

PERSPECTIVES ON LIVED RELIGION

Practices – Transmission – Landscape

edited by

N. Staring, H. Twiston Davies and L. Weiss

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Perspectives on Lived Religion

Practices – Transmission – Landscape

Nico Staring, Huw Twiston Davies
and Lara Weiss

The current volume addresses lived religion in and beyond ancient Egypt. It challenges the idea that ancient religions were essentially static.¹ The subtitle of the book reflects three methodological lenses through which ancient daily life activities can be examined in the material, archaeological, and textual evidence from ancient cultures: ‘practices’, ‘transmission’, and ‘landscape’. These research perspectives stem from the core aspects of the research project, ‘The Walking Dead at Saqqara: The Making of a Cultural Geography’, kindly funded by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO).² This project studies the cultural geography of Saqqara, the necropolis of the ancient Egyptian city of Memphis, and its development (see chapters 4, 7 and 13).³ Saqqara was a centre of major political and religious importance throughout Pharaonic history. Kings and non-royal individuals were buried there from the earliest times onward. Although Egyptian kings were buried elsewhere, Saqqara remained an important cultic area from the New Kingdom to the Late Period (c. 1500-332 BCE),⁴ and monumental tombs, funerary temples, and shrines continued to be built there. Having served as a memorial site for non-royal individuals and kings, as well as a centre for the worship of various gods for millennia, Saqqara not only provides chronological depth, but also the necessary thematic breadth, to study the ways in which religion changed and affected the physical environment and contemporary society and how, in turn, contemporary society, and the restrictions and possibilities offered by the environment shaped the site’s cultural geography. With a nod to the successful American TV series, the title ‘The Walking Dead’ emphasises the fact that Saqqara was not exclusively a burial site for the deceased, but also a place for interaction with the living.⁵ This volume presents a comparative confrontation of the ‘Walking Dead’ approach with other disciplines and an enlargement upon its perspectives. The volume

1 On the lived ancient religion approach see also Albrecht et al. 2018, 568-593; Rüpke 2012.

2 The project ‘The Walking Dead at Saqqara: The Making of a Cultural Geography’ has kindly been granted as dossier no. 016.Vidi.174.032 within the Vidi-talent scheme and is hosted at Leiden University Institute for Area Studies (LIAS) from 1 November 2017 to 31 October 2022.

3 See Weiss 2018 for a project description.

4 The dates used throughout this book are taken from Krauss/Hornung/Warburton 2005, unless stated otherwise.

5 Compare e.g. Gordon 1984.

includes chapters by specialists not only from the field of Egyptology, but across a broader span of time and space, in order to test, criticise, and contextualise methods, as well as the project's first results.

What is Cultural Geography?

Cultural geography has its roots as a field of study in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century study of religious geography,⁶ and the development of “natural theology”.⁷ The crystallisation of “cultural geography” as a concept in contemporary thought may be traced to the work of Carl Sauer, who defined a “cultural landscape” as the refashioning of a natural landscape by a cultural group.⁸ This definition was not reached in a void, but rather represented a reversal of the position dominant prior to this point, that environment shaped religious practice, in a rather simple, deterministic manner.⁹ Perhaps the most influential early codification of a purely *geographical* geography of religion was established by Paul Fickeler,¹⁰ which emphasised the ways in which religion and environment act on one another, rather than one influencing the other in a purely linear manner.¹¹ More recently, cultural geographers have defined their field as examining

“patterns and interactions of human culture, both material and non-material, in relation to the natural environment and the human organization of space”,¹²

or as a method of examining the ways in which the

“life world and its dwellers create and ‘reshape’ each other in one continuous movement, weaving individual life cycles into long-term histories”.¹³

Central to the study of cultural geography, and specifically the geography of religion, is the observation that sacred spaces

“are not merely discovered, or founded, or constructed; it is claimed, owned, and operated by people advancing specific interests”.¹⁴

This means that the construction of a cultural geography relies on human action and interaction in terms of shaping and controlling the landscape, but also on human adaptation to the existing space.¹⁵ The “geography of religions” approach within the broader topic of “cultural geography” has tended to focus on religion and “its relationships with various elements of its human and physical settings”.¹⁶

Cultural Geography and the Walking Dead

This volume offers perspectives on the ways in which religion in different places and time periods changed and affected physical environments, and how, in turn, restrictions and possibilities offered by the environment could shape a site's cultural geography. The papers assembled here examine these processes in the Mediterranean and in South Asia from the Bronze Age to the Medieval period, and offer a fruitful perspective on modern China. The starting point for the selection of papers is the observation that religion should not be perceived as essentially static. The archaeological and textual evidence discussed in this volume should dispel this notion immediately. Individuals and groups continuously shaped their environment and their agency was shaped by their environment in turn.¹⁷ Various ancient and modern cult places, temples, royal and non-royal tombs and access roads to various archaeological sites of religious significance reflect the continuous change in traditions over the course of time. The tangible results of these processes of religious appropriation by individuals and groups are conceptualised as ‘cultural geography’, acknowledging the mutual relationship between religion and its environment.¹⁸ The hypothesis of the ‘Walking Dead’ project is that human interaction with the environment and vice versa can be examined in an ancient culture from three perspectives, namely by studying individual and group practices such as offerings, by analysing various media through the examination of the transmission of texts and images, and by studying spatial features of the landscape, which together form a cultural geography. In

6 Park 1994, 7-14.

7 Glacken 1967, 35; quoted in Park 1994, 1. See also Park 1994, 12-14.

8 Sauer 1925, 476.

9 See Büttner 1974.

10 Park 1994, 16-17; Büttner 1980, 96; Fickeler 1947.

11 Park 1994, 16-17.

12 Cosgrove 1994, 111.

13 Kolen/Renes 2015, 21.

14 Kong 2001, 213-218; Chidester/Linethal 1995, 15.

15 Kong 2001, 213; Smith 1978, 88.

16 Park 1994, 18-19; Stump 1986, 1. Since the mid-1970s, interest in the geography of religions has increased, with the publication of themed issues of journals and the establishment, in 1976, of an International Working Group on the Geography of Belief Systems (Park 1994, 19-20). It has become a “well-established field of study, the focus of professional specialty groups, scholarly conferences, an online journal, and a growing academic literature” (Stump 2008, 20; contra Park 1994, 21; for a more recent summary, see Kong 2001).

17 E.g. Kolen/Renes 2015.

18 E.g. Park 1994; Cooper 1992; Kong 1990; Büttner 1974.

the ‘Walking Dead’ project these three perspectives are examined as the three main vectors by which religious agency can be traced in the archaeological record, adding a spatial perspective to the lived ancient religion approach.¹⁹ These three vectors have informed the structure of the present volume.

Religious Practices

Barry Kemp has provided a useful selection of material evidence in order “to explore the tangle of piety and self-interest”²⁰ which motivated the various religious practices performed in Egypt in different time periods, in an article on ancient Egyptian religiosity. In Kemp’s view, religious expressions, where they can be detected, were highly formalised and often motivated by self-interest. Since religion “did not serve as a guide to living” and since in its formal style it was “removed from the emotional and practical life of most Egyptians”,²¹ Kemp concluded that Egyptian society “was, in practice, largely secular”.²² Implicit in such definitions of religion are protestant notions that religious action should be motivated by pure piety. This rather narrow definition is surely inapplicable to the ancient Egyptian data, from which it is not possible to determine the degree of piety felt by particular individuals or groups.²³ The analysis of actual practices, seeking to identify religious practices in the material record, is of greater value than seeking to define their limits too narrowly.²⁴ For this purpose, religion can be defined here loosely, as being found in all material and textual evidence that relates to practices and beliefs dealing with gods, deified individuals, spirits, demons, and ancestors. This analytical focus on religious practices rather than beliefs in ancient and Medieval contexts reflects not only archaeological thought but also contemporary sociological data. Studies of contemporary Chinese religion face comparable challenges to the study of ancient religious practices: deeply-rooted protestant views of religion “continue to cause great confusion” and impede in a comprehensive understanding (see also chapter 15).²⁵ Anna Sun shows that

“in the World Values Survey, 93.3 per cent of the Chinese respondents answered ‘No’ to the question ‘Do you belong to a religious denomination?’ and 89.7 per cent answered ‘Never’ to the question of ‘How

often do you attend religious services?’ But if we focus on everyday religious practices in China, we find that 67 per cent of people have performed ‘ancestral rites to the gravesite of a deceased family member in the past year’”.²⁶

In contemporary Chinese society, group membership of institutional religion may not be very relevant in day-to-day practice. However, this does not mean that Chinese people do not perform what would be considered, by Western scholars, to be religious practices. Chinese people perform a series of practices in which categories set by different religious traditions are highly fluid and overlap.²⁷ This situation can find parallels in ancient Egypt, where various gods and ancestors could be adored in different contexts and situations.²⁸ In the present volume this conception of religion, as a repertoire of various elements to choose from more or less freely,²⁹ is nicely illustrated by Richard Bussmann, who critically assesses interpretations of Egyptian votives, and reveals the implicit assumptions of modern scholars (pp. 73-84). Bussmann challenges intuitive interpretations of meaning based on iconography or texts, which neglect alternative interpretations. With fresh methodological insight he demonstrates that the selection of a crocodile votive may depend on a variety of intended meanings, including the strength and power of the animal, whether to provide protection or virility, rebirth and rejuvenation, the commemoration of having been saved from a crocodile, or nothing, in the sense that the votive was simply to hand. Whereas in some cases one or other interpretation may be more plausible depending on the surrounding evidence, scholars should also allow for broader interpretations and perhaps sometimes not being able to find a clear-cut solution at all.³⁰

Mattias Brand demonstrates that a similar variety of practices can be found in cemetery contexts. Brand discusses the burials in Roman Kellis, and demonstrates that a clear distinction between Christian and pagan is not always possible (pp. 85-95). Symbols such as crosses were used widely at that time, and funerary customs like body orientation often depended on practical matters rather than the religion of the deceased. Identity was and remains complex, and daily life practices can rarely be assigned to fixed categories.³¹

This phenomenon is also illustrated by Miriam Müller and her study of domestic religious practices at the city of Avaris in the Delta, an ancient trade hub in which the

19 Term Rüpke 2012 and see also Albrecht et al. 2018, 568-593.

20 Initiated by Kemp 1995, 26.

21 Kemp 1995, 50.

22 Kemp 1995, 50.

23 E.g. Weiss 2012, 190-192, with references.

24 Compare e.g. Geertz 1968, 1.

25 Sun 2016, 51.

26 Sun 2016, 51.

27 Sun 2016, 66.

28 E.g. Luiselli 2011; Stevens 2006.

29 Swidler 1986, 273, cf. Sun 2016, 66.

30 Compare also Raja/Weiss 2015.

31 Notably Rebillard 2012.

material culture was characterised by a vivid blend of both Levantine and Egyptian styles. The mix of cultures is reflected in Near Eastern practices, such as the installation of ancestor houses attached to typical Egyptian houses (pp. 27-38), apparently reflecting a belief that the deceased were not impure.³² The construction of the physical fabric of shared ancestry, visible to everyone at Avaris, shows how migration and the settlement of new groups in the eastern Nile Delta established new traditions.

Whereas the previous chapters show an apparent high degree of flexibility in daily life practices Julia Budka's study shows that at the same time Egyptian institutionalised temple religion was far more formalised than has been previously assumed (pp. 15-25). Although in general the power of Egyptian administration did not allow exhaustive control,³³ the temple of the god Osiris at Abydos was able to restrict access to its sacred area.³⁴ This has become even clearer following recent excavations that unearthed the large quantities of votive pottery dating to Twenty-Fifth Dynasty Egypt (c. 747-664 BCE) placed in a highly organised manner by priests. Budka's findings emphasise that earlier texts should perhaps be taken more literally, since already on Middle Kingdom (c. 1980-1760 BCE) stelae placed along the processional route to the temple the area is referred to as a restricted area.³⁵

Returning to Kemp's "tangle of piety and self-interest",³⁶ religion cannot be viewed outside its social context. Religion and society are two sides of the same coin, and the example from contemporary China referred to above shows that people may not consider their practices to be what scholars identify as religious behaviour (pp. 243-247). As to the monumental tombs of New Kingdom Saqqara, they certainly reflected the high status of their owners,³⁷ as do the numerous limestone reliefs, statues, and smaller objects from that site. These allow insight into the world of the higher echelons of Egyptian society at that period. In the *Prosopographia Memphitica* project, Anne Herzberg analyses prosopographical data from Saqqara in order to detect personal networks in the Memphite necropolis (pp. 39-57). By means of Social Network Analysis, Herzberg

maps all identifiable social classes of the Memphite society in a database, which allows not only the detection of individual persons, but also the reconstruction of their networks in terms of both social and genealogical affiliations as well as their professional backgrounds. With a similar interest, Lara Weiss (pp. 59-71) analyses the appearances of named individuals, other than the tomb owners themselves, in tomb reliefs, and discusses the question of the potential advantages gained by means of representation. The chapters by Herzberg and Weiss both demonstrate that social and spiritual capital was gained by lower ranking individuals through their representation in the tombs of higher ranking members of the Egyptian elite. An approach centred on the tomb owner thus conceals not only the practices of individuals and groups in those monuments, but also the life history of tombs in later generations.

Transmission

'Transmission' refers to the process by which a text or image is copied and recopied across time by different individuals or groups. As a subject of study, its origins lie in the 'textual' or 'lower' criticism, as initially practised chiefly on Classical and Biblical texts in and after the Nineteenth Century. This methodology targeted the cataloguing of copying errors through the so-called 'common-error' method. The purpose of this is both to resolve such errors on the basis of what the original text ought to say, and to discover which of the surviving manuscripts were copied based on each other. The overall aim of this model of 'textual criticism', then, is the reconstruction of an 'original' text, 'as close as possible' to the recension of the text first written down by the author.³⁸

This method has not been without its critics. In the early Twentieth Century, the French medievalist Joseph Bédier noted that the diagram illustrating the hierarchy of manuscripts, the stemma codicum, almost always divided into only two branches, or manuscript traditions,³⁹ suggesting the exercise was of limited utility. More recently, at the end of the 1980s, Bernard Cerquiglini, in his book *Éloge de la variante*, argued that variant copies of a given text, previously said to be 'erroneous', were in fact valid and valuable expressions of their copyists, and ought not be dismissed as merely a result of incompetent copying. This view is often summarised with the now well-known quotation from this book:

"l'écriture médiévale ne produit pas des variants, elle est variance."⁴⁰

32 On the traditional Egyptian perspective cf. e.g. Meeks 1975, 430-452.

33 E.g. Moreno Garcia 2013a.

34 See also Kucharek 2006, 57 with references.

35 Cf. e.g. a stela now in the Cairo Museum (JE 35256): "As for anyone who shall be found within these stelae, except for a priest about his duties, he shall be burnt. Moreover, as for any official who shall cause a tomb to be made for himself within this holy place, he shall be reported and this law applied to him and to the necropolis-guard as (is the case) today. But as for everywhere outside this holy place, (it is) an area where people may make tombs for themselves and where one may be buried", translated by Leahy 1989, 43.

36 Kemp 1995, 26.

37 For example, on the High Priests of Memphis: Raedler 2011, 135, but this applies also to tomb owners of other professions.

38 See e.g. Trovato 2014, 52-58; West 1973, 32-37; Maas 1958, 1-3.

39 Bédier 1913.

40 Cerquiglini 1989, 111.

Since the 1990s, this approach has been known as “material” or “new philology”. This perspective is less concerned with the reconstruction of a single, authorial ‘original text’, than it is with examining how and why texts were copied, edited, and adapted, and the contexts in which manuscripts emerged and diverged from earlier sources. Egyptological textual criticism has, since the 1970s, focussed chiefly on the examination of the textual traditions of religious texts, centred mainly on the ‘Tübingen School’.⁴¹ Dedicated studies have examined specific corpora, such as the solar litanies,⁴² the Book of the Two Ways,⁴³ and the Book of Gates.⁴⁴ These studies, although acknowledging the possibility of a more ‘open’ transmission,⁴⁵ in which texts are not readily assembled into a stemma, have nevertheless principally aimed at providing compositional dates, and clear recensions for these texts.⁴⁶

Since the early 2000s, approaches drawn from material philology have grown in influence within Egyptology, most predominantly in the study of Egyptian literary texts.⁴⁷ Willems was among the first Egyptologists to engage with material philology in his study of the texts on Middle Kingdom coffins.⁴⁸ However, Egyptological engagement with material philology remained limited for a number of years.⁴⁹ It was Parkinson who perhaps most clearly summarised the objections to traditional textual criticism, noting its “immense value”,⁵⁰ but criticising an excessive application of the method, which can “sometimes almost negate the search for meaning”, and becomes at times “a means of avoiding questions” about the source and potential purpose of textual variation, charging textual critics with an excessive disregard for the processes of copying of individual manuscripts.⁵¹ Nevertheless, prior attempts at textual criticism within Egyptology have not

always resulted in the production of stemmata,⁵² and some more recent studies have been conducted from a material-philological perspective.⁵³

Working within the broader theoretical frame of ‘material philology’, the chapters on transmission in this volume discuss the ways in which texts and images were adopted, adapted, altered and recontextualised by people across long periods of time. The chapters cover a wide cross-section of material, both from Egypt and from other cultures, and through a number of perspectives. Nevertheless, the papers share methodological approaches, and emphasise the importance of human actors as the agents of transmission, as well as broader, living, and often oral, contexts which are now partly or wholly inaccessible to the scholar.

Examining transmission at Saqqara, Huw Twiston Davies (pp. 97-129) examines the ‘harpists’ songs’ of the New Kingdom at this site. His contribution problematises the oral context of these song-texts, and asks what kind of ritual context such songs might have had, and whether such a context actually existed, or whether the ‘songs’ are a purely written genre, a kind of scene-caption. Twiston Davies emphasises the complex relationship between these scenes at Thebes and Saqqara, the difficulties of interpretation that arise over their meaning, and discusses the extent to which they reflect ancient Egyptian ritual practices.

Examining the transmission of images, Burkhard Backes (pp. 131-145) discusses the scene of a weeping cow found on two coffins of the early Middle Kingdom. This appears to anticipate ritual scenes found in the New Kingdom, involving the cutting off of a calf’s foot. Backes also emphasises the apparent links between the scene on the coffins and early Middle Kingdom royal ritual. Mobilising material from the Coffin Texts as broader context for the motif on the two coffins, Backes suggests that the representation of the weeping cow may allude to the myth of Isis cutting off the hands of Horus, in which the deceased is understood to be both, or either, party, drawing on Willems’s notion of the ‘embalmer embalmed’.⁵⁴ Backes emphasises the different forms that transmission can take: transmission between royal and non-royal contexts, transmission of motifs between broader iconic compositions, the transmission of an idea in different forms of representation, the transmission of an idea between text and image, and the transmission of iconic and textual elements between mythological and ritual contexts.

Lucía Díaz-Iglesias Llanos focuses on the transmission of the Book of the Dead within the tomb of Djehuty (TT 11)

41 See e.g. Westendorf 1974. For a summary article on the application of textual criticism in Egyptology, see Backes 2011.

42 Schenkel 1978.

43 Backes 2005.

44 Zeidler 1999.

45 For the distinction between ‘productive’ and ‘reproductive’ copying in Egyptology, see Schenkel 1986, 459-460, but also Parkinson 2002, 50-55.

46 Perhaps the most exhaustive exposition of the methodological approach of the ‘Tübingen School’ is to be found in Ziedler 1999, 11-59. Note that these have by no means been the only aims of the school, and that other genres of text have also been examined, for both of which see Burkard 1977.

47 Definitions of ‘literary’ and ‘non-literary’ within Egyptology, as more broadly, have been somewhat vexed. In this regard, the perspectives offered in Loprieno 1996, 5-94, and Moers 1999 are a useful starting point; but see also Parkinson 2002, 3-42.

48 Willems 1996.

49 Quirke 2004, 29-31.

50 Parkinson 2009, 262.

51 Parkinson 2009, 262-263.

52 E.g. Quack 1994, 18-32.

53 E.g. Hussein 2013; Hagen 2012.

54 Willems 1997, 343-372.

at Thebes (pp. 147-164). Analysing the 42 Book of the Dead spells found in the burial chamber of this tomb by content, textual sequence, layout and closest parallels, Díaz-Iglesias Llanos emphasises the role of individual copyists in the production of the text in the tomb, examining the process of copying, and emphasising the ‘productive’ editorial activity of the copyists, as well as the limitations and opportunities afforded them within the physical space in which the texts were copied.

Looking at textual transmission in a non-Egyptological context, Peter Bisschop describes processes of textual transformation and transmission which illuminate the variability which can be inherent in ‘anonymous’ texts.⁵⁵ Bisschop discusses the reappropriation of text in Indian purāṇas, and the systematic reworking of textual manuals dedicated to the cults of Viṣṇu and Śiva into the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa*, a text dedicated to the worship of the Sun (here referred to as Sūrya) (pp. 165-172). Bisschop notes the continuous expansion and editing of this text down to the beginning of the modern era, and the ways in which the text adapts older forms for the new religion. Bisschop emphasises the interrelation between texts, suggesting the use of the term ‘transtextuality’, on the basis of the work of Gérard Genette,⁵⁶ to emphasise the close relationship of concepts and expressions between different religious corpora.

Landscape

Studies focused on landscape are numerous in archaeology. It is therefore surprisingly difficult to find a clear and satisfactory definition of what is meant by this “fuzzy and ambiguous”⁵⁷ term. Traditionally, scholars have struggled in particular with the dichotomy between nature and culture in defining what a landscape is, who dwells in it, and who is responsible for its construction. Because of the difficulty of defining the term, it might be useful to start with a very brief historic outline of ‘landscape’.

At its origins, the term landscape denoted a communal, collective work. The English word derives from Dutch *landschap* or German *Landschaft*. In its early, Sixteenth Century usage, ‘lantschap’ indicated “an area carved out by axe and plough, which belongs to the people who have carved it out”.⁵⁸ It was “an area of cultural identity based on tribal and/or blood ties”. In today’s popular usage of the word, landscape signifies the specific arrangement or pattern of “things on the land”, and refers to “the *look* or the *style* of the land”,⁵⁹ by which is meant the social or

cultural significance of the observed order or make-up. For geographers, landscape is understood as a built morphology. To them, landscape refers to the shape and structure of a place.⁶⁰ Landscape also refers to a form of representation, a usage heavily influenced by the genre of landscape painting.⁶¹ This view of landscape has been adopted in the Merriam-Webster dictionary (2018), in which two definitions are presented for landscape: (1) “a picture of natural inland scenery”, and (2) “a portion of land that the eye can see in one glance”. The landscape, then, is conceptualised as the backdrop to human action. This view, drawing on 1960s environmental archaeology, is not how landscape is understood in the context of the studies presented in this volume.

Landscape is related to, but not identical with nature. This view is perhaps best articulated by cultural geographer Donald Meinig, who argues that

“[T]he idea of landscape (...) begins with a naive acceptance of the intricate intimate intermingling of physical, biological, and cultural features which any glance around us displays. Landscape is, first of all, the unity we see, the impressions of our senses rather than the logic of the sciences.”

Landscape can be found all around us. Yet while the landscape may be contemporary to its dwellers, glimpses of older landscapes always remain visible, and these potentially continue to be meaningful. The past endures, and therefore, as Tim Ingold has noted, “the landscape is never complete: neither ‘built’ nor ‘unbuilt’, it is perpetually under construction.”⁶² In other words, landscape has an important temporal aspect.⁶³

In the proceedings of the first international conference on Landscape Archaeology, published in 2012, the editors note that in today’s scholarship there are, essentially, two approaches to the topic. The first, “landscape as territory” definition, is used by processual archaeologists, earth scientists, and most historical geographers. Post-processual archaeologists, new cultural geographers and anthropologists, on the other hand, “favour a more abstract definition of landscape, based on how it is perceived by the observer.”⁶⁴ The papers published in the landscape section of the present volume adhere to the second of these perspectives.

Alexis den Doncker addresses the temporal aspect of landscape in his paper (pp. 173-189). In doing so, the

55 For this term, see Barton 2013.

56 Genette 1997.

57 Michaels 2006.

58 Olwig 1993, 311.

59 Meinig 1979.

60 Mitchell 2005, 49

61 Antrop 2007, 23-26; Cosgrove 1985.

62 Ingold 1993, 162.

63 The aspect of temporality has been explored in-depth in Kolen 2005.

64 Kluiwing/Guttman-Bond 2012, 11-30.

Theban necropolis is viewed as an iconographic archive. The tombs built by numerous generations of high-ranking officials in the western Theban mountain remained accessible long after their death. The iconographic programmes of their tombs represented a rich record of powerful images, each imbued with magical efficacy. These images could potentially establish a relationship with the living images of gods, who were thought to have fashioned the overall agency of the Theban sacred necropolis. While the tomb-images remained accessible, the reception or appropriation by later generations need not have been in line with the intentions of their creators. The case study of Theban Tomb (TT) 93, for example, shows various patterns of reception and appropriation. The patterns observed reflect the “shifting agencies” or “multi-functionality of monuments”. The meaning and functionality of images evolve continually with the passage of time.

Johannes Auenmüller examines the ways in which rock inscriptions on the southern borders of Egypt were used by the pharaonic state and its representatives to inscribe themselves upon the landscape (pp. 191-206). In so doing, they perpetuated their presence and, perhaps more importantly, perpetuated their claim over the land. The sites bearing rock inscriptions can be said to represent ‘epigraphically appropriated’ places, and ‘social landscapes’. This latter term refers to the individuals represented by the inscriptions sometimes embedding themselves within older social networks. The author refrains from drawing all-encompassing generalisations regarding the overall function or agency of the studied rock inscriptions. Instead, he convincingly argues that, above all, it is the topographical and site-specific context which allows us to understand the texts on rocks in space and place.

Nico Staring argues in his paper for a biography-of-landscape approach to the study of space in an ancient Egyptian necropolis (pp. 207-223). As an underlying premise, his approach conceptualises the history of any landscape as a life-history. In that view, life in a necropolis is “lived among that which was made before”. The landscape is conceived of as a palimpsest. Choices made by individuals dwelling in the landscape are made in negotiation with the material remains of the past. The necropolis at Saqqara serves as an example of such a palimpsest site, where the development of the landscape can be examined over a period of several millennia. The paper first situates the necropolis in its broader context, outlining the spatial relationship to the urban centre

of Memphis. Processional routes used during religious festivals connected the city with the necropolis site and beyond. Guided by the concept of ‘embodied movement’, the development in terms of tomb building within one section of the larger necropolis is then used to illustrate how a focus not on individual tombs, but on the necropolis space as a whole, may lead to new insights into the actual use of the site through time.

The landscape as an arena for display of power is explored by Elizabeth Cecil (p. 225-241). Cecil’s study incorporates political ecology, temple architecture, and landscape design to examine how power was materialised by reshaping the land according to the will of those in power. The case-studies in the paper are from the ‘kingdoms’ of Champa in Central Vietnam, Zhenla in Southern Laos, and Taruma on Java, referred to here as “archipelagos of power”. To analyse the mechanics of the political manipulations of landscape, when viewed as a process, Cecil introduces three phases of architectural intervention in the landscape: participation, amplification, and mastery. These stages take the transformation from the initial claim to landscape, through intensification and structural interventions, to culmination in monumental redevelopment.

Synthesis

The papers in this volume cover a variety of time periods and geographical areas. They demonstrate the effectiveness of the ‘Walking Dead’ model, of three detectable vectors of agency, in illuminating how the cultural geography of a given site was shaped over time. Changes at religious sites come about through the practices, creativity, adaptation, and intervention in the landscape of individuals and groups. The ‘Walking Dead’ approach enables scholars to perceive the human element in the ‘processes of becoming’ which form a site’s life history. Individuals and groups developed their own interpretation of religion and religious practices. This observation has been theorised as *lived religion* in Religious Studies. The fluid nature of these appropriations may be constrained in institutional cults. Nevertheless, the identification and interpretation of the scope for mutability in religious traditions necessitates a clear analysis. This is vital because religion was and is not monolithic. People manoeuvred within different options, so that past choices interacted with future ones in fluid ways.

Re-awakening Osiris at Umm el-Qaab (Abydos)

New Evidence for Votive Offerings and other Religious Practices

Julia Budka¹

Introduction

Since 2006, a project of the German Archaeological Institute in Cairo directed by Ute Effland has been dedicated to the later use of the Early Dynastic royal necropolis of Umm el-Qaab, focusing on the cultic activities at the site connected with the god Osiris.² It has long been known that Abydos was one of the most important cult centres of the god, with the presumed burial of Osiris in the royal tomb of king Djer of the First Dynasty (c. 2900-2730 BCE) at Umm el-Qaab.³ The previous studies of the Osiris cult of Abydos, however, relied primarily on textual sources and mainly on secondary text references (like, e.g., Middle Kingdom stelae).⁴ For the first time, primary testimonies are now being evaluated in detail and in their entirety for the reconstruction of the genesis and diachronic development of the cult at the site.⁵

Material evidence for the sacredness of the landscape of Abydos can be found in numerous pottery vessels deposited at Umm el-Qaab and other places connected with rituals and festive processions for Osiris (fig. 1.1).⁶ Responsible for the modern name of the site Umm el-Qaab ('Mother of Pots'), are the numerous small dishes and bowls, which are summarised under the term *qaab* and represent material evidence of the Osiris cult.⁷ Millions of broken *qaabs* cover the surface around the early graves

1 My investigation of the ceramic material from Umm el-Qaab was undertaken under the auspices of the *Deutsches Archäologisches Institut* (DAI) Research Cluster 4 in the context of the project 'The Cult of Osiris in Abydos' initiated in 2006. First of all, I wish to thank Ute Effland as the project director. I am especially grateful to Andreas Effland for constant support and many useful references for this paper. Further thanks are due to all involved in studying the pottery deposits at Umm el-Qaab, especially to the late Günter Dreyer, Ulrich Hartung, Leon Ziemer, Ines Klenner, Nicole Mosiniak, Julia D. Preisigke and the local specialists as well as workmen from Quft.

2 Effland/Effland 2017; 2013; Effland/Budka/Effland 2010.

3 Budka 2018, 70-73; Effland 2013 with references; Effland 2006.

4 See Otto 1966; Schäfer 1904.

5 Budka 2014a; Effland 2006.

6 Effland/Effland 2017; Budka 2014.

7 Budka 2014a, 57 with further references; Budka 2010a, 35; Müller 2006a; 2006b.

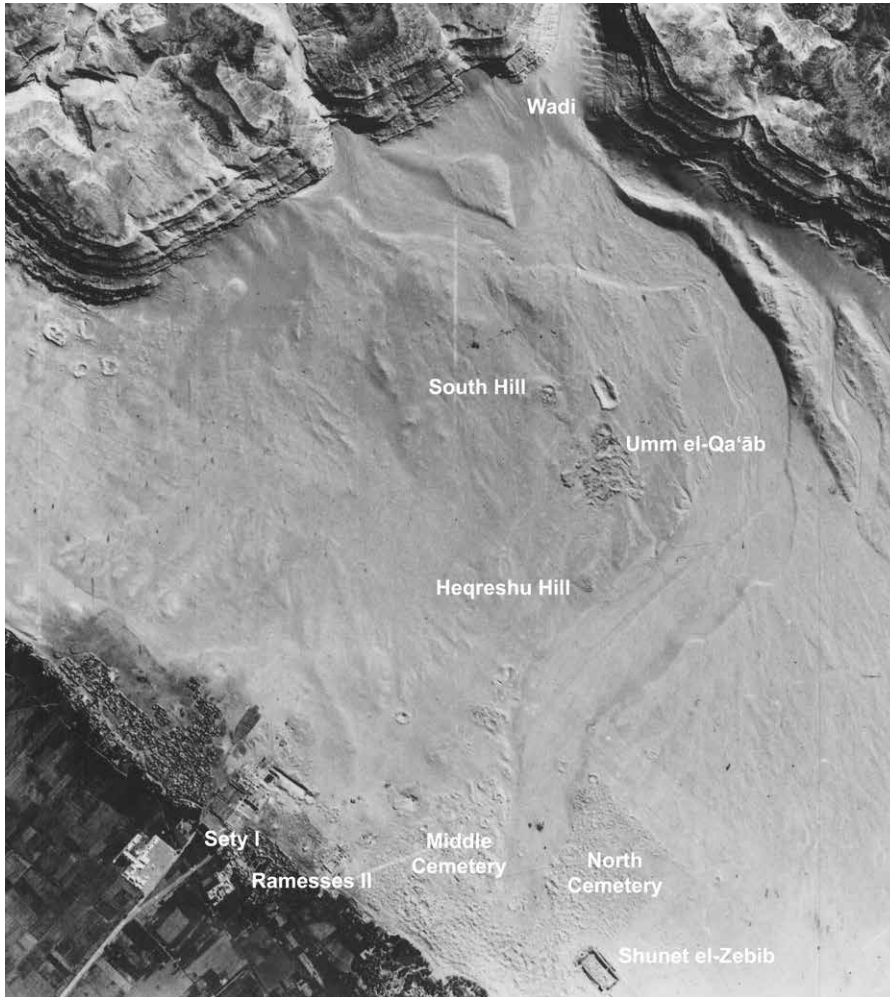


Figure 11. Aerial view of Abydos with the main sites. © DAI Osiriskultprojekt.

and turn them into an offering surface in the desert.⁸ The masses of vessels in Umm el-Qaab are unparalleled within pharaonic Egypt, which is in general very rich in pottery (fig. 1.2).

The pottery at Umm el-Qaab attests to cultic activities from the late Old Kingdom (c. 2300-2100 BCE) throughout all ages until the Ptolemaic (332-30 BCE), Roman (30 BCE-395 CE) and Coptic periods (395-640 CE). According to the ceramics, one of the heydays of the cult for Osiris at Umm el-Qaab was clearly the Twenty-Fifth Dynasty/Kushite period (c. 722-655 BCE).⁹ Recent fieldwork by the German Archaeological Institute in Cairo resulted in a considerable increase in understanding the nature, date, size and variability of in situ pottery deposits in the

surroundings of the tomb of Djer/Osiris datable to the Kushite period.¹⁰

This paper will present the new evidence for votive offerings and other religious practices connected with the cult of Osiris at Umm el-Qaab. It also aims to contextualise the material remains of religious practises over a timespan of almost two millennia. Spatial features of the religious landscape of Abydos will be addressed as well.

Ceramic Vessels as Votive Offerings for Osiris?

One of the main issues with the masses of ceramic vessels around the tomb of Osiris at Umm el-Qaab is whether they are to be interpreted as offering vessels or as votives to the god. Several details of the archaeological findings offer here some clues. It will be discussed in the following, whether a superordinate term can be used

8 Budka 2014a, 57. For representations of rituals within desert environments see Wilkinson 1994, 391 with n. 23; Settgest 1963, 4, 64-65. I am grateful for these references to Andreas Effland.

9 Budka 2010a, 57-58; 2010b, 51-52.

10 Budka 2017; 2014.



Figure 1.2. Assemblages of votive cups at Umm el-Qaab. © DAI Osiriskultprojekt.

that describes the most probable function of all vessels deposited at Umm el-Qaab. In archaeology, boundaries between votive, sacrificial and depositional are often fluid and were only with the advent of the ‘Cognitive Archaeology’ discussed in more detail.¹¹ It is often argued that a functional assignment and definition of objects depends on accompanying textual findings.¹² The intentional deposition is generally understood as aiming at “exchange of material objects for supernatural returns”.¹³ For deposited ceramic vessels, the question arises in this context, whether they served as containers for offerings or whether they actually represent the votive, being deposited in the context of ritual acts.¹⁴

At Umm el-Qaab, an in situ deposit of *qaabs* in the surroundings of the tomb of Khasekhemwy illustrates that the vessels were carefully laid out reflecting organised votive activities embedded in the yearly festival of Osiris.¹⁵ Organic remains as contents of the *qaabs* strongly point to Osiris as the god of vegetation, but especially to the aspects of regeneration and fertility.¹⁶ These in situ deposits clearly attest that both vessels and botanical material, in

particular fresh branches, were simultaneously deposited at Umm el-Qaab (fig. 1.3). In many cases, the filling of *qaabs* with some coprolites (one or two pieces) could be observed.¹⁷ In other *qaabs* charcoal and incense remnants were found; some of the bowls were also painted with red paint, possibly with an apotropaic meaning.¹⁸ One has to assume therefore a ritual (or several rituals) in which the *qaabs* and fresh, still-green branches (mostly of sycamores) and small amounts of coprolite were used together,¹⁹ sometimes incorporating red paint to mark the vessels with irregular splashes.

The presence of sheep/goat dung in the *qaabs* offers various lines of possible explanation, from an association with Seth and enemies of Osiris,²⁰ to dung balls of the scarab beetle and thus a solar connotation to more general sacred aspects.²¹ All in all, we have to assume that the contents of these ritual deposits were highly evocative and hold

11 See e.g. Müller 2017; Budka 2014a, 63-64; Lindström/Pilz 2013; Osborne 2004, 3.

12 Osborne 2004.

13 Osborne 2004, 2.

14 Cf. Müller 2017.

15 Effland 2010, 25-30; Effland 2006.

16 Effland 2010, 29-30.

17 See Von Lieven 2011, 297-298 with references.

18 Budka 2014a, 62; 2010a, 41 with ns 117-118.

19 Effland 2010, 29-30.

20 Von Lieven 2011, 297-299.

21 For dung and excrements as *materia sacra* in religious contexts in Egypt see Von Lieven 2011, 292-296 with references. As was pointed out by Ramadan Hussein during the conference in Leiden, pottery deposits in Late Period shaft tombs in Saqqara also yielded dung, here in association with mummification. For pottery deposits connected with the embalming in Late Period shaft tombs see e.g. finds at Abusir (Smoláriková 2009, 79-88; 2008, 200).



Figure 1.3. Detail of *qaab* deposit with botanical remains.
© DAI Osiriskultprojekt.

presumably a mythological meaning.²² Equally meaningful are the red splashes or irregular red paint on some of the pottery vessels. These are maybe a reference to blood and to real food offerings and belong to a very long tradition at Umm el-Qaab. In the vicinity of the famous Naqada period tomb U-j,²³ offering cult and the deposition of ceramic vessels was observed. Among more than 100 votive vessels which were deposited on the desert surface,²⁴ one example showed irregular red paint very similar to the Late Period examples of *qaabs*.²⁵

Overall, there seem to have been different reasons/ritual contexts for the deposition of these vessels at Umm el-Qaab. We know from textual sources that the complex cult for Osiris includes a number of different ritual acts, most of which were performed in the course of Osirian festivals, in particular the Khoiak festival.²⁶ These diverse rituals appear to be reflected in the variance of ceramic depositions in Umm el-Qaab and also find parallels in the intricacy of ritual activities connected with embalming deposits.²⁷ Textual sources attest the Opening of the Mouth ritual and apotropaic rituals during the deposition of embalming remains,²⁸ stressing the complexity which needs to be considered when explaining ritual traces.

This also applies to the ceramic vessels themselves. Votive vessels, cult ceramics and offering ceramics – these terms are often very difficult to differentiate,²⁹ and all appear to relate to the pottery in Umm el-Qaab. However, some characteristics can be mentioned that underline the votive character. A large part of the vessels in question was clearly produced specifically for local rituals and deliberately deposited in a sacred place, just at the Osiris grave. This holds true first of all for the *qaabs*. The suggestion that the small-scale *qaab* form is specifically related to the local Abydene cult at the tomb of Osiris finds support by the fact that very similar forms already exist in the Middle Kingdom, namely in Umm el-Qaab itself³⁰ and especially in the temple complex of Senusret III in South Abydos.³¹ A local production of the *qaabs* is very likely, not only due to the large number, but also because of the manufacturing technique which is almost ad-hoc style, suggesting that no proper long-term drying of the vessels took place.³² In general, a high proportion of the vessels deposited at Umm el-Qaab are not usable vessels.³³ Such non-usable vessels are in general widely known in various cultures and periods, primarily in funerary

22 See Von Lieven 2011, 298-299 for an association of sycamore branches with Nut and Seth.

23 Dreyer 1999; 1998.

24 Mostly simple dishes and plates: Dreyer 1998, 15-16, figs 8-9.

25 See Budka 2019.

26 Kucharek 2017, 122-123; Backes 2015, 18-23.

27 Budka 2006.

28 Von Lieven 2011, 293-294.

29 See Lindström/Pilz 2013, 267.

30 Budka 2010d, 60.

31 Wegner 2007, fig. 114, nos 91-92; fig. 125, nos 100-104.

32 This is evident from technological features like the manufacture of the bases but also from deformed parts of the vessels, very likely a result of the transport/movement of the vessel in a still wet state.

33 Due to the small size or pierced vessel bottoms, see Budka 2010a, 58-61.

contexts, often thought to hold a symbolic character.³⁴ These factors suggest that in the case of Umm el-Qaab the vessels are actual votive offerings for Osiris associated with a prayer/ritual act rather than being containers for offerings. This is especially evident for vessels from Umm el-Qaab which carry texts or labels.³⁵ Among the group of inscribed vessels, the so-called heart vessels are particularly relevant. These vessels in the shape of the *jb*-heart hieroglyph carry representations, dedications and ritual spells, which clearly mark the vessels as votives of high officials, among them the prominent Ramesside High Priest of Osiris at Abydos, Wenennefer.³⁶ Thus, from the Nineteenth Dynasty we have strong evidence and with the heart vessels the actual material manifestation of ritual performances at the tomb of Osiris in Umm el-Qaab.

I would like to suggest that the small percentage of inscribed/marked votive ceramics³⁷ in Umm el-Qaab helps with interpreting the mass of unlabelled ceramic vessels, which themselves provide various interpretive approaches. This case study from Umm el-Qaab can also serve as an example that texts should always be interpreted as complementary to, rather than as, substantive evidence, also in ritual contexts. Material findings are often even more variable than the textual testimonies that are generally associated with elites in Egypt. In the specific case of Umm el-Qaab, the material findings testify to votive actions over a very long period of time and give secondary evidence for the communication of people with the god Osiris, potentially supplementing the inscribed elite votives attested primarily from the New Kingdom.

For example, from the Middle Kingdom to Ptolemaic times, numerous model vessels, which probably have a symbolic value and are most likely to be interpreted as votive vessels, were deposited at Umm el-Qaab.³⁸ The millions of *qaabs* from the Late Period (Twenty-Fifth – Thirtieth Dynasties, c. 722-343 BCE) to the Ptolemaic era have previously been interpreted as a sign of a public, intensified pilgrimage at the site,³⁹ and thus of a changed agency concerning the main religious activities at Umm el-Qaab because restricted access to the site is well attested for the Middle Kingdom and other early periods.⁴⁰

However, recent research suggests that both the *qaabs* and the so-called Late Period bottles were deposited in the course of various Osirian rituals and festivals and were certainly subject to certain standards, being handled by ‘informed’ specialists and trained personnel of the cult.⁴¹ This is a new line of research, focusing in particular on the actual archaeological evidence and the careful layout of these ceramic deposits. Our interpretation thus differs from previous explanations, taking the millions of ceramic vessels as indication for open access to the site, based on the illusion of a random deposition of the pots which is actually not the case as our excavations of in situ pottery deposits clarified. All in all, I propose based on the recent finds that the situation in the Late Period was still very like it was in the Middle Kingdom, for which we have plenty of textual and archaeological evidence deriving from offering chapels and stelae, primarily associated with North Abydos.⁴² According to these texts from chapels and royal stelae, part of the rites at the Osiris celebrations were public and visible to everyone, but the beginning, end, and climax of the ritual – the resurrection of the god – was celebrated by a small, select circle of initiated priests, with every unauthorised observer banned and excluded.⁴³

Overall, according to the current state of research, questions about the participants in the deposition of vessels in Umm el-Qaab, and the concrete performance of the acts are still open, but it is possible to draw some parallels with the complex practices around animal mummies as votives in Egyptian animal necropolises.⁴⁴ Also at these animal necropolises, thousands of votive vessels are integrated into a complex structure with a high degree of organization.⁴⁵ I would therefore argue that the ceramic vessels deposited at the Osiris tomb in Umm el-Qaab represent an essential part of the Osirian votive offerings⁴⁶ – the vessels themselves, not their contents were of prime importance. Some of the vessels were probably deposited empty.⁴⁷ Quantitatively, ceramics are even the largest share of the find material deposited for the god at the site.

34 See Parker Pearson 2003, 10.

35 A. Effland 2013; 2010.

36 For Wenennefer as very prominent agent for religious practices at Abydos see most recently Raedler 2017 and see A. Effland 2013 with references.

37 For pot marks of the votive pottery for Osiris at Umm el-Qaab see Budka 2015.

38 Effland 2006, 136-137, fig. 2, model vessels in limestone. For general aspects of model vessels see Müller 2008, 151-152; Allen 2006; for miniature vessels cf. also Schattner/Zuchtriegel 2013, 259-263.

39 Richards 1999, 95.

40 See below and O'Connor 2009, 87-96; Effland 2006, 149.

41 Budka 2019; 2014; Effland 2010; for the *qaabs* see already Müller 2006b, 47.

42 See Effland 2006, 148; Simpson 1974.

43 Budka 2018, 74; Effland/Budka/Effland 2010, 79; Bonnet 1952, 496.

44 Budka 2019.

45 See Kessler 2003; Fitzenreiter 2003, 234; Kessler 1989; for the votive character of animal mummies see also Price 2015.

46 Effland 2006, 136; for Ptolemaic “votive pottery” from North Abydos see Pouls-Wegner 2011.

47 See Budka 2010a, 59.

Votive Pottery marking Sacred Places and Processional Routes at Abydos

The votive pottery at Umm el-Qaab can be associated with deposits at other locations and landmarks throughout the site of Abydos. It becomes obvious that the vessels marked the main cultic axes constructing the sacred landscape of Abydos which was interpreted as the stage for the Osirian myth, being used as the processional ways during the festival for Osiris.⁴⁸ This can be illustrated by a deposit at the Seti I complex. As one of the major buildings in Abydos, this temple complex⁴⁹ features a so-called desert pylon in its western part, opening the mud brick enclosure towards Umm el-Qaab and clearly connecting the monument to the presumed tomb of Osiris in the desert. Remarkably, in front of this western pylon there is a large deposit of votive pottery very similar to the ones found at Umm el-Qaab.⁵⁰ The pottery of this deposit mainly dates to the Late Period, especially to the Twenty-Fifth Dynasty which was one of the heydays of depositing pottery at Umm el-Qaab.⁵¹

The studies by Ute and Andreas Effland have revealed important connections between North Abydos, Umm el-Qaab, the Seti I complex and also South Abydos (fig. 1.1). A significant landmark at Umm el-Qaab was also the so-called 'southern hill'.⁵² It is striking that the main cultic axes constructing the sacred landscape of Abydos and representing the processional ways during the festival for Osiris⁵³ were marked by votive deposits, predominately dating to the Late Period.⁵⁴ It seems that the Twenty-Fifth Dynasty reused already existing structures and revived processional features set up during the New Kingdom. A similar Kushite re-construction of the sacred landscape can also be observed at Thebes.⁵⁵ The underlying concept for this was not only religious continuity, but probably also conscious references to earlier periods, frequently labelled as 'archaism'⁵⁶ and especially the wish to legitimise Kushite rulers by embedding them and their monuments into previous traditions.⁵⁷

Votive Pottery of the Twenty-Fifth Dynasty

The votive pottery of the Twenty-Fifth Dynasty illustrates cultic activities at Umm el-Qaab and the use of processional routes connected with the cult of Osiris. Despite the long

tradition of votive offerings around the royal tombs of the Early Dynastic period (c. 2900-2545 BCE), the Kushite period marks the beginning of some specific vessel shapes. The most significant new type is the so-called *qaab* that continued into the Ptolemaic era.⁵⁸ It has to be stressed that the *qaab* recalls miniature vessels of the Middle Kingdom specific to Abydos and in some respects also resembles canopic jars associated with the embalming.⁵⁹ The only close parallel for this specific vessel type outside of Abydos can be found at the royal Kushite necropolis of Nuri.⁶⁰ There, the cups which seem to represent copies of the *qaabs* from Abydos were primarily used in foundation deposits in the Kushite pyramids. This suggests that people with first-hand experience of ritual activities in Twenty-Fifth Dynasty Umm el-Qaab passed on their knowledge in order to shape Kushite funerary traditions.⁶¹ This transmission of religious ideas from Abydos to ancient Sudan raises several questions and will also be discussed below.

Apart from the *qaabs*, a specific type of storage vessel, the so-called Late Period bottles are most common during the Twenty-Fifth Dynasty at Umm el-Qaab. These large bottles are a very special type of vessel, clearly locally made, produced in very large numbers and arranged to form two parallel rows marking pathways.⁶² Until recently, no traces of any content within the bottles were observed, suggesting that they were always deposited empty.⁶³ However, the latest discovery of a very large ceramic deposit at the tomb of Djer allows an updated assessment of Twenty-Fifth Dynasty votive activity at Umm el-Qaab.⁶⁴

A New Deposit at the Tomb of Djer/Osiris

Already in 2011, the first vessels of a votive deposit were unearthed along the eastern edge of the subsidiary tombs of Djer. These vessels are connected with the row of vessels found well preserved in the area before the tomb of Den⁶⁵ leading towards the south, to the so-called 'southern hill'.⁶⁶ In 2012 and 2013, more vessels of this deposit labelled O-NNO were unearthed. It became obvious that the pottery deposit excavated in 1985 above B40, comprising 300-400 vessels,⁶⁷ was probably once part of O-NNO in its south-eastern area (fig. 1.4). The

48 Effland/Effland 2010a; 2010b; see also Kucharek 2017.

49 Schröder 2010, 104 with further references; O'Connor 2009, 43-61.

50 Budka 2018; Effland/Effland 2017; 2010b, 142.

51 Budka 2017 with references.

52 Effland/Effland 2017; Effland/Budka/Effland 2010, 82-83, fig. 52; Effland/Effland 2010b, 137-139.

53 See Kucharek 2017; Lavie 1998; 1989.

54 Budka 2019.

55 Budka 2010b, 60-61 with references.

56 Cf. Morkot 2014; Tiradritti 2008.

57 Budka 2017.

58 Budka 2010a, 45; Müller 2006a, 82.

59 Budka 2010a, 58.

60 Dunham 1955, 125, fig. 125 (Nu. 9); 157, fig. 118 (Nu. 10); pls 134-135; see also Budka 2017, 54, fig. 1; 2010a, 45-46; Pumpenmeier 1998a, 134.

61 Cf. Budka 2014b.

62 Budka 2010b, 56-57.

63 Budka 2010b, 55.

64 Budka 2019; 2017; 2014a.

65 Müller 2006b, 39-48; Naville 1914, 38, pl. 18.4 and pl. 19.1.

66 Effland/Effland 2010b, 138.

67 Aston 1996.

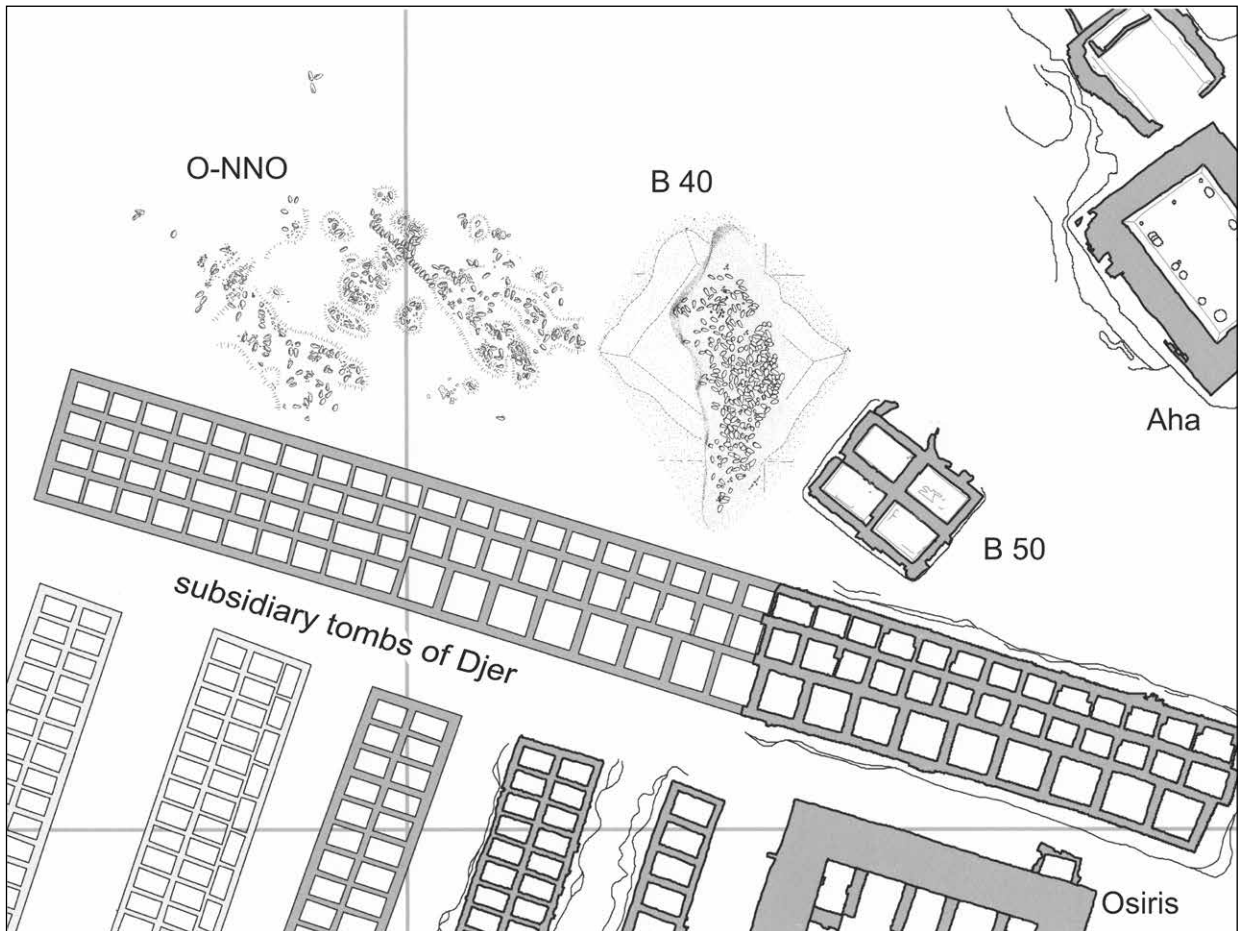


Figure 1.4. Plan of the deposit O-NNO on the eastern side of the tomb of Djer. Plan by U. Effland, I. Klenner, M. Sählhoff et al. © DAI Osiriskultprojekt.

most important vessel types fall into the two categories of closed and open forms. 24% are storage vessels of types already well attested at Umm el-Qaab, the so-called Late Period bottles, storage vessels of globular to elongated shape with various types of necks and modeled rims.⁶⁸ The large majority of the open vessels are various types of *qaabs*;⁶⁹ in addition, a few other dishes and incense burners are present.

Several references to ritual activities were observed in O-NNO.⁷⁰ First of all, a large number of ‘killing holes’ (intentional perforations of vessels executed post-firing) was recognised.⁷¹ Secondly, several traces of irregular red paint, possibly also with an apotropaic character, were documented on various types of vessels, both on *qaabs* as well as Late Period bottles (cf. above). The ritual breaking or ‘killing’ is a widespread funerary practice encountered

in various cultures throughout the world, neither limited to ancient times nor to a single explanation.⁷² Yet, the most common explanation is that objects were neutralised in this way, since they were associated with hostile powers, thereby preventing any future profane reuse.⁷³

For understanding the process of depositing votive vessels during the Twenty-Fifth Dynasty, traces of contents inside the Late Period bottles of O-NNO are especially relevant, in particular because it was previously assumed that the vessels have been deposited empty. Complete examples and fragments of *qaabs* and remains of their filling (botanical remains and sand) were discovered within the storage vessels. Thus, for the first time, the deposition of the large bottles can be directly associated with the ritual deposition of *qaabs*.⁷⁴ Because the contents

68 Budka 2010b, 57, fig. 16.

69 Budka 2014a, 58, fig. 5; 2010a, 44, fig. 23.

70 Budka 2014a, 57.

71 Budka 2019, fig. 3.

72 See e.g. Meyer-Orlac 1982, 54-56 and 317-318; Grinsell 1975, 60-67.

73 El-Shohoumi 2004, 316.

74 See, however, already the pit A 4 with a Late Period bottle and several *qaabs* excavated at the Heqareshu hill; Pumpenmeier 1998, 134.



Figure 1.5. Detail of O-NNO pottery deposit. © DAI Osiriskultprojekt.

of the *qaabs* are identical with that documented in the in situ deposits at the tomb of Khasekhemwy, a similar ritual framework embedded into the calendar of the Osiris cult seems likely. The association of the *qaabs* with the Late Period bottles is therefore of great importance for understanding the process of depositing the vessels. In some cases, the votive dishes were obviously positioned in already laid out storage vessels. In other cases, small groups of *qaabs* were put upside-down on the ground next to the Late Period bottles.⁷⁵ Here, an unusual feature of one of these *qaab* assemblages within O-NNO was recognised: from 16 dishes, one is not of Late Period date, but rather an Early Dynastic lid.⁷⁶ Consequently, ancient and modern vessels were used side by side within a pottery votive deposit laid out in the Eighth Century BCE. The Early Dynastic lid is probably a piece from the original burial of Djer and it was obviously ritually appropriated for the votive offerings to Osiris more than 2,000 years later.⁷⁷ There is another aspect speaking for a long tradition of the deposits at Umm el-Qaab: The common position of *qaabs* within the deposit of O-NNO, upside down with the mouth to the ground, finds already parallels in the Naqada period deposit around tomb U-j in cemetery U.⁷⁸

References to the original tomb contents from the early periods can be regarded as important aspects for understanding the complex composition of the Late Period

votive pottery at Umm el-Qaab. The so-called Late Period bottles give the impression to recall ovoid jars from the Pre- and Early Dynastic tombs.⁷⁹ There was obviously the clear wish to connect to and to physically continue the original inventory for Osiris Djer.⁸⁰

All in all, the deposit O-NNO (fig. 1.5) and the other remains of large streets composed of votive vessels can be understood as way markings in connection with the mysteries of Osiris and especially the Khoiak festival. Depositing the votive vessels seems to have been primarily undertaken during apotropaic rituals related to the god Osiris and his regeneration, as evidenced by the use of organic material within the vessels. The row of votive vessels at Umm el-Qaab also emphasises the importance of the connection between the Osireion and the ‘southern hill’ (fig. 1.1). Similar to finds made by Naville, during recent work more clay statues of Osiris were discovered.⁸¹ These statues were buried during the Khoiak rites at Umm el-Qaab. This all implies that the pottery vessels were themselves votives, but also markers of important pathways during the Osirian festivals.

75 Budka 2014a, 62-63, figs 15-17.

76 Budka 2014a, 63, fig. 17; see also Budka 2019.

77 Budka 2019; 2014a; cf. also Müller 2017.

78 See above, Budka 2019; Dreyer 1998, 15-16, figs 8-9.

79 Budka 2010a, 60.

80 Budka 2014a, 56-65. This might also be related to the Kushite preferences for ‘archaism’ in relief and sculpture, see Budka 2010a, 60 with references.

81 Pamer/Effland 2015.

The Re-Awakening of Osiris

Ute and Andreas Effland have convincingly argued that concepts of the Egyptian Netherworld were projected on to the landscape of Abydos, which in turn became a sacred place.⁸² The earliest burials at Umm el-Qaab facing the large wadi and thus the presumed entrance to the Netherworld made the plateau the perfect place to perform rituals aiming to achieve regeneration and resurrection (see fig. 1.1). Umm el-Qaab was the centre of this cult activity, which lasted several millennia, resulted in millions of pots and focused on continuity as well as change.⁸³

References to royal ancestors' cult and royal succession are specific to Abydos and can be illustrated, for example, with the complex of Ahmose and the pyramid for Tetisheri,⁸⁴ but also the famous kings list from the Seti I temple.⁸⁵ Reflections of ancestors' cult may go back as early as to the First Dynasty,⁸⁶ although this has been questioned by some scholars.⁸⁷ All in all, I agree with Ute Effland that ancestors' cult might be viewed as the most important 'cult-impact'⁸⁸ for the site which is also very evident for the Kushite rulers and their references to royal ancestors.⁸⁹

The most impressive relic of the Middle Kingdom re-modification of the tomb of Djer is the 'Osirian bed', representing a mortuary bed with the recumbent Osiris.⁹⁰ This bed, and especially texts and reliefs from the temple of Seti I at Abydos, illustrates the main theme of the Osirian cult: the regeneration of the god, his awakening from a passive mode and the impregnating of Isis are all essential for the cosmic cycle as well as the royal and the funerary cult.⁹¹ Osiris is thought to be buried at the site of Umm el-Qaab and received rejuvenating ritual acts which focus on reactivating his body functions.

During the recent work by the German Archaeological Institute, a new shrine for the 'Osirian bed' was re-discovered and identified based on thousands of small pieces.⁹² Although the texts and decoration on this shrine is heavily disturbed, it is very likely that the bed and the shrine carried the royal names of the same ruler from the Thirteenth Dynasty (c. 1759-1630 BCE). Remarkable is a scene showing the milk offering of the king. The ritual context of this scene is most probably the rejuvenation

of the god,⁹³ thus corresponding to the general theme expressed by the shrine and bed. Furthermore, Andreas Effland has suggested that one particular relevant scene within the regeneration theme of Osiris was also once present on the shrine:⁹⁴ the awakening of the god by Horus which is best known from the scene in the Osireion which is presumed to be its earliest representation.⁹⁵ In the context of the heydays of votive pottery at Umm el-Qaab, it is striking that this motif is otherwise well known from royal tombs at Thebes and Tanis, from Theban elite tombs⁹⁶ and royal tombs in Kurru (Ku. 16, Tanwetamani and Ku. 5, Qalhata)⁹⁷ as well as on private *krsw* coffins of the Twenty-Fifth Dynasty.⁹⁸ The awakening of Osiris was thus strongly revived during the Twenty-Fifth Dynasty and the scene made its appearance in ancient Sudan. It needs to be stressed that, according to textual sources and here especially documentary papyri, we have to expect a continuous, probably dynamic transition of the motif of the re-awakening, strongly connected with the embalming process and corresponding techniques.⁹⁹ The pictorial evidence from Tanis suggests that we are probably missing a considerable amount of sources from the Libyan period (c. 1076-746 BCE). Thus, the reviving of the motif in the Twenty-Fifth Dynasty is at least partly reflecting our state of knowledge and the existing respectively lacking sources.¹⁰⁰ However, the close connections between Abydos, Thebes and Kush on the religious level make it very likely that we also do see an actual increase.¹⁰¹

The familiarity and involvement of the Kushite rulers, their officials, priests, architects and artists with the site of Abydos and its monuments left also other clear traces in Kush. The much-debated form of the underground rooms of the pyramid of Taharqa at Nuri can only be explained with a high degree of knowledge of the actual building of the Osireion at Abydos.¹⁰² It is noteworthy that the pyramid of Taharqa is not the only monument of the Twenty-Fifth Dynasty recalling the Osirian sanctuary at the back side of the Seti I complex. Reflections of the Abydene monument in certain sets of rooms within the subterranean structures

82 Effland 2014, 27; Effland/Effland 2013, 11.

83 Budka 2019.

84 O'Connor 2009, 105-110; Harvey 1998.

85 Budka 2019; Effland 2014, 27; Kemp 1989, 21-22.

86 Morenz 2004, 108, n. 458; Dreyer 1996, 72-73, fig. 26.

87 Heagy 2014; Wengrow 2006, 131; Dreyer 1996, 73.

88 Effland 2013, 324-326.

89 Cf. Revez 2010 for an adaptation of the Osirian myth for the Kushite royal succession under Taharqa.

90 Effland/Effland 2017; Effland/Budka/Effland 2010, 33-35; Trello 1997; Leahy 1977.

91 Cf. Budka 2018; Roberson 2013; O'Connor 2009, 31-41.

92 See most recently Effland/Effland 2017 with references.

93 Cf. Cassor-Pfeiffer 2017.

94 Effland/Effland 2017, 21, n. 9.

95 Roberson 2013, 1-2 and *passim*.

96 TT 132, Ramose, see Greco 2014 and TT 410, Mutirdis, see Roberson 2013, pl. 5; Assmann 1977a, 91, fig. 41.

97 See Dunham 1950, 38-41, pl. 9: Qalhata; 60-63, pl. 19: Tanwetamani.

98 E.g. CG 41001bis; personal communication Cynthia M. Sheikholeslami, September 2012; see also Greco 2014.

99 I am grateful to Koen Donker van Heel for pointing out this aspect and for stressing the importance of documentary texts as references to the techniques of embalming. For the complex history and text composition of the 'Embalming Ritual' see also Töpfer 2017; 2015.

100 Cf. Jurman 2009.

101 See Budka 2017; 2012, 32.

102 Cf. Kendall 2008.

of the Theban temple-tombs in the Asasif were already noted by Eigner,¹⁰³ for example in the tomb of Montuemhat, who had very close relations with the Kushite court.¹⁰⁴ Montuemhat left two important rock inscriptions at Abydos, illustrating his visit to the site.¹⁰⁵ Also remarkable is the ‘Osirian monumental tomb’ section of Theban Tomb (TT) 33¹⁰⁶, for which recently the term ‘Abydos pilgrimage place’ was suggested¹⁰⁷ and which illustrates the strong connections between Thebes and Abydos.

These references to Abydos and the Osireion also correspond to the general focus on Osiris during the First Millennium BCE, which markedly increased during the Twenty-Fifth Dynasty.¹⁰⁸ In my perspective, it is also no coincidence that the only known burial places of Kushites in Egypt – Thebes and Abydos – are also sites with a long tradition of pyramid building, especially regarding mud brick pyramids. It is striking that during the Late Period, pyramids which became the tomb memorials for the Kushite kings were used within burial monuments at both sites.¹⁰⁹ The Kushite pyramids built in Sudan were influenced by New Kingdom mud brick pyramids in Egypt and Nubia, not by Old or Middle Kingdom pyramids in stone.¹¹⁰ Thebes and Abydos therefore offer common funerary architectural elements which seem to have been highly relevant during the Twenty-Fifth Dynasty.

Summary: The Ritual Framework for Osirian Votive Vessels

The long-lasting tradition of pottery votive offerings at Umm el-Qaab, reaching from the Predynastic period until late Roman times with a florescence in the Kushite period, relates to kingship, royal ancestors and the god Osiris. The new finds in O-NNO illustrate that, despite the very high number of ceramic votive vessels, the millions of pots at Umm el-Qaab were deposited in an organised way during the Late Period. The ritual traces and the careful layout of the deposits strongly speak against an open ‘pilgrim activity’ and a random deposition of the vessels by pilgrims. This was already indicated by the in situ deposits of *qaabs* meticulously studied by Ute Effland,¹¹¹ and is now strengthened by the organised deposits of the Late Period bottles in conjunction with *qaabs*. Since the pottery deposit O-NNO allows a clear association between *qaabs* and Late Period bottles, it is now unlikely that any

kind of vessel could have been deposited at Umm el-Qaab in the First Millennium BCE by an ordinary visitor or an individual pilgrim. We have to assume that priests and other personnel of the temples were responsible, along similar lines to what was always proposed for the earlier periods (especially the Middle and the New Kingdom). It is clear that a lot of manpower must have been involved in arranging the votive vessels on special occasions (festive dates) embedded in the sacred landscape of Abydos. Of course, one cannot exclude that during the extraordinary circumstances which are always associated with festivals, turning the regular order up-side-down, restricted access was modified to open access,¹¹² resulting in specific festival votive offering behaviours.¹¹³

The deposit O-NNO forms an integral part of the sacred landscape shaped during the Twenty-Fifth Dynasty in Abydos. Following major landmarks from earlier periods, especially the complex of Seti I with the Osireion, the Kushites also activated the old processional way through the large wadi (fig. 1.1). Burials of Kushites discovered at Cemetery D towards the north of this wadi¹¹⁴ and monuments such as the stelae recently identified by Leahy as Kushite dedications,¹¹⁵ further support the prominence of ceremonies associated with Osiris and his burial place at Umm el-Qaab during the Twenty-Fifth Dynasty.¹¹⁶ The importance of Abydos, and here especially the concept of a sanctuary of Osiris as represented by the Osireion, led to the much-debated form of the underground rooms of the pyramid of the Kushite king Taharqa in Nuri.¹¹⁷

All in all, there was probably no single, regulated deposition of votive pots at Umm el-Qaab. However, the deposits are the results of ritual acts which are clearly associated with Osiris and the Khoiak festival, but cannot be specified in all respects by means of the archaeological evidence alone.¹¹⁸ A complex ritual framework, comprising several rituals, seems altogether very likely.¹¹⁹

In the context of Umm el-Qaab, I would like to suggest, however, that it is not a coincidence that during the Kushite heyday of depositing vessels at the tomb of Osiris also the theme of re-awakening Osiris was reinforced, at least according to our present knowledge (see above). In addition to the scenes in Theban and Kushite tombs

103 Eigner 1984, 163-183 and see also Budka 2010c, 71 and 78.

104 See Budka 2010c, 65 with further references in n. 246; Leclant 1961.

105 Effland/Effland 2013, 81.

106 Traunecker 2014, 217-221.

107 Traunecker 2018.

108 Budka 2010c, 476-477.

109 Budka 2012, 32.

110 Lohwasser 2004.

111 Effland 2010, and see above.

112 See e.g. Rummel 2013; Assmann 1991.

113 I am thankful to Ute Rummel for this important note about the specific character of festivals which might have influenced votive practices.

114 Budka 2012 with further references.

115 Leahy 2014; see also Leahy 1994.

116 Effland/Effland 2013, 78-79.

117 Kendall 2008; see also Budka 2014b.

118 Cf. above; for general discussions of these interpretative challenges see e.g. Görmer 2006, 289-298; Eggert 2001, 78.

119 I am very grateful to Ramadan Hussein for stressing the aspect of a complex ritual framework during the Leiden conference.

mentioned above, one can also add the re-composition of the Ritual of the Hours.¹²⁰ Awakening hymns were introduced into the Twenty-Fifth Dynasty version of the Rituals of the Hours of the Night with the first attestation in the Kushite tomb of Karakhmun at Thebes (TT 223).¹²¹ Twenty-Fifth Dynasty *qaab* votive cups with organic material might also very well refer to the resurrection of the god; the red paint on some votive vessels might have served as protection against enemies like the rows of vessels marking a pathway to the safe burial of the god.

It is still unclear when the ritual scene of the awakening of Osiris was developed; Roberson argued for the New Kingdom and most likely the Nineteenth Dynasty (c. 1292-1191 BCE).¹²² There are some indications of an earlier conception;¹²³ the evidence from Umm el-Qaab could also be counted as supporting an earlier tradition, based on the shrine for the Osirian bed but also on the votive pottery.¹²⁴ With all the innovative aspects already known for the Kushite religion, building upon older tradition, the revival of the awakening motif might have been a modification of the available New Kingdom sources like the Osireion, but potentially also included older sources which are still lost, possibly from Abydos or elsewhere. The focus on this moment of awakening within the late sources like at Edfu and Dendera does not come as a surprise because it is the essential aspect of the Osiris myth, enabling the succession of kingship and the complete idea of resurrection. Thus, it seems likely that more traces of this very ritual are still to be found. Although it must remain open whether the votive vessels from the Twenty-Fifth Dynasty at Umm el-Qaab are really connected with the ritual of awakening Osiris within the general sphere of Osirian rituals, I hope to have illustrated that contextualising material remains of ritual activities has much potential and leads to further questions. The complexity of the rituals and whether similar acts were performed for various rituals, thus if the same material evidence can actually reflect diverse activities which appear blended in the archaeological remains, needs to be investigated in the future. The main theme of the funerary and temple rituals in Late Period Egypt – at Abydos and beyond as reflected in pottery deposits, material remains as well as in architectural designs and text compositions – was, however, clearly Osiris and the resurrection of the god.

120 For the rituals of the “Hourly Watches”, *Stundenwachen*, attested both in the funerary and in the temple sphere; see Pries 2011.

121 Griffin 2017.

122 Roberson 2013.

123 Werning 2014; see already Quack 1999. For this reference, I am grateful to Andreas Effland.

124 Effland/Effland 2017, 21.

Appropriation of Territory through Migrant Ritual Practices in Egypt's Eastern Delta

Miriam Müller

Introduction

Negotiations of identities and changing practices, especially when it comes to religious expressions, play a considerable role in the Egyptian borderlands where a mixing of different cultural realms can be witnessed first-hand.¹ With its focus on religious change and its impact on environments shaping a dynamic cultural geography the *Walking Dead Project*, situated in the Saqqara necropolis of the capital, Memphis, benefits from a look from the core to the periphery.

Dynamic zones of interaction show a lived experience beyond the empire's reach, very different from official representations and the interests of the crown. This becomes primarily visible at the micro level in settlements and households.² A challenge in examining the evidence from those frontier zones is often the lack of written accounts – absent from settlements in general with the notable exception of the New Kingdom village Deir el-Medina³ – that would give insight into the different ways of life experienced in a multicultural environment on the periphery of the empire.⁴ In the absence of texts, a detailed examination of the archaeological record and material culture is essential.⁵ A cross-cultural perspective and comparison of observed practices in different cultural spheres is crucial to potentially understanding origins and new expressions of practices in these borderlands. For a study of the dynamic landscape at the fringes of empire, certain concepts lend themselves for a better understanding of cultural interaction. Those are among others foodways, costume and religion, and here foremost funerary culture, and in particular household cults.⁶

1 Lightfoot/Martinez 1995.

2 Stein 2008, 35.

3 McDowell 1999; Bruyère 1939.

4 A contemporary comparison of cultural encounter on the empire's periphery with an abundance of textual records is represented by the Assyrian trading colony in Kültepe/Kanesh (Larsen 2015; Larsen/Lassen 2014; Stein 2008).

5 M. Müller 2015a.

6 Smith 2003.

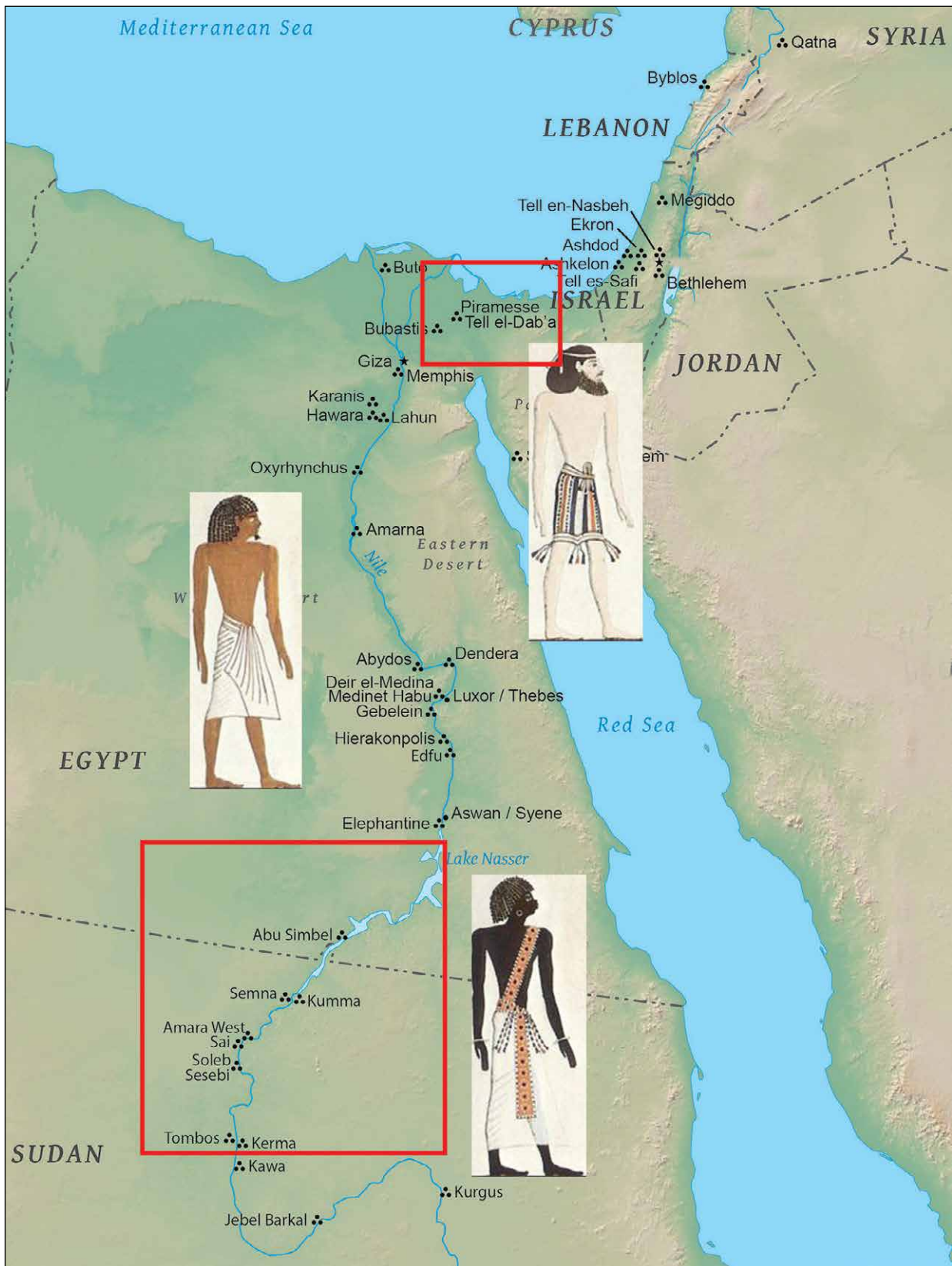


Figure 21. Egypt's borderlands in the north and south, after Leslie Schramer and Heinrich von Minutoli.

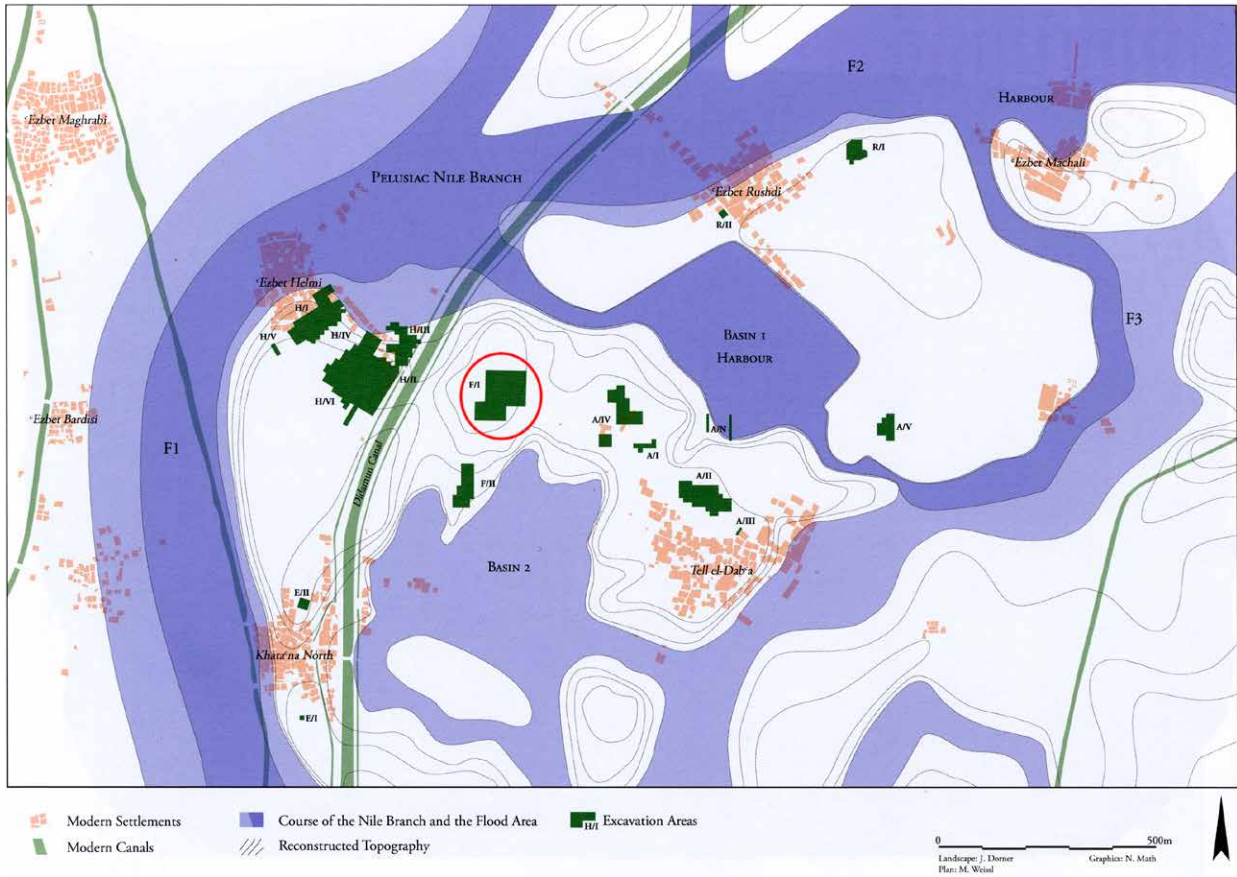


Figure 2.2. Neighbourhood F/I at Tell el-Dab'a/Avaris, cf. Bietak 2010a, fig. 6.

Case study: Tell el-Dab'a/Avaris - Neighbourhood F/I

To exemplify the above-mentioned challenges and possibilities of coming to a differentiated understanding of cultural interaction, I single out a case study from the north-eastern borderland of Egypt, the site of Tell el-Dab'a in the eastern Delta (fig. 2.1). The same processes that will be seen in the archaeological record of this site can, however, be easily compared to the situation in other frontier zones of the empire such as in the south, in ancient Nubia.⁷ Tell el-Dab'a, identified with ancient Avaris, the capital of the Hyksos dynasty, displays the most extensive evidence of occupation in the eastern Delta, spanning from the Middle to the New Kingdom in the Second Millennium BCE (1980-1076 BCE).⁸ The site already shows a considerable history leading up to the takeover of power by the Hyksos (1640-1530 BCE) as well as a significant afterlife, eventually being incorporated into the new capital of the Ramesside kings, Piramesse, founded a short distance to the north of

Tell el-Dab'a at the site of Qantir.⁹ The area thus exhibits diverse processes of interaction, from a domineering Egyptian presence in the course of the Middle Kingdom, to the infiltration of Western Asiatic elements from the Levant in the late Middle Kingdom, to the first supremacy of foreign power in the Second Intermediate Period, and the economic and military significance of a trade hub and capital city in the New Kingdom. The period leading up to the enigmatic Hyksos rule is within that development the most interesting phase exhibiting strategies of place-making and territorial appropriation by migrant groups over subsequent generations and the intermingling of two cultural spheres. In light of these processes, the formation and success of Hyksos rule can be much better understood. Starting out from evidence for the colonization policy of the kings of the First Intermediate Period and beginning Middle Kingdom in form of a typical state planned foundation,¹⁰ the town quickly grew into one of the largest cities in the later Second Millennium BCE with a sizeable extent already in the late Middle Kingdom. Due to its

7 E.g. Budka/Auenmüller 2018.
 8 Late Period remains (722-332 BCE) are furthermore also attested (Lehmann 2012).

9 Bietak 2010b.
 10 Czerny 1999.

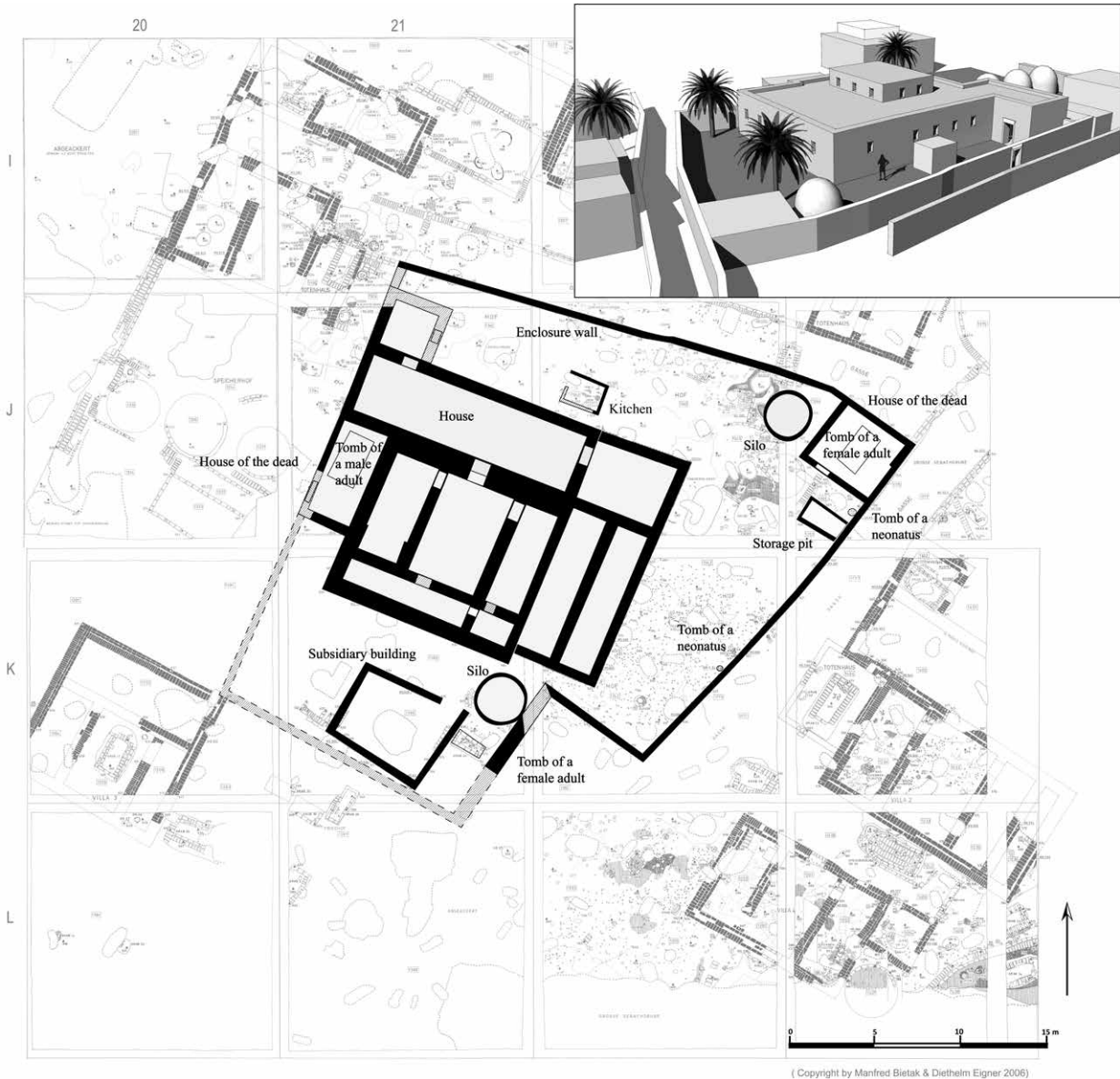


Figure 2.3. Family estate in neighbourhood F/I, after Dieter Eigner & Manfred Bietak and Katinka Strzeletz & Pablo Garcia Plazas.

strategic location on one of the three main Nile tributaries, the Pelusiac Nile branch (fig. 2.2), Tell el-Dab^a/Avaris developed into a major trade hub, housing a multicultural population from the entire Eastern Mediterranean, with a large part coming from the Northern Levantine and Mesopotamian region.¹¹ The different neighbourhoods of the city reflect life in a prospering city, social mobility, and economic relations, based on widespread connections with trade in the Eastern Mediterranean.¹² How life was

experienced by the inhabitants can be exemplified by a closer look at one of the neighbourhoods in the city centre (fig. 2.2).

Area F/I showcases a residential area over four subsequent generations, within a much longer development characterized by administrative, palatial, temple and funerary architecture. Four building phases represent a period of about 120 years from the late Middle Kingdom to the beginning of the Hyksos period in the Second Intermediate Period (Middle Bronze Age II-III). Over the course of the development of the quarter the most significant factor is a strong focus on the family estate

11 Bietak 2010b.

12 Exemplified through the metalworking objects found in the city: Philip 2006.

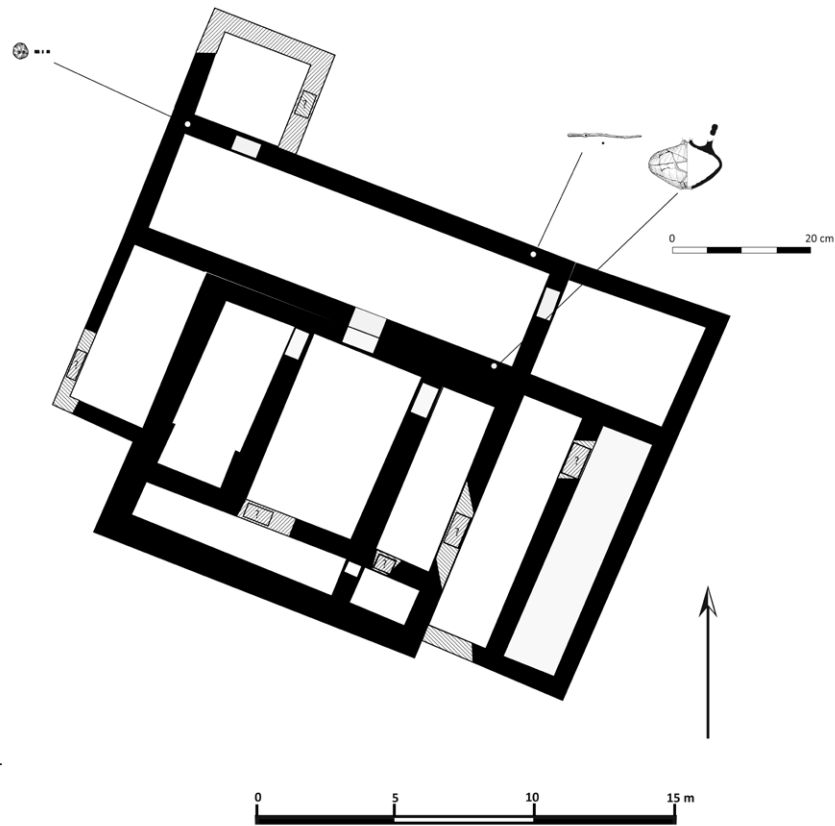


Figure 2.4. Foundation deposits in one of the houses.
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that can be observed within the different plots allotted to a number of families.

This results in the demarcation of individual properties which are constantly being remodelled and enlarged, exhibiting a sizeable house, with installations for storage, dependents' housing, food processing facilities and burial places accommodated on the different lots (fig. 2.3).¹³ Within this dynamic development, changing expressions in cultic and funerary practices can be observed that hint at the negotiation and creation of new identities. Local inhabitants witnessed new customs from abroad and migrant settlers adjusted to different circumstances in their new home. We need to picture a society that consisted of mixed families, local Egyptians marrying Asiatic migrant settlers and generations of offspring having a very different outlook on their cultural embeddedness.¹⁴ While the different estates resemble in their outline a typical Egyptian settlement structure, as it is known from Egyptian cities from the Delta to the Cataracts,¹⁵ certain expressions in the material culture differ from well-known Egyptian concepts of everyday life.

Foundation rituals

A practice that is readily visible in all houses of this area is a concern with the foundation of the different households, the procurement of a particular territory and the protection of the family's well-being. Foundation deposits and offering pits delineate the laying out of the house walls of the initial construction, and are continuously added under newly built parts that enlarge the different properties (fig. 2.4).¹⁶ They are placed under the four corners of the building, but can also be found in front of or under important doorways of the houses.

Typical deposits consist of animal bones, in particular long bones of cattle,¹⁷ and model pottery, typically small vessels such as cups and vases. Some of the deposits also contain flasks with undulating profiles,¹⁸ (loom) weights and copper/bronze pins (fig. 2.4). While foundation deposits in domestic architecture were for a long time not considered, not particularly observed or simply still hidden under the ancient remains,¹⁹ the deposition of (loom) weights and bronze needles is in fact comparable with other settlements in the Delta and the Near East.

13 M. Müller 2015b; 2015c.

14 Smith 2003.

15 Cf. Amarna: e.g. Spence 2010 and Amara West: e.g. Spencer 2009.

16 M. Müller 2018.

17 Boessneck/Von den Driesch 1992, 21-22.

18 'Salad mixers': Aston 2004, 183; Bourriau 1981, 56.

19 Marchand/Soukiassian 2010, 124; Weinstein 1973, 433-436.

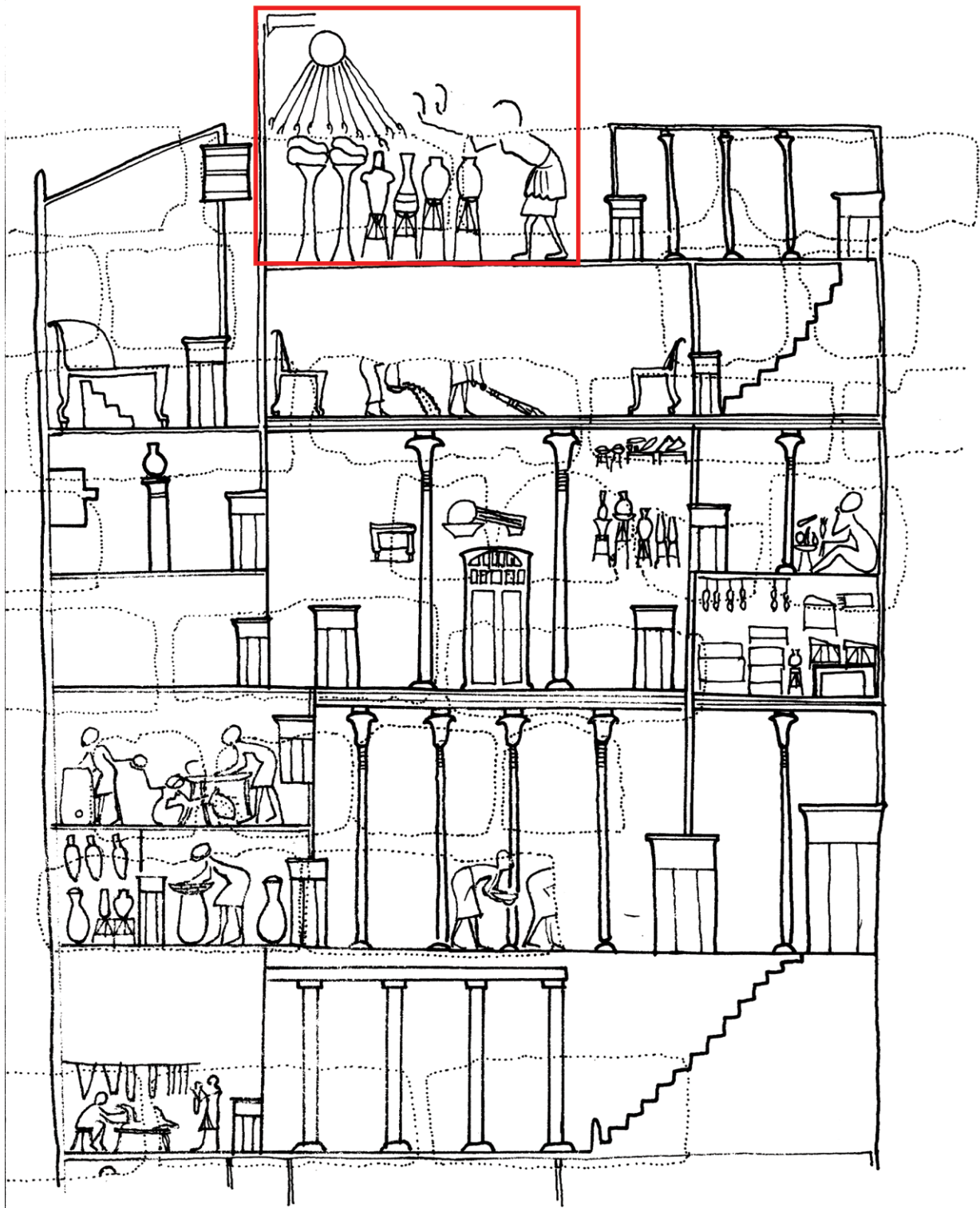


Figure 2.5. Depiction of an offering scene in an Amarna period house, cf. Traunecker 1988, 74, fig. 1.

Excavations at the Late Period site of Tell el-Ghaba in the eastern Delta²⁰ and the Uruk-period site of Habuba Kabira in Syria²¹ have yielded evidence for the deposition of loom weights and bronze pins in the foundations and walls of domestic architecture. This practice is furthermore confirmed in texts from the Near East, detailing the sacrifice of animals over the foundations of a house, the deposition of food and liquids and the offering of precious materials such as metal pegs that were driven into the four corners of a building.²² Identified as offerings for the foundation of a house, a small number of pits were also associated with the entrance and important doorways of a house in neighbourhood F/I.²³ While offering pits are not as ubiquitous as foundation deposits, they nevertheless exhibit a similar pattern of being focused on important entrance ways of the houses. They contain a collection of model vessels and ceramics probably once used for the presentation, but perhaps also consumption of offerings and their ritual “destruction”, evidenced in the breaking and burning of the pottery and food remains.²⁴ The evidence for offering pits in domestic architecture from other sites is rare,²⁵ but a few examples from another Second Intermediate Period Delta site Tell el-Maskhuta,²⁶ Middle Kingdom Kahun,²⁷ and potentially also New Kingdom Deir el-Medina²⁸ and Amarna²⁹ can be listed.

Household Culfs

Ritual practices continue to be visible throughout the quarter’s history, but do not always show a recognizable setting and recipient, as it was apparent in the custom of placing foundation deposits into the walls of the houses. As the architecture of Tell el-Dab’a is only preserved in its foundations and a number of brick courses, due to the less favourable preservation in the Delta and the constant humidity penetrating bricks and destroying all organic material, built-in installations such as altars and niches³⁰ or wall paintings³¹ that vividly demonstrate ritual settings in houses from other settlements, have not been preserved

or never existed in the houses of neighbourhood F/I.³² What remains, however, are multiple examples of vessel types and small finds that have been variously attributed to religious practices in different settings such as temples or small chapels,³³ or are known to appear in ritual contexts in depictions (fig. 2.5).³⁴

The categories in question are foremost model, respectively miniature, vessels,³⁵ as already encountered as component of the foundation deposits³⁶ and offering pits, high stands,³⁷ and footed bowls,³⁸ as well as a number of very particular ceramics such as kernoi³⁹ and ‘flower vases’ (figs 2.6-2.7).⁴⁰

Model vessels made from Nile and marl clay as well as imported Syro-Palestinian clays were found in various types in the houses. Small pots and vases, but also bread moulds, ring stands, dipper jars and containers for storage such as zirs, are represented (fig. 2.7). High stands made from Nile clay supported small bowls (fig. 2.6). They often exhibit a red wash, and in one instance decoration with a wavy band pattern. A white coating, as displayed by the comparative examples from the Workmen’s Village in Amarna, however, is not attested.⁴¹ Footed bowls from Nile and marl clay were found in great number in different houses (fig. 2.6.). They often contained remains of carbonised wood and were certainly used as burners.⁴² Kernoi made from Nile clay represent small receptacles such as small pots and vases that could be either affixed to the rim of a bowl or a hollow ring (fig. 2.6).⁴³ In case of the latter, all containers show a hole at the bottom and are thus connected in a circle via the ring. Flower vases made from Nile clay exhibit a globular body with round or flat base, and a number of protuberances or bulges towards the rim (fig. 2.6).

All the different vessel types presented exhibit a particular form. Very small and very tall vessels deviate

20 Crivelli et al. 2012.

21 Klein 1992, 256.

22 Ambos 2010, 230-231; 2004, 71; Haas 1994, 250, 254. For comparison from the royal-sacred sphere see Van Buren 1931.

23 V. Müller 2008a, 276, 317-318; 2008b, 397-420.

24 V. Müller 2008a, 267-287.

25 V. Müller 2008a, 353, 367.

26 Paice et al. 1996.

27 Petrie 1890, 24, 43.

28 Weiss 2015c, 46-49; Bruyère 1939, 282.

29 Kemp/Stevens 2010a, 507; 2010b, 51-52. In this case it seems, however, to be quite clear that those allotment stones are boundary markers that were mixed with the rubble of the foundations.

30 Weiss 2015c; Stevens 2006.

31 E.g. Kemp 2009.

32 See, however, the evidence for a potential altar from area A/II and niches with offering depots in the mortuary chapels in the same area (Bietak 1991).

33 E.g. Stevens 2006, 191-192; Hulin 1984.

34 E.g. Seiler 1995; Traunecker 1988.

35 Kopetzky 2010, 68-69, 110-112, 125-126; Aston 2004, 179-184. While the term ‘model vessels’ clearly pertains to a use in rituals symbolising their larger counterparts but not necessary the same functionality, the expression ‘miniature vessels’ stands for the reduced version of the larger vessel types holding the same functionality (Allen 2006, 20-22).

36 Cf. Marchand 2004.

37 Kopetzky 2010, 139; Aston 2004, 178-179.

38 Kopetzky 2010, 128, 155-156; Aston 2004, 75-78, 92-93; Bader 2001, 60-67.

39 Kopetzky 2010, 120; Rzeuska 2007; Aston 2004, 243; Bourriau 1981, 60-61.

40 Aston 2004, 170; Bourriau 1981, 67.

41 E.g. Stevens 2006, 191-192; Hulin 1984.

42 Aston 2004, 75; Bietak 1991, 322.

43 Cf. Masson 2013, 145-146.

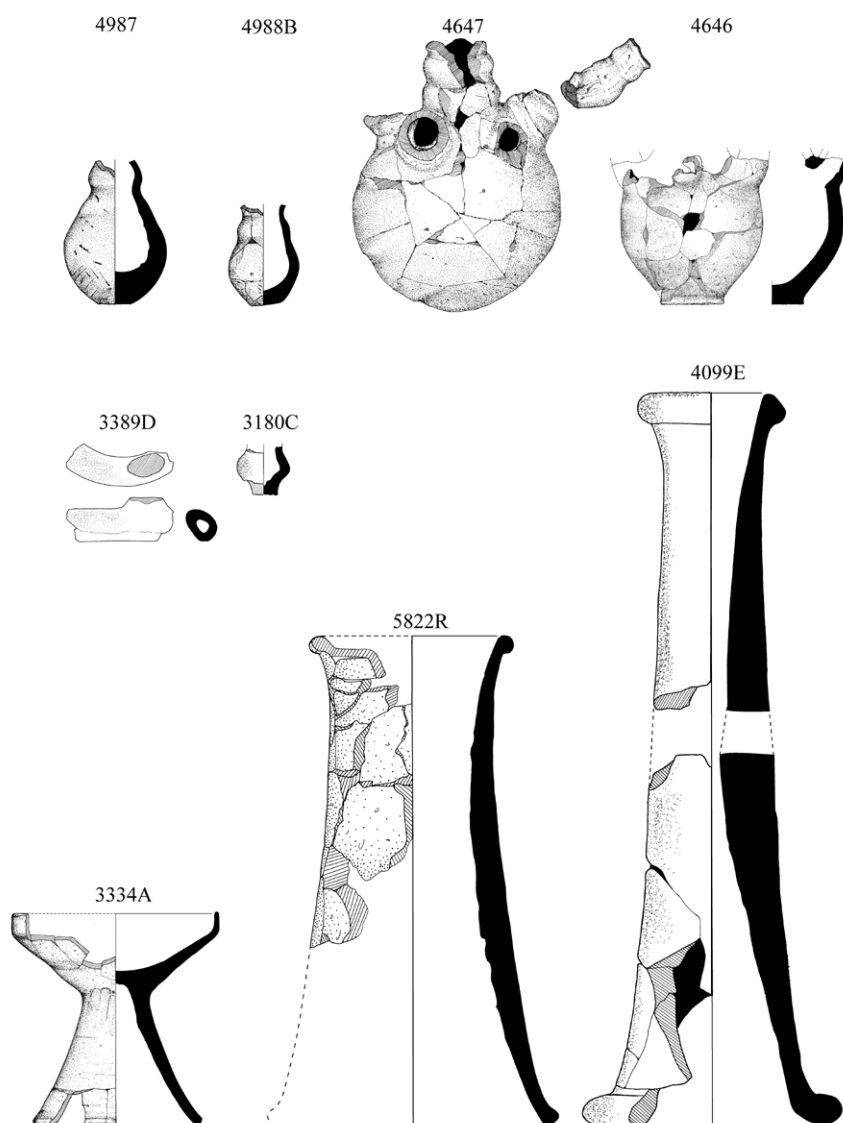


Figure 2.6. Pottery types found in the houses of neighbourhood F/I. © Austrian Archaeological Institute.

from the norm as do the containers with applied features. Whereas the kernoi seem to be connected to libations, the high stands with a bowl on top and the footed bowls were used in the process of burning and firing certain substances. These functions make them ideal candidates for use in ritual ceremonies. A discussion of whether those types could also have been used on a regular basis in the daily tasks of the household and thus not only exhibit ritual connotations, but rather could be multifunctional,⁴⁴ needs to be closely linked to the archaeological context. In a dense settlement such as Tell el-Dab^a and in particular area F/I⁴⁵ objects that were once deposited in or at tombs

could have easily ended up in a household setting due to the close connection with the burials within the settlement, a custom of the Near Eastern settlers that will be the focus of the last part of this paper. Thus, the accidental encounter with older tombs under the floors of houses, as well as the tearing down of walls with foundation deposits within them, could have yielded the vessel types in question, which then ended up in a household setting. Formation processes of the archaeological record and in particular the displacement of objects have to be carefully considered in any study of this kind.⁴⁶ The large number of different types in a seemingly ‘secular’ context, however,

44 Cf. Masson 2013.

45 Bietak 1996.

46 Schiffer 1987.

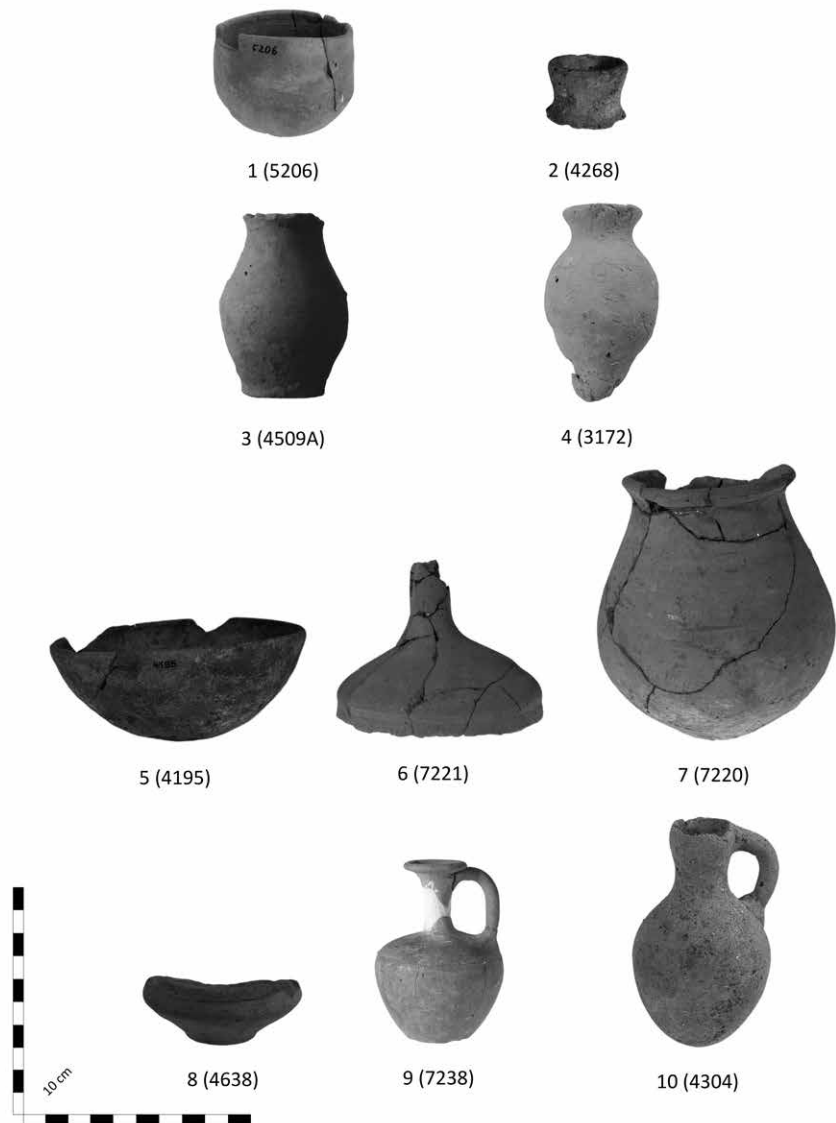


Figure 2.7. Miniature vessels found in the houses of neighbourhood F/I. © Austrian Archaeological Institute.

cannot be a coincidence, and a number of potential cult foci for which these vessels served as receptacles for offerings and libations have to be presumed. Within the above-mentioned limitations, the rare occurrence of an offering plate in a household context of this neighbourhood supports this hypothesis.⁴⁷ Furthermore, small finds such as a large number of body parts from human and animal figurines can be discussed for their attribution to the cultic sphere. Their significance is, however, debated and certainly not unequivocal.⁴⁸ An extraordinary assemblage

of musical instruments has also been assigned to the religious-funerary sphere.⁴⁹

In combination with particular vessel types, potential remains of offerings can also be investigated. As with the preference for long bones of cattle for foundation deposits, other unusual depositions such as the skeletons of two black kites in an offering pit and the adjacent tomb,⁵⁰ and of five shrews next to a storage vessel buried in the floor of one of the houses, also deserve attention, since an assemblage comparable to the latter was also found in front

47 M. Müller forthcoming.

48 Quirke 2005.

49 Bietak 1985.

50 V. Müller 2008a, 303, 310; 2008b, 255; Boessneck/Von den Driesch 1992, 15.

of the temple V in area A/II.⁵¹ In the absence of a particular setting, such as in the case of the offering pit linked to a funerary cult, an interpretation within the framework of ritual practices nevertheless remains difficult.

Ancestor Veneration

However, another cult focus can be reconstructed, apart from the foundation ceremonies exemplified by the deposits. All estates in this neighbourhood show the practice of burying the deceased within the settlement. A strong focus on the veneration of ancestors is expressed in area F/I, with family vaults (fig. 2.8), small 'houses of the dead' constructed in mud brick and with a chamber tomb and secondary burials inside attached to the houses.⁵² Members of the different households were buried in these vaults, but also under house floors, in courtyard areas and in small community cemeteries outside the different properties⁵³ that were nevertheless clearly focused on specific estates in this neighbourhood. Whether individuals buried in those community cemeteries could also have lived in a different part of Avaris cannot be investigated, but needs to be considered.⁵⁴ Intra-mural burials are, with the exception of infant burials,⁵⁵ not a common characteristic of Egyptian settlements and the occasional burials within neighbourhoods encountered at sites such as Memphis,⁵⁶ Elephantine⁵⁷ and Amarna⁵⁸ have to be understood as interments in decayed houses or on the periphery of settlements that later show an expansion into former burial grounds. In the case of Tell el-Dab'a this custom is well-known, however, from the Near Eastern sphere and especially the Northern Levantine and Mesopotamian region, the presumed area of origin of those migrant groups.⁵⁹ Similar burial settings are furthermore known from the Levant, such as the closest parallel, from Middle Bronze Age Jericho, where houses of the dead were constructed in mud brick with multiple burials inside.⁶⁰ A connection with adjacent architecture is, however, difficult to reconstruct. Later examples from Late Bronze Age Ugarit, with vaulted stone tombs under the floors of the houses, show a different placement and

material used, but display the same concept of family vaults closely attached to the domestic architecture.⁶¹

This tradition implies a very close connection between the world of the living and the dead - a characteristic also visible in ancient Egyptian beliefs about the afterlife.⁶² The deceased household members and here in particular the household master, as can be identified from the buried remains,⁶³ received a 'house' in the immediate vicinity to the homes of the living. The interaction goes so far that in at least two cases the vaults were attached to the bedroom of the house, a room function that is readily visible in houses of this size, with the installation of a bed niche showing the characteristic alcove that would feature a wind hood (*malqaf*) as roofing (figs 2.4-2.5).⁶⁴ Without a connecting doorway between the houses of the dead and the living, the vaults, however, could only be accessed from the courtyard areas (fig. 2.8). Although this implies a clear separation, both 'resting places' still shared a common wall, and the deceased family members would literally sleep next to the household master.

Evidence from within the houses of the dead but also within the bedrooms point to ritual activities that were conducted there. In accordance with the aforementioned categories of vessel types and deposits, religious practices can be assumed for cult activity in the bedroom, but especially cult activity in the vaults. Offering pits and deposits of vessels clearly focus on the main burial in one of the houses of the dead (fig. 2.3, house of the dead in the north-eastern corner of the estate).⁶⁵ A bench attached to the southern wall in another family vault furthermore suggests the depositions of offerings or space for cult participants (fig. 2.3, house of the dead attached to the house of the estate).⁶⁶ Banquets in honour of the dead during festivals and on particular occasions such as anniversaries⁶⁷ and interaction with the deceased during dreams⁶⁸ are well-known concepts in ancient Egypt. The so-called Letters to the Dead⁶⁹ and paraphernalia such as the ancestor busts⁷⁰ and *šh ikr n R* ('excellent spirit of Re') stelae⁷¹ attest to a widespread private ancestor cult.⁷² Similar beliefs with an active involvement of the dead in daily life, occurrences of the dead in dreams and their representation in effigies in the houses, are

51 Boessneck/Von den Driesch 1992, 20, 34-35.

52 Bietak 1996, 49-54; Van den Brink 1982, 62-65.

53 Kopetzky 2014; 1993.

54 Bader 2011.

55 Tristant 2012.

56 Tavares/Kamel 2012, 6.

57 Von Pilgrim 1996, 81-83.

58 Stevens 2017, 11-14.

59 Cf. Tell Arbid: Wygnańska 2008; Tell Barri: Valentini 2016; forthcoming; Umm el-Marra: Schwartz 2013.

60 Nigro 2009; Kenyon 1957.

61 Salles 1995.

62 M. Müller 2014.

63 Kopetzky 1993.

64 Endruweit 1994, 89-90.

65 V. Müller 2008a, 303, 309-310; 2008b, 253-265.

66 M. Müller 2015d.

67 Harrington 2013, 113-123; Schott 1953.

68 Szpakowska 2003, 23-29, 123-126, 159-180; Ritner 1990.

69 Donnat Beauquier 2014.

70 Keith 2011.

71 Demarée 1983.

72 Fitzenreiter 1994.

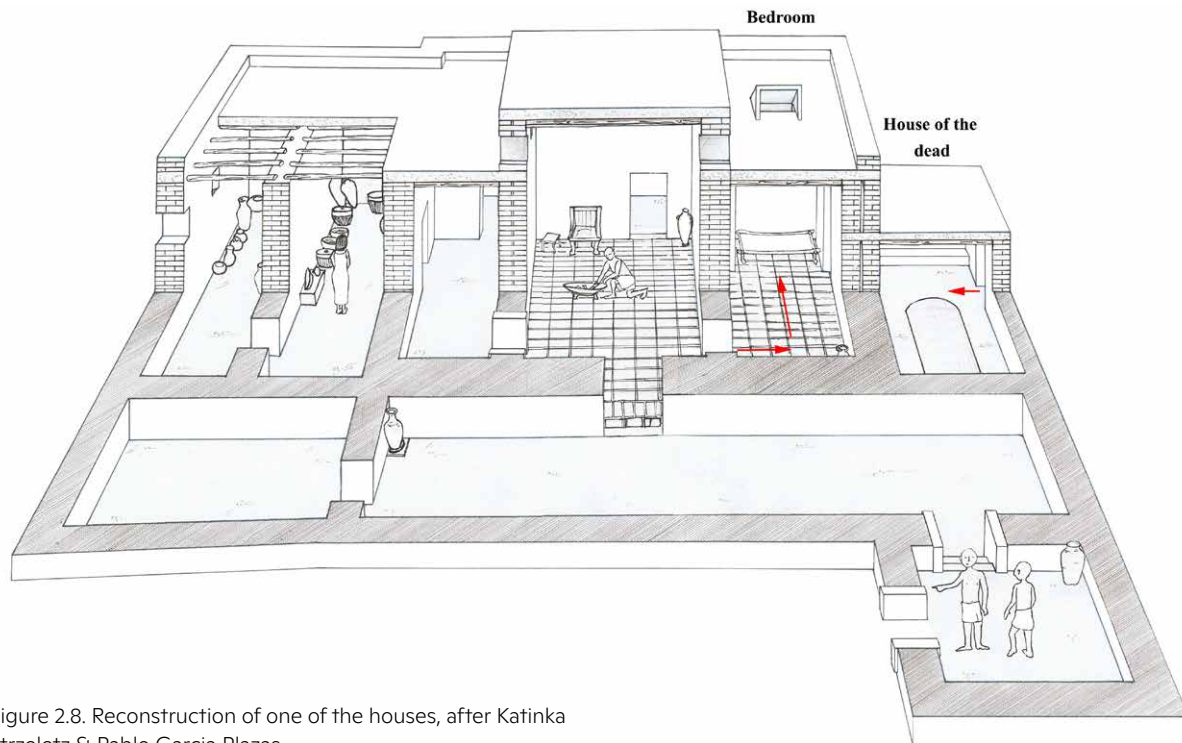


Figure 2.8. Reconstruction of one of the houses, after Katinka Strzeletz & Pablo Garcia Plazas.

also well-known from the Near East.⁷³ They furthermore extend into the community sphere with the veneration of important personalities for a particular group linked by a common activity or shared origin and received expression in neighbourhood chapels, as is common in the Egyptian and Near Eastern sphere.⁷⁴ Examples of such community chapels also existed at Tell el-Dab^a⁷⁵ and could also be identified in neighbourhood F/I.⁷⁶

Conclusion

Following the development in this quarter it becomes clear that many of the religious expressions at the site are essentially new versions of customs and belief traditionally rooted in the Egyptian and Near Eastern spheres. They furthermore combine elements and modify existing ideas into concepts that fit both cultural realms.⁷⁷ As with the manifestation of family vaults, it is apparent that this is a new expression at the site subsequent to the interments under house floors and in courtyards which

were preferred in the previous generation.⁷⁸ This new burial form must have been introduced in response to the presence of different cultural groups in the area, but also in response to new circumstances that may have been of mundane geological, but also of course ideological, nature.⁷⁹ While the geography of the Delta did not allow for elaborate constructions of a private nature in stone due to the absence of nearby resources, the composition of the ground dotted by many pits and tombs from previous generations on the small settlement-islands of the Delta landscape did not leave space for complex subterranean vaults under the houses.

Socio-political strategies of place-making and appropriation of territory⁸⁰ that particularly pertain to the migration and settlement of new groups as can be observed with the Levantine settlers in the eastern Nile Delta are, on the other hand, much more important. While the principal idea was surely the acceptance by the local population and successfully ‘making a living’, the long-term goal might have been to take advantage of the favourable circumstances in this prosperous place, and to achieve considerable wealth and social status, as

73 Van Exel 2014; Van der Toorn 1996; Jonker 1995; Tsukimoto 1983; Carter 1970.

74 Struble/Herrmann 2009; Franke 1994; Bomann 1991; Wildung 1977a.

75 Bietak 1994a; 1994b; 1991, 78-80, 108-116.

76 M. Müller 2015d.

77 Cf. the exact same processes and cultural expressions at Kültepe/Kanesh (Larsen/Lassen 2014).

78 M. Müller forthcoming. Cf. the model of hybridisation developed by P. van Dommelen (1997) for colonial encounters in the Mediterranean (cf. Bader 2013; Stein 2008).

79 Sparks 2004.

80 McAnany 2010; Hallote 1995.

was described at the outset. Building family histories and establishing social memory by creating a common ancestry is in that sense a very successful approach, which becomes visible in the takeover of power by the Hyksos kings one or two generations later. This strategy also proved to be effective in other areas of the Near East in earlier and later periods, as demonstrated by the Amorite presence in the Northern Levant and Mesopotamia, the presumed homeland of the Tell el-Dab^a settlers.⁸¹ The case study presented in this paper exemplifies how a close examination of all available lines of evidence, in particular in the absence of written documentation, can reveal very specific expressions of life in borderlands. It has furthermore shown how groups – in this case a migrant group interacting with the local population – appropriate territory in response to local circumstances, but also personal belief. By negotiating and changing identity and religious expressions, a new cultural geography is created.

81 Ristvet 2015, 149-151; Burke 2014.

Prosopographia Memphitica

Analysing Prosopographical Data and Personal Networks from the Memphite Necropolis

Anne Herzberg

“As social persons we are present, not just in our singular bodies, but in everything in our surroundings which bears witness to our existence, our attributes and our agency.”¹

Introduction

The archaeological remnants of the New Kingdom (1539-1077 BCE)² royal residential city of Memphis are located approximately 18 km south of Cairo on today's west bank of the Nile. Although the scientific discussion about the site and its monuments forms an independent research focus, the archaeological legacy of the Memphite necropolis of the Second Millennium remained uninvestigated for a very long time. It was not until 1975 that the systematic documentation of elite tombs dating to the New Kingdom was initiated by the Egypt Exploration Society in cooperation with the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden.³ The fieldwork has continued at the site uninterrupted. However, since 2015 it has been a cooperation between the Museo Egizio Torino, the University of Leiden and the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden.⁴ In addition, several other fieldwork missions were able to unearth other New Kingdom burial sites. The area known as the Memphite Necropolis covers about 40 km² and reaches from Zawiyet el-Aryan in the north to Dahshur in the south.

The elite tombs, that have been discovered at the individual sites, eventually revealed numerous data of their owners. Relevant texts and inscriptions are to be found not only on the walls of the tombs, but also on different types of objects that were part of the tomb's original equipment or decoration. As a result, those tomb structures create a monumentalised social identity for the deceased

1 Gell 1998, 103.

2 After Hornung et al. 2006, 492.

3 Raven 2000, 133-144; Martin 1991.

4 Raven et al. 2014-2015, 3-17. For more information see the digging diaries which are available online: <<http://www.saqqara.nl/category/digging-diaries/>> (last accessed 19.12.2018).



Figure 3.1. Map of the Memphite region with notification of New Kingdom burial sites. Map: Anne Herzberg.

“that will continue in the memory of men and will thus become the medium not only of self-thematisation but also of transcending and eternalizing the self.”⁵

Although a number of tombs and tomb owners have already been identified and current excavations add substantial quantities of new epigraphic material regularly, scientific investigations of persons, who are recorded on particular objects and monuments have not been achieved on large scale. Moreover, the relevant works done so far, like the fundamental prosopographic studies of Beatrix Gessler-Löhr⁶ or Christine Raedler⁷ were limited to specific groups of persons, like the mayors of Memphis or the high priests of Ptah. As a result, the investigation of the complex system of relational patterns was inevitably concentrated on only a small number of social actors selected by their particular importance. In addition, the relatively small amount of data deriving from the individual studies could

not serve as a basis for conclusive statistical analyses or further digital processing.

A first list of persons attested for the Memphite region, that is not concentrated on titles or professions of individual persons, has been compiled by Wolfgang Helck in his 1961 published *Materialien zur Wirtschaftsgeschichte*.⁸ In addition to that, Jaromir Málek’s second edition of the Topographical Bibliography⁹ and Jacobus van Dijk’s Preliminary List of New Kingdom Names and Titles provided numerous prosopographic data,¹⁰ while the recent works done by Nico Staring¹¹ and Stéphane Pasquali¹² add even more substantial material concerning the people who lived and worked at Memphis during the New Kingdom.

5 Assmann 2005b, 377.

6 Gessler-Löhr 1997, 31-71; 1995, 133-147; 1989, 27-34.

7 Raedler 2011, 135-154; Maystre 1992.

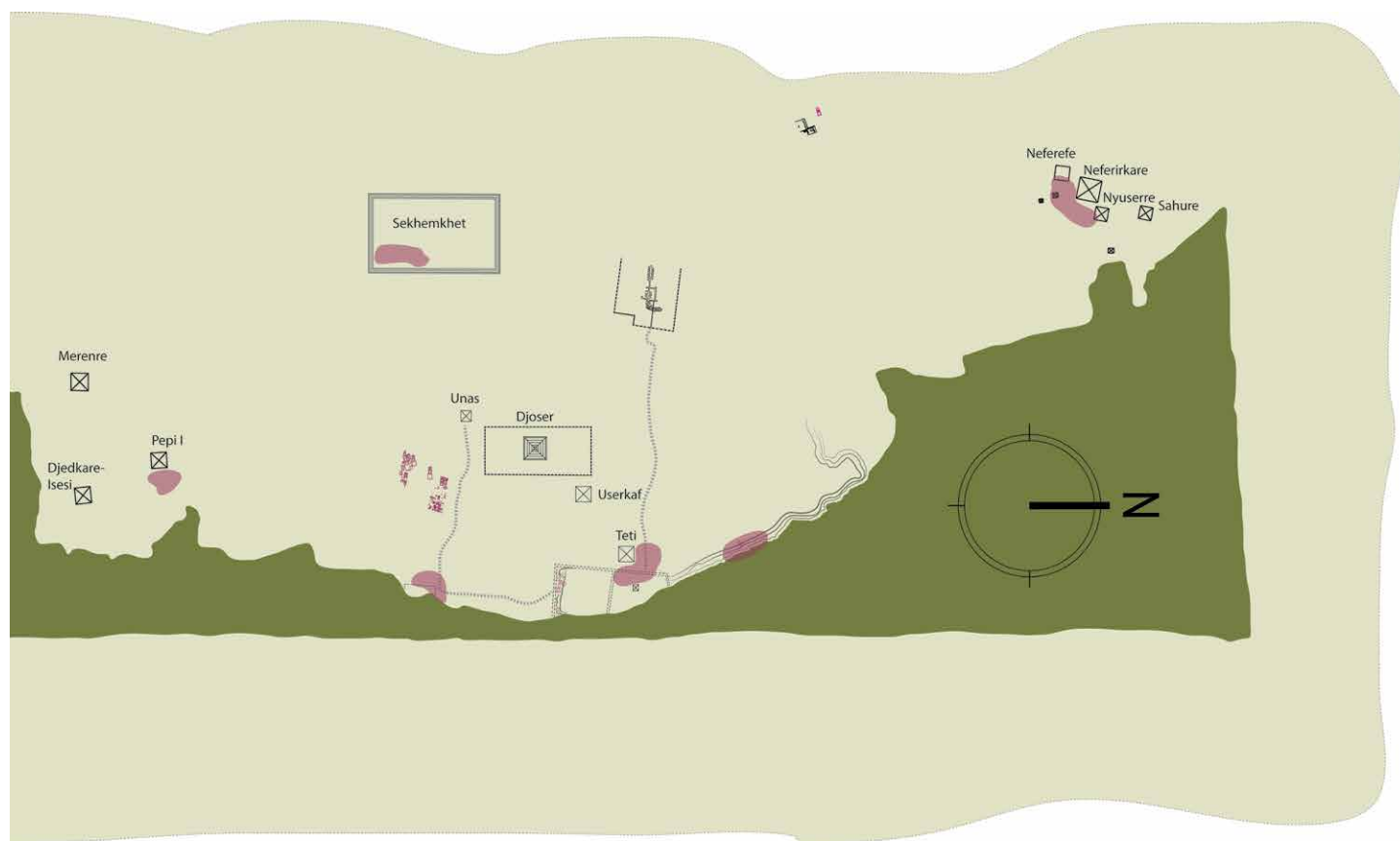
8 Helck 1961, 913-926.

9 Porter/Moss 1979. See also: Málek 1989, 4-7.

10 Van Dijk 1989, 8-12. See also: Martin 1995, 5-33.

11 Staring 2017, 593-611; 2015d.

12 Pasquali 2011.



Thus, it is the aim of the Prosopographia Memphitica Project¹³ to attain a regional prosopography for the Memphite region of the Second Millennium BCE, which sheds new light not only on the identity of individuals, but on the reconstruction of personal connections within a historical network of people.

Data Collection

As a first step towards this aim the compilation of epigraphical material has begun at the outset of the project by incorporating all data entries of a so far unpublished card box collection that has been compiled by Dietrich Raue since the 1990s; it comprised 1121 individuals.

In the course of this first phase the data have been supplemented with information from preliminary reports and final publications of archaeological missions as well as additional relevant studies and collection catalogues. Altogether 2366 persons and 1708 objects from over 100

museums and collections all over the world as well as 968 Egyptian titles have been recorded in a prosopographical database. The high standardisation of the digital data form and structure enables an easy access as well as the application of external analysis software and visualisation tools.¹⁴ To ensure the scientific transparency of the research argumentation, but also continuity of data editing respectively recording of new data, data storage and long-term provision of research results in a structured file format, the database is a citable web publication.¹⁵

Data Analysis

In order to establish a complete and sufficiently regional prosopography for the Memphite region it is necessary to start with the basics that historians use to recreate the past:

13 The research project is a dissertation project by the author which is supervised by Univ.-Prof. Dr. Jochem Kahl (Freie Universität) and PD Dr. Dietrich Raue (Universität Leipzig): <<https://www.topoi.org/project/c-1-x-10/>> (last accessed 11.12.2018). See also: Herzberg 2019; 2016.

14 Such as the network analysis software Gephi. By the export plugin sigma.js and the VizTool TOMATILLO the creation of web-based visualisation has been possible which enables the user to explore the network either as a whole as well as those of individual nodes and ties (see: Broux/Pietowski 2019) or Jupyter notebook, which is an OpenSource interactive computational environment (IPython) for creating analyses and visualisations from existing data libraries.

15 A first Beta version has been launched on Zenodo (DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.2547538).

attestations in sources. Working with prosopographical data attested on pharaonic monuments and artefacts of the New Kingdom poses a major difficulty – the ‘problem of the missing data’. It states that only the data that have been documented from the surviving sources can be analysed, but how close this is to the original record cannot be estimated with certainty. In addition, the number of compiled personal data only represents a very small percentage of the estimated total population of the Memphite region.¹⁶ Or to be accurate, only those people who were capable of affording a stone funerary monument which is decorated and equipped with texts and images that bear witness to their existence, could be included into the present prosopographic study.¹⁷

But what actually are prosopographic data? The etymological origin of ‘prosopon’ comes from the Greek language and can be translated as ‘person’. ‘Prosopography’ or ‘Collective Biography’ as it has been described by the British historian Lawrence Stone:

“[...] has developed into one of the most valuable and most familiar techniques of the research historian. Prosopography is the investigation of the common background characteristics of a group of actors in history by means of a collective study of their lives.”¹⁸

16 Although estimates of ancient populations are scarcely more than informed guesses, because the individual values are not evident, it might be quite informative for the present study. When a number of 2366 people recorded for a time span of about 400 years (1550-1070 BCE) representing about 1% (Baines/Yoffee 2000, 13-17; Baines/Eyre 1983, 65-96) of the population as explained above, then an estimated population might have amounted about 11,830 persons during one generation. Considering that more than one generation of individuals is living at the same time including grandparents, parents and children, for example, it results that about 29,575 persons (counting 11,830 with 2.5 generations) might have lived at Memphis at the same time. In fact, this assumption is consistent with the ancient Egyptian sources. The majority of genealogical information given by the tomb owners during the time of the New Kingdom includes members of the nuclear family: father, mother, brother, sister, son, daughter, husband, wife and thus, does not cover more than three generations. On the discussion of estimates of Memphite population, see Herzberg 2019.

17 This group of people often identified as the elite has been described by Christine Raedler as: “*Mitglieder der Hofgesellschaft Proliferanten einer ‘Hofkultur’, die sich vor allem durch ein spezialisiertes Wissen wie Schrifttum und Bildung, aber auch durch Körperkultur und ‘Kleiderordnung’ sowie in Form der steinernen Monumentalität ihrer Denkmäler und deren Bildsprache von der Alltagskultur untergeordneter sozialer Schichten abgrenzt*”, in: Raedler 2006, 84. After John Baines and Norman Yoffee (2000, 16), this group of elite officials “consists of a very small percentage of people, certainly less than one percent”.

18 Stone 1971, 46. On prosopography and collective biography as research method see: Keats-Rohan 2007, 139-181; Carney 1973, 156-179.

Prosopographical data in general can be divided into two categories. The first one provides information of individual identities. Thus, prosopographic data forms the basic requirement for the manifestation of personal and social identity within a community of persons. According to the idea of “*le dur désir de durer*” (Paul Éluard) as Jan Assmann refers to,¹⁹ the preservation of the name forms a central topic of Egyptian funerary belief. The tomb, as the house of eternity, marks the place where the deceased’s name is handed down for future generations.²⁰ An example from the reign of Ramesses III states:

jr. i n=k h w. t m t3 qsr mn rn=k jm=s
Build yourself a house within the necropolis, so that your name shall endure within.²¹

Another explicit statement is given in the tomb of Khnumhotep II at Beni Hassan:

s:rw d=f rn=f n nh h s:mn h=f sw n d. t m js=f n. j hr. t n r
He caused his name to endure in eternity and he endowed him forever in his tomb of the necropolis²²

It becomes clear that by recording the name within the tomb’s decoration and equipment, the long-term preservation, the memory of a person amongst the living and the ability to interact can be ensured. The importance of the preservation of a person’s name, as basic prosopographic information, is clearly expressed in the standard phrase of private dedication texts:

jn s3=f s:nh rn=f
It is his son who causes his name to live

During life, persons feared damage to their social sphere at least as much as harm to their physical existence. Thus, in prayers and offering formulas of the New Kingdom, we often find specific requests, like:

(dj-sn) rn=j mnw m r3 n r3 dd. jw m r3 n. j nh. w
They shall cause that my name may be established from mouth to mouth and that it will be called in the mouth of the living.²³

19 Assmann 1987, 208. See also: Assmann 1988, 91.

20 This phenomenon has been well described as “*Sepulkrale Selbstthematisierung*” and is discussed by Assmann 1987, 208-232.

21 The given text reference is to be found in the second chamber of tomb no. 35 in Deir el-Medina dating to the reign of Ramesses III: Lichtheim 1945, 201.

22 Sethe 1935, 26. I owe this reference to Burkhard Backes.

23 Assmann 2005a, 392-397; Barta 1968, 127. In contrast a person could be destroyed or erased by the destruction of his name. Thus, we see in Egypt examples of *damnatio memoriae*, and monuments, including statues, were frequently usurped in later times: Assmann 1984, 692, 695.

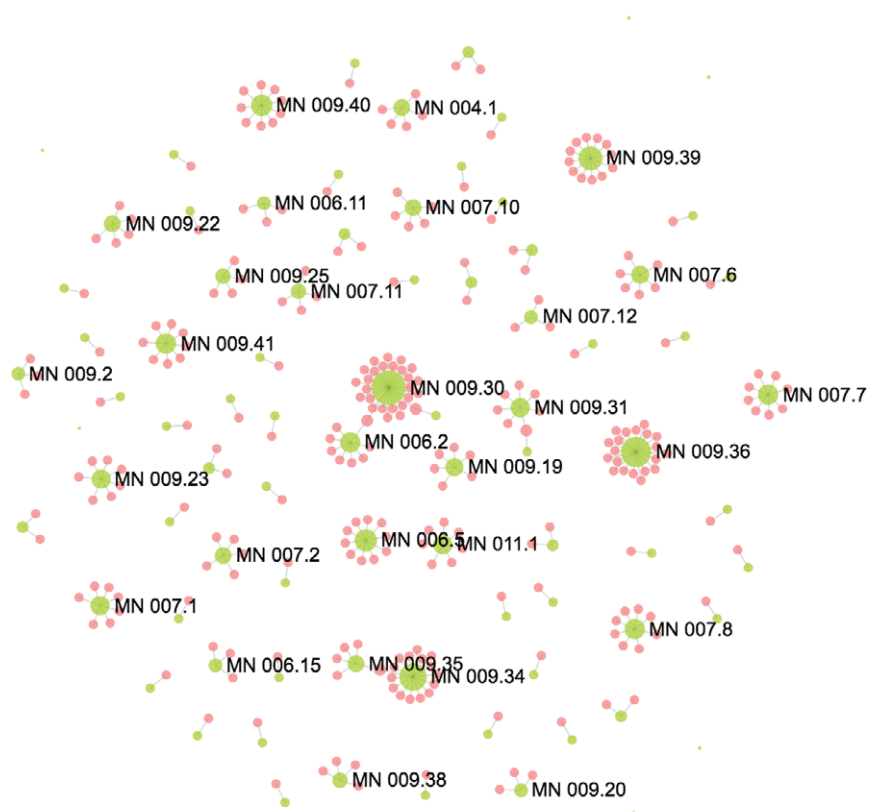


Figure 3.2. 2-mode network showing Memphite tombs and the persons attested in tomb inscriptions. Graph created with Gephi. To explore the network, see: <<https://www.trismegistos.org/network/38/>> (last accessed 01.01.2019).

The preservation of personal identity through the maintenance and memory of social, personal and cultural identity has been established as a practice, which could be executed in two different ways to ensure a person's immortality in the afterlife:

“...einmal dadurch, daß das Grab künftigen Besuchern offensteht, die die Inschriften lesen und in ihnen den Namen des Grabherrn finden sollen (monumentale Form), und zum anderen dadurch, daß das Grab als Bühne eines Totenkults fungiert, in dessen Rahmen der Name des Toten rituell ausgesprochen wird (rituelle Form).”²⁴

As a second type, prosopographical data are relational data by which individuals can be connected to each other. By evaluating and comparing all prosopographic data, the personal interrelations within a social community or network of persons can be reconstructed by means of network analyses. Thus, prosopographical data are not just a criterion to identify a person, but it is a network parameter which forms the common basis for connecting people within the same network. According to Pierre Bourdieu, those reciprocal personal interrelations generate social capital.²⁵ As a result, the social position and

the social status of an individuals is strengthened within a network of persons. A prosopographical network is a set of individual actors of a historical group of persons and their relations. A network analysis investigates the relational patterns of network members through the application of graph theory.²⁶ Network studies have been established and regularly applied within Social Sciences.²⁷ Although the application of Social Network Analysis appeared in historical studies since the 1990s,²⁸ historical network and especially prosopographic network studies from ancient times have been more and more established since the 2010s.²⁹ Only very recently projects started to include network studies into their investigation of material dating to pharaonic times, such as Émilie Martinet's investigation of provincial administration during the Old Kingdom,³⁰

24 Assmann 2005a, 392-397.

25 Bourdieu 1983, 191. See also Prell 2012, 62.

26 “Social network analysis is neither a theory nor a methodology. Rather, it is a perspective or a paradigm”: Marin/Wellmann 2011, 22, see also 11-12.

27 Prell 2012, 12. For the development of Social Network Analysis see Carrington/Scott 2011, 1-4; Freeman 2011, 26-39.

28 See among others Düring et al. 2015; Düring/Stark 2011; Graham 2006a; 2006b, 359-362; Alexander/Danowski 1990, 313-335.

29 Ruffini/Graham 2007, 325-336. Lena Tambs applies formal network analysis to identify network characteristics of the Ptolemaic military camp of Pathyris (165-88 BCE): Tambs 2019; 2015. Yanne Broux's research focuses on local power networks in the Roman Empire: Broux 2017a, 64-68; 2017b, 137-146; 2016, 303-312.

30 Martinet 2019; 2013.

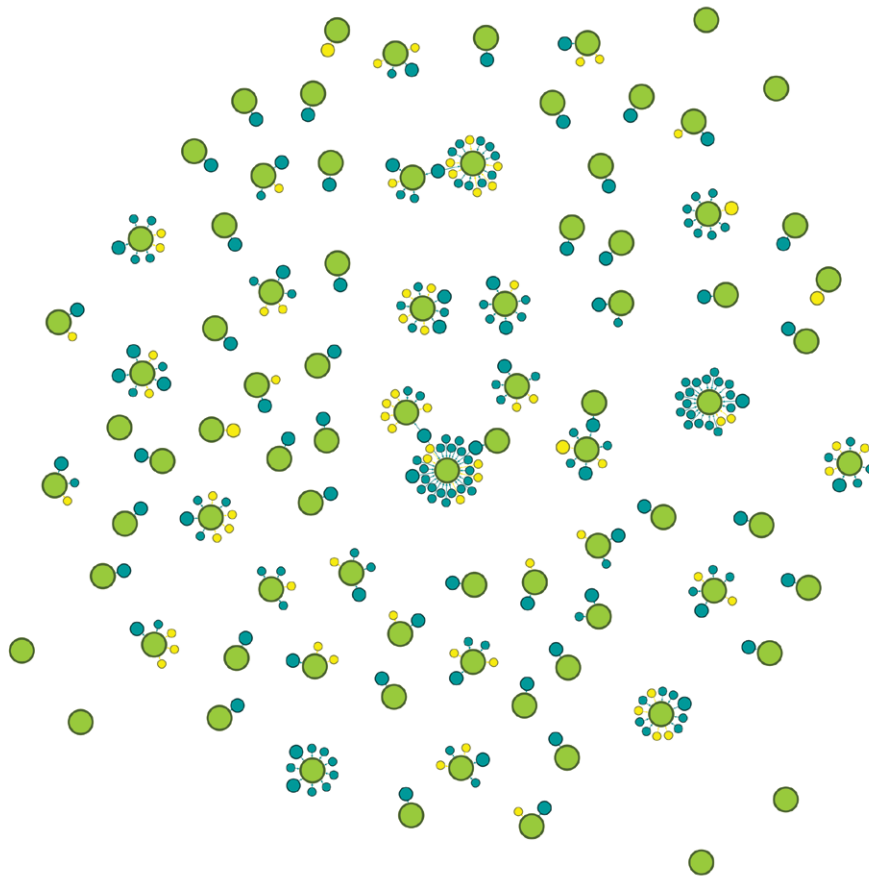


Figure 3.3. 2-mode network showing the identified Memphite tombs (green nodes) and the persons attested in tombs grouped by gender. Yellow nodes represent females and blue nodes represent male persons. Graph created with Gephi software and Sigma.js plugin.

Veronika Dulíková's and Radek Mařík's work on Old Kingdom elite society using datasets from Abusir,³¹ the examination of the Amarna letter corpus by Eric and Diane Cline³² as well as the study of relational structures of Upper Egyptian elites in the New Kingdom, which has been done as a PhD research project by Vincent Chollier.³³

Within a network graph each person is represented by a node and each connection is shown as an edge. The shape of the network is irrelevant and nodes can be placed anywhere, but to create a network, it is necessary that those nodes are connected by edges.³⁴ In addition, there are many network measures to describe the features of a network, either as a whole, as well as those of individual nodes and edges.³⁵ To gain a better understanding of how this works with ancient Memphite material a network of

tombs and persons attested in tombs has been created. This 2-mode network comprises 84 nodes of the node type 'tombs' and 270 nodes of the node type 'persons'.³⁶

Node Type: Persons

From all tombs included into the network, there are only six tombs that cannot be related to a person, which means that their owners remain anonymous. With

31 Mařík 2019; Dulíková/Mařík 2019; 2017, 63-83.

32 Cline/Cline 2015, 17-44.

33 Chollier 2019; 2017.

34 But as humans have difficulty seeing the message behind a number of nodes embedded in hundreds and thousands of edges, programs like Gephi can adapt the visual representation of the network according to specific layout algorithms. To bring out the structure in the following networks more clearly.

35 Prell 2012, 101-103.

36 For the network graphs discussed in this paper: <<https://www.trismegistos.org/network/Memphite-tombs>>. (last accessed 01.01.2019). A direct link to the 2-mode Memphite Tomb Network, you will find here: <<https://www.trismegistos.org/network/38/>> (last accessed 03.02.2019). All interactive network visualisations have been made with the Gephi export plugin sigma.js and the VizTool Tomatillo, which has been developed by Yanne Broux and Frédéric Pietowski: Broux/Pietowski 2019. The search bar may be used to search within the network. You can directly switch to the network. To explore the nodes and its ties you can zoom in and out in order to scan the network. When passing over a person's node, you see its name. Click on it, and you find its ego network, an overview of its connections as well as further details. A legend has been added to indicate what the nodes and edges stand for. The filters allow you to look at specific network features: you can isolate individual node groups by specific parameters, such as gender, profession or tomb type, location, or date.

Job groups	totals	%
Administration	65	51.5
Military	18	14.2
Royal court society	16	12.7
Cultic personnel	13	10.3
Service and supply	10	7.9
Science and scholarship	1	0.8
Not defined	3	2.4
126		

Table 3.1. General distribution of titles of tomb owners.

these exceptions all of the tomb nodes are connected to at least one person. To be able to distinguish between tomb owners and other individuals attested in the same tomb, the owner is represented by a bigger node. From all tombs included to the network 57% are connected to only one person, while 36 tombs show edges to more than one individual. This observation can most probably be interpreted by the issue of the missing data. Indeed, the tomb nodes with single outgoing edges represent those tombs coming from sites which were not fully excavated or whose excavation reports have not yet been published. Thus, it can be assumed that originally more than just one person was attested in those tombs, but the relevant information is not available.³⁷ The majority (95%) of tombs belong to male persons while six tomb owners could be identified as females. Including all persons attested in Memphite tombs increases not only the number of network members to 270, but the proportional relation between male and female persons from 13:1 to 2.6:1. This means that while females do not occur as owners of tombs that often, they represent a substantial part of the group of individuals attested in the tombs' decoration.

The analysis of titles revealed that altogether 73 tomb owners held occupational titles that are denoting a profession. The number of titles attested for tomb owners is 126. That means that for six tomb owners no titles are attested. 14% of persons belonging to that group bear only one or two titles, but altogether 43% are attested with more than ten titles. The majority of the tomb-owners' titles are related to offices that are affiliated to the administration,³⁸ where most of them were employed in

economic administration, which includes offices affiliated to the treasury, granary, cattle, or domains.

Another group of tomb owners is made up of members of the royal court society. Altogether ten tomb owners held the office of royal butler, three officials of the Ipetnesut, a royal nurse and two members of the royal family, namely Tjia, sister of Ramesses II,³⁹ and Isisnofret,⁴⁰ who might have been the mother of prince Khaemwase, have been buried in Memphite tombs. In addition, sixteen tomb owners bear sacerdotal titles, such as Khay, who was a *wab* priest of the front row of Ptah,⁴¹ or the overseer of treasury Parekhennua, who was in the position of festival conductor of Ptah, lord of truth.⁴² The number of sacerdotal titles may seem high, but as has already been stated by Nico Staring:

“They do not, however, necessarily represent individuals who were in their primary occupation priests. Officials who were otherwise employed exclusively in the civil administration, for example could also bear a title such as Festival Conductor (*sšm. w-ḥb*) of a certain deity.”⁴³

The fourth job group recorded for Memphite tomb owners is made up by military officials. Altogether eighteen titles affiliated to the military have been recorded, whereas, it is quite remarkable that fifteen of them date to the Ramesside period (1292-1213 BCE).⁴⁴ Altogether seven tomb owners held a military office together with an administrative position. The most prominent example is the Urhiya family,⁴⁵ whose members were military officials and obtained offices within the economic state administration as well.

Andrea Gnirs interpreted this observation as a change of system, which already started during the early Ramesside period. She postulates that there was a new pool of individuals from which officials of the Egyptian administrative system have been recruited. By this means lower ranking military officials became high ranking military officials, that also held offices within the civil economic administration. Thus, a gradual integration of military officials within the national and regional administration can be noticed.⁴⁶ It is not clearly evident

37 Like the tomb Nebmehyt, which has been discovered by the archaeological mission of Cairo University under the direction of Sayed Tawfik. The excavational results have been published as a preliminary report, which only mentioned the physical presence of the tomb and to whom it belongs: Tawfik 1991, 405.

38 These observations can be confirmed by the research of Nico Staring. He was able to show that nearly one third of all Memphite tomb owners held administrative offices: Staring 2017, 599.

39 Martin 1997.

40 Kawai 2012, 37-46; Kawai/Yoshimura 2010, 11-14.

41 Raven/Hays 2010, 5-24; Spencer 2009, 28-31.

42 Zivie 2007, 140-141; 2006, 68-78.

43 Staring 2017, 599-600.

44 After: Hornung et al. 2006, 493.

45 Ruffie/Kitchen 1979, 55-74. The tomb of Urhiya (MN 009.23), which might have been used as burial place for his son Yupa and his grandson Hatiay as well, has been discovered during the excavation season 2017/2018 in Saqqara by an archaeological mission of Cairo University.

46 Gnirs 1996, 56-57.

Name	Titles (military)			
Urhiya	<i>jm.j-r3 mšc (wr), hr.j pđ.t n.j nb t3.wj</i>	(Great) General, Troop- commander of the Lord of the Two Lands	<i>jm.j-r3 pr, jm.j-r3 pr n.j nb t3.wj, jm.j-r3 pr n.j hw.t Jmn, jm.j-r3 pr t3 hw.t Wsr-m3c.t-Rc.w štp-n-Rc.w m pr Jmn</i>	Steward, Steward of the Lord of the Two Lands, Steward of the temple of Amun, Steward of the temple of Ramesses in the House of Amun
Yupa	<i>jm.j-r3 ssm.wt n.j nb t3.wj, hr.j jh.w n.j jh.w c3 n.j Rc.w-ms-s Mr.j Jmn</i>	Overseer of Horses of the Lord of the Two Lands, Stablemaster of the Great Stable of Ramesses-Meriamun	<i>jm.j-r3 šnw.tj, jm.j-r3 pr, jm.j-r3 pr wr n.j hnm.t W3s.t, jm.j-r3 pr wr m t3 hw.t Wsr-m3c.t-Rc.w štp-n-Rc.w m pr Jmn, jm.j-r3 pr hđ, jm.j-r3 pr hđ n.j nb t3.wj, jm.j-r3 pr hđ wr n.j nb t3.wj</i>	Overseer of the Granary, Steward, High Steward of the Ramesseum, High Steward in the temple of Ramesses in the House of Amun, Overseer of the Treasury, Overseer of the Treasury of the Lord of the Two Lands, High Overseer of the Treasury of the Lord of the Two Lands
Hatiay	<i>wr n.j mđ3.jjw, jm.j-r3 mšc (wr)</i>	Captain of the Medjay, (Great) General	<i>jm.j-r3 pr wr, jm.j-r3 pr n.j nb t3.wj, jm.j-r3 k3.t</i>	High Steward, Steward of the Lord of the Two Lands, Overseer of Works

Table 3.2. List of family members of the Urhiya family that held military and administrative offices.

Job group	totals	%
Administration	32	42.1
Military	4	5.3
Royal court society	0	0
Cultic personnel	25	32.9
Service and supply	13	17.1
Science and scholarship	2	2.6
Not defined	0	0
	76	

Table 3.3. General distribution of titles held by persons attested in Memphite tombs.

whether offices of different professional categories have been held simultaneously, or if individuals like Urhiya or Parekhennua held an office of the one category during their early career and another office later in life. It could also be the case that offices have been exercised seasonally or rather according to demand, which might imply that the possession of offices within different occupational fields is not necessarily to be interpreted as successive steps of an individual career.

In contrast, persons affiliated to the professional sectors of ‘service and supply’ are less represented among the group of Memphite tomb owners. For that reason, a second analysis, which included all persons attested in Memphite tombs, has been carried out. Altogether 188 persons are attested in Memphite tombs. Among those people 107 (56%) bear a title. Interestingly, the majority of persons (59%) hold only one or two titles, while the greatest number of titles a person held is nine. It seems very plausible that tomb

owners mentioned a whole sequence of titles for the purpose of their self-presentation, while the titles of other persons in tombs have been rather used as identification criterion. Nevertheless, the discrepancy should not be evaluated without further criticism, since the number of titles attested is strongly dependent on the surviving written evidence.

While the analysis of tomb-owners’ titles shows a significant concentration of persons related to the professional sectors: administration, royal court society and military, a network of all persons attested in Memphite tombs reveals that persons belonging to the military are less frequently attested, and members of the royal court society are missing completely.

Due to the integration of female network members the number of sacerdotal titles has increased. Altogether twelve individuals among the group of persons attested in tombs were in the position of a god’s chantress.

In addition, the analysis revealed that titles affiliated to persons attested in tombs are usually of lower social rank and their titles are lacking the extended titles’ variations or specifications.⁴⁷ Due to this fact, a great number of persons bear titles that simply consists of the title’s core, such as as *hr.j h3b.t*: lector-priest, *t3.jj mđ3.t*: engraver or *šdm.w*: servant.

By the examination of their titles people can be classified into several groups, such as military officials,

47 For example, the titles affiliated to the military comprise lower-ranking offices such as standard bearer, charioteer and retainers. In comparison to that, high-ranking positions, such as troop-commander, overseer of horses, general and stable master are only attested among persons belonging to the group of tomb owners.

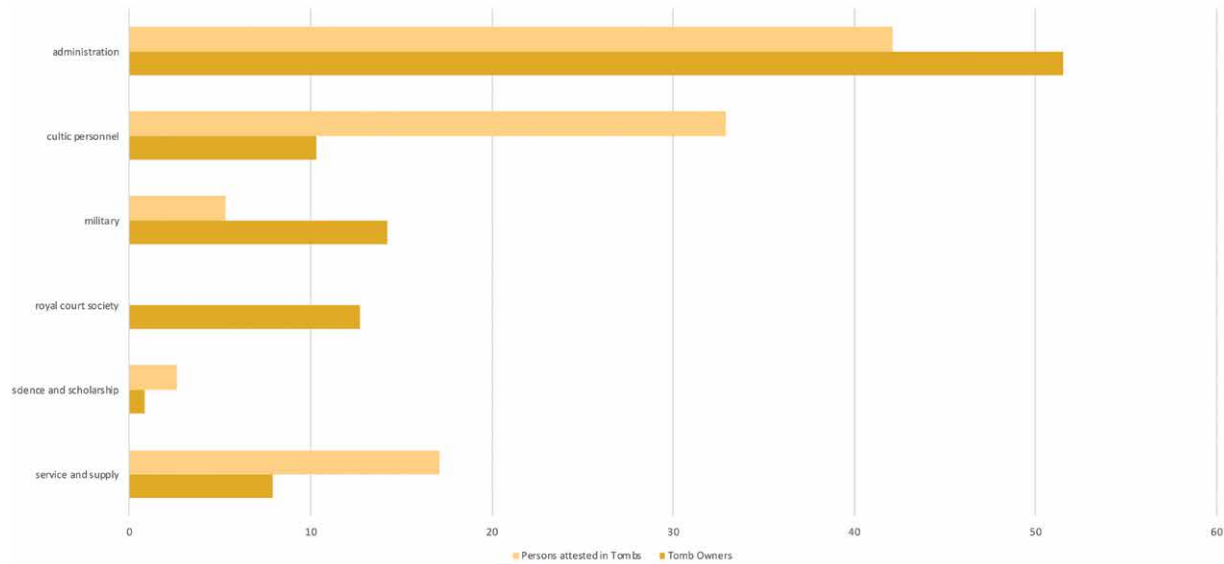


Figure 3.4. General distribution of titles of tomb owners vs. titles of persons attested in tombs.

members of the royal court society or individuals that are in charge of the service and supply, like craftsmen, servants and assistants. The individual members of those groups show a relation to the tomb owner that is based on specific parameters. On the basis of those parameters a network of persons can be created. To give an example, a case study on the tomb of overseer of treasury Maya will be presented in the following. All in all, 37 persons are attested within the wall decoration of Maya's tomb chapel at Saqqara.⁴⁸

Maya's Family

The nucleus of Maya's ego network is represented by his family. The individual family members can be identified by their kinship titles, which additionally provide information about kinship degree. Maya's family can be traced back over three generations.⁴⁹

The first generation includes Maya's father Juy, his wife Weret and Maya's stepmother Henutiunu.⁵⁰ Maya had at least three brothers: Nakht, Parennefer and Naherhu.⁵¹ He was married to Meryt, whose family relations are not documented.⁵² Apparently, Maya and Meryt had no male offspring. At any rate, no son of theirs was mentioned within the tomb inscriptions, and in addition, the position of the eldest son, as chief officiant of his father's mortuary cult, was taken by Maya's half-brother Naherhu.⁵³ According to a heavily damaged relief published by Carl Richard Lepsius, Maya and Meryt had two daughters, who also occur on a stela currently held in the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden (inv. no. AP 56).⁵⁴

48 Carl Richard Lepsius discovered Maya's tomb chapel in 1843 already (Lepsius 1897, 182-184), but it was subsequently lost again until the rediscovery in 1986 and the following excavations by the archaeological mission of the Egypt Exploration Society and the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden. On the architecture of his tomb see: Martin 2012, 4-17. Beside his tomb a number of 34 objects, held in different museums all over the world have been identified as deriving from his Memphite burial: Raven 2001.

49 For a biographical sketch see: Van Dijk, in: Martin 2012, 60-62, 64-70; Van Dijk 1990, 23-28; and Graefe 1975, 187-220.

50 Henutiunu is depicted together with Weret while they are receiving offerings by Maya's brothers: Martin 2012, 19-20, 30, pls 13, 22-23. Jacobus van Dijk assumed in accordance with Wolfgang Helck and Hans Schneider that: "Weret was Maya's natural mother, and that Henutiunu was his father's second wife and mother to Maya's brother Naherhu" (Martin 2012, 64).

51 Martin 2012, 19, 64, pls 13-14, 16, 24. Lara Weiss considers Nahunefer a variant of Nahuher in: Martin 2012, 39, pl. 35.

52 Martin 2012, 22, pl. 18; Martin 1988, pl. 2.

53 Martin 2012, pl. 24.

54 Lepsius 1849-1858, 240 [a]. The name of Maya's daughter is recorded as Mayamenti and she is depicted on the stela (Leiden inv. no. AP 56: Van Dijk 1990, 28, pl. 2). It originally belongs to the *jm.j-r3 jh.w*, the Overseer of Cattle, Djehuti, who is depicted as receiving offerings by *n3 msw n pr-s*, the children of their house(hold). One of the five adorants, depicted right next to Mayamenti, is named Tjauenmaya. According to her name she might be Maya's other daughter, whose name did not survive in the wall decoration of Maya's tomb, Martin 2012, 33, 64-65, pl. 31.

Name	Title		Relational status
Meryt	<i>šmꜥ.jjt n.jt Jmn</i>	Songstress of Amun	family/ wife
Juy	<i>sꜣb</i>	Magistrate	family/ father
Weret	<i>šmꜥ.jjt n.jt Jmn, ḥs.jjt n.jt Ḥw.t-Ḥr.w</i>	Songstress of Amun, Songstress of Hathor	family/ mother
Henutiunu	<i>šmꜥ.jjt n.jt Jmn</i>	Songstress of Amun	family/ stepmother?
Nahuher	<i>jm.j-rꜣ pr, jm.j-rꜣ pr n.j ḥnm.t Wꜣs.t</i>	Steward, Steward of the Ramesseum	family/ half-brother?
Parennefer	<i>ḥr.j pꜥ.t, jm.j-rꜣ ssm.wt</i>	Troop-commander, Overseer of horses	family/ brother
Nakht	<i>šḥꜣ.w pr ḥꜥ n.j nb tꜣ.wj</i>	Scribe of the Treasury of the Lord of two Lands	family/ brother
Tjauenmaya			family/ daughter
Mayamenti			family/ daughter
Neferrenpet			family/ nephew

Number of network members: 11

Table 3.4. List of family members related to the Overseer of the Treasury, Maya.

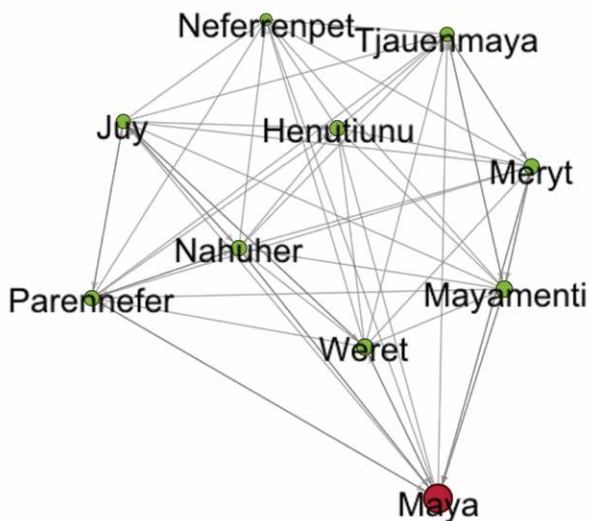


Figure 3.5. 1-mode network including all members of Maya's family represented as green nodes.

Since the members of Maya's family network are genealogically affiliated to each other, the nodes are connected directly, however, the nature of the connections is undirected since all ties are reciprocal and every member of the network is connected to each other by genealogy.

Maya's Employees and Colleagues

A second group of people attested in Maya's tomb can be interpreted as his employees, respectively colleagues. The *šꜥm ꜥꜣ n.j Mrjj.t m pꜣ.jj-s pr*: servant of Meryt in her house(hold) named Ptahemhab is recorded on a pilaster in Maya's tomb. Concerning to his title it can be assumed that Ptahemhab was employed as servant of Maya's and Meryt's private household. The Egyptian household incorporates a variety of social classes and professional backgrounds such as servants, nurses, workmen, and priests who collectively took care of the economic, social, and cultic concerns of the family and its individual members. Another example of that group is Peraaneneh, whose stela is held in the National Museum in Warsaw (inv. no. MN 142294).⁵⁵ Though he is not mentioned on any of Maya's monuments, his title *ḥr.j ḥꜣb.t n.j jm.j-rꜣ pr ḥꜥ Mꜥjꜣ.jj*: lector priest of the overseer of the treasury Maya indicates that he was responsible for the maintenance of Maya's mortuary cult. The original provenance of the stela is unknown, but it was probably erected in a small chapel close to Maya's tomb, such as the one built against the exterior face of the south wall of the outer courtyard. This chapel still contained a limestone stela inscribed for a lector priest called Yamen.⁵⁶ Although his title does not explicitly mention it, it can be assumed that Yamen also functioned as officiant of Maya's mortuary cult. He is represented as giving an offering to a seated couple and

⁵⁵ Martin 2012, 51, pl. 57; Van Dijk 1991, 10; 1990, 26-27.

⁵⁶ Raven 2001, 21, cat. 18, pls 8-9b, 28.

Name	Title		Relational status
Ptahmose	<i>sh3.w nswt n.j pr.wj hq</i>	Royal Scribe of the Double Treasury	treasury/attendant
Amenemone	<i>jdn.w n3 n.w hmw.w.w (n.j) pr hq n.j pr 3</i>	Deputy of the Craftsmen of the Pharaoh's Treasury	treasury/attendant
Sennefer	<i>sh3.w pr hq</i>	Scribe of the Treasury	treasury/attendant
Qendua	<i>jm.j-r3 k3.t m pr hq n.j nb t3.wj</i>	Overseer of Works in the Treasury of the Lord of the Two Lands	treasury/attendant
Iny	<i>sh3.w pr hq n.j nb t3.wj</i>	Scribe of the Treasury of the Lord of the Two Lands	treasury/attendant
Ranefer	<i>sh3.w pr hq</i>	Scribe of the Treasury	treasury/attendant
User	<i>jdn.w n.j pr hq, sh3.w nswt pr hq nb t3.wj</i>	Deputy of the Treasury, Royal Scribe of the Treasury of the Lord of the Two Lands	treasury/attendant
Meh	<i>sh3.w pr hq</i>	Scribe of the Treasury	treasury/attendant
Khaia	<i>sh3.w pr hq n.j nb t3.wj</i>	Scribe of the Treasury of the Lord of the Two Lands	treasury/attendant
Meryre	<i>jdn.w n.j pr hq</i>	Deputy of the Treasury	treasury/attendant
Ptahmose	<i>sh3.w 3c.t (n.j) jm.j-r3 pr hq, jdn.w n.j jm.j-r3 pr hq</i>	Secretary of the Overseer of Treasury, Deputy of the Overseer of the Treasury	treasury/attendant
Khay	<i>sh3.w n.j pr hq</i>	Scribe of the Treasury	treasury/attendant
Penneith	<i>sh3.w pr hq</i>	Scribe of the Treasury	treasury/attendant
Ramose	<i>jdn.w n.j n3 hmw.w.w n.j pr hq n.j pr 3</i>	Deputy of the Craftsmen of the Pharaoh's Treasury	treasury/attendant
Nebra	<i>sh3.w pr hq n.j nb t3.wj</i>	Scribe of the Treasury of the Lord of the Two Lands	treasury/attendant

Number of network members: 15

Table 3.6. List of treasury officials attested in Maya's tomb.

they are entitled as overseer of the treasury of the lord of the two lands Maya and his wife Meryt.

Maya's household did not only include cultic personnel responsible for the performance of his mortuary cult, but also craftsmen, such as Merymery, Merire and Hui who probably were in charge of tomb building are attested in the wall-decoration of Maya's tomb.⁵⁷

The tomb owner Maya is connected to every person of that group, because they are either attested in his tomb or they held a title that indicates a connection between them. By contrast, the members of this group are not connected to each other; there is no documented relation within the inscriptions on Maya's monuments and they do not mention any of the other group members on their own monuments. Within the graph this has been visualised

57 Martin 2012, 36, pls 32-33. See also: Weiss this volume, fig. 4.1 who gives a more detailed description of that scene and the personnel depicted.

as directed edges between nodes. In addition, and for the same reason, they are not connected with any of Maya's family members either.

A number of people attested in Maya's tomb show a common affiliation to the treasury as attested in their title's specification *n.j pr hq*: of the treasury (fig. 3.6).⁵⁸

Every person, whether the name is part of the tomb's original decoration or has been added some time later, is related to Maya in a direct way because of the

58 Not all name labels belonging to that group of persons are part of the original wall decoration, but have been added later on, which means after the erection of the tomb itself: Martin 2012, 19. The connection between the treasury officials and the tomb owner Maya is therefore not necessarily to be interpreted as a personal relation. On the topic of name labels: Jansen-Winkel 1990, 128-156.

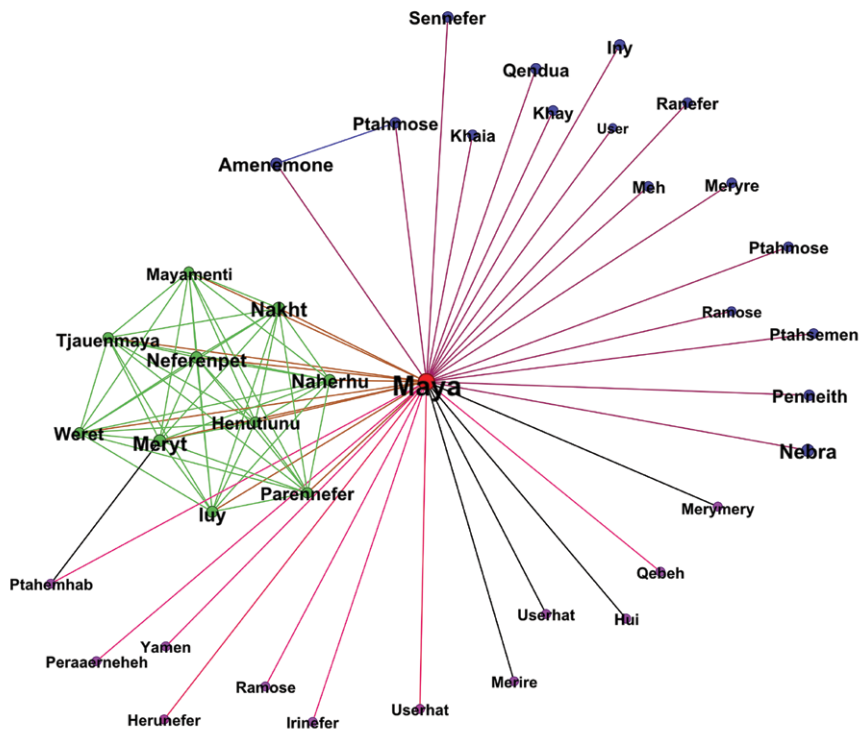


Figure 3.7. 1-mode network of Maya’s family, members of his private household and the officials of the treasury. Graph made by Gephi.

attestation within the same epigraphical record.⁵⁹ But the treasury officials are not connected to each other or to other network members, for the reasons explained above. Although it might be tempting that people who are affiliated to the same administrative institution lived in the same place during same time and are attested in the same tomb, might have known each other, this is not evident in terms of the surviving sources. This leads to an aspect that has to be considered for the interpretation of prosopographic data from pharaonic times in general. The analysed data mostly originates from funerary contexts and, as a result, those data represents a “*subjektive Stilisierung*”⁶⁰ and therefore a selective understanding of what might be interpreted as a so-called social reality. To be accurate, the epigraphical record primarily documents the prosopographical information intentionally left by the deceased to maintain within a social community. Or as Stephan Seidlmayer expressed it:

“Die Person wird nicht dargestellt, sondern sie stellt sich selber dar.”⁶¹

The tomb owner decides which titles of his career should be recorded for the purpose of his self-presentation. He also decides who should be depicted and named within his funerary monument and therefore who should be included in his direct social community.⁶² For that reason, Jan Assmann stated that the tomb owner makes his appearance as ‘author’ of his own tomb:

“The tombs are erected by those left behind, under circumstances of long-term preparation and instigation on the part of the deceased. Herein lies the special, ‘literary’ element of an Egyptian monumental tomb. Art, literature, and tomb have a common root in resultative thought: in the idea of creating a result that will continue in the memory of men and will thus become the medium not only of self-thematising but also of transcending and eternalising the self.”⁶³

59 See also: Weiss, this volume, who gives a more detailed description and the depicted personnel. She comes to the same assumption that, since Maya was Overseer of the Treasury and all persons depicted bear a title’s specification on the treasury, these officials had most probably worked for Maya as his employees.

60 Seidlmayer 2001, 251.

61 Seidlmayer 2001, 251.

62 The frequency of common attestations of persons in the same epigraphical record does therefore not necessarily represent actual personal relations. That means when the tomb owner is shown in the company of a specific person more often than others, it does not automatically follow that those persons have a specific close or beloved relationship to each other. See on that topic Herzberg 2019.

63 Assmann 2005b, 377.

Stephan Seidlmayer, who analysed the parallelism between the understanding of archaeological records and images based on the practice of offering goods in tombs of the late Old Kingdom to the early Middle Kingdom on Elephantine, basically agrees with Assmann. He understands the archaeological record of a necropolis in general and a tomb complex in particular as a human made illustration, which has been recorded to act as a medium of cultural communication:

*“Die konkrete Person wird im Moment der Bestattung in ein begrifflich organisiertes Tableau eingetragen. Soziale Parameter wie Affiliation, Status und Rollen, die zu Lebzeiten und im Alltag in einem gewissen Maße in der Schwebel, neu definierbar und verhandelbar waren, werden nun expliziert und fixiert in einem Begriffsraster, das der Bildstruktur des Friedhofs zugrunde liegt.”*⁶⁴

This observation does not include name labels that have been added as graffiti after the decoration of a tomb was executed. In those cases, the persons, who were not the tomb owners, intentionally recorded their names and titles, with an intended reference to another person, such as the tomb owner. In this way the special affiliation to a person and the participation in the same social network have been recorded and fixed permanently, so that they may be perceived by others. For that reason, the concept of ‘authorship’ and ‘work’ is not to be understood as completed with the erection of a tomb or the tomb owner’s funeral, but it is a ‘work’, which has been modified within a process of permanent transformation executed by different ‘co-authors’, such as Sennefer, who added his name-label after the decoration of Maya’s tomb had been finished.⁶⁵ Or Yamen, who was in charge of Maya’s mortuary cult, and added a small chapel to his masters tomb.⁶⁶ A tomb – as an archaeological record – may have intentionally been made by one author as Assmann stated it, but it has also been used as a medium of self-thematisation and eternalising by other persons, which permanently modified the initial work.⁶⁷ The archaeological record of a necropolis including the epigraphical, visual and archaeological evidence of individual tombs shall therefore be understood as an evolved and coherent context:

“Das Besondere der funerären Abbildung liegt darin, daß ihre Semantik additiv ist. In der Summe der Gräber eines Friedhofs, in der strukturieren Opposition mehrerer Nekropolen entstand vor den Augen des

*ägyptischen Betrachters ein Tableau der lokalen Gesellschaft, ein Tableau, in dem jedes Mitglied dieser Gesellschaft seinen eigenen Platz kannte.”*⁶⁸

To sum up, the 37 persons attested within Maya’s tomb complex can be – in terms of their specific affiliation to the tomb owner – divided into two major groups. On the one hand the deceased is shown in the company of his family, who form the nucleus of his ego network. On the other hand, persons of diverse professional backgrounds and social rank are depicted and mentioned in the textual discourse of Maya’s tomb.⁶⁹ Basically this latter group of people can be subdivided into two collectives. They comprise employees of Maya’s private household who took care of the economic, social, and cultic concerns of Maya’s family. In addition, people who held titles affiliated to the treasury and thus can be interpreted as staff of this institution are included into the wall-decoration of their master.⁷⁰

As has been already mentioned above, personal interrelations that have been handed down within the epigraphical and archaeological record generate social capital which strengthens the social position and social status of an individual within a network of persons.⁷¹ The fact that not only family members of the deceased are included to this social community, but also officials that are acting on lower social levels, such as members of the tomb owner’s household, can be interpreted as the reflection of a complex social system of patrons and clients.⁷² On the one hand, Maya presents himself as the ideal patron, who mentions his clients and dependents within his own funerary monument and thus includes them to his direct social community. This ensures that the names of those persons and thus their memory amongst the living will be eternally preserved. In contrast, persons belonging to a tomb owner’s household intentionally left their name labels on the walls of their master’s tomb after

64 Seidlmayer 2001, 249.

65 Martin 2012, 19, pl. 9.

66 Martin 2012, 57; Raven 2001, 21.18.

67 Assmann 1987, 377.

68 Seidlmayer 2001, 250-251. For the process of change and modification of Memphite cemeteries, especially referring the use of space and the burial patterns of tombs, see also Staring, this volume.

69 This can also be seen in the tomb of Urhiya, where the funerary priest Pehefemnefer is depicted. The same person is also shown as giving a food offering to Urhiya on the stela now held in the Musée Calvet in Avignon (inv. no. A 4) as well as on another stela now held in the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Palais Saint-Pierre in Lyon (inv. no. H 1380): Ruffle/Kitchen 1979, 56, 62, pl. 2, and 57-58, 66, pl. 5.

70 This can be seen in the tomb of the Overseer of the Treasury Tia where the treasury’s scribe Iurudef is depicted within the tomb of his master, the Overseer of the Treasury Tia: Martin 1997, 56, pl. 56, 58. The same phenomenon has been documented in other Memphite tombs, such as the Chief Engraver Nebwau, who is depicted in the tomb of his master, Pay; see Raven 2005a, pl. 21.

71 Bourdieu 1983, 191.

72 Moreno Garcia 2013b, 1029-1065; Eyre 2011b, 707-711; Assmann 1999, 38-41.

the erection of the tomb had been executed.⁷³ In this case, the fixed participation to a social network did not happen on behalf of the tomb owner. This points out again, that the textual discourse of a tomb as well as the network graph which documents the personal relations as attested in the epigraphical context of the tomb, should not be interpreted as a ‘work’ that has been created by one ‘author’.

Node Type: Tombs

After discussing the persons within the Memphite tomb network, the other node type of the Memphite Tomb Network, the Memphite tomb complexes shall be the focus of the following section. At least fifteen Memphite burial sites of the New Kingdom have been revealed so far (fig. 3.1). The tombs that have been discovered at the individual sites show different architectural layouts ranging from simple pit burials⁷⁴ to monumental free-standing tomb chapels⁷⁵ or rock-cut tombs.⁷⁶ The two latter tomb types have been used as burial places for the higher echelons of the Memphite society and have been unearthed at the following Memphite sites:

Until now, 84 of those so-called elite tombs, whose physical existence is known or has been recorded in the past, could be included to the present case study.

Abusir	Near the modern village of Abusir	Rock-cut tombs
Saqqara	<i>Falaise du Bubasteion</i>	Rock-cut tombs
Saqqara	Khaemwaset-Hill	Tomb chapels
Saqqara	Teti Cemetery	Tomb chapels
Saqqara	Unas Cemetery	Tomb chapels
Saqqara	Northwest of Unas valley temple	Rock-cut tombs
Dahshur	Between military railway and Red Pyramid of Sneferu	Tomb chapels

Table 7. List of New Kingdom burial sites where monumental tomb structures have been discovered.

Within the network they are represented as green nodes. However, it should be noted that Memphite burial places did not only include monumental tomb complexes, such as the tomb chapels of Maya, Tia and Horemheb at Saqqara, but also smaller burials whose existence is only indicated by individual inscribed elements once belonging to the tomb, while their original architectural context is lost. Indeed, already Jaromir Málek listed a great number of tombs labelled as ‘Position unknown’ in the 1979 published second edition of Porter and Moss.⁷⁷ In recent years Nico Staring compiled an updated list of identified Memphite tomb owners. He was able to demonstrate that in contrast to the physical presence of a number of tomb structures, 381 tomb owners are additionally represented by a selection of elements originally belonging to their tomb’s equipment or decoration. This indicates that the number of identified tombs amounts only 19.4% of the total number of recorded Memphite tomb owners.⁷⁸ Since the location of the humbler tomb chapels is largely unknown, or the owners of excavated specimens are unidentified,⁷⁹ the estimated number of Memphite burials

73 Martin 2012, 19, pl. 9.

74 In the area of the Teti-cemetery northeast of the pyramid of king Teti a couple of minor burials have been discovered by the archaeological mission of Macquarie University, Sydney: Sowada et al. 1999. Minor burials are also known from the area surrounding the pyramid of Sekhemkhet in Saqqara-South: Goneim 1957, 6, 23-29. Within the magazine rooms and in the zone of the former sanctuary of the pyramid temple of Pepi I, minor burials have been placed directly on the ground: Labrousse 1988, 67-69.

75 On the architecture of Memphite tomb chapels: Raue 1995, 255-268; Málek 1988, 125; Van Dijk 1988, 37-46. Tomb chapels are to be found not only at Saqqara. The highest concentration of that tomb type is located in the cemetery south of the Unas causeway (El-Aguizy 2015, 203-217; 2007, 41-50; Raven 2000, 133-144; Martin 1991; Tawfik 1991, 403-409) and north and northeast of the pyramid of Teti (Ockinga 2012, 371-395; 2004; Quibell/Hayter 1927; Lorent 1900, 85-100). Only very recently an archaeological mission of Waseda University Tokyo was able to unearth a great number of shafts which seem to have had superstructures. In addition a tomb chapel which shows similar monumental dimension as the tomb of Horemheb and might have belonged to the royal butler Ipay has been discovered: Yoshimura/Hasegawa 2000, 145-160.

76 The most prominent site for Memphite rock-cut tombs is the *Falaise du Bubasteion*. An area located located on the escarpment of the Saqqara plateau between the wadi of Abusir and that of the Unas causeway and has been named after the Greco-Roman temple for the goddess Bastet. At least twelve tombs dating to the Pre-Amarna and the Ramesside Period have been found by a French mission under the direction of Alain-Pierre Zivie: Zivie 2013; 2009; 2007; 1988a. Another group of rock-cut tombs is located near the village of Abusir, adjacent to the Early Dynastic necropolis: Daoud 2016, 9-13; 2011, 7-10 and Youssef 2011, 84-89. In addition, rock-cut tombs have been discovered to the northwest of the valley temple of king Unas at Saqqara: Málek 1992, 59; Porter/Moss 1979, 592.

77 Porter/Moss 1979, 701-718. See also: Gessler-Löhr 2012, 149.

78 Staring 2017, 593-611, 595.

79 See for example a limestone chapel of Ramesside date (2007/10) that was investigated in the narrow strip exposed along Ptahemwia’s south perimeter wall (see Staring, this volume, fig. 13.7). This was built of limestone slabs erected on top of a stone floor, it had screen walls separating an inner sanctuary from an antechapel with two square pillar bases. Since the extant walls of the superstructure bear no reliefs or inscriptions, the identity of the tomb owner is unknown: Raven et al. 2008-2009, 8, 13, fig. 7.

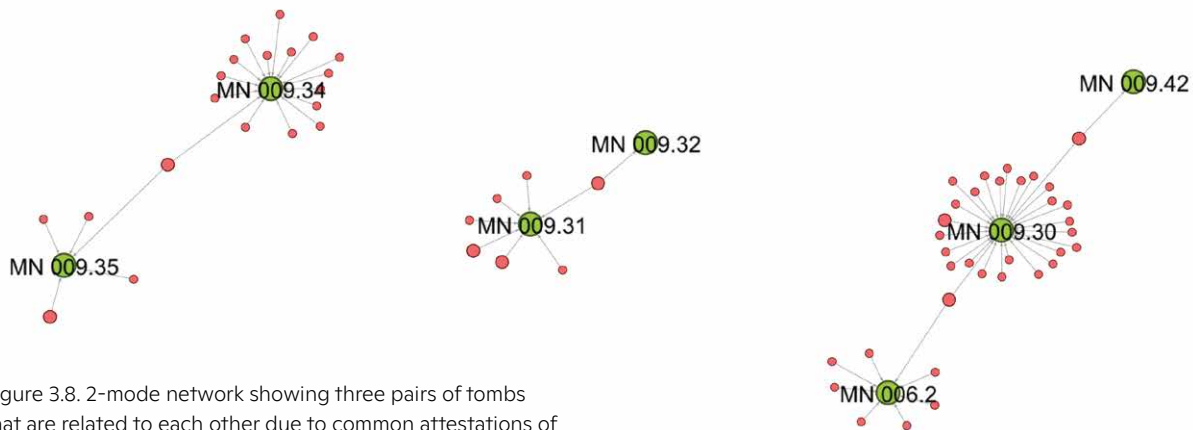


Figure 3.8. 2-mode network showing three pairs of tombs that are related to each other due to common attestations of persons. Graph made by Gephi.

is fairly elusive.⁸⁰ This can be also confirmed by old site plans, such as the map published in Carl Richard Lepsius' *Denkmaeler Aegyptens und Aethiopiens*⁸¹ or the *Carte de la Nécropole Memphite* provided by Jacques de Morgan.⁸² The latter shows a large number of New Kingdom tombs marked in blue, whereby a particularly high density of those blue New Kingdom tomb structures has been noted in the area north of the Pyramid complex of king Pepi I⁸³ or the area that extends from the later-built Bubasteion to the South.⁸⁴ Both areas have not yet been excavated and documented.

An overview of the whole tomb network shows that the majority of tomb nodes are depicted as isolated dots within the space of the Memphite necropolis. But a closer look reveals that there are at least six tombs that form pairs.

This phenomenon is based on the fact that persons are attested in more than one tomb. For example, the goldsmith Amenemone is mentioned in Maya's tomb, where he held the title *jdn. w n3 n. w hmw. w. w (n.j) pr hq n. j pr ʿ3*: deputy of the craftsmen of the treasury. His own tomb chapel has been discovered in the Teti-cemetery by an archaeological

mission of the Macquarie University Sydney.⁸⁵ Within the wall decoration all individuals, except for his family members, remain generic and do not show a name label.⁸⁶ Amenemone's son Ptahmose is shown and named as *sh3. w pr hq*: scribe of the treasury within the tomb of his father.⁸⁷ An inscription in the tomb of Maya names a person of the same name bearing the titles *jdn. w n. j jm. j-r3 pr hq*: deputy of the overseer of the treasury and *sh3. w š. t. jm. j-r3 pr. wj hq*: secretary of the overseer of the treasury.⁸⁸ Taking into consideration that both persons are identical would mean the tomb complexes of Maya and Amenemone might be connected to each other, although they are located some distance from each other.⁸⁹ The same observation has been made for the *sh3. w pr hq*: scribe of the treasury Iurudef, who not only appears in several reliefs from the tomb of the overseer of treasury Tia but was also allowed to build a small tomb chapel in the forecourt of his master's tomb.⁹⁰ Another cross-connection, which is based on genealogical affiliation is attested for Khay and Pabes, because Khay is

80 Taking into account that the number of 2366 persons represents about 1% of the Memphite total population (see: Baines/Eyre 1983, 65) within an investigated time period of about 400 years, and that one generation amounts about 20 years (see: Baines/Eyre 1983, 66; 72; Samuel et al. 1971, 25), then a number of about 11,000 persons could be estimated for one generation. Calculating with 2.5 generations living at the same time, the total population of the Memphite region could be estimated to 30,000 individuals living at the same time. Although estimates of population are scarcely more than informed guesses, and so the present calculation has to be treated with caution, it shows that the number of Memphite tombs in relation to an estimated Memphite population is extremely small.

81 Lepsius 1897.

82 De Morgan 1897.

83 De Morgan 1897, 8. See also: Dobrev 2017, 53-61, fig. 1.

84 Quibell 1908, 63; De Morgan 1897, 10.

85 Ockinga 2004.

86 For a more detailed discussion of generic vs. non-generic tomb representation see: Weiss, this volume.

87 Ockinga 2004, 31-32 [13], 31-32 [15], 32 [19], 37-44, pl. 5.

88 Martin 2012, 33, pl. 28.

89 The idea that goldsmith Amenemone and his son Ptahmose are to be identified with persons of the same name mentioned in the tomb of Maya has been suggested by Jacobus van Dijk and although the idea seems very plausible it is not certain: Ockinga 2004, 19-20; cf. also Berlandini-Grenier 1976, 312; Helck 1958, 188.

90 Martin 1997, 56, pl. 56; Raven 1991, 1. A similar observation has been mentioned above: a stela of Maya's mortuary priest Yamen has been found in position in its original niche built on the exterior of the south wall of the tombs. There are clues to indicate that other niches for stelae were cut into the walls of Maya's tomb: Raven 2001, 21, cat. 18, pls 8-9b, 28; Martin 1991, 176.

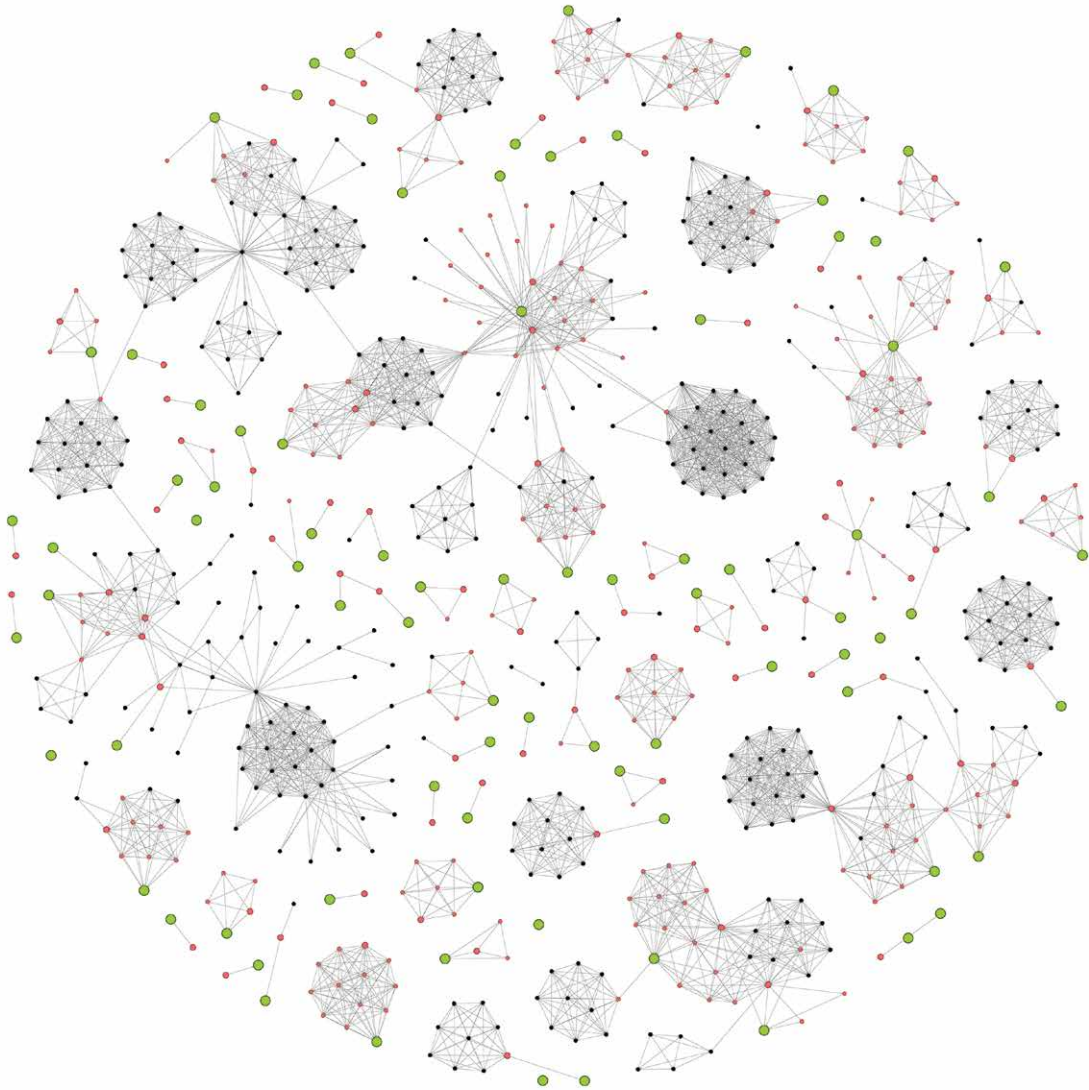


Figure 3.9. 2-mode network showing identified Memphite tomb chapels (green nodes) and persons attested in Memphite tombs as well as their direct related edges. Graph created with Gephi software and Sigma.js plugin. <<https://www.trismegistos.org/network/39/>> (last accessed 01.01.2019).

attested in his own tomb chapel in Saqqara as well as in the tomb chapel of his son Pabes.⁹¹

Looking for further cross-connections the Memphite tomb network has been expanded.⁹² All persons that show a detectable connection to a network member (either

genealogical or based on attestations on the same object) of the already existing network have been included.⁹³

This ensures that objects that originally were part of the tomb's decoration or equipment, later transferred to museum collections all over the world, can be included to the present study. By that means, the number of

91 Martin 2001, pls 18, 24. Because Pabes is not attested in his father's tomb, Lara Weiss suggested that he was possibly not the biological son of Khay, but records the reference to him in order to strengthen his own social capital: Weiss, this volume.

92 See <<https://www.trismegistos.org/network/39/>> (last accessed 27.01.2019).

93 Due to this working step, more objects in addition to tombs have been taken into consideration, such as objects belonging to a tomb's original equipment and decoration. They have been transferred to museums all over the world during the past 200 years. As can be seen with Nico Staring's study on Memphite tomb owners as well as by the distribution of object types within the present data collection. In comparison to 84 tomb structures, more than 1,600 objects belong to the object's categories small finds, architectural elements, (tomb-)equipment, statues, and stelae.

network members has increased up to 692 persons, which means that the number of network members has more than doubled and includes nearly a third of all persons recorded in the present data collection. Although most of the tomb nodes remain isolated on the one hand, new cross-connections have been created on the other. In contrast to the first network, those new connections are not represented as direct edges. That means the tombs are not related to each other in a direct way but by an intermediate node.⁹⁴ For example, the *sh3.w n.j pr h4d*: scribe of the treasury Nebra is depicted in Maya's tomb.⁹⁵ However, he is also depicted in the adjacent tomb complex of his father, the chief of the royal Ipet, Pay,⁹⁶ and thus links the tombs of Maya and Pay – as well as the tomb owners themselves – to each other indirectly.

Summary

To sum up at this point, while the personal identity of an individual was preserved by the recording of the name, the social identity which presents the deceased as a specific type of person (e.g. gender, social status), was established and preserved by other means, such as the documentation of titles and genealogical information.

“A solitary person is not capable of life, that is, alive in the full sense of the word. There must be someone else to take him by the hand and guide him. By the same token, he is also not dead, so long as there are others to mention his name, so long as the bond of connectivity is not broken.”⁹⁷

94 Like Stanley Milgram already stated in his 1967 published paper (Milgram 1967, 60-70), individuals who do not show any detectable direct connection can still be linked to each other by other persons, which results in the fact, that every human being, as a social actor, is connected to other persons through a surprisingly short chain of relationships. The average path length between two nodes of the extended tomb network is 5.029. It means that each person of the network is connected to any other network member by four stops. But like Milgram (1967, 67) already argued “If two persons are five removes apart, they are far apart indeed. [...] Thus, when we speak of five intermediaries, we are talking about an enormous psychological distance between the starting and target points, a distance which seems small only because we customarily regard ‘five’ as a small manageable quantity.” In this way, statistical measurements of personal interrelations within a network, such as the average path length, have to be valued with criticism, since it does rather describe the quantitative features of a network and its individual nodes and ties, than the quality of individual relations. According to Milgram's observation, it has to be stated that although the distance between two individuals seems to be remarkably small, it is not evident if they were conscious of the fact that they participate to the same network and were connected by common acquaintances.

95 Martin 2012, pl. 28.

96 Raven 2005b, pls 34-35 and 58-59.

97 Assmann 2005b, 39.

Due to the fact that the principle of social connectivity worked to maintain life, it can be stated, that the eternal preservation of a deceased person is not only realised by the attestation of his personal identity but obviously included the preservation and maintenance of social relationships which manifest the affiliation to the community and the process of socialisation as well. And for that reason, prosopographic data including identification criteria and network parameters should be ensured not only among the world of the living but have to be documented for the afterlife. It is quite remarkable that the deceased did not only include family members, or persons of similar or higher social status in his social network, but individuals who acted on lower social levels. In this way the tomb owner made them benefit from his mortuary cult and in this way presents himself as the ideal patron within the network of his clients. In this way every network member either tomb owners, who represent the Memphite high elite stratum or lower ranking officials such as servants and dependents, were able to benefit from their monumentally attested affiliation to a social community. This generates social capital and strengthens the social standing of every network member included in the same network. This act of reference to benefit from the cult practices performed for the deceased is not limited by time, and thus people were still adding their names after the erection of a tomb has been executed

It has been shown that prosopographic data have been preserved in two different ways. On the one hand, by the attestation of persons (or groups of persons) within the same epigraphical record: Maya is depicted in the company of his family as well as with his dependents, such as people working in his private household or officials who were institutionally affiliated to the treasury. On the other hand, personal relations are reflected in the archaeological record as well. Relatives and dependents of the deceased built their tomb chapels in, around and side-by-side with the great elite tombs. This can either be observed with tombs of persons directly related to each other on genealogical basis, such as Raia who reused and extended the tomb chapel of his father Pay, Pabes and his father Khay, whose tombs are located right next to each other, or with the tomb of Urhiya that has been built and used as a burial place over three generations.⁹⁸ Furthermore, not only relatives but also dependents were allowed to build tombs for their own within the complex of their master's tomb, like Iurudef, who built a small tomb chapel in the forecourt

98 Raven 2005a, 10-12.

of his masters tomb.⁹⁹ This phenomenon includes even persons ranking relatively low in the social hierarchy, such as Maya's mortuary priest Yamen.¹⁰⁰ From an archaeological point of view there are numerous burials of that type, but unfortunately no indication that their owners were related to the great officials due to the lack of inscriptions in the minor tombs. But nevertheless, their existence proves that personal interrelations by which the participation in a network has been documented, have been preserved in both epigraphic and archaeological record.

Through the monumentalised attestation within tomb complexes, individuals remain present within a network of persons.¹⁰¹ Because Memphite tomb complexes have been built in direct relation to specific reference points within the Memphite landscape, such as the main temple complex of the god Ptah at Mit Rahina,¹⁰² local sanctuaries,¹⁰³ or sacred processional routes, they act as interface between the dead and the living. The persons attested in the wall decoration of the tombs have been perceived by the continuous flow of priests and visitors passing by.¹⁰⁴

“Was das Grab aber als »Botschaft« in seinen zugänglichen Räumen an Bildern und Inschriften entfaltet, war durchaus dazu bestimmt und konnte damit rechnen, von Besuchern des Grabes betrachtet zu

werden. Besucht wurden die Gräber von kultausübenden Familienangehörigen, Priestern, potentiellen anderen Grabherren, die sich Anregungen für ihre eigene Grabanlage holten, Künstlern und Schaulustigen [...]. An diese Besucher wendet sich die Botschaft der »sepulkralen Selbstthematization«. Sie appelliert an das Gedächtnis der Nachwelt. Sie bittet um das officium memoriae, das LautLesen der Inschriften.»¹⁰⁵

In accordance to the initial quotation by Alfred Gell, social persons are present in every object that bear witness to their existence, their attributes and their agency. In this way prosopographic data as attested on objects belonging to the tomb's decoration or equipment could not only be perceived by other persons, but they can be involved into the ritual practices of local cultic festivities, such as the Memphite Sokar festival.¹⁰⁶ As Nico Staring has mentioned in his contribution, day 26 of month IV of the Akhet season was a public holiday, which includes a visit of the god's barque to the necropolis.¹⁰⁷ The participation in cultic events does not necessarily mean a material involvement of offering goods, but it offers the opportunity to present the monumentalised personal identity and social status through the commemoration of names, titles and personal relations to a social community as well as to the divine community of local gods for whom such religious festivities have been arranged. Thus, the necropolis as recorded within its archaeological and epigraphical remnants does not only reflect a complex network of personal and institutional interrelations between individual members and groups of persons, but it forms a meeting point of the dead and the living as part of the same social community.

99 Martin 1997, 56, pl. 56; Raven 1991, 1. A similar observation has been mentioned above: a stela of Maya's mortuary priest Yamen has been found in the position of its original niche built on the exterior of the south wall of Maya's tomb. There are clues to indicate that other niches for stelae were cut into the walls of Maya's tomb, which indicates that even more of his dependents recorded their affiliation to Maya's network within the textual discourse of his tomb, Raven 2001, 21, cat 18, pls 8-9b, 28; Martin 1991, 176.

100 On the use of cemetery space and the development of the Saqqara New Kingdom necropolis see: Staring, this volume.

101 Herzberg 2014, 137-154; Kjølby 2009, 31-46; Gell 1998.

102 For a more detailed discussion on the idea that Memphite officials built their tombs in visual connection to the royal memorial temples of the New Kingdom and the temple complex of Ptah at Mit Rahina see: Staring, this volume.

103 The temple of Bastet of Ankhtawy – the Bubasteion of Greek sources – was located on the escarpment of the Saqqara plateau between the wadi of Abusir and that of the Unas causeway, an area named the *ts dhn.t ḥḥ-ḥ.wj*: hill of Ankhtawy: Pasquali 2011, 81-82; Zivie 1988a, 104. It is quite remarkable that the only officials bearing titles connected with a Memphite cult of Bastet are those buried in the rock-cut tombs at the Bubasteion's escarpment. Thus, it can be assumed that the Greek Bubasteion might have had a predecessor sanctuary dating to the New Kingdom. For a possible reference from the Ramesside period, see Málek 1981, 158.17.

104 An explicit reference to the visit of the necropolis is given in the stela of Ptahmose in New York (inv. no. MMA 67.3) see: <<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/549236>> (last accessed 08.01.2019). For a more detailed discussion, see Staring, this volume.

105 Assmann 1987, 213.

106 Unfortunately, no Memphite festival calendar which lists the Memphite religious festivities and cult events is known from the available data. While the burial of the sacred Apis bull is well attested in epigraphical and archaeological sources, there is much less information about the Memphite Sokar festival. For festival activities as “*Bühne zur Selbstrepräsentation*”, see Seidlmayer 2006, 93-111.

107 Staring, this volume.

Immortality as the Response of Others?¹

Lara Weiss

Tombs for the Deceased?

Despite the increasing role landscape archaeology is playing in Egyptology in general,² most Egyptological knowledge of ancient Egyptian objects in most museum collections still stems from tombs or temples.³ This is due to the fact that, historically speaking, early excavators were often commissioned to find valuable objects not usually expected in settlement areas. Their finds later entered museum collections and continue to guide the museums' current research interests. Such is the case with much of the fieldwork carried out by the National Museum of Antiquities in Leiden. While the museum's new joint mission in cooperation with the Museo Egizio in Turin has surely opened new ways of approaching broader questions,⁴ the free-standing monumental tombs at Saqqara remain a crucial focus of research. Indeed, the material evidence of Egyptian religious practices and views of the afterlife form quintessential cultural-specific features that fascinate scholars and the general public alike. The tremendous amount of cultural and economic resources the ancient Egyptian elites invested in their afterlife is remarkable. Throughout their entire history the ancient Egyptians built different types of tombs in which to be buried and remembered. The type of tomb largely depended on the means of the person buried inside it, but it also says a lot about the fashions and expectations in specific time periods and/or peer groups. The religious motivation of monumental dynastic elite tomb building can be characterised by three elements:

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- 1 This paper was written as part of the research project 'The Walking Dead at Saqqara: The Making of a Cultural Geography' kindly funded by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research under dossier no. 016.Vidi.174.032 and hosted at Leiden University Institute for Area Studies (LIAS), 1 November 2017 to 31 October 2022. I would like to thank the participants of the authors' meeting that took place in Leiden on 7 to 9 November 2018 for their careful reading and kind feedback, and in particular the stimulating discussions within our Walking Dead Team with Huw Twiston Davies and Nico Staring, and last but not least, my mentor Rob Demarée for his kind feedback.
 - 2 E.g. Tristant/Ghilardi 2018, Moeller 2016.
 - 3 The literature is extensive, for a summary see, for example, Te Velde 1982, 135-153. For a notable museum project taking a different angle see e.g. Ilona Regulski's British Museum project *Urban Development and Regional Identities in Middle Egypt: A Deep History of the Asyut Region*, cf. <https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/research_projects/all_current_projects/asyut_urban_development.aspx> (last accessed 29.11.2018).
 - 4 See Del Vesco et al. 2019. In general Howley/Nyord 2018, vi-ix among others.

- Protection of the deceased's body in the underground tomb chambers
- Creation of a cult place in the upper accessible part of the tomb where the deceased could receive the necessary offerings
- Commemoration of the deceased's name by means of the monument as a whole and individual and group practices

The first two elements provided the physical fabric that would allow for an eternal post-mortal life.⁵ The third assumes the successful, magically supported passing of the deceased into the afterlife and that the deceased's soul ultimately reaches the status of a glorified spirit. On a social level, the commemoration of the names and indeed the tomb owners' titles monumentalise their status and careers, a phenomenon for which Jan Assmann has coined the term 'self-thematisation'.⁶ Assmann's interpretation, as well as the tomb owners' monumental embeddedness into social strata and networks of succession and hierarchy, is widely recognised in Egyptology.⁷ The underlying idea is that ancient Egypt was a complex system of patrons and clients in which the tomb owners manifested their status in stone.⁸ In addition to the deceased's access to material resources, his or her status may have manifested itself in ideational and cognitive aspects,⁹ although these may be hard for contemporary scholars to detect. The memory 'stored' on tomb walls is thus usually understood in terms of commemoration of the tomb owners.¹⁰ This paper discusses the reliefs of some New Kingdom tombs, primarily those excavated in the Leiden-Turin concession at Saqqara, as a case study in order to demonstrate that only a wider interpretation of the tomb decoration allows a comprehensive understanding of the vivid processes of commemoration practices in ancient Egypt.

Some Overlooked Aspects of Egyptian Decorum

Egyptian art in general – and tomb decoration in particular – was highly conventionalised and followed a cultural decorum.¹¹ This means that forms of representation were restricted, normative and highly idealised. For example, relief representation and also statues of individuals and groups were not portraits, but rather metaphors of what was considered appropriate style. As a consequence, the identification and recognition of certain individuals – and indeed to be able to commemorate them – depended, in principle, on the preservation of the deceased's name, title, and, given the many namesakes, social affiliation ('A son of B') in writing.¹² In theory, this means that, in the case of the large monumental tombs, it is certainly plausible that people knew who was buried there even though they might not be able to read the name. What is relevant here is that while of course the most prominent individual in a tomb was the owner buried inside it, a tomb owner centred approach¹³ is problematic because it confines the scope of analysis to a proposed 'original' use of the monument¹⁴ from the perspective of the owner. Such an approach glosses over the tombs' use-life history including, for example, processes of negotiation and signifying practices by subsequent generations.¹⁵ For a wider understanding of these practices, it is interesting to consider Janne Arp's study of the Amarna tombs.¹⁶ She analysed the relationship between the tomb owners' status and the design and decoration of their tombs and offered a fresh methodological approach based on the works of Norbert Elias.¹⁷ Elias had long ago studied the court society of the *Ancien Régime*, that is the time prior to the French Revolution under Louis XIV, and demonstrated how "the king controlled the court elite with a complex system of reward and punishment".¹⁸ Prestige in court society according to Elias depended on descent and titles, but also importantly on the favour of the king.¹⁹

5 Vischak 2015, 208 with reference to Willems 2001 and Assmann 1990.

6 Assmann 1983, 68. Also very important is the summary by Janne Arp 2012, esp. 145-150 with references.

7 E.g. Eisermann 1995, 65-80; Guksch 1994, 2. More generally on the "mausoleum culture", Baines/Lacovara 2002.

8 E.g. Franzmeier 2017, 334-336 and see Binder 2008, 252-264. I doubt, however, whether the 'clients' actually had much freedom of choice which 'patron' to follow, as indeed "New Kingdom society is characterised by inequality among people at all levels of society" (Binder 2008, 263).

9 See also the important article by Seidlmayer 1988, 47.

10 E.g. Assmann 1996, 103.

11 Cf. Luiselli 2013, 13; Baines 2007, 298-337; 1990, 1-23.

12 E.g. Robins 2016, 205; Kucharek 2003, 165. With reference to the Bible and Icons noted by Belting 1990, 20: "Das Bild ist nur verständlich, wenn man es von der Schrift wieder erkennt" but the idea that any representation need to be mediated to be understood in a certain cultural context is of course applicable to sign systems in general, see also: Jürgen Mohn on "Mediatisierung als Vermittlung von Transzendenz": Mohn 2013, 207-209.

13 Compare Hans Belting's observation that the fact that every image is in principle a representation of a person caused the person to become the preferred subject of religious practice, cf. Belting 1990, 9. On the Egyptian material see Staring forthcoming.

14 See criticism by Holtorf 2013, 167-180.

15 Compare the criticism Stolow 2005, 124-125 and see Vischak 2015, 222.

16 Arp 2012.

17 Elias 1975.

18 See also Clemens et al. 2011, 3.

19 Elias 1975, 187 and see Arp 2012, 161.

He referred to the complex system of changing alliances, rewards and punishment in social groups as figuration.²⁰ Although Norbert Elias's theory has recently been heavily criticised,²¹ his key ideas are highly relevant to understand elite networks²² and the interpretation of the Egyptian tomb decoration. In fact, in addition to the tomb owners and occasionally the king, many other individuals and groups were depicted in the monumental tombs at Saqqara in different areas of the tomb and performing different roles. Drawing on Elias's and Arp's ideas, I hope to demonstrate that these individuals gained status and potentially also spiritual capital (see also p. 62) from their recognizable representations in the Egyptian tombs.

Generic vs. Non-generic Tomb Representation

An important wish of the Egyptian tomb owners was that people would visit and remember them.²³ They decorated their tombs with offering scenes, rituals and representations of daily life by means of which the names and titles of the depicted individuals became part of the memory stored in the tomb. To be precise, I generally consider anonymous representations of individuals such as service personnel, queuing offering bearers or family members, to be 'generic' metaphors of the function they fulfil in the tomb. These individuals are only identifiable as actual persons when their name, title and/or affiliation is added in writing.²⁴ Nevertheless, one should generally not exclude the possibility that contemporaries of the deceased knew who was depicted in an anonymous representation of, for example, the unnamed daughter of a deceased tomb owner when they visited the tomb shortly after the burial, particularly if a depicted individual was a member of the elite and still alive. However, representations of anonymous people did not enter the eternal commemoration of the deceased in the same way because their names were probably forgotten after three or four generations at the most. This is suggested, for example, in studies in early-medieval Anglo-Saxon England,²⁵ which define a generation as the time span between the birth of a mother's first child to the time that child gives birth.²⁶ Family representations on Egyptian stelae,²⁷ as well as the genealogies we know from the

Theban 'workmen's village' Deir el-Medina,²⁸ suggest a similar situation in New Kingdom Egypt of a maximum of three simultaneously living generations. As Duncan Sayer puts it:

“generations coexisted and people interacted, meaning they experienced each other and contributed to the creation of each other's experiences and memories.”²⁹

By being personified as individuals by name, title and/or filiation, people could be recognised in the tomb decoration and gained status from the fact that they were represented in a high official's tomb fulfilling important duties, showing their loyalty and demonstrating their favour in the eyes of the tomb owner(s).

Engraved in the Tomb Owner's Community

Besides gaining social status and prestige, the individuals depicted in the tombs gained rewards for the afterlife. This idea of benefit-sharing is made explicit, for example, by an inscription on a stone block recorded by Carl Richard Lepsius that is now lost.³⁰ According to this text, the ones who worked in Maya's tomb take part in his reward. Reciprocity is fundamental for the performance of offerings, often called the *do ut des* principle.³¹ In return for his or her offering, the individual receives the favour of the deceased or the god(s), a principle also fundamental to the Egyptian system of patronage.³² Hierarchies confined the individual agency, but they also provided a social system to turn to in need.³³ Egyptian society is thus best understood in terms of a kind of household economy in which various networks overlapped.³⁴ Thus, by looking at tombs as figurations, one can better understand the interrelations and interdependency of the various individuals and tomb owners. To make matters even more complex, Egyptian households were hybrid in the sense that their composition may have included a wide

20 Elias 1975, 33-35.

21 E.g. lack of a sound data basis and unclear social categories, cf. e.g. Horowski 2014, 143-172.

22 See also Arp 2012, 169.

23 Robins 2016, 205.

24 Compare also a similar interpretation of graffiti by individuals with name and title by Staring 2018, 90.

25 Sayer 2010, 59-91.

26 Sayer 2010, 65.

27 E.g. Weiss 2017, 215-230 of course excluding here idealised genealogies.

28 Davies 1999.

29 Sayer 2010, 81.

30 The pilaster was recorded by the German Egyptologist Carl Richard Lepsius for the Prussian expedition to Egypt, cf. *LD.*, III, 242b/c; Martin 2012, 37 and pl. 32 [45].

31 Teeter 1997, 77.

32 E.g. Eyre 2011b, 705. As an aside, note that Eyre identifies corruption as a sign of failure of government (cf. p. 702: “To support members of the social or kinship group in a feud is not corrupt, but a necessity, a sign of failure of government”) as if the “Weberian idealization of bureaucracy as well-structured, systematic, effective, impersonal, and equitable” (p. 701) were applicable to modern societies.

33 Eyre 2011b, 710.

34 Lehner 2000, 279-286, and see Eyre 1994, 112-114, and recently Moreno Garcia 2013b, 1029-1065.

range of members and overlap with others.³⁵ However, what has been largely overlooked until now is the fact that the representation of family members, colleagues, and house personnel supporting the tomb owners' cult³⁶ added to the owner's status. At the same time, the family members, colleagues, and house personnel of the deceased became "part of the tomb owner's community".³⁷ In a wider understanding of Assmann's idea that "the social network of interdependence takes on an eternalised form"³⁸ in tomb decoration, I argue that this means that named individuals benefitted from the tomb owner's cult and gained spiritual capital.³⁹ In other words, their representation provided a confined group of individuals with additional status, power and prestige. We shall see how from that perspective, immortality indeed becomes a "*Rezeptionsschicksal*",⁴⁰ in the sense that reaching eternal immortality should be seen as a process dependent on the response and interaction of others, that is an audience.

Tombs for the Living

The tomb was not only important for the deceased but also for the living.⁴¹ While this is never made explicit in Egyptian texts per se (but see below), some Renaissance letters illustrate a situation that we may well imagine was the case in Ancient Egypt. For example, in the 1470s, a rich associate of the Medici writes to his brother about plans for a tomb for their other brother who had just died and emphasises:

"for the honour, like the burden, gets assigned to us and not the dead, and in making it beautiful we honour ourselves."⁴²

In other words, the more the surviving family invests in the memory of the deceased the greater their own reputation. Therefore, reading the tomb inscriptions and

representations through the lens of the family's potential spiritual capital can be particularly illuminating.⁴³ Spiritual capital is defined here as "referring to the power, influence, knowledge, and dispositions created by participation in a particular religious tradition."⁴⁴ For the tombs at Saqqara, spiritual capital is measurable by the individual's ability to build a monumental tomb at all. The tomb itself is revealing of the family's knowledge and financial means.⁴⁵ As Richard Chalfen aptly noted "[d]esign and decoration of physical space in general [are] (...) constructed appearances] (...) meant to be looked at and appreciated in culturally specific terms".⁴⁶ This also applies to ancient Egyptian monumental tombs built by their owners in order to be commemorated as members of the elite. Access to a tomb "helped (...) to establish or reinforce social and hierarchical differences".⁴⁷ Tomb owners can be identified as members of the elite through their "access to and command of a disproportionate quantity of resources".⁴⁸ The tomb owners make very clear that they want to be remembered for their achievements. For example, tomb owner Maya hopes that the gods will "cause my name to prosper because of what I have done in my tomb."⁴⁹ Elsewhere, Maya expresses the wish that all his people will visit him in his tomb.⁵⁰ These appeals to the living often entailed requests for offerings, but it is also important to understand that they were a manifestation of the tomb owner's elite status as well. While the depictions of various individuals and groups performing different roles represent the tomb owner's wish for specific people to visit and remember him,⁵¹ the names of the depicted also

35 This idea has been coined as 'social house', cf. Picardo 2015, 245-248 and with an application to Egyptian mortuary culture cf. Nelson-Hurst 2015, 258-260.

36 For the practical involvement of servants in cultic activities see also Chauvet 2015, 63-78.

37 Vischak 2015, 213.

38 Assmann 2011, 46.

39 A similar view has in fact been expressed by Arp 2012, 170 who reflected on Norbert Elias' theory of figuration and Egon Flaig's concept of 'conspicuous loyalty' and showed that in fact the demonstration of loyalty can strengthen the status of individuals in social networks. See also Elias 2002, 339-3340 and Flaig 2003, 33-34. Note that Chloé Ragazzoli considers graffiti in tombs as providing status to the writer, cf. Ragazzoli 2013, 275 and see also below (pp. 63-71).

40 Assmann 1983, 67: "*Unsterblichkeit als Rezeptionsschicksal*".

41 Compare also Robins 2016, 202 with reference to Hartwig 2004, 5-14.

42 Gilbert 1998, 412 with reference Borsook 1970, docs. 16-18 and see Bács 2018, 15-32.

43 Compare the very interesting forthcoming article by Johannes Auenmüller, who looked for evidence of social capital to the Old Kingdom mastaba of Ti at Saqqara. He demonstrated nicely how although the reliefs do not necessarily represent actual social realities, they can be read as metaphors of the complex ideal social network (Auenmüller forthcoming).

44 Definition by Berger/Hefner, 'Spiritual capital in comparative perspective', paper prepared for the Spiritual Capital meeting, <<http://www.metanexus.net/archive/spiritualcapitalresearchprogram/pdf/Berger.pdf>> (last accessed 17.01.2018).

45 For the construction of monuments as manifestation of power see also Sullivan 2016, 86 with reference to DeMarrais et al. 1996, 16. On prestige compare also, for example, Ragazzoli 2016, 166 on the elite eloquence demonstrated in monumental tombs, and see recently, Bács 2018, 15-16.

46 Chalfen 2012, 24-48.

47 Eastmond 2015, 253-254.

48 Definition by Grajetzki 2010, 181. Grajetzki decides not to use the term elite, but his reasoning that some Egyptologists might misunderstand the term remains questionable; see also Kóthay 2013, 482.

49 Offering formula to Hathor (?) and Idid on the doorway to the inner courtyard, north doorway, cf. Martin 2012, pl. 23 [24.4] translating *rwꜥ* with 'endure'.

50 Pilaster recorded by Lepsius, now lost, cf. LD III, 242b/c: Martin 2012, 37 and pl. 32 [45] translating *rmꜥ* with relatives. On this aspect see also Moreno Garcia 2013b, 1042.

51 Robins 2016, 205.

became part of the memory stored in the tomb and may have gained status from others seeing them being depicted in a high official's tomb decoration. In that respect, we must consider the tomb visitors' ability to read and understand the texts and representations, and the question the extent to which the use of writing excluded illiterate members of the community from the elite literate circle.⁵² For ancient Egypt, and indeed Saqqara, this is the more true as the literacy rate was probably low,⁵³ which meant that not all tomb visitors were meant to actually read the texts surrounding the representations.⁵⁴ However, the varying degrees of understanding of the respective texts and representations in the way they were meant to be read does not mean that certain beholders were fully excluded. What is important is the "collateral knowledge and the cognitive skills necessary to understand the depicted scene".⁵⁵ Illiterate visitors may have developed their own understanding and appropriation of the elite practices, thereby allowing them to participate in the dynamic relationship between the building and the beholders.⁵⁶ In the ancient Egyptian context, this idea is possibly reflected in a rare and therefore often quoted passage from the tomb of Neferssekheru, who in his autobiographical text claims that everything he says in his tomb (*dd[.t]=j nb hr h.w.t=j*) should also be known (*rh*) by both the fool (*whz*) and the skilled ones (*hmw.w*).⁵⁷ Jürgen Osing translated the verb '*rh*' not as 'known' but as 'experienced' (*erfahren*), perhaps hinting at the idea that various people interacted with the texts and representations in the tombs.⁵⁸ 'The fool' is a well-known motif in Egyptian teachings, such as the so-called 'Instruction of Ptahhotep', where he is usually contrasted with the 'wise one' (literally: 'knowing one').⁵⁹ It is curious that in his tomb inscription Neferssekheru uses '*hmw.w*', which is usually understood as 'craftsman'. In doing so, he is apparently creating a contrast with the concrete lack of technical skills instead of tying into the more general wise vs. fool motif (although one could argue technical skill does not go without knowledge). In the tomb of Khaemhat (Theban Tomb 57), the tomb owner explicitly addresses literate visitors (*sš wh^c.w drf spd.w-hr m m(w) d.w ntr*, i.e. 'scribes that can explain script and who are skilled in hieroglyphs') and asks them that 'they look at my walls and read in my spells' (*gmh-sn r s^c.wt-j šd-sn m tšs*).

52 Compare Vischak 2015, 221 in a different context.

53 Compare the still standard article by Baines/Eyre 1983, 65-96, updated in Baines 2007.

54 See also Eastmond 2015, 253-254.

55 Stjernfelt 2012, 23.

56 Papalexandrou 2001, 260.

57 Cf. Osing 1992, 46. Note that a translation as 'artist' has been suggested for *hmw.w*: cf. Laboury/Tavier 2016, 73.

58 Compare also, for example, Ragazzoli 2013, 274-275.

59 As attested on pBM EA 10371+10435, cf. Hagen 2012, 131-135, pl. 1.

w=j).⁶⁰ Assuming this was read aloud,⁶¹ it is immediately clear how illiterate visitors might have been included in the experience of the texts as well, and, of course, in addition to those who overheard them coincidentally, some people may have been accompanied by others who could help them interpret the wall decorations.

The Evidence

'The Eldest Son' in the Tomb of Maya and Merit

In the tomb of Maya and Merit, many individuals are named. The eldest son was traditionally in charge to perform the required offerings and arrange the burial of his father.⁶² The term 'eldest son' designated an actual son (or family relative), but some Late Period Demotic texts suggest its broader use as a legal term, in the sense of heir.⁶³ In Maya's tomb, Maya's half-brother Nahuher is frequently viewed fulfilling his duties.⁶⁴ For example, on the doorway leading to Maya's inner courtyard, Nahuher is represented presenting an incense burner to Maya. The accompanying text clarifies that he is performing the ritual of the morning house (*jr-tw n-k pr-dwz.t*), in which the purity of Horus is gained by the deceased's taking of the Eye of Horus via the scent (the accompanying text says 'join the Eye of Horus for you so that its scent comes to you' – *tšs n-k jr.t Hr jy sty-s r=k*).⁶⁵ Similar to the case of the Florentine brothers mentioned above, although not literally building his brother's tomb, Nahuher's fulfilment of his duty meant performing according to his contemporaries' expectations and living up to his status. Since this idea is more or less accepted in Egyptology, no further examples shall be provided here.

Colleagues and Employees in the Tomb of Maya and Merit

In addition to 'the eldest son', however, many other colleagues and employees of Maya are shown in adoration and offering. An interesting relief depicting religious practices performed in the tomb and also naming the individuals involved is the one recorded by Carl Richard Lepsius, which was situated in the main courtyard on the south wall of the tomb of Maya and Merit. The scenes

60 Cf. Den Doncker 2012, 23 with reference to *Urk. IV*, 13-14 and see also Den Doncker's wider interpretations on visitors' responses.

61 Weiss 2014, 300 with references.

62 Cf. e.g. McCorquodale 2012, 71-88 with references, and see also Olabarria 2018, 99; Feucht 1995, 86-92.

63 Allam 2010, 29-33.

64 Martin 2012, 19 and pls 13-14, and 16. I consider Nahuher a variant of Nahuher in the central chapel: Martin 2012, 39 [60] and pl. 35.

65 An interesting detail in that respect is that the incense burner is indeed adorned with the head of the god Horus.



Figure 4.1. Martin 2012, pl. 9 kindly provided by the Egypt Exploration Society, London, UK. Superstructure, Scenes [3] and [4]

show (preparations for) Maya's funeral. The upper register is lost. In the middle register, offerings are made by the overseer of the works at the site of eternity, the 'chief of the interpreters of the annals' (*hry smn.w gn.wt*) Userhat is assisted by an unnamed servant and by the craftsman (*hmw.w*) Qebeh and the painter Huy.⁶⁶ In the lowest register, a naophoric statue of Maya is being pulled on a sledge by four anonymous servants supervised by chief draftsman Merymery. In front of them, the lector priest Jrunefer makes a libation offering to the coffin while it is pulled on another sledge by three anonymous men and the overseer of the builders of the treasury of the Lord of the Two Lands,

Qendua. The latter group is led (and thus supervised) by the treasury scribe Penneith. A clear distinction has thus been made between the representation of the activities of the anonymous individuals (those pulling the two sledges or assisting with tasks) and the representation of those executing more important tasks of supervision and offering, who are identified by their name and title in writing. One exception here is Qendua, who is potentially carrying out both tasks despite the fact that his rank is lower than that of Penneith.

A second example is a row of nine offering bearers moving westwards into the tomb of Maya on the sub-

⁶⁶ Martin 2012, 36 [42] and pls 32 and 33.

register of the northern wall of the pylon gateway (fig. 4.1).⁶⁷ These men stand in front of a large pile of offerings, which includes two gazelles, pomegranates, and beef, east of which a large offering table bears various other vessels, flowers, and food. Such representations are usually understood as a perpetuation of the offerings for eternity,⁶⁸ however, we shall see that the depicted figures are not just there to bring offerings, they also have their own agency. The foremost offering table possibly belongs to the first figure. The second man holds two flower bouquets in his hands. Behind him a third man presents two chairs and a flower bouquet, then follows a man holding two flower bouquets, a man with another offering table, a man holding a duck and lotus flowers, and behind him yet another man with similar gifts accompanied by an oryx. These first seven offering bearers are represented in the style of high officials wearing wigs and pleated dresses. The other two at the rear of the row are bald and wear long shorts, an iconography probably identifying them as servants. The order of the persons depicted thus follows the principles of Egyptian-style hierarchy⁶⁹ in which the foremost positions are considered more prominent (quite like today, in fact). The hierarchy is also clear from the more refined and more detailed elaboration of the first two figures (i.e. those with the curly wigs) compared to the iconography of the five officials following them. Also, not unimportant for the understanding of the entire wall scene is the fact that the foremost figures seem to be standing underneath the throne of the god Osiris in the register above them, whereas the other five officials are standing underneath the feet of Maya and Merit adoring the god. This is perhaps another example of how reliefs can depict differences in hierarchy. The scene is interesting, not only in terms of the spiritual capital it portrays, but also because at least some of the offering bearers are not generic, some are clearly identified as specific individuals by their names and titles. Geoffrey Martin described the inscriptions as follows: “No. 1: Royal scribe overseer of [...]. No. 2: [...]. No. 3: [...]. No 4: Scribe of the treasury Ranefer. No. 5: Scribe of the treasury Sennefer. No. 6: Secretary of the overseer of treasury Ptahmose. No. 7: Two columns left blank apart from *n* [...]. There are no texts adjacent to nos. 8 and 9.”⁷⁰ Maya was overseer of the treasury, so these officials had most probably worked for him. In line with the style of representation, the order of professional status descends from left to right. The scribe Ranefer also appears on other

walls.⁷¹ Although Ranefer is often depicted much smaller than Maya and Merit, he appears quite often in the tomb, sometimes in close interaction with them. This may have contributed to his status.

The same applies to Maya’s secretary Ptahmose who appears in a prominent position in the tomb’s reliefs, namely overseeing Maya’s inspection of arriving prisoners on the lower register of the north wall of the inner courtyard.⁷² This Ptahmose was most probably identical to his namesake, the son of the overseer of the craftsmen (*jmy-r3 hmw.t*) Amenemone, attested in his father’s tomb in the Teti Pyramid cemetery.⁷³ In spite of the commonness of the name Ptahmose, the identification is supported by the fact that his father, Amenemone, also appears as an offering bearer in the tomb of Maya in another row of employees.⁷⁴ Yet Amenemone did not seem to feel the need to hand such favours down to his own employees. Except for his family members, all other individuals in Amenemone’s tomb, such as offering bearers and priests, remain generic.⁷⁵

Returning to the row of offering bearers on the northern reveal of the doorway in the pylon entrance to the tomb of Maya, only Sennefer is not accounted for elsewhere. This could be due to the fact that other reliefs in which he is depicted have been lost. What is particularly interesting on the relief on the northern pylon is thus that not all figures are named, but the ones that were named, seem (mostly) to have been important enough to be mentioned elsewhere as well. Even more interesting is the fact that not all names were added at the same time. Martin already noticed that

“only the inscriptions belonging to nos. 4 and 6 have been part of the original design <of the relief>. No. 7 was left unfinished, while no. 1 is a graffito. The others, including no. 5 are less well-carved, and have perhaps added later, some of them have been left unfinished.”⁷⁶

The idea that every text that is less nicely carved should be considered a ‘graffito’ as opposed to an official ‘inscription’

67 Martin 2012, pl. 9.

68 E.g. Weiss 2014, 291-303 and Weiss 2015b.

69 On the principles of Egyptian art still ground-breaking Schäfer 1919.

70 Martin 2012, 19.

71 Offering fruit and incense to Maya and Merit on the doorway leading to the Inner Courtyard, north reveal, while standing underneath a large offering table, cf. Martin 2012, 30 [28] and pl. 23, as the last person in a row of offering bearers whose names have not been preserved on the east wall, north ‘wing’, lower register, cf. Martin 2012, 32 [35] and pls 27-28 and 90.

72 Martin 2012, 34 [38] and pl. 29.

73 Ockinga 2004, 18.

74 Martin et al. 2012, 33 [36] and pl. 28; Ockinga 2004, 19.

75 For example, on the lower register of the west wall of the antechapel a very general offering formula wishes that “your name may be invoked daily by the *w^{ch}*-priests and the lector priests” (*w^{ch}.w hr.yw-hb*), cf. Ockinga 2004, 62, pl. 61 cols 4-5.

76 Martin 2012, 19 and pl. 60, no. 7.



Figure 4.2. Relief Berlin inv. no. ÄM 12412 with kind permission by Friederike Seyfried and Caris-Beatrice Arnst. Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung. Photo: Margarete Büsing.

is, in fact, rather dated. Scholars have advanced more flexible definitions of what constitutes graffiti.⁷⁷ In that respect, a note by Dieter Kessler is also relevant here. While studying Old Kingdom boat scenes, Kessler argued that, in principle, representations with and without texts should be considered of equal meaning and value.⁷⁸ The iconography of the offering bearers, as well as their titles, suggests that – in line with what we would expect – the more to the front a person is depicted, the more important that person is. But why were only Ranefer and Ptahmose named in the original design, and why was Ptahmose left unfinished, and why the foremost (and hence possibly most important) person identified only in a less carefully executed inscription? In this case, it seems that the text was indeed a later addition, thus the traditional interpretation that it is a graffiti is still plausible. The question of who decided on the official decoration of a tomb is a difficult one. With reference to the Renaissance patrons mentioned above, it is perhaps convincing to assume that the general idea of the layout of the tomb decoration was communicated to and then relatively freely executed by the chief artist.⁷⁹ A possible explanation could be that the identity of some unnamed offering bearers (which we have wrongly considered generic) was in fact so obvious that the audience needed no further explanation. It is unfortunate that the foremost name has not been preserved, so now we cannot tell whether the person himself or a contemporary clarified his position at a later

stage, or maybe somebody else ‘conquered’ the existing image by adding his own name. Whatever the solution is, it is crucial that not only the tomb owner benefitted from the offerings magically carried into his tomb, but that there was also active engagement after the completion of the tomb in which people entering the tomb read the tomb inscriptions, and sometimes added their own name.⁸⁰ Obviously the notion that a graffiti was always written by the person mentioned in it is not necessarily true.⁸¹

Contesting Hierarchies at the Berlin Trauerrelief

Another interesting reference in this respect is a relief which shows the mourners of the burial of a high Memphite official, most likely the high priest of Ptah Ptahemhat-Ty.⁸² In the right corner of the relief, the remains of the coffin are depicted, followed by a procession of fourteen people (fig. 4.2).

Instead of portraying the highest officials, such as the viziers, leading the procession, the two sons of the deceased, called Say and possibly his brother Hatiay,⁸³ are depicted. This unusual order of people was observed already in 1895 by Adolf Erman who explained it convincingly by suggesting that the Egyptian hierarchies’ as reflected in

77 See e.g. Mairs 2011, 154, cf. Ragazzoli 2013, 275. A nice example to challenge too strict definitions of graffiti vs. inscription will be discussed below pp. 67-68.

78 Kessler 1987, 65.

79 Cf. Bács 2018, 15-32; Gilbert 1998, 392-450.

80 See also Den Doncker 2012, 23-34.

81 Compare e.g. Yasin 2015, 43 with reference to Christian graffiti written in favour of many separately listed family members, but the same is possible for single names.

82 Cf. Priese 1991, 136-138. I would like to thank Friederike Seyfried and Caris-Beatrice Arnst for kindly providing permission for publication. For the identification, cf. e.g. Schulman 1965, 55, and see most recently Arnst 2019.

83 The name is lost. Gessler-Löhr has recently argued for the identification of the figure as Hatiay, cf. Gessler-Löhr 2012, 181.

titles need not reflect always social realities.⁸⁴ In other words, on some occasions personal relations seem to have superseded professional hierarchies.⁸⁵ The high officials are all anonymous in the sense that they have titles, but no names,⁸⁶ which again raises the question of when a figure can be considered generic. For the service personnel, I am inclined to think of titles of anonymous individuals of generic ‘servant metaphors’ (i.e. metaphoric representations of the concept of servant or the like) that serve their masters in eternity. Yet the question is whether, in the case of these highest state officials such as the royal scribe, hereditary prince and leader of the troops (*sš nsw jry-p^c.t jmy-rꜥ mš^c*), it may not be more plausible that people knew who they were (in the example e.g. Horemheb⁸⁷ and note also the High Priest of Heliopolis Sa-Inheret);⁸⁸ and indeed whether it is even necessary for one definition to be valid in all cases.

Behind the high officials follow nine bald lower-ranking priests called Ty, Tutu, Amenemheb, Merysekhmet, Ptahemhab and Rara. They are depicted on much smaller scale and closer together. Amenemheb could be identified as the son of Say, and thus grandson of the High Priest Ptahemhat-Ty.⁸⁹ Likewise, Ty could be Hatiay’s son, as in another grandson of the tomb owner.⁹⁰ Both grandsons prove yet again the importance of representing several generations in the Saqqara tombs, often sharing a similar field of career (i.e. here priests of Ptah),⁹¹ and indeed support Beatrix Gessler-Löhr’s identification of the anonymous person behind of Say as his brother Hatiay.

Even more interesting in the context of ‘genericness’ (i.e. ‘the state of being generic’)⁹² is the register above, which shows two little arbours adorned with palm branches and flower bouquets, which may have been built along the processional way.⁹³ The duty of the servants was to mourn, like the lady in front of them on the right

of the relief block, and probably to break the red pots.⁹⁴ What is relevant here is that while the high state officials below remain anonymous, the hard-working priests in the upper register are almost all named. Behind the mourning woman, who was probably part of a group of female mourners, a priest is shown holding a vessel upside down. Next to him is a faintly written inscription in which the man is identified as the supervisor of the retainers of the greatest of the directors of craftsmen (*hry šms.w wr hrp hmw.w*) Neferrenpet. Erman had already observed the shallow style of the scratching and suggested that it was secondary, in other words, a graffito rather than part of the original design of the relief.⁹⁵ We shall see that this interpretation is subject to debate. Behind Neferrenpet further to the right stands a third priest who is called the rhythm maker (*dhn*) Kefkef. Although this inscription is deeper, it looks much different from the titles of the high officials below, so the question of when it was added remains a difficult one. Behind Kefkef stands an anonymous mourner, while the fifth person kneeling is identified as supervisor of Ptah’s offering table (*hry hꜥw.t n Ptḥ*) Ramose. Next to him is the chief gardener (*hry kꜥry*) Aaemhotep carrying larger flower bouquets,⁹⁶ and a man possibly called Neferhor, is bending forward and arranging a cloth around the flower bouquets.⁹⁷ Following them is another anonymous mourner before the gardener (*kꜥry*) Khay, who is also shown mourning. The small figure to the right displays another odd inscription which could possibly be read as the name Nykaptahemmerut (*Ny-kꜥ[.j?]-Ptḥ-m-mrw[t]* – ‘(My?) kꜥ belongs to Ptah in love’). Although the latter is not yet a known name, it is perhaps the most plausible option of the sequence of hieroglyphs.⁹⁸

Let us return to the matter of whether or not these inscriptions were part of the ‘original design’ of the relief or whether they should be considered as secondary. In fact, the different style of writing could partly be explained by the fact that some of these short texts appear to have been squeezed in. For example, the texts of Ramose and Khay look as if they were written with more care than the alleged Neferhor or indeed Neferrenpet in front. However, ‘careful writing’ as opposed to ‘rough scratching’ is not always a good indicator of a decision as to whether or not texts should be considered official. These kinds of marginal

84 Erman 1895, 21.

85 Raue 1999, 443 views the order as evidence in favour of a dating of the relief prior to the reign of king Horemheb, which is in line with the representation of the figure discussed below as Horemheb as *jry-p^c.t*.

86 Compare also the burial scene of Tutankhamun in his tomb where the entire group of officials is called “the companions and officials of the house of the king who are dragging (the funerary sledge) of the deified king (...) (*smr.w sr.w n n.w pr nsw nty(w) hr stꜥ Wsjr nsw*)”, cf. Schulman 1996, 57.

87 Spiegelberg 1925, 57-58. That it cannot be Nakhtmin as was suggested by Schulman 1965, 64 is discussed by Kawai 2010, 273, who showed that Nakhtmin acquired the title *jry-p^c.t* later and was ‘only’ a general at the time of the relief.

88 Gessler-Löhr 2012, 181; Raue 1999, 246-247.

89 Suggested by Gessler-Löhr 2012, 183.

90 Gessler-Löhr 2012, 184.

91 Gessler-Löhr 2012, 186-187.

92 Cf. <<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/genericness>> (accessed 06.12.2018).

93 Raue 1999, 442-443; Barthelmeß 1992, 33.

94 Compare e.g. Van Dijk 1986, 1389-1396.

95 Erman 1895, 19.

96 Not Aamay as Erman (1895, 19) assumed.

97 The reading of the text as a name is highly tentative. The determinative is the wrong one (sign Gardiner A2 instead of the required Gardiner A1), it is depicted in the wrong direction and in the wrong spot in front instead of behind the potential name. Alternatively, the interpretation of the phrase as *nfr-hr*, ‘beautiful of face’ as epithet of Ptah (cf. *Wb* II, 255.5-9 and *LGG* IV, 214c-217a) leaves us with a random sitting man.

98 Reading kindly suggested by René van Walsem and Rob Demarée.

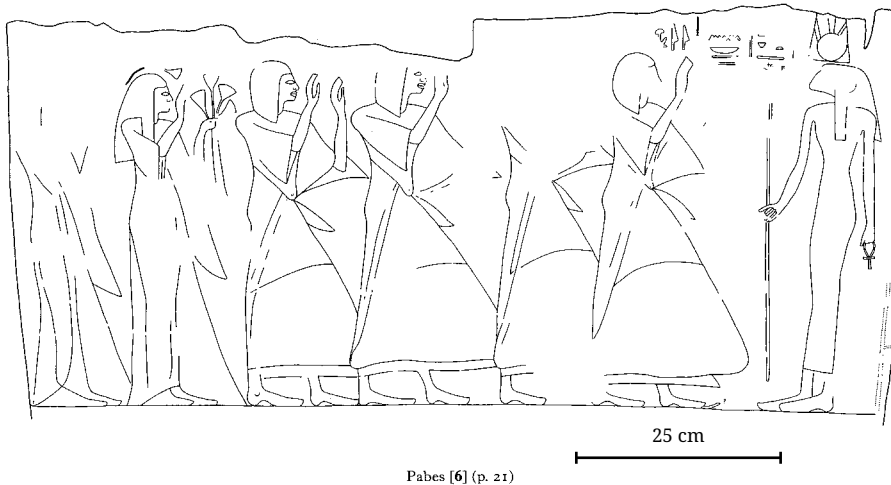


Figure 4.3. Martin 2011, pl. 19 kindly provided by the Egypt Exploration Society, London, UK.

inscriptions have been found in the royal temple context,⁹⁹ so we should not be surprised to see various styles in private contexts as well. For example, in comparison with the text identifying the row of priests in the bottom left, these texts seem unlikely to be graffiti because the shape of the text below is very similar. For example, the hieroglyphs for the ‘r’s of the name Rara is almost as shallow as the ‘scratches’ above. Therefore, the graffiti hypothesis is less plausible here. Perhaps some of the texts accompanying the lower-ranking priests were written hastily and/or left unfinished, yet clearly the writer intended to identify particular individuals.

Becoming a Forever Family?

One case that indicates social climbing perhaps rather than spiritual capital is the tomb of Pabes, who describes himself as the son of Khay in his small tomb situated south of the tomb of Horemheb.¹⁰⁰ Interestingly, Pabes is not accounted for in his father’s tomb, but he built his own chapel “behind and to the west” of Khay’s tomb.¹⁰¹ Like Khay, Pabes was a troop commander (*hry-pd.t*)¹⁰² and apparently trained by his father.¹⁰³ The excavators suggested that both tombs were built together as a “family burial complex” and suggested that this was the reason why Pabes is absent in the decoration of Khay’s tomb.¹⁰⁴ Although this is possible, it does not rule out the possibility that Pabes is represented in both tombs or explain his absence. Perhaps a more convincing explanation is that Pabes was not Khay’s biological son,

but rather taken under his wing and treated as a son, a fact that may also be suggested in the explicit reference to his father’s supervision. This interpretation could explain why “Pabes’ chapel (...) almost create[s] the impression of a memorial chapel for his relatives”.¹⁰⁵ For example, on the southern doorjamb a text seems to say that [his? i.e. Pabes’s] family make their (own) names live (*[nꜣy=f?]* *snw sꜣnh rn=w*), which would indeed be highly unusual.¹⁰⁶ However, if Pabes did want to stress his relationship with that family, it would be a strong reason for him to depict the group in his tomb. With a similar idea in mind, the excavators have reconstructed a text on the south wall of the central chapel as “[The Osiris, the troop commander of the traders] of the Lord of the two Lands, [the gold washer Kha]y” and tentatively identified the other figures as Pabes’s brothers Amenkhau, Neferabu, and either Piay or Amenemope and perhaps two other unknown sisters or wives of his brothers (fig. 4.3).¹⁰⁷ Obviously, this is only a tentative interpretation given the limited remains of the hieroglyphic text. Pabes’s own nuclear family appears only on the Leiden statue depicting him and his wife, a statue that probably served as the main focus of worship in Pabes’s central chapel.¹⁰⁸ By mentioning the names and titles of his sons on the statue, the *wꜣb*-priest Ptahemwia, the temple scribe Semenmaatnakht, the *wꜣb*-priest Amenhotep and his two daughters, both chantresses of Ptah Isis and Nebetakhbit,¹⁰⁹ Pabes included them and allowed them to benefit from the cult. In addition, they gained spiritual capital and shared their father’s status.

99 Compare, for example, Brand 2007, 52-55.

100 Martin et al. 2001.

101 Martin et al. 2001, 18 and pl. 1.

102 Martin et al. 2001, 19 [1] and pl. 15.

103 *Jr(w) hꜣr-ꜣ n jt-j*, ‘working under the supervision of (literally the arm) of my father’, cf. Martin et al. 2001, 20, n. 3 and [4], pl. 17

104 Martin et al. 2001, 24.

105 Martin et al. 2001, 24, not considering the option that Pabes was not Khay’s biological son, rather they view him as his eldest son and wonder if he predeceased his father (Martin et al. 2001, 28).

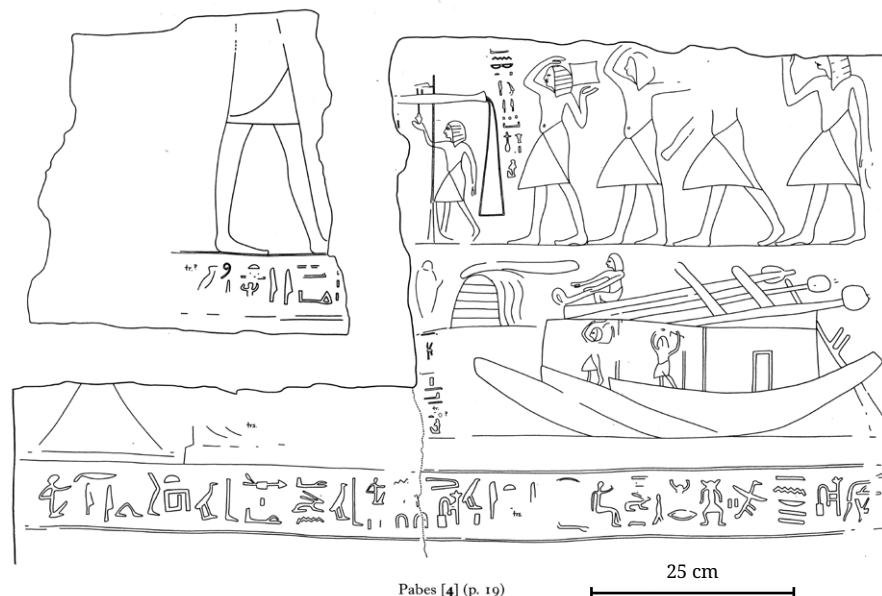
106 Martin et al. 2001, 21, ns 6-7, [7] and pl. 16.

107 Martin et al. 2001, 21 [6] and pl. 19.

108 Martin et al. 2001, 24 and see Leiden inv. no. AM 108, cf. Martin et al. 2001, 22 [13] and pls 24 and 70-71.

109 Martin et al. 2001, 22 [13] and pl. 18.

Figure 4.4. Martin 2011, pl. 17 kindly provided by the Egypt Exploration Society, London, UK.



Surely representations of people's work are common, yet if we agree on the hypothesis that Pabes might have been an orphan or of lower descent and that he prospered through the mentorship of Khay, it would make even more sense to emphasise his connection to Khay's family in his tomb and explain why he is not represented in the Khay's tomb. A parallel for such mentorship is, for example, the case of Hesysunebef (i), the protégé of Neferhotep (ii) at Deir el-Medina.¹¹⁰

Irrespective of the question of whether Pabes indeed gained social prestige by means of mentorship, Pabes himself shared the capital he had. On the northern wall of Pabes's central chapel, where "the unloading of ships and weighing of goods, presumably in Memphis" is depicted in the relief,¹¹¹ a small figure checking the weighing procedure is identified as deputy commander of traders (*jdwn (?) pd.t šwy.ty*) Neferher,¹¹² in other words, working for his superior Pabes (fig. 4.4). Underneath the name of the chief artisan (*hr.y hmw.tjw*) Penanuket is written,¹¹³ but if there was another related figure, it is now lost. So, in addition to potentially gaining status and spiritual capital from his (allegedly new) family, Pabes returned the favour and handed spiritual capital down to two of his employees by depicting them as identifiable persons in his tomb.

Loss of Status in the Tomb of Horemheb

In the tomb of Horemheb, many generic figures are represented. When compared to Maya's tomb, for example, it is even more evident how few of them were named. In fact, the majority of individuals in Horemheb's tomb are generic figures. The most prominent named individual is the royal scribe of the army Ramose who appears beside Horemheb on the southern wall of the entrance to the statue room, that is "in a place where (...) a son or other relative of the deceased might be expected".¹¹⁴ A parallel was found in 1981 and probably belongs to the easternmost part of the southern wall of the second courtyard.¹¹⁵ Interestingly, in both texts, the name seems to have been amended by adding the new name and title over a previously mentioned private secretary (*sš šꜥ.t*) Sementawy.¹¹⁶ Here we see again very clearly that spiritual capital is gained by iconographic proximity to the tomb owner, but also that changing alliances might be reflected in changing the decoration where necessary during the tomb owner's life. The register below shows a row of offering bearers moving westwards into the main cult chapel.¹¹⁷ In front of the foremost person, an inscription has been carved: 'overseer of the doorkeepers Pehehnefer'. This was probably the same individual who appears as 'lector priest of Horemheb' on the south and north plinths situated "on either side of the doorway at the west end of

110 Davies 1999, 32-33 and see Janssen 1982, 109-115.

111 Martin et al. 2001, 20 [4] and pl. 17.

112 The excavators identified as such the first of the men carrying goods, which seems less plausible.

113 Martin et al. 2001, 20 [4] and pl. 17.

114 Martin 2016, 54-55 [56] and pls 23 and 108-109.

115 Martin 2016, 55 and 76-77 [70] and pls 37, 47 and 134.

116 Martin 2016, 77.

117 Martin 2016, 55 and pl. 24.



Figure 4.5. Martin 1997, pl. 37 kindly provided by the Egypt Exploration Society, London, UK.

the Statue Room, flanking the statue niches”.¹¹⁸ The style of the decoration indicates that the date is Ramesside (i.e. at a time when Horemheb was venerated as a deified king in the tomb).¹¹⁹ Apparently, Pehehnefer felt free to amend the tomb decoration elsewhere as well and put himself in a prominent spot by naming and hence identifying himself as the foremost offering bearer. Pehehnefer’s¹²⁰ sons Horemhebemnetjer, Amenemope and the latter’s wife [...].mennefer and her sister Bakenmut are also depicted on the north plinth,¹²¹ but not elsewhere in the tomb, like Pehehnefer’s wife Takhat only on the south plinths.¹²²

Another example of name erasure, and hence presumably loss of status, is evident in the tomb of Horemheb, possibly from the north side of the antechapel (D).¹²³ A lector priest Nehesis was depicted in front of the goddess Nephthys supporting the mummy of Horemheb.

Later this text was replaced by “his lector priest (*hr.y-ḥb.t=f*) and *sem*-priest (*sm*), both cut over the original inscription (and) [o]ver the shaven head of the priest a short wig was later carved in plaster.”¹²⁴ In short, what we see here is an interesting case of the removal of spiritual capital without adding a new name, in other words, a previously named figure becomes generic.

Loss of Status in the Tomb of Tia and Tia

Different from colleagues and employees, servants in general are even less frequently named explicitly. An interesting example comes from the tomb of Tia and Tia. On the south wing of the west wall of the main chapel in the second courtyard, a damaged relief shows the male Tia in adoration of a mummified deity (probably the god Osiris, or otherwise Ptah).¹²⁵ In the smaller register underneath, five bald offering bearers are preserved moving north towards the entrance of the main chapel (fig. 4.5).¹²⁶

118 Martin 2016, 66 and see 66-68 [65-66] and pls 30-31, for the individual.

119 Martin 2016, 55.

120 Martin 2016, 162, n. 374.

121 Martin 2016, 67 [66] and pls 30-31.

122 Martin 2016, 66 [65] and pl. 29.

123 Martin 2016, 102 [112a] and pls 57 and 160.

124 Martin 2016, 102.

125 Martin 1997, 25 [63] and pls 37 and 144-147. The excavators suggested that the fragments [204] (pl. 79) showing the head of the god Ptah or [257] (pl. 86) showing the head of Osiris could belong to this wall.

126 Martin 1997, 25 [62] and pls 37 and 144-147.

The men wear pleated dresses and present offering tables and flowers to the deceased. Like in the case of Maya's relief only some figures are identified by name and titles. (*sdm*-*ḫ*, perhaps to be considered literally "the one who hears the call"¹²⁷ in the sense of generic staff personnel.¹²⁸). The third man in the row, Djedamennakht brings a calf, and behind him, Tjlamun¹²⁹ brings an oryx into the chapel. Again, the foremost individual was not identified. Next to the second servant, the excavators noted "traces of an erased name".¹³⁰ Somebody took the trouble to chisel away the name and title of the second servant and to carefully smooth over the surface of the relief afterwards. This is interesting because apparently not only could individuals gain spiritual capital by being depicted in their superior's tomb, they could also lose it by being erased (assuming the erasure was contemporary, which is not certain). The person at the rear of the row is too damaged to tell whether or not there was an inscription. Tjlamun appears again with an oryx in the corresponding row on the north wing of the west wall.¹³¹

Conclusion

Although situated next to each other at Saqqara, the tombs of Maya, Horemheb, Tia and Pabes are all very different in size, architecture, style of decoration, date, and also in terms of tomb ownership. In addition, the state of preservation varies greatly and different parts of the tombs (and hence reliefs) have been preserved or remained unfinished. What is depicted in one tomb, may very well have been lost in another. Also, the purpose of the tombs is different. While Maya, Pabes and Tia were buried in their tombs, Horemheb was not. He used his tomb in the Valley of the Kings and probably left his Saqqara tomb to his wife Mutnodjmet.¹³² Maya was a very high official, but Tia's wife and Horemheb were (each in their own way) royal; Pabes, on the other hand, was a lower ranking official. In fact, it seems status is the main issue here. The lower the status of the tomb owner, the fewer representations of employees seem to appear. On

the other hand, high status, as in case of Horemheb (or his wife), seems to go along with fewer 'private' offering situations (in addition to issues of preservation). However, what the topoi considered important may also have varied. Being Ramesside in date, the veneration of gods by the tomb owners in the case of Tia is more important in the decoration than their own veneration by others.¹³³ In the case of Horemheb, his military achievements seem more important. For Pabes, the manifestation of him as a family member of Khay seems to have been most the important. Yet, in most tombs and in spite of the individual differences between the tombs, we see the representation of named individuals other than the nuclear family of the deceased. This naming, or not naming, was deliberate. I hope to have demonstrated that representing individuals by name and title not only added to the tomb owners' status by demonstrating their access to generic staff members, priests, and lower-ranking officials, but also benefitted those identified individually by improving their status and spiritual capital. Status and spiritual capital were gained through naming, and the fact that this naming was deliberate becomes even more evident by the fact that names could also be erased. The agent deciding who was allowed to gain spiritual capital in his/her/their tomb was most likely the tomb owner, yet by means of later additions, people could also add or even remove themselves or others from a tomb (although in case of removal it would be others only). In this paper, I hope to have shown that whether they have been named in the original design, erased from it, or added as a 'graffito', the individuals identified in the tombs are more than generic metaphors, they were actually provided with agency. The experience of the wider community beside the tomb owner was a significant factor in these religious practices at New Kingdom Saqqara. For the ancient Egyptian employees, servants, and priests, who were not always able to afford their own monumental tomb, immortality was dependent on the response of others, either on the tomb owners' (or graffiti-writer's) decision to leave a record of them. Today, however, their memory depends on our conclusions, which depend on the state of preservation of wall decorations, either on site or in museums.

127 Compare discussion in Černý 2001, 29.

128 See also Málek 1988, 131 for *sdm.w ḫ* as "lower-order managers and specialists" and see Bogoslovski 1977, 81-94.

129 A man called Tjlamun also appears prominently on a stela now in Copenhagen, where he performs the opening of the mouth ritual with a Khnum-headed wand, cf. Martin 1997, 37 [109] and pls 57 and 165. For the identification of the two Tjlamuns cf. Martin 1997, 25 n. 3. Unfortunately, the stela's provenance is unclear.

130 Martin 1997, 25 [62] and pls 37 and 146.

131 Martin 1997, 25 [66] and pls 39 and 149 (unfortunately not well-visible in the photograph).

132 Strouhal 1982, 317-322. Of course, the original use of the tomb was that Horemheb should be buried there, and indeed for Mutnodjmet the monument remained a tomb in spite of or beside her husband's veneration in it.

133 Tia and Tia do in fact show their employees in their tomb. The scribe Iuruf and the overseer (?) Minhotep appear, small in scale, but performing responsible tasks on the vessel that ships Tia and Tia to Abydos, but that's another story, cf. Martin 1997, 28 and pl. 47, and see also Weiss 2018, 467-468.

Practice, Meaning and Intention

Interpreting Votive Objects from Ancient Egypt

Richard Bussmann

Culture, Practice, and Meaning

Traditional syntheses of ancient Egyptian religion are based on what Egyptologist Jan Assmann has referred to as the “monumental discourse”, centred on hieroglyphic tomb and temple inscriptions and handwritten religious texts.¹ Interpretation of the monumental discourse tends to be governed by the implicit assumption that the meaning of objects and words resides within them. Culture is thus understood as being equivalent with its materialisation and the analysis of culture as a method to reveal the ideas hidden behind words, images and objects. A corollary of this approach is the rather exclusive focus on the ideas of the elite, which stand out more clearly in the ancient record and seem to be articulated in a more explicit, programmatic fashion than those of other social groups.

Up to the 1980s, cultural history has been an equivalent to a history of (elite) ideas in other disciplines of the social and cultural sciences, too. In 1989, cultural historian Lynn Hunt edited a volume, entitled *New Cultural History*, which drew on developments in the French *École des annales*. The authors of the contributions criticise traditional approaches to cultural history and started embracing questions from within sociology and anthropology. One of the fundamental paradigms emerging from subsequent debates has been social practice.² French annalist Roger Chartier has argued that the aim of cultural history is to explore the recursive interplay of representations and practices, ‘recursive’ meaning that ideas are constantly materialised and change as a consequence of the interpretation and adaption of these materialisations in different social groups.³ Following cultural historian Michel de Certeau, Willem Frijhoff defines culture as the strategies by which individuals incorporate symbols controlled by others into their own repertoire of knowledge and behaviour in order to establish their lives as meaningful events.⁴ These and related approaches place the emphasis on the dynamic process of assigning meaning to objects and words.

1 Shafer 1991; Assmann 1984; Hornung 1971; Morenz 1960; Frankfort 1948b; anthropological approach by Quirke 2015.

2 Bennett 2008; Burke 2005; Hardtwig/Wehler 1996; Daniel 1993.

3 Chartier 1993.

4 Frijhoff 1998, 105-106.

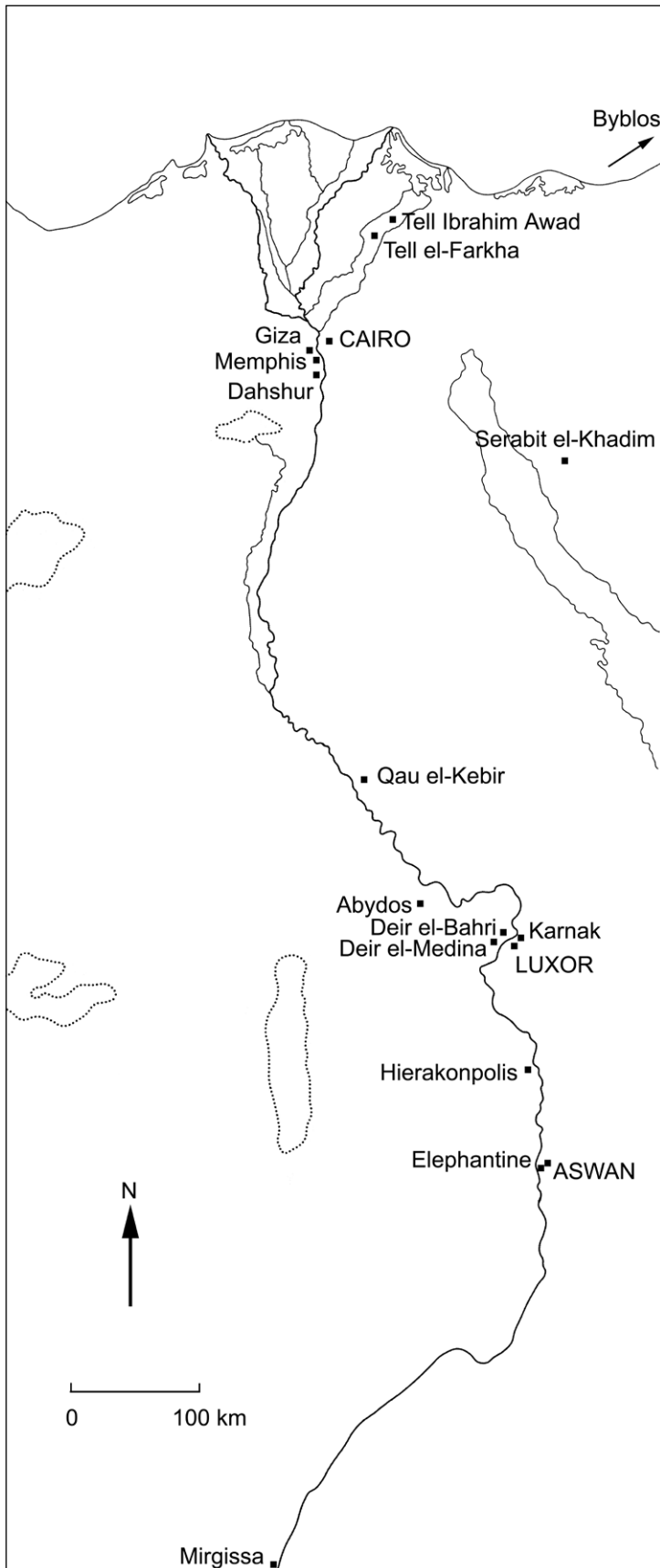


Figure 5.1. Sites mentioned in the paper. Map compiled by R. Bussmann.

A case-study from more recent contexts may exemplify the difference between dynamic and static approaches to culture. Social anthropologist McKim Marriott described religious processions in provincial India during the 1950s.⁵ When the villagers were asked what the image of a specific deity would represent or mean, they offered widely diverging answers. Similarly, ancient Egyptian festivals and statues of deities might have meant different things to different people. Although this point is fairly banal, it is hardly factored in for the interpretation of ancient Egyptian processions. In fact, systemising views prevail in ancient sources, whereas subversive voices have rarely survived. Social anthropologists Jack Goody and, later, Charles Stewart have argued that systemisation is typical of central initiatives, often requiring material objectifications, predominantly in writing.⁶ Members in local communities may adopt and re-interpret systemised thought and develop new meanings by reconciling local with central knowledge. The focus in the analysis of culture away from the objectifications towards their appropriation does not mean that results obtained from source immanent analyses are wrong. The meaning established by Egyptologists of an object, using written documents, could very well be identical with the meaning an ancient Egyptian would have assigned to it. However, the neglect of alternative interpretations obliterates the open and often controversial nature of social symbols.⁷

In archaeology, following models developed by Anthony Giddens and Pierre Bourdieu, social practice is usually discussed under the term ‘agency’.⁸ The original point of departure for the discussion was the question of whether individuals passively reproduce established patterns of behaviour or whether their behaviour mirrors their intentions and deliberate decisions. Reconciling structure and individual, Giddens and Bourdieu have

5 Marriott 1955, 194.

6 Stewart 1991; Goody 1986.

7 Eriksen 2001, 220-225.

8 Preucel/Mrozowski 2010, 131-136; Gardner 2004; Barrett 2001; Dobres 2000.



Figure 5.2. Selection of votive objects from the local shrine of the Third Millennium at Elephantine: a) boy, faience, h: 7.2 cm; b) baboon, limestone, h: 7.5 cm; c) crocodile, faience, l: 9.4 cm; d) flint pebbles of different sizes; a) and b) were found in a heap of redeposited votive objects; c) was found between the floors of the subsidiary niche in the shrine; the flint pebbles came to light from various layers of the shrine. From Dreyer 1986, Taf. 22 (86); Taf. 29 (156), Taf. 34 (182), Taf. 57 (457). Courtesy Deutsches Archäologisches Institut.

suggested that people are knowledgeable agents who use resources available to them in order to develop strategies and achieve their goals. Agency was further refined on theoretical and philosophical grounds in the context of archaeology.⁹ This paper explores what can be gained from these discussions for the interpretation of specific evidence in its cultural and historical context.

Egyptological research reaches increasingly beyond descriptive notions of practice, using some of the arguments summarised above, including with references to debates in theory.¹⁰ The following discussion builds on these and related approaches to Egyptian religion based on

the archaeological record.¹¹ The aim is to situate Egyptian votive objects in a praxeological context.

Diachronic Overview of Votive Deposits in Local Shrines

The earliest votive objects in Egypt were found in local community shrines dated to a period, when political authority became centralised and the early state developed in the late Fourth Millennium BCE.¹² Votive practice flourished during the Early Dynastic period and the Old Kingdom (c. 2900-2200 BCE). The excavated shrines at Elephantine, Hierakonpolis, Abydos, Tell Ibrahim Awad and Tell el-Farkha (fig. 5.1) have yielded a rich repertoire

9 Gardner 2008; Osborne/Tanner 2007.

10 Weiss 2015c; Nyord/Kjølby 2009; Vischak 2006; Smith 2001; Von Pilgrim 2001.

11 Fitzenreiter 2011; 2004; Kemp 1995; Baines 1991; 1987.

12 Pinch/Waraksa 2009 for a short summary of votive practices in ancient Egypt.

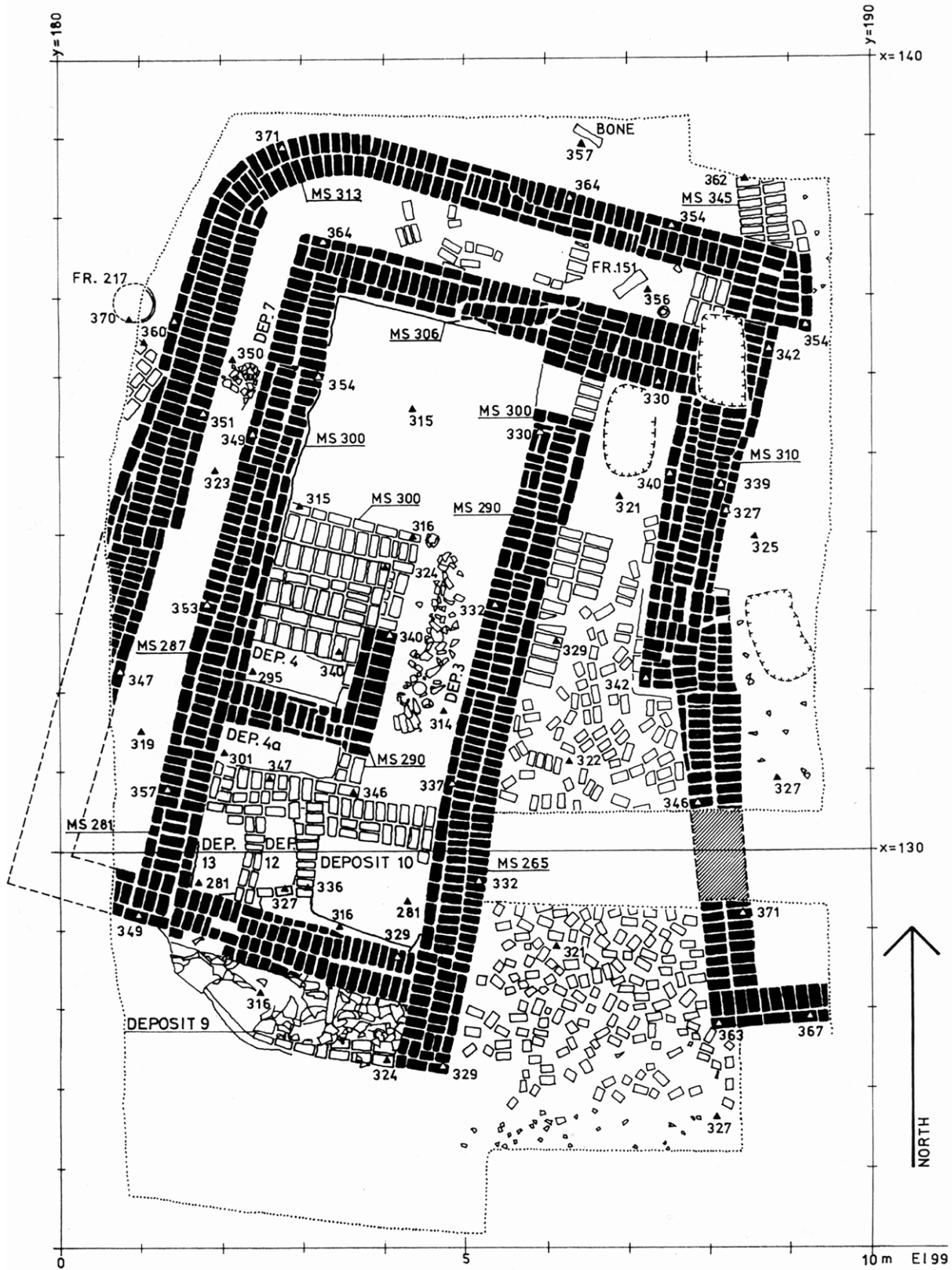


Figure 5.3. Plan of phase 2c of the mud brick shrine at Tell Ibrahim Awad, Third Millennium, 'dep' and 'deposit' indicating the location of votive deposits. After Eigner 2000, fig. 3. Courtesy Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften.

of votive objects, most of which are uninscribed (fig. 5.2).¹³ These include faience figurines depicting men, women, boys and girls, baboons, crocodiles, frogs, scorpions, birds and other animals as well as model objects, such as pots and boats. Some of these types were also made of mud, limestone, hard stones and semi-precious stones. Jewellery, natural flint pebbles and stone vessels were offered, too. Votive objects made from metal were rarely found, probably because these were re-melted in later times. Figurative objects of bone and ivory (hippopotamus, elephant) were also found. Hierakonpolis, a central place of the state formation period, stands out among the early shrines, due to the quantity of high-quality objects found in the temple precinct, such as ceremonial mace heads and palettes, stone vessels, and monumental objects.¹⁴ Objects inscribed with a royal name were rare at all sites.

Neither the few royal inscriptions on votive objects, nor the iconography of the other objects make clear references to the deities worshipped in the local shrines. The names, epithets and iconography of many deities, in whose shrines the votive objects were found, are only known from later sources or are entirely unknown.

Although the range of votive types is fairly similar from site to site, stylistic features suggest that the votive objects were made locally.¹⁵ The objects were found in secondary votive deposits, under the corners of walls, deposited in vessels, pits or built caches, where they had been placed after the clearing and restoration of the shrines (fig. 5.3).

The funerary cult of kings in the same period is of an entirely different nature. Spatially, it was centred on the temples attached to the pyramids and, economically, it drew on taxes collected from domains in the entire country.¹⁶ Different from the local shrines reviewed above, a few stelae and statues of high-ranking officials were found in the pyramid temples, whereas figurative votive objects were almost absent from the find assemblages.¹⁷ An interesting exception are hedgehog ships discovered in the valley temple of the Bent Pyramid of Sneferu at Dahshur.¹⁸ Similar to the valley temple of Menkaure,¹⁹ the valley temple of the Bent Pyramid seems to have served a local community as a cult centre focussed on the deceased king.

In the Middle Kingdom (c. 2010-1650 BCE), kings and central administration developed a stronger interest in

local shrines and replaced many of them with stone-lined temples decorated with royal imagery.²⁰ Due to the constant rebuilding of the local temples in later periods, relevant archaeological layers of the Middle Kingdom, which may have included votive material, are likely to have been destroyed. Perhaps the best example for the continuation of the votive practice throughout the Middle Kingdom is the obelisk temple of Byblos, the well-known Egyptian outpost on the Levantine coast.²¹ Figurines similar to the votive objects of the Third Millennium are attested in settlements and tombs of the Middle Kingdom, corroborating the assumption that votive practices continued in this period.²²

New Kingdom (1539-1077 BCE) votive practice is well attested and has been excellently discussed by G. Pinch.²³ Building on a review of the votive objects found in shrines of the goddess Hathor, Pinch explores the social profile of the individuals offering. She also draws on wisdom texts of the period, which for the first time mention the visit to temples by non-royal individuals. The votive objects include inscribed stelae, linen, stelae depicting ears, female figurines made of faience and mud, phallic objects made from wood and other materials, figurines of cows and cats, jewellery, scarabs, beads and natural flint pebbles (figs 6.4 and 6.5). Similar objects were found in shrines dedicated to deities other than Hathor.²⁴

Different from the votive objects of the Old Kingdom, those of the New Kingdom show a stronger overlap with objects found in contemporaneous domestic and funerary contexts. Types previously not attested include female figurines, scarabs, cows, cats and phalli. The proportion of inscribed stelae and statues is significantly higher. Their imagery and inscriptions make explicit reference to the names, epithets and iconography of specific deities.

The excellently preserved temple of Mirgissa, near the Second Cataract in Lower Nubia, allows for a more detailed analysis of cultic activities and votive practices. It was built by Thutmose III in the corner of a Middle Kingdom fortress. By the time of Thutmose III, a local community had emerged at the site with the temple as their spiritual centre (fig. 5.6).²⁵ The main sanctuary, lined with stone slabs, presumably decorated with royal imagery, was archaeologically sterile. The subsidiary sanctuary, in contrast, was cramped with votive objects. The sanctuary was accessed from a pillared hall via an ante-chamber in whose centre a repaired water basin was found. A statue

13 Kawai 2011 with finds from Saqqara North; Bussmann 2010; Van Haarlem 2009.

14 Bussmann 2013; alternative discussions of early shrines by McNamara 2008; Kopp/Raue 2008.

15 Bussmann 2011.

16 Posener-Kriéger et al. 2006; Posener-Kriéger 1976.

17 Verbovsek 2004, 14-16, 40-42, 87-89, 146, 149-151, 153-155 for the statues.

18 Fakhry 1961, 14, pl. 49b.

19 Kemp 2006, 207-209; Reisner 1932, 46-47, pls 8, 10.

20 Richards 2005, 38-45; Hirsch 2004; Verbovsek 2004, 161-165; Franke 1994.

21 Pinch 1993, 79; Dunand 1950-1958.

22 Kemp/Merrillees 1980, 105-175, pls 10-24.

23 Teeter 2010; Waraksa 2009 with fresh evidence; Pinch 1993.

24 For example, Exell 2009; DuQuesne 2009; Hassan 1953; Petrie 1909, pls 7-17; Quibell/Green 1900, 12, pl. 46 [5, 7, 11].

25 Kemp 1995, 27-28, with a summary; Karlin 1970.

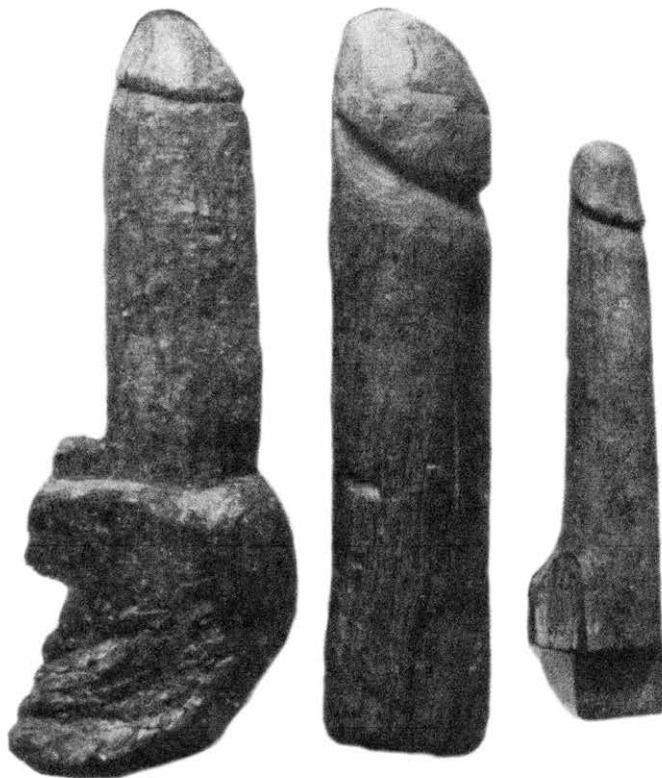
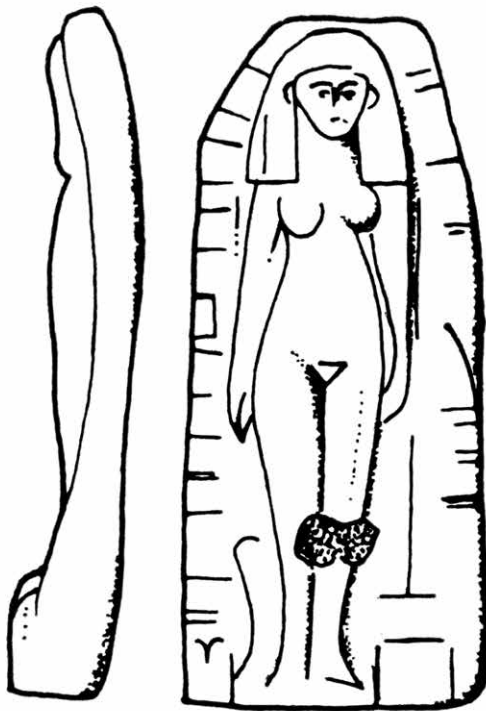
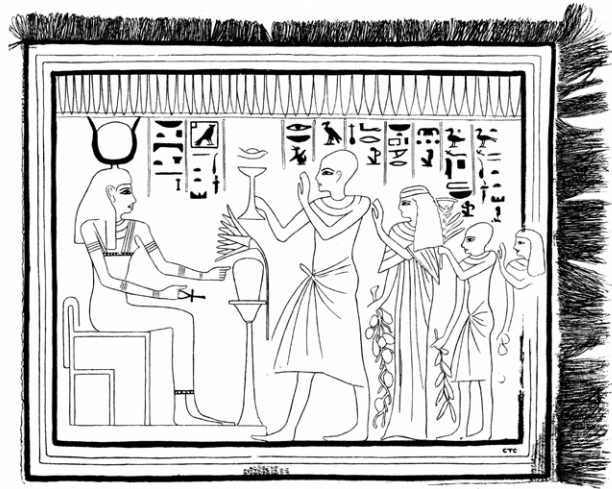
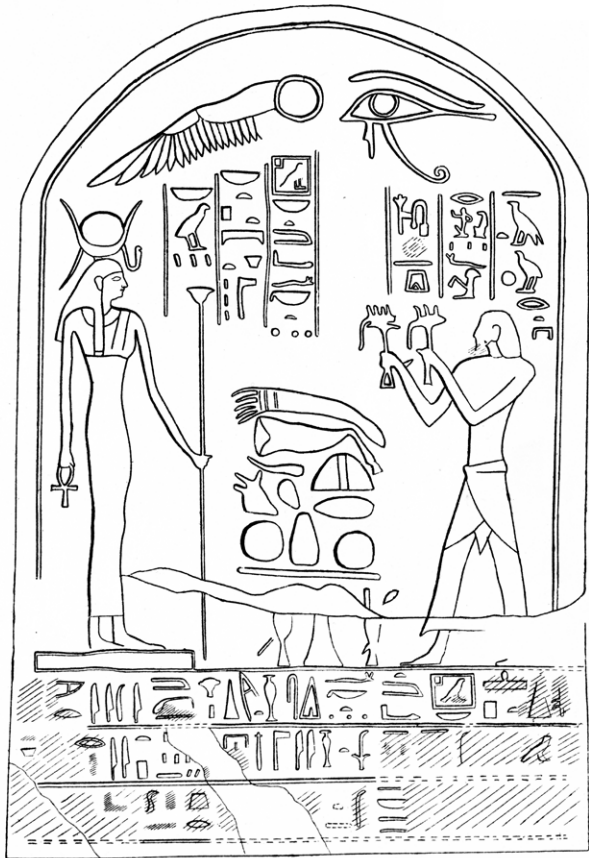


Figure 5.4 (left, above). Inscribed votive objects of the New Kingdom, all found redeposited: a) stela from Serabit el-Khadim, h: 54.8 cm; b) linen from Deir el-Bahri, 36.0 × 29.0 cm; c) "ear stela" dedicated to "Ptah who listens to the prayer", h: 9.6 cm. After Peet/Gardiner 1917, pl. 67, no. 235; Naville 1913, pl. 31.3; Petrie 1913, pl. 10.10. Courtesy Egypt Exploration Society.

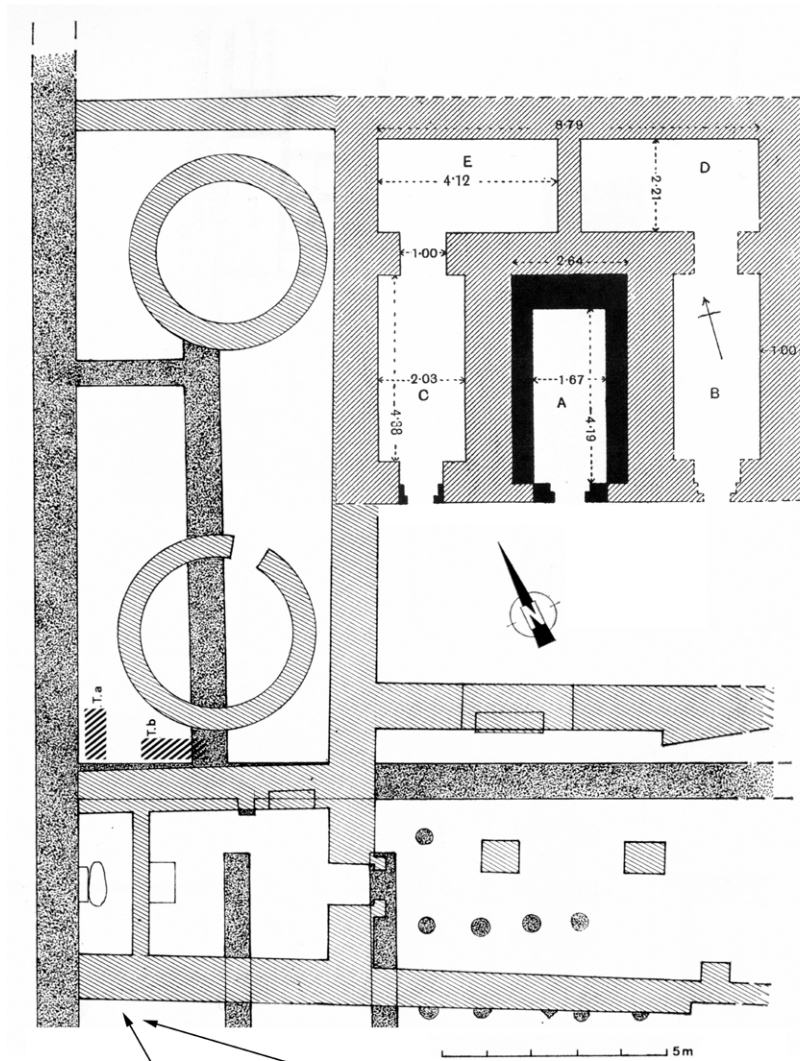


Figure 5.5 (left, below). a) Female figurine from the subsidiary sanctuary at Mirgissa, faience, h: 10.7 cm, Eighteenth Dynasty (New Kingdom); b) Phalli from Deir el-Medina, wood, seize not known, New Kingdom, found redeposited. After Karlin 1970, 350; Hornblower 1926, pl. E. Courtesy Éditions Geuthner.

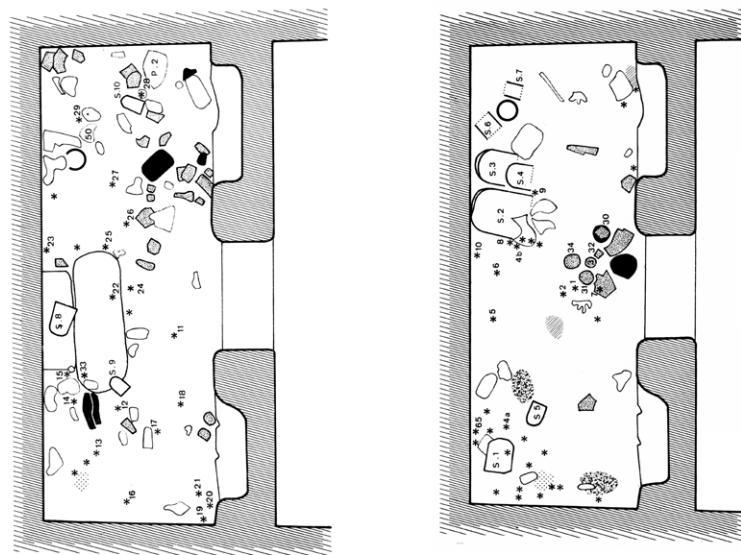


Figure 5.6 (right). Local temple of Mirgissa, Eighteenth Dynasty. Close-up of two different layers in the subsidiary sanctuary, showing find spot of pedestal, pottery, stelae, baskets and votive objects. After Karlin 1970, figs 8, 10 und fig. 3, combined with Lyons 1916, 183. Courtesy Éditions Geuthner and Egypt Exploration Society.

of the goddess Hathor was probably set up on a simple pedestal, formed of mud bricks and a chunk of granite. Broken bowls and pot stands found in the entrance area of the sanctuary are evidence of offerings made to Hathor, which included fish and plants. Votive objects were placed in baskets or redeposited in a vessel found in a corner of the chamber. Of the five stelae leaning against the rear wall, three were dedicated by women, two by low-ranking priests. Pinch hypothesises that the majority of the votive clientele at Mirgissa were women who approached Hathor with “female concerns”, particularly relating to questions of pregnancy and child birth.²⁶

Practice and Intention

The figurative votive objects reviewed above make weak references to the iconography and mythological role of specific deities. For this reason, it has been argued that the shapes of the objects express the intention of the individuals offering them. For instance, figurines of crocodiles, found in Old Kingdom community shrines, have been interpreted as expressing the wish for a) protection of children, because crocodiles had a strong instinct for breeding their offspring, or b) protection from attacks by crocodiles as shown on tomb reliefs, or c) regeneration because crocodiles would bath in the river Nile in the night, which is identified as the primeval waters of Nun, according to mythology, or d) rebirth, since the royal Books of the Netherworld from the New Kingdom were associated with the solar cycle, or e) virility as suggested by the royal Pyramid Texts of the Old Kingdom.²⁷

Methodologically, these interpretations are based on either the natural behaviour of crocodiles or their representations in other ancient Egyptian sources, visual or written. They suggest that the crocodile had a definite meaning which would explain why it was selected as a votive object. However, the five meanings suggested above are highly diverse and even contradictory. Some of the other votive objects, such as frogs or scorpions, are argued to have had similar meanings. Moreover, the list of five could easily be extended to embrace a whole range of additional meanings. Certainly, if it was possible to ask an agent why he or she had chosen the figurine of a crocodile, he or she might have referred to one of the meanings extrapolated by Egyptologists. In fact, the stela inv. no. BM EA 1632 from Assiut, dedicated to the local god Wepwawet who is called “the saviour” in the label, shows an unusual scene of an individual having escaped the attack of a crocodile. The implication is that the stela was offered to thank Wepwawet for his help in a life-threatening

situation.²⁸ It is entirely possible that all votive objects depicting a crocodile were offered for the same reason. However, since the crocodile had a range of additional qualities, according to Egyptological interpretation, the method for establishing meaning, as shown above, fails to explain what it promises to demonstrate, namely that there is a *necessary* relation between intention and image.

At first sight, it seems safer to depart from the inscriptions on votive objects to understand the intention of an agent. The female figurines are typically interpreted as expressing a wish for fertility and the health of mothers and children. Two of them, stylistically dating to the Middle Kingdom, have handwritten texts on them asking for a child to be born to a woman.²⁹ While these examples are in line with modern expectations, a third figurine, from the New Kingdom village of Deir el-Medina, was offered by an individual who wished to receive revenues from the temple income.³⁰ Although the exact translation of the inscription is debatable, votive imagery and inscription fall apart in this case.

Whereas handwritten vows and prayers were added to votive figurines and jewellery in rare cases, inscriptions were regularly included on stelae, statues and linen and should offer insight into the intention behind the offering act. However, these objects contain stereotype formulae and were probably purchased off the shelf, modified here and there to include additional depictions and names of members of the family.³¹ Apparently, what mattered in the first place to individuals, who dedicated a stela, a piece of linen or a statue, was the activity itself of dedicating an object and the display of their identity.

Consequently, people did not select a votive object commensurate with a specific vow. Rather they chose objects available to them at the time when the offering was made, each object allowing to varying degrees for individual vows and prayers to surface. Inscribed objects, such as stelae, statues and linen, are fairly restrictive in this respect. Other votive objects were occasionally inscribed. Due to a lack of convention, these inscriptions contain rather individual and specific vows, which can, but do not have to, comply with what the votive imagery would suggest. The actual vows and prayers put forward through the votive objects cannot be established from the votive imagery.

26 Pinch 1993, 96, 342-343.

27 Wiese 1996, 144-145; Dreyer 1986, 76.

28 Brunner 1958.

29 Berlin inv. no. 14517 (purchased on the antiquities market) and Louvre inv. no. E 8000 (find spot unknown); see Desroches-Noblecourt 1953, 34-40, and Schott 1930.

30 Pinch 1993, 241-243. Ramose is known from various inscriptions, see Exell 2006.

31 Pinch 1993, 98, 125, 326.

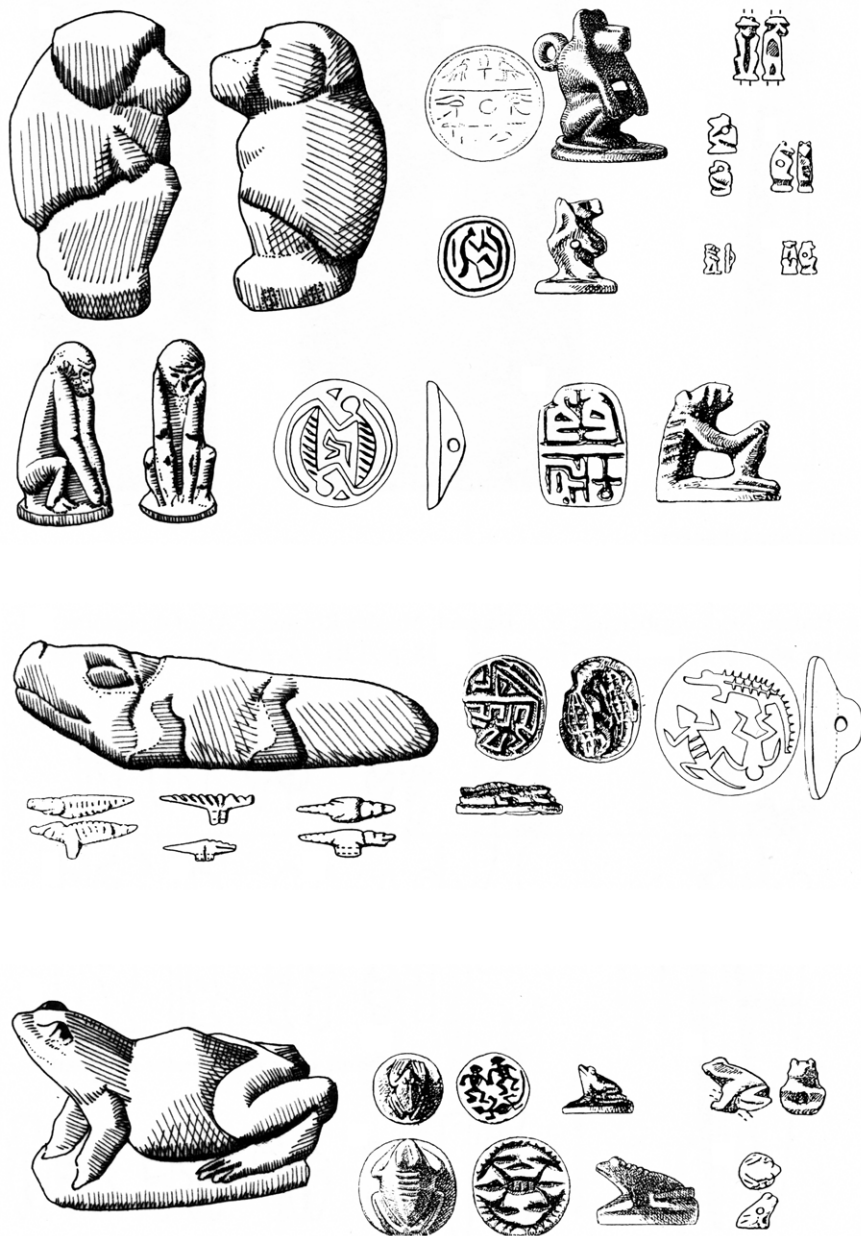


Figure 5.7. Overlap of iconography of temple votive objects, amulets and seals from burials of the late Third and early Second Millennium at Qau el-Kebir. Not to scale. After Dubiel 2008, Taf. XVII. Courtesy Ulrike Dubiel.

Agents and Meaning

The standardised formats of visual and textual models reflect the exclusive nature of stelae, statues and linen.³² As with modern branded products, the appropriation of prestigious items by imitation and modification fosters their exclusive status.³³ Sociologically, their owners belong to the lower ranks of administration, as the prosopographical details given and the mediocre quality of many of these objects suggest.³⁴ Exclusiveness should

therefore not be conflated with luxury, since it only marks a relative position on the scale of accessibility and desirability. Put simply, a medium quality stela was only desirable for those who could not usually afford it.

Exclusiveness is, of course, not restricted to inscribed objects and visual display, but also applies to the materials used for votive objects. Access to materials and the technological skills to work on them have a great impact on their prestige.³⁵ Mud objects were probably offered by members of all social groups, from low-ranking villagers

32 Exell 2009, 11, 135.

33 Deliberate deviation from the convention (Robins 1997) underlines the authority of the formula.

34 Exell 2009; Pinch 1993, 344.

35 Richards 2005, 109-111 with an attempt at quantifying the value of materials using a wealth index; Shaw/Nicholson 2000 for ancient Egyptian materials and technologies.

and peasants to the local elite. In contrast, objects made of hard precious stones were likely restricted to very few, which explains the low number of items from these materials discovered in the archaeological record.

Another method for relating objects to people is the comparison of votive material with objects from the burial equipment of different tombs. As a rough guide, material features of a tomb (size, equipment, location) and skeletal remains (sex, age) can be used as social identifiers.³⁶ Since ancient Egyptian burial customs changed through time, interpretation of burial assemblages needs to take historical context into consideration.

Some types of votive objects were found in temples as well as in tombs. For instance, ivory objects discovered in early Third Millennium shrines, particularly the temple of Hierakonpolis, were also found in tombs of kings and their followers.³⁷ The overlap suggests that ivory objects were offered in shrines by kings, courtiers and individuals of comparable social standing. In the New Kingdom, the overlap of temple votive objects with objects found in funerary and domestic contexts is stronger.³⁸ Most of the comparative material of the New Kingdom stems from tombs of high officials, but the excavated record has long been biased towards monumental tombs in this period. Recent studies suggest that some of the smaller items, such as pieces of jewellery made from faience, were regularly placed in lower-status burials, too. As a consequence, the votive material looks less elite than it previously might have done.³⁹

While most of the Old Kingdom votive figurines have no full-size equivalent in burial assemblages, their iconographic repertoire overlaps with the imagery of amulets and the shape and decoration of seals made of a similar range of materials as votive objects (fig. 6.7).⁴⁰ A comparison of the sex of the deceased with the shapes of anthropoid amulets shows an interesting mismatch: some men were buried wearing amulets depicting a woman, and some women were buried with amulets depicting a man. By analogy, votive figurines depicting a man could very well have been offered by a man or a woman. Contrary to intuitive interpretation, a human-shaped votive figurine need not represent the individual offering it.

The deceased buried with amulets during the Third Millennium were predominantly members of rural communities in provincial Egypt, the majority being

women and children.⁴¹ Consequently, the imagery of votive objects is rooted in the provincial milieu and tied to themes relevant to women and children. A magical papyrus of the New Kingdom, known as “Spells for mother and child”, shows that seals and amulets found in burials, for example those depicting a crocodile, were used in life to protect women and children, as Dubiel has demonstrated.⁴²

“Spell for tying (an amulet) for a child, a young bird.
Are you warm (in) the net? Are you warm in the bushes? Is your mother not with you? Is your sister not there to make you breathe? Is your wet nurse not there to offer protection?

Have a bullet of gold, a pellet of garnet, a seal, a crocodile and a hand brought to me in order to fell it, to remove this wish, to heat the body, and to fell this male and this female enemy of the west. May you dissolve. This is protection.

One shall recite this spell over a bullet of gold, a pellet of garnet, a seal, a crocodile and a hand; it shall be spun on a string, made an amulet and given around the neck of the child.”

In this context, the crocodile, together with the gold, garnet, seal and amulet of a hand, acquired meaning through the practice in which it was embedded, here the protection of a child. The meaning ascribed to the crocodile differs from regeneration, rebirth, virility or the protection from attacks by a crocodile. Rather, as Dubiel has shown, it belongs into a repertoire of objects used for close relationships between kin members, more specifically mother and child.

Taken together, text and archaeology shed light on how meaning was ascribed to images in specific pragmatic contexts and how practice, objects and agents were related to each other. Chronologically, the amulets of the Third Millennium were inspired by votive objects, which predate them. Apparently, a locally available repertoire of images was transferred from one field of practice, i.e. votive practice, into a related field, i.e. amulet practice.

Texts, Visual Display and the Archaeological Record

Texts, images and material culture articulate votive practice in different ways. Intuitively, one might assume that texts and images express ideas, whereas archaeology shows what people actually did. If this was right, archaeology, texts and images would perfectly complement one

36 For applications and critical discussions of quantitative analyses for social modelling; see Castillos 2006; Richards 2005; Alexanian 2006; 2003; Bard 1994; Anderson 1992; Seidlmayer 1988.

37 Bussmann 2010, 389-394.

38 Pinch 1993, 127, 203, 249, 278.

39 Franzmeier 2017; Goulding 2013; Kemp et al. 2013.

40 Dubiel 2008, 199-221, table 12.1; Bussmann 2010, 407-427; also Reisner 1932, 105-153.

41 Dubiel 2008, 14; Seidlmayer 2006a, 311-316; Baines 2006, 17 suggests that these burials are mid-ranking.

42 Dubiel 2008, 71-72; new edition of pBerlin 3027 by Yamazaki 2003, 40; on the use of images for magical practices see Eschweiler 1994.

another. However, the overlap is only partial and often absent. Stelae, for instance, depict food offerings made by the owner of a stela to deity, whereas the practice, in which the stela was embedded, was its setting up in a temple or along a processual route. The latter might have gone hand in hand with a food offering, but only the food offering is depicted, whereas the setting up of the stela is not. Michela Luiselli rightly points out that the activity depicted was repeatedly activated through the ritual practices in which a stela was embedded, such as processions or temple cult.⁴³ Lara Weiss highlights the importance of oral practices for understanding hieroglyphic inscriptions on stelae. She argues that “text-free” stelae were set up in domestic contexts, where prayers were recited, whereas stelae inscribed with a prayer were erected in inaccessible areas, functioning as proxies for an oral speech act.⁴⁴

The food offering scene is an iconographic convention for displaying interaction between a human individual and a deity. There are a few other such conventions serving a similar purpose, for example a human being depicted in the gesture of adoration. These conventions are selective about which aspects are displayed. The physical context of the food offering is often not shown, and the interaction between deity and human individual is represented in form of a direct face-to-face encounter, with no ritual assistants mediating. The imagery therefore shows interpreted rather than actual practice.

Royal temple reliefs are even more explicit in this respect. They depict the cultic interaction between a king and a deity, whereas, in practice, a priest was making offerings to a temple statue. The spells inscribed next to the depictions mesh ritual practice with myth, essentially by equating the offering made to a deity with the return of the Eye of Horus, a key metaphor of cosmic order, according to the Osiris myth. Very clearly, the images and inscriptions therefore depict an interpreted version of cultic practice.

Different from inscriptions and visual display, archaeology seems to offer more reliable information on what people really did. The votive objects found at Mirgissa are evidence of a practice otherwise not represented in art and texts. However, at closer inspection, the find context only tells something about the final deposition of votive objects. At best, the find situation is the result of a votive activity, often affected by several phases of redeposition and movements of the earth, unrelated to the votive practice for which it is used as evidence. Thus, objects found in an archaeological context say little about the actual act of making a votive offering, the individuals involved, their intention or what the activity meant to them. Archaeology thus does reveal aspects not articulated

in texts and visual display, but it also has limitations, which need to be factored in for an analysis of past practices.

One way of making use of archaeological context is the analysis of spatial distribution patterns. In the community shrines of the Third Millennium, the votive objects were found deposited within or close to the sanctuary. Apparently, whenever a sanctuary was felt being too crowded, it was cleared from votive objects. Although it is debatable how accessible the shrines really were, their architecture and the find location of votive objects overall suggests a rather intimate setting for votive practice. In contrast, in state-run temples of the New Kingdom, votive practice seems to be confined to subsidiary sanctuaries, as in Mirgissa, and the outer space of the enclosure wall, as at Memphis, suggesting restricted accessibility to the temples.⁴⁵ Evidently, not all temples of the New Kingdom were equally exclusive, and not all of them were state-run. The shrine of Gebel Zeit, dated to the Second Intermediate Period shortly before the New Kingdom, is an example of a rather localised cult.⁴⁶ There is little evidence to suggest that kings or central administration had a particular interest in the cultic activity of this shrine. Votive objects were found in immediate proximity to the centre of the shrine, resulting in an archaeological record much closer to Third Millennium community shrines than New Kingdom state-run temples. Diachronic change and synchronic comparison of the find contexts thus points to varying degrees of exclusion of people from access to deities.

Conclusion

Votive practice offers valuable insights into social dimensions of ancient Egyptian religion. It sheds light on the religious behaviour of social groups largely excluded from visual and written sources. The local community shrines provide good evidence for archaeological contexts of votive objects, ranging from inscribed stelae, linen and costly figurines to rather humble objects made from mud.

It has been argued in this paper that the shape of a single votive object tells little about the identity and intention of the individual offering. Rather, votive objects belong to broader streams of iconographic traditions, embedded in different social contexts. Meaning does not reside in objects but is ascribed to them through practice. Rules of display offer differential opportunities for intentions of the offering individual to surface on the object. Visual and written sources articulate votive practice as interpreted action, whereas the archaeological record captures the result of actions, often mediated only

43 Luiselli 2007.

44 Weiss 2014, 301.

45 Bussmann 2017.

46 Pinch 1993, chapter 1.6 and *passim*.

through multiple phases of redeposition. Spatial distribution patterns of votive objects offer insight into the different degrees of accessibility of shrines.

The focus of this paper is placed on methodological questions. A fuller appreciation of votive practice in ancient Egypt would require stronger consideration of diachronic developments and the historical context of individual shrines. Cross-cultural comparison of votive objects is suggested as another avenue of future research in order to understand why similar practices were articulated differently in societies of comparable social organisation and what might be specific about the Egyptian evidence.

Identifying Christian Burials

Mattias Brand

Introduction

The identification of Christians in the Late Antique funerary record is a profound challenge for modern historians and archaeologists. For a long time, scholars used to believe that the rise of Ancient Christianity could be detected in the long-term transformation of burial practices, like the establishment of new cemeteries, the absence of grave goods, or the presence of Christian identity markers. While many traditional funerary practices endured, new customs emerged over the course of time. Rather than continuing to bury their dead in the monumental mausolea and above-ground tombs, as those visible along the Via Appia in Rome or the splendidly decorated Egyptian tombs at El-Muzawwaqa, late antique Romans built new subterranean cemeteries, including the famous catacombs of Rome and Naples. Simple pit graves became more common, now mostly with an east-west orientation. Are these features to be taken as connoting Christianity? Can they be used as indicators of religious change in a particular region?

For a long time, these questions have been answered affirmatively. Simple graves without grave goods, and an east-west orientation, are commonly designated as “Christian graves”, even in absence of any explicit Christian symbols.¹ The steady transition towards this type of burial in the Fourth and Fifth Century CE has frequently been associated with the rise of the Christian Church, with its doctrines, rules, and institutions. The east-west orientation, for example, has been viewed as a meaningful identity-marker, following from Christian belief as to rise up from the grave facing the east, where Christ would return to judge the living and the dead.² For the province of Egypt, Gillian Bowen argues that Christians “made a conscious effort to adopt a distinctive mode of burial from that of their pagan contemporaries.”³ In fact, she highlights the poignant example of two cemeteries at one site as ‘separate cemeteries/separate customs’: one for ‘pagans’ and one for Christians.

This chapter will question the solidity of the conviction that the rapid spread of Christianity during the Third and the Fourth Century led to fundamental changes in burial practices. It builds on forthcoming research by Alexandra D. Pleșa and me, challenging

1 Davies 2017, 149-151; 1999, 193-199. A strong religious interpretation is also found in Dunn 2013.

2 Davies 1999, 199.

3 Bowen 2003, 169.

the ‘separate cemeteries/separate customs’ thesis.⁴ Rather than thinking about Christians and ‘pagans’⁵ as two distinct communities with their own cemeteries and burial customs, we should recognise the multi-layered nature of changing burial patterns. This is not to say that Christianity, in the long run, had no impact on commemoration rituals and burials, but I contend it was not the driving force behind the changing burial practices in the first place. Specifically, I will argue that some of the observed changes in the burial customs at Late Antique Kellis (modern Ismant el-Kharab in the Dakhleh Oasis) cannot be tied to the rise of Christianity, even though it was highlighted as one of the most outstanding examples of a site with a specific Christian cemetery with distinct burial practices. By focusing on the dating of the two cemeteries at Kellis, I will show that the burial customs changed gradually from the Second Century onwards, which makes it highly unlikely that the changes were set in motion by the rise of Ancient Christianity in the Oasis.

Changing Religions, Changing Burial Patterns?

Ancient Christianity’s slow rise to prominence was more than just another new imperial-sponsored religion. Christianity was one among a new type of religions. In contrast to earlier, ‘locative’ types of religion, to use Jonathan Z. Smith’s characterisation, these groups were “utopian” in orientation.⁶ ‘Utopian’ religion was no longer coterminous with a village or ethnic identity, but became transportable, internalised, and conceptualised as a discrete social unit: a religious community or group. It challenged the status quo with a new type of universal cosmological stories, aimed for another world. These ‘utopian’ religions organised themselves apart from pre-existing social structures, and therefore spread all over the ancient world.⁷ Consequently, we find doctrinal instructions in Ancient Christian texts regarding proper group norms and behaviour, including passages pertaining to the funerary sphere. These prescriptive elite perspectives do not directly represent the reality of most

ordinary Christians. On the contrary, many scholars have in the last decade pointed to the contrast between textualised or institutionalised religion and the lived religious choices of ancient individuals and families.⁸ Isabella Sandwell stresses this distinction as one more meaningful than the perceived ‘pagan’-Christian divide. Rather, most religious behaviour in Late Antiquity was flexible, as

“the difference between those who “loved” Christ and those who “loved” Zeus, Apollo and Calliope might well have been less than that between those who sought to impose ideas about clear cut religious identities on their world and those who continued to work with a practical sense of what was appropriate in regard to these matters.”⁹

From this standpoint, Christian beliefs and teachings may have suggested a new ‘utopian’ religion, but many Christians lived their lives in a more flexible manner, sometimes less defined by their religious identification and more by their immediate local context.¹⁰

Archaeological work on Christian burials has yet to come to terms with this focus on the inherent flexibility of religious choices, even though important steps have been made in that direction (more on this below). Despite recent work that has nuanced our understanding of religious change in Late Antique Egypt, there is a widely held conviction that a Christian identification can be inferred rather unambiguously from the funerary record. This conviction is not only built on the interpretation of Ancient Christian theological works, but also on a number of noteworthy changes in funerary practices throughout the Roman Empire during the first three to five centuries CE.¹¹ Many of these changes have already been mentioned. For the province of Egypt they include: a decline in mummification practices; an increasing number of burials with an east-west orientation; a gradual decrease of grave goods; some items with interpretably Christian symbols, such as crosses, representations of saintly figures, biblical scenes, making their way in the funerary record; the head and feet of the deceased being padded to create protrusions, and the body or the head alone fastened with coloured tapes; finally, multiple, separated cemeteries with distinct burial practices emerging around settlements.

Because many of these changes are reported to have occurred roughly at the time of the rapid expansion of Christianity during the Third and the Fourth Centuries, they are held to reflect the new Christian identification of the deceased and of their families. After decades of

4 I would like to thank A.D. Pleša for involvement in this project, as well as for her permission to publish a section of our common work.

5 Lumping all non-Christian religions together under the header of ‘paganism’ is profoundly flawed. I use ‘pagan’ only as a heuristic label, with appropriate hesitation. Jürgasch 2016.

6 Smith 1978, xiii-xiv; 1971, 236-249.

7 Jan Assmann (1978a) designated this transformation as one from “primary” to “secondary” religions. The locative vs. utopian distinction is Jonathan Z. Smith’s. The latter typology has been used extensively in modern scholarship, most recently by Greg Woolf, who stressed that “utopianism and locativism are better seen as two tendencies or emphases each offering different ritual and theological possibilities.” Woolf 2017, 29; Assmann 2009.

8 Rüpke 2016; 2013.

9 Sandwell 2007, 280.

10 This approach will be further developed in Brand 2019.

11 Rebillard 2009; Volp 2002.

circulation in the academic literature on the subject, these observations serve nowadays as criteria for identifying religious belief in burial context in the first place, and they are used to measure the Christianisation process during this period. Yet a steadily growing body of evidence is often at odds with the existing criteria of identification of Christians in the funerary record and shows a much more complex pattern of religious change.

The Fag el-Gamous necropolis in the Fayyum illustrates the changing scholarly evaluation of the observed burial patterns. Initially, the excavators tended to connect the orientation of the graves to the rapid expansion of Christianity. Those tombs with bodies placed with the head towards the east were deemed earlier, whereas those with the head oriented towards the west were almost always interpreted as relatively late, which led the principal investigator to propose that the change would have been caused by a conversion to Christianity.¹² This assessment, however, is not without problems, as a secure chronology of the cemetery is yet to be proposed, an enterprise thus far hampered by the lack of grave goods and the poor conservation of tombs situated lower in the desert bed. The preliminary chronology was established on the assumption that burials situated at greater depths are earlier than those placed closer to the surface; it seems difficult, to say the least, to translate this principle into an absolute chronology.¹³ Most notably, the results of five radiocarbon-dates from mummies show that the chronologies of individual burials do not necessarily fit the mentioned overall scheme. Rather, they suggest that the change in head orientation from east to west occurred gradually over the Third and the Fourth Centuries. These results have prompted a more nuanced approach to the relation between head orientation and religious change on the site.¹⁴

Another example of a recent reinterpretation of burial customs and religious change is Alexandra D. Pleša's evaluation of the cemeteries at Matmar and Mostagedda, excavated at the beginning of the Twentieth Century. She points out that a large proportion of the deceased buried in tombs from the Ptolemaic or early Roman time had their head westward, while at least five bodies buried at the end of the Fourth Century were not oriented westward. Instead of confirming the assumptions about so-called 'Christian' burials, these exceptions remind us of the fragility of our interpretations of the funerary material. The orientation of the body appears to have been more flexible than the 'separate cemeteries/separate customs' thesis may lead us to believe. Moreover, the continuous usage of various

necropolises at the two sites suggests that Christians and 'pagans' used the same cemetery; there is no sign of explicit differentiation between Christian and non-Christian cemeteries. Instead, the necropolises were in use concomitantly, showing a remarkable continuity from the Ptolemaic period until well after the Arab conquest of Egypt. The generous number of grave goods and jewellery in graves labelled as 'Christian' is more in line with older burial traditions than with the new trend towards simple pit graves.¹⁵ Again, the differentiation between supposedly 'Christian' graves and their 'pagan' counterparts was less distinct than previously assumed.

Taken together, these reinterpretations add flesh to the skeleton of the new theoretical frameworks about the possibility of 'multiple identities' or dynamic, flexible, religious identification in Late Antiquity. The archaeological material from older excavations offers opportunities to move beyond a textual elite perspective on the lived religious behaviour of ancient individuals, as well as a chance to critically reflect on academic assumptions inherited from the (however ground-breaking) work of previous generations.

New Approaches to Christianisation and Religious Transformation in Late Antique Egypt

It is already commonly agreed that newly-converted Christians continued to observe local and traditional practices.¹⁶ The production of amulets, talismans, and magic spells invoking traditional deities continued undisturbed, if often infused with new Christian symbols.¹⁷ Traditional festivals continued during the Fourth and Fifth, and some well into the Sixth Century, presumably attended by Christians and non-Christians alike. Recent archaeological work also confirms that traditional cultic practices were not completely eradicated over the course of the Fourth and Fifth Centuries. Although traditional temple cult stopped *de facto* in the Fourth Century, and was banned in the early Fifth, forms of traditional religious practice survived in local and domestic spheres, often in 'Christianised' form, throughout the Sixth Century.¹⁸ Occasionally, bishops frowned upon some of these practices, but as it was widespread, there is ample reason to believe that Christians themselves did not

12 Griggs 1988.

13 As was also observed in South 2012, 70-76.

14 Evans/Whitchurch/Muhlestein 2015.

15 Pleša 2017.

16 The best description of the changing burial patterns in Late Antique Egypt is found in Dunand 2007. Earlier she emphasised that "the strong attachment of the Egyptians, native or otherwise, to their funerary rituals becomes all the more clear from the fact that when they converted to a new religion, Christianity, they nevertheless did not abandon their former practices." Dunand/Zivie-Coche 2004, 333.

17 De Bruyn 2017.

18 Frankfurter 2018; 1998.

perceive these practices as dichotomously “non-Christian”. Christianness was not, as Éric Rebillard has pointed out, “the common framework of interpretation for everyday experience.”¹⁹ Christians during this period embraced their Christian identity intermittently, while negotiating other social identifications according to specific situational concerns.

This ‘situational’ approach to religious identification and action may highlight *why* and *how* some traditional practices were brought under the umbrella of Christian devotion, while others were excluded.²⁰ Following this line of thought allows for a deconstruction of the perceived dichotomy between traditional veneration and Christian practices, proposing that traditional practices and centuries-old cultural habits should be understood as ways for local communities to negotiate, understand, and perform their Christianness. In the words of David Frankfurter,

“the process of Christianization in late antiquity can no longer be said to have involved the encounter or conflict between two mighty worldviews, Christian and heathen [...]. There was always, in some form, religious mixture and contestation—at the local as well as the trans-local, “discursive level”.”²¹

This dismissal of the narrative of a ‘pagan’-Christian clash in historical scholarship is at odds with archaeological interpretations of clear-cut Christian identities and practices in the burial record. In 2003, Éric Rebillard argued that exclusive Christian burial areas emerged only in the Seventh and Eighth Centuries, whereas for the larger part of Late Antiquity, burial practices and commemoration rituals were considered to be in the domain of the family, rather than in the hands of the church. Rebillard adds that “funerary practices and, specifically, the choice of burial place does not appear to have been, in the Roman empire, an important element in the constructing of religious identity.”²² This does not mean that burial had no religious component, but that it shows the ongoing concern for ritual efficacy and the family’s investment in the transformation of the soul rather than directly reflecting specifically Christian group-norms.²³

19 Rebillard 2012, 91.

20 An interesting follow-up question in this regard is to what extent it is useful to classify these practices as either ‘Christian’, ‘Jewish’, ‘Roman’, or ‘Egyptian’. A more agency-centred approach would have to qualify the meaning of these (frequently academic) labels. See the discussion regarding amulets in Boustán/Sanzo 2017.

21 Frankfurter 2018, 31.

22 Rebillard 2009, 36.

23 Frankfurter 2018, 179.

As a result, we encounter mixed burials of Christians and non-Christians.²⁴ Some Christians may have preferred specific cemeteries, but there was no immediate nor general doctrinal concern for separate cemeteries. The lack of regulations with respect to burials appears to be mirrored by archaeological evidence across Egypt. Many Christian tombs in Egyptian necropolises have alternative orientations than the “hallmark” east-west axis, to the extent that some cemeteries are thought to have lacked any rules on orientation.²⁵ Earlier on, in the First and Second Centuries, there were many necropolises in which the dead were buried in a variety of orientations.²⁶ Tombs at various sites known to include Christian burials contain a large number of grave goods and jewellery that are generally in line with older, Ptolemaic or Roman burial customs.²⁷

To further address the tension between the new approach in historical scholarship and the “separate cemeteries/separate customs” thesis, we will now turn to the evidence at ancient Kellis.

Kellis (Ismant el-Kharab)

Ancient Kellis (modern day Ismant el-Kharab) was located in the Dakhleh Oasis in the Western Desert of Egypt. The ancient settlement was known to early travellers and Egyptologists such as Archibald Edmonstone, Bernardino Michele Maria Drovetti, and John Gardner Wilkinson. Systematic archaeological surveys commenced only in the 1980s under the directorship of Colin Hope (Monash University) as part of the Dakleh Oasis Project. The mission unearthed the remains of a thriving village inhabited between the late Ptolemaic period and the end of the Fourth Century CE. The diversity of the religious life in the village is attested by a wealth of textual and archaeological data: the various temples of Tutu (Greek Tithoes, venerated at the Main Temple as well as at two additional shrines

24 On liturgical developments, see Volp 2002, 96-234. On the silence of Church authorities related to the issue of mixed burial, see Rebillard 2009; Johnson 1997, 42.

25 For a larger discussion on the orientation of the deceased and their religious affiliation, see Fox/Tsitsaroli 2019; Dunand 2007, 174. The so-called ‘Christian’ necropolis of El Deir, in the Kharga Oasis, also shows variations in orientation, presumably from a later period. Coudert 2013.

26 On the orientation of the body in earlier times, see Raven 2005b. The mummies found in the tombs of the First and Second Century at Marina el-Alamein, west of Alexandria, were buried in various directions, many with the head to the west.

27 Dunand 2007, 180 for a summary. At El Bagawat, in the Dakhleh Oasis, numerous grave goods were reported in graves datable from the Third to the Fifth Century CE, see Kajitani 2006, 103-105. ‘Christian’ graves at Fag el-Gamous in the Fayyum are generally provided with numerous items of jewellery, as described in Smith et al. 2011.

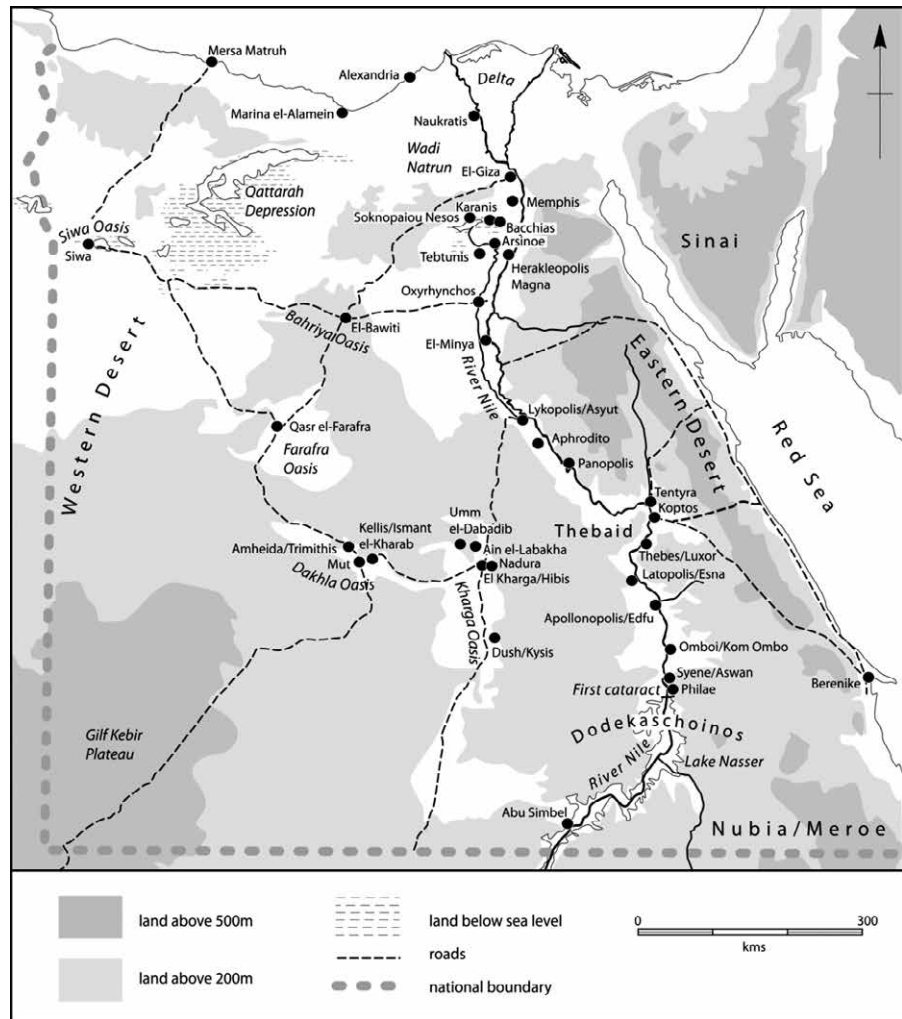


Figure 6.1. Dakhleh Oasis in Egypt, drawn by M. Mathews, published by A.L. Boozer (Courtesy of the Amheida Project).

shared with Neith and Tapshay), three church buildings erected in the Fourth Century CE, and a large corpus of papyri indicating the presence of a Manichaean, as well as a Christian, community.²⁸

The village's wealth is discernible in the funerary record. In the immediate vicinity of the settlement, running from its north-west to the south, mud brick mausolea (known as the North Tombs, the South Tombs, and their extension in the West Tombs, directly next to one of the churches) were erected between the First and the Third Century CE. Besides these mausolea, burials were also found in two large cemeteries, both located north of the village: the West Cemetery (also known as Kellis 1) and the East Cemetery (Kellis 2). Burials in these cemeteries have yielded abundant (bio-)archaeological data concerning

mummification practices, dietary habits, diseases, and the life expectancy of Kellis's ancient inhabitants.²⁹

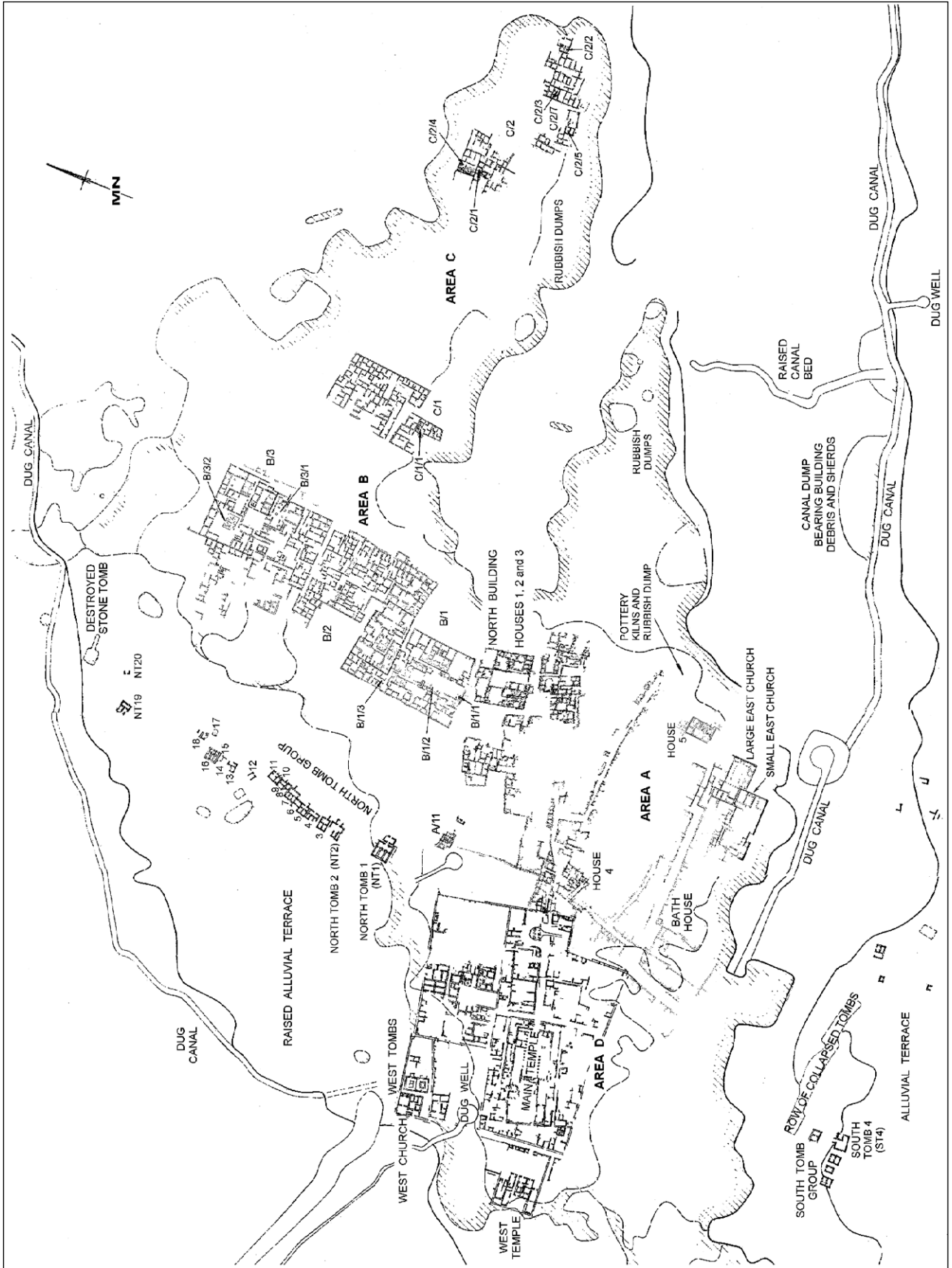
Perhaps most notably, the burial practices in the two cemeteries were sharply differentiated. They were, therefore, held to reflect the distinction between Christian burial practices and traditional religious customs. Bowen described the discrepancies of burial practice between the Kellis 1 and 2 cemeteries as "separate cemeteries; separate customs,"³⁰ and concluded that "the decision made by the Kellis community to reject traditional burial practices and commence a new cemetery along what must have been the preferred Christian lines, indicates an awareness of such practices and willingness to conform to Church doctrine."³¹ Kellis's cemeteries have not been published

28 Gardner/Alcock/Funk 2014; 1999; Worp 1995. Excavation reports and conference proceedings are published regularly in the Dakhleh Oasis Project series *Oasis Papers*.

29 Dupras et al. 2015; Dupras/Tocheri 2007; Tocheri et al. 2005; Aufderheide et al. 2004; Molto 2002; 2001; Dupras/Schwarzc 2001; Fairgrieve/Molto 2000; Aufderheide et al. 1999.

30 Bowen 2003, 169.

31 Bowen 2003, 179.



comprehensively thus far, but a close study of the existing publications and field reports gives reason to doubt the clear-cut religious differentiation behind the two cemeteries.

The Cemeteries and the Burial Practices

The West Cemetery (Kellis 1) has been dated from the late Ptolemaic to the early Roman period based on ceramic typology. It consisted of a large number of tombs cut into the clay of a higher sandstone terrace. The position of the graves followed the contours of the terrace, so graves did not have a common orientation.³² Excavations in this seemingly large cemetery have remained very limited. Only 27 tombs, most of which were disturbed by grave robbers, have been investigated thus far. They mostly consisted of single chambers with low ceilings and narrow entrances; only some tombs were multi-chambered. Wooden doors and large sandstone slabs were used to seal the entrance temporarily, as it appears that tombs were frequently opened to add new bodies. Deceased were at times placed on top of previous burials or in the space created by pushing them aside.³³ The bodies were not put in coffins but were simply wrapped in shrouds and deposited on funerary beds.³⁴ A few had the head and the feet covered in gilded cartonnage, of which the best preserved example displays a sphinx-shaped representation of god Tutu.³⁵ Other grave goods found include ceramics, jewellery, and small wooden *ba*-birds with human heads and spread wings.³⁶ The tombs were also provided with libation tables for traditional commemorative practices, some of which were reused in Fourth Century buildings on site.³⁷

Despite most tombs being disturbed and the human remains scattered, there is enough evidence as to attest to graves with various orientations. Diversity also characterises the treatment of the bodies. Of the 169 bodies studied by Aufderheide and his team in 1999, 45 were mummified, yet only 18 by human design.³⁸ Therefore, it appears that most bodies in the West Cemetery were placed in tombs without any mummification treatment. Professional mummification ranged in quality from full evisceration to less complex treatments such as the simple application of layers of resin. Specific choices may have been caused by the deceased person's socio-economic standing.³⁹

The mud brick mausolea elsewhere in the village date back to the first three centuries CE. Their size and decoration suggest that they belonged to the well-to-do segment of the Kellis society.⁴⁰ While the North Tomb 1 and 2 were most likely built during the First or Second Century CE, they were probably reused in the Fourth Century, as additional sets of bodies were now all buried on an east-west axis (head to the west).⁴¹ The same pattern was visible at the West Tombs, themselves dating back to the early Roman period. They were reused for burials with east-west axis (both head west and head east positions were attested). The nine graves surrounding the West Tombs all featured this orientation, as well as a general lack of grave goods. The two graves inside the West Church post-dated its construction (datable to the second half of the Fourth Century based on numismatic evidence).⁴² Those outside the church have an east-west axis (head west) and contain skeletonised human remains without grave goods.

Figure 6.2. Map of the excavation of Kellis. Derived from Dakhleh Oasis Project 2006–2007 Season Final Report SCA. Courtesy of the Dakhleh Oasis Project (Colin Hope).

32 Birrell 1999, 31.

33 Hope 2014, 326-327.

34 Traces of wooden funerary beds have been found. Hope 2014, 330.

35 Schweitzer 2002.

36 Olaf Kaper (2012, 728) regards these statuettes as “an archaizing feature” in the oasis.

37 Hope 2014, 328.

38 Aufderheide et al. 2004, 63-77; 1999, 197-210.

39 This is the preferred explanation of Hope 2014, 328, although he also argues that it is most likely that there would have been embalmers in the Dakhleh Oasis all year-round.

40 Hope 2004; 2003; Hope/McKenzie 1999.

41 Dupras/Tocheri 2003, 183; Hope 2003, 264.

42 Hope 2003, 244-252; Hope/McKenzie 1999, 55-56.

The East Cemetery (Kellis 2) was located northeast of the North Tombs. It is estimated to have contained about 3000-4000 interments,⁴³ of which only 701 have been excavated thus far. In contrast to the West Cemetery, the East Cemetery housed only single pit-burials in pits with an east-west axis (head west). Some graves were clustered around mud brick enclosures or superstructures, creating the impression of distinct burial units, but most pits contain simple interments, only covered with pottery shards, sometimes using the larger pieces to cover the face of the deceased. In contrast to the West Cemetery, the East Cemetery contained a high number of infant burials, including foetuses wrapped in linen cloth and buried in shallow pits close to adult interments.

The pottery found in the East Cemetery corresponds to other Fourth Century ceramics, including the typical “pigeon pots”.⁴⁴ Few graves contained jewellery or amulets, and altogether only a few finds were uncovered: “one string of beads, a reused glass vessel, the occasional ceramic bowl with red ticks painted on the rim, and sprays of rosemary and myrtle”, but no traditional grave goods.⁴⁵

The treatment of the body was thus relatively limited compared to the West Cemetery. Fewer bodies showed traces of elaborate post-mortem treatment.⁴⁶ Based on these features, Bowen concluded that “[s]uch burial practices equate with the Christian tradition and, consequently, those interred have been identified as belonging to the Christian community at Kellis.”⁴⁷ As we will see, however, other interpretive options are available – as well as more probable.

Religious Symbolism

Religious symbolism in the West Cemetery was evidenced by the presence of *ba*-birds as grave goods, and by the application of traditional pharaonic imagery on head and chest coverings. One of these images represents a woman in full clothing, including a shawl tied with the Isis knot.⁴⁸ The fragment of a painted wooden figure depicting Anubis in a squatting position, found in Tomb 5, may have been part of a wooden funerary bed like those found in North Tomb 2.⁴⁹

The only instance with an explicit Christian symbol in the Kellis interments was found in North Tomb 1, where the decorations not only included traditional Egyptian deities, but also a gypsum sealing with a *crux ansata*.⁵⁰ The context of this find was a family tomb. The organisation of the bodies suggests that the tomb was opened regularly

to receive recently deceased family members.⁵¹ The last interments seem to have been different, as the bodies were aligned with an east-west orientation, were buried without grave goods, and were only wrapped in linen shrouds. Consequently, it has been argued that the family converted to Christianity and embraced a new, and noticeably modest set of funerary practices.

One of the noteworthy differences between the West and East Cemetery is the large number of child burials in the latter cemetery. Of the 683 individuals examined, 65% were 15 years old or younger, while 15% were foetuses. Three out of eleven interments near the West Tombs, as well as several interments within North Tomb 1, belonged to children. For Bowen, these striking numbers can be explained best by the direct impact of Christian group norms based on a novel conception of the soul.⁵²

Dating the Cemeteries

The lack of Christian symbols has placed a heavy load on the proposed date of the cemeteries. If the changing burial customs were concomitant with the growing influence of Christianity, there may have been a direct causal relationship. The current state of the evidence is, however, less straightforward than previously suggested.

The radiocarbon date of one of the deceased indicates death in the Ptolemaic period. Most ceramics in the West Cemetery represent types commonly found in the first three centuries of the Common Era.⁵³ The dating of the East Cemetery, on the other hand, is considerably more difficult. It is equally more important, since it serves as the basis for the Christian interpretation of its funerary patterns. If the ‘Christian’ patterns of burial in the East Cemetery can be dated before the Third Century, it is highly unlikely that they are indicative of Christian group-norms.

One aspect that has complicated the dating of this necropolis is the divergence between archaeological dating and radiocarbon dating. Where the archaeological interpretation of the pottery and burial style has led Colin Hope and Gillian Bowen to a Third or Fourth Century date, the radiocarbon dating points to a considerably longer period of use.

In 2002, J. Eldon Molto concluded that the “mortuary pattern at K2 [MB: the East Cemetery] pre-dates the Christian period” on the basis of six radiocarbon dates generated on human bone remains.⁵⁴ In a more recent

43 Molto 2002, 241.

44 Birrell 1999, 41.

45 Bowen 2003, 168.

46 Bowen 2003, 172.

47 Bowen 2003, 168. Adding on page 173 that it was for the “exclusive use of Christians”.

48 Schweitzer 2002, 275-276 and pl. 5.

49 Hope 2014, 330 with fig. 5b.

50 Bowen 2003, 81.

51 Kaper 2003.

52 Bowen 2012, 355, 362, 365. The numbers for the East Cemetery derive from the work by Wheeler 2009. The number of burials at North Tomb 1 is difficult to reconstruct, as the tomb has been robbed in antiquity. The relatively high number of foetus-burials is, however, uncontested.

53 Birrell 1999, 29. In more recent studies, Colin Hope (2014, 331) has assigned the cemetery to the First to Third Century CE.

54 Molto 2002, 243.

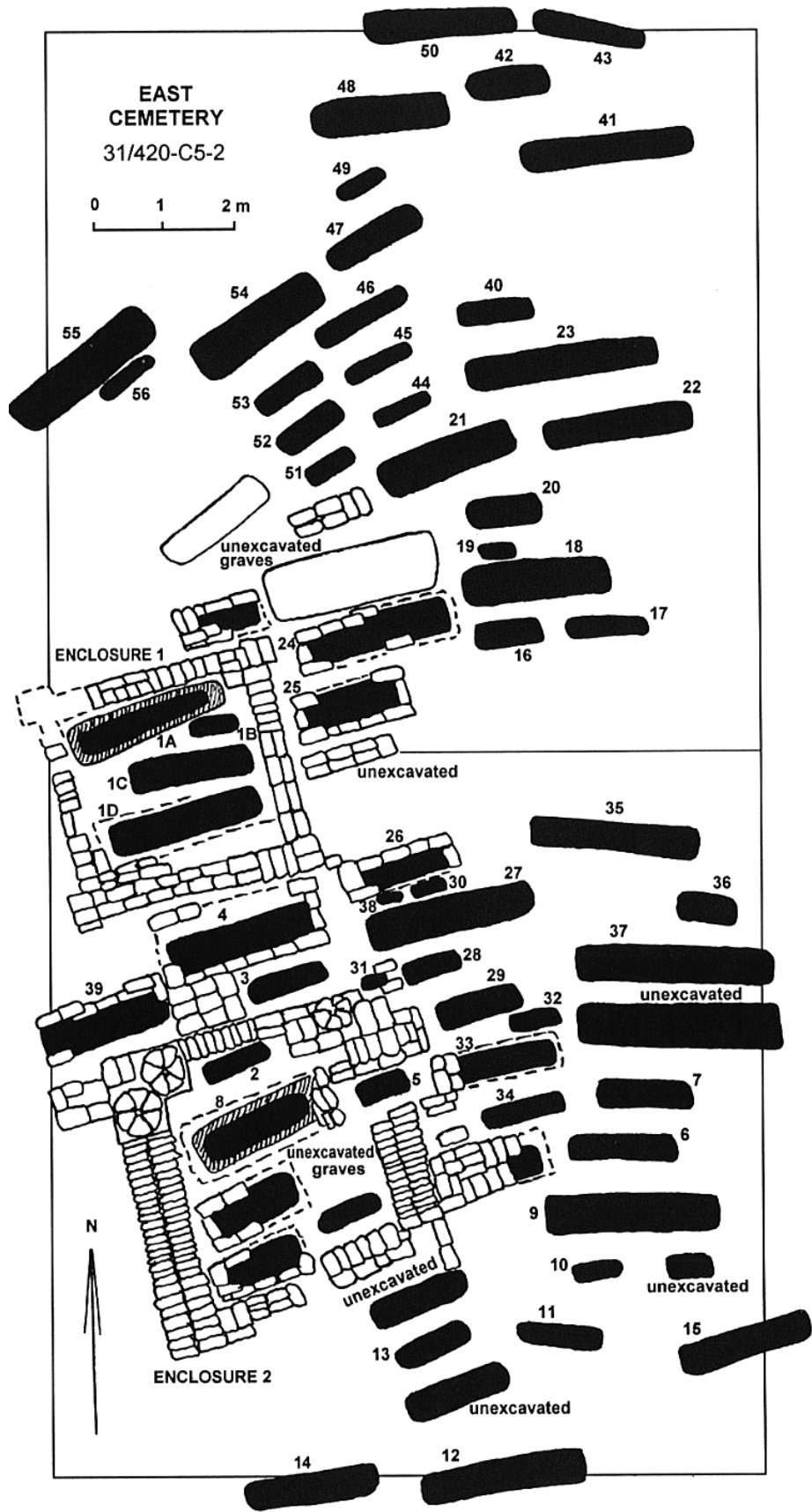


Figure 6.3. Section of the East Cemetery. Courtesy of the Dakhleh Oasis Project (Colin Hope). Adapted from Birrell 1999.

Burial #	Selection Criterion	# dates	Range (AD) 2 sigma (Probability)
2	Date Tomb 2	1	75-325 (.99)
5	Close to B6	2	130-319 (.99)*
6	Leprosy and TB	2	339-535(.99)*
9	TB and Leprosy	1	130-255(.96)
25	Date tomb 1	1	68-227(1.00)
95	grave with 96	1	227-429 (.99)
96	grave with 95	1	0 -229 (1.00)
100	Date tomb 2	1	49-435(.99)
101	Date tomb 2	1	0 -345 (.98)
116	Leprosy	1	381-599 (99%)
124	Date Tomb 2	1	129-385(1.00)
219	south cemetery	1	57-220 (.99)
222	Leprosy	1	137-381(1.00)
251	leprosy	1	87-317(1.00)
265	TB	4	127 - 236 (.99)*
280	TB and leprosy	2	7-235(.99)*
306	vertebral path.	1	135-341(1.00)
377	TB	2	126-244(.97)*
380	brucellosis, leprosy	2	137-337(1.00*)
392	Leprosy	2	134-324 (1.00)*
437	Leprosy	2	76-220 (1.00)*
	* intercepts of averaged radiocarbon determinations on same skeletons		

Figure 6.4. Overview of the radiocarbon dates. Derived from a 2005 presentation by Molto, Stewart, Reimer and Williams. Used with permission.

reconsideration, bio-archaeologists Joe D. Stewart, J. Eldon Molto and Paula J. Reimer reported the results of radiocarbon dating on eleven bodies (and two on a twelfth), ranging from the First to the Sixth Century CE.⁵⁵ This rather long span overlaps with the period during which the West Cemetery was used, and continues well after the village was abandoned. Because of anomalies in the data, as well as the presence of Fourth Century pottery, this timespan has been considered to be too long. Stewart, Molto and Reimer suggested the late end of the earlier date and the early end of the latest date as the minimal termini, but even this calibrated range from 220-380 CE was considered “problematic in light of what is known of the nature of Christianity” by Bowen, as Christian burials (i.e. those with an east-west axis, head west) cannot be expected before 220 CE, when the institutional Church reached the Egyptian countryside.⁵⁶ Bowen’s scepticism about the initial radiocarbon dates is supported by the

ceramics from the cemetery, which corresponds to the type of pottery found in the Fourth Century houses.⁵⁷ More importantly, two child burials from the same grave came up with a long temporal divergent radiocarbon date.⁵⁸ This led her to reject the radiocarbon dating as mistaken, possibly affected by the plant-derived material in the resin coating. Instead, she proposed a range spanning from the mid Third to the Fourth Century CE.⁵⁹ Partly in response to Bowen’s position, Molto, Reimer, Stewart and Williams have reported on twenty-one radiocarbon dated burials which unequally show the high statistical probability of the East Cemetery being used for 400 years (c. 48-436 CE: see fig. 6.4).⁶⁰ If this is true, the proposition of a strong correlation between Christianity and specific burial

55 Stewart/Molto/Reimer 2003, 377. More importantly, the results put a 260 year difference between two child burials interred in the same grave.

56 Bowen 2003, 168.

57 Bowen 2003, 168.

58 Sample B95 and B96 from grave 92, marked with lab codes TO-6256 and 6257. While the infants must have died within a short time of each other, the radiocarbon dates are 213-429 CE (98% probability) and -1-224 CE (97% probability). Stewart/Molto/Reimer 2003, 376-377. See the discussion in Bowen 2012, 368-369.

59 On the impact of the resin, Maurer/Möhrling/Rullkötter 2002, 761.

60 I thank E. Molto for sharing his presentations of the CAPA meeting in 2005 and the DOP conference in Cairo (2005).

patterns cannot be sustained anymore: the purported “Christian” burial style dates back to a period before any institutional impact could be reasonably expected.

Despite the attempts to solve the disjuncture between the pottery typology dating and the radiocarbon results, both options remain open. The archaeologists point to the ceramic evidence and the(ir) Christian interpretation of the burial practices, both supporting a Fourth Century date, while Molto and his team highlight the high probability of an earlier dating range. Although the interpretation of the radiocarbon dates is not without difficulties, there seems to be enough evidence to draw several conclusions:

The East Cemetery overlapped with the period in which the West Cemetery was used. There was no radical change, but rather a gradual transition in burial customs.

In the East Cemetery, poor or simple burials with an east-west orientation appear as early as the beginning of the Roman period; therefore, the lack of grave goods in these early graves could not possibly have been influenced by Christian dogma.⁶¹

The infrequency of mummification practices at the West Cemetery suggests that funerary customs were already undergoing changes since the early Roman period.

In line with the foregoing summary of historical and archaeological evidence from the Roman Empire, the archaeological evidence from Kellis suggests continuation of traditional practices and a gradual transition towards a new burial style since the Early Roman period.

Conclusion

Judging from the evidence discussed above, changes in the material culture of late antique burials at Kellis were far less dramatic than previously thought. Many of the practices started to occur during a time period in which they could not possibly have been influenced by the normative discourse of the newly emergent institutionalised Christian Church. Christian belief does not seem to have been the driving force behind most burial practices, which may instead have been connected to older local traditions.

To put it briefly, there are good reasons to consider the current criteria for the identification of Christians in burial inadequate for the study of religious change in Late Antique Egypt. First, these criteria show serious pitfalls when set against the archaeological evidence, especially in light of new radiocarbon datings. Second, the characterization of Christian burials has been part of a normative historical discourse that conveys a picture of monolithic and irreversible advancement of Christianity in Egypt, at the expense of traditional and local practices

61 In an earlier publication, the bio-archaeologists state that the dates “hint at a longer use than the historical evidence from the ‘Christian’ burial position.” Stewart/Molto/Reimer 2003, 377.

(often deemed ‘pagan’). ‘Christian’ archaeology has too long been hampered by theological interpretations, which are slowly being replaced by more nuanced socio-cultural, economic, and historical perspectives.⁶² There is, however, still a need for a more comprehensive evaluation of all Second to Fifth Century Egyptian burial places, to better understand the diachronic and synchronic developments and their potential connection to religious change. This chapter has proposed that a unique mode of Christian burial did not exist. In death, religious group affiliations mattered little. Rather, individuals and families expressed various messages concerning grief, ritual efficacy, and family status, as well as pragmatic concerns in their burial practices. Within the material remains of these decisions, we see how they appropriated traditional practices of burial, which, over time, were re-conceptualised as Christian.⁶³

In many ways, the historiography of ‘Christian burials’ should remind us of historian Ian Morris’s warning against “direct and linguistic interpretations” of archaeological patterns in Greek and Roman burial remains, as well as post-processual theoretical reflection in burial archaeology in its widest sense.⁶⁴ Connecting questions concerning the identification of ‘Christian’ burials to these broader fields is necessary, a prerequisite for a next step in the study of Late Antique Egypt, which could benefit from the comparative framework of the History of Religion(s). In particular, the relatively new trend to focus on the lived religious experience of individuals and communities could help us to reconceptualise the diversity of burial practices, as well as a deeper understanding of the performative nature of Christianness within specific and local settings. Changes in burial patterns developed at different paces throughout Egypt, and may not have been motivated by the same concerns everywhere. Moreover, burial customs that are deemed similar at a general level often vary in detail, and may well occur on various sites at different times. This situation requires a shift in research toward renewed attention to the local contexts which generated the meanings of these burial practices. Much further work is needed to understand the specificity of burial change at a local or regional level in Late Antique Egypt, but with the advent of new methods and modern publications of excavations, the time may be ripe to propose a new synthesis on the subject.

62 Humphries 2008, 91 points to the historiography of Christian Archaeology between dogma and discipline: “It is a regrettable fact that much Christian archaeology has been driven by interpretations generated within a framework informed above all by dogmatic concerns, while paying only scant attention to the broader socio-cultural context within which the material evidence survives.”

63 Denzey Lewis 2015, 274.

64 Morris 1992, 17. See also the skeptical approach to Roman grave goods in Denzey Lewis 2013, 122-136, as well as the nuanced approach to belief and burial practice in Tarlow 2013.

The Harpists' Songs at Saqqara: Transmission, Performance, and Contexts¹

Huw Twiston Davies

Introduction

The term 'harpist's song' refers almost exclusively to inscriptions on tomb walls, accompanying the depiction of a musician or musicians. Often, this is a depiction of a single, male harp-player, but depictions of lute-players of either sex, or groups of musicians, are also found. Although some examples of this genre are known from the Middle Kingdom onward, the majority now known date to the New Kingdom. These texts do not form a wholly coherent category on their own, and for this reason, Assmann has questioned whether they should really be considered an ancient Egyptian genre at all, or instead a modern, descriptive category.²

Harpists' songs have been known to Egyptologists, in increasing numbers, since the Nineteenth Century. Lichtheim³ laid the foundations of the modern study of this 'genre', to which nearly all subsequent publications on this topic have referred. Lichtheim draws a distinction between the 'orchestra songs' depicted in Eighteenth Dynasty tombs as part of banquet scenes, which typically encourage the deceased to "make holiday" (*ir hrw nfr*), and are performed by groups of musicians and dancers, and the harpist's songs of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasties, typically performed by a single harpist or lutenist, and whose subjects are more varied: these texts are often longer, and diverge more clearly from the texts which surround them. The songs are usually not integrated

1 This paper was written for the interdisciplinary workshop, *The Walking Dead: The Making of a Cultural Geography*, held at Leiden University and the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden in Leiden, 7-9 November 2018. The paper was written as part of the research project 'The Walking Dead at Saqqara: The Making of a Cultural Geography', funded by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (dossier 016.Vidi.174.032), and hosted by the Leiden Institute for Area Studies. The author wishes to extend his gratitude to both these organisations for their kind support, as well as to the participants in the interdisciplinary workshop, and to his colleagues, Lara Weiss and Nico Staring, for their kind feedback and suggestions, and in particular to Dr Weiss for her suggestions about the structuring of this article, as well as to Dr Roland Enmarch for his kind feedback and suggestions on reading in some of the texts translated here.

2 Contra Manniche 1990, 97, but see Assmann 1977a, 59.

3 Lichtheim 1945.

as part of a larger banquet scene, but are sung only to the deceased, usually depicted with his wife. Although Lichtheim emphasises that these are generalities,⁴ there has been a tendency in some of the later literature to treat these factors as rigid category-markers,⁵ and as reflecting a clear evolution of the song(s) and their significance.⁶

Lichtheim in particular noted that the Eighteenth Dynasty examples are often not easily distinguished from the general captions to the banquet scenes they accompany,⁷ but the ‘solo’ songs of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasties can also be difficult to categorise. Some consist of benedictions for the deceased, while others encourage the deceased to rejoice in their afterlife in the tomb, and a much-discussed subset of the texts appear to cast doubt on the value of building a tomb, and the existence, or at least the knowability, of the afterlife. In general, the Ramesside songs have been divided into two subcategories on the basis of Lichtheim: pessimistic, or ‘make-merry’ songs, which, like their Eighteenth Dynasty precursors (with which they have been grouped), encourage the deceased (and the reader) to enjoy the pleasures of this life, and more explicitly religious compositions, including more ‘optimistic’ song-texts, glorifying the afterlife, as well as songs about ‘transfiguration’ (*sꜣḥw*).⁸

A number of interpretations of the harpists’ songs have been advanced since the middle of the Twentieth Century. Lichtheim suggested that the songs all derived from the ‘Intef’ song (see below),⁹ and that they developed from a combination of other genres.¹⁰ Lichtheim says little of context, except that the songs are “mortuary”.¹¹ Fox¹² suggested that the songs might represent musical accompaniment for the daily offering in the tomb. More recently, Emerit¹³ has emphasised the placement of the texts in tombs at Thebes, advancing the notion that they are liminal in character, representing the soul’s journey from this life into the next and suggesting a ritual context at the end of the funeral.¹⁴ Chobanov¹⁵ has argued that the scene of offering in the tomb of Djehutiemhab, which is opposite the harpist’s song in that tomb, depicts ritual action in this world, while the deceased man travels in the

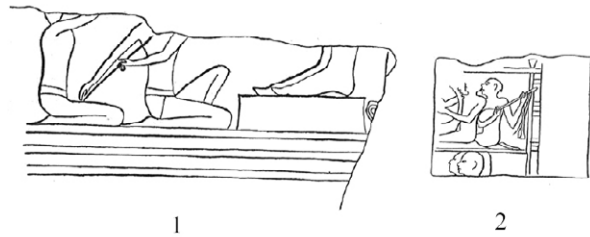


Figure 71. Two fragments found by Quibell, during excavations at the Monastery of Apa Jeremias. Photo source: Quibell 1912, pls 80-81.

Netherworld, again suggesting a context for the harpist’s song at a moment of transition between this world and the netherworld for the deceased. Chobanov argues that the harpists’ songs are part of the offering for the *ka* of the deceased, and, on the basis of Fox¹⁶ that the banquets are not literal funerary banquets, but rather that they are depictions which emphasise that the deceased is properly equipped in the next world.¹⁷

Harpists’ Songs from the New Kingdom Necropolis at Saqqara

The surviving evidence for harpists’ songs at Saqqara is very limited. Two have been found in the Leiden excavations since 1975: one in the tomb of Raia,¹⁸ and one in the tomb of Tatia.¹⁹ Another harpist scene is known from Saqqara, from the chapel of Paatenemheb in the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden in Leiden (inv. no. AP 52 and inv. no. AMT 1*), and a fourth was excavated by an Egyptian team led by Sayed Tawfik, in the tomb of Nebnefer and Mahu.²⁰ A further scene of musicians with an accompanying song-text was found by Quibell and Hayter, belonging to a man named Merya.²¹ Two fragments depicting musicians were found during Quibell’s excavation of the monastery of Apa Jeremias.²² Two more unprovenanced harpist scenes, now in American collections, were published

4 Lichtheim 1945, 207.

5 Raven et al. 2010, 9-13.

6 Fox 1982, 271-272 prefers to divide the scenes into “mortuary” and “mundane”, on the basis of whether the tomb owner is depicted as dead or alive; but this distinction is not easily made on the basis of either visual depiction or accompanying label-text.

7 Lichtheim 1945, 184-185.

8 See Assmann 1979.

9 Lichtheim 1945, 207.

10 Lichtheim 1945, 209.

11 Lichtheim 1945, 207.

12 Fox 1982, 277-279.

13 Emerit 2015, 161-162.

14 Emerit 2015, 161-162.

15 Chobanov 2014, 133.

16 Fox 1982, 281.

17 Chobanov 2014, 131.

18 Martin 1985, 12-14, pls 18, 22.

19 Oeters 2017.

20 Gohary 2009, 9.

21 Quibell/Hayter 1927, pl. 15.

22 Fig 7.1, no. 1: Quibell 1912, pl. 80, no. 3; fig. 7.1, no. 2: 1912, pl. 81, no. 6.

separately by Simpson, who suggested a provenance of Saqqara for both scenes.²³

Additionally, the banquet scene from the chapel of Ptahmay is included here for the sake of completeness, despite Zivie's convincing argument that the scene comes from close to the village of Nazlet el-Batran, near Giza.²⁴ The material considered here dates from early or pre-Amarna, in the case of the example belonging to Merya, to the reign of Ramesses II in the case of the harpists' songs of Raia, Tatia, and Nebnefer.

Ptahmay

The chapel of Ptahmay was likely found near Giza, close to the village of Nazlet el-Batran.²⁵ The depiction of the human body, and textual references to the Aten, as well as the depiction of musicians, point to a date in the latter part of the reign of Amenhotep III or early in the reign of Amenhotep IV/Akhenaten. The song-text consists of a short caption to a scene of musicians dancing before the deceased and his wife, as part of a banquet scene. The scene takes place in the middle register of three. The lower register contains scenes of a woman filling a bowl from a collection of pots, a man carrying jars using a yolk, and a man fashioning a shrine. The upper register is damaged, but may depict scenes of workshop production.²⁶ Because only a small number of reliefs survive from the tomb of Ptahmay, it is difficult to say where in the tomb these scenes may have come from.

Merya

No complete tomb of Merya is currently known. The blocks which comprise this scene were found by Quibell and Hayter near the north side of the Teti pyramid. They had been turned upside down and reused as paving-stones, north of the north-east shaft in Quibell's tomb 2727.²⁷ Quibell described the scene as 'brightly coloured',

but gave little other description. A middle section of the scene, perhaps consisting of two blocks, was not found by Quibell, and is still missing from the scene.

The song-text is written over the heads of a group of female musicians, who play in front of the deceased and his wife. The text emphasises the benefits of an afterlife in the necropolis, and the continuity of the tomb owner's family. The scene as it survives is divided into two registers. In the upper register, musicians play before the deceased and his wife, while the deceased has a drink poured into a bowl for him by an attendant, and figures bring bouquets to offer him. In the lower register, the deceased and his wife are shown receiving offerings, while a *sem*-priest officiates before them. Behind these, other figures are depicted sitting before offering tables full of offerings. The scene likely dates to the late Eighteenth Dynasty, and may be broadly contemporaneous with the chapel of Ptahmay. The sagging stomachs on some of the figures, most notably that of Merya's wife, appear to anticipate the style of human depiction in the Amarna period. Additionally, the lutenist with head turned and looking behind her appears similar to the dancing musicians found in some Theban tombs from the reign of Amenhotep III,²⁸ and so a date in this reign may be suggested, albeit tentatively.

Paatenemhab

This harpist's song is found on the north wall of the offering-chapel. The surviving text likely preserves part of the 'harpist's song from the tomb of king Intef', otherwise known from the Theban manuscript p. Harris 500.²⁹ This text reflects pessimistically on the transitory nature of tomb structures, emphasising that even the tombs of famous men are destroyed. The song reflects on the unknowability of the next life, and closes by exhorting the deceased (and the reader) to enjoy the pleasures of this life while they last.

The song is depicted over a small orchestra, consisting of two flute-players, a lutenist and a harpist, as well as a *sem*-priest, who censes and libates at an offering table in front of the deceased, his wife and two daughters. To the right of the scene, on the east wall of the chapel, are scenes which appear to depict the deceased and his wife (or their statues) receiving libations and being equipped with a double staff. To the left of the scene, on the west wall, the deceased offers to a god in an upper register, while in a lower register, offerings are brought before an offering

23 Yale inv. no. 1937.126, the harpist's song of Sunero, published in Simpson, 1969; and Detroit Institute of Arts inv. no. 1986.103, belonging to a tomb owner whose name is not preserved: see Simpson 1982. A further relief block (Brooklyn inv. no. 68.150.1), depicting a female figure playing the tambourine, has not been included in the discussion here. It is not clear whether the scene derives from a temple or a tomb, and Fazzini 1975, 94, no. 81 argues that "[p]eculiarities of the inscriptions indicate a date later than the Ramesside Period". As this book went to press, the author's attention was brought to a further example of a harpist's song at Saqqara in the Bubasteion tomb of Nemtyemes. The scene accords more closely with examples from Thebes in placement and style. Little of the text survives however, so that it would add little to the discussion to include it here. At time of writing, the tomb was as-yet unpublished by the excavator.

24 Zivie 1975, 285-287.

25 Zivie 1975, 285-287.

26 Zivie 1975, pl. 51.

27 Quibell/Hayter 1927, 36.

28 See the discussion of the scene from the tomb of Ptahmay below.

29 A small section of the song, corresponding to p. Harris 500 6.4-6, was apparently adapted and reused as part of a scene-caption in the tomb of Amunpahapy at Deir el-Medina (TT 355); see Wildung 1977b, 22-24; Bruyère 1928, 116-117.

table, which a *sem*-priest, labelled as the servant Kasa,³⁰ libates and censes.

The chapel was bought by the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden in the Nineteenth Century. Its original context and location at Saqqara are unknown. It has often been assumed to date to the Amarna period, but the style of decoration may indicate that an early Nineteenth Dynasty date is preferable.³¹ While it has been argued that the name Paatenemhab must indicate a date in the Amarna period for the construction of the chapel, it may simply indicate that the tomb owner was born or lived during this period.

Raia

The harpist's scene in the chapel of Raia depicts the tomb owner playing the harp before the gods Ptah-Shu and Hathor. The text of the scene is damaged, and only a single line survives in full, which appears to suggest that death is not something to be feared, and the text may therefore tentatively be considered among those which give a more 'optimistic' depiction of the netherworld. The scene is found on the south wall of the chapel, as the topmost register of three. The middle register depicts the coffin being dragged as part of the funeral cortege, while the bottom register depicts mourners and the performance of the Opening of the Mouth for the deceased.³²

The chapel of Raia was excavated during the 1981 season of the Leiden-Egypt Exploration Society (EES) excavation at Saqqara, during excavation work to the west of the tomb of Horemheb.³³ The chapel likely dates to the reign of Ramesses II.³⁴

Tatia

The chapel of Tatia was found during the 2009 season of the Leiden excavation at Saqqara, south of the tomb of Meryneith.³⁵ The tomb is Ramesside, and probably contemporaneous with both the tombs of Paser and Mose, as Tatia is depicted in both of these monuments, and the chapel of Tatia should therefore likely be dated to the reign of Ramesses II.³⁶ The harpist's scene in this chapel is

found in the lower register of the south wall of the chapel, beneath a damaged scene of the deceased and his wife sitting before an offering table. The harpist's scene itself consists of a depiction of a flute player and a harpist, and a depiction of three female singers, separated from the harpist and flute-player by three columns of text. In the lower left corner of the upper register, two women can be seen sitting on the base-line of the scene, facing the deceased. One of the two holds a lotus-flower, and the scene may have been a depiction of a banquet, but it is damaged, and so this cannot be said for certain. To the left of the scene is a pilaster depicting the deceased, while to the right appears to be another offering-scene.³⁷ The text extols the afterlife to the deceased, and so should also be counted among the 'optimistic' songs, while also containing elements reminiscent of ritual texts.

Nebnefer

The temple-tomb of Nebnefer and Mahu, his son, was excavated by Sayed Tawfik between 1984 and 1988, south of the causeway of the pyramid of Unas, and c.100-150 metres north of the Leiden concession at Saqqara.³⁸ The titles of Mahu may indicate that he lived during the reign of Ramesses II,³⁹ and the tomb likely dates from the reign of Ramesses II or later.

The harpist's scene in this tomb is found in the bottom register on the south wall of the south side-chamber, beside the chapel. At the far left of the scene, the deceased is depicted as tall as both registers of the rest of the wall. One hand is outstretched, but the scene is very damaged so that it is not possible to say whether the deceased is sitting before an offering table. In the lower register, a *sem*-priest censes and libates over a series of offerings. Behind him, a harpist, a flute-player, and four female singers, grouped in pairs, are depicted. Behind these stands a man carrying jars and lotuses. The upper register is damaged, but appears to depict three kneeling figures and five standing figures.⁴⁰ To the right of the scene is a pilaster depicting a standing figure, likely the deceased, facing out of the chapel. The west wall of the chapel depicts a standing figure before an offering table, adorning the four sons of Horus, who are depicted in two shrines.⁴¹ The text of the harpist's song on the south wall is damaged, but praises the netherworld and encourages the deceased to enjoy the afterlife, so belongs among the more 'optimistic' harpists' songs.

30 *sdm*-*ḫ* *Ks-sz*. This name (with title) is applied to the officiant elsewhere in the chapel as well. In each case, the carving is of a different style than that used in the main texts of the chapel, and has the appearance of having been carved subsequent to the completion of the main reliefs; on this topic, see Weiss, this volume.

31 For the date of this chapel, see Gessler-Löhr 1989, 27-34, who argues that the chapel dates to the reign of Horemheb. Stylistic comparison with other tombs at Saqqara from this period may indicate a date later in the reign of Horemheb for this chapel (N. Staring, pers. comm.).

32 See Martin 1985, 12-14, pls 18, 22.

33 Martin 1985, 1.

34 Martin 1991, 124.

35 For a description of this season, see Raven et al. 2010.

36 Oeters 2017, 70-80.

37 Oeters 2017, 65, fig. 7.

38 Gohary 2009, 9.

39 Gohary 2009, 37.

40 Gohary 2009, pl. 40.

41 Gohary 2009, 29, pl. 38b.

Sunero

Published briefly by Simpson,⁴² the block which preserves the harpist's song of Sunero (Yale inv. no. 1937.126) measures 17 inches height by 26 inches wide.⁴³ The context of this relief block is almost completely unknown. Simpson suggests Saqqara as a possible site of origin on the basis of the mention of Ankh-Tawy in the second column of the text, and suggests that the piece may be Ramesside.⁴⁴ The excavation of the tomb of a royal butler Sunero near the causeway of the pyramid of Unas at Saqqara (ST 201) by Sayed Tawfik⁴⁵ might provide a context for this song: the orthography of the name appears to be identical in both,⁴⁶ but the lack of a title on the Yale block makes this identification tentative at best.

The block preserves parts of three registers. Only a very small part of the top-most register is preserved, and it is difficult to interpret. Some of this register may preserve the remnants of depictions of human feet. In the middle register which takes up the majority of the block, the far right is filled by a figure kneeling and playing a large harp. The figure wears a kilt, and appears to be bald. He is shown plucking the strings of the harp with both hands. The harp is depicted with six strings and twelve pegs. To the left of the harpist are four columns of text which run the length of the register, and contain the harpist's song. To the left of this, two figures, one female and one male, are depicted sitting, beneath seven blank columns. The female figure wears a scent cone and a lotus. She touches one arm with the other, and reaches out to touch the male figure in front. The male figure is depicted wearing a wig and kilt, and appears to be holding either a scent cone or a conical loaf of bread.

In the bottom register of the surviving block, the heads of at least two figures are partially preserved. One of these appears to be carrying a canopic jar, while the other may carry a basket of offerings. The text encourages the deceased to be happy with their afterlife, and so may be considered another 'optimistic' text.

Fragment from an Unknown Tomb

A further example of a harpist's song has been attributed to Saqqara. This relief fragment was published by Simpson,⁴⁷ and is now in the Detroit Institute of Arts (inv. no. 1986.103).⁴⁸ It was purchased from the collection of Frederick and Elizabeth Stafford, but no prior provenance for the relief has been mentioned in publication to date.

42 Simpson 1969, 49-51.

43 c. 43 × 66 cm; Simpson 1969, 49.

44 Simpson 1969, 49.

45 Tawfik 1991, 403-409, pl. 60a.

46 For comparison, see Tawfik 1991, 406.

47 Simpson 1982, 133-137; but see also Zeigler 1982, 256-258, no. 362.

48 Goedicke (1982) has claimed that the relief is fake, but the argument appears to have met with little acceptance.

The relief shows parts of two registers. In the lower register, the head and hand of a man are shown. The hand is raised and extended, in the gesture of the *sem*-priest, similar to the depiction on the Leiden wall relief of Mery-Mery.⁴⁹ According to Simpson, the face has the almond-shaped eyes characteristic of the late Eighteenth Dynasty, and wears a short wig topped by an elaborate sidelock, of the sort worn by the high priest of Ptah, and which may indicate that the object originated in the Memphite necropolis.⁵⁰ The upper register is divided from the lower by a thick line carved in raised relief. In the centre of the scene sits a harpist who is depicted with his eye closed (or as blind), playing a large, low harp. The harpist is bald, and wears a loose-fitting tunic, pleated at the arms and waist. One leg is shown bent, while the other foot is shown front-on to the viewer. The harp is shown with eight pegs. The carving may be incomplete; only one string has been carved on the harp, while the second of the harpist's hands is nevertheless shown plucking a string which is not there. Faint traces remain of a finial on the end of the harp in the shape of a head wearing the blue crown, but this has either not been fully executed, or has been worn away since antiquity. The relief is executed in pale white limestone, and fragments of yellow and red paint still adhere to the surface on the body of the harpist, the harp, and the columns of hieroglyphs to the right of the harpist. A similar blue-crown harp finial is found, fully-executed, on the harp played by Raia in the scene from his tomb (see above), though the two harps are otherwise quite dissimilar. The carving of only one string need not be an indication that the scene was unfinished; further details may once have been painted in, rather than shown like this. The harpist in the tomb of Nebnefer and Mahu is depicted laying a harp with only two strings shown.⁵¹

The text is fragmentary and difficult to classify in terms of the categories suggested by Lichtheim. References to joy may indicate an 'optimistic' theme, but the majority of surviving phrases appear to refer to ritual activity, or to be wishes for the deceased to obtain benefits in the afterlife.

Harpists' Songs at Saqqara and Thebes

The discussion of the transmission of harpist's songs at Saqqara cannot be separated from the discussion of the harpists' songs more generally without difficulty. This is partly because of both the small amount of evidence which survives, and because the harpist scenes and texts which survive from Saqqara show as much intertextuality with Theban examples as they do with each other, if not more. The tradition of harpist's songs at Saqqara was clearly not produced in isolation from Thebes, and it is

49 Simpson 1982, 134.

50 Simpson 1982, 134.

51 See above; Gohary 2009, pl. 40a.

very difficult to perceive much of a distinct, local tradition in the examples now known.⁵² The harpist's song from the tomb of Paatenemhab, to take the most obvious example, appears to preserve part of a text also found on p. Harris 500, which was found in the Theban region, and from which source our title of 'harpists' songs' derives.⁵³ Although ritual contexts have been proposed,⁵⁴ the variety in content of the songs has often confounded attempts to analyse this context; some appear to paraphrase known ritual texts (e.g., the harpist's song on the Twelfth Dynasty stela of Saisis, inv. no. Leiden AP 65, which paraphrases Pyramid Text utterance 364, §612a-b);⁵⁵ others take a pessimistic outlook on the afterlife, most notably the harpist's song in the tomb of Paatenemhab, or on the need to enjoy this life⁵⁶ and still others appear to emphasise the blessed state of the dead in the netherworld.

Although the Saqqara harpist scenes are all but unmentioned⁵⁷ in the literature on the topic, the 'Harpist's Song from the Tomb of King Intef', found in the chapel of Paatenemhab, has been of foundational importance to the discussion of this entire genre for modern Egyptologists, although it is not certain that the text was of such paramount importance for the ancient Egyptians themselves. The more complete copy of this text is found on p. Harris 500. This manuscript was found in the Theban region during the mid-Nineteenth Century.⁵⁸ In addition to the harpist's song, the papyrus preserves two incomplete narrative tales, and a collection of love-songs. The 'harpist's song' is found among these love-songs. It is on

52 This is not because sub-traditions cannot be identified: the four songs published by Wente (1962), to which the harpist's song from the tomb of Roma-Roy (El-Noubi 1998), and the harpist's song from the tomb of Nefermenu (Fabian 2002), clearly form one such sub-tradition. These tombs range in date from the reign of Ramesses II (TT 194, the tomb of Djehutiemhab) to the reign of Ramesses III (TT 158, the tomb of Tjanefer), and are found at Assassif, Sheikh Abd el-Qurna, Dra Abu el-Naga, and Khokha. The tombs come from a period of at most 130 years, and are within walking-distance of one another.

53 See Fox 1977.

54 See Emerit 2015, 161-162; Fox 1982, 277-279; Assmann 1979, 57-58.

55 Leemans cat. no. V.71; for an explanation of the various catalogue numbers in the Egyptian collection at the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, see Raven 1992, 7-14. For a photograph, see Simpson 1974, pl. 60 (ANOC 41.1).

56 See e.g. Wente 1962.

57 Lichtheim 1945, 184 translates the orchestra-text of Merya, but this is about the only reference to harpist's songs from Saqqara mentioned in the literature, aside from references to the "Intef song" and first publications, such as Simpson 1969.

58 The precise location is unclear: see Dawson 1949, 163 n. 4, which provides varied provenances given by different Nineteenth Century Egyptologists for the group of papyri including Harris 500. Evidence has recently come to light suggesting that the provenance given by Eisenlohr, near to Medinet Habu, may be correct; but this cannot be said with certainty: see Hamernik 2010, 238-239. On the unreliability of Budge's accounts of the provenance of objects, see Smith 1994, 293-303.

the basis of this source that much early discussion of the harpists' songs was based,⁵⁹ and contemporary literature refers not infrequently to 'the harpist's song',⁶⁰ as though all other songs were secondary to this supposedly more 'original' text.

The limited size of the data-set provides a convenient focus for considering processes of transmission at Saqqara in the broader context of transmission in tombs, and in ancient Egypt more broadly. The data-set therefore provides an opportunity to examine the ways in which traditions were reappropriated at Saqqara by individuals and groups in the development of the site's cultural geography, and is therefore well-suited to testing the methodology of the transmission strand of the project, *The Walking Dead at Saqqara: The Making of a Cultural Geography*.⁶¹

The discussion of the harpist's texts from Saqqara cannot be separated from a discussion of the accompanying tomb scenes and depictions of musicians. Since this is not an article on art history, comments are generally limited in this paper to the noting of similarities, where appropriate, and to the number, position, and adornment of figures, rather than a full stylistic or iconographic analysis. Text and image are frequently intertwined in Egyptian monumental decoration, so that an overly-rigid distinction drawn in the discussion of the two elements is unhelpful. When carried to extremes this can lead to an artificial separation of elements which are, in truth, part of the same composition, as in some approaches applied to some of the Ramesside underworld books.⁶² In the case of the harpists' songs, as Assmann⁶³ and Fox⁶⁴ have noted, the texts are principally identified on the basis of the accompanying depictions of musicians, rather than on content of the text alone. As such, an analysis which does not include a consideration of the accompanying depictions would be incomplete at best.

The Harpists' Songs

*Ptahmay*⁶⁵

This text is written over five short columns above the deceased couple. The scene is preserved on two blocks, in the middle of three registers. The deceased couple sit, with two small, male figures between their legs; one

59 See Lichtheim 1945, 178-181.

60 See e.g. Smith 2017, 280; Manniche 1990, 84. The argument that the 'Intef' song is the model and precursor of all other harpist's songs is explicitly advanced by Assmann 2005b, 120.

61 See the introduction to this volume.

62 E.g. Zeidler 1999.

63 Assmann 1977a, 59.

64 Fox 1982, 269.

65 See Zivie 1975, 291, pl. 51.



Figure 7.2. Banquet scene from the chapel of Ptahmay, reproduced from Zivie 1975, pl. 51. © IFAO.

<i>k3=k</i>	(For) your ka!
<i>ir hrw nfr n p3 itn</i>	Make holiday for the Aten,
<i>m di n=k snt=k mrt=k</i>	Being the one who gave you your sister whom you love,
<i>nbt-pr Ty</i>	The lady of the house Ty,
<i>m3't-hrw</i>	The justified.

Table 7.1. Transliteration and translation of 'banquet song' from tomb of Ptahmay.

standing under or beside Ptahmay, and the other sitting under the chair of his wife Ty. In front of the couple, a woman carrying something in one hand and wearing a scent cone hands a cup to Ptahmay to drink from. Behind her stand three female musicians, depicted overlapping each other. At the front stands a lutenist, whose head is turned back, and whose legs are depicted stepping backwards, perhaps as part of a dance. Behind her stands a harp-player, whose large harp is partially behind the lutenist. Last comes a lyre-player, whose lyre is in turn partially obscured by the lutenist. The harpist and the lyre-player, like the lutenist, wear scent cones, but unlike the lutenist appear to be clothed.

Behind the musicians, there is a small space, and the register subdivides into two smaller registers. In the upper scene, three men sit on chairs, the foremost of them with a lotus held at his nose. The three columns of text in front of them describe them as Ptahmay's sons. Behind them stands a table loaded with food, with bowls and jar-stands depicted underneath its legs. Below these, a servant appears to be decanting wine into a bowl, from a large set

of jars standing on a table behind him. Between him and the pots sits a small jar-stand, with a long, thin-necked jar standing on it, and what appears to be a plant on top of it. In front of the man, there is another table. In front of this stands a depiction of a woman stepping backwards and with her hands raised toward her neck. She may be a dancer connected with the scene of musicians in front of her, and stands at a smaller height as a result of the need to fit in the scene of Ptahmay's sons.

The musicians shown in this scene from the chapel of Ptahmay show great similarity to the musicians in the Theban tomb of Nakht (TT 52). This similarity is not so much in execution as in the pose and grouping of the musicians, who are also shown dancing close together, in such a way that the figures partially obscure each other from view.⁶⁶ There, however, the figures stand in a different order, with the harpist at the front, and the lutenist in the middle. The third figure in TT 52 plays the double flute. As in the scene from the tomb of Ptahmay, the figures likely once stood before a figure making offerings to the deceased and his wife, though now only the legs and chairs of the figures, and the offering table and the male figure arranging the offerings on the table remain. The subdivision of the register behind the musicians, with three male figures depicted in the upper 'sub-register' is also similar to the organisation of the scene in the chapel of Ptahmay; but in the tomb of Nakht, the lower 'sub-register' depicts three female figures, and the musicians stand

⁶⁶ Davies 1917, 55-59 and pl. 15.



Figure 7.3. Musicians in the Tomb of Nakht (TT 52). (Copy by Norman de Garis Davies). Source: Metropolitan Museum of Art, public domain image.

beneath a depiction of offerings. In the register above in the Nakht scene, a male harpist sits in front of a group of seated figures, and in front of two larger, male figures who stand, though now only their legs remain visible.

It is beyond the surviving evidence to suggest whether or not the tomb of Nakht (likely decorated in the reign of Amenhotep III) influenced the tomb of Ptahmay, but it may also be an unnecessary inference; the two may have drawn upon a common ‘pattern-book’ or set of stylistic tropes popular in the period. A similar scene to that of Nakht is found in the nearby (and almost contemporaneous) tomb of Djeserkareseneb (TT 38), where the group of musicians consists of four players, including a player of the double-flutes and a lyre-player, as well as a short, nude, female dancer in the middle, between the lutenist and the double-flute player.⁶⁷ The lutenist is damaged, but appears to be depicted in much the same pose as is found in the tomb of Nakht, and the tomb of Ptahmay at Saqqara. Here, however, the figures are clearly separated, and are not

67 Davies 1963, pl. 6.

shown in the overlapping style of the musicians found in the tombs of Nakht and Ptahmay.

This motif is not restricted to tomb-walls: a parallel to the harpist’s scene of Ptahmay can be found on the cylindrical cosmetic box of Ipy now in the Brooklyn Museum (inv. no. 37.600E). This object also dates to the late Eighteenth Dynasty, and comes from from Saqqara.⁶⁸

The scene on the box shows a male figure at one end, seated on a chair, with his feet resting on a footstool. He wears a short wig and broad collar. He holds something in one hand, which may be a piece of cloth. His other hand is extended, and holds a broad, shallow bowl. A female figure, of whom only the front part now survives, pours liquid into the bowl from a tall, narrow vessel held in one hand. Her other hand is lowered, and appears to be holding a piece of cloth. The figure wears a headband and a scented cone. The hair was likely originally depicted reaching over the shoulder, but damage to the box obscures this, along with the rest of the figure’s body. Behind this figure stand two other female figures, depicted close together. The first faces forward, and is depicted dancing. The two arms of the figure are bent, and the hands are held separately at the breast. Behind this figure stands another female figure playing the lute. This figure is looking backwards, and also appears to be dancing. Both figures are depicted wearing a girdle around their waists. Their hair is depicted shoulder-length, and they wear both a headband and a scented cone.

After a space, three more female figures are depicted. The first plays a large, D-shaped harp. The figure is depicted facing backwards, and is depicted dancing as well as playing. The figure has short hair and a sidelock. The figure is depicted wearing a scented cone, but without a headband. The middle figure is depicted dancing, but holds no instrument. One arm is held above the face, which looks towards the back of the hand. The other hand is held lower, over the breast. The figure wears a girdle, a headband and a scented cone. The figure has shoulder-length hair, and this is given detail in the form of vertical lines. The final figure in the scene plays a lute, and faces forward. Like the other female figures, she is depicted dancing. Her hair is depicted as shoulder-length, and she wears a headband and a scented cone. The figure also wears a broad collar, but appears to otherwise be naked. A bouquet of flowers is depicted between the final two figures, at the height of their legs. Over the top of the scene runs a single band of text (fig. 7.5, table 7.2).⁶⁹

68 Contra Kozloff 1998, 100 n. 25, this object is not mentioned in Smith 1952. See Brovarski/Doll/Freed 1982, 203, no. 237. For the text, see James 1974, 173, no. 427 and pl. 84. A similar box (inv. no. N.1331) can also be found in the Louvre’s collections, but this is not inscribed with a text (see Vandier d’Abbadie 1972, 41, no. 110)

69 James 1974, pl. 84.



Figure 74. Cylindrical Box, c. 1336-1295 BCE, Wood, 4 3/8 × diam. 2 15/16 in. (11.1 × 7.4 cm). Brooklyn Museum, Charles Edwin Wilbour Fund, inv. no. 37.600E. Photo source: Brooklyn Museum.



Figure 75. Hieroglyphic text on cylindrical cosmetic box Brooklyn inv. no. 37.600E.

*ṯs mhy wrḥ [ḥstt (?)] ir hrw nfr n k3 n wꜥ iḳr nfr bi[st...] ḥsy
n nṯr=f ṣdm-ṣꜥ Ipy*

“Tie on garlands, anoint (with) [fine oil (?)], make holiday for the soul of the unique one, the excellent, good of chara[cter...], praised of his god, the servant Ipy.”^a

Table 7.2. Transliteration and translation of cosmetic box text. **a.** Hieroglyphic text here follows James 1974, pl. 84. *ḥstt* has been restored here in both translation and hieroglyphs on the basis of the suggestion of James 1974, 173-174.

The scene clearly alludes to the banquet scenes found in tombs, and the context appears funerary. But the deceased is depicted alone, and the presence of a bouquet of flowers may indicate a connection with offerings. It is worth noting that the text here is not addressed to the deceased, but to the viewer of the object, who is encouraged to make holiday for the soul of the deceased.⁷⁰

Freed⁷¹ and Manniche⁷² have both suggested that the excerpt here is a quotation from ‘the song of the harper’, presumably meaning the ‘Harpist’s Song from the Tomb of Intef’. However, while the phraseology here is reminiscent, it is not a quotation, and the phrasing here differs significantly from that found either in the tomb of Paatenemhab or on p. Harris 500. Rather, the text here mobilises phrases common to many of the harpist texts and similar banquet captions. In fact, James notes the

more direct parallel with the text found in some Eighteenth Dynasty tombs, which instruct to tie on a *w3ḥ*-collar, and anoint with *ṅtyw*-unguent.⁷³

Merya

The harpist’s song of Merya is probably the earliest example which now survives from the Saqqara cemetery. The scene is divided into two main registers, which appear to have originally contained at least two sub-registers each. The lower register depicts an offering made to the deceased and his wife by the *sem*-priest on the left of the scene, with subsidiary figures depicted before offering tables to the right of the scene. Both subsidiary figures are

70 See Simon 2013, 212-213.

71 Freed 1982, 203.

72 Manniche 1990, 98.

73 James 1974, 173-174.

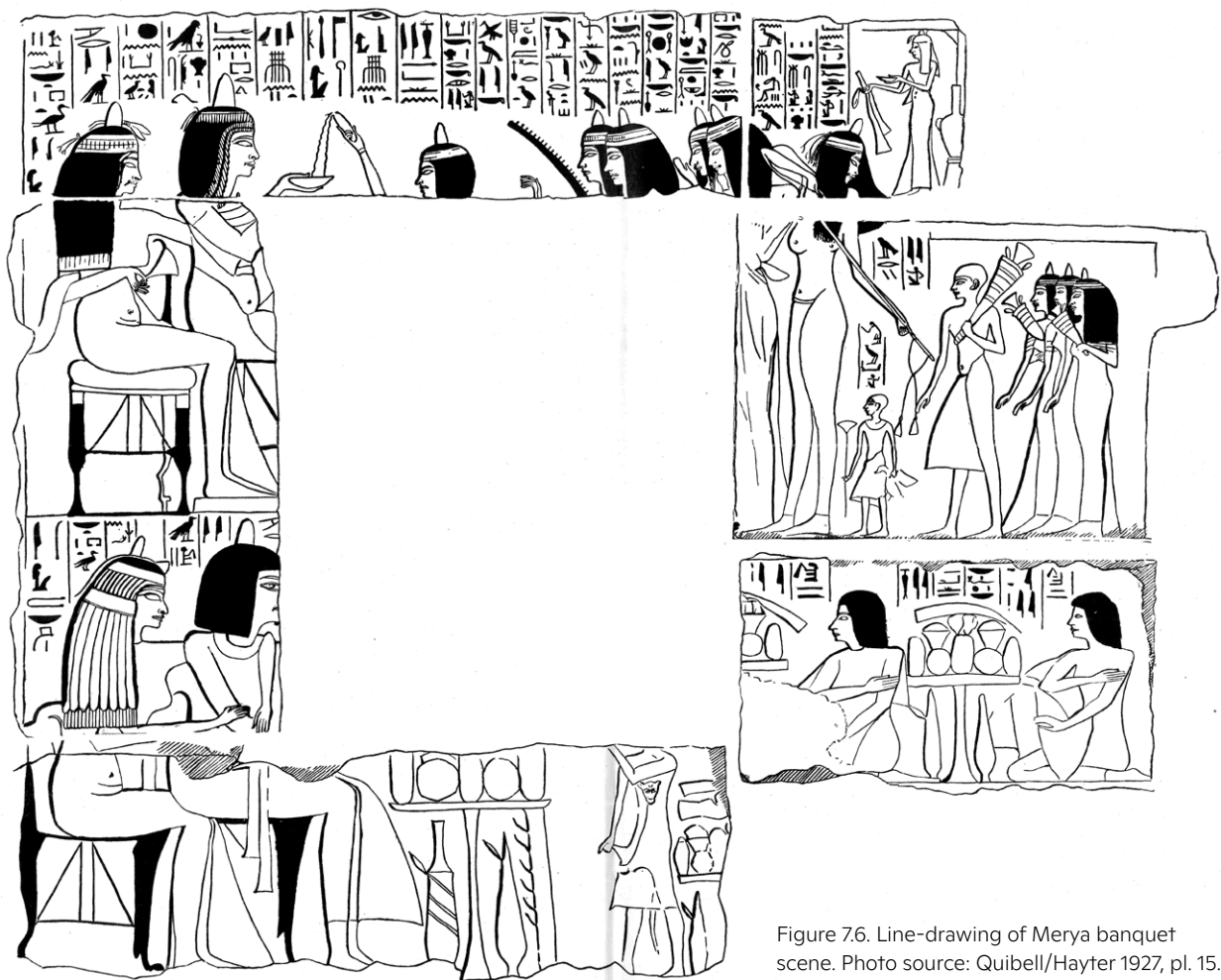


Figure 7.6. Line-drawing of Merya banquet scene. Photo source: Quibell/Hayter 1927, pl. 15.

labelled as ‘true of voice’ (*ms^c-hrw*),⁷⁴ and the second of the two figures appears to be labelled as a singer.

In the upper register, the deceased and his wife again sit on the left of the scene. A figure pours drink from a small, narrow vessel into a cup held by the deceased. Behind this figure stands a group of five musicians. Four of these musicians are depicted close together in groups of two. Instruments can be seen in the hands of two of the figures: at the front of the group, one of the first pair of figures plays a standing harp, of which the top curve can be seen, as well as the player’s hand plucking the strings. At the back of the group, a nude woman who faces backwards plays a lute, holding the instrument diagonally

across her chest. The body of the lute is held high, almost level with the player’s head, and the neck low, pointing towards a male figure behind, named Wery, who carries a bouquet on his right shoulder. Between the two figures, and under the neck of the lute, stands a short male figure labelled Huy, who carries a lotus flower in one hand, and a bird in the other. Both male figures are depicted wearing long kilts, and are either bald, or wearing close-fitting caps. Behind them, stands a group of three women, two of whom carry bouquets. Above the lutenist stands a woman carrying a bowl and two pieces of cloth. She wears a long wig, and a full-length dress. On top of the wig are a scent cone and a lotus blossom. Behind her is a jar with a tall neck, on a pot-stand. Aside from the two bald men, all of the figures in the upper register wear scent cones. The wife of the deceased is depicted wearing two lotus-buds and a scent cone, as is the figure above and behind the lute-player, in the right of the scene.

74 This epithet is often found after the names of figures on funerary monuments, and is generally taken to indicate that the person depicted was dead at the time the monument was carved. However, the term is not applied consistently to the deceased, and is sometimes used of the (presumably living) person who dedicated the monument (see e.g. Fischer 1957, 224-225; Engelbach 1922, 124; for the term *ms^c-hrw* more broadly, see Anthes 1954).

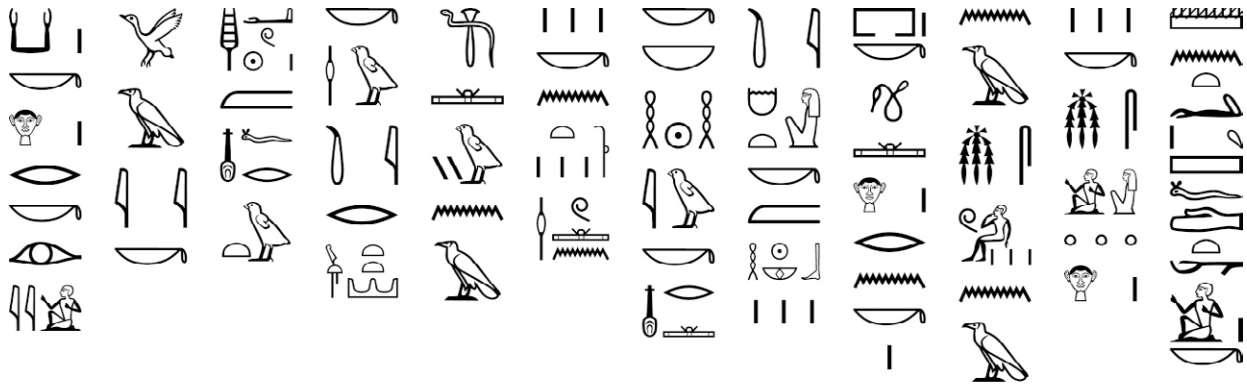


Figure 7.7. Text of Merya banquet song.

<p> <i>k3=k hr=k</i> <i>iry=i p3y=k h'w m nfr</i> <i>tw=k wd.ti r imntt</i> <i>w3d.wy n3=k n rnpwt</i> <i>wd n=k nb nhh</i> <i>iw=k nfr.ti</i> <i>hmt=k m hbw</i> <i>pr=k rwd hr rn=k</i> <i>n3 msw n3=k msw</i> <i>hr [r]mn šfd=k</i> </p>	<p> May your ka be with you! I shall make your lifetime good! You are decreed to the West How flourishing are your years, Which the Lord of Eternity decrees for you! You are well, Your wife is in festivals, Your house prospers because of your name, and the children of your children shoulder your coffin. </p>
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Table 7.3. Transliteration and translation of Merya banquet song.

The harpist's scene described here could be understood as a depiction of a 'secular' event,⁷⁵ belonging to the deceased's life on earth, or a generalised depiction of a banquet which the deceased might hope to enjoy in the afterlife. However, a number of features make such an interpretation seem unlikely. First, in the lower register, the offering is made to the deceased by a *sem*-priest, whose leopard-skin is still clearly visible. The subsidiary figures sit before offering tables similar to those depicted before the deceased. In the upper register, the presence of offering-bearers behind the musicians appears to make clear this is also part of a funerary ritual, and the depiction of a smaller figure carrying a papyrus-stem and a duck suggest that the scene in fact represents part of a funerary offering. Such combinations are not uncommon, and a similar mixture of singers and offering-bearers can be found as early as the Twelfth Dynasty, on the Abydos stela of Saisis.⁷⁶

Paatenemhab

The text in the chapel of Paatenemhab appears to be one of the only examples of the copying of a complete harpist's song in two places, as an apparently canonical

composition.⁷⁷ The question of whether the copying of the 'Intef' song here and on p. Harris 500 reflects a 'canonical' status, held by this song in distinction to others now known, remains problematic. The two copies are very similar and show only slight variations in the text. This is not quite unique, however: the harpist's song found in the tomb of Amenmose at Thebes (TT 373) is substantially the same as the second harpist's song in the tomb of Tjanefer (TT 158), but this type of almost identical copying remains unusual for harpist's songs nevertheless.⁷⁸

The copying of the 'Intef song' here does appear to imply a canonical status for the text, in the sense that it is substantially fixed in content, expression, and sequence of clauses. Only the ends of columns are preserved in the chapel of Paatenemhab, but these column ends appear to

75 Fox 1982, 270-275; Wente 1962, 118-122.

76 Leiden inv. no. AP 65; see Simpson 1974, pl. 60 (ANOC 41.1).

77 The excerpt from the Intef song in the tomb of Amunpahapy at Deir el-Medina has not been included in the discussion here as this appears to be an excerpt rather than an attempt to copy the song as such, and does not appear to form part of a scene with musicians.

78 For Amenmose, see Seyfried 1990, 98-99, pl. 10; for Tjanefer, see Seele 1939, pls 12, 14; for a translation of the latter, slightly longer text, see Lichtheim 1945, 206). A similar case may be the harpist's song in the tomb of Djehutimes (TT 32; see Kákosy and Fábán 1995). This single harpist's song contains large parts of the three songs from the tomb of Neferhotep (TT 50), which have been copied very closely. However, this is clearly a case of adaptation rather than canonical copying as such, as the songs have been interpolated into a longer, single work.

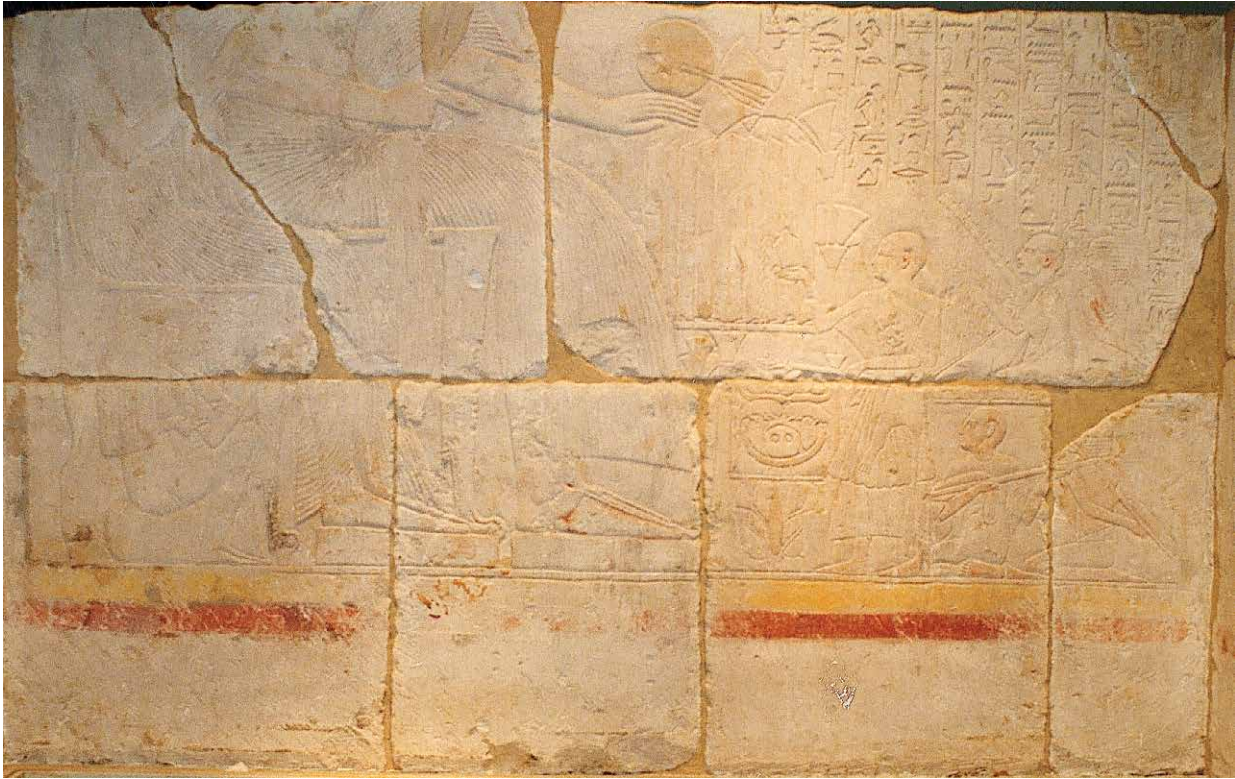


Figure 7.8. Harpist's scene from the chapel of Paatenemhab. Photo source: Rijksmuseum van Oudheden.

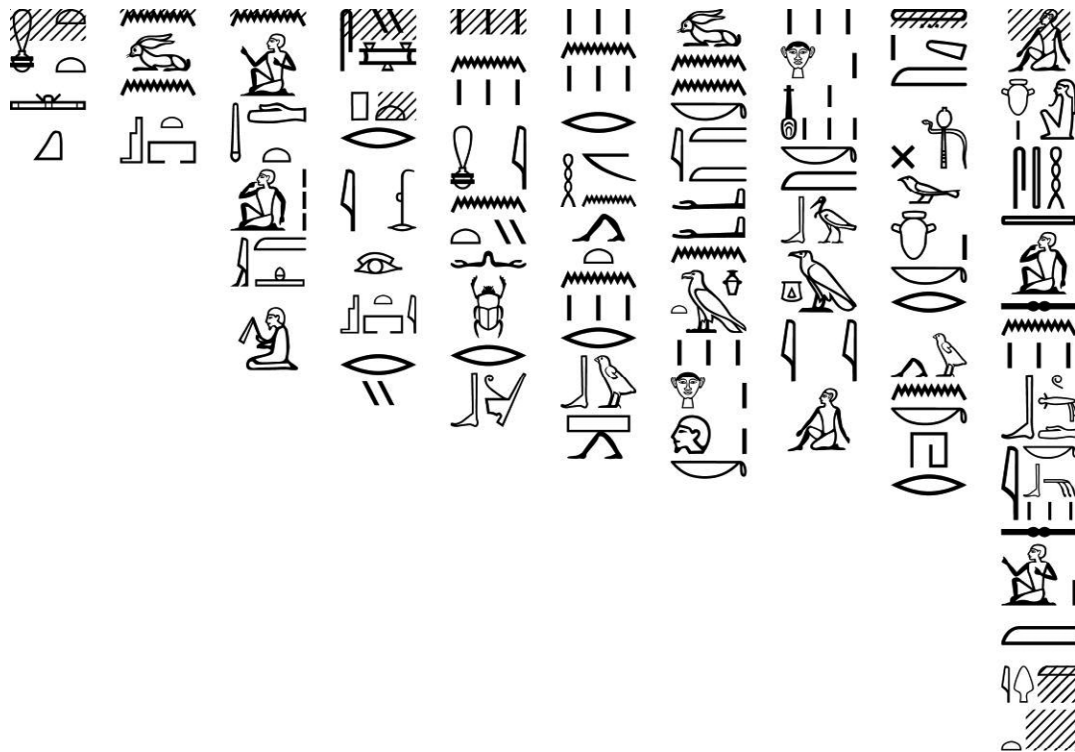


Figure 7.9. Text of the harpist's song in the chapel of Paatenemhab.

[<i>nṯrw ḥprw ḥr-ḥst ḥtp m mr=sn sḥw ʒḥw m-mit</i>]t k[<i>rs m mr=sn kḏ ḥwt n</i>]- <i>n-wn st</i> [...]	[The gods who came into being before rest in their pyramids, the dignified ones and the beatified spirits, likewise, are b[uried in their pyramids; the builders of chapels, (their)] places [are n]o more [...]
[... <i>sdm</i>]. <i>n=i mdwt ʿly-m-ḥtp</i> [ḥnḥ <i>Ḥr-dd=f sḏd.ti m sḏdwt=sn r</i>]- <i>sy ptr swt ʾry</i> [<i>inbw=sn fh nn-wn st</i>]= <i>sn mi nty n ḥpr bn</i> [ḫim...]	[...] I have [heard] the words of Imhotep [and Hordedef, recited wh]ole [in their sayings.] What has become of their places? [Their walls are destroyed,] their [places are no more] as though they had never existed, and none [returns from there ...]
[... <i>stm.tw=f ib</i>]= <i>n r ḥn.t=n r bw šm</i> [<i>im=sn...</i>]	[... that he might still] our [heart]s, until we depart for the place [where they] have gone [...]
[... <i>šms ib=k</i>] <i>wnn=k imi ʿntyw ḥr tp=k</i> [... <i>imi ḥʒ</i>]w ḥr <i>nfrw=k m bʒʒy</i> [<i>ib=k...</i>]	[... Follow your heart] while you exist; put myrrh on your head [... create] excess on your happiness, and do not weary [your heart...]
[... <i>iri ḥt=k tp</i>]- <i>tʒ m ḥḏ ib=k r iw n=k hr</i> [w <i>pf...</i>]	[... make your property upon] earth. Do not damage your heart until [that] da[ly ...] comes to you [...]
[<i>bw sdm.n wrd</i>]- <i>ib sbḥ=sn bw šd ikb s m im</i> [ḥ]t [...]	[the weary-]hearted [does not hear] their cry, and mourning does not save a man from the Netherworld[...]

Table 7.4. Transliteration and translation of the harpist’s song from the chapel of Paatenemhab.

indicate a strong correspondence with the text of p. Harris 500, offering few meaningful places for deviation in the text.

Where the Paatenemhab and p. Harris 500 copies of the song are both preserved, the two appear to be largely identical, though it has been noted that the Paatenemhab text appears to make rather better sense grammatically.⁷⁹ However, whether the whole text found on p. Harris 500 was originally written on the walls of the tomb of Paatenemhab, or whether this represented a different recension of the text, remains to be discussed. The answer depends on how tall the columns of text in the tomb of Paatenemhab originally were. Fox⁸⁰ has already noted that the Paatenemhab text appears to end without the refrain (*mʒwt*) found in p. Harris 500, which is set off in the papyrus with a rubric. This is in contrast to the main body of the song, which is set off from the preceding love-song by a red *grḥ*, or ‘pause’ sign,⁸¹ but has no rubric at the start of its text.⁸²

Ten partial columns of text survive from the Paatenemhab text of the harpist’s song. There appear to be no traces of columns before the first which now survives, above the offering table which is now visible. The scene

is clearly not complete as it now survives: the depiction of Paatenemhab and his wife at the left of the scene is not preserved above the nipple. The scene seems likely to have extended for as much as half the surviving space again, and it is probable that this space was made up of a third set of blocks of comparable size to the two layers of blocks which make up the surviving wall.

This would allow substantial space for the portions of the text which do not now survive. It may be possible to estimate the missing length of text by considering the number of sign-groups now missing between the surviving columns, when compared to the text of p. Harris 500.

It is difficult to tell how much text is really missing from the beginning of the song in the chapel. In theory, nine of Fox’s lines from p. Harris 500,⁸³ are equivalent to three lines of papyrus, or approximately 60 sign-groups. Whether the song as found in the tomb chapel originally began with the title it is given in p. Harris 500 is perhaps more difficult to address. Presumably, the title in the Paatenemhab chapel would have followed the model of other harpists’ songs, and referred to the owner of the tomb it was carved in, rather than the chapel of Intef. The lack of refrain in the Paatenemhab text may give reason to suspect that the

79 Fox 1977, 409.

80 Fox 1977, 411.

81 Parkinson 2002, 114.

82 Fox 1985, 378. It is not clear whether this should be understood as something separate from the song itself, given the vagaries of rubrication in New Kingdom literary manuscripts (see e.g. Winand 1998; Posener 1951b). It is notable that the beginning of the next song (*ḥst-ḥ m ḥsw ḥmḥ-ib*, ‘beginning of the songs of entertainment’) is also written in rubric, perhaps implying that the *mʒwt* written

after the ‘Intef’ song was also seen in some way as separate. The meaning of the word *mʒwt* is not entirely clear, and relatively few attestations are known. Hannig (2001, 319; 322) associates it with *mʒt*, ‘erdenken, ersinnen’. The word may be cognate with Middle Egyptian *ḫnt=f* (lit. ‘it is brought’), used to mark a refrain in the Hymns to Senwosret III at Lahun (Collier/Quirke 2004, 17).

83 Fox 1977, 405.

Column	Text which survives	Text missing	Approx. number of sign-groups	Approx. no. of columns
0	-	[<i>ḥsw nty m ḥwt in.tw=f mš^c-ḥrw nty m-bšḥ</i> <i>pš ḥsy m bnt</i> <i>wšd pw sr pn</i> <i>ššw nfr ššw ḥd</i> <i>ḥt ḥr sbi kt ḥr mn dr rk imyw-ḥzt nṯrw</i> <i>ḥprw ḥr-ḥzt ḥtp m mr=sn s^cḥw šḥw]</i>	60	4-5
1	<i>mītt k</i>	[(<i>k</i>) <i>rs m mr=sn kd ḥwt n(n)</i>]	12	1
2-3	[<i>n</i>] <i>n=wn st [...].n=i</i> <i>md(w)t Iy-m-ḥtp</i>	[= <i>sn ptr ir.tw im=sn iw sḏm...</i>]	12	1
3-4	<i>-sy ptr swt iry</i>	[<i>ḥn^c Ḥr-dd=f sḏd.ti m sḏdwt=sn r-</i>]	12	1
4-5	<i>=sn mi nty n ḥpr</i>	[<i>inbw=sn fh nn=wn st</i>]	11	1
5-6	<i>bn [...](w)=n r ḥn.t=n</i> <i>r bw šm</i>	[<i>iy im sḏd=f kd=sn sḏd=f ht=sn stm.tw=f ib</i>]	18	1.5
6-7	[...] <i>wnn=k</i>	[= <i>sn im wḏš=k ib=k r=s mht-ib sšḥ n=k šms</i> <i>ib=k</i>]	18	1.5
7-8	<i>imi ṛnyw ḥr tp=k [...]</i> <i>ḥr nfrw=k</i>	[<i>wnḥ n=k m pškt gs tw m biš mš^ct n ḥt-nṯr</i> <i>imi ḥšw]</i>	22	2
8-9	<i>m bšgzy [...]</i> <i>tš</i>	[<i>ib=k šms ib=k ḥn^c nfrw=k iri ḥt-k tp-</i>]	11	1
9-10	<i>m ḥd ib=k r iw n=k</i> <i>hr[(w) ... (wrd)]-ib</i> <i>sbḥ=sn bw šd iḳb s m</i> <i>i[ḥ]m</i>	[(<i>hr</i>) <i>w pf n sbḥ bw sḏm.n wrd-(ib)</i>]	13	1

Table 7.5. Estimated number of sign-groups missing between columns of the Harpist's song in the chapel of Paatenemhab, with estimated number of columns required to fill this space.

title might likewise have not been carved here, or at least given in different form. The typical beginning of a harpist's song text appears to be *ḏd pš ḥsw nty m tš ḥwt ir.t.n NN* "The singer who is in the chapel which NN made says", or variants,⁸⁴ but other headings are also attested; the second of the songs in the tomb of Neferhotep (TT 50) simply begins *ḥšt-ṛ m ḥsw* "beginning of song".⁸⁵ The final column of text in the chapel is the longest which now survives, and preserves perhaps 12.5 sign-groups.⁸⁶ This would require a further 4-5 columns, which could easily be accommodated over the offering table on the now-missing blocks. Such columns might have been placed higher than the rest in

84 See e.g. Fox 1982, 284-285; Wente 1962, 122-126.

85 Hari 1985, 14, pl. 4.

86 It is beyond the scope of this article to consider either the complexities of Egyptian orthography, or what may be considered to constitute a 'sign-group' (see e.g. *LÄ* II, 1191). The phrase is used here only in a loose sense to refer to the broadly square 'blocks' into which signs are often arranged by scribes when writing. These are used here to provide an approximate sense of how much space the text might have taken up. The author is unaware of any current study of this phenomenon.

order to accommodate the lotus-flower which sits atop the offering table in the scene.

In theory, this would allow plenty of room for the substantial missing sections of text, but complications arise from this. Fox⁸⁷ set out the two texts in parallel. His lines 21-22 (*stm.tw=f ib=sn / r ḥn.t=n r bw šm=sn im*) appear to both be partially preserved in the Paatenemhab wall-scene. The (w)=n found at the beginning of column 6 of the Paatenemhab text appears to be the end of the phrase *stm.tw=f ib=n* found in p. Harris 500.⁸⁸

The first column of text in the chapel now consists of *mītt k*, presumably preserving part of the phrase *mītt ḳrs*, "likewise buried". This requires the restoration of at least the phrase as [*s^cḥw šḥw m-|mītt ḳ[rs m mr=sn]* "the dignified ones and beatified spirits likewise are buried in their pyramids", as found in p. Harris 500 6,4-5.⁸⁹ This clearly requires an antecedent clause as well, and so the restoration of the preceding phrase from p. Harris

87 Fox 1977, 405-406.

88 P. Harris 500 6,8; Fox 1985, 394.

89 Fox 1985, 379; 1977, 405.

6,4, *ntrw hprw hr-hst htp m mr=sn*, “the gods who came into being formerly rest in their pyramids” is likely. It is conceivable that the song began here, and it is notable that this is where the excerpt from this song found in the tomb of Amunpahapy at Deir el-Medina begins.⁹⁰ However, this makes for a rather abrupt beginning to the song, and a more plausible reading may be proposed by the additional restoration of at least the phrase *ht hr sbi kt hr mn dr rk imyw-hst* “A generation passes and another remains, since the time of those who went before” as found in p. Harris 500 6,3-4, and in other harpist’s songs.⁹¹ There is likely enough room to restore the initial phrase of the song, *w3d pw sr pn nfr š3w nfr hdy* additionally.

Between columns 1-2, the phrase *k[rs m mr=sn kd hwt n|n=wn st[-sn]* would appear to require restoration, or roughly twelve sign-groups. This appears to fit with the estimated extra space required for the text given above almost exactly, and is necessary for the text to be comprehensible. Column 3 would likely have originally begun with the suffix pronoun *=sn* following the *st* mentioned at the end of column 2. If the text of p. Harris 500 can be relied upon, the intervening space must then have contained *ptr ir.tw im=sn iw sdm.n=i mdwt*, making up roughly eleven sign-groups.

The next lacuna appears to encompass the phrase *[hn^c Hr-dd=f sdd.ti m sqdwt=sn r]-sy* (“and Hordedef, which are recited whole as their sayings”). Again, allowing for some orthographic variation between the chapel wall and p. Harris 500, it is possible to fit this text into around twelve sign-groups.

The lacuna corresponding to Fox’s lines 18-21 (p. Harris 500 6,8) seems to be larger than the c. twelve groups observed to be missing from columns 1-5 of the Paatenemhab chapel. At the bottom of column 5 of the Paatenemhab inscription, the negative existential *bn* is preserved. This corresponds to the phrase *bw iy im* in p. Harris 500 6,7. After *bn* it would appear that around 18 sign-groups are now missing between the end of column 5 in the chapel, and the beginning of column 6 with *(w)=n*. This larger gap could be accounted for either by the omission of one of the phrases found in p. Harris 500, or by a different, more abbreviated orthography in the chapel.

A similar gap appears to exist between columns 6 and 7 of the Paatenemhab text, in the lacuna in *bw š[m=sn im wd3=k ib=k r=s mht-ib hr=s s3h n=k šms ib=k] wnn=k*.⁹² Here again it is tempting to suggest the omission of a given phrase, but a more abbreviated orthography might have accounted for much of the missing text, and the omission of some pronouns found in p. Harris 500 (as found in the phrase *mi nty n hpr* found in column 5,

against p. Harris 500 *mi nty nn hpr=sn*) might also explain this. In any case, it is not possible to say which phrase, if any, was omitted, on the basis of the surviving evidence. Around 18-20 groups then appear to be missing between the end of column 7 of the chapel-text and the beginning of column 8. The orthography of this section in p. Harris 500 (6,10) is particularly detailed, containing multiple determinatives, and apparently redundant groups in writing, which may account for some of this extended gap. The gap between the bottom of column 8 and the top of column 9 is closer to eleven sign-groups, as is the gap between column 9 and column 10.

What little survives of the text appears to accord closely with the text found on p. Harris 500.⁹³ The small number of textual variations appear to be substantially grammatical in nature, or involving the substitution of words which are similar both in sound and visual form, as in the reading *w3d* in Harris 500 6,12 for *h3d* in Paatenemhab col. 9.⁹⁴ This example is difficult to analyse, since the ‘correct’ word could plausibly be preserved in either copy. The two texts appear to demonstrate the same minor variants found regularly in copies of literary works from the New Kingdom.⁹⁵ The time which elapsed between the construction of the tomb of Paatenemhab and the writing of p. Harris 500 is unlikely to have been very great; perhaps no more than a century, if the manuscript is also Nineteenth Dynasty.

This lack of more significant variation in texts might be due to a lack of time for variations to emerge in the course of the transmission process. However, the four songs published by Wente⁹⁶ were carved over the course of a similar period of time to the period which likely separates the chapel of Paatenemhab and p. Harris 500, but show a much greater variation. This may indicate that the ‘Intef’ song was in some sense a ‘canonical’ composition.

The depiction which accompanies the song is of particular interest. Scenes of harpists singing before the deceased and his wife, who are depicted sitting before an offering table, are relatively common (see above). However, the scene in this tomb has several features worthy of note. First, Paatenemhab is not sung to by the harpist alone, but by a group, consisting of two flute-players, a lutenist, and a harpist. The depiction of the harp-player and the lutenist appear to share some similarities in style to one of the fragments found by Quibell in his excavation of the monastery of Apa Jeremias,⁹⁷ though it seems doubtful that this fragment comes from the same tomb, since it does

90 Wildung 1977b, 22-24; Bruyère 1928, 116-117.

91 E.g. Wente 1962, 122-127.

92 Fox 1985, 379; 1977, 405-406.

93 See e.g. Fox 1985, 379-380; 1977, 407-412, especially 409-411.

94 See Fox 1977, 411.

95 See e.g. Ragazzoli 2017; Hagen 2012.

96 Wente 1962.

97 Quibell 1912, pl. 81; see fig. 7.1, no. 2.

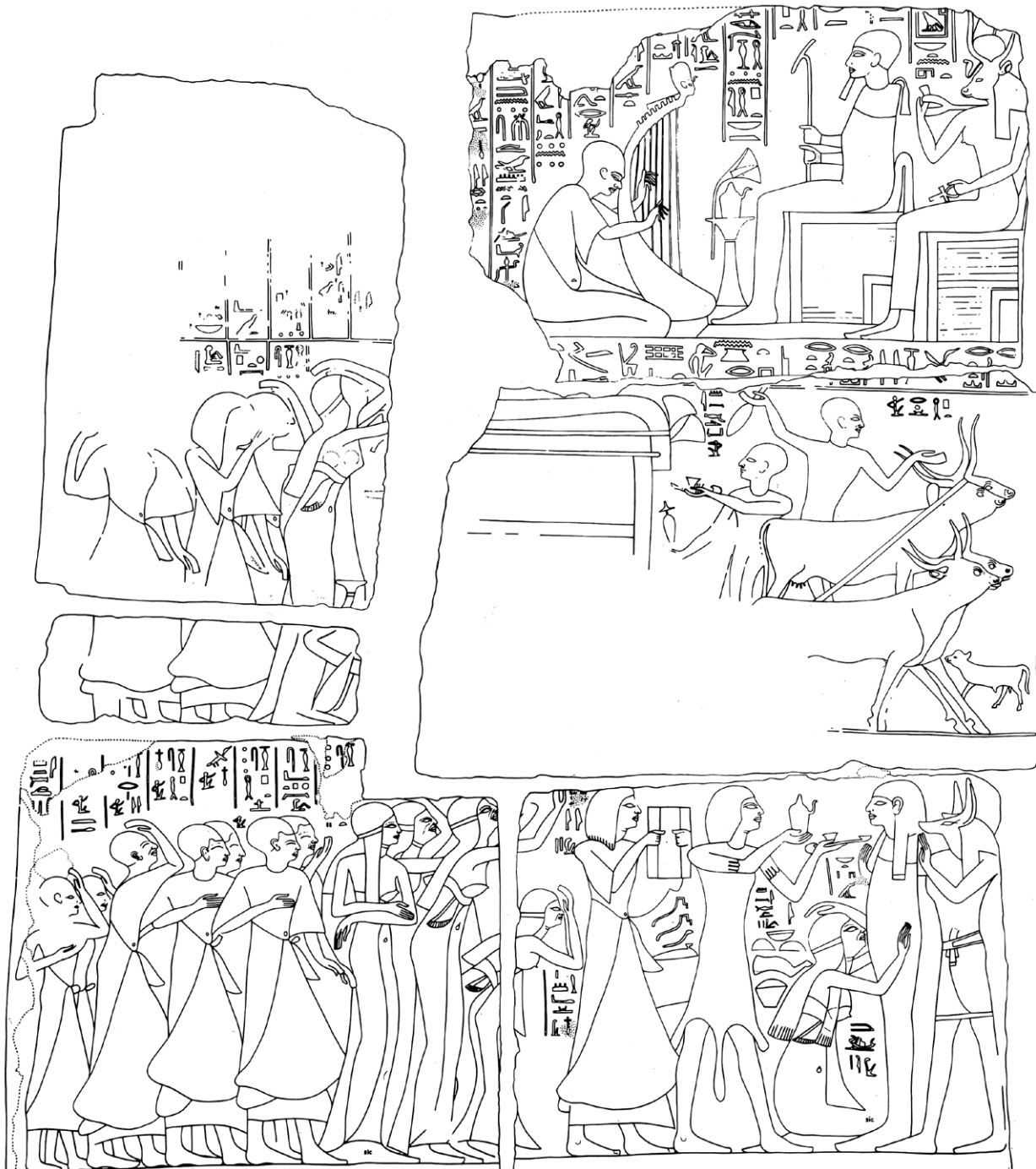


Figure 7.10. Wall with harpist's scene from the chapel of Raia. Reprinted from Martin 1985, pl. 22.

not fit with any of the decorative programme of the chapel which now survives.

The depiction of a group of musicians here should put to an end the notion of a rigid distinction to be drawn between harpist's songs and so-called

'orchestra-songs'.⁹⁸ The 'Harpist's Song from the Tomb of King Intef', which is apparently preserved here, is the harpist's song *par excellence*, and the single example for which an ancient title is known. Despite being

⁹⁸ Lichtheim 1945, 181-187.

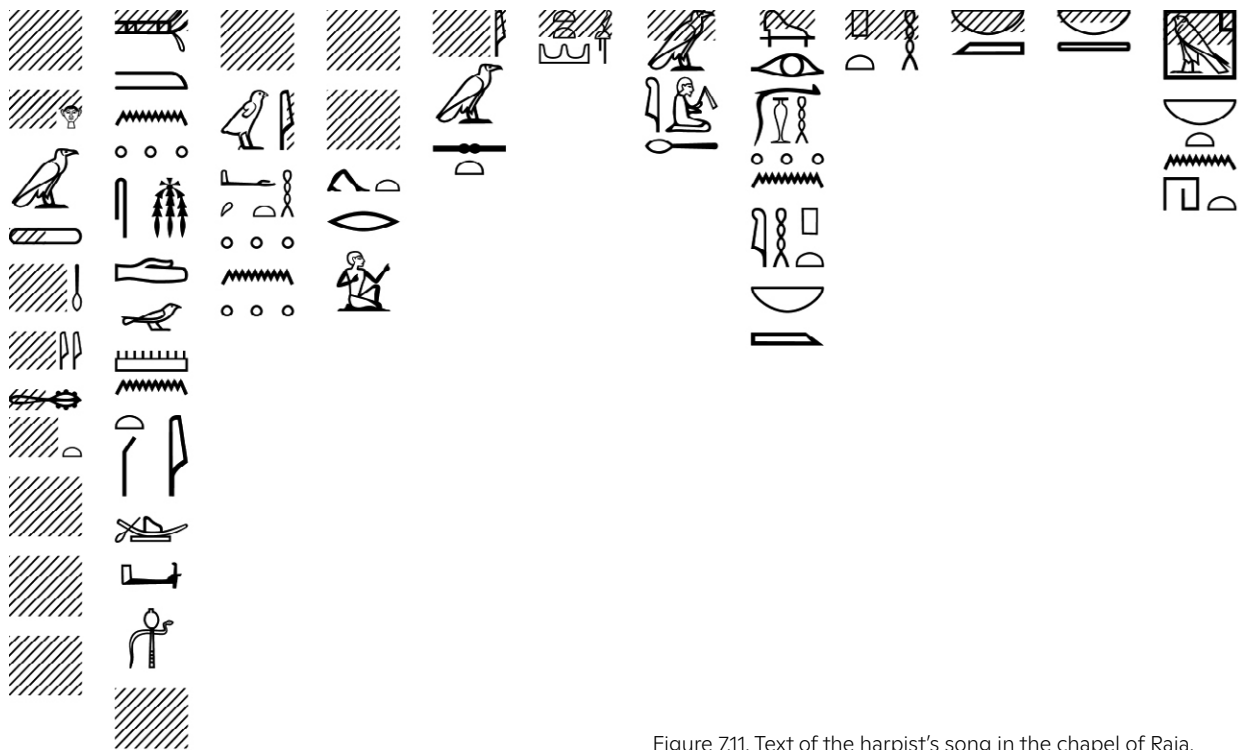


Figure 7.11. Text of the harpist's song in the chapel of Raia.

[...] <i>Pth</i>	[...] Ptah
[...] <i>nb M3't</i>	[...] Lord of Ma'at
[...] <i>nb i3(?)</i>	[...] Lord of the Land(?)
<i>Hwt-Hr nbt nht</i>	Hathor, Lady of the Sycamore
[... <i>W3]ir (i)m(y)-r hsw n Pth-Šw nb M3't</i>	[... Os]iris, overseer of singers of Ptah-Shu, Lord of Ma'at
[...] <i>m3'c-hrw</i>	[...] the Justified
[...] <i>imntt</i>	[...] the West
[...] <i>tyw st (?)</i>	[...]s them (?)
[...] <i>iwt (?) r=i</i>	[...] come (?) for me
[...] <i>iw (?) h'c-t=n</i>	[...] our limbs
[...] <i>tm=n msd mnit hq</i>	[...] So that we do not fear the mooring-post; the destruction [...]
[...] <i>w (?) hrw [...y ht (?)</i>	[...] voice(?) [...] body (?)

Table 7.6. Transliteration and translation of the harpist's song in the chapel of Raia.

called a 'harpist's song' on p. Harris 500, however, as can be seen here, no particular distinction is drawn in the depiction of accompaniment, and this terminology should be abandoned in future discussion.

The depiction of the *sem*-priest here may be of rather greater importance. Here, we see that the depiction of the harpist scene here doubles for a depiction of an offering, and specifically a depiction of the purification of the offering table with cool water and incense. The scene here may provide a ritual context for the harpist's scenes, and the music which accompanies the ritual action.

The 'Intef' song at Saqqara may have been chosen for the chapel of Paatenemhab in part because of its associations with Memphis. The explicit mentions of both Imhotep and Hordedef are perhaps significant in this context, since both are figures associated with the Memphite region. The attribution of the Step Pyramid of Djoser to the design of Imhotep is well-known, as is the later veneration of him, and the cult's apparent locus



Figure 7.12. Scene with harpist's song from the chapel of Tatia. Photo source: Leiden-Turin Expedition to Saqqara.

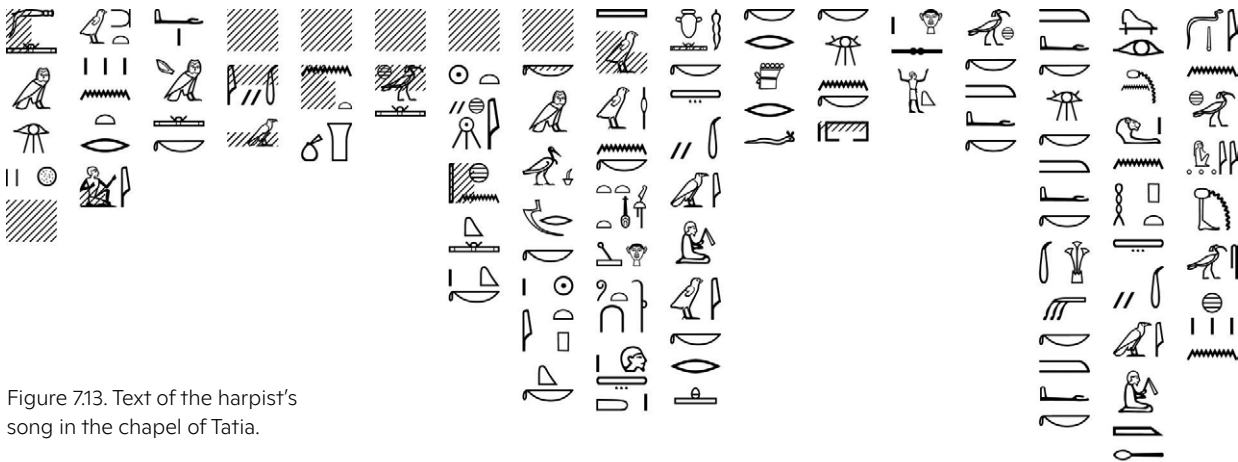


Figure 7.13. Text of the harpist's song in the chapel of Tatia.

at North Saqqara.⁹⁹ Hordedef's veneration as a wise man appears to have been equally widespread, if better-attested in literary texts,¹⁰⁰ though he is not specifically associated with Saqqara. The 'Intef song' was clearly also read at Thebes, however, and the 'lament for dead authors' on p. Chester Beatty IV also makes mention of these figures. Additionally, only the name of Imhotep is preserved here, and of the two figures, only Imhotep is mentioned on the 'Daressy fragment', which also came from Saqqara.¹⁰¹

99 See e.g. Emery 1971, 3-13

100 See Hagen 2013.

101 Mathieu 2012.

Raia

Very little of the text of Raia's harpist song survives. What does survive praises the West and a good death. The publication of the chapel of Raia noted that the only complete phrase, "let us not fear the mooring-post", in column 11, is not otherwise attested.¹⁰² Although the particular phrasing here appears to be unique, the 'day of mooring' is a well-attested theme of harpist's songs, particularly those which focus on 'making holiday',¹⁰³ and other nautical metaphors are also occasionally found in texts of this genre.¹⁰⁴

102 Martin 1985, 13 n.1.

103 Wentz 1962.

104 E.g. the harpist's song in the tomb of Paser; Lichtheim 1945, 202-203, pl. 3; but see also Parkinson 2013, 71.

<p> <i>dd-mdw in ʒhyw w^cb sʒhw n</i> <i>Wsir w^cb ḥʒt n Ptḥ Tʒ-ty-iʒ mʒ^c-ḥrw</i> <i>mk rmw=k m^c=k ḥʒti=k m^c=k</i> <i>ʒḥ=k m^c=k</i> <i>ḥr skʒi=k</i> <i>rmw n=k pr</i> <i>=k r-dr=f</i> <i>ndm ib=k Tʒ-ty-iʒ iw=k r ḥtp</i> <i>wḏ n=k imntt nfrt ḥr-sʒ rnt¹¹⁰ tp-tʒ</i> <i>[pr (?)] =k m bʒ r mʒ=k r^c tpi=k</i> <i>[...t i(ʒ)hy ḥn(p?) fnd=k</i> <i>[...]ʒḥ[...]</i> <i>[...^c]nt[yw(?)]...</i> <i>[... Tʒ]-ti-yʒ[...]</i> <i>^c (?) sḏm=k</i> <i>dniwt n tr</i> <i>mḥ m rmw sp-sn</i> </p>	<p> Words spoken by the pure transfigured spirits and transfiguring for the Osiris, the <i>wab</i>-priest of the front of Ptah, Tatia the justified: Behold, your weeping with you, your mourning is with you, Your akh is with you Elevating you, Your house weeps for you In its entirety Let your heart be glad, O Tatia! You shall rest! The beautiful West is decreed for you, after 110 years on earth! May you [go forth (?)] as a <i>ba</i>, in order that you may see the sun; may you breathe [...(?)] [...]sunlight. May your nose inhale(?) [...] [...] <i>akh</i> (?)[...] [...] ung]ue[nt(?) ...] [...] Ta]tia[...] <i>a</i> (?) May you hear The cries of the worshipper, filled with weeping! (x2) </p>
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Table 7.7. Transliteration and translation of the harpist's song in the chapel of Tatia.

The scene in the tomb of Raia appears to represent a novel approach to the harpist motif. Raia appears as the performer rather than the audience for the song. He sings to the gods who sit enthroned where the husband and wife would more normally be expected. The surviving phrasing of the song reflects this, asking the gods to protect the living from fear of the Netherworld, rather than asserting a lack of such fear.

In the scene, Hathor removes her broad, counterweighted *menat*-necklace. This is a well-known motif from royal and non-royal depictions alike, often associated with rejuvenation, and, through the caption-text “your hands to beauty”, associated with the rejuvenation scene in the *Story of Sinuhe*.¹⁰⁵ Direct allusion to *Sinuhe* is rather unlikely here. The apparent similarities here are likely more to do with the overlapping contexts of the two texts: the harpist's song in the tomb of Raia belongs to a funerary context, while the relevant part of *Sinuhe* refers to rejuvenation within a context of old age and burial.

Harpists are also sometimes associated with rituals of rejuvenation, too, as in the early Middle Kingdom tomb of Senbi son of Ukhhotep at Meir (Tomb B1), where the harpist sings before Senbi while two rows of women shake their sistrums and offer him their *menat*-necklaces.¹⁰⁶ The captions for Senbi's singers contain wishes for the *ka* of the deceased not dissimilar from many of the more ‘orthodox’ songs written in front of harpists in the Nineteenth Dynasty.¹⁰⁷

Raia held the title ‘Chief of Singers of Ptah’, and the scene may be one of personal devotion, typical of the Ramesside. The surviving text states that it is Raia who is depicted as the harpist here, and the scene may anticipate later devotional depictions on stelae of the deceased playing the harp before the god.¹⁰⁸ Raia is not the first to be depicted this way: Amenemhab Mahu appears on two stelophorous statues, in the lunette of the stelae, playing the harp, while the text represents the lyrics of his song.¹⁰⁹

Although the scene depicts Raia singing before the gods, and may be related to personal devotion or Raia's work in this life, the wider context remains funerary, both in terms of its placement in a tomb, and more immediately in terms of the accompanying scenes.

5. *Tatia*¹¹⁰

The text here is accompanied by musicians, but the text is labelled as the speech of the *akhs*. This introduction is presumably to be taken as part of the song sung by the musicians, too.¹¹¹ This may indicate that the text refers to events in the Netherworld. The first part of the text (cols 1-7) is difficult to interpret, but appears to refer to the state of the deceased following the funerary ritual, their *akh* and their (funerary) shroud being with them. The text appears to be set in the Netherworld, since it is spoken by the beatified spirits.¹¹² The text of columns 3-4 is

105 B 269-270: Koch 1990, 77. See also Parkinson 2002, 163; 1991b, 79-81.

106 Blackman 1914, pls 2-3; the text of the accompanying song is translated in Lichtheim 1945, 190-191.

107 Lichtheim 1945, 190.

108 See e.g. the stela of Djedkhonsuefankh, Louvre inv. no. N. 3657, but also a Late Period stela in Cairo inv. no. JE 65756.

109 Froid 2013, 164 n. 36.

110 See Oeters 2017, 64-65, figs 6-7. For the reading of *ḥʒti* as ‘mourning’, see *Wb.* III, 6-7.4.

111 On the question of who is to be understood as ‘speaking’ in the harpist's songs, see Simon 2013, 212-213.

112 Compare the litanies in the Book of Caverns: Werning, 2011, 163.

particularly difficult to interpret. Nevertheless, it is difficult to justify alternative readings of the repeated sign-group interpreted as *m-^c-k* here. The second half of the text consists of motifs commonly found in the harpist's songs, praising the afterlife and the tomb. The text here may support the notion that the songs point to events which are supposed to take place in the Netherworld while they are sung,¹¹³ and appears to suggest a context for the singing of such songs at the end of the funerary ritual.

The phrase *wḏ n-k imntt nfrt*, "the beautiful West has been decreed for you" appears to be found in another harpist's song from the Saqqara necropolis: similar expressions are found in the harpist's song of Merya (text no. 1: *tw-k wḏ.ti r imntt*, "you are decreed to the West"), and the harpist's song in the tomb of Nebnefer (text no. 5: *wḏ n-k imntt* "the West is decreed for you"). The phrase *nḏm ib-k*, "let your heart be glad" is also found in the harpist's songs of Nebnefer (text no. 6), and Sunero (text no. 7). Although much of this part of the text is otherwise damaged, what can be read falls within the realm of expected expressions for harpist's songs, expressing the deceased's continuing good fortune in arriving safely in the afterlife.

Oeters¹¹⁴ has noted the apparent similarity of the musicians depicted in the tomb of Tatia to those depicted in the tomb of Nebnefer.¹¹⁵ The tomb of Nebnefer contains two groups of two female performers who may be singers, depicted in a similar arrangement and similar poses to the ones found in the tomb of Tatia. These singers are depicted holding ducks, and accompanied by a harpist and a flute-player, arranged in the same order as in the tomb of Tatia. However, the tomb of Nebnefer contains four singers rather than three, and the flute-player appears to be depicted wearing a wig. This does not appear to be the case for the flute-player in the tomb of Tatia, though this cannot be confirmed since the head of this figure is damaged. Additionally, the harpist in the tomb of Tatia appears to be unusually depicted wearing a skullcap, rather than being depicted as bald, as is more common.

The poses of the singers are not quite identical in the two tombs. While the outermost singer in all three groups depicted in the two tombs has one hand raised to her ear and one hand resting above her knee, the position of the visible hands of the other two singers in the tomb of Tatia is near their faces, perhaps in a gesture of mourning. In contrast, the singers in the tomb of Nebnefer are depicted with their hands close to their knees, like the outermost singer.

6. Nebnefer¹¹⁶

Here, as in the harpist's song in the tomb of Paatenemheb, the *sem*-priest is depicted censuring and pouring water over the offering table. Above the offering table and next to the *sem*-priest a caption is written: *irt ḥtp-dī-nsw n k3-k*, "doing 'an-offering-which-the-king-gives' for your *ka*". Here, the musicians appear to be fully integrated into the ritual scene; they appear behind the *sem*-priest purifying the offering table, but in front of an offering-bearer, carrying two jars topped by lotuses. The combination found in the Paatenemheb scene is here made more explicit, and the viewer is surely supposed to take these as parts of one and the same offering scene rather than an ambiguous mixture of multiple events, as might have been the case in the better-known example. Part of the register above the harpist's song is still preserved. The legs of at least six figures appear in a row. The first and third figures from the left appear to be kneeling, and it could be the remains of a depiction of the Opening of the Mouth, which often involves both standing and kneeling figures. A similar combination of scenes is found in the tomb of Raia (see above). However, this is far from certain, and the scene may well have depicted some other form of activity.

113 See Chobanov 2014, 131-133.

114 Oeters 2017, 64-65.

115 Gohary 2009, pl. 40a.

116 Raven 2017, 91, fig. 10; Gohary 2009, 28-29, pl. 40a.



Figure 7.14. Scene with harpist's song from the tomb of Nebnefer. Photo reproduced by kind permission of Professor Ola el-Aguizy of Cairo University.

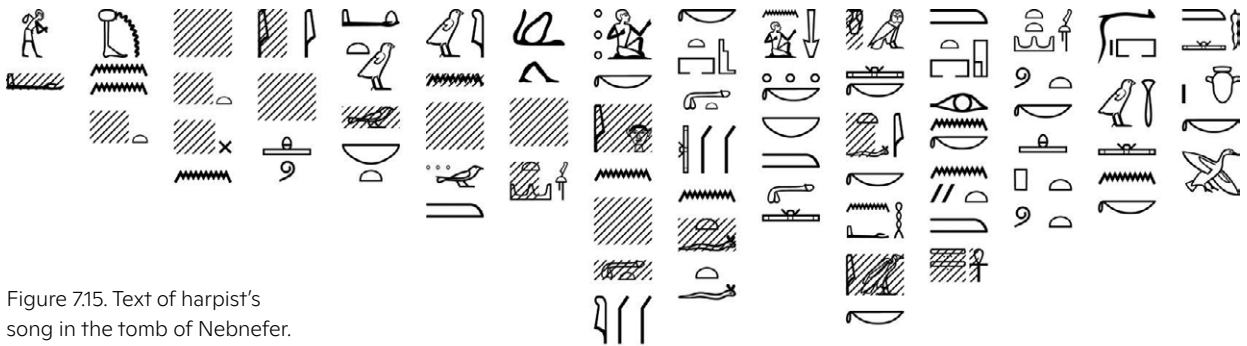


Figure 7.15. Text of harpist's song in the tomb of Nebnefer.

<i>nqm ib=k p3 (i)m(y)-r pr</i>	Let your heart be glad, O steward!
<i>wq n=k imntt</i>	The west is assigned to you,
<i>tw=k htp.tw m hwt ir.n=k nty m nh(?)[-t3wy]</i>	and you are at rest in the chapel which you have made and which is in Ankh-[Tawy]!
<i>[hn]m=k i[t]=k hn^c [mwt]{i}=k(?)</i>	May you [joi]n your fat[her] together with your [*mother] (?)
<i>sn=k nb m-b3h=k st mty n nftft*=k (?) [...]</i>	All your brothers being in your presence! The proper place of your
<i>hri n[...] mty (?)</i>	wandering
<i>ph[-k (?) ...] imntt[...]</i>	is far away (?) [...] testimony(?)
<i>šw [...] m (?)</i>	[May you(?)] reach the We[st]
<i>di.tw nbt</i>	Free [...] from (?)
<i>y (?) [...] htp.w</i>	Everything is placed (?)
<i>[...] t [...] n</i>	[...] at peace
<i>w^cb[...]</i>	[...] for
<i>[...](?)</i>	[...] pure
	[...](?)

Table 7.8. Transliteration and translation of harpist's song in the tomb of Nebnefer.



Figure 7.16. Relief block with harpist's song belonging to Sunero. Photo source: Yale Art Gallery, public domain image.

Table 7.9. Transliteration and translation of harpist's song of Sunero.

*Sw-n-r m3^c-hrw [ndm]-ib=k tw=k htp.ti
 m imntt hrt=k m n^h-t3wy
 iy.n sp-tpy imntt nfrt n k3=k
 htp b3=k m-hnw=s nis.tw=k in hry-hb r^c w3h ht
 Wsir Sw-n[-r m3^c-hrw]*

O Sunero the justified, may you heart b[e glad]! You are at rest in the West, your tomb is in Ankh-Tawy, the first moment of the beautiful West has come for your *ka*! Your *ba* rests inside it, and you are invoked by the lector priest, on the day of laying down provisions, Osiris Sune[ro the justified!]



Figure 7.17. Text of harpist's song of Sunero.

Despite the clear similarities in the composition of the harpist's scene in the tomb of Nebnefer to the scene in the tomb of Tatia, what survives of the texts show very little overlap, beyond the deployment of stock phrases exhorting the deceased to be glad, and noting their arrival in the West (see above). At a broader thematic level the two songs appear comparable, in that both assume that the deceased has not yet completed their journey in the Netherworld; the text in the tomb of Tatia appears to make reference to the deceased flying out of the tomb as a *ba*, while the text of Nebnefer appears to suggest that although the deceased has been nominated for the afterlife, they have yet to reach the West ([...] *ph* [...] *imntt* in column 9), and the possible reference to testimony in the text (columns 7-8) might suggest that the deceased is thought to still have the judgement ahead of them. Here it is interesting to note the rather prominent placement of the 'Negative Confession', from Book of the Dead chapter 125, on the north wall of the second court of this tomb, following a depiction of a funerary procession.¹¹⁷

7. Sunero

Simpson suggests that the block dates to the Ramesside period on the basis of art style.¹¹⁸ If so, the scene appears to be an unusual example of a harpist's song from the

¹¹⁷ Gohary 2009, 19-20, pls 22a-b.

¹¹⁸ Simpson 1962, 49; see also Scott 1987, 133-134.



Figure 718. Egyptian, *Relief with Blind Harpist*, 1350/1300 BCE, carved limestone. Detroit Institute of Arts, Founders Society Purchase, 1986.103. Photo source: Detroit Institute of Arts, public domain image.

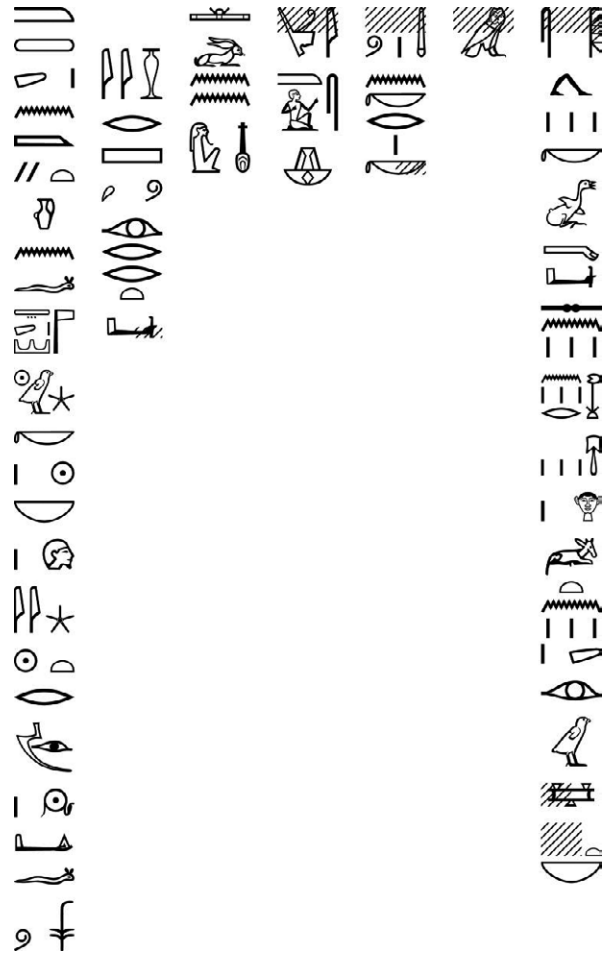


Figure 719. Text of harpist's song from unknown tomb on relief block in Detroit.

Ramesseid period, depicted as being performed during a banquet scene; 'banquet songs' are generally assumed to have ceased to be depicted on tombs after the Amarna period, to be replaced with the harpist's songs,¹¹⁹ but this distinction is likely somewhat exaggerated in the Egyptological literature.

On the subject of the text, Simpson noted that the text of the fourth column (*nīs.tw=k in hry-ḥb hrw wꜣḥ ḥt*, "you are called by the lector priest on the day of laying down provisions")¹²⁰ recalls the harpist's song from the tomb of Piay at Thebes ("Your *ba* comes forth at the voice of the *ka*-priest, in order to receive the offerings laid down for it").¹²¹ The phrase "let your heart be glad" (*ndm ib=k*) is also found in the harpist's songs of Tatia and Nebnefer (see above). References to the deceased's place in the West are found in the harpist's songs of Nebnefer, Tatia, and Merya, but the phrasing found in the harpist's song of Sunero is not otherwise attested at Saqqara.

119 Lichtheim 1945.

120 Lichtheim 1945, 204-205.

121 Simpson 1969, 50; see Lichtheim 1945, 204, pl. 4a.

The reference to the 'laying down of provisions' (*wꜣḥ-ḥt*) is significant. This refers to the provision of offerings, and is strongly associated with the end of the Egyptian funeral, but also with offerings made at feasts.¹²² The phrase is also strongly associated with mortuary liturgies.

8. Fragment from an Unknown Tomb

Goedicke's scepticism about the comprehensibility of this text¹²³ is not altogether irrational. However, although the phrases do not hang together completely, they do seem to form a broad thematic unity, and fit with the topical preferences of the genre, namely, ritual action by priests, and the promised joys of the afterlife. Where the song in the tomb of Raia preferred to link rebirth with nautical metaphors relating to the mooring-post (see above), here the solar afterlife appears to be invoked. The reference to 'reins' perhaps refers to the ropes used to drag the solar boat in the Netherworld. Alternatively, they may belong to the ritual boat of another god, such as Sokar. References to

122 Favard-Meeks 1991, 401-433, quoted in Assmann 2005b, 467-468.

123 Goedicke 1982, 36.

<i>šmsw=k t3(i)=sn hnr(w) hr iwtn irw w3t nb</i>	Your followers take up the reins on the ground, and every journey is made;
<i>m</i>	[...] in [...]
<i>mdw n=k</i>	[...] speech for you [...]
[...] <i>r=k</i>	[...] Your utterance (?) [...]
<i>in sm hry-ḥb</i>	[...] by the <i>sem</i> -priest and the lector-priest
<i>Wnn-nfr</i>	[...] Wennefer
<i>ḥsy ršw irrt</i>	[...] favoured one, who rejoices (at) what is done
<i>m iw n M3t(y) hnm n=f t3-ntr dw3=k r^c nb</i>	In the island of Maaty, having joined the god's land. May you awaken every
<i>tp dw3yt r m33 R^c di=f sw</i>	day in the early morning, in order to see Ra when he shows himself [...]

Table 7.10. Transliteration and translation of harpist's song on relief block in Detroit.

actions taken by the lector-priest and the *sem*-priest in this text may find parallels in the references to the actions of priests "in leopard-skins" (*m inm 3bi*) found in the harpist's songs of Paser¹²⁴ and the first of the songs from the tomb of Neferhotep,¹²⁵ but does not appear to find explicit textual reference at Saqqara apart from in this text.

Harpists' Songs at Saqqara: Contexts and Performance

Harpists' Songs at Saqqara

Among the more distinctive elements of the harpists' songs at Saqqara is the location of these texts in the tomb. This appears to differ from the standard practice at Thebes, but since only four of the eight songs discussed here come from complete or substantially complete chapels, this observation should be treated with some caution.

The harpists' songs in the tombs of Raia¹²⁶ and Tatia¹²⁷ are found on the south wall of the chapel, the harpist's song of Nebnefer¹²⁸ is found on the south wall of the south side-chamber, and the harpist's song in the tomb of Paatenemhab is found on the north wall of the chapel. The association of the harpist's song with the south wall of the chapel at Saqqara is difficult to interpret. The harpist's song in the tomb of Nefersekheru at Zawyet es-Sultan¹²⁹ is also found on the north wall of an inner chamber, and this placement may represent a 'northern', or even Memphite, trend in tomb decoration, as opposed to the Theban preference for placing such scenes in the hallways of the tomb.¹³⁰

It is often said that only depictions of individual musicians accompany the harpists' songs in the Ramesside period.¹³¹ Evidently this is not the case at Saqqara.

The Sunero and Tatia scenes, although dating to the Nineteenth Dynasty, appear to still place the harpist's song in the context of a banquet, while the scenes from the tombs of Paatenemhab, Tatia, and Nebnefer all show a group of musicians playing rather than an individual lutenist or harpist, as is more common in Thebes during the Nineteenth Dynasty.

The majority of the surviving songs from Saqqara are similar in terms of general motif,¹³² with songs known from the Theban area, but show limited direct intertextuality with one another. While some phrases are found in more than one song, or repeat motifs found in other songs with a slight variation in phraseology, this overlap at Saqqara is limited. The harpist's song in the chapel of Paatenemhab appears to be substantially identical with the song found on p. Harris 500, but the song does not appear to be otherwise attested at Saqqara, or indeed anywhere else, with the exception of Deir el-Medina.¹³³ The chapel of Paatenemhab appears to be the only funerary monument from the Saqqara necropolis to preserve a 'pessimistic' harpist's song. While this appears to suggest that harpist's songs with pessimistic themes are less common at Saqqara than at Thebes, this may simply be a result of the greater number of tombs known from the Theban area, and the greater number of harpists' songs known from Thebes as a result.

It seems likely that the selection of texts for the harpist's song scene was determined in part by the rest of the tomb's decorative schema, or was not made in isolation from it, at least. Raia's career as chief singer of Ptah must surely be taken as the reason he is depicted as singing before the gods, rather than listening to the song in his tomb.¹³⁴ Reasons for the choice of text in the chapel of Paatenemhab are rather more difficult to suggest, given the limited biographical information known about this individual and the fact that the original context for his

124 Lichtheim 1945, 203.

125 Lichtheim 1945, 195.

126 Martin 1985, 12-13.

127 Oeters 2017, 64-65.

128 Gohary 2009, 28-29.

129 Osing 1992a, 65-72.

130 Emerit 2015; Fabian 2002, 5-7.

131 E.g. Simon 2013, 211.

132 See Assmann 1977, 72.

133 In addition to the quotation of the 'Intef' song in the tomb of Amenpahapy, there is an additional possible quotation in p. Deir el-Medina I; see n. 154, below.

134 Martin 1985, 10.

chapel is unknown. Likewise, any particular contextual information on the reason for the text selection in the tomb of Merya, Sunero, or the Unknown Tomb Fragment is limited. The prominence of Merya's children in the text presumably refers to real offspring, but it does not seem wise to press this line of argumentation, given the limited data available. It is equally difficult to suggest a reason for the apparent focus on transfiguration in the harpist's song of Tatia, beyond a loose religious association with his title as *wab*-priest of the front of Ptah.¹³⁵ The appearance of the wife of Ptahmay in the 'banquet song' in his chapel is brief, and the reason for this prominent appearance is unknown.

Oral and Textual Contexts, and the Question of Performance

The harpist's songs appear to show a high degree of variability in use of expressions and content, with many similar phrases found in the songs but few examples which are substantially identical.¹³⁶ The process of composition appears to be a kind of 'cut-and-paste',¹³⁷ or recombination of stock phrases and expressions to produce a text of required length and sentiment. This process finds distinct parallels more generally in both the Egyptian literary and religious corpora.¹³⁸

This compositional technique does not appear to have been followed in the copying of the 'Intef' song found in the chapel of Paatenemhab. It might be that if more pieces of the chapel of Paatenemhab were known, they would reveal a greater variation in the text of the harpist's song than has hitherto been apparent, but this is a speculative argument. It is not clear how the question of its 'canonical' copying might reflect deeper questions about the harpists' songs. The 'Intef song' might represent an actual song of the type sung at the funeral or funeral banquet. Alternatively, it might represent a specific and popular example of a purely monumental text, serving as a type of lengthy scene-caption. It is likely that the reader was supposed to take literally the incipit of the text on p. Harris 500: the song is before the 'singer with the harp' in the tomb of Intef not in the sense of a score before a musician,¹³⁹ but as the content of a hieroglyphic inscription found in front of a depiction of a harpist in the tomb.

If this is the case, it is not clear whether this should be taken to imply that the text was not a real, performed song; apparently, the copyist who assigned it the title it bears on p. Harris 500 was not aware of the song from

another context, and it might be inferred from this that the text was not performed regularly, at least at Thebes, unless the text was particularly well-known as having originated in a particular tomb, and the title reflects a real context. Alternatively, if the title is pseudepigraphic, and does not really refer to a particular tomb, it clearly envisages monumental display as the principal context for songs of this type.¹⁴⁰ The apparently fixed, canonical copying of the text raises similar questions. This might be taken to indicate that the 'Intef' song is indeed a real, performed song, for which a fixed set of words were required to match the (fixed) melody, but these notions themselves may be anachronistic for a culture without musical notation, and hence without a reliable method of ensuring that a particular melody remained unaltered. Indeed, the very lack of variation in the text might be taken to indicate the opposite, that this was a purely monumental text which was never performed, and hence was never subject to the demands of an audience and the particular tastes and skills of the performer. The existence of an apparent quotation from the 'Intef' song in the Twentieth Dynasty tomb of Amenpahapy, which preserves a text which deviates considerably from that known from p. Harris 500 and the chapel of Paatenemhab, does not necessarily clarify the matter of the song's canonicity. The section quoted may have been transmitted independently long after the song itself was no longer sung, or as a stock phrase without being known as part of the song itself. The Amenpahapy¹⁴¹ "quotation" differs quite significantly in wording from that found either in the chapel of Paatenemhab or on p. Harris 500. This may reflect in part adaptation to context, altering the wording to suit the use of the excerpt, but also either a more open transmission process than is attested in the Paatenemhab and p. Harris 500 sources for the song, or possibly the independent transmission of elements used in the 'Intef' song as stock phrases, worked into a coherent whole as it suited either the musical performer or the copyist assembling a text for a tomb wall. The high degree of variation and intertext found

135 Oeters 2017, 57.

136 See e.g. Fabian 2002, 3, 10-12; El-Noubi 1998, 252-253; Wente 1962.

137 Eyre 2013, 136-138.

138 Hussein 2013.

139 Perhaps unlikely given the lack of evidence for musical notation in ancient Egypt; see Manniche 1990, 11-14.

140 Simon 2013, 213-217 takes a different view, emphasising the oral-performative nature of the songs, and their secondary role in monumental display as a kind of eternal substitute for a real singer (on which concept see Weiss 2015b). The argument is not without merit, but the difficulty in distinguishing song-texts from more general caption-texts noted by Lichtheim 1945, 184-185 appears to suggest a more complex relationship.

141 "The gods [who came into being previous]ly(?) are <in>side their chapels, and the beatified spirits and people likewise rest [...] and hear (?) the words of Hordedef and Imhotep, saying: [...]" (*nṯrw* [*hprw hr-ḥst(?)*] <*m->ḥnw ḥwt-sn šhw rṃw m-mitt ḥtp*[...] *sdm mdwt Hr-dd-f ḥnꜥ Ty-m-ḥtp r-dd*[...]); see Bruyère 1928, fig. 79. For comparison with the text in Paatenemhab and on p. Harris 500, see Table 7.4, above.

in the songs published by Wente¹⁴² could be read in such a light, reflecting the vagaries of oral performance.¹⁴³ However, this variability might also be understood as indicating that the texts were composed purely as texts, subject to purely textual processes of adaptation and transmission, without being sung to music, as a purely ‘elite’ composition. Lichtheim notes that the Eighteenth Dynasty ‘orchestra’ texts are often not distinct from the other banquet scene captions,¹⁴⁴ while Fox has referred to the song texts as “stereotyped and theoretical”.¹⁴⁵ This highlights the difficulties which surround the question of whether the songs were really performed, and how the songs performed relate to the texts written on tomb walls. Even if the texts do reflect ‘real’ songs, they still may not form a ‘direct’ record: some degree of editing, to make the texts fit the physical space allotted to them on the wall, would presumably have been necessary for at least some of them. This may have only involved the use of abbreviated orthographies to fit the text into a limited space, but it may also have involved the kinds of more extensive editing found in the copying of excerpts from the Book of the Dead on tomb walls, for example.¹⁴⁶

The ‘Intef’ song certainly shares a great deal of intertext with some other harpist’s songs, to the extent that Lichtheim noted Max Müller’s conviction that the ‘Intef’ song and the harpist’s songs in the tomb of Neferhotep at Thebes (TT 50) were in fact variant copies of the same work.¹⁴⁷ This notion is surely far too rigid an approach to the material, and almost certainly incorrect, but does highlight the epistemological difficulties encountered in discussing the songs from a perspective of canonicity and the ‘old philology’. Similarly, whether or not the four texts discussed by Wente¹⁴⁸ as ‘make-merry songs’ should really be treated as one song or as four very similar ones is as much a matter of perspective as of identifiable criteria.

The harpist’s songs as a genre of text occasionally contain allusions to works of Egyptian literature. Such literary allusions should not be seen as incidental to the question of their context; at least two of the Theban harpist’s songs appear to contain allusions to literary works, aside from the well-known reference to famous wise-men, and an allusion to the *Dialogue of a Man and*

*His Ba*¹⁴⁹ may be found in the ‘Harpist’s Song from the Tomb of King Intef’. The harpist’s song from the tomb of Paser contains a reference to sailing with the “fair wind of truth”, which may be an allusion to the beginning of the first petition from the *Tale of the Eloquent Peasant*,¹⁵⁰ while the statement in the ‘second’ song from the tomb of Neferhotep that “There is no man who prepares himself against his brother”¹⁵¹ appears to allude to Middle Egyptian pessimistic literature, such as the *Dialogue of a Man and His Ba*.¹⁵² Whether these allusions are to be understood as directly referring to the texts mentioned here, or simply to a common stock of phraseology and sentiment to which these texts belong, they seem to indicate that the harpist’s songs are not the work of lesser composers, a draughtsman’s composition of inferior quality to high literary works, for instance, or ‘folk’ literature.¹⁵³ Rather, they suggest that these texts emerged from the same group within New Kingdom society who were reading and copying Middle Egyptian literary works.¹⁵⁴ Whether this group consisted of a large cross-section of the literate who disseminated these works to a wider audience by performance,¹⁵⁵ or a more limited ‘scribal sub-elite’,¹⁵⁶ the presence of such allusions in songs underlines the clear connection between performance and literature in pharaonic Egypt.¹⁵⁷

142 Wente 1962.

143 See e.g. Parkinson 2009, 34-40, on ancient and modern performance practices.

144 Lichtheim 1945, 184-185.

145 Fox 1982, 274. Although Fox states here that the songs are not “precise records of what was said and done at actual events”, he nevertheless argues that the songs were sung nevertheless, because a wholly textual song would “not be persuasive magic” (Fox 1982, 287).

146 See Diaz-Iglesias Llanos, this volume.

147 Lichtheim 1945, 180.

148 Wente 1962.

149 For this text, see Faulkner 1956, 21-40; for translation see Parkinson 1997, 151-165.

150 B85-86; Parkinson 2013, 71; Parkinson 1991, 17.

151 *nn-wn hr sw r sn-nw-f*; Hari 1985, pl. 4.

152 E.g. 112-113 *iw hꜣdꜣ.tw s nb hr iꜣt sn-nw-f*, “one steals, and every man is robbing his brother”; Faulkner 1956, 25.

153 This term is unhelpful, and probably not useful for Egyptian literature: see Eyre 2011a.

154 A more indirect indication of this may be in the text of p. Deir el-Medina I 7,2 (B 21,4-5), where a fragment of harpist’s song appears to have been interpolated into the *Instruction of Ani*: *ir ꜣk sw dy rꜣ nb rmꜣ pꜣ nty m ht wꜣ [s]bi iw [... mn]*, “for food is there every day; (but) man is the one who is in a generation, one passing while [... remains (?)]”. For this text, see Quack 1994, 136-137 and 317; Černý/Posener 1978, pls 7-7a; the present author is unaware of an English translation of this manuscript of this text; for an English translation of the *Instruction of Ani*, see Lichtheim 1976, 135-146. The apparent interpolation demonstrates a familiarity on the part of the literary copyist with the stock phrases of the harpist’s songs. Although it might be taken as a quotation from the ‘Harpist’s song from the tomb of Intef’ (see above), the phrase is attested in other harpist’s songs as well (see e.g. Wente 1962, 122-238; Lichtheim 1945, 195-203). Nevertheless, the phrasing in p. Deir el-Medina I accords most closely with that found in the ‘Intef’ song, and may be a further indication of its canonical transmission, but the brevity of the fragment and the lacunae are reasons to be cautious about pressing this point. Quack (1994, 178-179) does not comment upon this apparent interpolation in the Deir el-Medina text.

155 Eyre 2013.

156 Ragazzoli 2010, 163-164.

157 Eyre 2013.

It is possible that the ironic tone found in Egyptian literature of the New Kingdom, and particularly in the narrative tales,¹⁵⁸ can also be found within the tomb as well; it seems very unlikely that the person responsible for the design of Paatenemhab's chapel was unaware of the irony in inscribing a text doubting the durability of monumental tombs on just such a monument. Whether this irony was felt to be a profound and wise humility, or humorous and sardonic, or both, is perhaps beyond the ability of the modern scholar to assess.

The same process of adaptation and transmission in evidence in the songs themselves can be seen to apply to the scenes accompanying the harpists' songs, most notably in the depiction of musicians and singers in the tombs of Tatia and Nebnefer. The process of transmission of both text and image in this case would seem to be the result of similar, if not identical, processes of copying, adaptation, and transformation. Indeed, this should not be altogether surprising, and there seems little reason to posit that there should have been more than one kind of (textual) transmission in ancient Egypt at any one time. It seems particularly inappropriate to suppose that the transmission of text and images should be subject to separate processes, particularly when these are parts of the same scene, and when the copyists of both may have been the same people: many of the copies of literary works from Deir el-Medina are the work of *sš-ḳdw*, or 'draughtsmen',¹⁵⁹ and these are the same people who copied texts onto tomb walls, at least at an initial stage.

Contexts of Performance

Two of the chapels, those of Paatenemhab and of Nebnefer, appear to combine the depiction of the harpist singing before the tomb owner and his wife with the depiction of a funerary ritual. The harpist's scene from the tomb of Merya combines the banquet scene with a ritual performed by a *sem*-priest. This suggests a ritual context for the harpist's song in the tomb. The harpist's song from the tomb of Piay at Thebes notably makes reference to the voice of the *hm-kz* priest calling the deceased's *ba* to receive offerings,¹⁶⁰ which finds parallel in the Saqqara Sunero fragment. A ritual context, and particularly a context at the end of the funeral rites, would explain why some of the harpist's songs make reference to 'transfiguration' (*sšḥw*), and contain benedictions rather than either the well-wishes for life in the beautiful West, or the 'make holiday' themes found in others. No reference to singing, or to music, appears to be found in the 'Opening

of the Mouth' ritual,¹⁶¹ but this need not rule out the use of such songs as an accompaniment to its performance.¹⁶² These connections do not explain the use of 'pessimistic', 'make-holiday' texts in the context of the funeral. The evidence collected here may seem to suggest that the 'banquet scenes' found in Egyptian tombs, and in which the deceased is sung to by musicians, including harpists, are to be understood as depictions of the deceased after death. It may be, however, that if the interpretation of these scenes is ambiguous to the modern scholar, it is because they may have been intended simultaneously represent both the deceased in the next life, and the deceased during their lifetime. Emerit¹⁶³ has argued that the position of the harpist's songs in Theban tombs of the New Kingdom indicates their role as marking a boundary between this world and the next. This would appear to support the notion that the harpist's songs belong to the end of the funerary ritual, a key moment in the transition of the deceased between this world and the next.¹⁶⁴

Indeed, the earliest examples of the 'harpist scene' from the Middle Kingdom may well underscore this connection: the harpist's song from the stela of Sais at Abydos (Leiden inv. no. AP 65)¹⁶⁵ shows a series of offerings being made, and the slaughter of a bull, while a harpist sings a text apparently adapted from the Pyramid Texts.¹⁶⁶

Fox argued that the 'harpist's scene' represents part of the daily offering within the tomb,¹⁶⁷ on the basis of uses of the phrase 'every day' in some of the texts.¹⁶⁸ Fox further argued that this was not necessarily performed daily,¹⁶⁹ and that the harpist's were only present pictorially, as part of scenes meant to guarantee sustenance to the deceased magically.¹⁷⁰ The evidence presented by Fox for this is slim, however, and a context within the tomb chapel is unlikely for the harpist's songs for two reasons. The first is practical: the offering-chapels of the tombs at Saqqara, perhaps most notably the chapel of Paatenemhab, are rather small, such that it seems unlikely that an offering-priest and a musician or musicians could fit into them. Perhaps more seriously, references to the offerings made at the mouth of the tomb, found in the harpist's songs of Sunero, and of Piay,¹⁷¹ appears to suggest a different physical context.

158 See Eyre 2018, 96.

159 E.g. the *Book of Kemyt*; Posener 1951a, pl. 21; for a translation, see Wentz 1990, 15-16.

160 Lichtheim 1945, 204-205, pl. 4a.

161 Otto 1960.

162 See Eyre 2002, 55.

163 Emerit 2015, 161-162.

164 As argued by Emerit 2015, 161-162.

165 For image, see Simpson 1974, pl. 60 (ANOC 41.1).

166 Lichtheim 1945, 189-190, pl. 4b.

167 Fox 1982, 277-279.

168 Fox 1982, 278-279.

169 Fox 1982, 279-280.

170 Fox 1982, 286-287; but see also Weiss 2015b.

171 Lichtheim 1945, 204.

A second context for the offerings, and accompaniment by harpists, may be during religious festivals. It has been suggested that the real context of the harpist's songs is feasts taking place at tombs during the Beautiful Festival of the Valley at Thebes.¹⁷² This is a plausible enough suggestion for the Theban region, but can hardly account for the harpist's songs elsewhere in Egypt, as in Saqqara. The Sokar festival is associated with visiting tombs, and was celebrated at both Thebes and Memphis.¹⁷³ This context appears to be supported by the second harpist's song from the tomb of Neferhotep at Thebes, which makes explicit reference to the Sokar festival (table 7.11).¹⁷⁴

Here, the reference to the deceased's participation in the festival of Sokar is clear, but the text appears to blend this with references to the funerary ritual performed for the deceased, too.¹⁷⁵ A more abbreviated reference to ritual context, with a more directly Osirian theme, is found in the harpist's song of Piay (TT 263). Here again, the context is both funerary and festival (table 7.12).¹⁷⁶

A broader association with the making of offerings at tombs during festivals may be preferable to assigning the harpist's songs to a single ritual context. Harrington¹⁷⁷ notes that Sheikholeslami has recently questioned the previously-held assumption that all scenes of feasting depicted in Theban tombs represented the Beautiful Festival of the Valley,¹⁷⁸ and it may be that the dominance of the 'Beautiful Festival' in the tombs at Thebes has been overstated in the past. It would be unwise to assume that the reference to the Sokar-festival in the tomb of Neferhotep indicates that this was the only occasion after the burial on which feasts might have been held at the tomb, and a broader calendar of festivals may have been observed. Nevertheless, the Sokar festival was an important event in the Memphite region, and may have been the most common context for such feasts at Saqqara.

There is a clear connection between the harpist's songs and the banquet scenes of the Eighteenth Dynasty, through the accompanying depictions of music and their song-texts. These have been interpreted variously,¹⁷⁹ as depictions of

either 'secular' feasts held during the deceased's life on earth, or else 'mortuary' banquets connected with funerary ritual.¹⁸⁰ Baines¹⁸¹ has argued banqueting might have taken place in tents in the open courtyards of Eighteenth Dynasty tombs, and that this might have been part of the culmination of the funerary ritual. Baines further suggests that such banquets might have been repeated during the Beautiful Festival of the Valley,¹⁸² but they could easily have been performed at other festivals, too.

The discovery of Nineteenth Dynasty pottery deposited at pavement level in two locations in the forecourt of the tomb of Horemheb may provide some confirmation for banqueting in tombs at Saqqara.¹⁸³ The first deposit, in the south-east corner, consisted of 151 vessels, all of which had been broken before deposition. 91% of the vessels in the deposit were uncoated silt beer jars.¹⁸⁴ Aston dated the deposit to the first half of the Nineteenth Dynasty,¹⁸⁵ and suggested that the material was offering pottery, originally placed in the cult chapels, and subsequently cleared out and dumped in the forecourt in antiquity, or are otherwise connected with a nearby Ramesside shaft burial.¹⁸⁶ However, if a 'banquet', similar to those depicted in Theban tomb scenes, had been held in the forecourt, this would also be a plausible deposition resulting from it, and the dominance of beer jars in the deposit would appear to accord well with the depictions of the feasts in tomb chapels, which tend to emphasise drinking over eating.¹⁸⁷ A second deposit was also found against the north wall, of which 77% of the material came from beer jars,¹⁸⁸ and which was also likely deposited during the early Nineteenth Dynasty.¹⁸⁹

An objection might be raised, that the harpist's scenes of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasties tend to only depict the musician and the deceased couple, of the musician alone. However, Baines has argued that the depiction of the deceased before an offering table in Old Kingdom reliefs in particular is a '*pars pro toto*' representation of the action of banqueting,¹⁹⁰ and a similar argument may apply to the harpist's scenes of the Ramesside period. The depiction of the deceased couple accompanying the harpist's song is often in front of an

172 Wente 1962, 120-121.

173 See Kitchen/Gaballa 1969. For an overview of the Sokar festival at Saqqara in the New Kingdom, see Staring in this volume, 210-213.

174 Hari 1985, pl. 4, song 2, cols 6-11.

175 Another example of both the often under-represented role of music in ritual, and of the blending of funerary and festival ritual, is provided by p. Louvre E 3228 Étiq. A Carton F, an abnormal hieratic funerary account, probably dating to the reign of Taharqa (see Donker van Heel forthcoming, 165-178). Among the costs listed is payment for the musicians, and their ration of beer (E 3228 Étiq A Carton F lines 8-9; Donker van Heel forthcoming, 167), as well as payment for a singer, scribes, and a dancer.

176 Lichtheim 1945, pl. 4a.

177 Harrington 2016, 134-136.

178 Sheikholeslami 2011.

179 Lichtheim 1945, 181-187;

180 See Baines 2014, 7-14; Fox 1982, 269-270; Wente 1962, 118-122; Lichtheim 1945, 181-187.

181 Baines 2014, 7-12; but Baines also warns against reading such scenes "too literally": Baines 2014, 13-14. See also Harrington 2016, 140-145, for evidence of banqueting at tombs in the Theban area.

182 Baines 2014, 12.

183 Aston 2011, 217.

184 Aston 2011, 217.

185 Aston 2011, 217.

186 Aston 2011, 217-219.

187 Hartley 2012, 26-32.

188 Aston 2011, 223.

189 Aston 2011, 224.

190 Baines 2014, 2-3.

dd.tw r=k st3.n=f Skr
di=k hnw hr m{c} <f> h
phr=k inbw m šmswt=f
thnt n šnbt=f
s'hc.n=f dd m [...]
sm m it=f
šsp hb <s> m ssw hbs-t3
šd=f hb Ddw
nfr wn=k hr ntrw
sh3.tw=k hr nfr=k
mi ntk pw 'k hr Twnw
rh sš <t3.w> imi=s
in hr(y)-hb htp ib n 'Imn
Nfr-htp m3c-hrw
p3 it-ntr shnty b3=k
sn krs=k
w3h Inpw 'c.wy=f hr=k*
hnm tw sn.ty
ir.tw n=k w'bt m m3wt
sip.ti m k3t dt c3
ht-ntr m km'c=s m3c*
nw hr 'c.wy Šsmw
hbs m k3t T3yt
m3w hr m s3w=k
hms n=k drty r rwtv
ikb=sn hr rn=k
mi ntk pw sh wn=k tp-t3
n nb=k 'Imn

“One says about you, ‘he has dragged the Sokar-boat.’
 You have placed the Henu-barque upon its sledge,
 You have gone around the walls in his entourage,
 (At the(?)) illumination of his chest.
 He has made the *djed*-pillar stand in [...]
 A *sem*-priest for his father,
 who seizes the hoe on the dates of hacking up the earth,
 and who has recited the festival of Busiris.
 Your existence before the gods is good,
 And you are recalled for your goodness,
 Just as it is you who enters into Heliopolis,
 Who knows the secrets which are in it.
 By the lector priest who pacifies the heart of Amun,
 Neferhotep the justified.
 O god’s-father, may your soul go forward,
 May your coffin pass,
 May Anubis place his two arms upon you,
 the Two Sisters embrace you,
 may purification be done for you anew,
 reckoned as a great work of eternity,
 with the god’s property being in its exact form
 Ointment on the hands of Shezmu,
 Clothing as a work of Tayt,
 The sons of Horus as your protection,
 The Two Kites sitting at the gates for you,
 Lamenting over your name,
 Just as it was you who were effective while you were on
 earth
 For Amun your lord (...)”

Table 7.11. Transliteration and translation of excerpt from the second harpist’s song in the tomb of Neferhotep at Thebes (TT 50).

rs m htp m is=k
sdm sprwt=k
nis.tw=k
s3=k hs[...]
pr=k tp-t3
šms=k ntr=k m w Pkr
m hb=f nfr n nšmt
ir.tw n=k c3bt c3t m r is=k
pr b3=k hr hrw hm-k3
šsp ht w3h.n=f

“Awaken in peace in your tomb!
 Your petition has been heard,
 And you are invoked,
 Your son is favour[ed...?]
 Your house upon earth.
 May you follow your god in the district of Peqer,
 In his beautiful festival of the Neshmet-barque.
 May a great sacrifice be made for you at the mouth of your
 tomb,
 and may your soul come forth at the voice of the
 spirit-priest,
 Receiving the things he has laid down (...)”

Table 7.12. Transliteration and translation of extract from harpist’s song from tomb of Piay at Thebes.

offering table,¹⁹¹ and the whole group might be understood
 as an abbreviated depiction of the same banquets depicted
 in Eighteenth Dynasty tombs.¹⁹² The same argument might
 likewise be applied to the depiction of harpists or lutenists

in the tombs at Thebes in the Ramesside period: rather
 than resulting from a shift in practice from the depiction
 of orchestra songs, they might rather reflect only a change
 in depiction of a practice which remains unchanged.
 Rather than representing a change in practice after the
 supposed ‘trauma’ of the Amarna period, the depictions
 of Nineteenth Dynasty Thebes would reflect rather a
 change in the ‘decorum’ of visual depiction.¹⁹³ Such an

191 Simon 2013, 211; Fox 1982, 269.

192 Fox 1982, 269 argued that both the ‘banquet scenes’ of the
 Eighteenth Dynasty, and the Ramesside harpist’s scenes, are
 simply elaborations on the offering scene in tombs, but that the
 banquets were symbolic rather than representations of real events
 (Fox 1982, 275).

193 For this term, see Baines 1990; for a broader overview, see Baines
 2007, 3-30.

<p> <i>sh3 n=k hrw n krs</i> <i>sbt r im3h</i> <i>wdꜥ.tw n=k h3w m sft</i> <i>m ʕ.wy T3yt</i> <i>ir.tw n=k šms-wd3 hrw sm3-t3wy</i> <i>wi m nbw tp m h3bd</i> <i>pt hr=k</i> <i>dī.ti m mstpt</i> <i>iḥw hr iḥ=k</i> <i>šmꜥw hr-h3t=k</i> <i>ir.tw hbb nnyw r r is=k</i> </p>	<p> Recall the day of burial to yourself, departing to be <i>imakh</i> A night in oils is assigned to you in the two arms of Tayt A funeral procession is made for you on the day of joining with the earth, A mummy-case of gold, a head of lapis lazuli, and heaven above you; You having been placed in the portable shrine, Oxen drawing you, Singers in front of you, And the dance of the inert ones is performed at the entrance of your tomb. </p>
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Table 713. Transliteration and translation of excerpt from the *Tale of Sinuhe*.

<p> <i>wb3=k dww nw hrt-ntr</i> <i>m3 n=k pr=k ʕnhw</i> <i>sḏm hrw hsi šmꜥ m rwyṯ imyt t3 pn</i> <i>ir=k s3 n msw=k</i> <i>r nhḥ hnꜥ dt</i> </p>	<p> May you open the mountains of the necropolis: See for yourself your house of the living, Hear the sound of singing and chanting in your gateway which is in this land, May you enact protection for your children, for eternity and everlastingness. </p>
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Table 714. Transliteration and translation of excerpt from tomb of Amenemhat (TT 82).

interpretation may explain the continued depiction of orchestras at Saqqara in the Nineteenth Dynasty.

Music accompanies ritual action in Egypt.¹⁹⁴ The point is illustrated nicely by the depiction of lutenists accompanying offerings to Amun in the tomb of Tjanuny at Thebes.¹⁹⁵ At Saqqara, the fragment found by Quibell, depicting a lutenist accompanying a figure who appears to be worshipping on his knees, both of whom sit before a statue of a god or the king, similarly reflects this.¹⁹⁶ References in the harpists' songs to funerary ritual near the entrance to the tomb find parallel in the Middle Kingdom recension of the *Tale of Sinuhe*¹⁹⁷ describes musicians as part of the funeral cortege (table 7.13).¹⁹⁸

Eyre¹⁹⁹ draws attention to the appeal to the living in the Eighteenth Dynasty tomb of Amenemhat, may provide a further hint of the ritual context of music during burial (table 7.14).²⁰⁰

The singing of the harpist's song, then, may coincide with the final parts of funerary ritual, and the provisioning of offerings for the *ba* of the deceased at the mouth of the tomb. This, perhaps, is what connects the contexts of the Eighteenth Dynasty 'banquet songs' and the Ramesside harpist's songs. The end of the funeral rites would be an

eminently appropriate time for the funerary feast to take place.²⁰¹ The placement of songs within the tomb itself, even in the chapel as at Saqqara, need not be taken as pointing away from such an interpretation; the Opening of the Mouth is often depicted inside the tomb, despite the ritual likely having taken place at the entrance.²⁰² The 'negative' sentiments of many of the songs, focussing either on gratification while alive, or casting doubt on the permanence of funerary monuments, may seem inappropriate to a funeral taking place at just such a monumental tomb. The difficulty which modern readers tend to have with this apparent contradiction may have more to do with Western theological distinctions between sacred and profane than with Egyptian religious mores, however. In the context of the end of the funerary ritual, a song emphasising the need to live on and enjoy this

194 See *LÄ* III, 852-855.

195 Brack/Brack 1977, 30-31, pl. 23.

196 Quibell 1912, pl. 80, no.3. See fig 7.1 no. 1.

197 As noted by Fox 1982, 275.

198 *Sinuhe*, B 191-195; Koch 1991, 62; for translation of the whole text, see Parkinson 1997, 21-53.

199 Eyre 2013, 114-115.

200 *Urk.* IV, 1064.13-17.

201 Baines 2014, 12. Harrington 2016, 131 raises the question of fasting before a funeral, on the basis of Frandsen 1999, and cites Prophecies of Neferti 9c (*nm sḏr. tw ḥkr n mt*, "no-one shall sleep, being hungry unto death"; Helck 1970, 34; for a different and more supportive translation, see Parkinson 1997, 131-143). This, however, is a single line from a literary text, and the interpretation, even in context, is not unproblematic. Frandsen 1999, 135-136 puts forward two further examples in support of the notion, but one of these is a reference to the mourning practices of the gods (p. Turin 1993 vso 5, 1-4) and the other appears to refer to the hunger of the *deceased*, not of those mourning them (p. Leiden T. 32 (= inv. no. L.I.2) VI, 2-3, 5, 11-13). Elsewhere, Frandsen (2001, 166-167) connects the practice of fasting with refraining from specific 'taboo' (*bwf*) foods during mourning, or at particular moments during the funeral.

202 See e.g. the well-known opening of the mouth vignette in the Book of the Dead of Hunefer (p. BM EA 9901, sheet 5).

life, following the mourning of the dead, can easily be envisaged as providing catharsis and perhaps a sense of closure to the whole ritual for those participating in it.

It may be unwise to attempt to tie the harpists' songs to a single funeral context, however. The heterogeneity of their content suggests that scholars should remain mindful of the broader Egyptian love of polysemy. The presence in some of the Theban tombs of as many as three different harpists' songs, notably in the tombs of Neferhotep,²⁰³ and Tjanefer²⁰⁴ may well indicate that the singing of songs with the harp did not belong to a single, funerary ritual. The presence of lutenists in scenes of sacrifice to Amun in the tomb of Tjanuny²⁰⁵ appears to indicate that musical accompaniment was normal for sacrifices, even if they are not always depicted. If so, it may be that the category of 'harpists' songs' should be considered with greater care, and possibly with more qualification than has been the norm until now. The song from the tomb of Raia in particular seems to argue against a narrow, overly-literal interpretation - the tomb owner could hardly have performed at his own funeral - and in any case, scenes carved and presumably completed before the tomb was actually used anticipate the funeral, rather than recording it, and should not be taken as literal accounts of what took place in a given tomb, as a consequence.

Nevertheless, two core contexts appear to be discernible for the harpists' songs in the material: a point towards the end of the funerary ritual, and perhaps at a subsequent banquet, and religious festivals at which the tombs of the deceased might be visited and a banquet, or drinking-party, might be held in the more accessible parts of the tomb. Here, the references to the 'laying down of provisions' (*wꜣh-ḥt*), explicit in the harpist's song of Sunero and perhaps more implicitly alluded to in the harpist's song of Piay from Thebes, may be essential. Favard-Meeks has identified the *wꜣh-ḥt* not simply as a reference to offerings, but to the opening of the offering-ritual.²⁰⁶ This is sometimes depicted as part of the inauguration of the tomb,²⁰⁷ and sometimes as part of festival activity.²⁰⁸ These two contexts match the two apparent contexts of the harpists' songs.²⁰⁹ The phrase *wꜣh-ḥt* is often connected with the offering-list, and Favard-Meeks argues that *wꜣh-ḥt* is the first part of the mortuary rite, which summons the *ba* of the deceased to receive the offerings, to be followed by the 'offering-

which-the-king-gives' (*ḥtp-di-nsw*) offering, and which is concluded by the recitation of transfiguration formulae (*sꜣḥw*). Fox has already noted²¹⁰ that a *ḥtp-di-nsw* offering was made as part of the funeral, after the completion of the 'Opening of the Mouth' at the entrance to the tomb. The connection of the *wꜣh-ḥt* with the harpists' songs may find further confirmation in the tomb of Neferhotep at Thebes (TT 50), which contains three harpists' songs, and also contains a festival calendar, listing dates for *wꜣh-ḥt* to be made for Osiris at various festivals.²¹¹

Assmann has emphasised the importance of sound to the summoning of the soul to receive the offerings.²¹² Among the elements of the spells for summoning the deceased to the offering is the exhortation of the deceased to arrive at the tomb.²¹³ The harpists' songs do not directly address this theme, but the emphasis of some of these texts on the joyousness of the tomb, which is "built for festivity"²¹⁴ may serve the same purpose thematically. While the scene from the tomb of Paatenemhab might be argued to clearly identify the harpist's song with the beginning of an offering-ritual, and so with *wꜣh-ḥt*, the scene in the tomb of Nebnefer labels the *sem*-priest as performing *ḥtp-di-nsw*, corresponding to a different point in the ritual. However, it may be unwise to overinterpret these scenes; as noted above, the scenes depicted in Egyptian tombs and temples rarely if ever offer a precise schematic of ritual action.

It remains unclear how the different varieties of content and expression found in the texts – the 'ritualistic' texts associated with *sꜣḥw*, the 'optimistic' texts which emphasise the blessed state of the dead, and the 'pessimistic' texts questioning the value of preparing for the netherworld – fit together in this context. A continuity of expression may be detected between the pessimistic songs in their emphasis on making holiday (*ir hrw nfr*) and the banquet songs of the Eighteenth Dynasty, and there is perhaps a continuity of sentiment between the 'optimistic' songs with their emphasis on the joys of the tomb, and the more 'pessimistic' songs which emphasise the joys of this life. There is even a certain amount of overlap between the 'optimistic' texts and some of the harpists' songs which seem to be more closely connected with funerary ritual. A good example of this comes at the end of the second song in the tomb of Tjanefer at Thebes (TT 158) from the Twentieth Dynasty. After a series of wishes for

203 TT 50; Hari 1985.

204 TT 158; Seele 1959.

205 TT 74; Brack/Brack 1977, 30-31, pl. 23.

206 Favard-Meeks 1991, 401-433.

207 Favard-Meeks 1991, 404.

208 Favard-Meeks 1991, 401-405.

209 Contra Fox 1982, 275-277, who argues that references to festivals create a festal atmosphere, but do not refer to an actual, specific festival performance of the song, in line with Fox's assertion that the banquets are purely notional (Fox 1982, 274-275).

210 Fox 1982, 275.

211 Assmann 2005b, 467-468, n. 2; Favard-Meeks 1991, 406-407; Hari 1985, pls 29-30.

212 Assmann 2005b, 331

213 Assmann 2005b, 338-339.

214 For hieroglyphic text, see Simpson 1974, pl. 56; for translation see Lichtheim 1973, 193-194.

m3c-hrw=k hr R^c
dd=k hr Wsir
šsp htpwt m bw nfr
wmm=k mitt tp-t3
nqm ib=k m hrt-ntr
hnm=k hwt m htp
dd n=k ntrw Dw3.t
[iy.ti n] k3=k m htp
rmw nb nty m hrt-ntr
st (hr) dit n=k m fkw
nis.tw=k r dd sprwt n Wr
ir=k m3c Wsir T3-nfr m3c-hrw

May you be justified before Ra,
 May you be stable before Osiris:
 Accept offerings in goodness
 (so that) you may eat likewise upon earth.
 May your heart be glad in the necropolis,
 May you join the chapel in peace,
 May the gods of the Duat say to you
 ["Welcome to] your *ka!*" in peace.
 All the people who are in the necropolis,
 They give to you provisions,
 When you are invoked to speak petitions to the Great One:
 May you act justly, Osiris Tjanefer the justified!

the deceased in the next world, the song concludes with wishes more closely related to funerary offering (table 7.15).²¹⁵

Like the harpist's song of Tatia at Saqqara, the first half of this song is redolent of ritual texts, while the second half makes use of expressions known more generally from optimistic songs ("let your heart be glad", "your *ka* in peace", and so on). The reference to speaking petitions in the Netherworld recalls the phrasing of the song from the tomb of Piy, as does the reference to being invoked (*nis.tw=k*). The "people who are in the necropolis" must here refer to the living, gathered to perform ritual acts. It is not clear whether they should be understood as acting individually or as a group here, but the context might suggest a gathering of people for either the funeral or a festival gathering, as discussed above.

It may be tempting to associate a song such as this one with the end of the ritual, and the similar set of wishes expressed in the spell for presenting offerings cited by Assmann,²¹⁶ and to associate the 'optimistic' songs with the calling to the spirit of the deceased to receive the offerings which Favard-Meeks argues is the meaning of *w3h-hi*. This would be an over-interpretation of the evidence, however, and leaves no clear explanation for the pessimistic, or 'make-merry' songs, unless these are understood to belong to the banquet, taking place after the offering itself.²¹⁷ It may be best, however, not to press such interpretations so far, and to avoid an overly-rigid categorisation. Music was appropriate accompaniment both to banqueting and to the making of offerings, and it need not have been the case that the two types of music were strictly divided. Indeed, the evidence gathered above may suggest that, to the contrary, there was considerable overlap between these contexts.

Synthesis

The harpists' songs from the Saqqara New Kingdom necropolis come from a variety of dates and tomb-contexts. The texts of these songs show little direct intertextuality or quotation between one another, but borrow from a common stock of themes also found at Thebes. The data from Saqqara is limited, and therefore does not allow for a particularly detailed discussion of transmission of the harpists' songs at this site by itself. The greater quantity of material from Thebes, however, does allow the discussion of compositional process in the harpists' songs. In particular, the four songs published by Wente²¹⁸ appear to be the result of a compositional process of assembling the text from

Table 7.15. Excerpt from the second harpist's song in the tomb of Tjanefer at Thebes (TT 158).

215 Seele 1939, pl. 12; for a complete translation, see also Lichtheim 1945, 206. For a similar 'transfiguration' harpist's song, see Assmann 1979.

216 Assmann 2005b, 343.

217 The offering followed by banqueting might reflect social practice among the living of superiors and subordinates dining at different times: see Baines 2014, 5-7.

218 Wente 1962, but see also Fabian 2002 and El-Noubi 1998.

common formulae and stock phrases,²¹⁹ or through ‘cut-and-paste’.²²⁰ These are features more broadly attested in Egyptian literary composition, and result in the ‘fragmentation’ which Eyre describes as characteristic of Egyptian literature.²²¹ At a broader level, this may be reflected in the use of compositional ‘building-blocks’ in the arrangement of texts and images within tombs as whole.²²²

Although some of the harpists’ songs at Saqqara, in particular those found in the tombs of Nebnefer and Tatia, show some similarities in decoration, there does not appear to be a direct copying of motifs for this scene between tombs. The cosmetic box of Ipy, and its scene of musicians, shows clear overlaps in design with late Eighteenth Dynasty tomb scenes in Thebes, and particularly the tomb of Nakht (TT 52), and the banquet scene from the chapel of Ptahmay. The harpist’s song in the chapel of Paatenemhab is partially preserved, but appears to be the same text as the ‘harpist’s song in the tomb of Intef’ on p. Harris 500. The two copies of the text appear to show little variation, and may indicate that this harpist’s song had canonical status. The harpist’s scene in the tomb of Raia appears to be unique. Rather than depicting a harpist singing to Raia, it depicts Raia singing to the gods. Although the song is badly damaged and the single surviving phrase is not attested elsewhere, its selection of motifs and expressions clearly belongs to the genre of harpists’ songs. The scene is placed over scenes of the funeral cortege, and for these reasons appears to depict Raia singing to the gods in the afterlife, rather than performing his job in this world.

The harpist’s songs appear to have a ritual context in accompanying offering. This offering occurs at a transitional moment for the deceased, likely the end of the funeral, when their mummy has been ritually reactivated by the ‘Opening of the Mouth’, and they are free to journey into the Netherworld. This context would plausibly explain the variety of texts found in the harpists’ songs, both of an ‘optimistic’ variety which praise the netherworld, and those which praise ‘making holiday’ in this life, or which cast doubt on the efficacy of funerary monuments. The offering context also appears to be connected with feasts held at the tomb at other times. These were likely held during festivals. Such feasts have often been assumed to take place during the ‘Beautiful Festival of the Valley’ in Thebes, but this context is unlikely to have held at Saqqara. The Festival of Sokar was one of the most prominent festivals in the Memphite region, but feasts may have taken place in the necropolis on many occasions during the year. The harpists’ songs appear to be connected to the ‘laying down of provisions’ and the making of offerings not only as part of the funeral but also at subsequent festivals, which may have been accompanied by banqueting at the tomb. It may be futile to seek for a single context for the harpist’s song, of any of the types identified in prior literature on the topic, however, owing to the variety of possible contexts for the songs. This may relate to the ‘multiplicity of approaches’,²²³ much-referenced in discussions of Egyptian religion, and the high degree of variation between manuscripts of Egyptian literary works.²²⁴ There may also be a more direct cause, however, in the individual choices made in the decoration of particular tombs, and perhaps in the performance of funerary rituals, as individuals and groups continuously reappropriate religious practices for their own use, “weaving individual life-cycles into long-term histories”.²²⁵

219 Such a process of composition has been suggested for most high-register Egyptian texts, and particularly royal texts: see Eyre 1990, 153-160.

220 Eyre, 2013, 137.

221 Eyre 2013, 136-137.

222 See e.g. Hussein 2013.

223 For this term in reference to Egyptian statements about the gods, see Frankfort 1948a, 3-29. For a broader discussion of the polysemy in Egyptian myth, see Hornung 1982a.

224 See e.g. Hagen 2012, 216-239.

225 Kolen/Renes 2015, 21.

Chapter 8

The Crying Game

Some Thoughts about the “Cow and Calf”
Scenes on the Sarcophagi of Aashyt and Kawit

Burkhard Backes

Silent Tears: The Crying Cow and Her Calf on the Sarcophagi of Kawit and Aashyt

...

Grande misère, grand malheur
Grande douleur, la vache qui pleure
Pourquoi faut-il donc qu'elle pleure
Qu'elle perde tout son bonheur
Qu'elle vive cet arrache-coeur

...

Kate & Anna McGarrigle, *La vache qui pleure*¹

The scenes dealt with in this contribution are elements of the decoration of the outer walls of the famous stone sarcophagi of Aashyt (Cairo JE 47267: figs 8.1-8.3) and Kawit (Cairo JE 47397: fig. 8.4),² two wives of Mentuhotep II (Nebhepetre; c. 2009-1959 BCE), the king of the Eleventh Dynasty remembered as the founder of the Middle Kingdom. His funerary complex – a tomb with an elaborate mortuary temple – in Deir el-Bahri, on the Theban west bank, combines the structure of a rock-cut tomb with forecourt and colonnades with a massive central building, probably a pyramid,³ an element borrowed

1 It is a nice coincidence that the cover image of the album bearing the same title is a representation of the equally famous ‘*vache qui pleure/vaches pleurantes*’ in the rock-cut reliefs of the Tassili n’Ajjér that were mentioned along with the cow on Kawit’s sarcophagus by Kolmer 1993. Egypt’s eventual long-distance contacts are beyond the scope of this contribution; cf. on this topic Schneider 2011; 2010. Cf. also Schneider 2006 for Libyan names on the dog-stela of Antef II, or Le Quellec/De Flers/De Flers 2005, 304-313 and 345-353 on the prominent appearance of bovines in Saharan rock-art.

I would like to thank the editors for inviting me to participate in this fruitful meeting and for the perfect organisation and the other participants, especially Lucia Diaz Iglesias and Ute Rummel, for some very helpful comments. I am equally grateful to Marleen De Meyer and José Miguel Serrano for very kindly sharing an unpublished article (De Meyer/Serrano in press) as well as to Mareike Wagner and Marleen De Meyer again for commenting on a draft of this article. Last but not least, the following text owes a lot to Chris Turner-Neal (Cambridge Proofreading) who has transformed my neo-Anglo-Saxon idiolect into real English.

2 For a photograph of the scene cf. e.g. Saleh/Sourouzian 1986, no. 68c; Fischer 1975, no. 265.

3 Cf. the discussion in Polz 2007, 200-211.



Figure 8.1. Sarcophagus of Aashyt (Cairo JE 47267), west wall (© Egyptian Museum Cairo).

from the royal tombs of the Old Kingdom (c. 2543-2120 BCE). Behind this central building are situated six chapels, each with a tomb shaft below and dedicated to a girl and five women, queens or princesses of the king's harem (*hm.t-nsw*), the women bearing the titles 'sole royal ornament' (*hkr.t-nsw-w^c.tt*) and 'priestess of Hathor' (*hm.t-n^{tr}r Hw.t-Hr.w*).⁴ This is where the sarcophagi in question, among others, were found.

In the scene on the eastern wall of the sarcophagus of Kawit, the cow with a tear in its eye is milked while a calf is bound to her left foreleg. Another calf and a cow with horns follow (cf. below). On the west wall of Aashyt's sarcophagus, the cow with the tear is suckling a calf while stretching its head towards an incense burner on a stand, as if nosing the scent of the offerings. Behind the animal, a man stretches out his right arm above its hindquarters. In both scenes, the cow has no horns. Further to the right on Aashyt's sarcophagus, a bull and a cow without horns and again with a tear below her eye are driven to the left by a man whose posture parallels that of the man behind the other crying cow.

Another sarcophagus from the chapels, the fragmentary one of Kemsit, features a milking scene, too. From the coloured drawing in the published reproduction it is not entirely clear whether there too, at the edge of a fragment, the cow has a tear below its eye or just one more of the little blue spots which make up the pattern of her skin.⁵ The second seems much more probable to me because the spot in question is considerably smaller than the tears at the eyes of the other cows. Somewhat fortunately, the

4 Cf. e.g. Arnold 2015; 2008, 94-101. As for the debate on the significance of the ladies' titles, cf. Liszka 2018, 195-196 with further references. In the projected edition of Aashyt's coffin and sarcophagus, the issue will be re-discussed (Backes, in preparation).

5 Naville 1907, pl. 22. In any case the tear is not as certain as it is presented by Keel 1980, 48, 65 with fig. 7 on p. 50 indeed rendering a tear, but said to rely on the plate in Naville's publication. The implicit indication that fig. 7 was mechanically copied ('entnommen') from the original publication (Keel 1980, 148) cannot be correct as there are further differences. Keel's figure seems to belong to the drawings among his figures (cf. *ibidem*) and as such shows some amount of interpretation.



Figure 8.2. Sarcophagus of Aashyt (Cairo JE 47267), detail of west wall (© Egyptian Museum Cairo).

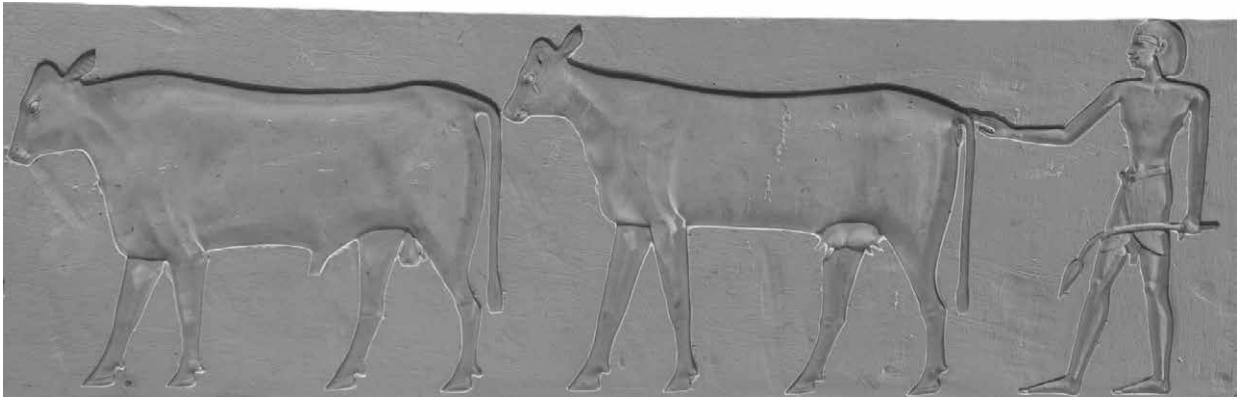


Figure 8.3. Sarcophagus of Aashyt (Cairo JE 47267), detail of west wall, southern end (© Egyptian Museum Cairo).

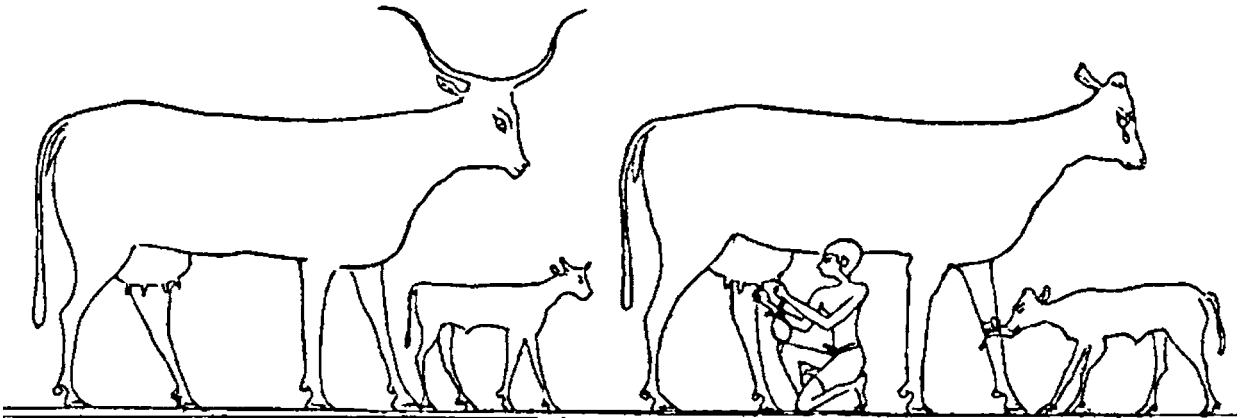


Figure 8.4. Sarcophagus of Kawit, detail of east wall (from Naville 1907, pl. 20).

question has no influence on the ideas brought forward in this contribution, because if that cow really is shown crying, it exactly parallels that on Kawit's sarcophagus without adding further iconographic information.

The scene on Kawit's sarcophagus has received the most attention,⁶ including interpretations of the tear. It has been explained as a sign of the cow's grief at being forced to give her milk to humans instead of her calf.⁷ This idea seems to have found general approval. The only explicit exception⁸ known to me is Dietrich Wildung, who interprets the sucking calf on Aashyt's sarcophagus as Horus fleeing from danger and looking for protection from his divine mother whose tear indicates her concern.⁹ To see an element of flight in the picture is of course problematic, but Wildung regards the context as a ritual and/or divine one because of the brazier and the tear.

There are basically two options. The first is that the tear is indeed not much more than a picturesque detail without any impact on the essentially mortuary relevance of the entire scene. The second is that the tear carries some particular significance. Several arguments can be provided in favour of the second option:

- A tear without milking: The 'traditional' explanation can only claim validity for the milking scene. On Aashyt's sarcophagus the crying cow is not being milked, but is suckling her calf or even shown without a calf. There at least, the supposed reason for depicting the tear is ruled out.
- The simplicity of the scenes: Some details in objects like pieces of meat, other food or containers might be termed as 'meaningless', but these can be seen as an integral part of their depiction. The case is different for the tear because it is clearly very unusual.
- It is true that bovines, male and female, can shed tears as a sign of mental stress, but this does not happen quietly, as one might guess from the depictions in question. It would be very difficult if not impossible (and in any case very unwise) to milk a cow that is shedding tears. It is thus more likely to interpret the tear as a hint of a situation to which the cow shows a strong and lively emotional reaction.
- The presence of the calves: If the only, or at least the main, aim of the depictions of the cows was to perpetuate the supply of milk for the deceased, why would one insist on the repeated presence of a calf in the scenery? Like the tear itself, the calves can be expected to be significant on their own behalf. As a matter of fact, it is not the combination of the tear with milking that the first two scenes have in common, but the combination of the tear with a calf.

The three scenes in question are by no means isolated. More scenes, with at least two cows, two calves and one bull appear on the walls of the two sarcophagi, and more can be found elsewhere in Mentuhotep's funerary complex.¹⁰ These scenes, as well as other elements of the decoration, should be taken into account when searching for the meaning of a single iconographic element. Not all details of the funerary decor can be mentioned here, but at least the relevant scenes on the walls of the two sarcophagi in question can be examined:

Sarcophagus of Aashyt:

- West wall: Below the crying cow, a bull is slaughtered (fig. 8.1).
- East wall (outside): To the left of a scene in which two servants present beer and milk to the sitting deceased, the cow without horns is depicted in two registers. In the upper one, she is milked by a man with her calf bound to her foreleg, thus analogous to the milking scene on Kawit's sarcophagus, but without the tear. In

6 Cf. e.g. Oppenheim 2015, 4, fig. 5; Saleh/Sourouzian 1986, no. 68.

7 Wolf 1957, 359: "ein für den Geist des Mittleren Reiches ungemein bezeichnender lebenswürdiger Zug menschlichen Empfindens, der hier dem Tier unterstellt wird", Keel 1980, 48: "... während die Kuh über die Zweckentfremdung ihrer Milch eine Träne vergießt", Saleh/Sourouzian 1986, no. 68: "rührendes Detail aus einer Zeit, in der man glaubte, der Kuh wehzutun, wenn man ihr die für das Kälbchen bestimmte Milch wegnahm", Lapp 1993, 160, § 364: "In einer anderen Szene (Abb.168) werden dem Muttertier geradezu menschliche Züge zugelegt. Sie wird mit Tränen in den Augen gezeigt, weil sie gemolken und ihr Kälbchen, an ihrem Vorderfuss festgebunden, von der Milch ferngehalten wird." A similar understanding underlies the partly inaccurate description of the scene by Barthelmeß 1992, 92, n. 516: "In diesem Zusammenhang ist das Milchopfer auf dem Sarg der Kawit zu nennen. Dort wird die Kuh, an deren Vorderbein ein Kalb festgebunden ist, gemolken. Auch hier handelt es sich um ein Opfer, das dem Verstorbenen gewidmet ist. Dem Kalb wird dadurch seine Nahrung entzogen, wobei die Kuh brüllend dargestellt wird." Additionally, the cow's grief has even been characterised as a humorous element by Fischer 1975, 298, no. 265: "Das Ganze ist nicht ohne Humor geschildert, wie an der Mitleidsträne unter dem Auge der Kuh zu ersehen."

8 The general impression that the unique scenes on the sarcophagi are 'highly symbolic' has been formulated by Dieter Arnold (2008, 99), but without explaining of what this symbolism actually might consist: "... on trait des vaches aux yeux humides en présence de leurs veaux" (Arnold 2008, 100). Walther Wolf's wording is interesting here because whilst regarding a scene on Kawit's sarcophagus as purely mundane, his impression is actually a very different one: "Das Ganze ist nichts weiter als ein Stück aus dem Alltagsleben. Durch die überaus gepflegte Form jedoch ... wird es geradezu auf die Höhe einer kultischen Handlung emporgehoben" (Wolf 1957, 359).

9 Wildung 1984, 108-109 with fig. 95.

10 Sarcophagus chamber of Kemsit: Jaroš-Deckert 1984, pl. 9c; Naville 1913, pl. 3. Chapel of Kemsit: Naville 1913, pl. 3. Chapel of Sadeh: Naville 1910, pls 11-13.

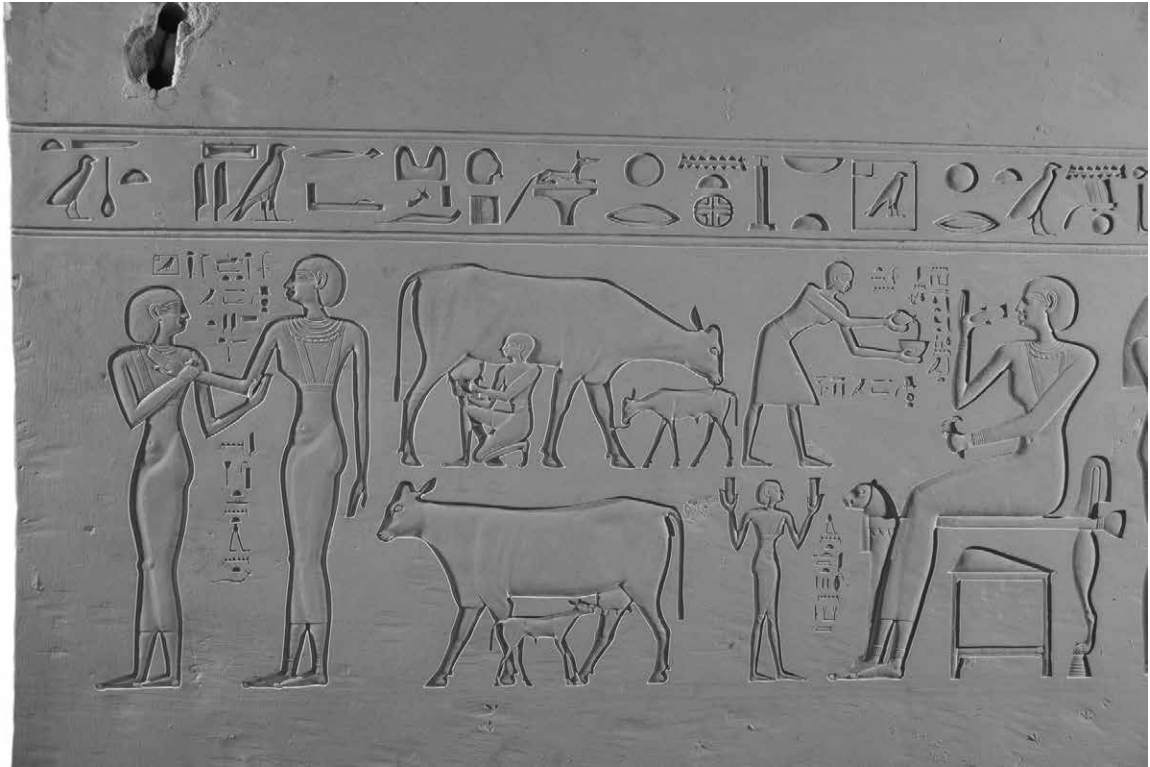


Figure 8.5. Sarcophagus of Aashyt, east wall, south end (© Egyptian Museum Cairo).

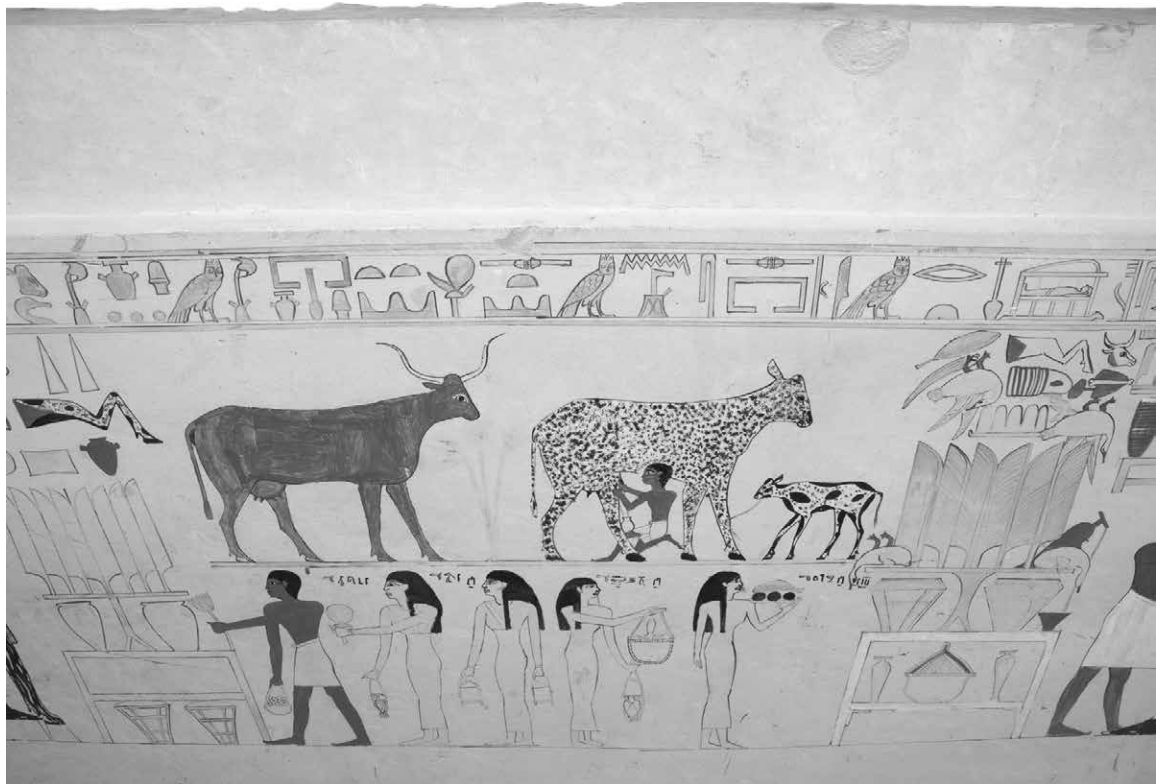


Figure 8.6. Sarcophagus of Aashyt, west wall, centre of inner side (© Egyptian Museum Cairo).

the lower register, the cow, here looking to the left like the deceased, is suckling her calf (fig. 8.5).

- West wall (inside): Similarly to the outer east wall, the cow without horns, facing the deceased, is milked in the presence of her calf. Here, she is followed by the cow with horns, separated from her by a papyrus plant with three stalks. The first cow and her calf are white with black spots, and the second cow has a red-brown skin (fig. 8.6).

Sarcophagus of Kawit:¹¹

- West wall: The cow without horns is depicted with her calf in front of her. A second cow with horns follows, suckling her calf.
- East wall: Behind the milking scene with the crying cow, without any clear separation, stands/walks the cow with horns with her calf in front of her, analogous to the cow without horns on the west wall (fig. 8.4).

As seen above, the tear is combined with different motifs, i.e. milking and suckling. From the overall group of the scenes with bovines on the two sarcophagi, we can draw several conclusions about the animals involved:

- There are two cows: one with horns, one without horns.
- The cow without horns is the “crying cow”. She is the mother of a calf.
- The other cow may have a calf, too. As the cow without horns can also be shown without a calf, it is probable, though not provable, that the cow with horns is also permanently thought to be the mother of a calf (which is to be expected for almost every cow).¹²
- The cow with horns can appear with a papyrus plant, in other sources even in a papyrus coppice, which seems to be a typical element of the Theban cult image of the Hathor-cow. The coppice has been interpreted as an indication of the hiding place of the young Horus in the marshes of the Delta,¹³ but also as a symbol for the unification of Egypt.¹⁴
- The bull can appear together with the cows.
- The scenes with the cows are not clearly separated from scenes of presentation of offerings, especially offerings of milk and beer. This is a further argument in favour of an exclusively ritual understanding of the images. They do not show mere agricultural scenes

symbolising a permanent source of food and drink but depict actions executed in the course of cultic activity in favour of the deceased.

Scenes of bovines, including milking scenes with the cow licking her calf, had appeared as a motif of the decoration of tomb walls since the Old Kingdom.¹⁵ There, they indeed seem primarily to reflect the agricultural background of milk and meat production for the benefit of the deceased and his entourage, although there is the possibility of a double meaning of the scenery of Old Kingdom tombs – that is to say that beyond ‘daily life’, they also hint at ritual and/or netherworldly events¹⁶ – should not be forgotten. On the sarcophagi in question the scenery is not the same as in these scenes. The concept of a permanent food supply certainly plays an important role there, as it does in every tomb. The granaries most clearly embody this function. The scenes under discussion differ, however, because in contrast to the depictions of granaries, they are unusual and their context here is clearly a ritual one, not a sequence of agricultural activities. The altar in front of the weeping cow on Aashyt’s sarcophagus is an unequivocal indication of a ritual situation, whatever its exact significance might have been. This is important with regard to the subject of ‘transmission’: two icons might well look very similar – e.g. a cow licking her calf while being milked – without actually having identical meanings.

The same is true for the similar scenes in Mentuhotep’s chapel to Hathor in Dendera, which show some close iconographic parallels to the depictions on the sarcophagi. On the right wall of the chapel,¹⁷ we see the king sitting in front of a table of offerings. Above these, a suckling cow is shown behind a man who, as stated in the caption, is offering cow’s milk. The central motifs as well as the composition of the scene, which shows the cow facing the recipient of the offering, match those of Aashyt’s sarcophagus. On the opposite wall of the Dendera chapel,¹⁸ the king is again receiving milk, but not in a milk jar. Instead, he is suckling on Hathor’s breast. Taking the well-known motif of a king suckling on the Hathor-cow’s udder¹⁹ into consideration, it is likely that the king at Hathor’s breast may be seen in parallel to the calf on the opposite wall. Why should we

11 Naville 1907, pls 19-20.

12 This is a further argument for why the calf probably signifies more than only the fact that the cow is able to give milk.

13 Cf. Blumenthal 2000, 13-14, 38.

14 Morenz 2008, 165-166. Morenz even interprets the bird’s nest in the picture as a playful writing of *sšr* ‘to milk’.

15 E.g. Morenz 2010, 101-102; Klebs 1915, 63-64.

16 As seminal works Kessler 1990, 1987 are to be mentioned here.

17 Habachi 1963, 26, fig. 8, pl. 8; reproduced in Marochetti 2010, 136, fig. 27c.

18 Habachi 1963, 24, fig. 7, pl. 6; reproduced in Marochetti 2010, 138, fig. 27e.

19 Examples collected in Blumenthal 2000, 35-38. Non-royal persons can equally be shown at a cow’s udder, as in the tomb of Baket III in Beni Hassan (BH 15; Shedid 1994, 29, fig. 39). A cow is licking her suckling calf while a boy or man is drinking from another teat. I cannot find an indication for Shedid’s view that the boy is pushing the calf aside.

not envisage the possibility that not only the imagery itself, but also the basic elements of its meaning have been transferred from a purely royal to a funerary context?²⁰ The connections between royal and funerary rituals²¹ are too complex to be addressed properly in this contribution and go beyond its scope. For our purpose, it is sufficient to remember that the function of Horus, or in more general terms the son acting for his father (Osiris, Atum), is well known to be a preeminent ‘role model’ of the deceased person (cf. also below).

The information collected so far is certainly helpful, but it does not explain the presence of two different cows or to the role of the bull on Aashyt’s sarcophagus. Other sources that offer supplementary information from another perspective may be more illuminating to approach next.

Shouting Out Loud: The Cow and the Calf in Depictions of the Funerary Cortege in the New Kingdom

bw-ir ih hwt š r p3 dm

A bull does not shout for the calf

Anksheshonqy (pBM 10508 XXIII.11)

To find a possible meaning of the motif of the ‘crying cow’ we should not focus on milking scenes alone; instead, some other scenes of cows with calves might be more promising. An interesting case can indeed easily be found in the well-known scenes of a cow with her calf in depictions of the funerary cortege from the New Kingdom onwards. In two attestations (here figs 8.7-8.8), a caption indicates that the cow is ‘crying’ (*rmj*) when a part of the calf’s foreleg is cut off. In 1993, Nadine Guilhou devoted an article to these depictions, and several crucial points of her interpretation, together with some brought forward by other authors,²² offer compelling material for further thoughts about the scenes dealt with in this paper.²³ The most relevant aspects can be summarised as follows:

- Only a part of the calf’s foreleg is cut off.
- The slaughtering of the bull is an episode in the Opening of the Mouth Ritual, but can appear together with the calf scene. Here, the entire foreleg is cut off.

- The calf’s foreleg, which is brought away in haste, does not replace that of the bull which, together with the heart of the animal, remains a part of the food offerings. The view that a calf is unlikely to represent Seth in a ritual has also been expressed by others.²⁴
- The cutting of the calf’s foot or foreleg is interpreted as referring to the amputation and subsequent replacement of Horus’ hand by Isis because it has been touched by Seth’s semen, as reported in the Tale of Horus and Seth.²⁵ The account of homosexual intercourse between the two, including Horus stopping Seth’s semen with his hand, is already attested on a papyrus of the Middle Kingdom from Illahun²⁶, and the amputation was likely written on the lost fragments. An amputation of both of Horus’s hands by his mother Isis is recorded by the early Middle Kingdom, in the Coffin Texts (in the following: CT)²⁷ spell 158 (later Book of the Dead spell 113).²⁸ There, for an untold reason, Isis has thrown the hands in the Nile, from where they are to be brought back and restored, but are finally buried. In the Tale of Horus and Seth the hands, and Seth’s semen with them, seem to remain in the water.²⁹
- CT spell 331 eventually alludes to the same mythical background, the violent mother of Horus there being Hathor.
- The captions in TT 218 and TT 360 explicitly refer to ‘crying’, surely by the cow; also to her “sadness” (*mr.t ind.ti*).³⁰ The cow’s grief is also connected to the tomb owner, as she is grieving because of her lord (*ib-s in(d) n nb-s*). The cow is thereby presented in a role comparable to that of Isis, who weeps for her husband and fears any harm her son Horus might (and in some episodes actually does) suffer.³¹
- The scene is linked to a libation of/purification by milk if the reading “purifying with milk” (*sw^cb m ir.t*) in the tomb of Khonsu is correct.
- With explicit reference to the sarcophagi of Kawit and Aashyt, Guilhou interprets the cow’s sadness as being linked to the giving of milk, eventually referring to the cow’s inability to nourish her calf because of her grief. Petra Barthelmeß sees a parallel between the amputation of the leg and the milking of the cow on the sarcophagus of Kawit because both scenes show a

20 Morenz 2008, 166 also discusses the transfer to a funerary context but highlights the aspect of *Verfremdung*.
 21 See, mainly discussing evidence from later periods, Stadler 2015, 75-90.
 22 Especially Barthelmeß 1992, 90-92; Eggebrecht 1966, 59-60.
 23 Guilhou 1993, 277-298. For a collection of sources and information on earlier interpretations cf. also Barthelmeß 1992, 87-92 and both contributions for further illustrations.

24 Cf. Barthelmeß 1992, 91-92 with reference to Eggebrecht 1966, 59-60.
 25 pChester Beatty I XI.3-7; cf. Guilhou 1993, 293.
 26 pUCL 32158 esp. x+II.6-7; cf. with further references Röpke 2009.
 27 Edition: de Buck 1935-1961 (in the following: CT I-VII + page number and letter for paragraph).
 28 Guilhou 1993, 293.
 29 pChester Beatty I XII.7-8.
 30 Guilhou 1993, 287; Barthelmeß 1992, 89.
 31 Similarly also Baines 2017, 273.



Figure 8.7. The cow-calf-scene in TT 218 (Guilhhou 1993, fig. 16).

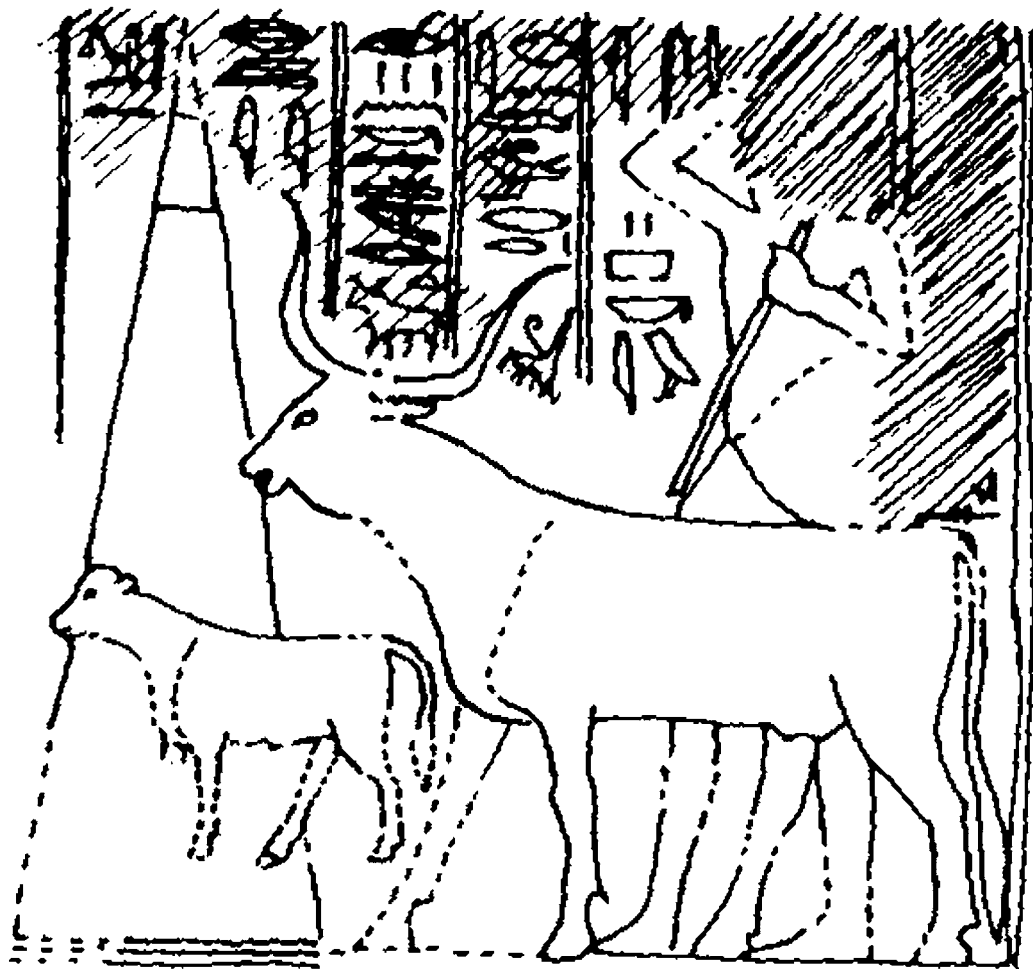


Figure 8.8. The cow-calf-scene in TT 360 (Guilhhou 1993, fig. 19).

funerary rite in which harm might be done to the calf and elicit a passionate reaction from the cow.³²

Before drawing any conclusions, we have to consider why these scenes of very different appearance may 'parallel' the crying cows on the much older sarcophagi. First, the central features have more in common than they may seem to from a quick glance: Not only are a cow and a calf present in both cases, but also the action of crying and the scenes on the sarcophagi are equally part of a longer, yet obviously less fixed cycle of depictions of funerary rituals. On Aashyt's sarcophagus we also see the slaughtering of a bull, one of the central incidents of the funerary scenes in the New Kingdom tombs. Not long after Mentuhotep II's period, a scene in the tomb of Senet (TT 60) shows a slaughtered bull with a calf at the left end of the scene.³³ There, we cannot explain its presence by that of its milk-giving mother. It seems instead that the calf will be the next to suffer.

It should be added that on Aashyt's wooden coffin (Cairo JE 47355 = T3C), scenes of the funerary cortege are included in the object friezes.³⁴ As the other scenes on the sarcophagi feature important elements of the funerary and/or mortuary cult, it is only to be expected that the scenes highlighting bovines also allude to or directly represent episodes of these long cultic sequences of actions.

All in all, while these commonalities cannot be taken as a direct proof for a link between the scenes in question, it would be equally unwise to rule out the possibility that both sets of icons refer to similar themes.

When taking the New Kingdom scenes as a helpful point of reference we must be clear about our understanding including the limits of our understanding of them. Guilhou's ideas certainly mark an important step forward and give helpful hints to a more differentiated interpretation of the crying cows in the Middle Kingdom scenes, yet they are not free of controversial points. Several problems appear when one looks closer at the hypothetical lack of milk as a reason for the cow's grief. First, the 'crying' of bovines goes together with other signs of a significant emotional reaction (open mouth, head shaking), which are visible in the scenes where the calf's foot or foreleg is cut off. Second, the Middle Kingdom scenes do not support the interpretation of milk-related despair. On Aashyt's coffin the cow is suckling her calf. The parallel to the king sucking on a cow's udder has been mentioned above. Instead of referring to the – for us – ambivalent scenes on the Middle Kingdom sarcophagi in order to establish a privileged link between crying and milk, it seems more

promising to posit that the brutal treatment of the calf is an obvious reason for the cow's grief in the scenes in question, in the funerary cortege as well as on the Middle Kingdom sarcophagi. The cutting of the foot or foreleg is not shown, but the tear clearly indicates that something happens in the course of the actions involving the animals which evokes a strong and negative emotional reaction on the cow's part. Everyone informed about funerary rites could understand this pictorial indication. The eschewal of a direct representation of the cutting of the foreleg from the sequence of images is not surprising at all. As a matter of fact, the number of explicit depictions of the rite is relatively small, and none are attested before the late Eighteenth Dynasty.³⁵ More often, the cow and her calf are led in the funerary procession without any clear sign of the rite. As this is also the case in some tombs of the Eighteenth Dynasty,³⁶ the conceptual gap between the images on the sarcophagi and in the Ramesside tombs is likely to be smaller than it appears at first sight. The representation of the cows' tears is thus not only unusual as such, but it is an unusually clear indication of a rite which was depicted only rarely and not before a considerably later period. The avoidance of a direct representation of the rite makes even more sense if the mythical event thereby enacted was deemed negative. This is the case here, as the calf is not a representative of the enemy, but of Horus. It is therefore less surprising that the cutting of the calf's leg only came to be depicted in the late Eighteenth or early Nineteenth Dynasty, a period that saw a shift in decorum in the aftermath of the Amarna period.

So far, the use of the cow-calf scenes in the funeral cortege has led us to the following elements of interpretation of the representations of crying cows:

- The tear alludes to a ritual episode which is not depicted itself on the sarcophagi, namely the cutting of the calf's foot or foreleg.
- There is no clear link between milking and the tear except that the cow is the calf's mother.
- As has been guessed from Mentuhotep II's chapel in Dendera, the calf is a representative of Horus and is not identical to the bull whose slaughter is shown below the crying cow on Aashyt's sarcophagus.

In order to establish the function of the images for the sarcophagus owners, we now need to come back to the role of the diverse protagonists of the scenes in question, above all the two different cows. As the mother of Horus and lamenting wife of Osiris is Isis, who can also take the form

32 Barthelmeß 1992, 92 with n. 516; cf. the quotation here in n. 3.

33 Davies/Gardiner 1920, pl. 26.

34 Willems 1996, pls 46-51; Backes in prep.

35 The relevant scenes in TT 45 date to the time of its later usurpation, that is to the Ramesside era. Cf. also Barthelmeß 1992, 90-91.

36 Cf. Barthelmeß 1992, 91 with ns 503-504 who equally sees here a hint at the execution of the rite before its rendering in images.

of a cow, it seems logical to identify the cow with horns with Hathor and the cow without horns with Isis.³⁷ The issue is a bit more complicated, and logic alone does not do justice to our sources. When we discuss the mythical role of the cows, we must be aware that what is depicted are episodes of ritual action, not of a myth. It is the animals we see here, not the gods. Otherwise, these would have been identified by captions. Instead of divine beings, we ‘only’ see their earthly representatives manipulated in rituals, and nothing forbids calling these representatives by more than one name. One single cow might well represent different goddesses in different ritual episodes. This flexible perspective is mirrored by the inscription lines that run along the top of the sides of the sarcophagus and of the coffin of Aashyt. In these, the Hesat-cow and the beer-goddess Tenemyt are mentioned, which makes them possible candidates as well. Hesat, as the mother of both the Mnevis bull and the embalmer Anubis, has aspects that would fit a cow in a funerary ritual, especially her role as receptacle of the Osirian corpse.³⁸ The identification of Isis with a cow, which one might expect here, is less evident during the periods in question, with her designation as *ꜥh*-cow attested only from the Late Period onwards.³⁹

The equivocal divine identity of the cows corresponds with the neutral designations of the cow as *ꜥh.t* and *mr.t* in the captions in the tombs of Amennakht (TT 218) and Kaha (TT 316).⁴⁰ If *mr.t* really designates a black animal⁴¹, Hesat, the mother of the black Mnevis bull, comes to mind first. As the mother should normally be Isis it seems likely that the cow with horns represents Hathor, but this is not the only possible explanation. The different iconography could also reflect a changed situation, i.e. the image could refer to the same goddess at a later stage of action, in which her horns would symbolise her regrown power.

Archaeological Evidence?

In spite of the arguments brought forward in the preceding paragraph, the time gap of approximately 700 years between the different representations remains a potential source of scepticism. Other evidence, of very different origin and character, might offer a further link between the Ramesside representations of cutting off the calf’s foreleg and the imagery of the Eleventh Dynasty.⁴² The sources in question are animal remains that have been found in tombs from the Old and Middle Kingdoms in Deir

el-Bersha and other places.⁴³ Prominent among them are forelegs or, more frequently, all four feet⁴⁴ of calves that very likely did not form a part of the food offerings, but whose deposition seems to have been a fixed part of the funerary ceremonies,⁴⁵ just like the severed foreleg or foot in the scenes from the New Kingdom. Further evidence comes from scenes depicted in three Theban tombs from the time of Hatshepsut.⁴⁶ In these, offerings are deposited and burnt in pits similar to the structures found in the aforementioned tombs. In one pit, four calf’s feet are shown together with “entrails” (*mht.w*), the latter being represented not by an image, but by their designation alone. Corresponding to the calf’s foot or foreleg in the later scenes, it is clear that these four feet do not form a part of the food offering.

The main difference between these findings and the later scenes is of course the presence of four feet instead of just one. Interestingly, the Old and Middle Kingdom deposits could not only contain calves’ feet or legs; gazelles and turtles have been found in similar contexts, i.e. animals that certainly symbolised enemies of the ordered world, although the evidence for them is far less clear.⁴⁷ The calves’ feet and forelegs are thus likely to be interpreted in a similar way, but only their feet, not the entire animal. Why not think about the beforementioned ‘infection’ of the hands by Seth’s semen as one possible *Ausdeutung* of what might originally have been a separation of less desirable parts of the slaughtered animal? Seth’s semen could also be what is hidden behind the enigmatic “what is between them (*scil.* the hands)” (*im.iw-sni*) in CT spell 158.⁴⁸

From Speculation to Interpretation?

To interpret evidence as different as two-dimensional representations of different icons, some texts, and the archaeological findings just described as traces of more or less the ‘same’ ritual results, of course, in a hypothesis which can easily be challenged as speculative and positivistic. As for the first point, this is simply true, and this paper does not intend to provide a provable solution. Still, in spite of all differences between the sources – which are expected when dealing with sources so removed in time and type – there are enough common features that forbid us to simply neglect the possibility of a link between them as too far-fetched. Instead, ideas should be presented which others might be able to falsify or to support with further evidence, as occurred during the meeting at

37 Cf. also the discussion of Isiac and Hathoric aspects of the cow in Barthelmeß 1992, 91-92.

38 Meeks 2006, 178 with further references in n. 65.

39 Meeks 2006, 287; Leitz 2002, 48-49.

40 Guilhou 1993, 287.

41 Guilhou 1993, 288 with n. 33 prefers “*vache aimante*”.

42 I owe the hint to the archaeological evidence described in the following to Lucía Díaz-Iglesias Llanos.

43 De Meyer et al. 2005/6, 45-71; De Meyer/Serrano (in press).

44 De Meyer et al. 2005/6, 48-52, 60-61.

45 De Meyer et al. 2005/6, 65.

46 Serrano 2017, esp. 588-589; De Meyer/Serrano (in press).

47 De Meyer et al. 2005/6, 67-71.

48 CT II, 357a, 361a.

Leiden. Interestingly, the different types of evidence even converge in their ‘inconsequential’ features. The offering pits in the Middle Kingdom cemeteries can contain sets of four calf’s feet or entire legs, whilst the depictions in the later tombs of the New Kingdom vary in showing a foot or an entire leg being cut off. As for the texts cited, they can speak of one hand or of both. In the Late Egyptian version of ‘Horus and Seth’, the feminine singular *ḏr.t* ‘hand’ is written but referred to using the masculine suffix pronoun *-f*, which does not match *ḏr.t* but would the dual *ḏr.ti*.⁴⁹

Critically, the episode of cutting off Horus’s hands as it is described in ‘Horus and Seth’ is not regarded here as the single point of reference for the rites featuring the poor calf. The narrative of CT spell 158 particularly clarifies that there was more to the removal of Horus’s hands than is told in the (today) better-known ‘story’. The execution of rituals, as well as their meaning(s) and function(s), are subject to considerable variation.⁵⁰ It would push the interpretation too far to argue that details of Late Egyptian texts are exactly represented in archaeological and iconographic evidence from the early Middle Kingdom. What we can safely state is that on the one hand there were rituals featuring the feet of calves, that is to say of animals that in a ‘religious’ context normally represent the divine son, while on the other hand some texts, again of different date and genre, are concerned with Horus’s hands and their amputation by his mother. Although we will probably never know what the rites meant to the people who executed them, we cannot reject a possible link between the different sources. Doing so would leave us with an unstructured bulk comprising a considerable number of different rites and concepts without any mutual influence and development, which really looks unlikely.

‘Embalmer Embalmed’ - ‘Nurse Nursed’ - ‘Healer Healed’? Hathor and the Deceased in the Coffin Texts and Beyond

The speculations brought forward in the preceding paragraphs do not touch upon the possible role(s) of the deceased in the assumed ritual and mythical constellation. We have already seen that the deceased, just like the king, can generally be understood as Horus, as is surely the case when (s)he receives milk from the cow. But, as we all know, the Egyptian deceased is also Osiris, and one would expect that this most important aspect of Egyptian funerary rites plays a role here. The rites during the funerary procession focus on the mummy, i.e. the deceased in her/his Osirian role. Therefore, like the other animals, the calf is just a calf

on which a specific ritual is executed, not a representative of the deceased. If the calf is to be identified with Horus, it is in order to represent the successful overcoming of his dangerous childhood so that the succession and the mortuary cult of his father are secured. The Horus-like aspect of the sarcophagus owner herself is reserved to the scenes of milking and presenting milk, which are to be seen in parallel to those of the king drinking from Hathor’s breast or udder.

This twofold understanding of the calf-cow scenes and the milk offerings on the sarcophagi resembles in some respects the concept for which Harco Willems has coined the term “embalmer embalmed”.⁵¹ The fundamental parallel consists in the involvement of the deceased as father and son, i.e. as recipient and executor of ritual action. It therefore looks attractive to transfer the concept as reconstructed by Willems to our scenes, explaining them as manifestations of what one may call a ‘nurse nursed’ constellation. The main difference from texts which present the deceased in the double role of son and father is that the owners of the sarcophagi are depicted as recipients of a milk offering and also of other offerings, but do not seem to appear as donors or in any other active role. This difference goes together with the different mythical roles of the son of Osiris or Atum and the calf. In the first case, the son has the active part as successor, protector, and executor of rituals in favour of his father; in the second case, the motif of suckling a calf or the king indicates the more inert role of a new-(re-)born child, the active part being taken by the cow or the mother-goddess respectively. In order to parallel the ‘embalmer embalmed’, the deceased must be identified with the nourishing goddess, but no image on the two Theban sarcophagi seems to ascribe such a role to Aashyt or Kawit. There might, however, be implicit references. Günther Lapp has already explored the similarities between our scenes and the ones showing Mentuhotep II in contact with Hathor or a cow as starting point for his interpretation. He does not imagine a Horus-like role for the king’s wives, but believes them to take over the role of Hathor, whom they had served as priestesses during their lifetimes.⁵² Ludwig Morenz goes a step further by ascribing a ‘Hathoric’ role to the Theban ‘princesses’ and other female deceased. He even postulates a predecessor of the much later ‘Hathorification’ of deceased women.⁵³

Such a direct transfer of earthly roles, including gender and status, to the Beyond is problematic, as it often is. As early as the late Old Kingdom (approx. Twenty-Second to

49 pChester Beatty I XI.7 (*ḥ3^c-f* ‘throw it/them’); cf. Gardiner 1957, 416 § 511.1a.

50 For a recent collection of examples cf. Pries (ed.) 2016.

51 Willems 1997, 343-372.

52 Lapp 1993, 160, esp. § 366.

53 Morenz 2010, 257. Cf. also Smith 2017, 384ff; Smith 2012, 195ff. with reference to Smith 2009, 8 and Petrie 1900, pl. 15 (inscriptions belonging to pl. 21).

Twenty-Third Centuries BCE) there seems to be a special relation between women and Hathor,⁵⁴ but the dominant identification of all deceased with Osiris is enough to show that the situation is more complex. A Hathoric aspect may join the Osirian one, but does not replace it.⁵⁵ As for the motif of drinking milk, we have also seen that the female sarcophagus owners are shown receiving milk which indicates a role parallel to that of the calf. The two approaches do not exclude one another, but can be regarded as a further example of “multiplicity of approaches”.⁵⁶ If this is correct, the sarcophagus owner does not only take over the roles of the son and his father, but also of the son and his mother. The ‘embalmer embalmed’ seems to be complemented by a ‘nurse nursed’ motif. The question now is whether this is indeed a theological feature specific to the royal complex of Deir el-Bahari or even especially designed for the women buried there, who all bore the title of a priestess of Hathor. But again, there are more elements to consider. An important and, in my view, correct point about Lapp’s idea is that elements which are not in the pictures themselves can be connected with their meaning: in this case, the simple fact that the deceased are women, not the king. Once we agree with this assumption, further relevant elements come to mind. The fundamental question is whether there is a fundamental difference between conceptions of regeneration of deceased women and men, royal or not. The presence of regalia in the object friezes of coffins of female as well as of male owners makes such a difference rather improbable. The scenes in the object friezes of Aashyt’s coffin are different from those on the coffins of two non-royal men (A1C, G1T) as far as their arrangement is concerned,⁵⁷ but the motifs as such are the same. Additionally, the two most typical roles for the deceased, Osiris/the (dead) father and Horus/the son are of royal character and are ascribed to male and female decedents respectively. We have to differentiate between the social roles of men and women and the roles ascribed to them in the process of their post-mortal regeneration. If it is true – as one would expect – that the scenes depicting women on the walls of tombs indicate a more Hathor-like role, it is also true that men by their sex are more similar to Osiris or Horus, i.e. male divine rulers.⁵⁸ The specific social role of the noblewomen buried in Mentuhotep II’s temple is clearly indicated in some scenes in their chapels, in which they appear together with their husband the king,⁵⁹

54 Smith 2017, 385-386.

55 Cf. also Smith 2017, 388.

56 Frankfort 1948a, 3-29.

57 Willems 1996, 53-54.

58 This point is implicitly stressed by Kessler 1987, 63 when he states that among male tomb owners shown overseeing works are individuals who very probably never fulfilled this function during their lifetimes.

59 Cf. e.g. Arnold 2015, 99-101 esp. cat. 41.

who is totally absent from the walls of the sarcophagi of his wives right below these chapels. Apart from the scenes discussed here, the motifs are entirely within what can be expected on the walls of a tomb. Female servants caring for their mistress’s hair are the only indication of the gender of the tomb owners, but like granaries or the presentation of oil and food they can be found on other tomb walls as well, and therefore cannot be interpreted as a reference to the princesses’ offices of priestesses of Hathor. It should also be held in mind how fragmentary Mentuhotep II’s funerary complex is. Many scenes with the king as the beneficiary of rites must be lost today, and at least one crying cow with a calf might well have been included among them.

In sum, no serious argument can be brought forward in favour of a specific link between the iconographic motif in question and the earthly roles and functions of the sarcophagus owners. Furthermore, there is no serious objection to the assumption that the role of the calf taken over by Mentuhotep II, who was not necessarily the first king to have done so, could have been taken by a deceased woman. The next step is to ask whether the transfer of roles in the opposite direction was equally possible, i.e. whether the specifically female role of the divine mother could be ascribed to men. In other words, if the extrapolation of the gender-specific earthly roles does not hinder a woman from being identified with Osiris, it should also be possible to identify a man with a goddess, here Hathor. This is indeed the case. Several Coffin Texts present the deceased - male or female - as Hathor or as a cow. Among these, CT spell 331, entitled “transforming into Hathor” (*hpr m Hw.t-Hr.w*), deserves further attention. Guillou has already quoted the passages in question, but did not go into further detail because of the difficulties the text presents. Willems’ translation and interpretation go in a different direction, especially concerning the form and meaning of *hwj* ‘strike’ and the role of Horus.⁶⁰ The lines of argument cannot be followed extensively here, but some brief remarks should summarise the elementary points of the discussion.

The first passage in question is the beginning of the spell (CT VI, 172b): “I am Hathor who has brought her Horus and who has beaten her Horus” (*ink Hw.t-Hr.w inj.t Hr.w-s hwj.t Hr.w-s*). The alternative preferred by Willems and others⁶¹ are relative forms, interpreting “whom her Horus has beaten” as an unusual reference to

60 Willems 1996, 348-353, 490-492.

61 Allam 1963, 144 regards the forms as passive participles (“*deren Horus fortgenommen, deren Horus geschlagen wurde*”). and Carrier 2004, 791 (“*qu’a écartée son Horus*”) and Barguet 1986, 521 (“*qu’a frappée son Horus*”) choose the same solution as Willems. Faulkner 1973, 255 prefers active participles, but with a surprising translation of *hwj*: “who proclaims her Horus.”

Horus acting as Onuris, reading ‘beating’ as a metaphor for bringing the raging sun-eye under control. The use of the older perfective relative form cannot be excluded in a text copied in the Eleventh Dynasty, yet the *sdm.n=f*-relative form is by far more usual. The second and, in my eyes, even more convincing argument against Willems’ view is the suffix pronoun. “Her Horus” or “your Horus” respectively clearly refer to Horus as the goddess’s son, as it is used in other texts, with the pronoun referring to Isis.⁶² This relationship between the two divinities makes a role of Horus as Onuris highly improbable, as Onuris(-Shu) is the sun-eye’s brother. On the other hand, the sun-eye-like character of the goddess in CT 331 is unquestionable. A reasonable solution seems to be to ascribe the action of cutting off Horus’ hands to the violent sun-eye instead of Isis. The second passage mentioning the action of ‘beating’ seems to confirm this assumption: “Now I beat entirely, in this my name ‘Hathor’.⁶³ I now shed (“give”) my tears⁶⁴ (so that)⁶⁵ I suppress (them),⁶⁶ in (this)⁶⁷ my name of ‘She-who-is-over-her-spittle’”⁶⁸ (*hwj.n=i r-dr m ʿ.wi=i m rn=i pw n(.i) Hr.t-Hr.w dj.n=i rm.wt=i sidj=i (sn) m rn=i (pw) n(.i) hr.(i)t isd=s*). The word ‘spittle’ may well have a double-fold meaning here: it can refer to the dangerous spittle of the cobra-goddess,⁶⁹ but also to the well-known spitting performed in healing rituals.⁷⁰

As stated by Guilhou, it is difficult to understand to what exactly this passage refers, but this is not a reason to exclude it from the discussion. There is indeed no definite proof that the passage actually refers to a situation

comparable with the one enacted in the ritual actions and icons discussed in this contribution, but definite proofs are rare in our field, and the inclusion of two key elements – crying and violence against the goddess’ child Horus – is certainly enough to take the possibility of a link somewhat seriously. It certainly does not look easier to explain the text as a reference to another, unknown mytheme. If the hypothetical connection between Hathor in CT spell 331 and the icon of the crying cow is correct, the ‘beating’ of Horus, the crying, and the supposed healing in CT IV, 172b and 175f-g correspond to more than just this assumed chain of events. Their embedding into the theme of the violent sun-eye as well as the phraseology in the co-text also make clear that the healing of the injured Horus is set in parallel to the oppression of the enemies of the sun-god. Again, this connection is paralleled in imagery, combining the cow-calf scenes with the slaughter of the bull on Aashyt’s sarcophagus and in depictions of the funerary cortege. This understanding also corresponds with numerous sources that illustrate the link between lamentation and warding off enemies in Osirian rituals.⁷¹

The double role of the coffin owner as donator and beneficiary of food offerings is very clear in CT spell 817 which is, by now, only attested on Aashyt’s coffin. The coffin owner’s identity as the uraeus and the eye of the sun-god is related to the motif of receiving and giving food offerings among the followers of Re. In spell 817, the deceased’s role very much resembles that of Horus/the son or of Thoth as representatives of Re, i.e. she appears as a bringer of order and provisions. The followers of Re and Hathor are both mentioned in spells against eating and drinking ‘abominations’ (*bw.t*) as models of food supply: the deceased wants to live on the same provisions as the followers of Re and wants to eat under Hathor’s sycamore.

Among the other Coffin Texts spells in which the deceased is presented as Hathor or a cow,⁷² spells 204⁷³ and 940⁷⁴ deserve to be briefly mentioned here, because in both an identification of the deceased with a bull follows: Apis in spell 204, the *smz* bull in spell 940. Both thereby illustrate the possibility of identifying the deceased with the divine-bovine mother and child(?) at the same time. The also-possible identification of the deceased with Hathor’s son Ihy points into the same direction.⁷⁵ In terms of the ‘embalmer embalmed’ concept, we may again ascribe both roles to the deceased: that of the mother as well as that of ‘her Horus’, the second role again indicating the

62 As an example, the following passage from spell 417 of the Pyramid Texts may be quoted here because it has both pronouns: “The found one whom she has found: her Horus - this is your Horus, Isis!” (*gm.y gmj.n=s Hr.w=s Hr.w=t pw nm ss.t*; Allen 2013, 269, § 741d-e). More attestations in texts of later date can be found in the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae* (<http://aaw2.bbaw.de/la/>).

63 Guilhou’s “*en ce mien nom de Celle-qui-frappe-son-Horus (Hathor)*” is not in the Egyptian text.

64 S2C^a and S2C^b add *p.t* ‘sky’ or ‘these’ (*(i)ptm*) respectively.

65 With the exception of Carrier 2004, 793 (“*quand j’ai humilié*”) the available translations of this passage neglect the verb forms and especially the *sdm=f* in CT IV, 175g. Earlier in the spell, the past is referred to by *iw sdm.n=f* (CT IV 174h-j). Here, the *sdm.n=f* without the introductory particle may be alternatively be regarded as preceding subordinate clause or as subject of an ‘emphatic construction’. As the sentences are the goddesses’ answer to a short speech of the sun-god I take them as performative, explaining what she is doing for him, now that she has just been accepted in his presence. In any case, there is no reason to interpret the *sdm=f* in 175g as predicate of a subordinate verbal clause, be it with circumstantial (Carrier) or, as preferred here, with consecutive meaning.

66 Only in S2C^{a+b}.

67 Only in S2C^{a+b}.

68 S2C^b: *hr.t sid[...]*; S2C^a: *hr.t [...]*. Cf. Willems 1996, 492 n. t for discussion.

69 The spell ends with a self-designation as Uadjyt (CT IV, 176f).

70 For healing and hostile spitting cf. Ritner 1993, 78-88.

71 Kucharek 2010, *passim*; cf. esp. 523-524 and 830 (index s. v. ‘Schutzklage’).

72 Cf. also CT IV, 17m [276]; CT IV, 177j [332]; VI, 225e, 1[612]; VI, 297i+j [669].

73 CT III, 140d.

74 CT VII, 152i.

75 CT IV, 179a ff. [334]; eventually also VI, 2091 [588] and cf. VI, 162v [563] (*mi Ihy*).

passive part. One could therefore establish further designations such as ‘healer healed’ or ‘protector protected’, but this is certainly not very helpful. What we can take as a result from the provisional analyses of the images and texts presented in this contribution is an extension of Willems’ concept by adding the mother-son constellation to the father-son relationship, the main difference being the shift of the active part to the older generation, i.e. the mother. This is by no means a re-interpretation of Egyptian funerary beliefs. To the contrary, it can be subsumed under the motif of post-mortal rebirth, which is well known with Nut and other cosmic goddesses as mother of Osiris = the deceased.

Further Questions: on Transmission and Invention

The preceding case study was part of the ‘transmission of images and texts’ panel of the Walking Dead conference. Aside from the extent to which one agrees with the speculative scenario outlined in this paper, it raises further questions concerning our ideas of transmission in ancient Egypt. The aforementioned hypotheses touch upon the following key aspects:

- Transfer of a motif from a royal to a funerary context (and eventually vice-versa): the appearance of the suckling cow on the sarcophagi the Dendera-chapel of Mentuhotep II.
- The transfer of a motif from one icon to a second, different one: the cow with a tear – the enraged cow with her calf being mutilated in the funerary procession.
- This transfer goes along with a change of representation strategy: solely allusion to the reason for the cow’s grief (tear; no cutting of the foreleg) – explicit rendering of the scene including a more graphic depiction of the cow’s emotional reaction.
- The transfer of a motif from icon to text: tear in image – *rmj* in two captions to the cow in the funerary procession; tear and calf in image – *rmj* and ‘beating Horus’ in CT spell 331.
- Transfer between mythological (e.g. Dendera chapel) and ritual scenes (here: the sarcophagi and later the tomb walls).⁷⁶ The context shapes the form of representation.

The evidence treated in this paper primarily adds information on what one might call transmission of a motif or an idea, but less so the concrete objects of transmission, i.e. texts or images. In my opinion, this more abstract aspect of transmission, revealed in the appearance of a motif in few, remote, and different sources has a great potential to aid our goal to understand Egyptian religion better, its mythology as well as ritual practice. As we have seen, the different forms of representation, the different contexts of the motif, and the periods of execution of the image have shaped its rendering. The considerable differences between the sources make it difficult to securely identify them as attestations of the ‘same’ mythic phenomenon. Some other works are equally instructive on this behalf, such as Dimitri Meeks’ rich commentary on the myths reported in the ‘Delta Papyrus’.⁷⁷ Sometimes similar personae tell us that two texts or images are linked with each other; sometimes divinities have different names but perform similar actions. A large database would be needed in order to identify many more hidden aspects of Egyptian mythology.

With regard to the popularity of the crying cow on Kawit’s sarcophagus in and beyond Egyptology nowadays, it is surprising that for unknown reasons the icon was not established in Egypt, but seems to have rapidly fallen out of use. This makes its invention even more remarkable. The question arises whether an individual ‘artist’ at the court of Mentuhotep II in Thebes had a singular idea, and which factors might have influenced

⁷⁶ In addition to the scenes featuring a cow and calf, a comparable transfer can be stated for the depictions of the field goddess in the Dendera chapel and the female bringer of food offerings on the sarcophagi of Aashyt and Kawit.

⁷⁷ Meeks 2006.

him: was it just the direct observation of cows shedding tears at the injury or death of their calves, or could he have known of comparable depictions which could be adapted to the representations on the sarcophagi? As for the question of why they appeared in this location and not, for example, in a tomb in Middle Egypt, the specific ritual landscape of Thebes comes to mind, in which the cult of Hathor as personification of the western mountains played such an important role. A second aspect is the relevance of Hathoric iconography in monuments built for Mentuhotep II. Here, the earthly role of the deceased may indeed have played a part, if not one directly represented or alluded to in scenes of funerary nature. As a part of the mortuary complex of the king, the chapels and the sarcophagi surely have been designed and decorated by the same group of persons who were responsible for the royal monument as a whole, at least during the earlier phase of construction during which the queens' chapels were erected. The scenes of the crying cows might therefore testify to a privileged access to recent iconographic inventions,⁷⁸ including the responsible manpower, and this would explain why these scenes have been found here and not in other tombs. This scenario also might explain the sudden abandonment of what appears today as a compelling pictorial representation. The form and - as far as we know it - the iconographic and textual repertoire of royal tombs and their surrounding necropolises change considerably with the move of the residence to Illahun at the beginning of the Twelfth Dynasty. Some specifically Theban elements seem to have been abandoned during this process, which might well include iconographic motifs that had not yet made their way beyond the limits of royal usership. In the specific case of the weeping cow, one can also think of an earlier representation of a calf and a cow in distress: in some tombs from the later Old Kingdom, the calf is separated from its mother, seemingly in order to make the herd follow. Both cow and calf are shown with open mouths, thus bellowing.⁷⁹ Whether or not the 'Theban tear' was invented by someone with knowledge of such scenes, this older pictorial solution was preferred by later generations, be it by deliberate choice or coincidence. What we can conclude is that only the motif of the cow with a tear seems to have been an invention of the Eleventh Dynasty, not the general theme of a cow in distress because of the (potential) loss of her calf. This makes these surprising scenes look a bit less isolated than they might appear otherwise.

These further questions and ideas stand in the place of a conclusion. I hope to have shown that a connection between the icon of the crying cows on the Theban sarcophagi of the Eleventh Dynasty, the ritual scenes in some Ramesside tombs, and further iconographic and archaeological evidence is worth considering, but I would not dare to finish with a concise list of more or less definite results. With evidence so rare and unclear, this paper was mainly concerned with presenting some new options on how one can look at a specific motif, with a focus on its significance and its different 'materialisations' and within a broader perspective of theorising about processes of transmission and tradition.

78 As stated above, there is no reason to believe that the motif of the crying cow was invented especially for the princesses' sarcophagi; it is more likely to have been part of the iconographic repertoire of the entire temple complex.

79 E.g. tomb of Ty: Wild 1953, pl. 81, 114; cf. also Baines 2017, 273. On the scenes of cattle traversing the river, cf. generally Vandier 1969, 96-128. As for the captions in the tomb of Kagemni, in which Hathor's son Ihy is mentioned, Altenmüller 1991 convincingly argues against the identification of Ihy with the calf.

Human and Material Aspects in the Process of Transmission and Copying the Book of the Dead in the Tomb of Djehuty (TT 11)

Lucía Díaz-Iglesias Llanos¹

The tomb chapel of Djehuty, Theban tomb 11 (hereafter TT 11), built in Dra Abu el-Naga North during the joint reign of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III, is one of the main archaeological targets of the Spanish mission that has been working in the area since 2002, under the direction of J.M. Galán. The mission has completed 18 seasons of fieldwork in and around the tombs of Djehuty (TT 11) and Hery (TT 12), documenting the continued use, looting, and re-use of this part of the necropolis across two millennia, from the rock-cut tombs of the Eleventh Dynasty up until the animal catacombs of the Second Century BCE (fig. 9.1).²

The burial chamber of the tomb of Djehuty, (re)discovered in 2009,³ is an exceptional source for the study of the Book of the Dead (hereafter BD) for several reasons. It is situated at an early stage of the so-called Theban Book of the Dead recension, and could be our earliest witness for some formulae; it has a precise archaeological context and chronology; it is one of the few burial chambers of the early/mid-part of the Eighteenth Dynasty that contains decoration, and bears the largest collection of formulae found in

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2 Information on the site, a digging diary, and reports of every fieldwork season undertaken by the Spanish Mission in Dra Abu el-Naga are accessible in: <<http://www.excavacionegipto.com/index.php>> (last accessed 26.12.2018).

3 Díaz-Iglesias Llanos 2017a; Galán 2014. The chamber was first mentioned in the diary kept by Percy Newberry during the archaeological work sponsored by the Marquess of Northampton in TT 11 in January and February 1899. Although according to his fieldnotes Newberry copied the funerary texts of the chamber, his transcription has not hitherto been discovered (Díaz-Iglesias Llanos 2017a, 180; Galán 2012, 415-417).



Figure 91. Map of the area of Dra Abu el-Naga North excavated by the Spanish Mission with locations of the main structures © Djehuty Project.

any such space;⁴ it allows a close insight into all stages of the decoration process, from the preparation of the writing surfaces to the emendations of texts.

Drawing on the material of TT 11, this paper explores the forms of engagement of human actors, both the commissioner (and owner) of the monument and the

4 The decoration of burial chambers with funerary spells and religious compositions during the early- and mid-part of the Eighteenth Dynasty (reigns of Hatshepsut/Thutmose III–Amenhotep II) is a Theban phenomenon associated with the highest elite and with some members of the sub-elite. Only nine examples are currently known: Djehuty (TT 11), Senenmut (TT 353 – plus sarcophagus: Dorman 1991), Useramun (TT 61 – plus BD papyrus: Dziobek 1994; Munro 1990), Nakhtmin (TT 87 – plus BD papyrus: Guksch 1995; Lüscher 2013), Amenemhat (TT 82: Davies/Gardiner 1915), Sennefer (TT 96B: Engelmann-von Carnap 2013; Desroches-Noblecourt 1986), Amenemheb (TT 85: Heye 2008, 265-267, fig. 7); Merimose, TT 383, and Re, TT 201: Lüscher 2013, 9).

scribes who copied the texts onto its burial chamber, in the processes of transmission of funerary compositions. First, I depart from the idea that, for the highest levels of the elite, the positions held by the individual who commissioned a monument, economic wealth, family and professional connections, social status, access to human and economic resources, and geographical background, should have had some bearing on the final product.⁵ Section 1 focuses on the meaning of the spells that were selected from the available funerary repertoires for the decoration of Djehuty's burial chamber, on the forms of combining these spells into

5 Several decorative programmes of tombs of the Eighteenth Dynasty, and the strategies of self-presentation of their owners via images, were recently discussed by Den Donker 2017. See also Robins 2016 and Hartwig 2004a, 22-30. Both authors also emphasise the role exerted by the artists in the complexity and composition of scenes. For other periods, see Merzaban 2014.

sequences and of their distribution over the walls and ceiling. These issues are, in turn, set in relation to the unusual features included in the decorative programme of the accessible parts of the monument.

In Section 2, attention is paid to copying, which has been regarded as one of the most important scribal activities in many manuscript cultures. It has been claimed that this task was not limited to the mere reproduction of texts, but rather that it occupies a midpoint between bodily and intellectual actions, producing exemplars that differ from one another.⁶ In ancient Egypt, the copying of religious compositions for different purposes related to transmission (circulation, preservation, storage, remediation or transfer from one medium to another, including monumentalisation) through chirographical means, and free from any constraints of verbatim reproduction,⁷ was hardly a mechanical process. It was instead an operation marked by dynamism, creativity, revisions, and modernisations, but also shaped by material and unconscious factors, which together generated diversity and variation in the textual tradition.⁸ Moreover, the copying of funerary texts took place in complex *milieux*, where human and material factors intermingled. One such milieu is the burial chamber (such as that of TT 11), which bears witness to the last editorial activities performed on the received texts, and represents the final textual stage in a long chain of transmission that probably started in temple libraries. Furthermore, writing is here considered to be a dynamic process, one that entailed different episodes of activity, and the intermingling of past actors who transformed material substances via their tools, techniques, and embodied behaviours.⁹

The Role of the Commissioner

Djehuty was a high-ranking official who served under the joint reign of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III, although he probably did not outlive the former. He pursued a civil and religious career that possibly started in Hermopolis

and ended in Thebes,¹⁰ where his funerary monument was erected, opposite Karnak and within the royal and courtly cemetery of the Seventeenth Dynasty.¹¹ His connections with the 14th, 15th, and 16th nomes of Upper Egypt, and especially with Hermopolis, can be traced in some of his administrative and religious titles (*wr-djw m pr-Dḥwtj* “great of the five/high priest in the temple of Thoth”, *jmy-r ḥmw-ntr m Ḥmnw* “overseer of priests in Khemenu”, *jmy-r ḥmw-ntr ḥry-tp ʿz m Ḥr-Wr* “overseer of priests and governor of Her-Wer”, *jmy-r ḥmw-ntr n Ḥwt-Ḥr, nbt Kjs* “overseer of priests of Hathor, Lady of Cusae”), as well as in unusual features of the decoration of his tomb (see below). He further occupied some of the highest positions within the administration, including seal bearer of the *hjt*, overseer of the royal treasury, overseer of works (for royal monuments), and overseer of the cattle of Amun.¹² These positions would have granted him a close connection to the royal figure and entourage, as well as access to qualified workers and skilled draughtsmen and scribes.

The tomb chapel of Djehuty is distinctive because of its rich decorative and textual programme, which begins at the façade – an unusual feature for an early Eighteenth Dynasty funerary monument – and reaches all the way through to the burial chamber, blending innovative and archaic traits. It portrays its owner as a knowledgeable man and an excellent scribe, who strives to show off his creativity, intellectual skills, and access to ancient and new materials through the use of a wide array of textual and iconographical compositions. His monument combines cryptographic texts,¹³ autobiographical inscriptions,¹⁴ hymns to deities,¹⁵ complex and elusive funerary rituals with an archaic flavour that harks back to the Middle Kingdom and the area of Middle Egypt¹⁶ and even to the Old Kingdom,¹⁷ the longest offering-list of the period, a developed version of the Opening of the Mouth ritual,¹⁸ and a large collection of spells for the afterlife (fig. 9.2).¹⁹

The burial chamber is accessible through a system of shafts and an antechamber that leads from the innermost

6 Gertz et al. 2015.

7 Von Lieven (2016a) has compared the transmission of “corpora of spells” (Pyramid Texts [PT], Coffin Texts [CT], and Book of the Dead [BD]), which are liable to variations as part of an open tradition (cf. Gestermann 2017, 283-288; Backes 2011, 463-467), to “self-standing books” (so-called Books of the Underworld), which tend towards reproductivity. She concludes that the status and nature of a text had an effect on the copying strategies and the degree of variations introduced in the course of transmission. See also von Lieven 2016b.

8 Ragazzoli (2017a), following New Philological principles, claims that variation was a central aspect of textual practices and the paradigm of creation and transmission of texts in ancient Egypt. See also Hussein 2017; Hagen 2012, 215-217.

9 Following Piquette 2014; 2013; 2008.

10 For Djehuty’s career, see Galán 2014, 248-252; Shirley 2014, 195-198, with previous bibliography.

11 For this burial area of members of the royal family and entourage, see: Borrego Gallardo 2017; Díaz-Iglesias Llanos 2017b; Galán 2017; Galán/Jiménez-Higueras 2015, 101-113, 116-117.

12 A full list of Djehuty’s titles is given in Galán 2014, 269. It is worth noting that he was also overseer of all the craftsmen of the king (*jmy-r ḥmwt nbt nsw*).

13 Diego Espinel 2014.

14 Popko 2006, 245-272 (I would like to thank Lara Weiss for drawing my attention to this publication); Galán/Díaz-Iglesias forthcoming.

15 Galán 2015.

16 Serrano Delgado 2017 and in press; De Meyer/Serrano Delgado (in press).

17 Diego Espinel (in press).

18 Serrano Delgado 2014.

19 Díaz-Iglesias Llanos 2017a; Galán 2014.

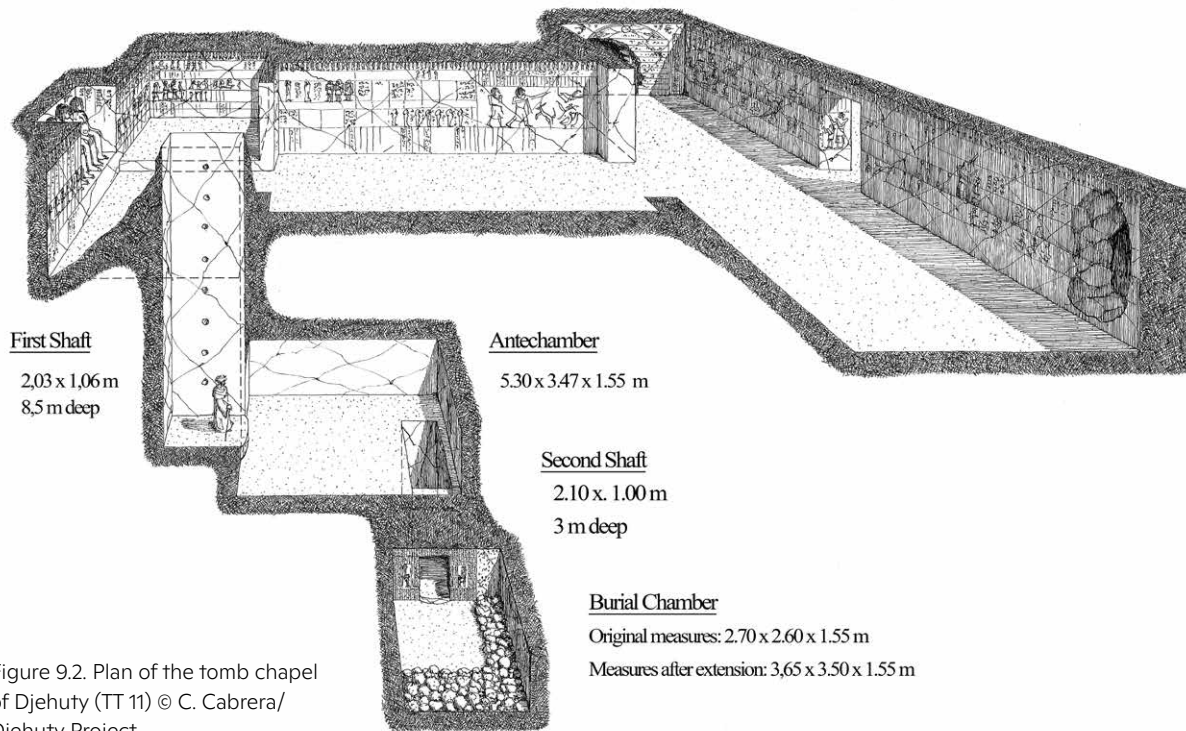


Figure 9.2. Plan of the tomb chapel of Djehuty (TT 11) © C. Cabrera/ Djehuty Project.

chapel, and is completely decorated on its walls and ceiling with BD spells and vignettes. The original scheme of the decoration is unknown, since the chamber was enlarged in antiquity by hacking up two of its already-inscribed walls and depositing part of the resulting debris elsewhere.²⁰ 42 spells have been identified to date, making this burial chamber the largest repository of formulae set down in writing in an architectural space at the beginning of the New Kingdom. Most of these spells are unattested in contemporary burial chambers,²¹ but had already been used in other media during the late Seventeenth and early Eighteenth Dynasties, notably coffins and shrouds that mostly belonged to members of the royal family or its closest entourage (fig. 9.3).

The decorative programme of the burial chamber in TT 11, though now incomplete, will be analysed in terms of its content, order (textual sequence), layout, and closest parallels, taking into account both the broader cultural

context in which Djehuty lived and his own career, described above. It will be shown how the monument reflects the individual appropriation of various traditions.

Several topics predominate in the content of the burial chamber, which are moreover joined together in thematic groups: transformation into various beings; travelling aboard the solar barque; personal integrity, i.e. recuperation of those intellectual capacities essential to communication and of all components of personhood; driving off inimical beings and avoiding hostile situations; deification; knowledge; the successful outcome of final judgement; and resurrection into daylight. Although all the chosen formulae derive from the Book of the Dead repertoire, many spells have antecedents in Coffin Texts (hereafter CT), and a few had been newly conceived and incorporated into the pool of compositions for the afterlife. The exception are the texts surrounding the depiction of Djehuty's parents on the entrance wall and the goddess Nut in the centre of the ceiling. While the former are wish formulae, the latter can almost literally be traced back to two mitre inscriptions of Middle Kingdom coffins, and they reappear together with an image of the goddess Nut in royal sarcophagi from the time of Hatshepsut onwards.²²

As mentioned, the selection and order of spells is closely modelled on two sequences often attested

20 A block found outside the courtyard of TT 11 during the 2018 field season, inscribed with part of BD 82: <http://www.excavacionegipto.com/el_proyecto/diario_de_excavacion_dia.php?year=2018&dia=01-27> (last accessed 26.12.2018), confirms the initial hypothesis that re-carved fragments of the walls were removed from the burial chamber when it was enlarged. Most of the 800 fragments found during the excavation of the chamber belong to the partial deterioration of the two other remaining walls and the ceiling.

21 Galán 2014, table 11.2.

22 Galán 2013.

Sequence 1 (late Seventeenth/early Eighteenth Dynasty): Munro 1994, 14, 15, fig. 1; Ronsecco 1996, 11; Lapp 2004, 46–49.

124–83–84–85–82–77–86–

99B–119–7–102–38A–27–14–39–65–116–91–64–

South wall > East wall >

DJEHUTY ... 82 [...]78–86V–81AV–88V–87V–99B V–119–7V–102V–38A–14–(22–)

TT 11 [149/1st mound]–149 V + 150 V (2nd–7th mounds) (lower register >)

North wall >

ceiling >

(–14)–22–23–24–25–26–28–27–43–30A–31–33–34–35 (door) –74–45–93–91–41–42–114–112–113–108–109–125A, B, C–
126V–153A–64

(> lower register) 149 V + 150 V (7th–10th mounds)[–...]

17–18–22–23–24–25–26–28–27–43–30A–31–33–34–35–74–45–93–91–41–42–14–68

Sequence 2 (late Seventeenth/early Eighteenth Dynasty): Munro 1995b, 11; Lapp 1996, 36–38.

First attestation of part of the sequence in the Coffin of Queen Mentuhotep, T4L (see most recently Gestermann 2012, 70–78).

Figure 9.3. Distribution of spells in TT 11 compared with two sequences often attested during the late Second Intermediate Period-early New Kingdom (modified after Galán 2014, table. 11.1). Parts of both sequences appear together in some manuscripts, although their poor state of preservation precludes knowing exactly how they were combined: L. Cairo JE 96810 (*Jḥ-ms ḥnwt-ḥmḥw, sst-nsw, temp.* Ahmose, Munro 1994, 1–11, pls 1–4); National Museum of Scotland 1956.315 (*Wsr-jmn*, Vizier of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III, Munro 1990). In pParis Louvre E 21324 (*Ms-m-ntr, temp.* Hatshepsut/Thutmose III) the recto gives sequence 2 (with some additions), while the verso begins with sequence 1 (from BD 82 onwards).

during the late Second Intermediate Period and early New Kingdom in the funerary equipment of individuals associated with the royal family or the court (fig. 9.3). Rather than being an unconsidered choice, I deem that the use of these two sequences in the decorative programme of TT 11 demonstrates the intention to connect with the royal or courtly sphere, as does the image of the goddess Nut and ‘Nut texts’ presiding in the centre of the ceiling. These examples show that Djehuty was closely acquainted with funerary strategies used by the royal entourage.²³

Although some BD spells were transmitted in clusters, as a coherent group that is attested in different media, some components could be inserted in other contexts, displaced or left out,²⁴ and several versions of the same spells were in circulation concurrently. Thus the two aforementioned sequences were cleverly combined in TT 11, given that certain formulae of the first group were probably omitted (BD 27, 39, 65, 116) to avoid repeating

topics dealt with in the second sequence and in the texts of the ceiling. On the other hand, the compositions inserted in the first sequence (BD 78, 81A, 88, 87) were placed within the group of transformation spells on account of the commonality of topics addressed. The example of the transformation spells in TT 11 also shows how elements of a group could be omitted, rearranged, or introduced.²⁵ A large space was devoted to BD 78, a composition seldom attested in the Eighteenth Dynasty, which goes back to a CT formula that was mainly circulated in the Hermopolitan area.²⁶ Though the sequence of transformation spells in TT 11 is not attested elsewhere, the order might have aimed at highlighting relationships among the formulae of the group, so that spells were linked with targets of transformation and by a recurrence of mythological topics (e.g. BD 78–86). The use and combination of existing sequences therefore forms a dynamic tradition in the sense that it left room for variation and adaptations, a trait which likewise characterises the New Kingdom recension of the Book of the Dead.

The programme of the burial chamber combines the use of sequences already circulated in other media with the introduction of other texts and groupings that would

23 Other ‘nods’ to the royal sphere can be traced in the decoration of the accessible parts of TT 11. Cleaning the walls in the transverse hall has recently brought to light a scene depicting the delivery of products from Punt, which closely resembles that celebrating the expedition sponsored by Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahari (Galán/Díaz-Iglesias Llanos forthcoming). One of the focuses of Djehuty’s career, monument building, afforded him close knowledge of royal decorative schemes. For the use of royal traditions in burial chambers of other contemporary private tombs, see Den Donker 2017, 345–346.

24 The flexibility of sequences, considered as thematic cohesive building blocks whose individual spells are isolatable, replaceable, and modifiable, is explored by Hussein (2013) using the transmission of PT after the Old Kingdom as a case study.

25 For the variety of forms of sequencing spells in this thematic group, see Lüscher 2006, 9–34; Lapp 2004, 46–49; Milde 1991, 180–182; Munro 1988, 153–155, 218–219.

26 BD 78 derives from CT 312, a spell mainly attested in Bersha (B2Bo, B6Bo -bearing the only full version of the text in the Middle Kingdom-, B4C, B6C), but also in Dendera (D1C), and Thebes (T1C): Willems 2001, 370–372; De Buck 1949.

go on to become an important part of BD papyri from the reigns of Hatshepsut/Thutmose III onwards. The most novel elements are concentrated on the ceiling and revolve around two main topics: knowledge (of mythical events, festivals, places, and the names of deities and objects, in BD 114, 112, 113, 108, 109, 125, 153A); and proximity to the divine sphere (variously expressed as the equation of body parts with gods in BD 42, of taking on divine roles in BD 114, of ‘Osirianisation’ through a positive verdict in the final judgement in BD 125, or of asserting identity with the sun-god in BD 64). The topic of knowing the powers of places in the Afterlife receives due attention, because whereas earlier shrouds only include BD 116 (related with the *hꜣw* of Hermopolis), TT 11 deploys a whole sequence of spells associated with Hermopolis, the royal centres of Pe and Nekhen, and the east and west cardinal points (BD 114-112-113-108-109). It should be noted that the sequence has its antecedent in a group of CT spells (154 to 160) that is often attested in the area of Hermopolis, and to a lesser extent in Assiut,²⁷ pointing to an interest in regional traditions that is also reflected in some scenes decorating the above-ground chapel.²⁸ Spell CT 154 (= BD 115), featuring Heliopolis, usually occupies the first position in the CT group,²⁹ but in TT 11 and other sources the sequence starts with BD 114, perhaps in an attempt to lay emphasis on another important centre and its associated traditions. This spell focuses on Hermopolis, and portrays the deceased as an assistant of Thoth, or even equates him directly with the god, given that the deceased demonstrates detailed knowledge of mysteries and executes tasks usually associated with this deity, such as justification or the healing of the injured eye.³⁰ One may wonder if this arrangement was favoured because Djehuty was interested in exploiting the connections between his name and that of Thoth, in an interplay

between the human and divine spheres that was probably also deployed through words and images outside his tomb in some royal monuments.³¹

In terms of layout, the three-dimensional space in the burial chamber of TT 11 allowed for a more meaningful and creative distribution of its contents than two-dimensional media, which can normally only accommodate linear sequences. Spells related with the topography of the netherworld (BD 149+150) are placed as close as possible to the lower part of the walls, whereas in shrouds and papyri they tend to occupy the end of the manuscript.³² Formulae directed against inimical forces are concentrated around the entrance into the chamber, following a pattern that can be traced back to the times of the Pyramid Texts.³³ The ceiling of the burial chamber is dominated by an image of the sky goddess Nut, who, often depicted on the lids of contemporary coffins and royal sarcophagi,³⁴ wielded from this position her protective and maternal powers on behalf of the mummy of the deceased.³⁵

The selection, sequence, and spatial distribution of the texts show the interplay between tradition and innovation. This individualised version of Djehuty’s Book of the Dead should be set against the backdrop of the historical period and of the tomb owner’s personality. The early Eighteenth Dynasty in general, and the reigns of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III in particular, marked a period of sophisticated high-culture, in which royal and private individuals looked to the past for references and motifs, producing novel works and recuperating archaic ceremonies.³⁶ This was also a time of highly competitive display of intellectual capabilities, knowledge/scholarship, written culture, and original creativity among members of the elite, which they manifested in their tombs.³⁷ In this respect, it is important to point out that none of the few decorated burial chambers of the period (see n. 4) drew on the same decorative scheme; a fact that points to a desire for distinctiveness. Djehuty,

27 Lapp (1990, 229-230) posits a Hermopolitan origin for this CT group. In some cases, the whole CT sequence was provided with the title *rh rh Dhwtj m swdꜣw, rh rꜣ-pr-nb, ꜣh m hrt-nꜣr* ‘to know what Thoth knows of protection, know every chapel, be *akh*-like in the necropolis’. According to Stadler (2009, 397), this title indicates that the assemblage was a “*kultische Totwissen zusammenstellende(n) Gruppe*”.

28 De Meyer/Serrano Delgado (in press). The influence of texts conceived or stored in Hermopolis on the earliest redaction of the Book of the Dead, which took place in Thebes, has been highlighted by Gestermann 1998. The transference of materials from Assiut to Thebes has been dealt with by Kahl 2014; 1999. It is interesting to notice that the version of BD 88 copied in TT 11 bears a reference to Hermopolis in a passage marred by lacunae. The only known parallel seems to be pCairo CG 40002 + pTrieste 12089 a-d, unluckily also damaged in this spot (Lüscher 2006, 406d).

29 Lapp 1989, 181-182.

30 For the relationship between the episodes mentioned in BD 114 and 116 and the god Thoth, see Stadler 2009, 392-404. In BD 114 the deceased takes an active role in the performance of Thoth-related tasks, whereas in BD 116 he knows or contemplates these tasks.

31 Galán (2014, 251, n. 20) brings forward the hypothesis that the person of the official Djehuty could stand behind a mythological reference to the god Thoth in the inscription of Speos Artemidos, and behind the obliterated figure of a scribe thus named, who is portrayed next to the god in the Punt scenes at Deir el-Bahari (for further details, see Galán/Díaz-Iglesias Llanos forthcoming).

32 Munro 1988, 159-160, 222-223.

33 For the placement of apotropaic PT spells on walls with doors in Old Kingdom pyramids and Saite shaft tombs, see Hussein 2013, 281-284, 290; Mathieu 2002.

34 Galán 2013.

35 A goddess with outstretched arms on the ceiling of TT 85, the tomb of Amenemhab (*temp.* Thutmose III–Amenhotep II), is interpreted as an image of Nut by Heye 2008, 266, fig. 7.

36 Navrátilová 2017; Ragazzoli 2016; Galán/Bryan/Dorman 2014; Bickel 2013; Popko 2006.

37 Ragazzoli 2016; Diego Espinel 2014; Heye 2008.

who boasted about his religious and written erudition,³⁸ may well have participated in devising the scheme for his funerary chamber. His connections with Hermopolis, a renowned centre for the production and transmission of funerary compositions in the Middle Kingdom, his closeness to the royal sphere, his priestly titles, and his keen interest in traditions and arcane knowledge of religious beliefs and rituals, all go some way to explaining the peculiarities of the decoration in the burial chamber, which was partly rooted in well-developed traditions and partly introduced creative nuances. Such interplay of ancient and new is also present in the above-ground decorative programme of his tomb chapel.

Scribes at Work

Recent years have witnessed a gradual increase in studies of ancient Egyptian textual sources undertaken from the perspective of their tangible nature, in which they are considered as cultural and material artefacts (derived from acts of materialisation), and ideas of New/Material Philology are applied. These trends have led to a growing interest in the physical aspects of textual objects and monuments as well as in the acts of recording and reading, including: materials for writing on and surface treatments; the tools and techniques of writing and decoration; the form, colour, size, position, visibility, orientation, and layout of texts and images; the rhythm of ink dipping; morphological features (palaeography, orthography); paratextual elements; and the embodied actions and sensorial engagement of scribes and viewers. The change also entails a closer observation of the steps of, and traces left during, the production, circulation, use, and reception processes of the manuscripts, with particular importance given to all variants generated along the transmission chain. These trends have developed alongside a concomitant interest in the practical and historical conditions of textual production, and in the social contexts of the textual artefacts, i.e. the wider social practices involving human actors or human interactions (both among individuals and between individuals and things) to which textual artefacts bear witness.³⁹

A study undertaken from the perspective of physical aspects, material processes, scribal practices, or individual traits through which a surface was graphically constructed can help us to understand many of the variations and characteristics displayed by textual witnesses. This perspective is currently being applied to the material of TT 11, to shed light on a wide variety of topics related to transmission: circulation of models; planning the decoration; and the reading,⁴⁰ copying, and editing of funerary formulae.

As mentioned in the introduction, copying was one of the most important scribal activities in many manuscript cultures. It has been stated that scribes copied compositions onto the surfaces of burial chambers through a ‘remediation process’,⁴¹ an act that entailed the transfer of textual materials from one medium of transcription – typically mobile carriers such as papyrus, leather rolls, or ostraca, which have generally not reached us – to another. Following Stenroos,⁴² two main sources of input in the copying procedure should be considered: the exemplar or model, which is now lost in most cases, and the scribal repertoire, defined as the range of forms available to a writer, which is dependent on the scribal background, including education and personal experience in copying and reading. For any given exemplar, the scribe might seek to reproduce the forms encountered as faithfully as possible, might edit them, or might produce a combination of both procedures, but his attitude would always generate some sort of variation in form and content. To Stenroos’ sources of input one should add the material factors mentioned at the beginning of this section, which would also have influenced the process and outcome of scribal work. In what follows, and drawing on the burial chamber of TT 11, several issues that have a direct bearing on the processes of copying and transmitting funerary texts will be dealt with.

38 In the tomb inscriptions Djehuty presents himself as *sš jkr, rh sšt nb n ḥ ḥꜥ ḥr mꜣꜣ jrty, whꜥ drf nw pr ḥꜣp*, ‘able scribe’, ‘the one who knows every secret of the palace and who keeps silence on what his eyes see’, and ‘the one who can untie the writings of the secret house(?)’: Diego Espinel 2014, 328. See Ragazzoli 2016, 155-159 for other contemporary examples of access to hidden and past knowledge.

39 A non-exhaustive list of Egyptological references includes: Ryholt 2018; Cromwell 2017; Hussein 2017; Ragazzoli 2017a; 2017b; Lundhaug 2016; Dieleman 2015; Dorn 2015; Goelet 2015; Pelegrin/Andreu-Lanoë/Pariselle 2015; Regulska 2015; Dieleman 2014; Piquette 2014; Smith 2014; Hagen 2013a; Piquette/Whitehouse 2013; Hagen 2012; Ragazzoli 2012; Backes 2010; Leach/Parkinson 2010; Ragazzoli 2010a; Parkinson 2009; Piquette 2008; Gasse 2002.

40 The reading of religious texts was an operation performed aloud (Contardi 2010). The presence of errors that adhere to phonetic confusions in the texts of TT 11 might indicate that scribes copying these compositions were mentally or physically pronouncing them.

41 Hussein 2017, 304-308; Lüscher 2015, 90-98.

42 Stenroos 2018, 26.

Form and Layout of Models

Most master copies and intermediate *Vorlagen* from which funerary texts were copied have not come down to us.⁴³ However, instances where two witnesses share common textual and iconographic traits (formal features; grammatical structures and wordings; orthographic patterns; special word spellings; choice of vocabulary; shared omissions, additions, mistakes, deviating readings, and defective writings from two scribes that are unlikely to have incurred independently) probably derive from the same master copy.⁴⁴ They afford insights into what lost models, from which texts were remediated onto different media, may have looked like. It should be noted that shared traits might extend over whole manuscripts, or might be particular to a single spell in a larger composition, which indicates that various models were in circulation concurrently.

I have found striking coincidences, while comparing the spells' variants in the burial chamber of Djehuty against other roughly contemporary witnesses, between TT 11 and the papyrus of the *wab*-priest of Amenhotep Baksu in chapters BD 42 (section of *Gliedervergottung*) and 102.⁴⁵ The coincidences in the deification of the body's limbs in the former spell have recently been published,⁴⁶ while both sources also display an array of common features in BD 102, which will be discussed here and again

point to the use of the same model. Although BD 102 is in a poor state of preservation in TT 11, hampering a detailed comparison between tomb and papyrus, both versions share the following features that are either unattested or rather infrequent elsewhere (figs 9.4.1 and 9.4.2):⁴⁷

Special wordings: 1. *bwt=j pw n wnm=j bwt=j*, also attested in pLondon BM EA 9905 (this is a meaningful phrase as it stands, but most parallels have *bwt=j sp sn n wnm=j bwt=j* "my abomination, my abomination, I shall not eat my abomination"); 2. While the majority of the parallels end the spell with *h3 skdwt wd R^c* "the crew embarks when Re commands", the exemplars of Baksu and Djehuty merely record *h3 skdwt R^c* "the crew of Re embarks".

Omissions of signs and words: 3. *j^cnw n=k wr jr=s* (the ending *-t* is dropped in *j^cnw n=k wr jrt=s* "hail to you who are greatest of her making"); 4. *m^hnt pn n* (omission of the second element of the indirect genitive in *m^hnt pn n(y)t pt* "this ferryman of the sky");⁴⁸ 5. *jw^c{t}*, *k^chw=fpw* (reference to a third limb is missing in the listing of *jw^c, k^ch, w^crt/t=f pw* "haunch, shoulder, and his thigh/limb". The omission is striking given the fact that the three elements are mentioned in the ensuing phrases of the spell).

Superfluous additions: 6. A second *n* is added after the demonstrative pronoun in *m^{-c} nw (n jr^w) mn=f mr jpn{n}* "from these (who caused) him to suffer those ills".

Defective or unusual orthographies: 7. *jw^ct* instead of *jw^c* 'haunch', *Wb.* I, 50, 3-5 (but cf. the following column in both tomb and papyrus, where the word is correctly written); 8. *k^ch* with plural marks (although these could belong to the third limb, usually spelled in plural in other sources, but omitted in TT 11 and pHanover 1970.37, see n. 5 above; cf. the ensuing column where *k^ch* is referred to again, and is rendered as singular in the papyrus); 9. *šs^t* and *št^t* instead of the more usual *šns* "loaf"⁴⁹ (the exchange of the signs *s* and *t* may be due to their visual resemblance in cursive hieroglyphs or, more specifically, in hieratic [Möller II, no. 317 and 366], but the book roll as determinative is unattested in parallels, which opt for the sign Gardiner X4, albeit that it is common in *št^t* "secret/mystery"); 10. *mrwt* instead of *mr* "ill" (the use of plural marks is attested also in L. Cairo JE 96807, pLondon BM EA 9905, and pParis Louvre E 21324, but while other parallels

43 The clearest exception is the collection of ostraca used as "temporäre, mobile und für das entsprechende Grab personalisierte Zwischenstufen" to copy the texts onto the walls of the burial chamber of TT 87 (Lüscher 2015; 2013). It has been suggested that the following manuscripts were used as models: pGardiner II (London BM EA 10676 with CT and probably dated to the end of the Old Kingdom: Gestermann 2003); leather roll London BM EA 10281 (with BD, *temp.* beginning of the Eighteenth Dynasty-Thutmose III, Shorter 1930); pCairo JE 95879 (with BD: mainly vignettes, *temp.* Siamun, Lucarelli 2006, 243). Other examples are quoted by Backes 2011, 455.

44 Examples of texts and vignettes copied from the same master copy were noted in a previous study (Díaz-Iglesias Llanos 2018 with bibliography): pBerlin P. 3158, pBerlin P. 3159, pAberdeen ABDUA 84023; Deir el-Medina Ramesside tombs and papyri; pCairo JE 95838 and pLondon BM EA 10064; pLondon BM EA 10793 and pLondon BM EA 10554; pTasheritenaset and pLondon BM EA 10558; pLondon BM EA 10554 and the tombs of king Osorkon and prince Sheshonq. To these should be added pLondon BM EA 9900 and pWarsaw 237128 (Lüscher 2008, 38-39; Munro 1988, 133); pColon Aeg 10207 and pVatican 48832 (similarities in texts but not in the style or arrangement of vignettes, Gasse 2002, 37, 125); pParis Louvre N. 3085 and pTübingen 2012 (Töpfer/Müller-Roth 2011).

45 pHanover KM 1970.37, published by Munro 1995a. The papyrus was bought in the Egyptian antiquities market by M. Brocklehurst in 1883 and lacks an archaeological context. Internal data from the manuscript and biographical information of its buyer allow a Theban origin to be suggested (Díaz-Iglesias Llanos 2018, 23-25, with previous literature). Though it has been dated to the reign of Amenhotep II, an earlier date cannot be excluded for this papyrus which derives from a stock-like manufacture process. TT 11 and this manuscript have other spells in common, but they are based on different traditions or models.

46 Díaz-Iglesias Llanos 2018.

47 Some thirty known sources of the late Seventeenth and early Eighteenth Dynasties of BD 102, accessible through the *Totenbuch* database, have been used in these comparisons.

48 Alternatively the *n* could be attributed to the first sign of the following word (see n. 50), but the omission of *pt* is unique to these two sources.

49 Some of the multiple variants seen for this word in parallels (*šnm*, *šnz*, *mnz*, *nšnz*, *nšnj*) are unattested elsewhere (Munro 1995a, 14, n. k), and may point to a certain scribal unfamiliarity with the expression. The *n* before the word may belong to the partially omitted indirect genitive (see n. 4) or to this word.

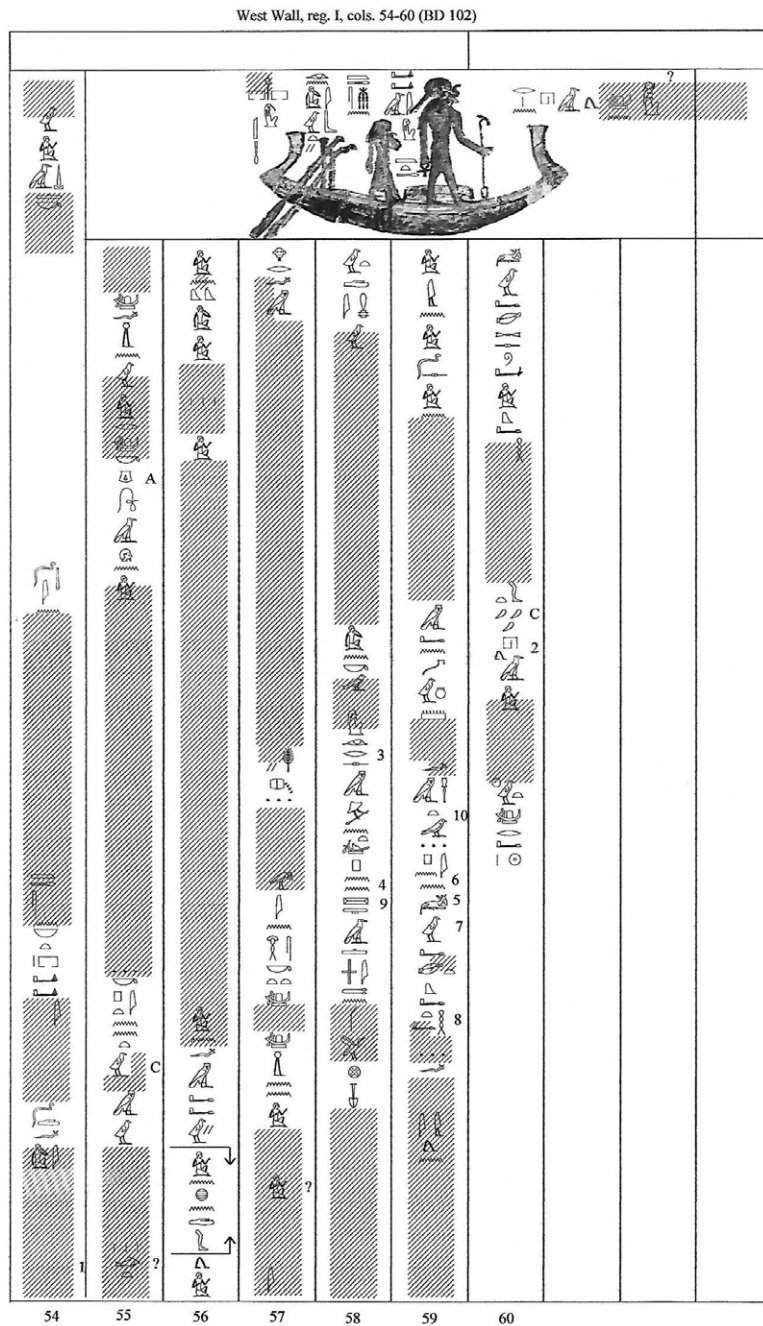
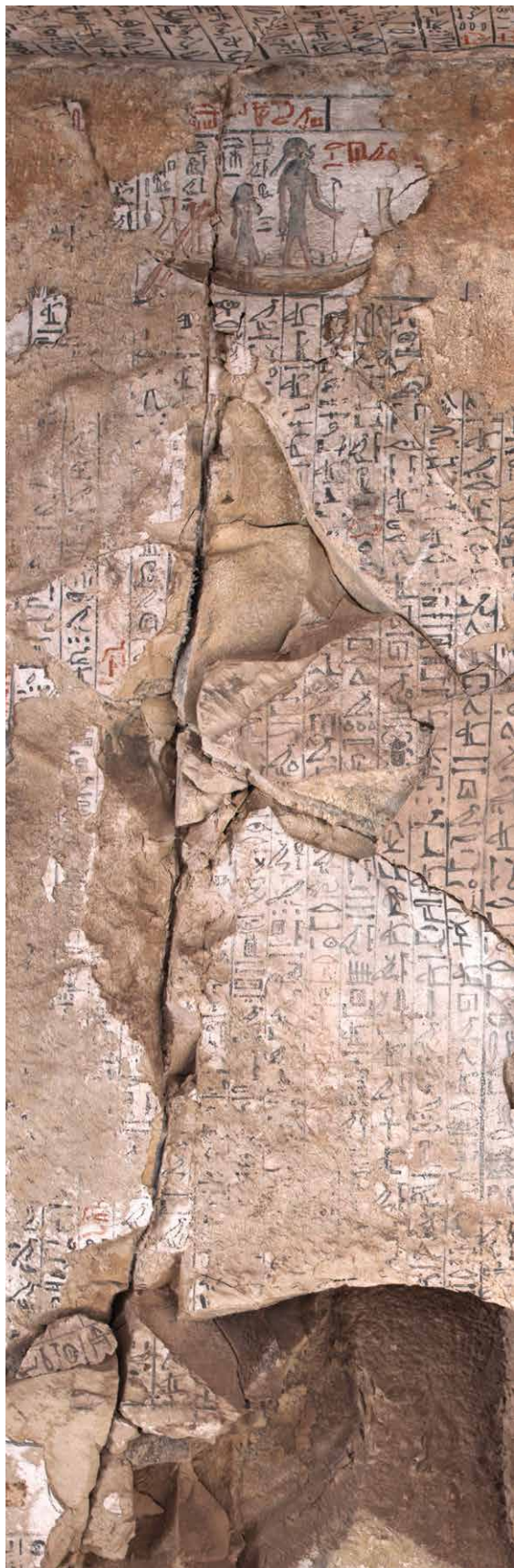


Figure 9.4.1. BD spell 102 in TT 11 (photograph - © J. Latova/Djehuty Project - and transcription).

introduce an *r* as phonetic complement, the ending in *-t* is quite exceptional. Munro [1995a, 14, n. n] has suggested that an *r* in a hypothetical hieratic original was wrongly transcribed as *t* in the papyrus of Baksu).

The shared elements between tomb and papyrus in the vignette of BD 102 include the depiction of a barque without a sail, in which a falcon-headed god occupies the central position and is followed by the deceased. A female

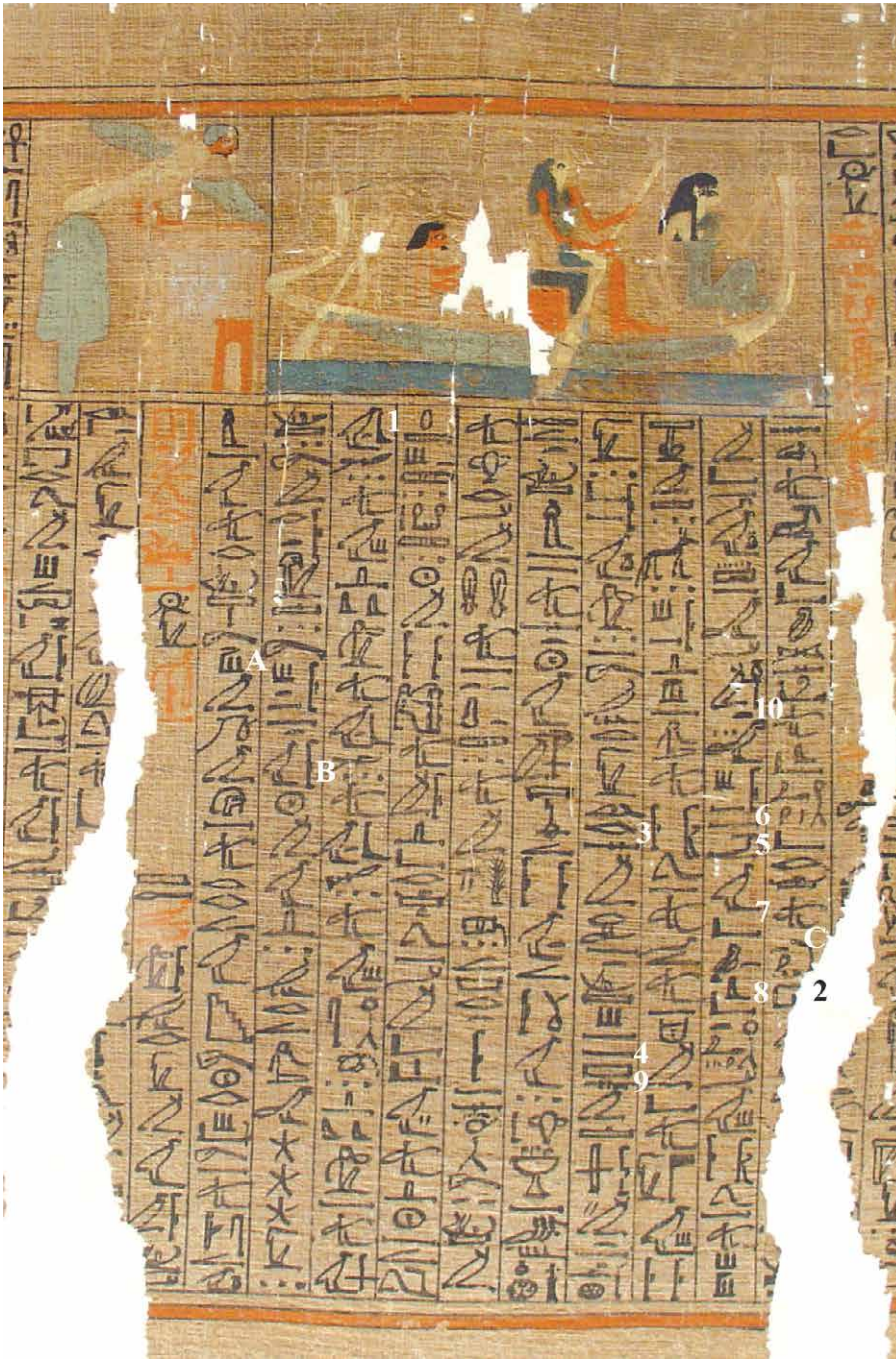


Figure 9.4.2. BD spell 102 in pHanover 1970.37 (photograph used here with kind permission of Museum August Kestner, Hanover (Germany), photograph - Lüscher/Lapp).

goddess holding a sceptre at the prow and a blue watery surface under the barque were added in the papyrus of Baksu. The two renditions of the image differ in style⁵⁰ and colour schemes – with TT 11 resorting mainly to black, grey, brown, and red, whereas pHanover 1970.37 uses a richer palette with yellow, red, blue, black, and green. They

also depict different attitudes, gestures, and clothing for the male figures (Re and the deceased, with his left hand before his chest, are standing in TT 11; the mummiform deceased is kneeling and Re is enthroned and grasps the oar in pHanover 1970.37) and in the attributes of the sun-god (the sun disk, *ankh*-sign, and *heqa*-sceptre of the former are not displayed in the latter).

From the analysis of the similarities in BD 42 (*Gliedervergottung*) and 102 in two sources written in different media after the same lost template, it is possible

50 The coarseness of non-hieroglyphic style vignettes in TT 11, such as those depicting human figures, may point to the work of scribes, not professional draughtsmen.

to draw conclusions regarding the formal features of the latter. The *Vorlage* was most likely written in the same script as seen in the final product on the architectural surfaces and the papyrus: cursive hieroglyphs.⁵¹ There are two main reasons that support this view: the impracticalities and difficulties of transforming every sign of a hypothetical hieratic model into its cursive hieroglyphic counterpart in adverse material conditions (underground burial chamber);⁵² and the close orthographic resemblance between the two sources. The model probably also contained scattered hieratic signs that could be turned into cursive hieroglyphs,⁵³ but also gave rise to some misspellings. A misreading of the hieratic may be behind the defective spellings of *šs3/št3* and *mrwt* (see n. 9 and 10 above).

The models might have been multipurpose, in the sense that they were used to prepare the decoration of different media,⁵⁴ and their contents could easily be adapted to several layouts. The latter flexibility of formats is visible in list-type spells, such as the identification of body parts with gods in BD 42, which can be written as a running text or in tables – in a single register or in two registers, one on top of the other – of separate columns for each entry. One wonders whether the *Vorlage* included some type of information not intended to be copied but instead facilitating their use, such as instructions for scribes and illustrators on the various possibilities into which texts and images could be arranged.⁵⁵ It is most likely that the master copy used in these cases only bore a single spell, since BD 42 and 102 could be inserted in different textual contexts (normally in standardised pairings of spells or larger sequences, but also in more unusual groupings). Finally, the model might have depicted enlarged determinatives and images in outline, or perhaps simply filled in with a conventional colour scheme, which the draughtsman could dismiss, follow, or enrich. Regarding the vignettes, I am unable to say if in the case of BD 102 the

image of the solar barque was included and transmitted together with the text in an individual master copy or in different sources.⁵⁶ Whether in integral or separated models, vignettes could also be accompanied by some sort of explanation (see below).

Individual Attitudes of Scribes towards Master Copies

I begin my approach to this issue from two accepted observations: that remediation was not a mechanical process; and that the attitude of a copying scribe was not motivated by the need for literal reproduction.⁵⁷ In the light of these ideas, the differences in how the spells and vignettes of BD 42 and 102 were rendered in TT 11 and pHanover 1970.37 can shed light on how three scribes used their models.⁵⁸ The work of each reveals similar attitudes to the received text, falling somewhere between paying careful attention to the model and minor creative adaptations. The editorial work, which resulted in variations, can be considered to be contingent upon several factors:⁵⁹ education and training; a scribe's copying and reading experience, of which very little is known,⁶⁰ and individual idiosyncrasies;⁶¹ and material aspects (especially the lack or abundance of available space, difficulties posed by writing on a ceiling or rough surfaces, and the conditions under which the copy was

51 Gester mann (2006, 105) states that “*es wurde von der Vorlage nicht nur der Text selbst übernommen, sondern auch die Schriftform.*” Haring (2015) expresses the same opinion in relation to hieroglyphic texts. See also Zeidler 1999, 47. How many steps separated the primary master copies, probably preserved in a library, from the ‘*Handwerkervorlage*’ used in the tomb’s decoration cannot be determined.

52 Diaz-Iglesias Llanos 2018, 38; Haring 2015, 72, 74-79.

53 The ostraca used as models for the decoration of TT 87 aptly demonstrate that conversion of forms, especially with birds and the sign Gardiner A1, could take place on the spot (Lüscher 2013).

54 Fit-to-purpose models for a specific monument could be prepared from these multi-purpose models (following the terminology used by Werning 2017, 49, cf. Kahl 1999, 294-295, *Musterbücher* and *integrale Vorlagen*).

55 Alleged templates for tomb and temple decoration might have included textual or visual indications for the spatial distribution of texts and illustrations (Haring 2015, 67-68, 79-80; Kahl 2014, 164, 167).

56 The existence of separate master sources for vignettes has been posited for Third Intermediate Period (Munro 2017, 54-55; Lucarelli 2006, 198-200, 243-244) and Late-Ptolemaic (Mosher 2016, 42) BD productions. Several forms of models and manufacturing processes might have also been in use concurrently.

57 Scribes had a certain freedom of choice when reworking existing models, so that related papyri show individual features (add to Díaz-Iglesias 2018, 36-37 n. 67; Lucarelli 2006, 237). See also n. 7 above.

58 Concerning the papyrus in Hanover, Munro (1995a, 3) states that “*die Handschrift erscheint flüssig und routiniert und gibt ein in sich geschlossenes Schriftbild wieder,*” which may point to the work of a single scribe, albeit that Munro does not say so explicitly. In the case of TT 11, BD 42 and 102 were copied by two different scribes, respectively working on the ceiling and the right-hand part of the west wall.

59 See also Zeidler 1999, I, 46-47 (factors accounting for orthographic differences).

60 In the transmission of literary texts, Hagen (2012, 215, 248) asserts that “copyists may embellish and elaborate depending on personal ability,” and Parkinson (2009, 115) indicates that orthographic idiosyncrasies may reflect something of the scribes’ cultural circumstances.

61 The scribe who copied BD 102 in TT 11 showed some orthographic tendencies: use of Gardiner N35 for negations (though usual in the Eighteenth Dynasty [Lüscher 2008, 16, 36], it contrasts with the use of Gardiner D35 by the second scribe); Gardiner R3 and Gardiner I12 as determinatives for masculine and feminine deities; unique spellings of Djehuty’s parents’ names; two versions of the sign A1 depending on its use as a pronoun (abbreviated form) or as a determinative (detailed form).



Figure 9.5. Repetitive passage of BD 78 (west wall, col. 7) exhibiting all types of omissions (of signs, words, and phrases): *nḥm pw Ḥrw*, *snḥm pw Ḥrw*, *[jt pw Ḥrw]*, *mwt [p]w Ḥrw*, *sn pw [Ḥrw]* “Horus is the rescuer, Horus is the one who has rescued, [Horus is the father], Horus is the mother, [Horus] is the brother” (cf. Lüscher 2006, 166a-e) © Djehuty Project/J. Latova.

made).⁶² Mistakes, emendations, orthography, space adjustment, ink redippings, and execution of vignettes will be explored to understand how scribes engaged with their master copies. It should be noted that homogeneity within a manuscript/section written by a scribe is not to be expected in any of the analysed features. Thus, when characterising a scribal hand, one should argue in terms of tendencies or preponderance.

Some textual variations were mechanical or unconscious, in that they adhere to errors incurred during the copying process, resulting in nonsensical versions. The most common mistakes observed in TT 11 are: confusion between similar graphemes, between homophones, and of meaning; incorrect orientation and sign inversion;⁶³ inaccurate grammatical constructions; and erroneous substitution, omission, or addition of graphemes, words, and whole passages as a consequence of horizontal or vertical proximity to similar ones (on the final writing surface and probably also in the model), of interruptions in the work flow (due to column changes, refilling of the writing tool, distractions), of work executed in haste. An analysis of the different types of mistakes should also take into account their number or frequency, location, and interactions with other features of the copying process (emendations, hieratic signs, dippings... see below), for which I suggest a ‘mapping’ strategy. This strategy would involve recording in a photograph or transcription of the texts the distribution of selected features of writing practice using visual devices, for example, by assigning a colour to each feature and storing the information in different layers that can be made visible or invisible. ‘Mapping’ helps visualise the concentration of mistakes and emendations in certain areas, for which an explanation should be sought in the combined analysis of the text’s content and its physical aspects. Such is the case of BD 42 in TT 11, whose many errors and corrections may be due to both human and material factors: the waning concentration of a scribe faced with repetitive statements

62 To the lighting conditions for the decoration of chapels analysed by Tavler (2012), one should add problems of air circulation, humidity, and heat in underground chambers (Haring 2015, 78). For media-related factors influencing the inscription and reading of inscribed artefacts see Piquette 2008, 96-97.

63 One should bear in mind that aesthetic factors (Hussein 2017, 310) and calligraphic and spatial concerns (Allen 2017, 2) can take precedence over sequentiality in the arrangement of signs in words.

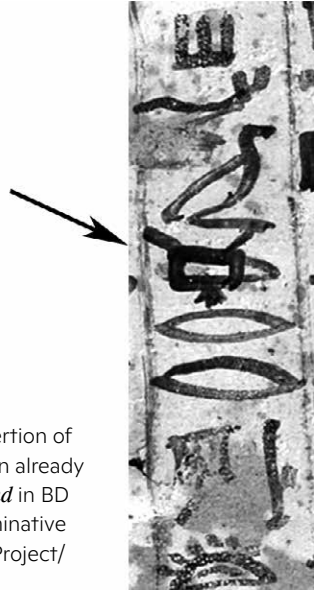


Figure 9.6. Two examples of insertion of signs with fresh ink, to modify an already written word (in *ḥwḥwt* <*m*> *ḥd* in BD 26) and to add a missing determinative (in *pfꜣ rrj* in BD 112). © Djehuty Project/ M.Á. Navarro.

(see fig. 9.5 for another example), and the adoption of unnatural bodily postures necessary for writing on the horizontal, but inverted, surface of the ceiling. It is not always an easy task to determine at which step in the reading, copying, and transmission processes an error was introduced, but the mapping approach can be of some use (see fig. 9.11 for the combination of dittography and ink redipping). However, it should be noted that some faulty spellings were already present in the models, and that the scribes might reproduce them faithfully.⁶⁴

Corrections of mistakes can take place through erasure, overwriting, or addition of missing parts to one side (fig. 9.7). As with errors, attention should not only be paid to documenting types of emendations, but also to their frequency. One may thus observe that in TT 11 there are as many instances of emendations as there are signs and words left uncorrected, which suggests that there was no close proofreading of the text – either by the copyist himself or by someone else – once it had been copied.⁶⁵ The scribes probably looked back at some sentences while copying or when refilling their rushes,⁶⁶ because many corrections are introduced with fresh ink (fig. 9.6), and they thus spotted some mistakes, but many passed unnoticed.

The factors leading to editorial changes, noted above, had a direct impact on several aspects of orthography.⁶⁷ Although they share many similarities due to the influence exerted by the *Vorlage*, the orthographic variations observed in TT 11 and the papyrus of Baksu are important. Spellings closer to Late Egyptian,⁶⁸ which were not frequent in pre-Amarna BD productions,⁶⁹ can sometimes point to a modernising will that was inconsistently applied throughout a given spell. Hieratic signs are rarely attested in the two cursive hieroglyphic witnesses, but tended to be used by an individual scribe for certain graphemes,⁷⁰ and could be introduced when the space was limited (such as at the end of columns⁷¹ or when overlooked signs needed to be squeezed in fig. 9.7), or where the writing surface obliged copyists to adopt uncomfortable positions, such as

64 Lüscher 2013.

65 A circumstance already observed by Rößler-Köhler (1979, 27) in her study of BD 17 and frequent in funerary compositions, albeit attentive proofreading is attested in some cases with carved texts (Bareš 2009; Mathieu 1996).

66 Observation made by Parkinson (2009, 98) of Middle Kingdom literary manuscripts.

67 It should be noted that orthographic tendencies have not been the subject of a monograph since the work of Dévaud (1924) on hieratic manuscripts of the period between the Twelfth to the Eighteenth Dynasties, which is mainly based on non-religious texts. I would like to thank Huw Twiston Davies for this reference.

68 Cf. the spelling of *gwꜣ* (*Wb*. V, 159) in pHanover 1970.37 (see note A in fig. 9.4.2, which follows Late Egyptian patterns: Munro 1995a, 14, note a to BD 102) and TT 11 (note A in fig. 9.4.1) and the use of double determinatives. The orthography of *kꜣh* (n. 8 in figs 9.4.1 and 9.4.2.) could be also influenced by Late Egyptian (Dévaud 1924, 18, 8*).

69 Munro 1988, 175-184.

70 The quantity and type of hieratic signs has proved to be a distinguishing criterion between the scribes who decorated the west wall of the burial chamber in TT 11, since one copyist resorted to hieratic predominantly for birds, while a second opted for this script more frequently. See also n. 72.

71 The scribe of TT 87 also changed the cursive hieroglyphs of his model into hieratic at the bottom of some columns (Lüscher 2013, 56 h).




Figure 9.7. Addition of skipped words in hieratic in the passage of BD 25 (west wall, col. 82): *sh3-n-j rn-j m pr ...* "I have remembered my name in the house of..." © Djehuty Project/M.Á. Navarro.

in corners and on ceilings.⁷² They may also appear when the scribe was in doubt about the correct form of the sign,⁷³ or at random points in the composition as he mechanically turned to the graphemes he used most and had learnt first.

72 The scribe who decorated the right-hand part of the west wall of the burial chamber in TT 11 used four times more hieratic signs than his colleague in charge of the left-hand part, but the 'mapping' of this feature indicates that 50% of these signs are concentrated in the final three columns before the corner. This ratio might indicate handedness, because a right-handed scribe would have felt less comfortable in the corner between the west and north walls than a left-handed one.

73 Haring 2006, 9.

The polyorthographic nature of the Egyptian writing system,⁷⁴ the pictographic character of cursive hieroglyphs, and the flexible forms in which signs could be arranged⁷⁵ allowed copyists to adopt a variety of strategies and solutions where they could display their command of the writing system. Among these were: the free use of phonetic complements and determinatives; differing renditions of dual- and plural morphemes;⁷⁶ the adoption of more iconic or logographic spellings; the exchange of equivalent graphemes (); varying

degrees of sign elaboration (including sportive forms of logograms and of the enlarged determinatives in BD 42); and the use of more compact or less dense arrangements.⁷⁷ Such variations do not affect the underlying meaning of the words themselves, but can enrich them where determinatives were rendered playfully, used as visual puns⁷⁸ or perhaps to introduce slight connotational nuances. To borrow Jasper's explanation: "The notion of 'copying' permitted Egyptian scribes to implement creative and fairly ingenious solutions by exploiting the possibilities of the hieroglyphic writing system, whilst remaining faithful to the original content."⁷⁹

Scribes strove to produce a justified text, leaving as few blank spaces as possible. The adjustment of the text to the available space was normally achieved by cramming or enlarging signs towards the bottoms of columns, the use of space-saving hieratic signs, or the addition or omission of phonetic complements.⁸⁰ Sometimes more creative strategies were essayed, which indicate that the scribe was actively involved with the text. An instance of such conscientious work can be found towards the end of BD 114 in TT 11. Envisaging that a blank space would be left in the last column if he followed his model literally, the scribe chose not to use a personal pronoun but instead the name

74 Hussein 2017, 309-311. A polyorthographic system produced words with different spellings, so that several written forms of a given language could coexist.

75 Polis 2018.

76 See note C in figs 9.4.1 and 9.4.2.

77 An extreme case is the spelling of *jhmw-wrd* in pHanover 1970.37 (note B in fig. 9.4.2).

78 Notice the case of *tbtj* 'feet/soles of the feet' in BD 42 in TT 11, where the scribe wrote a determinative not attested elsewhere (*Wb.* V, 361,9-362,14; Lapp 2017, 210-211; Walker 1996, 79-80).

79 Jasper 2017, 49. Synchronic and diachronic orthographic divergences among different witnesses of PT and the Book of Caverns have recently been dealt with by Hussein 2017; Jasper 2017; Werning 2017; Landgráfová 2015.

80 See n. 77.



Figure 9.8. Reworking of the final passage of BD 114 to fill in the whole column (ceiling, register I, cols 57-58) © Djehuty Project/J. Latova.

Some material evidences which have yielded excellent results for papyri in tracking the attitudes of scribes towards their compositions, such as the pattern of writing tool refilling, have proved to be of limited value when applied to texts from the burial chamber of TT 11. On horizontal surfaces, a distinction can be often made between meaningful dippings (where the rush was refilled at natural units of the text, or the beginnings of columns or lines) and mechanical ones (where it was refilled at random places or within words). The former indicates that a scribe was more concerned with the meaning of a text, and therefore mentally engaged in the copying process – betraying at the same time his level of literacy – while the latter shows that he instead paid more attention to the formal aspects of the composition.⁸³ Very few strokes were executed with the same penful of ink on the walls and ceiling of TT 11, given that refilling was normally done within a word

jnd-ḥr=tn b3w Ḥmnw mj rh-j tn
(version probably written in the model)

jnd-ḥr=tn b3w Ḥmnw mj rh tn
jnj-r3 prwy-ḥd Dḥwtj, m3-ḥrw
(version written on the wall)

and title of Djehuty, and filled the whole space⁸¹ (*jnd-ḥr=tn b3w Ḥmnw mj rh-j tn < jnd-ḥr=tn b3w Ḥmnw mj rh tn jnj-r prwy-ḥd Dḥwtj, m3-ḥrw*, fig. 9.8).⁸² This also indicates that the scribe understood what he was copying and slightly modified the content, well aware of the changes entailed in the word order. Such a modification hints at the literacy of the person involved in the editing of the composition in its very last stage of transmission.

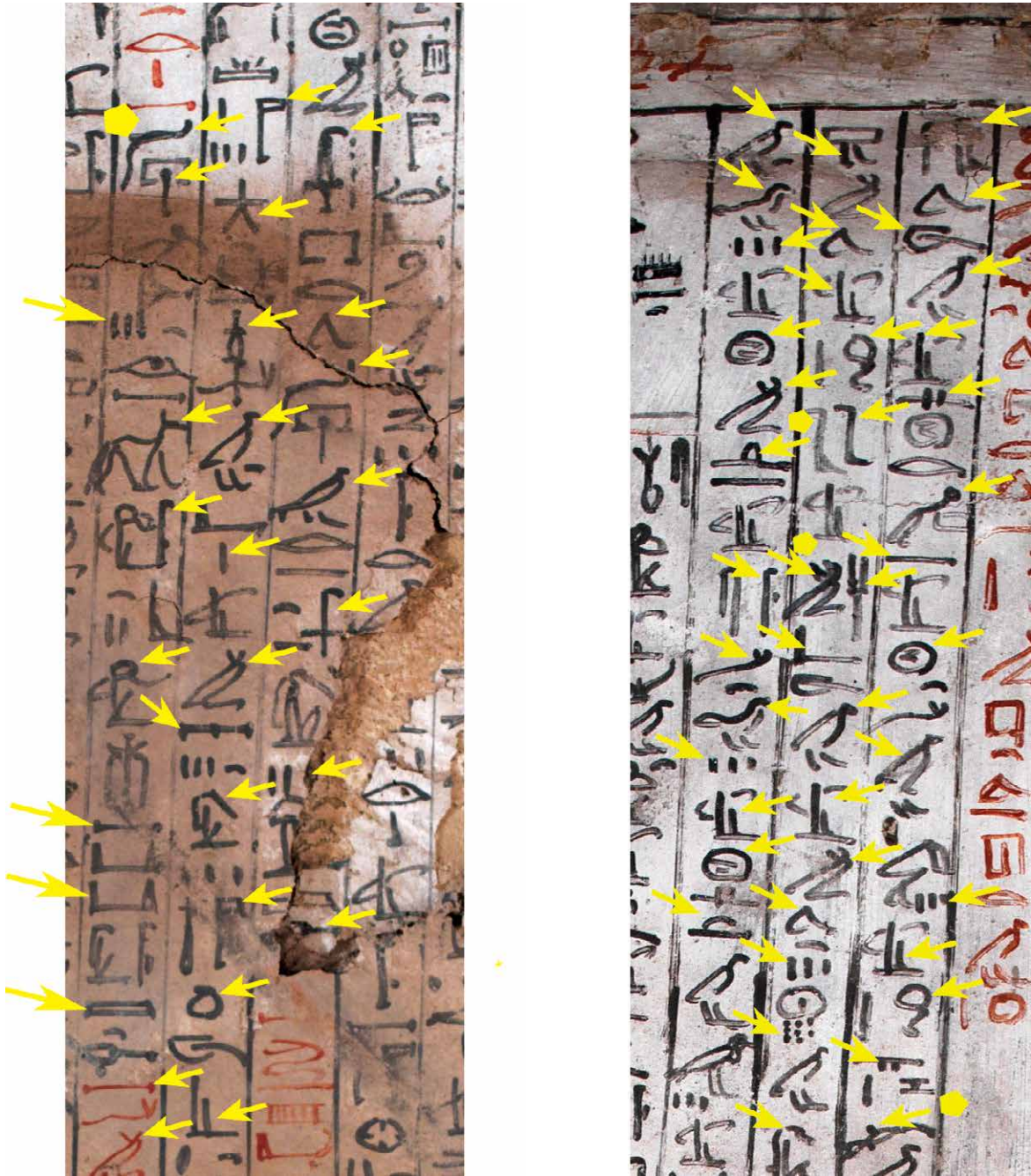
or even within an individual sign, and it is often not possible to detect where the rush was refilled (fig. 9.9).⁸⁴ There are several ways to account for differences in dipping patterns between the two writing media: a layer of gypsum absorbed the ink more quickly than did papyrus; vertical surfaces posed more problems than horizontal ones (perhaps less ink was used to avoid the possibility of drips); and scribes may have been more worried about the quality of the end result and strove to obtain an even appearance. Nonetheless, rhythms of ink dipping in TT 11 are useful insofar as they help

81 The possibility of extending or contracting the deceased's titles (and filiation) in made-to-order exemplars offered scribes a flexible device to negotiate the space available on the writing surface. For the papyrus of Nw, pLondon BM EA 10477, see Lapp 1996, 19-20. Notice that a single title registered on the ostraca of Nakhtmin might be expanded on the walls of his burial chamber to include other functions, to better fit the column length (Lüscher 2013, 61b, 84n).

82 Lüscher 2012, 156d for parallels.

83 Both Allen (2002, 77 and Appendix B) and Parkinson (2009, 90-92, 106-107) have called attention to redippings in Middle Kingdom texts, and their method of analysis has successfully been applied to New Kingdom miscellanies (Ragazzoli 2017a, 106-107; Ragazzoli 2012, 211-214) and funerary texts of other periods (Verhoeven 2017, 64-66; Regulski 2015, 310-314; Ragazzoli 2012, 212).

84 Similar problems have been detected in ink graffiti on vertical surfaces by Navrátilová (2015, 258-261), and in pottery vs limestone ostraca by Hagen (2012, 187).



us to distinguish between scribal hands (fig. 9.9).⁸⁵ The use of fresh ink can also serve to identify pauses in the copying process, acts of going over what had already been written (fig. 9.10), or of resuming the copying, at which point the scribe could introduce errors of repetition or omission (fig. 9.11). Finally, they point to the stage at which corrections were introduced (fig. 9.6).

To conclude, and regarding the work with the images, the differences between the two witnesses of the vignette of BD 102 (figs 9.4.1 and 9.4.2) could be due to the

Figure 9.9. Patterns of ink use (refillings of the brush are marked by arrows and retouching of signs by stars) of two scribes who decorated the west wall of the burial chamber of TT 11 © Djehuty Project/J. Latova.

85 One scribe demonstrated greater distance between the dippings (every two or three signs) and a less marked tendency to retouch the final sign written with the new penful of ink.



Figure 9.10. Minor retouches of three signs with new ink, pointing at reviewing acts. © Djehuty Project/M.Á. Navarro.

use of two independent models, to the combination of several *Vorlagen*,⁸⁶ or to an accepted degree of flexibility in the execution of a scene.⁸⁷ In the latter case, one may consider the existence of a basic scheme,⁸⁸ composed of a barque plus a falcon god, and normally including the deceased, but that the actual execution of this model was fairly flexible, with the result that scribes/draughtsmen

86 Descriptions of BD 102 vignettes in New Kingdom sources in Milde 1991, 103-104; Munro 1988, 97.

87 In BD vignettes of the Theban recension “*grosse Varianz herrscht und es trotz gleicher Motivwahl ansonsten praktisch keine direkten Dubletten gibt*” (Lüscher 2007, 28).

88 Hartwig (2004, 19) describes the hypothetical copybooks used for the decoration of tomb walls as: “rather than being catalogues of specific scenes or texts, copybooks were probably summaries of basic types of scenes, outlines of picture programs, and information on the canon, color symbolism, and other important references.”

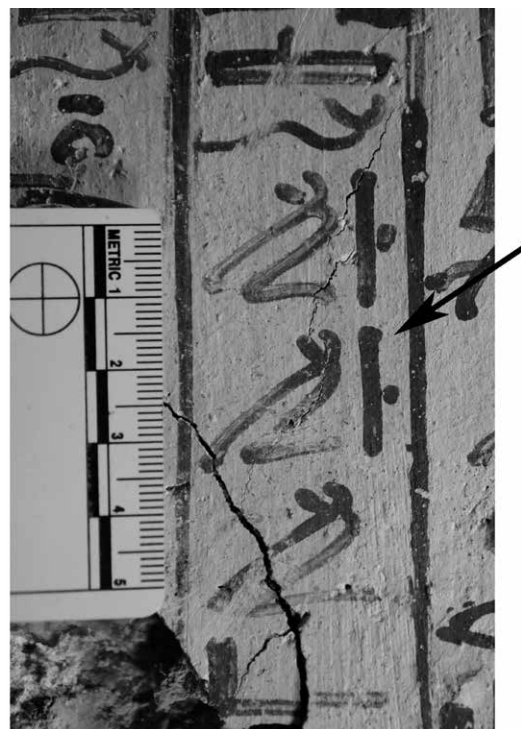


Figure 9.11. Dittography of *jm* resulting from an interruption in the work flow when the brush was refilled with ink, in the sentence *jmm n=j k* “give me your hand” (BD 86, west wall, col. 10). © Djehuty Project/M.Á. Navarro.

could embellish certain core elements (presence or absence of divine attributes), make changes to clothing and attitudes of the characters (sitting, standing, sailing), and add extra details.⁸⁹ One cannot exclude the possibility that the inclusion of details might, to a certain degree, have derived from the assimilation of nearby vignettes. This could explain the presence of a female deity in both BD 102 and 99B (here depicted with the Hathoric headdress) in pHanover 1970.37⁹⁰ that is absent from TT 11 and other manuscripts.

One may venture that images in *Vorlagen* would have been accompanied by brief descriptions, which would

89 Such changes are not infrequent in later papyri derived from the same model: cf. Spells BD 18, 40, 85, 72, 44, 45, 134, 71, 68+91, 114, 144 in pTasheritenaset (Munro 2011) and pLondon BM EA 10558 (<<http://totenbuch.awk.nrw.de/objekt/tm57267>>, last accessed 28.12.2018) and BD 136A, 65, 78, 82, 81A, 102, 31, 38B, 104, 145, 126, 110 in pCairo JE 95838 (Lucarelli 2006) and pLondon BM EA 10064 (Munro 2001). Minor differences between witnesses copied from the same *Vorlage* are attributed to unclear elements in the model or appear “*im Rahmen der individuellen Gestaltungsfreiheiten des Künstlers*” (Töpfer/Müller-Roth 2011, 99).

90 Munro 1995a, 24, Photo-Taf. 6. Milde (1991, 103) already commented that “this scene brings to mind the vignette of BD 99 in the same papyrus”.

set a paradigmatic version or framework of basic elements that could be expanded by draughtsmen/scribes through variations. A caption to the vignette of BD 102 (or BD 136) in a contemporary papyrus includes an additional comment before the title of the spell that could be regarded as a form of instruction, bearing practical information that was not meant to be passed on in copies: *wjz ʿz n Rʿ hzyt r wjz jn NN* “great *wia*-barque of Re, descending into the *wia*-barque by NN”.⁹¹ Alternatively, the copyist might have received written or oral instructions on the type of scene to be executed and its location, which were very seldom reflected on the final product.⁹²

Differences between the colour scheme of the enlarged determinatives of gods in BD 42 of TT 11 and pHanover 1970.37 (colourless in the former and polychrome but conventional in the latter) and the vignette of BD 102 (with a richer palette in the latter) may indicate a relative freedom of execution within certain conventions. Indeed, examples of ‘doublettes’ or exact copies of the same images are rare, and their existence points not only to the use of the same model but also to execution in the same workshop and probably by the same hand,⁹³ which is not the case for the witnesses analysed here.

Ancient textual and iconographic artefacts or monuments are products of specific historical contexts, which play host to a wealth of information on the processes standing behind their conception, production, and use. The burial chamber of the tomb of Djehuty (TT 11, c. 1470 BCE) is an interesting case-study for addressing issues related to the mechanisms underlying the transmission of funerary texts and images during the first stages of the Book of the Dead recension. The operations of selecting, combining, and copying spells and vignettes onto the walls and ceiling of Djehuty’s chamber were shaped by human and material aspects. A minute analysis of the textual sequence – paying attention to its components and distribution – of mistakes, emendations, orthographic tendencies, space adjustments, patterns of brush use, and execution of vignettes, shed new light on the human actors, both the commissioner of the monument and the scribes who executed the decoration, and on the socio-cultural and material contexts in which they operated. Such an analysis should take place in a wider evaluation of the whole decorative programme of the tomb chapel and of its owner’s career.

91 Papyrus of *S-n-wsr*, pWien Vindob Aeg. 10.994-10.997, *temp.* Hatshepsut/Thutmosis III–Amenhotep II, Thausing/Kerszt-Kratschmann 1969, pl. 6; cf. Milde 1991, 103-104.

92 Ragazzoli 2010a, 232-234. See Scalf 2015-2016 for later examples (but cf. Verhoeven 2017, 42-43).

93 Lüscher 2007, 27-29.

Vyāsa's Palimpsest

Tracking Processes of Transmission and Re-creation in Anonymous Sanskrit Literature

Peter C. Bisschop¹

As in other literary cultures around the world, intertextuality is integral to the Sanskrit literary traditions of premodern South Asia. Recent years have seen the appearance of several studies that highlight the need for more systematic study of different kinds of textual reuse, and, accordingly, the need for rethinking concepts of 'originality' and 'authorship'.² The majority of these studies have tended to focus on practices of quotation and borrowing in Indian philosophical texts. The phenomenon is, however, much more widespread. It is in particular characteristic for the genre of anonymous Hindu religious literature that forms the subject of this study, the Sanskrit 'Purāṇas'. Intertextuality is a characteristic and defining feature of the Purāṇic genre as a whole.

After a brief introduction to the Purāṇic text corpus, I will illustrate the practice of adaptive reuse³ through the example of one Purāṇa in particular, the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa*. As I will demonstrate, the composers of this anonymous work have incorporated and revised very large portions of text from earlier religious manuals dedicated to the gods Viṣṇu and Śiva, in order to promote their own religious agenda, which centers around the worship and devotion of the Sun (Sūrya) as the highest divine principle. The textual parallels attest to the intensive nature of religious exchange in early medieval India, in which brahmanical representatives of particular religious communities adapted textual

1 I would like to thank the editors for inviting me to write on a subject that falls outside of the field of Egyptology, but which I hope contributes to the kind of cross-disciplinary scholarship that their Walking Dead project aims at. I also thank Elizabeth Cecil (Florida State University) for critical feedback on an earlier version of this paper. Research for this paper has been supported by the European Research Council (ERC Project no. 609823).

2 See Freschi/Maas 2017; and *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, special issues 43.2-3 and 43.4-5 ('The Re-use of Texts in Indian Philosophy'). The literature on 'intertextuality' is sheer endless, ever since Julia Kristeva first introduced the term. See Alfaro 1996, for a concise overview. According to the more restrictive definition of Gérard Genette it is "a relation of copresence between two or among several texts: that is to say, eidetically and typically as the actual presence of one text within another" (Genette 1997, 1-2). Genette recognises three practices of copresence: quotation, plagiarism and allusion. The notion of plagiarism will be addressed and problematised at the end of my paper.

3 For the concept of 'adaptive reuse', see Freschi/Maas 2017, 13: "The attributive "adaptive" presupposes that the reusing person pursues a specific purpose by adapting something already existent to his or her specific needs." For the present paper, I would qualify the term 'person' because in the case of anonymous literature the 'person' is as a rule hidden from view. We are rather confronted with an anonymous tradition that may involve a number of persons or groups of persons.

templates that they deemed to have been successful in communicating religious ideologies and used them to craft competing claims of authority and hierarchy. While such texts were produced by spokesmen of different religious traditions and display a marked tendency to set up a separate religious community identity, the texts they produced shared a common language and idiom which significantly drew from each other. We thus gain a close-up view of religion in the making through textual production, which involved the transplantation, transformation and re-creation of earlier ritual models of worship in dialogue with each other. I conclude with a few observations on questions of authorship, plagiarism and composition in Purāṇa literature.

Introduction to the Purāṇic Text Corpus and to the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* in Particular

The Purāṇas form a prolific genre of brahmanical religious texts, composed mainly in Sanskrit but also in some of the major regional Indian languages, that have constituted the backbone of Brahmanical Hinduism through the ages. Traditionally there are held to be eighteen major (*mahā-*) and eighteen minor (*upa-*) Purāṇas, but the actual Purāṇic text corpus far outnumbers this canonical classification and is considerably more complex. While the first Purāṇas may go back to the first half of the First Millennium CE, most existing Purāṇas have been composed several or more centuries later. Further complicating matters, the Purāṇas show a tendency to grow and change over time, as the texts were copied in a process of ‘composition-in-transmission’, attesting to their continued and lively use in medieval India.⁴

This process of ‘composition-in-transmission’ has frequently led scholars of Purāṇas to a state of despair, for it makes it next to impossible to get a firm grasp of the time, place and conditions of the composition of the texts involved and, as a consequence, of their teachings. In this respect, the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* is one of the most notorious Purāṇas of all, with one early scholar even calling it a literary fraud (“*ein literarischer Betrug*”).⁵ The title of the text may be rendered, somewhat ambiguously, as ‘The Ancient Book of the Future’. As the sixth verse of its opening chapter informs us, the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* was composed by the legendary sage Vyāsa, who is also credited with the composition of the Epic *Mahābhārata* and a range of other anonymous Sanskrit scriptures, including the Vedas, with the express aim of narrating the

‘future Dharmas’ (*bhaviṣyadharmā*) in the Kali age (*yuga*).⁶ The concept of Dharma may be broadly understood as ‘law’, in the sense of an ideal set of rules to be followed and handed over by tradition. More specifically, Dharma here concerns the law or set of rules about how to worship the deity for the realisation of the highest good. The text presents itself in the form of an eschatology, describing the state of the present at the time of composition of the text in the form of a prediction about the future.⁷

Like many other Purāṇas, the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* has been subject to a long and intensive process of modification and re-composition. It never existed in some early pristine state, but has had a life as a ‘living text’ from the beginning.⁸ This process of redaction continued well into the modern age, for, although parts of the text certainly go back to the First Millennium of our era, later sections of the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* include passages that, for example, refer to the figures of Moses and Jesus, which clearly reflects the influence of Christian missionaries. Together with references to the British rule in India, as well as the Houses of Parliament, these passages illustrate how the text continued to be updated over the centuries.⁹ Rather than taking this to be a case of ‘literary fraud’, as has been done by scholars in the past, such passages draw our attention to the fact that the Purāṇas have always formed a living tradition, which, while purportedly being concerned with all things ancient and primordial, nevertheless was firmly engaged with and embedded in the present, and as such subject to a continuous process of upgrading and updating, in accordance with changing times and circumstances.¹⁰

The *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* is not only notorious for having been continuously subject to expansion, but also because of its creative copying of textual materials from other earlier sources, which can give it the appearance of a work of little inspiration and originality. Heinrich von Stietencron, for example, has characterised a large part of the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa*’s so-called *Brāhmaparvan* ‘Section of Brahma’,¹¹ as “a kind of compendium in which anything worth knowing about the sun cult has been thrown

4 The concept of ‘composition-in-transmission’ has been coined by Bakker 1989. For an engaging introduction to the Purāṇas as a genre of ancient Indian history writing, see Fitzgerald 2014.

5 Aufrecht 1903.

6 *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* 1.1.6:

*kṛtvā purāṇāni parāśarātmajaḥ sarvāny anekāni sukhāvahāni |
tatratmasaukhyāya bhaviṣyadharmān kalau yuge bhāvi lilekha
sarvam | |.*

7 For this phenomenon, see chapter 1 (‘Apocalypse, Heresy and Philosophy’) in Eltschinger 2014.

8 On the concept of the ‘living text’, first developed in New Testament Studies and more recently also applied to Buddhist literature, see Chen 2018; Parker 1997. Purāṇic studies may also benefit from a ‘living text’ approach.

9 For references, see Rocher 1986, 153.

10 See Bisschop 2011, for an example of this process with reference to pilgrimage literature of the holy town of Varanasi.

11 The printed *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* consists of five major sections, called *parvans*.

together”.¹² Several scholars have studied parallels of the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* with earlier texts, most notably the *Manusmṛti* ‘The Code of Manu’, the Indian book of law, and the *Brhatsaṃhitā*, a compendium by the famous Sixth Century astronomer Varāhamihira.¹³ While there can be no doubt that the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* was the borrower in both cases, little work has been done on understanding the processes of transmission and re-creation involved and what they may tell us about the nature of religious exchange in early India. The present paper aims to contribute to such a perspective, through the example of the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa*’s extensive incorporation and re-composition of external material drawn from the religious manuals of two other religious communities, the *Śivadharma* ‘The Law of Śiva’ and the *Viṣṇudharma* ‘The Law of Viṣṇu’.

The chapters of the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* that correspond closely to the *Śivadharma* and the *Viṣṇudharma* belong to the text’s earlier mentioned *Brāhmaparvan*, a section which is generally considered to be the oldest part of the text. Although the precise date of composition of the *Brāhmaparvan* remains uncertain, it was most probably composed sometime during the second half of the First Millennium.¹⁴ This part of the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* stands out for being primarily concerned with teachings about sun worship. While worship of the sun has been part and parcel of the Vedic tradition from a very early period,¹⁵ the type of cultic sun worship taught in the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* is markedly different, in that it presents sun worship as a distinct religion centered on one deity, with its own class of priests (Māghas and Bhojakas), its own community of worshippers, and its own forms of ritual practice. The text clearly reflects and engages with Iranian traditions of sun worship that had entered Northern India in the First Millennium CE.¹⁶ The *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* presents sun worship in accordance with a brahmanical model of worship and teaches that the Sun is the highest and ultimate lord (*iśvara*), encompassing and ruling all other deities. In doing so, it has creatively adapted earlier models of the ritual worship of the Hindu gods Śiva and Viṣṇu.

From Viṣṇu to Sūrya: Creating a Model of Sun Worship (I)

My first example of textual reuse comes from the *Viṣṇudharma* ‘The Law of Viṣṇu’, a text promoting Viṣṇu worship, possibly dating to the middle of the First Millennium CE. Vaiṣṇavism, the religious tradition centered around the worship of God Viṣṇu, was a dominant force in premodern India, receiving the support from many of the royal courts. The *Viṣṇudharma* was a key text in canonising the activities and rituals of worship of lay devotees of Viṣṇu. Its popularity is attested by the existence of manuscripts from regions as far apart as Nepal and South India, as well as by the many quotations and references to it in later texts.

In the third and final volume of the critical edition of the *Viṣṇudharma*, its editor (Reinhold Grünendahl) already remarked upon the many parallels of the *Viṣṇudharma* with parts of the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa*. In the edition’s accompanying tables he has listed these parallels, identifying a total of 560 shared verses. Grünendahl’s plans to discuss these parallels never materialised.¹⁷ Within the limits of this paper, I will single out just one case as an illustration of the degree of parallelism involved, taken from the very beginning of the text.

The parallel with the *Viṣṇudharma* starts in *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* I.60, which is a reworking of the very first chapter of the *Viṣṇudharma*. This introduces the request of a king called Śatānīka ‘Hundred Army’ to the sage Sumantu ‘Good Adviser’ to teach him about the Sun and his worship. I quote here the final five verses of this introductory chapter, in each case followed by the underlying parallel of the *Viṣṇudharma*, with differences in the texts underlined:¹⁸

12 Rocher 1986, 152, quoting von Stietencron 1966, who refers to chapters 47-215 of the *Brāhmaparvan* in particular.

13 For the *Brhatsaṃhitā*, see Scheffelowitz 1933; for the *Manusmṛti*, Sternbach 1974; László 1971.

14 See Hazra 1940, 167-173, on the quotations from the *Brāhmaparvan* in the Dharmanibandha literature.

15 The *Rgveda*’s Sāvitrī or Gāyatrī mantra, dedicated to the sun, is regarded as the quintessence of the Vedas to the present day.

16 On the history and incorporation of Iranian traditions of sun worship in the formation of the Saura religion, see Stausberg 2012; Chenet 1993; Humbach 1978; Gail 1978; Von Stietencron 1966.

17 Cf. Grünendahl 1989, 177, n. 1.

18 The text of the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* follows the Venkatesvara Press edition (Śrīkṛṣṇadāsa 1959); for the *Viṣṇudharma* I follow Grünendahl 1983.

Bhaviṣyapurāṇa I.60.18:
durgasaṃsāarakāntāram apāram abhidhāvātām |
ekaḥ bhānūnamaskāraḥ samsārānavatārakah | |
 ‘Adoration of Bhānu (the Sun) alone is the saviour
from the ocean of transmigration for those who are
 running up against the bad shore that is the impassable
 wilderness of transmigration.’

Bhaviṣyapurāṇa I.60.19:
ratnānām ākaro meruḥ sarvāścaryamayaṃ nabhaḥ |
tīrthānām āśrayo gaṅgā devānām āśrayo raviḥ | |
 ‘Mt. Meru is the mine of jewels, the sky is made of all
 wonders, the Ganges is the resort of holy places, Ravi
(the Sun) is the resort of the gods.’

Bhaviṣyapurāṇa I.60.19:
evamādiguṇo bhogo bhānor amitatejasah |
śruto me bahuśaḥ siddhair gīyamānais tathāmaraiḥ | |
 ‘I have repeatedly heard that the wealth of Bhānu, of
endless splendour, has such qualities, from accomplished
 sages and praising immortals.’

Bhaviṣyapurāṇa I.60.20:
so ’ham icchāmi taṃ devaṃ saptalokaparāyaṇam |
divākaram aśeṣasya jagato hr̥dy avasthitam | |
 ‘I then, wish [to propitiate] that god, the refuge of the
seven worlds, Divākara (the ‘Day-maker’), who resides
 in the heart of the entire world,’

Bhaviṣyapurāṇa I.60.21:
ārādhayitum īśaṃ bhāskaram cāmitaujasam |
mārtandam bhuvanādihāram smṛtamātrāghadāriṇam | |
 ‘[I wish] to propitiate the Lord of lords, Bhāskara, of
 boundless energy, Mārtanda, the support of the worlds,
tearing asunder evil by mere thought.’

The above verses perfectly illustrate how all references to Viṣṇu in the *Viṣṇudharma* have been systematically replaced with references to Sūrya in the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa*, alluded to under various names, along with a few occasional changes to the syntax and wording. The overall structure of the text, however, has remained unchanged.

Following this introductory eulogy and opening question by Śatānīka, Sumantu provides a detailed exposition of worship of the Sun. For this the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* continues to make intensive use of the template of the *Viṣṇudharma*, replacing all references to Viṣṇu with names of Sūrya and thereby turning the earlier teaching of Viṣṇu worship into an instruction of Sūrya worship. Overall, the text of the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* more or less follows the order of the selected chapters of the

< *Viṣṇudharma* 1.20:
durgasaṃsāarakāntāram apāram abhidhāvātām |
ekaḥ kṛsnanamaskāro muktītīrasya deśīkah | |
 ‘Adoration of the Dark one (Viṣṇu) alone is the guide to
the shore of liberation for those who are running up
 against the bad shore that is the impassable wilderness
 of transmigration.’

< *Viṣṇudharma* 1.21:
sarvaratnamayo meruḥ sarvāścaryamayaṃ nabhaḥ |
sarvatīrthamayī gaṅgā sarvadevamayo hariḥ | |
 ‘Mt. Meru is made of all jewels, the sky is made of all
 wonders, the Ganges is made of all holy places, Hari
(Viṣṇu) is made of all the gods.’

< *Viṣṇudharma* 1.22:
evamādiguṇo bhogaḥ kṛsnasyādbhutakarmanah |
śruto me bahuśaḥ siddhair gīyamānas tathāparaiḥ | |
 ‘I have repeatedly heard that the wealth of the Dark
one, of wonderous deeds, has such qualities, being
praised by accomplished sages and others.’

< *Viṣṇudharma* 1.23:
so ’ham icchāmi taṃ devaṃ sarvalokaparāyaṇam |
nārāyaṇam aśeṣasya jagato hr̥dy avasthitam | |
 ‘I then, wish [to propitiate] that god, the refuge of all
the worlds, Nārāyaṇa (Viṣṇu), who resides in the heart
 of the entire world,’

< *Viṣṇudharma* 1.24:
ārādhayitum īśānam anantam amitaujasam |
śamkaram jagataḥ prānam smṛtamātrāghahāriṇam | |
 ‘[I wish] to propitiate the Lord, the boundless one, of
 boundless energy, beneficent, the vital breath of the
world, destroying evil by mere thought.’

Viṣṇudharma, but it certainly does not follow the source text slavishly and includes much additional material for which we can find no parallel in the *Viṣṇudharma*.¹⁹ It is, in other words, not a matter of simply copying and replacing the incongruous elements with appropriate ones, but it represents a new and original composition in its own right. The scale of this revision is quite extraordinary. The dialogical structure itself, the conversation between king Śatānīka and the sage Sumantu, has been modelled upon that of the *Viṣṇudharma* as well and features in other parts of the text too.

19 The last parallel with the *Viṣṇudharma* seems to occur in *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* I.120 (corresponding to *Viṣṇudharma* 28).

From Śiva to Sūrya: Creating a Model of Sun Worship (II)

My second example, the parallel with the *Śivadharma* ‘The Law of Śiva’, starts at *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa Brāhmaṇaparvan* chapter 151. The dialogue between Śātānīka and Sumantu still continues. The former tells Sumantu that he has heard many Dharmas, including the Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva Dharmas (the Laws of Viṣṇu and of Śiva), but now he wants to hear the Saura Dharma (the Law of Sūrya). This remark evinces that the author of the text was well acquainted with the *Viṣṇudharma* and the *Śivadharma*; we may even see in it a veiled acknowledgement of its templates. What follows – the moment Sumantu starts speaking – is taken verbatim from the *Śivadharma*, but with all references to Śiva and his worship systematically replaced by Sūrya and his worship.

The collective name ‘Śivadharma’ refers to a corpus of anonymous religious literature that expounds the rituals,

Bhaviṣyapurāṇa I.151.14:

*śrūyatām abhidhāsyāmi sukhopāyaṃ mahāphalam |
paramaṃ sarvadharmāṇāṃ sarvadharmam
anaupamam |*

‘Listen, I will tell you the easy means, yielding great result, the best of all laws, the entire law, unparalleled.’

Bhaviṣyapurāṇa I.151.15:

*ravinā kathitaṃ pūrvaṃ arunasya viśāmpate |
krśnasya brahmano vīra śamkarasya na vidyate |*

‘It was told in the past by the Sun (Ravi) to Aruṇa, o king, to Kṛṣṇa, to Brahṃā, o hero, but not to Śamkara (Śiva).’

Bhaviṣyapurāṇa I.151.16:

*saṃsārāṇṇavamagnānāṃ sarveṣāṃ prāṇinām ayam |
sauradharmoḍupaḥ śrīmān hitāya jagatoditah |*

‘This auspicious raft of the Sauradhharma has been spoken for all creatures who are sunk in the ocean of transmigration, for the welfare of the world.’

Bhaviṣyapurāṇa I.151.17:

*yair ayaṃ śāntahṛdayaiḥ sūryabhaktair bhagārthibhiḥ |
saṃsevyate paro dharmas te saurā nātra saṃśayaḥ |*

‘Those tranquil-hearted ones, devotees of the Sun (Sūrya), aiming for welfare, by whom this supreme law is honoured, they are Sauras (Sun-worshippers); about this there is no doubt.’

activities and attitudes of devotion to be adopted by devotees of Śiva. It constitutes the first systematic treatment of what it means to be a ‘devotee of Śiva’ (*śivabhakta*) and has played a central role in the formation, development and institutionalisation of Śaivism, the religion dedicated to God Śiva. The *Śivadharma(śāstra)* is the first text to have systematically targeted and integrated the growing body of lay devotees of Śiva, offering them a distinctive social system and a model of religious practice and ritual. The first two texts of the corpus – the *Śivadharmaśāstra* and the *Śivadharmottara* – have been incorporated and adapted by the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* for its own purposes; their time of composition may be dated roughly to about the Sixth-Seventh Centuries CE.²⁰

The first five verses of Sumantu’s answer to Śātānīka’s question may serve to illustrate how closely related the two texts are:

< *Śivadharma* 1.10:

*śrūyatām abhidhāsyāmi sukhopāyaṃ mahāphalam |
paramaṃ sarvadharmāṇāṃ śivadharmaṃ
śivātmakam |*

‘Listen, I will tell you the easy means, yielding great result, the best of all laws, the law of Śiva, consisting of Śiva.’

< *Śivadharma* 1.11:

*śivena kathitaṃ pūrvaṃ pārvatyaḥ sanmukhasya ca |
ganānām devamukhyānām asmākam ca viśesataḥ |*

‘It was told in the past by Śiva to Pārvatī, to the Six-Faced (Skanda), to the Gaṇas, to the best of the gods, and to us in particular.’

< *Śivadharma* 1.12:

*ajñānāṇṇavamagnānāṃ sarveṣāṃ prāṇinām ayam |
śivadharmonoḍupaḥ śrīmān uttarārtham udāhrtah |*

‘This auspicious raft of the Śivadharma has been declared for all creatures who are sunk in the ocean of ignorance, for the higher good.’

< *Śivadharma* 1.13:

*yair ayaṃ śāntacetaskaiḥ śivabhaktair śivārthibhiḥ |
saṃsevyate paro dharmas te rudrā nātra saṃśayaḥ |*

‘Those tranquil- minded ones, devotees of Śiva, aiming for Śiva, by whom this supreme law is honoured, they are Rudras; about this there is no doubt.’

* Corrected from the edition’s *sauradharmatamaḥ*, which makes no sense and must be a scribal error.

20 For an introduction to the compositional history of the *Śivadharma*, see Bisschop 2018, 1-27. The text of the following quotations from the *Śivadharmaśāstra* follows the draft of a critical edition of the first chapter prepared by Nina Mirnig (Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna).

Bhaviṣyapurāṇa I.151.18:

*ekakālaṃ dvikālaṃ vā trikālaṃ nityam eva vā |
ye smaranti ravim bhaktyā sakṛd evāpi bhārata |
sarvapāpair vimucyante saptajanmakṛtair api |*
‘They who always call to mind the Sun (Ravi) once, twice or thrice [a day], with devotion, instantly, o Bhārata, they are released from all sins, even those performed in seven lives.’

Bhaviṣyapurāṇa I.151.19:

*stuvanti ye sadā bhānum na te prakṛtimānuṣāḥ |
svargalokāt paribhraṣṭās te jñeyā bhāskarā bhuvi |*
‘They who always praise the Sun (Bhānu), they are no ordinary men. They should be known as Suns (Bhāskarā), come down to earth from the world of heaven.’

It is again not difficult to recognise the nature of the various changes involved. First of all, all references to Śiva have been systematically replaced by references to Sūrya. That it is the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* which is the borrower, rather than the other way around, is evinced by several cases in which the more specific or technical wording of the *Śivadharma* has been turned into a more general turn of phrase in the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa*. The last verse, for example, involves a central doctrine of the *Śivadharma*, namely that devotees of Rudra-Śiva are actually ‘Rudras’ on earth.²¹ It has been appropriately reformulated in the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa*, so that it concerns devotees of the Sun who are said to be ‘Suns’ on earth. The description of the original setting of the revelation of the *Śivadharma* – “told in the past by Śiva to [his wife] Pārvatī, to [their son] the Six-Faced (Skanda), to [his servants] the Gaṇas, to the best of the gods, and to us” – has been replaced with one that suits the notion of an original revelation stemming from the Sun: “told in the past by the Sun (Ravi) to [his charioteer] Aruṇa, o king, to Kṛṣṇa, to Brahmā, o hero, but not to Śaṃkara (Śiva)”. The specification “but not to Śaṃkara (Śiva)” is quite remarkable, and reads almost like a side joke about Śiva, from whose work the author of the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* has taken its model. Finally, the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* has inserted several vocatives which serve to remind the reader of the underlying dialogue between Sumantu and Śatānīka.

As in the case of the *Viṣṇudharma*, this only forms the beginning of a wholesale incorporation and re-composition of the *Śivadharma* as well as its follow-up text, the *Śivadhamottara*, in which the earlier teaching

< *Śivadharma* I.151.14-15:

*ekakālaṃ dvikālaṃ vā trikālaṃ nityam eva vā |
ye smaranti virūpāksam vijñeyāḥ te ganeśvarāḥ | |
kīrtayisyanti ye rudraṃ sakṛd apy āśu te narāḥ |*
sarvapāpaiḥ pramucyante saptajanmakṛtair api | |
‘They who always call to mind the Odd-Eyed One (Śiva) once, twice or thrice [a day], they should be recognised as lords of Gaṇas. They who praise Rudra (Śiva) just once, those men instantly are released from all sins, even those performed in seven lives.’

< *Śivadharma* 1.16:

*ye rcayanti sadā rudraṃ na te prakṛtimānuṣāḥ |
rudralokāt paribhraṣṭās te rudrā nātra samśayah | |*
‘They who always worship Rudra (Śiva), they are no ordinary men. They are Rudras, come down from the world of Rudra; about this there is no doubt.’

of Śiva worship is turned into one of Sūrya worship. Hundreds of verses have been rewritten in this way and come to make up a significant part of the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa*’s teachings on Sun worship. Again, it is not a matter of word-for-word replacement, but a careful re-composition, including many new elements and sometimes complete retellings of stories from the source text. For example, where the *Śivadharma* teaches a model of ‘eightfold devotion’ (*aṣṭavidhā bhakti*) to Śiva, the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* has turned it into a more encompassing model of ‘sixteenfold devotion’ (*ṣoḍaśāṅgavidhā bhakti*) to Sūrya.²² Likewise, the celebrated myth of the appearance of Śiva’s *liṅga*, the phallus icon in which the god is worshipped, has been ingeniously turned into an elaborate and unique myth of the appearance of Sūrya’s *vyoman*, an abstract icon

22 The eightfold devotion to Śiva consists of: 1. love for Śiva’s devotees; 2. delight in worship [by others]; 3. worship for oneself; 4. movement of the body (physical work) for Śiva; 5. listening to Śiva’s stories; 6. transformation of voice, eyes and limbs (possession); 7. remembering Śiva; 8. not living of Śiva[’s worship] (ŚiDhŚ 1.26-28: *madbhaktajanavātsalyaṃ pūjyās cānumodanam | svayam abhyarcanam bhaktyā mamārthe cāngaceṣṭitam | | matkathāśravāṇe bhaktiḥ svaranetrāṅgavikriyā | mamānusmaraṇam nityam yo na mām upajīvati | | bhaktir aṣṭavidhā hy eṣā yasmin mlecche ’pi vartate | sa viprendro munih śrīmān sa yatih sa ca paṇḍitaḥ | |*). The sixteenfold devotion to Sūrya consists of: 1. bathing at dawn; 2. muttering [mantras]; 3. sacrifice; 4. worship of the gods; 5. worship of brahmins; 6. worship of cows and fig trees; 7. listening with devotion and trust to Itihāsas and Purāṇas; 8. study of the Veda; 9. love for Sūrya’s devotees; 10. delight in worship [by others]; 11. worship for oneself; 12. recitation(?) before Sūrya; 13. love for(?) Sūrya’s book; 14. listening to Sūrya’s stories; 15. transformation of voice, eyes and limbs (possession); 16. remembering Sūrya with faith (BhavP I.151.22-26: *prātaḥ snānam japo homas tathā*

21 See Bisschop 2018, 7-8.

representing the highest and most ultimate form of the Sun.²³ An overarching teaching of Sūrya worship is the end result.

A Case of Premodern Plagiarism or Vyāsa's Palimpsest?

Plagiarism, according to the straightforward definition of my Apple Dictionary, itself drawing upon the New Oxford American Dictionary, is “the practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own”. If someone in our modern age were to incorporate and rewrite large pieces of text as has been done in the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* discussed above, he or she would no doubt be accused of plagiarism. Would the author of the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* likewise have been charged with plagiarism if someone had detected that large parts of the text were in fact composed on the basis of other unacknowledged sources? Was it, in Aufrecht's words, “*ein literarischer Betrug*”? Raising this question instantly brings to mind Roland Barthes' famous essay ‘The Death of the Author’ (1967) and the deconstruction of the notion of the author in subsequent post-structuralist thought. But rather than engaging with the many deaths of the author that have been declared ever since,²⁴ by way of conclusion I would like to address the plagiarism question from an emic perspective.

As far as I am aware, no systematic study of the concept of plagiarism in premodern India exists,²⁵ but the existence of words like *śabdacaurya* (‘theft of words’) and *vāgapahāra* (‘stealing of speech’) attests to the recognition of a concept close to our modern notion of plagiarism as ‘literary theft’.²⁶ For example, Sarvajñanārāyaṇa (c. Fourteenth Century CE), commenting on the word *vāgapahārakaḥ* (‘stealer of speech’) in *Manusmṛti* 11.51, writes *vāgapahārako 'nyasya padaracanām ātmīyāṃ jñāpayan* “stealer of speech: presenting the composition

of another person as one's own”.²⁷ Rāghavananda (post-Fourteenth Century CE), commenting on the same passage, elaborates a little more: *vāgapahārako 'smād etan nādhitam iti mithyāvādi yas tatkrtaṃ pustakaṃ svanāmnā aṅkayati so vāgapahārakaḥ* “stealer of speech: a speaker of falsehood, who saying, ‘this was not learned from him’, marks a book composed by that person with his own name; he is a stealer of speech”. The latter is a rather strong case of plagiarism, involving not only presenting another person's work as one's own, but the active denial of the original author in question.

Passages like this, however, are not applicable to the enigmatic figure of Vyāsa, the putative author of the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa*. For Vyāsa (literally ‘the arranger’) is not a person we can identify in historical time or place, but rather a legendary character to whom many major scriptures within the Hindu tradition – including such diverse and manifold works as the Vedas, the *Mahābhārata* and the Purāṇas – have been attributed, or, to be more precise, had to be attributed.²⁸ Vyāsa fulfils the role of sacred authority and is its archetype. For ‘new’ teachings to gain a stamp of authority they had to be presented in accordance with an age-old authoritative model of a genre of scripture created by the fictive author Vyāsa. No historical individual as such ever claimed authorship of the Purāṇa, meaning that in the final end there is no possible culprit of plagiarism, because nobody – aside from the fictive character of Vyāsa himself – ever made the claim of being its author in the first place. This model of the anonymous author Vyāsa accords well with the characterization of ‘myth’ by scholar of religion Bruce Lincoln: “a discourse that consistently denies originality and obscures the identity of its producers and reproducers, thereby concealing their positionality and the interests (material and other) that influence the modifications they introduce in the stories they tell”.²⁹

At the same time, while the Brahmanical tradition has generally valued the Purāṇas as authoritative scriptures on religious matters, this does not mean a wholesale or passive acknowledgement of the validity of each and every individual Purāṇa claiming that name. Several authors of medieval law digests known as ‘Dharmanibandhas’ reserve a section on the authority of the Purāṇic text corpus, and in this context some have called into question the validity of certain Purāṇas that they saw appearing in their own time, clearly taking them to be compositions of human

*devārcanaṃ nṛpa | dvijānāṃ pūjanaṃ bhaktyā pūjā gośvatthayasa
tathā || itihāsapurāṇebhyo bhaktiśraddhāpuraskṛtam |
śravaṇaṃ rājaśārdūla vedābhyāsa tathaiva ca || madbhaktā
janavātsalyaṃ pūjāyaṃ cānumodanam | svayam abhyarcayed
bhaktyā mamāgre vācakaṃ param || pustakasya sadā
śreṣṭha mamātiva priyaṃ surāḥ | matkathāśravaṇaṃ nityaṃ
svaranetrāṅgavikriyā || mamānusmaraṇaṃ nityaṃ bhaktyā
śraddhāpuraskṛtam | soḍaśāṅgā bhaktir iyaṃ yasmin mlecche 'pi
vartate | viprendraḥ sa munih śrīmān sa jātyaḥ sa ca paṇḍitaḥ ||).*

23 The *līṅga* myth is told in *Śivadharmasāstra* 3 (Kafle 2013), the *vyoman* myth in *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* I.153. For further parallels, see Bisschop 2018. I will deal with the *vyoman* myth in a future study.

24 See e.g. Galop 2011; Derrida 1988.

25 Sastri 1948, despite its promising title, is of no help.

26 That the notion of plagiarism as literary theft has a long history in the West is well illustrated in McGill's study of plagiarism in ancient Rome (McGill 2012). On plagiarism in general, see Randall 2001.

27 The text of Sarvajñanārāyaṇa's and Rāghavananda's commentaries on the *Manusmṛti/Mānavadharmasāstra* is given in the edition of Mandlik 1886. For the dates of both commentators I follow the estimates given by Olivelle 2005, 368.

28 See Sullivan 1990, 1; and Rocher 1986, 45-48, on Vyāsa as the composer of the ‘*Purāṇasamhitā*’.

29 Lincoln 2012, 55.

authorship. One author in particular, Ballālasena (Twelfth Century, Bengal), has some very telling and interesting observations on why he refrained from quoting certain Purāṇas considered spurious by him. For example, about the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa*, the Purāṇa that concerns us here, he remarks: “The *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* has been collected with great effort up to the seventh [ordinance], leaving aside the ordinances of the eighth and the ninth, which are full of heresies.”³⁰ The text of the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* up to the seventh ordinance (*kalpa*) corresponds precisely with the text of the *Brāhmaṇaparvan* of the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa*, in which the parallels discussed above are found. In other words, Ballālasena regarded this part of the text as authoritative, but not the following. Ballālasena’s remark shows that he had a clear conception of the existence of fraudulent Purāṇas, which he mostly identifies on the basis of – what he conceived of as – heretic teachings. While he does not dismiss individual Purāṇas on the charge of plagiarism per se, he shows a distinct awareness that certain Purāṇas have incorporated or summarised parts of others, which he then uses as an argument for not citing them in his compendium, e.g.: “And the great *Liṅgapurāṇa* is not employed in this Composition on Gifting, having ascertained that its essence derives from the great gifts taught in the *Matsyapurāṇa*.”³¹

The type of reuse discussed in the present article closely resembles the derivative composition of certain Tantric scriptures uncovered in recent years by Alexis Sanderson. In his article ‘History through Textual Criticism’³² he presents several case studies of Tantric scriptures belonging to different religious traditions (Śaiva, Vaiṣṇava and Buddhist) that have been composed on the basis of earlier Śaiva compositions, in addition to the more straightforward case of Śaiva Tantras composed on the basis of earlier Śaiva Tantras. The most striking case is that of a Buddhist Tantra, the *Laghuśaṃvara*, which turns out to have drawn about 200 verses, making up about one third of the entire text, from several earlier Śaiva Tantras.³³ We are confronted here, as in the case of the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa*, with the intensive reuse of earlier texts, involving the wholesale takeover and adaptation of scriptures, including their rituals, teachings and conceptions, from the texts of other religious communities. These findings raise major questions about the nature of religious exchange in early medieval India and the fluidity of perceived religious boundaries. While there can be no doubt that the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* intended to present the worship of Sūrya as a religion in its own right – dedicated to the Sun as the highest power principle and with its own sets of ideals and practices – in its attempt at canonisation of Sūrya worship it made heavy use of the manuals produced by its contemporary religious rivals.³⁴ The end result is that its teachings very much came to resemble those of its Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava antecedents.

It may be instructive to conceive of the Purāṇas – and many of the Tantras discussed by Sanderson as well – according to the model of ‘palimpsests’ developed by the narratologist Gérard Genette. The notion of the palimpsest brings into focus the transtextual relationships that are intrinsic to the production of the Purāṇic text corpus. ‘Transtextuality’ is, in Genette’s words, “all that sets the text in a relationship, whether obvious or concealed, with other texts”.³⁵ The *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* may be considered Vyāsa’s palimpsest, a textual document that, even though it has effaced much of the source materials that lie underneath it, still bears their traces and ultimately derives its meaning from them. Purāṇa literature is by definition “literature in the second degree” and the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* is one of its most conspicuous examples.

30 Ballālasena, *Dānasāgara* (text as constituted in De Simini 2014, 616): *saptamyavadhi purāṇaṃ bhaviṣyam api saṃgrhitam atiyatnāt | tyaktvāṣṭaminavamyoh kalpau pāṣaṇḍabhir grastau | |*

31 Ballālasena, *Dānasāgara* (text as constituted in De Simini 2014, 616): *bṛhad api liṅgapurāṇaṃ matsyapurāṇoditair mahādānaiḥ | avadhārya labdhasāraṃ dānanibandhe 'tra na nibaddham | |*

32 Sanderson 2001.

33 Sanderson 2001, 41ff.

34 Another example of the same process is a Saura Tantra called *Saurasaṃhitā*, which draws on the Śaiva scripture *Vāthula/Kālotara* as its source text (Sanderson 2009, 55).

35 Genette 1997, 1.

In Hathor's Womb. Shifting Agency of Iconographic Environments

The Private Tombs of the Theban Necropolis
under the Prism of Cultural Geography

Alexis Den Doncker

Introduction

The aim of the following article is to test the theoretical models developed by cultural geography, with a focus on reuse of space issues and religious practices, by comparing them to material evidence that bears witness to the agency of the private tomb chapels of the Theban necropolis, especially their decorations.¹ In this respect, the private tomb chapels of the Theban necropolis provide one of the largest imagery archives of ancient Egypt, which also includes ancient visitors' physical *reactions* to images on the decorated walls. Ancient textual graffiti placed carefully next to specific motifs, 'copies' of images from one chapel to another or alteration of images in connection to their reuse can, therefore, be analysed as concrete and visible responses to images with the aim of giving a glimpse of what happened in the minds of the individuals involved in these agential processes, i.e. how they experienced, viewed and comprehended tomb chapel decorations and/or specific depictions.²

These tomb chapels were directly cut in the hillside at the front of the Theban Mountain (today: al-Qurn, 'the Horn') on the fringes of the desert (fig. 11.1). From the outside, only their courtyards and entrances were clearly visible, notably in the effects of light and shade.

Considering that one of their main functions was to promote permanently their owner's identity and prestige as well as to provide a place for the performance of the tomb owners' funerary cult, their location and visibility on the hill was obviously at stake. One

1 On the concept of agency and its use as a methodological tool in art history, see for example Van Eck 2010.

2 The study of such reactions to images is the subject of my PhD research, carried out at the University of Liège under the direction of Prof. Dimitri Laboury. The thesis manuscript is about to be submitted at the time this article is sent to the editors.



Figure 11.1. The Theban necropolis. Sheikh Abd el-Qurna hill. © Alexis Den Doncker.

could indeed discern the more prominent ones from quite far downhill.³ Inside these chapels visitors engaged with more or less elaborated decorative programmes in which texts and images played a significant role in showcasing the deceased's identity, notably in order to convince them to take part in his funerary cult. As for the deceased, his body was cautiously buried underground in a hidden chamber intended to remain inaccessible for eternity. This

3 Thanks to the collaboration of María de los Ángeles Jiménez-Higueras, who has recently been able to implement Geographical Information System (GIS) data in her study, on theoretical development and reconstruction of the physical, religious and cultural landscape of the New Kingdom Theban necropolis, it appears, for example, that the tomb-chapels of the middle area of Sheikh Abd el-Qurna hill, particularly TT 81, TT 83, TT 61, TT 131, TT 122, TT 82 (which all belonged to members and relatives, i.e. 'clan' (*šbt*) of the vizierate, from the time of Thutmose I to the reign of Thutmose III, see Shirley 2010), were already visible from the Nile at the west bank starting point of the Opet Festival and the southern route of the Beautiful Festival of the Valley (dated to the Eleventh Dynasty [c. 2080-1940 BCE] but still in use during the Eighteenth Dynasty) and, at least from the area of Seti I's mortuary temple (*Men-set*) on the northern festival route related to the latter (see Jiménez-Higueras forthcoming; 2016, I, 163, 221-242; II, 190). I would like to warmly thank her for having run the GIS in order to validate my assumption.

particular landscape hinged therefore on two necessities: socially motivated attraction and visibility upon the hill and inaccessible confinement in the heart of the latter, in accordance with religious conceptions.

The Theban Necropolis from the Outside: A Zoom into the Landscape's Agency

At least from the Eighteenth Dynasty (c. 1539-1292 BCE) onwards, people associated the shape of the Theban Mountain characterised by its cliffs (*dhnt*) with the body of the Hathor cow.⁴ The contrast with the relative monotony of the surrounding desert flatness naturally attracted people, the mountain standing as a well-defined vanishing point in the dusty *sfumato* of the desert horizon (*šht*). In terms of religious geography, it is perhaps significant to recall that somehow, inevitably, any alteration of the Theban Mountain landscape could, therefore, be seen as physical contact with the holy realm of Hathor-Imentet,

4 For a complete analysis of the phenomenology of the western Theban landscape and its related mythological perception, see Rummel in press; 2016, 50.



Figure 11.2. Temples of Deir el-Bahri in their geological context. © Dimitri Laboury.

if not the body of the goddess herself,⁵ also taking into account the other two important divinities related to death (or transformation)⁶ and necropolises: Osiris and, to a lesser extent, Anubis. One of the most conspicuous examples of this physical association is the Grotto Cascade located at the western end of the Valley of the Queens. This grotto was held sacred because of its waterfall and pools of water, which originated from another valley after torrential rains. Graffiti depicting cows with the *menit*-necklace and the headdress of Hathor indicate that it was associated with the goddess. Interestingly, it has been suggested that the ancient Egyptians perceived this space as the goddess' womb from which the deceased rejuvenated. It is likely that this could be the reason for the creation of the queenly necropolis in this area.⁷

Another visual witness of the natural landscape's agency is the Deir el-Bahri area where, from the Eleventh Dynasty, the terraces of the mortuary temple of Mentuhotep II establish a clear aesthetic relation in terms of architectural harmony with the surrounding cliffs. This interactive relation between the geological nature

of the different limestone strata and the architecture of the second huge architectural project planned there at the beginning of the Eighteenth Dynasty, the mortuary temple of female pharaoh Hatshepsut (fig. 11.2),⁸ instantiate even more clearly a definite relation of what, in reference to Adrian R. Cooper's terminology, one may call overtly religio-geographical reciprocity.⁹ In other words: in response to this particular natural environment, ancient people chose to develop royal mortuary cult and implemented temples for it right in front of the cliffs and even partly inside them. The architectural structure of these temples, in return, therefore reshaped the natural aspect of the landscape.

The ancient conception and perception of the western Theban landscape as a 'sacred' place was doubtless expressed as such through one of the names used to refer to the necropolis: 'the sacred land' (*tꜣ ḏsr*).¹⁰ As we will see, the private tomb chapels surrounding Deir el-Bahri or facing the other royal mortuary temples were indeed,

5 Rummel in press; 2016, 46-50.

6 See n. 10, below.

7 Demas/Agnew 2012, 20, 24 (quoting Desroches-Noblecourt 1990-1991, 13; Leblanc 1989, 12, 278).

8 Tefnin 1975.

9 See Cooper 1992, 123-124. For a deeper insight into the western Theban landscape's agency, see Rummel in press.

10 For an *emic* insight into ancient conceptions of the necropolis and the tombs, see Roeder 2013.

among other things,¹¹ places of privileged and intimate encounter and interaction with gods. Eventually, in some cases, after the cultic activities related to their original owner ceased, but sometimes already before as well, these chapels became spaces open to broader audiences, enabling lower rank individuals to access to the divine images (*wt*) confined within them. Nonetheless, from the outside, the concrete imprint of these private monuments on the local landscape should be seen as the visible mark of individual demonstrations of social prestige much more than religious or even lived-religious commitment,¹² although, of course in certain cases, religious interactions with that landscape may well have justified in terms of divine causality the scope of various practices, especially in the Ramesside period (c. 1292-1077 BCE). In this respect, beside the funerary chapel, there existed many cheaper ways, such as funerary stelae, statuettes, papyri, amulets, ritual performative recitations, etc., to ensure a peaceful death in regard to the gods (like the Judgment of Osiris), to operate the transformation of the deceased into active transcendent being (*ꜥḥ*) and to guarantee his access to the afterlife. Possessing a tomb in the necropolis was a social privilege rooted in a highly sophisticated elite funerary culture that is still complex to understand,¹³ and surely not a religious or funerary prerequisite.

However, although socio-professional needs and motivations impacted on the actual shape of the Theban necropolis landscape, from the beginning of the Eighteenth Dynasty to the end of the Twentieth Dynasty (c. 1539-1077 BCE), there was a significant change in the conception of the divine (partly caused by the Amarna ‘monotheistic’ caesura), eventually leading to what is often seen as a democratisation of access to the divine (whereas this had previously been a royal prerogative).¹⁴ Concerning the very beholders taking part in the agency of the necropolis’ landscape, one could also mention the changes in the socio-professional spheres and affiliations of the people concretely involved in the shaping of the hill with directly-related evolving needs, possibilities and restrictions (more and more chapels to reuse, less and less space to build new ones) according to their varying means:

11 Notably a place for the deceased’s earthly existence as *ꜥḥ* (active transcendent being) (Roeder 2013, 12-18), therefore a space of commemoration, ritual performance, and transformation, see Hartwig 2004 (including complete bibliography).

12 On the epistemological shift in the study of ancient religious practices induced by the concept of *lived-religion* proposed by Meredith B. McGuire (2008), see Rüpke 2011, 196-198.

13 For the New Kingdom and a specific focus on the Theban necropolis, see Shirley 2005. For an estimation of the percentage of the population that had such access to monumental death (0.25-0.65%), see the case study of the Amarna necropolis by Laboury 2010, 429 n. 558.

14 Among others, Assmann 2004; 2001, 221-244; also Vernus 1995a.

from the state vizier’s family which initially controlled the most visible and ancient area of Sheikh Abd el-Qurna hill (see fig. 11.1),¹⁵ to the local priesthood eventually reusing previously unfinished tombs or simply inscribing their name as the only affordable way to benefit from the magical efficacy of the iconographic environment that constituted the accessible part of the tomb, that is the decorated chapel (consequently leading to the abandonment, at least temporarily, of the practice of cutting individual tomb chapels in the mountain).¹⁶ These shifts significantly affected the way people engaged with these monuments and impacted on the agency of the private chapels of the necropolis; accessibility and proximity to deities and their images definitely playing a crucial role in the reception of the iconographic environments confined there.

It thus seems that it is actually a particular dialectic tension between the *outdoor* visibility of the tomb chapels in the western Theban landscape being subject to a complex web of socio-professional stakes and the *indoor* beneficial accessibility to a rich archive of powerful images imbued with magical efficacy, among which one could establish an unrestricted relationship with *living* images of gods, that fashioned the overall agency of the Theban necropolis and determined the cultural geography – specifically as this definite geographical area, which ancient Egyptians conceived precisely as an intermediary zone between the living world of mankind and the faraway place of wilderness that constitutes the desert and gives substance to its ideological perception.¹⁷

Outdoor/Indoor Agency of Private Tomb Chapel Iconographic Environments

From a closer point of view, as applied to tomb chapel decorations, this relation between the ‘religious’ potential of such landscape and the socio-professional stakes reflected physically there, could be construed semantically in terms of ‘sacredness’ (*ḏsr*) vs. ‘sanctity’ or ‘holiness’ (*špsy*): the invisibility/inaccessibility of the burial chamber (hidden and locked inside the mountain for the eternity) like the *sacred* essence of a god, as opposed to the accessible/visible commemorative aspects of the chapel’s iconographic environment (intended to promote the deceased’s identity to further generations so that his name would be valuably remembered and people would bring him offerings) like the *holy* visible and tangible

15 Shirley 2014; 2010.

16 See Semat forthcoming; also Bács 2011.

17 For ancient conceptions of this specific area, see Roeder 2013, esp. 18-19.



Figure 11.3. TT 96. Decorated burial chamber. © Dimitri Laboury/MANT.

image of a god (or an *ꜥh* transcendent being).¹⁸ This second dialectic tension between what was hidden from, and what was exhibited there iconographically in, the sight of the living also plays a huge part in the agency of the Theban necropolis landscape. For example, while people knew of famous tomb chapels and probably even had some knowledge of their iconographic programme (which is supported by the fact that, in terms of semiotics, some representations obviously operated as indexes rather than significant),¹⁹ the will to decorate burial chambers, that would be purposely hidden and not seen (as derivation of a seemingly royal prerogative and/or simply an ancient custom) was also a way to show off: everyone passing by the necropolis could understand that an underground chamber was being decorated, but not intended to be visible, at the very least after the burial. Social prestige

was then actually gained from inaccessible valuable decorative features (also based on religious conceptions) operating merely on projections. The unique burial chamber of the Mayor of Thebes, Sennefer (TT 96), with its famous vine-like decorated ceiling (fig. 11.3)²⁰ and the multiple connections of its iconographic programme to the contemporaneous royal tomb of Amenhotep II (KV 35)²¹ is perhaps the best example of such a process.

The same dialectic tension is even instantiated by the royal mortuary temples gathering the activities related to the royal cult of the living and past kings (see fig. 11.2), which reign after reign, increased in size and extended their functionalities with the aim of surpassing the former in plain sight, as opposed to the royal tombs which were purposely, and somehow secretly, dug inside the desert mountain in the distant Valley of the Kings. Nevertheless, contrary to private chapels, accessibility to royal monuments depended on required prerogatives.²²

18 On the dialectic *dsr/spsy*, see Kruchten 1997. On the multiple functions of the New Kingdom private tombs, see Hartwig 2004, 5-15, 37-43, 51-52 (including complete bibliography); also recently, Roeder 2013, esp. 15-16, with a focus on the tomb as a space of proximity to gods and, reciprocally, proximity to humans, reflecting this ambivalence.

19 See Gillen forthcoming; Den Doncker 2017, 337-339; Pieke 2017; 2016, 103.

20 PM I², 202 (38).

21 On these connections, see Engelmann-von Carnap 2013, 48-59; Hornung 1982b, 56.

22 Among others, see Dolińska 2007.

The Theban Necropolis from the Inside: Indoor *Shifting Agency* of Private Tomb Chapel Iconographic Environments

Various systemic reuses of several tomb chapels²³ seem to reveal what, in the epistemological development of religious geography, Cooper referred to as “dilemmatic forms of experience”²⁴ insofar as, in our case, individual responses to images materialised by textual graffiti, copying or alterations of images, as well as destructions, betray the involvement of personal stakes in the way people engaged with these iconographic environments: coming with preconditioned outlooks; depending clearly on interests highly influenced by socio-professional predispositions. For example, to follow the path indicated by Denis Cosgrove and Stephen Daniels,²⁵ in the context of pictorial copying processes, one can indeed observe different perspectives on iconographic models depending mostly on the expectations and personal interests of their beholders (be they client, patron, painter) and on the further use of the copy or quotation as part of an elaborated rhetoric, which extends the ‘iconographic geography’ of the selected iconographic unit(s).²⁶ Operating altogether, these iconographic units will be here considered as *iconographic landscapes* or *environments*. In terms of the sheer religious aspect of such agential process, the only epistemological obstacle is still the lack of consensus with regard to what the very notion of ‘religion’ concretely encompasses,²⁷ especially in the context of ancient Egyptian necropolises since it surely did not determine or prevail on every human action that occurred there, although it potentially always remained its topmost justification.

With the aim to introduce to the significant ‘elasticity’ of the private tomb chapel decorations’ agency, the following rather distinctive case study will present images which confronted different ancient beholders in the context of the chapel’s architectural and iconographic environment. The case of the tomb of Qenamun (TT 93) is unique in several respects since evolving comprehensions

23 For the distinction between systemic and non-systemic uses of those tombs, see Polz 1987, 123-124.

24 Cooper 1992, 125.

25 Cosgrove/Daniels 1988 (quoted by Cooper 1992, 127).

26 Den Doncker 2017.

27 One should recall that there was actually no word for ‘religion’ in ancient Egyptian language. However, for our part, an *emic* approach based on the study of the ancient reception of those images prompts us to leave behind the restricted category of this term (sometimes influenced by oblivious modern western projections, see the discussion in Roeder 2011) and focus, as Jörg Rüpke (2011, 197) convincingly suggested, on collecting and analysing concrete manifestations of individual appropriation, or more passive reception, of the normative culture, traditions, collectively determined ‘religious’ experiences, artefacts, etc. that have mostly been understood and translated in *etic* terms so far.

and, accordingly, unexpected varying uses of the whole tomb intertwined.

Reception and Appropriation of Accessible Sacred Spaces. The Case of TT 93

Partly outlined in 1930 in a small chapter of its publication by Norman de Garis Davies, the history of the tomb of Qenamun is specifically rich in pieces of material evidence that bear witness to its agency seen from a *diachronic* perspective (fig. 11.4). This case thereby speaks on behalf of the majority of the other private Theban tombs, which have not been documented to this extent, especially with regard to the chapel and the iconographic environment that it constitutes. Although some chapels were carefully excavated and proved to have incredibly high archaeological potential,²⁸ only a very few publications have given an account on what could be referred to as a *parietal* archaeology²⁹ of their wall decorations, i.e. focusing on the study of the human actions that left an imprint on the walls; in our case, with a special interest in the actions that appear to be responding to definite images, that is reactions to images, by ancient people who lived during the New Kingdom (c. 1539-1077 BCE).³⁰ The scarcity of evidence in that regard is also due to the still very recent use of the chapels as the inner rooms of local people’s houses, sometimes as stables, that have often damaged the decorated walls and with them the slight traces of the ancient visitors’ reactions.

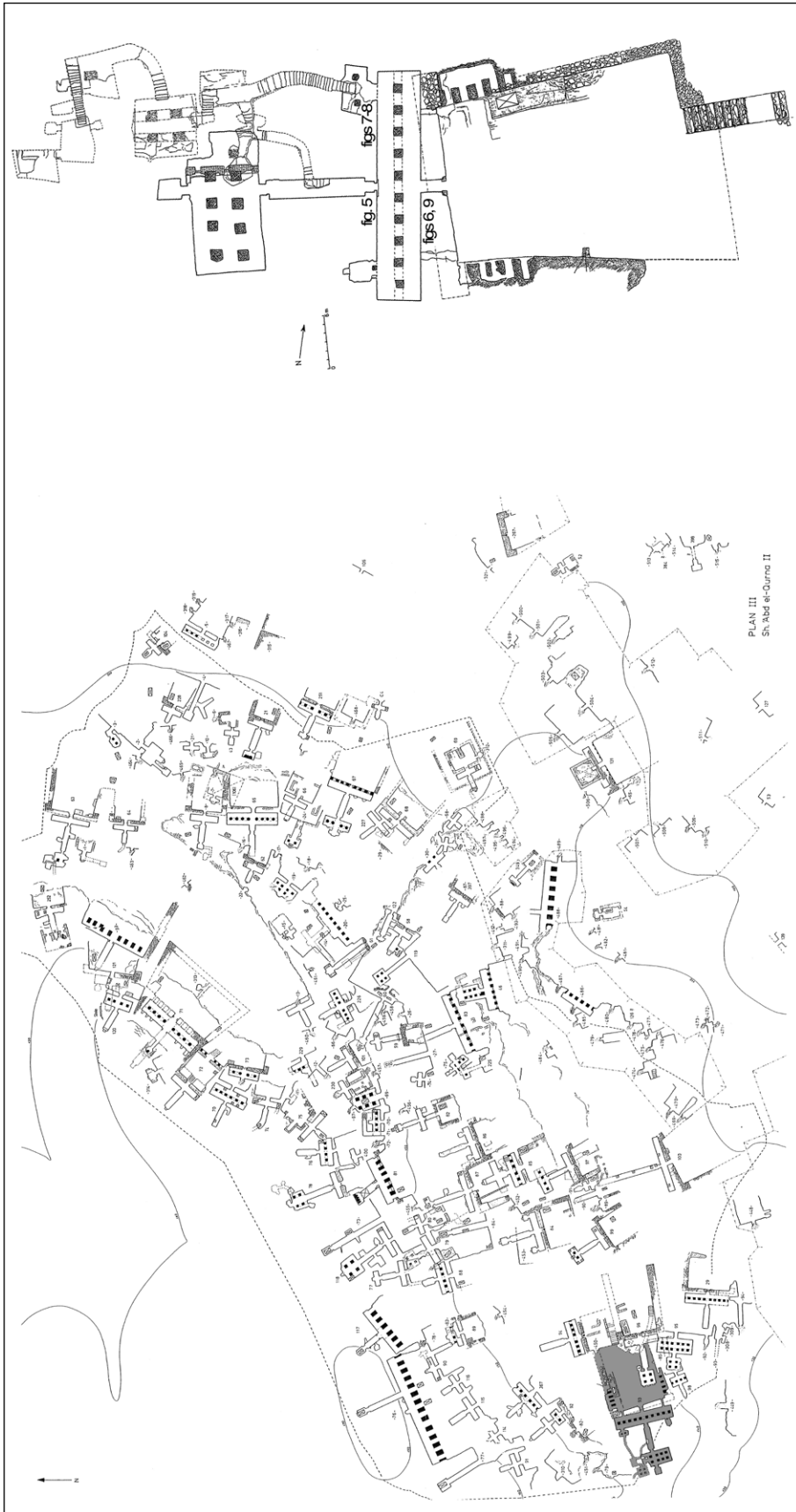
The owner of TT 93, Qenamun, was the Foster-brother and Fan-bearer of king Amenhotep II, the latter’s Chief Steward, notably in his residence of Peru-nefer,³¹ and the

28 See e.g. Bavay 2008.

29 An expression commonly used in prehistory referring to the study of the chronology of cave paintings, for which diachrony can cover thousands of years. As an application example, see Laboury 2012.

30 While one can assume most of these reactions have completely disappeared, some can still be detected, recorded and studied (Den Doncker 2012). They vary in form and potentially relate to a considerably long time span, namely, in the case of TT 93, from the time when the chapel was being decorated no later than the end of the reign of Amenhotep II (c. 1425-1400 BCE) to the beginning of the Twentieth Century when its access was finally limited by archaeologists. With the help of a diachronic approach, it is even possible to select a definite beholder with the specificity of his time and culture and analyse his reaction as systemic, non-systemic (Polz 1987) or even *post-systemic* (with a focus on diachronic relations). For instance, in the context of the Theban necropolis, an Eighteenth Dynasty dignitary’s view on the decoration is presumably different from an Eighth Century Coptic monk’s, a modern Muslim villager’s and, of course, an Egyptologist’s. Our interest remaining in this case the ancient beholders stemming from the same culture that produced the images (i.e. New Kingdom Egypt) and, therefore, their *systemic* reactions.

31 Peru-nefer has recently been identified as the Eighteenth Dynasty harbour of Avaris (Tell el-Dab’a), see Bietak 2009.



PLAN III
Sh. Abd el-Qurna II

Figure 11.4. TT 93. Plan and location. After: Kampp 1996, I, fig. 230; III, plan III/II (upper enclosure).



Figure 11.5. TT 93. Kiosk scene with king Amenhotep II. © Alexis Den Doncker-Hugues Tavier/MANT.

Overseer of the Cattle of Amun; a position of high economic significance. He also bore various titles in connection with the army.³² Consequently, he was one of the most powerful members of the elite of his time, while thanks to his mother – most probably named Amenemopet – who was the king’s Chief Nurse, he could even benefit from a particularly close relationship and protection of the king.³³ His tomb chapel is one of the largest of his time³⁴ and the artistic quality of its paintings is surely one of the finest of the whole Theban necropolis, with several iconographic innovative creations,³⁵ unparalleled stylistic devices such as the yellow background, the extreme finesse and sharpness of the highly detailed motif lines as well as probably the first private extensive use of scented resin as varnish (fig. 11.5).³⁶

After his funeral, which we can situate at the very end of the reign of Amenhotep II, or perhaps at the beginning

of his successor’s, Thutmosis IV, Qenamun suffered a vast programme of *damnatio memoriae* resulting in the complete destruction of all his representations. This seems to correspond to the early abandonment of his funerary cult, for the integrity of the deceased’s image was necessary to the efficiency and effectiveness of the ritual actions performed in his favour. Although we do not know much about the longevity of such individual’s funerary cult performances, in other cases it is clear that, even after a long interruption, members of the deceased’s family or the same professional affiliation came back to the tomb chapel and restored the images.³⁷ Contrary to these restoration practices, about a century later, presumably by the beginning of the reign of Seti I, people visited the abandoned chapel, engaged with the iconographic environment and made use of it, accordingly not as a private tomb chapel. As they indeed rather appropriated or *derived* it as a place of new significance and sacredness, this particular space was deliberately

32 See the complete list of titles in Davies 1930, 10-16.

33 On the career of Qenamun, see Shirley 2005, 265-282.

34 PM I², 190-194; Kampp 1996, I, 352-356. For the tomb and its decoration, see Gathy 2013; Davies 1930.

35 On this matter, see Hofmann 2012, 16-17, 51-56; El-Shahawy 2010, 41-44.

36 Den Doncker/Tavier 2018, 16; PM I², 191 (9).

37 For example the tomb of Sennefer (TT 96), where Amarna erasures of various names and figures of gods were restored about a century after the tomb owner’s death, or in case of similar personal vendetta, the tomb of Amenhotep-Huy (TT 40), where every representation of the tomb owner, which had been completely

deviated from its initial functional purpose. However, ultimately, during the Twenty-Second and Twenty-Third Dynasties (c. 943-746 BCE), the lower funerary chambers were reused as burial places, conforming back to the early function of the monument. It is the various stages of this story of the use and perception of the tomb that it is tempting to describe in terms of cultural geography, with a special focus on the agency of certain images of the tomb chapel.

First, it seems relevant to recognise the multiple ‘protective’ devices that Qenamun ordered to implement the decorative programme of his tomb chapel and the organisation of his burial. These stand out from the normal procedure as attested in other chapels. On the one hand, one should consider a specific imprecation formula included as the introduction to an ancient spell taken from the Pyramid Texts.³⁸ The text is written in retrograde script in order to hinder its decipherment. Besides, it was placed discretely on one of the less lit corners of the chapel’s transverse hall. The formula runs as follows: *ḏd mdw ḏ3.i(y).f(y) i[m ḏ3 sw ds] pf n Hr*, “Words spoken: He who will injure her[*ein*], that [knife] of Horus [shall injure him]”.³⁹ Despite the general assumption that the explicitly threatened profaners disregarded such warnings since they simply nullified its efficiency,⁴⁰ the fact that the formula was later hacked out along with the following names of Qenamun proves precisely otherwise. One can imagine that among the hundreds of inscriptions which spread all over the chapel, spotting (or not missing) the one that actually presented a potential risk must have been a certain challenge,⁴¹ particularly in such a low light environment.

On the other hand, another specific preservative device that Qenamun supplied to his chapel is the extensive use of varnish on the paintings. It appears hitherto that it is

the first and only Theban tomb chapel where a scented resin-made varnish was applied onto almost every scene and motif of the decorative programme. As it shares various chemical compounds with myrrh, frankincense and *Pistacia*, this resin might have served equally in the production of *antyu*-unguent and *senetjer*-incense (and other types of varnish as well), so that on a symbolic level, just like statues, coffins and embalmed human bodies, and as referred to in texts, the decorative programme of the chapel probably even benefited from some kind of magical protection derived from the antiseptic and purifying properties of these resins.⁴² As a result, it seems clear that the protective function of this relatively new painterly technique was taken into account, not only by the painters, but also primarily by the commissioner since the practice and the material were still highly uncommon at that time. Besides, his socio-professional position most probably helped him access the material through personal acquaintance.

A third significant advantageous feature that Qenamun could have benefited from in the way of this particularly cautious approach to his afterlife existence is a symbolic presence in Abydos, as attested by an impressive number of votive shabtis discovered in Umm el-Qa’ab together with a seal impression of the necropolis administration. These statuettes are inscribed in his name with an additional title stressing his close proximity to the king as his ‘Foster-brother’ – a title that does not appear in his chapel and that he possibly used later after the completion of his tomb decoration.⁴³ As Luc Delvaux explained, whereas nobles of his time usually had barely one or two shabtis in their burial, Qenamun’s extra-sepulchral depots contain tens of exceptionally fine ones, and therefore may be the first to refer to a royal gift procedure, namely the geographical distribution of one’s statues among the ancient royal necropolises.⁴⁴ To sum up and follow Davies’s suggestion, it is likely that all these specific protective measures responded to actual threats against Qenamun. With regard to the *damnatio memoriae* that indeed targeted the magical operation of his funerary cult a few years later⁴⁵ and the ultimate social position that he had reached at the royal court at the time of his death, with the aforementioned particularly close and favoured relationship with the

hacked out, was also carefully restored. In the case of the tomb of Senemiah (TT 127), it is interesting to note that the Ramesside reuser, Piay, obviously focused on the remodelling of the damaged figures of the *Sem* Priests performing the funerary ritual of the Opening of the Mouth in order to reactivate the ritual efficiency of the scene for his own sake but also for the benefit of the original tomb owner; see a brief description in Bács 2015, 3. In the case of the tomb of Nakht (TT 161), although no such destruction of figures is attested, albeit some names of Amun, members of the deceased’s family and/or the same professional affiliation came in around fifty years later in order to ‘cense’ the god, ‘bring gifts’, ‘make the offerings endure’, and ‘purify the offering table’ as stated by the graffiti they inscribed within specific scenes of the chapel’s decorative programme (Quirke 1986).

38 PT 601, as suggested by Davies 1930, 45, n. 1. On imprecation formulae, see Desclaux in press (with complete bibliography).

39 Davies’s transcription (1930, 45, n. 3, pl. 45b); followed by McClymont in press.

40 For instance, McClymont in press.

41 Which implies that the person(s) who perpetrated the *damnatio* was/were highly literate (and still had good eyesight).

42 In other chapels, painters applied the same varnish onto motifs representing people or objects that, in reality, were treated with unguents, balsams, perfumes or incense, etc. See Den Doncker/Tavier 2018, 17-18.

43 Delvaux 2010, 73-74; 2008, 469-498; Pumpenmeier 1998, 95-96. A similar group of shabtis found in Zawyet Abu Mesallam near Giza possibly corresponds to another depot.

44 Delvaux 2010, 73-74.

45 One can hardly imagine such personal vendetta conducted by someone who was not a contemporary of the victim. See McClymont in press; Davies 1930, 4.



Figure 11.6. TT 93. Ceremonial procession of statues including dancers. © Alexis Den Doncker-Hugues Tavier/MANT.



Figure 11.7. TT 93. [Qenamun] followed by female attendants and female lute player in front of Amenhotep II as prince sitting on the lap of his nurse. © Alexis Den Doncker-Hugues Tavier/MANT.

king, one may infer that he was possibly the victim of an excessive demonstration of wealth amongst his counterparts. In this respect, Delvaux even showed that public ceremonies such as the one depicted in the chapel (fig. 11.6)⁴⁶ were part of Qenamun's royal gift procedure and certainly got the attention of many important people.

With respect to the *intended* or ergative agency of the monument and its decoration, the cautious attitude of Qenamun betrays the apprehended vulnerability or alterability of his personal sacred place, implying that beyond the possibility that its operation could be disrupted, the functional sacredness of the tomb is clearly not established absolutely.⁴⁷ It is rather in constant negotiation with the interference of the realm of the living who have to recognise it as such in order that it keeps its status and still operates somehow systemically. Consequently, we might then question the motivation behind the later application of a kind of whitewash all over the scenes of the chapel (fig. 11.7). Whereas such greyish white coatings were generally used in the context of cleaning sanctuaries or shrines from graffiti overrunning their walls as attested in the temples of Deir el-Bahri,⁴⁸ the parietal stratigraphy of TT 93 shows the opposite: the whitewash covers the varnished scenes, while the graffiti from the Ramesside period are written over it (see below). In addition, the fact that the area covered by the whitewash stops exactly at the edges of the erasures indicates that it is anterior to them, otherwise it would have overflowed somewhat. It is likely that this procedure occurred while the decoration process was still in progress with the aim to undermine Qenamun's personal project as a first warning. Functionally, inhibiting the visibility of the scenes directly targeted their agency but not their owner. Anyhow, this reveals that the agential valuable potentialities of such images were in this case highly considered in themselves regardless of their related owner. Only thereafter the diligent erasing of Qenamun's names and figures from every scene was planned to counteract permanently its ritual effectiveness. As a result, apart from the damages caused by the Amarna hacking, the decoration was left in this state and the chapel most probably abandoned for over a century.

46 PM I², 190 (3) II-III.

47 Nor is the *ꜥh* nature of an individual. Compare to Roeder 2013, 17-18.

48 The frequent use of whitewash in Deir el-Bahri has been correlated with the restoration of damaged reliefs in anticipation of the reopening of the temples after the Amarna period (Dolińska 2007, 82-83). Similarly, Davies interpreted the whitewash covering the decoration in the tomb of User (TT 21) as a measure for re-appropriating the chapel as a burial place (Davies 1913, 20). Nonetheless, in the tomb of Antefiqer and Senet (TT 60), one can detect the presence of a pinkish whitewash covering several of Antefiqer's figures prior to their violent scratching, which attests to his *damnatio memoriae*. Almost the same occurs in the tomb of Rekhmire (TT 100) where some of his figures were washed out with water while others were utterly hacked out.

In the second phase of its history, within the context of the rediscovery and reoccupation of the necropolis after the Amarna caesura (c. 1353-1336 BCE), TT 93 received new attention, which *reciprocally* urged visitors to respond to its iconographic environment, however, in a way that deviated from its intended agency, i.e. no longer benefiting the tomb owner nor relating properly to the use of the place as a tomb chapel. On one of the most alluring scenes of the rear wall of the transverse hall, usually referred to as *Blickpunktsbilder*,⁴⁹ one can still observe the meaningful presence of several textual graffiti, despite the badly damaged condition of the paintings (fig. 11.7).⁵⁰

It seems relevant to interpret them along with their iconographic support. The left side of the wall scene depicts king Amenhotep II seated in his kiosk with the goddess Hathor.⁵¹ On the opposite side of the scene, the king is depicted in another kiosk as a young prince sitting on the lap of his nurse, Qenamun's mother, Amenemopet (see fig. 11.7).⁵² Qenamun and his colleague Pehsukher⁵³ initially stood in front of them as fan-bearers but their figures suffered the hackings of the *damnatio memoriae*. They are followed by equal sized, therefore relatively tall figures of two maidservants bringing cups of unguent, and a female lute player. The corresponding text expresses the latter's wish to the king:

“Have pleasure in the sight of good cheer, music, the dance, and song, rejoicing with gladness of heart at beholding [the troupe of] His Majesty in the pleasance Peru-nefer... [...] Rub in balsam, anoint (yourself) with oil, spend a glad day (in) binding on garlands in your plantation, (with) a lotus at your nostril, O king Amenhotep (...).”⁵⁴

The first graffiti (G.93.1) that raises awareness to the new agency of the scene is none other than the hieroglyphic signature of the vizier Paser, who probably held this office from the reign of Ramesses I to at least year 21 of

49 On *Blickpunktsbilder*, see Hartwig 2004, 51 (with complete bibliography).

50 PM I², 192 (16).

51 PM I², 192 (left to (17)). The scene is almost completely destroyed.

52 PM I², 192 (16).

53 Pehsukher is the owner of TT 88 (Davies 1930, 20, n. 6). His name written in semi-hieroglyphic script is very badly preserved. It has been confused with a secondary inscription and often labelled as a graffiti. However, its size and the blue pigment used to inscribe it make this unlikely. On Pehsukher's relationship with Qenamun, see Shirley 2005, 272-276.

54 Davies 1930, 20. There is an interesting connection between the olfactory environment that the text describes and the fact that the scene was thoroughly treated with the scented resin-made varnish. See n. 42, above.

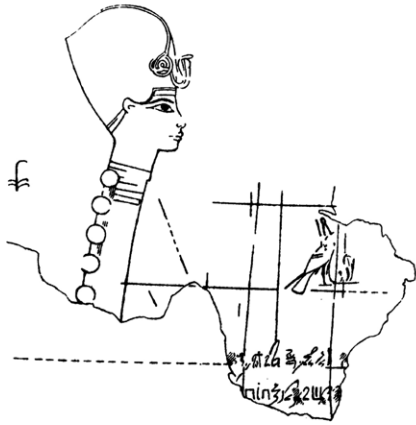


Figure 11.8. TT 93. Graffiti aligned on squaring-up lines at the feet of the female figures. After: N. de Garis Davies 1930, pl. 68A.

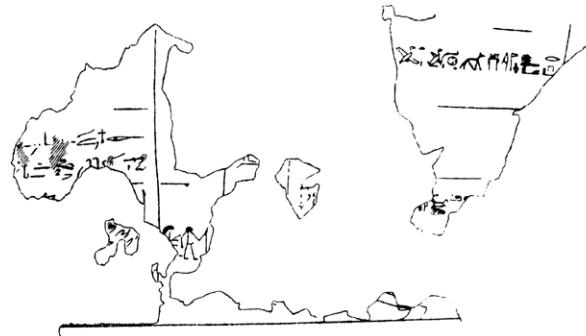
Ramesses II (c. 1292-1258 BCE) (fig. 11.8).⁵⁵ His function as vizier included among others the responsibility of overseeing the works commissioned by the king, the workshops and artisans employed in such works, as well as the overall control of the Theban necropolis. Paser's graffito is in straight connection with black inked squaring-up lines that cover the body of the three female figures.

One can assume these grids were planned for copying the figures.⁵⁶ We find them also running over the figures of prince Amenhotep II and his nurse, as well as other scenes of the chapel. A large hieroglyph of the double-crowned Horus is aligned on one of the horizontal lines near the motif of a specific harp, which has unfortunately been lost since Davies's drawing. The neck of the instrument shows the blue-crowned head of a king. In fact, it happens that slightly adapted replications of some of these motifs and figures can be found in several temples from the time of Seti I and Ramesses II (c. 1290-1213 BCE), of which we know that Paser oversaw the works, including the decoration process.⁵⁷ It thus seems that Paser's inspection of TT 93 gave rise to utilising the chapel as a source for iconographic models with a specific focus on motifs referring to royal features, but also the cult of Hathor (see below). Accordingly, one may interpret the hieroglyph of the double-crowned Horus as the official mark of the royal 'appropriation' of the scene. Nonetheless, this did not prevent Paser commissioning other copies of specifically

55 See also Davies 1930, 22, pl. 9. On Paser's activities as overseer of works, see Brand 2000, 341; Kitchen 1982, 125.

56 Already suggested by Mackay 1917, 74 (quoted by Davies 1930, 21, n. 2).

57 Notably, the temple of Seti I at Abydos, where one can observe a nursing scene almost identical to the example of TT 93 on the west wall of the second hypostyle hall between the chapels of Osiris and Amun-Re (see Gardiner 1958, IV, pl. 20). In one of the



chosen motifs for his own tomb chapel's decorative programme (TT 106), which, as Eva Hofmann convincingly demonstrated,⁵⁸ reveal more particular individual interests and tastes. As an example, one may mention the now destroyed figure of the goddess Maat standing behind the king in the kiosk scene of the southern rear wall (fig. 11.9).⁵⁹ His specific interest in this rarely attested scene probably responds to the ideological equation of the relationship of Maat with Amun to that of the vizier with the king, as stated in a text that Paser may have surely read

magazine rooms of the temple, the same harp with the head of the blue-crowned king is found as an offering to Amun-Re by Seti I (see Manniche 2010, 139-140, fig. 3). Likewise, adapted replications of Amenhotep II's complex headdress (see fig. 7.5) (with the distinctive feature being the forward curved ram's horn curled around the ear for mere aesthetic reason concerning the layout of the scene, which had to take into account the presence of the goddess Maat behind the king) appear in two scenes of the same temple (see Gardiner 1958, IV, pl. 44; 1938, III, pls 35, 38, 40); as well as in connection with Ramesses II's depictions in Abu Simbel as signalled by Goedicke 1992, 53-61. On this motif, see also Bács 2006, 3-16. It seems that Paser showed a personal interest in this iconographic tradition for he also had a version of the same motif associated with the representation of king Seti I in his own tomb-chapel (TT 106) (PM P, 221 (5)). The first occurrence of this type of headdress is the kiosk scene in the tomb-chapel of Thutmosis III's vizier Useramun (TT 131), which Paser also visited and copied from it several iconographic and architectural features such as the vizier's office scene, the pyramid and the niche façade. His specific interest in the Eighteenth Dynasty artistic production has been aptly examined by Hofmann 2015, I, 42-51. For analogous patterns of modelling on past iconographic traditions, see Den Doncker 2017; also Laboury 2014. Paser's interests in past artistic traditions should, of course, be compared to Prince Khaemwaset's contemporary activities in the Memphite area, see Navrátilová 2016.

58 See n. 57, above.

59 PM P, 221 (5); 191 (9); Davies 1930, pl. 11. The copy in TT 106 actually combines two models from TT 93.



Figure 11.9 (left). TT 93. *Khener*-dancer in the ceremonial procession of statues (see fig. 11.6). © Alexis Den Doncker-Hugues Tavier/MANT. Figure 11.19 (right). TT 106. Replication of the geometric patterns of her dress combined with the figure of [Maat] copied from the kiosk scene (see fig. 11.5). © Gemma Menéndez/MANT.

when visiting the tomb chapel of Useramun (TT 131),⁶⁰ which he also used as a source for models,⁶¹ as well as in his own tomb as a way to affirm his important role with the kingship.⁶²

Yet in order to appreciate the aforesaid scenes and specific motifs and even get the idea to model on them, it is clear that the overlaying whitewash, dating back to Qenamun's *damnatio memoriae*, must have already been removed. Otherwise, nothing of this would have happened. A careful survey of the parietal stratigraphy allows us to confirm that the whitewash was indeed removed during the Ramesside period because the copy grids overlay the figures and partly the whitewash itself, while the ancient

graffiti distinctly align with them (see fig. 11.7).⁶³ It is likely that in the gloomy environment of the chapel,⁶⁴ the technical procedure of removing the whitewash, and the opportunity to observe the figures emerging from it in a good state of preservation, due to the protective action of the varnish, must have been a certain perceptual experience. It is tempting to correlate this experience of the rediscovery of the scenes, notably of those of the northern rear wall where Paser placed his signature, with the *shifting* of the agency of some of the figures. Indeed, the textual content of the other graffiti, which he and other

60 See Dziobek 1995, 137.

61 See n. 57, above.

62 "You are a god who lives on Maat, who perceives what is in hearts, who judges bodies, who knows what is in them, clever like the lord of Hermopolis (...) His mother Maat being the protection of his body (...)" (as the textual reference to the copied scene: Frood 2007, 150).

63 I would like to thank my friend and colleague Hugues Tavier for his helpful collaboration in this matter. Interestingly, the fact that the graffiti were written over the whitewash indicates that Paser did not ask his workers to clean the entire scene; he selected specific figures. On the contrary, early Egyptologists also managed to clean the wall; they mostly focused on the texts.

64 Concerning the environment of the tomb-chapel, Davies (1930, 60) noted that TT 93, "owing to its size and its profusion of pillars, is exceptionally gloomy". As the author suggested, this situation could explain the use of yellow as background of the wall painting.

people following his visit⁶⁵ – or perhaps accompanying him – inscribed at the feet of the female lute player (see figs 11.7 and 11.8) and over the posterior of the goddess Hathor in the left kiosk scene, corresponds to formulae found in totally different context, that is temples and divine chapels:

G.93.2. At the feet of the lute player: “(1) [...] (2) do good, [do] good [...] for... (3) a man who is accurate and right like [Thoth] [...]”⁶⁶

G.93.4. Over the posterior of Hathor: “(1) [do] good, do good for (2) [...], made by the scribe Pa-[...]”⁶⁷

The ‘do good’ (or *ir nfr*) formula is commonly understood as an expression of individual religiosity that appeared during the Nineteenth Dynasty (c. 1292-1191 BCE) in relation to the significant changes in religious conceptions, practices and behaviours that followed the Amarna period.⁶⁸ The direct address to the god matches the need of an individual for communicating and interceding directly with the divine in a more proximate, intimate and intense relationship, which no longer depends on the king’s prerogative.⁶⁹ Many of these formulae are attested in the Memphite necropolis, notably in connection with the cult of Sakhmet,⁷⁰ whereas in the western Theban area they concentrate in Deir el-Bahri, particularly in the chapel of Hathor of the temple of Thutmose III (*Djeser-akhet*).⁷¹ It is of special interest to see that the people who inscribed them in TT 93 might have actually thought they were in a comparable place, i.e. a place giving the opportunity to access to the very

heart of the mountain, perceived as Hathor’s womb (*ht*), as Ute Rummel clearly demonstrated.⁷² Monika Dolińska has discussed the secondary use and activity of the Deir el-Bahri temples during the Ramesside period. She was able to establish that the practice of inscribing graffiti related closely to the new accessibility and function of the spaces where they are found: “It seems therefore likely that *Djeser-akhet* – probably both other temples – was not functioning any more but remained a sacred place in the vicinity of Hathor shrines which were still open and awaited the arrival of procession during the Feast of the Valley (...) and during the feast of Hathor (...) As a matter of fact, the lack of space would have prevented crowds from gathering in the hypostyle hall of this temple. It is then highly improbable that *Djeser-akhet* was functioning in the period when most graffiti were made.”⁷³ With regard to the context of this pattern of secondary utilisation of accessible sacred spaces, it is very likely that the visitors to TT 93 assimilated it as these places where a direct intercession with deities manifested in the form of images, particularly Hathor, had then become unrestrictedly possible. Besides, the last reference to priests of *Akh-isut* (the temple of Mentuhotep II) appears in an invocation inscribed on a votive statue left by Paser in that temple.⁷⁴ This could possibly indicate that he actually experienced the functional shifts of these monuments that defined the western Theban landscape. Several scenes, figures and decorative features of TT 93 surely influenced the Ramesside visitors’ perception of the chapel as a privileged place of intercession with Hathor: the figure of Hathor behind the king in the left kiosk of the northern rear wall, the maidservants, the lute player and the corresponding text as well (see fig. 11.7), the *khener* (female dancers) engaged in backbends on the sub-register (now largely destroyed) and those represented in the ceremony related to the transport of statues on the southern front wall (see figs 11.6 and 11.9). As Ellen F. Morris explained, in relation to the cultic activities performed in honour of Hathor in the temple of Mentuhotep II, the acrobatic movements of these dancers, which among others consisted of exposing their pubis in direction to the sun, “further heightened the intimate interweaving of the identities of the dancers with that of Hathor, the Lady of the Vulva”⁷⁵ (*nbt hipt*, as an alliteration with the king’s royal name Nebhepetre). Furthermore, the particular nature of the impressive hypostyle hall of TT 93 with the natural vault that its

65 One of these graffiti (G.93.3) comprises the title of an Overseer of the Treasury (*imy-r pr-hd*), which was one of Paser’s titles (see Raedler 2004, 315-316, 326, 400), and could therefore be attributed to the latter as well.

66 (1) [...] (2) *ir nfr [ir] nfr [... n...]* (3) *s mty mꜣꜣty mi [D]hwty...* (4-6) [...], after Davies 1930, 22, pls 9-10, 68A.

67 (1) *[ir] nfr ir nfr n* (2) [...] *ir.n = sꜣ Pꜣ-...* (3) [...] (unpublished).

68 For the theological aspect of this revolution, see Assmann 2004.

69 I borrow the expression ‘individual religiosity’ from Susanne Bickel’s revision of the more commonly used ‘personal piety’ (or the so-called *persönliche Frömmigkeit*): “Le terme de religiosité est ici utilisé dans une acception positive, impliquant non seulement les attitudes de piété et de dévotion, mais aussi la conscience de l’individu de prendre part à la religion qui définit sa culture et de vivre une relation de réciprocité avec le divin. La désignation de religiosité individuelle semble moins restrictive que le sigle traditionnel «piété personnelle»” (Bickel 2002, 66). On the concept of the proximity to the god, I refer to Assmann 2001, 221-244; Brunner 1977.

70 See for example Navrátilová 2007, 58-61, 116-119.

71 Barwik 2009; Sadek 1984; 1987, 240; Marciniak 1974, 117-123. With respect to the graffiti of TT 93, contrary to what has often been repeated, the idea that the formula at issue would explicitly refer to the beauty (*nfr*) of the figure at the feet of which it was inscribed can no longer be supported. This confusion comes from Kenneth A. Kitchen’s (1982, 148) translation of the formula as ‘very beautiful’, not from Davies as is often wrongly stated.

72 Rummel (in press).

73 Dolińska 2007, 84.

74 Naville 1913, 5-6, pl. 10B (mentioned by Dolińska 2007, 81, 84-85, n. 63).

75 Morris 2011, 85-86. Could this explain the presence of the figural graffiti depicting a pubis added to the figure of the lute player (see fig. 11.7)?

ceiling acquired after the detachment of a great mass of rock from the roof that had already occurred during the cutting of the chapel, followed by the installation of false doors as a tentative solution to hide the collapsed heaps of stones,⁷⁶ eventually made the innermost part of the chapel resemble an impressive dark cave highly contrasting with normal tomb chapel's inner halls. In addition, it has been argued that the side-chapels cut in the rear wall of the transverse hall – one of which at the right of the kiosk scene showing Amenhotep II and his nurse – were initially conceived as chapels of Hathor. The claim for this was notably the row of cats and other Hathoric motifs depicted on the entablature that frames the entrance to the southern side-chapel and the parallelism of the architectural plan of the chapel with that of the temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahri (*Djeser-djeseru*).⁷⁷ One may suggest that Ramesside visitors had more or less the same impression regarding these side-chapels. At least, we might assume that they perceived them as potentially functioning like actual divine chapels, for the ancient statues of the tomb owners had most probably already been destroyed and scattered on the ground at that time.⁷⁸

All this evidence leads us to assume the original functioning of TT 93 somehow shifted when the chapel became a place of new significance, namely an easily accessible (and visible) *sacred* space that gave the opportunity for direct communication and intercession with Hathor, but also Osiris,⁷⁹ via specifically valuable 'holy becoming' images, which did not contribute any longer to the tomb owner's self-presentational rhetoric that urged visitors to participate to his funerary cult. This secondary use of the private tomb chapel and its iconographic environment, almost as a place of divine apparition, corresponds with what has already been observed in the diachronic evolution of the use of temples and the Hathor shrines at Deir el-Bahri, with the difference that TT 93 was somehow more discreetly located in the western Theban landscape and therefore possibly offered more intimate interaction with the gods (see figs 11.1 and 11.4). In contrast, one can indeed suspect the strikingly high concentration of graffiti recorded on definite areas of the temple of Thutmose III at Deir el-Bahri points to

the massive flows of gathering crowds.⁸⁰ Yet, it seems relevant to recall that the divine images surely did not lack in the area of the necropolis. Of course, many ancient tomb chapels had such potentially accessible images and, besides, were already in a state of abandonment, which explains that they were sometimes reused.⁸¹ In those cases, the operating functions of the chapel and the burial chamber did not change: the chapel remained a chapel displaying the new owner's socio-professional status with, by the way, potential alterations to the original scenes and various figures, and the tomb itself remained a place for burial. However, in the case of TT 93, because of the unusual atmosphere resulting from the spatial perception of its architecture and its natural context combined with its specific iconographic environment that make the chapel extraordinary in many respects, it seems that the agency of the images also shifted, accordingly prompting visitors to respond to them in a very specific way which is not attested as such in other tomb chapels. Indeed, for comparison, it is worth mentioning the Twentieth Dynasty (c. 1190-1077 BCE) reuse of the tomb of Djehuty (TT 45) where the new tomb owner, Djehutyemheb, asked the painter he hired to put a dress on the scantily clad female servants of a banquet scene (fig. 11.10),⁸² surely not to conform to some kind of prudery as was once suggested,⁸³ but most probably in order to promote his socio-professional identity as the head of the weavers and fabricants of fine linen in the temple of Amun at Karnak, also perhaps because nudity would possibly refer to poverty and misery as it was a frequently used topos in literature.⁸⁴ It thus appears that some socio-professional predispositions obviously conditioned the way he evaluated the motif. Moreover, this technical intervention on the painting could also reflect, as a magical permanent performance, Djehutyemheb's daily professional activity as someone who provided clothing to

76 Davies 1930, 4-6.

77 See Warmenbol/Doyen 1991, 64-65, fig. 30. This interpretation has been clarified by Brandt 2016, I, 110-115, 121-122, 127.

78 By the way, the early archaeological survey of the tomb did not reveal any single fragment of such a statue with the exception of the two doorjambs of the entrance (Mond 1904, 97-100).

79 As suggested by the presence of two graffiti placed in front of the figure of Osiris on the rear wall of the innermost niche of the hypostyle hall (Davies 1930, 48, n. 3, pl. 67F). These are private signatures and correspond to a relatively common practice of writing one's name near the figure of a deity to benefit from a permanent presence in front of it (Den Doncker 2012, 24-25).

80 Dolińska 2007, 85.

81 See Bács 2015; Polz 1990.

82 PM I², 46 (8).

83 Schott 1939. See also Bács 2015, 6-7; Polz 1990, 304-307; Davies 1948, 3-10.

84 From this period, one could refer to the Royal Hymn of Ramesses IV, 4-5 (O. Turin CGT 57001): *n3 nty wcr iw r niwt. w n3 nty [k3p] pry n3 hkr st ss3i[.w] wnf n3 nty iby thy n3 nty hr h3ww st wnh. w m p(3)k(t)*, "(...) Those who fled are back in their town, those who hid came out: they are satisfied and rejoiced, those who were thirsty are drunk, those who were naked: they are clothed in fine linen"; or to the letter of the Scribe of the Tomb, Djehutyemes, to Butehamun, and the Songstress of Amun, Shedemduat, dated to the reign of Ramesses IX (P. Leiden I, 370): *mtw.k ptr n3 rmtw nty m p3y. i pr mtw.k rdit n. w h3sw m di h3w mtw.k wh3 p3 3 h3sw nty m-di P3-hr*, "(...) And you shall look after the people who are in my house and give them clothing. Do not let them go naked! And you shall claim back the three garments which Pakher has in his possession" (Wente 1990, 180-181, no. 297).



Figure 11.10. TT 45. Alteration of figures of a maidservant and two female guests (addition of clothes, hair, flowers, and partial re-outlining) in the context of the reuse of the tomb chapel (as a tomb chapel). © Alexis Den Doncker-Hugues Tavier/MANT.

people: a highly valuable ‘moral’ action. Likewise, Paser’s appreciation of the extremely high quality of execution of the maidservants in TT 93 (and other figures as well) depended clearly on a certain connoisseurship, which he acquired in the context of professional activities such as royal commissions, also affecting quite clearly personal interests and tastes.⁸⁵ From an art historical perspective, these specific predispositions surely led him to recognise the artistic value of these figures not only perceptually as evidenced by the copy grids, but also conceptually – that is *conforming perfectly* to the canonical aesthetics of proportion, line and efficiency, along with clear personal expectations/projections.⁸⁶ Interestingly, in contrast, the much smaller size of the more roughly executed servants in TT 45, as well as the ordinary architectural and iconographic environment of this

85 Again, see Hofmann 2015, I, 42-51.

86 In a famous scene of his tomb chapel (TT 106), Paser is represented inspecting the workshops of the Gold House in the temple of Amun at Karnak (PM I, 221 (6)). The corresponding text refers to the discussion shared with a sculptor: (...) *ḫꜣty Pꜣ-sr mꜣꜣ-ḫrw ḏd.f: ḫsy tw = Pth ꜣꜣ sꜣnh nfr 2x ꜣꜣy twt n nb ir.n.k imy ḫꜣr.f mi ꜣꜣ isy ḫr.tw m ꜣꜣ-ꜣꜣ ḥ(w) wꜣꜣ(w) snb(w) ḫr ir.tw hry iw ḫꜣꜣwy.fy [mi ?] Mntw*, “(...) the Vizier Paser, justified; he says: May Ptah favour you, sculptor! How beautiful (i.e. good, accurate) is this statue of the Lord you have done! Let’s do it the ancient way, as one says in the palace”. The sculptor’s answer is meaningful: *wn.k ḫr n iswt nbt sbꜣyt.k ꜣꜣr.<ti> [m] ḫmww*, “(...) Because your teachings spread throughout the workshop you open the mind of every craftsman”. On this matter, see Assmann 1992. It has been shown that the *nfr* aspect of an image, generally understood as expressing its beauty, perfection or, preferably, its *accuracy*, was not determined absolutely. Indeed, it necessarily resulted from its conformity to a definite chosen model taken from the past, therefore validating the notion of canonicity (with a straight connection to the notion of *maat*, thereby establishing an ethical dimension to ancient Egyptian aesthetics, see Winand 2002, 20). For textual evidence of such claims, one should refer to Vernus 2016; 1995b.

standard chapel, did not stimulate Djehutyemheb to interact with them as though they would carry some religious significance like their iconographic equivalent in TT 93. Moreover, the new owner fulfilled his need for religious images by completing the unfinished decoration of the southern side of the chapel with scenes displaying him and his wife in front of personally chosen divine figures,⁸⁷ thereby complying with the religious behaviours of his time.

Conclusion

The case of TT 93 clearly shows that a single iconographic environment, and a single image as well, could lead to various patterns of reception and appropriation. These patterns therefore establish the ‘elasticity’ of what can be referred to as *shifting agencies*, for the meaning and the functionality of images seem to be constantly evolving through time, coming across the variable individualities of their beholders. Hence, from another perspective one might even refer to the ‘multi-functionality’ of such monuments and images, which would impact on their sheer definitions. As a rule, it appears that one sees what he is actually projecting on the image in terms of self-centred personal needs, expectations and motivations, albeit common to other members of his community.⁸⁸ Constructed socio-professional predispositions participated in the definition of such identities and in the way individuals engaged with the images. To this extent Paser’s rediscovery of TT 93 operated consistently on the religious appropriation of the space and on the opportunistic intention to utilise it as a source for iconographic models, either in the context of an official commission, namely the overseeing of works and decoration process of various temples, or for his own personal interests (or even both), which instantiate in his highly individualised tomb chapel’s decorative programme. This response to the iconographic environment of TT 93 reveals the twofold reception of the tomb’s religious potential (as the newly projected *signified*) and its artistic value as a form (as the *significant* of the former signified): concretely, the lute player was addressed to and revered as a manifestation of the goddess Hathor, while initially it was just the figure of a musician standing behind the tomb owner in front of the king; almost simultaneously, it was thoroughly covered with copy grids from side to side.

Such patterns of reciprocity between definite spaces, iconographic environments and their cultural appropriation and alteration by individuals, with the influence of clear dilemmatic forms of experience, may help develop fruitful discussions on ancient Egyptian

imagery and functional contexts of images, disclosing them from the blurred definitions and meanings that we use to repeat somehow for ease of communication but that can also lead to epistemological imbroglios.⁸⁹ To some extent, the variable ways ancient Egyptian individuals engaged with the outdoor and indoor landscape of the Theban necropolis support Peter A. Jackson and Iris M. Zavala’s assumptions that cultural (or *symbolic*)⁹⁰ meaning is necessarily ‘dynamic’ or ‘becoming’.⁹¹ As to the art history of ancient Egypt, ancient individual perspectives somehow challenge the cultural meaning of these monuments as defined consensually by etic needs for categorisation, which, as regards to iconography, was based on recognitions of the texts instead of real comprehension. When the material documentation is available, taking into account these emic perspectives can give rise to wider etic outlooks, definitions and purposes.

87 Davies 1948, pls 5-8.

88 By means of different tools and focus, this is what Egyptologists also do.

89 A clear application of such methodological entanglements can be found in the recent critical essay of Widmaier 2017. Language is the source of misunderstandings.

90 Mitchell 1986, 2 (quoted by Cooper 1992, 126).

91 Jackson 1989; Zavala 1989 (quoted by Cooper 1992, 125).

Epigraphical Dialogues with the Landscape

New Kingdom Rock Inscriptions in Upper
Nubia

Johannes Auenmüller

Introduction: Rock Inscriptions and Landscape

Inscriptions on rock are a phenomenon encountered worldwide in different regions and cultures. Pharaonic Egypt in particular boasts a plethora of rock inscriptions along the Nile Valley and in the surrounding deserts. Egyptian rock inscriptions are, however, also found at the fringes of Egyptian territory in Nubia and the Levant. Here, royal inscriptions especially were carved into living rock as part of a strategy to commemorate and reinforce Egyptian presence and territorial claim.¹ The present paper does not aim at a comprehensive or definite evaluation of the function or role of rock inscriptions in Egypt, Nubia or beyond – others have done this more elaborately.² It rather aims at putting the claim about the agency of such artefacts as ancient Egyptian way of appropriating space and place into perspective. In evaluating rock inscriptions, the focus of this contribution will not primarily be on ‘lived religion’, but more on living people who epigraphically interacted with the rocks and the landscape and on how those inscriptional interactions unfold their agency beyond the actual presence of their makers. Thus, this contribution deals with contexts different from most of the other papers in this volume.

With regard to terminology, there is still a lack of conceptual clarity in the sometimes contrastive, sometimes converging use of the two key terms ‘rock inscription’ and ‘graffiti’, despite a number of conclusive discussions.³ Acknowledging the joint ‘glyphic’ (or epigraphical) tradition, a subdivision based on the type of ‘canvas’ – natural surfaces for rock inscriptions and man-made features for graffiti – has recently been proposed.⁴ In such a way, the term ‘rock inscription’ does not exclude other text types written on natural rock surfaces on the basis of their technique, form, format, script or genre. In a narrow perspective, however, a rock inscription can be defined by its two primary constituents: the material medium of a (stationary) natural rock and any

1 Cf. Thum 2016.

2 See e.g. most recently Brown 2017; 2015; Thum 2016.

3 Cf. Seidlmayer 2014a, 231-236; Navrátilová 2010, esp. 306-312; Peden 2001, xix-xxii; Vandekerckhove/Müller-Wollermann 2001, 9-11; Žaba 1975, 260-261.

4 Brown 2017, 154-155, with n. 3; Brown 2015, 11.

textual content written (i.e. scratched, pecked, incised, engraved, etc.) upon its natural or worked surface. The texts, that are written in hieroglyphs or a semi-cursive ductus, are quite often accompanied by figurative elements or decorative arrangements that are integral parts of the whole composition. Particularly in cases with figurative elements, there is a certain terminological blurriness regarding their denomination, as pictorial representations on rock are typically considered ‘rock art’. Thus, the distinction between rock inscription and rock art is a rather modern means of classifying and separating two mutually dependant ways of using natural rock surfaces for leaving traces in the form of texts and imagery. Two of the following case studies will show how these two elements blend and how figurative elements support the intended meaning and in fact merge with the iconic nature of the hieroglyphic script.

The whole corpus of Egyptian rock inscriptions is diverse and requires much more comprehensive studies than the present one.⁵ For the purpose of this paper, the focus shall lie on three instructive scenarios, dating to the Egyptian New Kingdom (c. 1540-1070 BCE). They are to be found in Upper Nubia, a region along the river Nile in modern Sudan, that stretches from the Second Cataract down to the Hagr er-Merwa at Kurgus.⁶ This region was the southern part of the Egyptian province of Nubia in the New Kingdom, controlled and administered under Egyptian authority.⁷ In order to approach and understand their meaning, rock inscriptions need to be studied under several aspects, such as location, geological and topographical setting, accessibility, visibility and orientation and the archaeology of the surrounding area. In addition, their authors and originators next to the texts themselves in all their material and linguistic quality have to be taken into account. Only the full appreciation of the individual aspects that make up such inscriptions leads to a better understanding of the rationale and motivations behind their creation.⁸

Thanks to their embedding and anchoring in the (natural) landscape, rock inscriptions are an ideal example to evaluate and understand the various ways of Egyptian interaction with space and place. In this regard, particularly the role of rock inscriptions for (re-)appropriating and marking places as well as their innate agency of turning places into significant spaces has repeatedly been discussed.⁹ As results of such (mutual) interaction

between humans and the natural landscape they do – in the traditional perspective of Cultural Geography – create ‘cultural landscapes’.¹⁰ Pursuing this line of thought further, rock inscriptions can be seen as artefacts whose dispersion in space not only tells us something about the texts, their locations and people, but also about the larger culture they represent, are part of and are embedded in as media of social and cultural display.¹¹ The ‘landscape’ term will be used as reference to the natural environment that provides the physical substance (i.e. ‘canvas’) for making and publicising inscriptions on rock. The result of the interaction between the physical environment and such texts has been called ‘inscribed landscape’, which refers to smaller or larger spatial settings characterised as well as created by such inscriptions.¹² The use of the living rock as carrier of text and imagery can thus be understood as reflecting the Egyptian perception and understanding of a specific place. In such a way, inscriptions on rock engage into mutual dialogues with the environment and represent a specific material element of the Egyptian discourse with and within the landscape and its features.

Understanding Rock Inscriptions

As backdrop for the following paragraphs which will discuss a number of rock inscription sites in Upper Nubia in more detail, a short and rather sketchy assessment of some perspectives on these inscriptions in general shall be given. In 1849, Richard Lepsius, the founding figure of German Egyptology, for example saw the “*Felsentafeln mit den Schildern der beiden ersten Thutmosis und des dritten Amenophis*” in Tombos simply as “*Spuren Aegyptischer Herrschaft*” without any further problematising their location.¹³ The father of Egyptian archaeology, William Matthew Flinders Petrie, understood most of the private rock inscriptions amongst his corpus of texts spreading out in the First Cataract region as funerary stelae due to the presence of a particular text type, the so-called *hpr-dj-nsw*-offering formulae.¹⁴ Texts giving only the title or name of an individual are interpreted by him “as probably cut by travellers while waiting in the neighbourhood for their boat to pass the cataracts.”¹⁵ Petrie also particularly considered the location of the texts and its implication in terms of their visibility and the economic and logistical efforts to cut the tableaux.¹⁶ He also noted the fact that inscriptions are sometimes cut above older ones, thus

5 See e.g. Brown 2015; Herzberg 2014; Seidlmayer 2013.

6 On Nubia and its rich archaeology, cf. Raue 2019.

7 Müller 2013.

8 However, not all those aspects can and will be considered in this paper that rather wants to put some individual thoughts about rock inscriptions up for further discussion.

9 Auenmüller 2019; Brown 2017; 2015.

10 Sauer 1925, 19-53.

11 Anderson et al. 2003, 2.

12 Cf. David/Wilson 2002.

13 Lepsius 1849, 10.

14 Petrie 1888, 6-7.

15 Petrie 1888, 7.

16 Petrie 1888, 7.

obliterating the original ones in an act of re-appropriation and re-use of the individual spot.¹⁷

In 1894, Jacques de Morgan, an eminent French Egyptologist, conceptualised private rock inscriptions at the First Cataract particularly as functioning in a religious framework.¹⁸ He observed a relationship between the mentioning of the three main cataract deities, Khnum, Satet and Anuket in the texts and the distribution of the individual texts in proximity to their major religious sites. He thus relates the higher frequency of Khnum close to Philae, of Satet around Aswan, and of Anuket in between these sites to their worship at the prominent rock formation Konosso and on the islands of Elephantine and Sehel respectively.¹⁹ He also acknowledges the visibility aspect: ‘graffiti’ of pious pilgrims were positioned at such places where visitors to particular temples or people passing the cataract could see them easily.²⁰ The private texts on Sehel island, an important cult place of the goddess Satet, are interpreted as recalling the passage of high-ranking officials who left a mention of their visit during their pilgrimage to the island.²¹

Zbyněk Žába, a Czechoslovak Egyptologist who recorded a great number of rock inscriptions in Nubia, understands the basic form of texts on rocks, to which indications about the occupation (title) and social relations (filiation) can be added, in a very pragmatic way: “A rock inscription containing merely the personal name of an individual is an intimation in its simplest form of that person’s presence at a given place.”²² In including deities or religious formulae, rock inscriptions are then interpreted as acting as an effigy of worship and prayer.²³ Žába also notes the fact that only very few private rock inscriptions provide any kind of historical detail about the presence of their owners at a particular place.²⁴ Furthermore, Žába relates the frequent lack of detail and elaborate texts in his rock inscription corpus from Lower Nubia to a shortage of time and knowledge of the inscriptions’ authors.²⁵

Drawing on his long-term commitment with regard to the First Cataract rock inscriptions, Stephan J. Seidlmayer, currently director of the German Archaeological Institute in Cairo, published several studies on this material and furthered its understanding in a number of ways.²⁶ His

analytical and interpretive framework builds upon five mutually interdependent aspects: epigraphy, archaeology, prosopography, media and landscape archaeology.²⁷ As regards content and meaning, Seidlmayer identifies the basic message of any rock inscription as: “This person existed and he was, at some time and somehow, ‘here’.”²⁸ However, he elaborates, the presence of particular people at a certain spot or site is not random, but chronologically significant and also related to their social status and function.²⁹ In order to understand both mediality and materiality of rock inscriptions, their visibility, arrangement in the landscape, size, and direction towards certain social or ritual spaces have to be taken into account.³⁰ Finally, Seidlmayer emphasises the significance of rock inscriptions in the framework of landscape archaeology: “Only if we reconstruct the landscape, its uses and changes over time, we will be able to understand why specific inscriptions were carved at specific sites and how these inscriptions, as visually prominent monuments, changed these sites.”³¹

Drawing on Seidlmayer’s approach of rock inscriptions as media and Annette Kjølbj’s reading of Alfred Gell’s theory on the material agency of art,³² Anne Herzberg has put the New Kingdom rock inscriptions of elite personnel from the First Cataract area into a framework of social display and communication.³³ While a rock inscription can be seen as “primary medium of self-representation” bearing witness of the presence of individuals at one moment in time in the respective landscape setting,³⁴ it also acts as a “*medialer Stellvertreter*” taking over “*die Rolle von Agens und Patiens in einem komplexen Geflecht sozialer Interaktion*”, medialisating the continuing cultic presence of those represented at religiously charged places.³⁵ In this way, rock inscriptions are understood as having a communicative agency in and towards social, ritual and natural landscapes.

Concomitantly with Herzberg, Marina Brown addressed the interaction between rock inscriptions and their physical contexts.³⁶ Adopting a structural-functional view and developing on Gell’s agency of art theory, she draws on case studies from the Eastern Desert and Nubia dating to the New Kingdom. According to Brown, these rock inscriptions perform their functionality and efficacy as “material agents of social

17 Petrie 1888, 7.

18 De Morgan 1894.

19 De Morgan 1894, 3.

20 De Morgan 1894, 65.

21 DeMorgan 1894, 79; on the religious landscape of the First Cataract, see also Seidlmayer 2006b.

22 Žába 1974, 253. Žába 1974, 255, calls simple name tags “signatures”.

23 Žába 1974, 253.

24 Žába 1974, 253.

25 Žába 1974, 253.

26 Seidlmayer 2013, with n. 5 including a list of his previous publications on the corpus.

27 Seidlmayer 2013, 205-206.

28 Seidlmayer 2013, 207.

29 Seidlmayer 2013, 207.

30 Seidlmayer 2013, 208-209.

31 Seidlmayer 2013, 209.

32 Kjølbj 2009; cf. Gell 1998.

33 Herzberg 2014, 137-151.

34 Herzberg 2014, 137.

35 Herzberg 2014, 149.

36 Brown 2015; cf. also Brown 2017.



Figure 12.1. New Kingdom rock inscription sites in Upper Nubia and the Nubian Desert.

construction” in their “ability so socialise the landscape by imposing a simulacrum of Egyptian order onto the landscape.”³⁷ Brown’s theoretical point of departure and comparison are modern ‘gang graffiti’, whose agency – in Gell’s sense – is embodied in their potential to manifest and act on behalf of the individual or the gang also in the absence of their maker(s), thus “establish(ing) a secure and ongoing territorial primacy”³⁸ of the individual or gang over space and place.³⁹ After assessing Egyptian texts and rock inscriptions in order to gain an understanding of the *emic* view of these artefacts, Brown concludes that the Egyptians themselves perceived rock inscriptions

37 Brown 2015, ii.

38 Brown 2017, 161.

39 In this conceptualisation, however, Brown overlooks, in my view, the fact that gang graffiti only function in such a way towards people who can – and want to – ‘read’ the message of the graffiti, i.e., those who are ‘initiated’ into the codes of gang communication, thus the own or rival gang members. Although gang members themselves ascribe such territorial potential to their graffiti, ‘laymen’ who do not even recognise or understand such graffiti (or even ignore them) will not be affected by their presence at all.

as imbued with agency as means “to perpetuate the active presence of an individual by communicating the intention of the primary agent to an audience.”⁴⁰ A discussion of particular Eastern Desert rock inscriptions as agents of ‘Egyptianising’ such liminal regions⁴¹ then leads Brown to identify particular audiences or ‘recipients’ of the substance of the individual texts. Next to Egyptians and the local people, it is, in her view, “the landscape that was perceived as the primary recipient of the inscripational agencies.”⁴²

Recently, Jen Thum has worked on a particular sub-set of the corpus of rock inscriptions: New Kingdom “royal inscriptions on living rock as a distinct monumental form”.⁴³ The Egyptian kings chose living rock in particular geological and landscape settings at the edges of the Egyptian world to inscribe their political messages. Thus, the living rock itself was an integral part of the “strategy for the affirmation, control, and surveillance of Egypt’s borderlands.”⁴⁴ In summing up this sketchy overview on scholarly positions on rock inscriptions, a transition from rather pragmatic perspectives to highly elaborated theorisations is perceivable, mirroring an epistemological shift in Egyptology in thinking about these important artefacts and their meaning.

Distribution and Materiality

In the preceding paragraphs, several aspects regarding the understanding of rock inscriptions were discussed in passing. While summarising them, the New Kingdom rock inscription repertoire in Upper Nubia, the region that this paper deals with, shall be briefly introduced.⁴⁵ Rock inscriptions are found in both Nilotic and desert landscapes, on rocks and boulders at the Nile, alongside the escarpment of the valley and along desert routes (fig. 12.1). Each spot has its particular significance. Some larger clusters are present in the Batn el-Hajar (‘Belly of Rocks’) at Tanjur, Akasha-West and at the Dal Cataract.⁴⁶ South of this area, an important group is found next to the rock-cut shrine of king Thutmose III at Jebel Doshe.⁴⁷ Another concentration is found at Tombos with the victory stela and tableaux of Thutmose I and other important

royal and elite texts from the mid-Eighteenth Dynasty.⁴⁸ A further large group of rock inscriptions is located at the southernmost end of Egyptian territory at the Hager-Merwa at Kurgus.⁴⁹ The remainder of New Kingdom rock inscriptions in Upper Nubia is scattered in small clusters at Jebel Wahaba, Sabu and Habaraab⁵⁰ or represented by single texts as at Amara West.⁵¹ Finally, there are the rock inscriptions in the Nubian Desert along desert routes and in proximity to gold production sites.⁵²

A quite strict social scaling can be observed in form, text and workmanship as well as in spatial arrangement in certain contexts. In social terms, two main categories of rock inscriptions can be differentiated: royal vs. private. Royal texts from Upper Nubia are e.g. king Ahmose’s name on Jebel Noh,⁵³ the four tableaux of Thutmose I at Tombos⁵⁴ as well as the two royal border stelae of Thutmose I and III at Kurgus.⁵⁵ Private rock inscriptions represent the other social level. On the ‘upper’ end of this category, there is e.g. the large rock-cut stela of a high New Kingdom elite official, the viceroy of Nubia Amenemipet, active under king Seti I, at Jebel Doshe.⁵⁶ The social scale continues down through the ranks of Pharaonic officialdom represented through texts with a number of epithets and titles⁵⁷ to those inscriptions that give names only, yet no titles as the usually required indicators of function and social standing of their makers within the Pharaonic administration.⁵⁸

The formal and material dimension has implicitly been touched upon already: On the one side, there are elaborate royal rock-cut stelae at prominent spots with a high degree of visibility written in the monumental hieroglyphic script. The other end is constituted by simple name tags in semi-hieratic, rather quickly incised or

40 Brown 2017, 174-175.

41 Brown 2017, 195.

42 Brown 2017, 195.

43 Thum 2016, 69.

44 Thum 2016, 76.

45 Cf. also Auenmüller 2019.

46 Davies 2018, 52-54; 2017, 23-29; 2013; 2014b, 41-42; Edwards/Mills 2013, 14-16; Hintze/Reineke 1989, 170-177, 181-183; Vila 1975, 26-28.

47 Davies 2017b; 2004.

48 Davies 2018, 46-51; 2012; 2009; 2008; cf. Osman/Edwards 2012, 83, 292-302.

49 Davies 2017.

50 Osman/Edwards 2012, 84-86, 319, 364; Fantusati 2006; Hintze/Reineke 1989, 184, 186.

51 Spencer et al. 2014, 22.

52 Davies 2014b.

53 Davies 2014a, 9-10; Osman/Edwards 2011, 257-258.

54 Davies 2018, 46-50; Osman/Edwards 2011, 293-295; Budka 2005; LD., III, pl. 5.

55 Davies 2017 with extensive bibliography. The ‘royal’ category also includes monumental rock-cut stelae, containing eulogies on the powerful pious king and recording military campaigns in Nubia, at Tombos (Thutmose I) and, though very fragmentary, at Jebel Bilal (Davies 2014a, 15-17; Osman/Edwards 2012, 293-295; LD., III, pl. 5). The Nauri rock inscription of Seti I providing legal provisions for his Abydene temple far north in Egypt is, due to its content, a special case (Osman/Edwards 2012, 83-84, 352; Griffith 1927). The same applies to the Nile level record of Amenhotep III at Tombos (Davies 2012, 33-34).

56 Davies 2017b, 62, pl. 6; Davies 2004.

57 E.g. Davies 2017b, 66-67, fig. 5 and pl. 13.

58 Hintze/Reineke 1989, 170-171, no. 553b and 554b; names only are, however, rare.

scratched into the rock surface, with less public effect. In between, there is a certain variety of forms and text/image compositions. Next to identity signatures, which constitute the bulk of the epigraphic record, there is a defined set of text formats that can, depending on social and spatial context, be accompanied with imagery and decorative arrangements. The king himself is identified by using his royal protocol, epithets and appropriate propagandistic text genres. Certain rock inscriptions also blend, however only rarely, royal formats including a regnal year, the name of a king and a general historical embedding with a brief description of the functionaries' activities.⁵⁹ In private texts, the offering (*hṯp-dj-nsw*) or praise (*rdj.t-jꜣw*) formulae or the 'for the Ka of' (*n-kꜣ-n*) statement, that are regularly found in Middle Kingdom (c. 1980-1760 BCE) rock inscriptions in both Egypt and Nubia, hardly ever occur in the New Kingdom repertoire of Upper Nubia.⁶⁰

The mentioned forms and formats are also dependent on those who made and/or commissioned the inscriptions, as well as on the motives behind making the texts. A certain investment of time, labour and equipment as well as linguistic and technological knowledge were required to execute rock inscriptions on different kinds of stone, such as quartz (at Hagr er-Merwa), sandstone (at Jebel Doshe) and gneiss (at Tanjur and Akascha), in different heights and accessibilities, prompting the use of smaller or larger installations (scaffolds or ladders etc.) to execute the more monumental texts. For larger tableaux, the natural stone was mostly smoothed to accommodate the inscription. While most private inscriptions, especially simple name tags, were carved by the individuals themselves, elite and royal stelae or tableaux were executed by specialists at well-chosen spots, guaranteeing high visibility and proper orientation. Due to their elaborate design, particularly royal inscriptions seem to have been pre-planned, both linguistically and logistically. While text and imagery could have been either pre-composed in the form of master copies or drawn from a cultural repertoire of textual phrases and visual content appropriate for the respective intention and place, specialist scribes and stonemasons with all necessary tools and equipment (and also the materials for their repair) had to be present or taken along.

59 Davies 2017a, 89-91, figs 28-30; Hintze/Reineke 1989, 171-172, no. 561.

60 E.g. Davies 2017b, 62-63, no. 7 (*rdj.t-jꜣw*: 'giving praise'); Hintze/Reineke 1989, 181, no. 602, 182, no. 608 (*hṯp-dj-nsw* offering formula: 'an offering that the king gives'); Hintze/Reineke 1989, 184, nos 610 and 613 (*n-kꜣ-n*: 'for the Ka of').

Rock Inscriptions and Particular Places

At this moment, we should come back to the main topic of this text. Which different kind of places were equipped with rock inscriptions or motivated such epigraphical interaction? In turn, how do these New Kingdom rock inscriptions in Upper Nubia themselves appropriate and mark spaces? What kinds of dialogue between the rock inscriptions and the landscape can be discerned? How does the landscape setting help us to understand the individual cases? Is there a scenario amongst those case studies discussed here that also has a religious background? The preceding paragraphs were all meant to recall different views on this material and to provide a general idea of the rock inscription corpus in Upper Nubia. Starting in the south, the case studies now try to assess different scenarios and their individual rock inscription record in view of the above-mentioned questions.

Hagr er-Merwa

By far the largest cluster of rock inscriptions in Upper Nubia in terms of individual inscriptions is located in the farthest south of the Egyptian New Kingdom sphere of influence. On a very conspicuous landmark, a white quartz outcrop called Hagr er-Merwa standing 15m proud c. 1,200m east of the Nile at Kurgus, the Egyptians "left records of their presence in the form of large royal stelae and numerous other inscriptions" (figs 12.2 and 12.3).⁶¹ The presence of older indigenous rock drawings in the form of animals was – surely on purpose in order to overwrite and obliterate – not respected by the Egyptians, as they re-appropriated the eastern face in the south for two large royal tableaux (zone A). These include two almost identical hieroglyphic inscriptions of the Eighteenth Dynasty kings Thutmose I and Thutmose III. Both texts are surmounted by an image of the state god Amun-Ra, seated and criocephalous (i.e. ram-headed), offering life and dominion to the king who is represented in the form of a falcon standing on a *serekh* (a stylised palace façade) and identified by the royal names of the respective king. To the lower left, these tableaux are accompanied by two figures of the deity Amun-Re-Kamutef depicted as a bull, while further to the right two large lions appear, each identified as the king by cartouches with the royal name in front of them. The two stelae texts warn "any Nubian or foreigner who violates this stela," that "his chiefs shall be slain, Re-Atum shall endure, the sky shall not rain for him, his cattle shall not calve, there shall be no heirs of his upon earth."⁶² Furthermore, the lion of Thutmose III

61 Davies 2017a, 65. See also <<https://youtu.be/IuuahIXRWEo>> for an animated SFM-model of the rock including the inscriptions (last accessed 05.02.2019).

62 Davies 2017a, 72.



Figure 12.2. The Hagr er-Merwa from the East (photo courtesy of W. Vivian Davies).

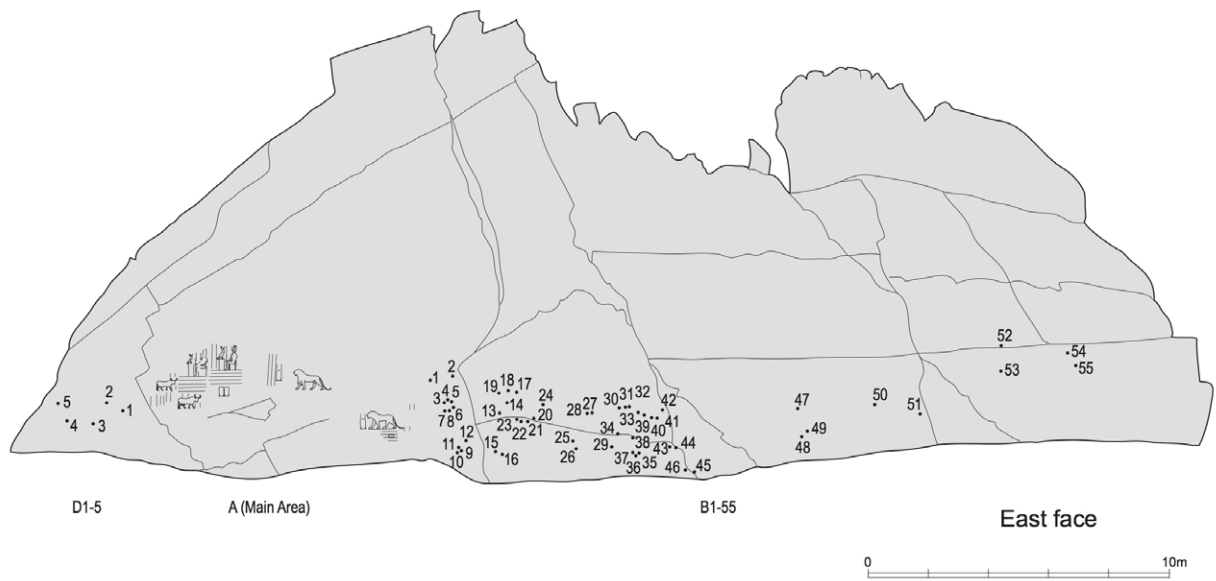


Figure 12.3. The East face of the Hagr er-Merwa with the location of the rock inscriptions (after Davies 2017a, fig. 4).

is accompanied by a text that explicitly qualifies this place and its texts as southern boundary markers of Egyptian territory in the land of Miu.⁶³

Mainly to the right of the two royal tableaux, high ranking members of both kings' entourages had their names inscribed onto the rock surface in well-defined clusters, which are based on their social standing and function (areas B, C and D) (cf. fig. 12.3).⁶⁴ Among them, not only male members of the expedition forces such as princes, viceroys, priests, scribes and soldiers appear, but also the chief queen of king Thutmosis I, Ahmose, together with some of her own military and service personnel. Later, under king Ramesses II, the viceroy of Nubia Setau, who was the head of the administration of Nubia, is attested here with his identity signature, in addition to leaving also a small dated text beneath the lion of Thutmosis I as well as the names of his king Ramesses II in cartouches below the Thutmosis I stela on the rock face.

In terms of materiality, the uneven and fissured white quartz surface was a challenging 'canvas' for the sculptors, the royal texts, however, occupy the most suitable rock surface.⁶⁵ The initial draft of the texts and figures was made in red colour. These preliminary drawings were then dressed and hammered to create outlines. Later, additional details and final outlines were added in red. Several of the private texts were executed in red paint only. The original red, particularly of the two large lions, on the dull white quartz must have been an impressive sight. Clearly, both rock inscription tableaux of Thutmosis I and III, measuring c. 1.60 × 1.20 m each, and their accompanying animal imagery were "designed to impress and intimidate".⁶⁶ They are oriented towards the north-east, where some smaller quartz boulders are lying in the immediate vicinity of the main rock. Further away in the desert distance, two tumuli tombs of considerable later date are in the line of sight.⁶⁷ Thus, no immediate archaeological traces of any deliberate later engagement with the inscriptions are known so far. The orientation of the royal rock inscriptions towards the north-east has,

however, another implication:⁶⁸ Facing towards the rising sun, the rays of the sun would shine on the texts and re-activate their agency every morning.⁶⁹

Based on this evidence, the Hagr er-Merwa serves as the exceptional as well as the prototypical example of the use of rock inscriptions to mark important places, to commemorate presence and to appropriate alien space and territory. The presence of older rock art suggests that this place was long since of special importance to local communities and that this importance was also re-activated by the inscriptional and pictorial epigraphic interaction of the Egyptians with this rock. Recent surveys in the surroundings of the Hagr er-Merwa have documented archaeological remains mainly dating to both the Post-Meroitic (c. 400-600 CE) and Medieval Christian (c. 640-1320 CE) periods. A few Neolithic (c. 5500-4300 BCE) and early Kerma (c. 2450-1750 BCE) sherds indicate an earlier human presence as well,⁷⁰ but "[a]ny archaeological remains, however ephemeral, directly relating to the Pharaonic inscriptions [...] remain elusive."⁷¹ Interestingly, the Egyptian inscriptions have never been violated in later times,⁷² only the lion of Thutmosis I was "disfigured by mounted-quadruped figures, much later in date [...], the only post-Pharaonic decoration so far identified on the rock."⁷³ Obviously, the Egyptian rock inscriptions did not motivate any serious attempts by any local people to destroy or deface them. Was their magical potency or political agency considered too critical, were they seen as sacrosanct or were they simply ignored by later residents or passers-by?

Following the conquest of Kerma, the capital city of a large Nubian kingdom c. 2500-1480 BCE, "Thutmosis I and Thutmosis III visited the site in person, each at the head of an army including an elite entourage, to establish and confirm respectively Egypt's new southern boundary."⁷⁴ While the hieroglyphic texts of both stelae address "regional communities, evidently pastoralists dependent

63 Davies 2017a, 72: "No king had reached this place except for my (grand)father. [Not] has the like [occurred] since the (time of) the primeval ones, in that my person returned to the boundary in the north and (the boundary) of the [out]h, to Miu, in victory."

64 Davies 2017a, 81: "Access to the rock was evidently tightly controlled. The inscriptions here are not 'graffiti' but officially sanctioned records of the presence at the site of the named individuals."

65 Davies 2017a, 69.

66 Davies 2017a, 67.

67 Welsby Sjöström 2014, 132, fig. 2.

68 Davies 2017a, 67. Thum 2016, 75, proposes another reason for this orientation, since the royal rock inscriptions at Kurgus are the partner-monuments of (now lost) border stelae of Thutmosis III at the Euphrates in Naharin: "The Hagr el-Merwa stelae were inscribed on the north-east face of the outcrop, and it is therefore tempting to imagine that one of the motivations for this orientation might have been to allow them to face the general direction of the monuments at Egypt's other imperial boundary."

69 Cf. Quirke 2001, on the cult and importance of the sun in Egyptian culture.

70 Welsby Sjöström 2014, 130-137.

71 Welsby Sjöström 2014, 134.

72 Thanks are due to Julia Budka for raising this important point in the discussion, adding that also the royal tableaux of Thutmosis I at Tombos (also discussed in Budka 2005, 109-111) were never hacked out or destroyed.

73 Davies 2017a, 69.

74 Davies 2017a, 67.

on cattle and seasonal rains”⁷⁵ as their audience (and thus provide textual proof for the presence of contemporaneous Nubian people in the region), it is clear that the local groups were not able to read the texts. They might, however, have recognised the tableaux and perceived the images and texts as something ‘Egyptian’ referencing to the presence of the kings and the intentions of the Pharaonic state. The depiction of the two lions might in this regard be seen as an attempt to deploy “familiar animal iconography as a means of asserting control over the native population.”⁷⁶ In Egyptian terms, both lion and bull were royal animals that were understood as proxies of the king. Royal texts use both as metaphors of the king’s might and political dominance.⁷⁷

Located at the fringes of the Egyptian territorial sphere of influence, the royal tableaux and their accompanying imagery can in ideological terms be understood as means to annex the place, operating as representations and representatives of the Pharaonic state. In such a way, they embody the agency to act beyond any actual presence of the Egyptian state or any other Egyptian at the Hager-Merwa. In this regard, W. Vivian Davies emphasises that this place was not continually accessible to or visited by the Egyptians.⁷⁸ As a strategic target, it was, however, specifically approached by Thutmose I in order to ‘own’ it.⁷⁹ According to Thum, both kings Thutmose I and III “were able to pacify and then deploy this desert feature as a perpetual guardian of Egypt’s imperial border.”⁸⁰

While the royal texts and images embody a particular political agency of appropriation, what about the other rock inscriptions of royal family members and functionaries? Out of an estimated number of “thousands rather than hundreds” of participants in each Thutmose expedition,⁸¹ only the highest ranking and most favoured officials were, next to members of the royal family, authorised to leave their identity signatures at designated places around the two royal tableaux.⁸² They were thus able to display not only their presence and participation in the expedition, but also their proximity to the king on this particular rock face. On a later visit to the site, viceroy Setau re-affirmed the Egyptian claim of this place in placing the cartouches of Ramesses II under the Thutmose tableaux and a short historical text dating to year 44 beneath the lion of Thutmose I. According to his own status and administrative function, he himself left his identity signature at the main elite rock inscription cluster B,

75 Davies 2017a, 69.

76 Davies 2017a, 69, n. 8.

77 Hsu 2017, 193-195, 445-448, 451-456.

78 Davies 2017a, 97.

79 Davies 2017a, 94.

80 Thum 2016, 76.

81 Davies 2017a, 87.

82 Cf. Davies 2017a, 81.

remarkably right next to the inscription of his Thutmose predecessor Nehe.⁸³ While the elite inscriptions can be understood as intimations of the presence of their owners as media of social display and prestige, the royal texts have to be seen in ideological and ‘geo-political’ terms as royal sentinels to delineate and define the boundary of Egypt in the farthest south.⁸⁴

Jebel Doshe

The second case study is devoted to Jebel Doshe, a conspicuous sandstone ridge that rises steeply from the Nile (fig. 12.4). Here, between the temple sites Soleb and Sedeinga, another important group of New Kingdom rock inscriptions clusters around a shrine of king Thutmose III cut into the south-eastern tip of the cliff facing the Nile (cf. fig. 12.1).⁸⁵ No traces of indigenous rock art could be found. The fact that Thutmose III chose this spot for his rock chapel indicates that this mountain was of particular religious and political importance for the Egyptians which presumably originated in an older local Nubian tradition.⁸⁶ However, the first archaeologically evidenced engagement with the site is the said rock-cut chapel, devoted to the cult of Thutmose III himself and local forms of the deities Amun-Re and Satet.⁸⁷ In chronological terms, three phases of epigraphical interaction with this prominent landmark and sacred place can be differentiated.⁸⁸ The first phase is represented by seven figures of striding officials that appear in three separate scenes on the rock face high above the chapel.⁸⁹ The figures are quite nicely carved and shown with their hands in the typical gestures of adoration, oriented northwards towards the centre of the cliff façade, which the gods venerated inside the chapel were thought to reside in. The officials are identified with names and titles that suggest that they belonged to the temple personnel.⁹⁰ Davies concludes in this regard, that “their representations on the sacred hill bear[...] prominent witness to their participation, both practical and ritual, in the project” of creating and ritually activating the rock-cut chapel under Thutmose III.⁹¹

The idea of self-representation in a local ritual framework is also evident with a single rock stela from the

83 Davies 2017a, 86, nos B31 and B32.

84 Thum 2016, 76; Brown 2015, 95.

85 Davies 2004; 2017b.

86 On Thutmose III in Nubia cf. Spalinger 2006; Schade-Busch 1997.

87 Davies 2016.

88 Davies 2017b, 64-65.

89 Davies 2017b, 60-63, nos 4, 5 and 9. To these, scene 8 has to be added. It also dates to this phase, shows a kneeling figure in adoration, however, no identifying text is preserved.

90 Pace Davies, 2017b, 64. The titles of the officials are *wꜥb*: wab-priest, *sꜥnh*: sculptor, *ḫꜣ.y-mdꜣ.t*: relief sculptor, *shꜣ.w-kd.wt*: scribe of forms/painter, *ks.tj*: sculptor and *hr.j-nb.yw*: chief gold-worker.

91 Davies 2017b, 64.



Figure 12.4 (left). The sandstone ridge Jebel Doshe seen from the South.



Figure 12.5 (left). Rock inscription tableau of the Viceroy, Merymose, adoring Amenhotep III and Satet at Jebel Doshe.

Figure 12.6 (right). Rock stela of Seti I and Viceroy Amenemipet high above the chapel at Jebel Doshe.

second phase, that is located a few metres south of the chapel on roughly the same level.⁹² It shows a viceroy, whose name is lost, in elite attire, offering to the deified Amenhotep III of Soleb and the local manifestation of Satet (fig. 12.5). Davies convincingly attributes this rock inscription to Amenhotep III's viceroy Merymose, who is also depicted in the Sed-Festival scenes in the nearby Soleb temple,⁹³ thus confirming the cultic link established or re-activated under pharaoh Amenhotep III between the monumental festival temple and the rock-cut chapel.⁹⁴ Phase three of epigraphical activity is represented by the large stela of the viceroy Amenemipet on behalf of king Seti I high above the chapel (fig. 12.6), a smaller private stela of said Amenemipet and another stela of an official. In the large stela, king Seti I is shown offering to the deities Khnum, Satet and Anuket in the upper

92 Davies 2017b, 59-60, no. 2.

93 The Sed-festival is a royal jubilee festival, typically held after the first 30 years of a king's rule, in which the religious, political and physical power of the pharaoh was ritually renewed and affirmed.

94 Cf. also Davies 2015.

register, while the viceroy kneels in the register below, accompanied by an elaborate royal text that proclaims “the king’s domination over foreign territories”.⁹⁵ Amenemipet himself is depicted before Khnum and Satet of Jebel Doshe in his own smaller stela, while in the register below him two of his subordinate officials appear in adoration towards both the viceroy and the deities. These two stelae can quite likely be connected to Amenemipet’s and his officials’ presence at Jebel Doshe on behalf of Seti I with the order of restoring the rock-cut chapel after its neglect in the Amarna period (c. 1353-1334 BCE).⁹⁶ The last rock stela also evokes a religious setting to portray presence and ritual participation. It shows a Ramesside scribe of the local district in adoration before the main deities of the chapel, Amun and Satet.⁹⁷ Later epigraphical interactions have not yet been documented. Today, however, vandalism poses a severe threat to the inscriptions.⁹⁸

Summing up the evidence of Jebel Doshe, we see an important local ritual place attracting people, inscriptions and a particular imagery.⁹⁹ A socially scaled “*versteinerte Festgemeinde*”¹⁰⁰ emerges on the eastern façade of the living rock in front of its deities Amun, Khnum, Satet and Anuket, with king Seti I representing the upper social end, and the viceroys and his officials, the local temple personnel and a scribe of the district joining. Not only the king and the deities are depicted in their particular iconography, but also the individuals, who worked or served here or were sent to Jebel Doshe to create, restore and (re-)activate the chapel. They appear in the form of human figures in the gesture of adoration. Thus, the rock inscriptions at Jebel Doshe have several layers of meaning. While they record presence, they also portray individual and functional attachments to the site and its gods, and they act as representatives of the individuals in relation to the deities beyond the only temporary actual presence of their makers.¹⁰¹ The rock-cut chapel of Thutmose III thus motivated a number of epigraphical engagements, each interacting with the chapel and partly also with the

95 Davies 2017b, 62.

96 Davies 2016, 22; 2017b, 65.

97 Davies 2017b, 63-64, no. 10.

98 Davies 2017b, 59: the inscriptions no. 6 (the stela of Seti I and Amenemipet), 7 (the private stela of Amenemipet) and 10 (private stela of the local district official Keny) have recently been vandalised.

99 In this regard, Davies 2017a, 64, notes the interesting fact that the officials dating to Thutmose III are not directly associated with the figure of a deity. The deities they are oriented to are those residing in the cliff and rock-cut chapel respectively. The later individuals, starting under Amenhotep III down to the Ramesside period, depict themselves in adoration before the local deities in their individual stelae. This can be explained by the particular iconographic decorum, in both chronological and social terms.

100 Seidlmayer 2006b, 107.

101 Cf. Weiss 2015b, 60-70.

other older inscriptions. The interaction of these rock inscriptions with the landscape is less pronounced than at Kurgus. The rock itself, hosting the chapel inhabited by the gods, is the physical landscape the texts and images, which in turn create and portray a social landscape, are mainly referring to.

Tanjur and Akasha West

The last case study presents us with rock inscriptions in yet another setting, both topographical and functional. The Batn el-Hajar is a long stretch of the Nile in Upper Nubia, where the river wriggled through the rocks of the basement complex, its course determined by geological and tectonic faults and fissures. Constraint by steep rocky ridges, ravines and high rising escarpments, the Nile formed innumerable islands and shoals and experienced several smaller cataracts disrupting its flow, such as at Tanjur (cf. fig. 12.7). Here, Fritz Hintze and Walter F. Reineke could document the largest share of New Kingdom rock inscriptions (38 in number) within their project concession area.¹⁰² They are mainly distributed along the rocky cliffs of the Nile’s east bank where they cluster at three major places. They consist of the typical title and name tags, e.g. of high-ranking functionaries such as the viceroy Amenemnekh, active under Hatshepsut and Thutmose III (fig. 12.8), the army general Setau or the city governor (or ‘mayor’) Neby.¹⁰³

Two well-known and frequently discussed texts stand out, which are in contrast to most of the other inscriptions located on the west bank. While no. 562 records an expedition to Nubia during the joint reign of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III, to which the presence of the viceroy Amenemnekh on the east bank can be related,¹⁰⁴ no. 561 documents the year 2 campaign of Thutmose I¹⁰⁵ that is also well represented at the Hagr er-Merwa.¹⁰⁶ In the last line of the text, an army scribe called Ahmose is mentioned as ‘counting ships’. Based on the textual evidence and the topography of Tanjur, Hintze and Reineke thus infer about this location and its high number of inscriptions, especially on the east bank:

“Diese Konzentration hängt sicher damit zusammen, dass das Fahrwasser in diesem Gebiet besonders schwierig ist, so dass die stromauf fahrenden Schiffe hier getreidelt werden mussten. Während dieses gefährlichen Manövers benutzten die Beamten den

102 Hintze/Reineke 1989.

103 Hintze/Reineke 1989, 170-177, nos 553a, 554a, 558, 564 and 565.

104 Hintze/Reineke 1989, 172, no. 562 (dated to year 12, month 3 of the Peret season, day 12).

105 Hintze/Reineke 1989, 171-172, no. 561.

106 Davies 2017a.

*Fußweg am Ufer und brachten dann an den Felsen südlich des Kataraktes ihre Inschriften an, während sie auf die Schiffe warteten.*¹⁰⁷

Some kilometres further south, at Akasha West, another rock inscription agglomeration is found on a small vertical rock face positioned at a ledge on the west bank (fig. 12.9). It overlooks the bend of the Nile c. 300m from the river. Here, a further text of Thutmose I referring to the year 2 campaign not only names the scribe Ahmose again with the task to ‘count the boats which emerge (*pri*) at this place’, but also states, that the prince and general Amenmose landed (*nni*) at this place (fig. 12.10).¹⁰⁸ This main inscription is accompanied a few metres away by a number of title and name tags of high ranking members of Thutmose I’s expedition force, such as prince Wadjmose, queen Ahmose and high-steward Ahmose Pennekhbet. These are some of the well-known people that are also attested at the Hagr er-Merwa.

107 Hintze/Reineke 1989, 16-17.

108 Davies 2017, 87-93; 2014b, 39-41; 2013; Edwards/Mills 2013, 14-15, pl. 13.

Figure 12.7. The Nile in the Batn el-Hajar with Tanjur and Akasha West.



Figure 12.8. Rock inscription of viceroy Amenemnehu overlooking the Nile at Tanjur East (after Hintze/Reineke 1989, 234).



In addition, this place was also visited during the campaign of Thutmose III bound for Kurgus, as is e.g. attested by rock inscriptions of the viceroy Nehy, the royal scribe Minmose and another scribe Menkheper.¹⁰⁹ Their signatures are grouped around the original Thutmose I text (cf. fig. 12.10), likely as seeking proximity and paying homage to the older royal inscription. This also proves that these rock inscriptions had a particular audience, namely those Egyptian officials who came to this place under virtually the same circumstances as their predecessors and interacted with it epigraphically as well.

The relationship of the Akasha West rock inscriptions with the landscape can be described in two aspects. They do not only attest the presence of the named individuals at that exact spot, they also mark a conspicuous location in the landscape. The royal inscription covers a slightly protruding and almost vertical rock at a narrow rocky plateau running roughly from north to south (cf. fig. 12.9). The text is thus positioned at a spot with good overview over the entire area, oriented towards the bend of the Nile. Given changes in the local geomorphology and topography in the course of the past millennia, the ancient Nile channel might have been closer to the hill, so that this location was a suitable spot for ‘counting the boats’ and for landing. Interestingly, these inscriptions were also not effaced in later times. Thanks to the historical data, other textual references to this area and the mentioning of the responsibilities of the army scribe Ahmose, the rock inscription clusters at Tanjur and Akasha can be understood as reflecting both the difficulties and mastery of riverine travel in this particular and dangerous reach of the Nile.¹¹⁰ Thus, it is maybe not surprising that there is no particular Pharaonic religious or ideological imagery present, except for the hieroglyphic signs of the rock inscriptions themselves.

Figure 12.9. The ledge with the rock inscriptions at Akasha West.

Concluding Remarks

By means of rock inscriptions, the Pharaonic state and its representatives inscribed themselves upon the landscape, or rather, upon special and conspicuous places or spots in the landscape. Each site represents thus not only an ‘epigraphically appropriated’ place, but also a social landscape made up of the inscriptions and those represented through them. However, no higher-level generalisations as to the overall function or agency of the rock inscriptions are proposed here, since it is above all the topographical and site specific context that allows us to understand the text compositions on rocks in space and place.

The royal tableaux at the Hagr er-Merwa at Kurgus prototypically embody Pharaonic state ideology and territoriality.¹¹¹ They are meant to portray political and cultural dominance at the southernmost fringes of Egypt and act – or perform their role – as boundary markers, saying ‘At this very place begins Egyptian territory’.¹¹² The ram-headed Amun and the ‘falcon-king’ appear jointly above a threatening text, written in hieroglyphs, accompanied by royal animals. Thus, ram-headed gods, bulls, lions, and falcons constitute the iconic dimension, while the inscriptions themselves, so to speak, fluctuate between imagery and ‘text’. Although this ‘shimmer’ (or multimodality) also applies to the private rock texts in their hieroglyphic nature, there is a stark difference with regard to their form and format: all of them – except one¹¹³ – are short identity signatures consisting of a title and a name, only sometimes enlarged with epithets characterising the individual as follower of the king. Such epithets are to be understood both actually and metaphorically.¹¹⁴ With their presence at the Hagr er-Merwa, the texts constitute an element of the elite individual’s territoriality in terms of their activity radius, geographical horizon of experience and loyalty to the king.¹¹⁵

109 Davies 2017a, 87-93.

110 Davies 2017, 23-29; 2014b, 41-42; 2013; Edwards/Mills 2013, 14-16; Hintze/Reineke 1989, 170-177, 181-183.

111 On the concept of ‘territoriality’, see Auenmüller 2015, 71-125.

112 Cf. also Brown 2017; 2015; Thum 2015.

113 This private and exceptionally long text has not yet been read successfully: Davies 2017a, 85-86, no. B24.

114 For such epithets and their significance, see Auenmüller 2015, 139-168.

115 Auenmüller 2015, 118-125.

Figure 12.10. The rock inscription of Thutmose I at Akasha West.

One question with regard to Kurgus still remains: How did the local communities, that were explicitly mentioned as recipients in the threatening texts, really perceive of the tableaux, imagery and elite texts? As has been stated above, the Egyptian inscriptions were not destroyed. Were the local communities thus not even aware of the texts or did the inscriptions embody such a powerful agency that no attempts to deface them were made? Surely, the local people could not read the texts, but the imagery alone was meant to impress and intimidate.¹¹⁶ Since the addressees were mainly pastoralists, no long-term settlement traces have to be sought in the neighbourhood of the Hagr er-Merwa. This, in turn, might be a reason that the inscriptions were less exposed to the risk of being affected or even effaced.

In contrast to the Hagr er-Merwa, a ritual framework of epigraphical interaction with the landscape – or rather one prominent religious feature – can be encountered at Jebel Doshe. Here, a particular iconography accompanying the inscriptions, including depictions of officials in adoration before the local deities, creates a social landscape of religious piety and attachment. Although not a single *rdj.t-jꜣw* (praise) formula is attested, the imagery speaks in and for itself. A community of people (and a king) appear before the gods who are thought to reside in this sacred mountain. This kind of self-presentation not only aims at recording the actual presence (project-bound or otherwise) in the form of a rock inscription, which acts as a reference point for the individual's spatial activity radius and geographical horizon of experience. It also aims at displaying both personal attachment to and continuing engagement with the religious matrix of this place. In this way, the identities of the rock inscription owners are mapped out in front of the deities within the rock and all other people active at or around the chapel, passing by in the context of their official missions or out of religious or any other kind of individual motivation. How the non-Egyptian, i.e. local Nubian interaction with this place looked like is difficult to assess, since direct evidence is lacking. After the chapel fell out of use in later Ramesside times, a seismic event (presumably in pre-Napatan times) led to a number of structural damages. In the medieval Christian period, it was remodelled into a small church.¹¹⁷ It is thus worthy of note that the rock inscriptions and stelae were not deliberately effaced until the severe vandalism of today.

In contrast to both Hagr er-Merwa and Jebel Doshe, there is no religious or politically motivated imagery present at Tanjur and Akasha West – except for some pre-existing indigenous drawings at Akasha West.¹¹⁸ Within the rocky landscape of the Batn el-Hajar, several historical actors take the stage, quasi in a textual discourse with this

landscape. While most of them are only identified by title and name tags – the pivotal markers of identity and social status within the reference system 'Pharaonic Egypt' – it is the landscape and its peculiarities in the context of state-run undertakings that provoked the epigraphical interaction. Undoubtedly, the Hagr er-Merwa and Jebel Doshe are also very conspicuous landscape features, charged with cultural, political, ideological and religious significance, but Tanjur and Akasha were neither frontiers, nor sacred places. These places gained their significance as places of royal presence on several Nubian campaigns, as attested by the few rock inscriptions on the west bank including a date, royal name and historical information, and of elite functionaries accompanying these campaigns, mainly attested on the east bank. Certain elite officials epigraphically interacted with the landscape on both banks of the Nile, while they had to wait or oversee the hauling of the ships through the difficult waters. Thus, one could term these locations as 'landscapes of difficulties', in which the rock inscriptions document the challenges and successful accomplishment of riverine travel in this dangerous reach of the Nile. One particular person, the army scribe Ahmose, had to record the successful execution of this task. In this capacity, he was most likely responsible for the two Thutmose I inscriptions at Tanjur and Akasha West, the latter of which was visited and interacted with by later members of expeditionary forces into Nubia under Thutmose III. There is rich archaeological evidence for later human presence in the region,¹¹⁹ that, however, as with the Hagr er-Merwa and Jebel Doshe, did not leave any epigraphical traces.

The New Kingdom rock inscriptions in Nubia are typical Egyptian responses and interactions with the landscape, signifying places and turning them into significant spaces. Besides documenting the sheer existence of people and their social position, they mirror the reality of individuals moving through the riverine and desert landscape, while generally not referring back to the situations and contexts of their production. The marking of space(s) in the context of human presence gives meaning to place(s) and, in return, accounts for the question which places were deemed to be of special importance and thus used and perceived. Tagging a vast landscape, rock inscriptions are not random witnesses of human behaviour, but are each of importance for understanding the nexus between human activities and the particular place. More practically, they were a specific Egyptian means of social display, communication, appropriation and commemoration in different local and ritual contexts.¹²⁰

116 Davies 2017a, 67.

117 Davies 2017b, 65.

118 Davies 2017a, 89.

119 Edwards/Mills 2013.

120 Cf. Auenmüller 2019, 405.

From Landscape Biography to the Social Dimension of Burial

A View from Memphis, Egypt, c. 1539-1078 BCE¹

Nico Staring

Landscape Biography

“...[The] treatment of the deceased [by the living] is conditioned by their perception of death and their relationships with each other as much as by their relationship to the deceased whilst alive.”²

As Mike Parker Pearson aptly states, the way people treat the deceased is highly influenced by their understanding of death and their relationships with both the living and the dead. Thus, studying the changing use of space within necropolis sites and the utilisation of the sites as a whole may allow for a fuller understanding of the social organisation that underlies the production of ancient monuments, and the structure of the society that created them. Moreover, the time-depth represented in a necropolis site makes it a “palimpsest landscape”³ or “temporal collage”.⁴ In other words, the site bears witness to a visible accumulation of overlapping traces from successive periods. Each trace modifies, and is modified by, new additions. As a natural consequence of these processes, necropolis life, including tomb building and the participation in cult activities and festival processions, had to be “lived amidst that which was made before”.⁵ Tomb structures built in this multi-temporal landscape have the potential to continually influence the behaviour of people long after the initial builders had passed away. The presence of the deceased

1 This paper was written for the interdisciplinary workshop, *The Walking Dead: The Making of a Cultural Geography*, held at Leiden University and the National Museum of Antiquities, Leiden, 7-9 November 2018. The paper arises from the research project ‘The Walking Dead at Saqqara: The Making of a Cultural Geography’, funded by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (dossier 016.Vidi.174.032), and hosted by the Leiden Institute for Area Studies. The author should like to thank the participants in the interdisciplinary workshop, and the *Walking Dead* team members Lara Weiss and Huw Twiston Davies, for their kind feedback and suggestions on earlier drafts of this article.

2 Parker Pearson 1993, 203 (after Pader 1982, 56-60).

3 Van Dyke/Alcock 2003.

4 Lynch 1972, 171.

5 Meinig 1979, 44.



Figure 13.1. View of the Unas South Cemetery, Saqqara, from atop the pyramid of Djoser, looking south. Photo: Nico Staring.

(materialised in their tombs) thus potentially continued to influence the actions of future generations – hence ‘The Walking Dead’.

Questions fundamental to an understanding of the shaping of the cultural geography⁶ at Saqqara, the prime cemetery site of Ancient Egypt’s administrative ‘capital’ Memphis in the New Kingdom, c. 1539-1078 BCE (fig. 13.1),⁷ include: Why were certain areas of the necropolis selected for burial in certain time periods? How were tombs accessed from the distant habitation areas? What effect did earlier structures have on the positioning of tombs and structuring of the necropolis in later times? What were the tombs’ spatial relations to contemporaneous and older monuments? These questions touch broader issues that extend beyond this research. Rather, this article offers a method to address the issues underlying these questions and presents some preliminary answers to them.

6 For the term ‘cultural geography’ as understood in the context of this study, see the Introduction to this volume, and Weiss 2018.

7 The dates of reigns of kings used in this paper are adopted from Gautschy 2014.

This paper argues in favour of a biography-of-landscape approach to understanding the shaping of a cultural geography. At the core of the term ‘landscape biography’ lies the premise that it is useful to conceptualise the history of a landscape as a life-history.⁸ Biographies of landscapes have no clear-cut beginning or end, unlike human biographies, which involve a more or less complete life cycle with a fixed beginning (birth) and end (death) and distinguishable life stages in between. A landscape’s life-history or biography can be seen as a never-ending process of growth and aging. The making of a cultural geography may thus be viewed as a cumulative process. Landscapes play a part in the closed biographies of the individuals dwelling in them; the biographies of landscapes, on the other hand, far outlive those of their dwellers. The significance of studying the changing landscape and its interaction with humans in order to understand the formation of a cultural geography is

8 Tringham 1995.

perhaps best captured by Jan Kolen and Hans Renes, when they state that

“...[a]s an essential part of human life worlds, landscapes have the potential to absorb something of people’s lives, works and thoughts. But landscapes also shape their own life histories on different timescales, imprinted by human existence, affecting personal lives and transcending individual human life cycles.”⁹

The relationships between the life histories of landscapes and people have in the last two decades attracted growing scholarly interest. This has resulted in the creation of landscape biography as a new approach to landscape history. Landscape biography as a “research strategy”¹⁰ was developed by archaeologists, geographers and historians in the Netherlands in the mid-1990s.¹¹ While the approach they developed was new, its foundations were not. The landscape biography approach is rooted in theories borrowed from the disciplines of social anthropology and geography. It combines insights from anthropological studies of material culture – object biography (also known as “the social life of things”) – as proposed by social anthropologists Igor Kopytoff¹² and Arjun Appadurai,¹³ with those of cultural geographer Marwyn Samuels’s “biography of landscape”.¹⁴ Current landscape biography also integrates insights from philosopher and cultural historian Michel De Certeau,¹⁵ who is interested in the idea of the city as a locus of everyday life and the people who are actively engaged in the continuous production of living space. In his view, urban space is given structure and meaning from below as a result of the constant flow of daily activities and concerns of those who have adopted urban space – as residents, visitors, and passers-by. The same principles can be applied to necropolis sites. In doing so, the projection of De Certeau’s views onto extra-urban contexts could balance Samuels’s take on landscape “authorship”. According to Samuels, the lives, works, ideals and ambitions of influential individuals are interwoven into the fabric of a landscape, its history and essence.¹⁶

9 Kolen/Renes 2015, 21.

10 Roymans et al. 2009.

11 For a comprehensive outline of the landscape biography approach and its place within the history of landscape studies, the reader is referred to: Kolen/Renes 2015; Roymans et al. 2009. For the theoretical and philosophical underpinnings of the approach, see Kolen 2005.

12 Kopytoff 1986.

13 Appadurai 1986.

14 Samuels 1979.

15 De Certeau 1984.

16 Kolen/Renes (2015, 32-35) aptly illustrate the opposing viewpoints of Samuels and De Certeau as regards “authorship” by highlighting the two authors’ respective biographies of Manhattan. According to Samuels, the urban landscape of Manhattan is a prime example

Samuels’s notion of “authored landscapes” in the sense of “the ‘who’ behind the facts of geography, or rather the specific role of authorship and human agency in landscape formation,” in which ‘individuals continually ‘write’ the ‘text’ of the urban space’¹⁷ is rather widespread in Egyptological scholarship. In histories of Ancient Egypt, powerful individuals, most of whom were kings, are considered to be the writers of the texts of urban landscapes and necropolis sites. This also applies to narratives of Memphis and its necropolis at Saqqara. Steven Snape, for example, argues that in the early Ramesside period, the lead ‘author’ of the text of both the city and its necropolis was a man named Khaemwaset, the fourth son of king Ramesses II (c. 1279-1213 BCE) and High Priest of Ptah at Memphis. He is singled out as the one responsible, on behalf of his father, for the monumental manipulation of the sacred landscape by stressing, in his activities, the projection of aspects of kingship.¹⁸ As a result of this particular view of ‘landscape authorship’, which is primarily focused on powerful individuals, the landscape described is one devoid of any real practitioners. People are reduced to the role of passive onlookers, whereas in reality, the necropolis was very much alive.

The Cultic Landscape of ‘West of Memphis’

Memphis was, to a great extent, shaped by the presence of its prime local deities. Egypt’s foremost temple complex of Ptah dominated the cityscape, and the elevated desert necropolis – commonly referred to as Ankhatawy¹⁹ – was considered the ancient, sacred abode of the Memphite

of an authored landscape inextricably linked to influential individuals. They include the urban planner Robert Moses and the ‘father’ of the skyscraper, Louis Sullivan, as well as influential families such as the Rockefellers and Harrimans. That view matches Caro’s 1974 biography of Moses, in which it is argued that the city would have developed much differently without its ‘master builder’. The life stories of all these influential individuals are linked to the life story of Manhattan. Their creations influence the daily lives of people living, working, and passing-by in the city. De Certeau, on the other hand, argues that to see the real authors of the urban space one should descend to street level and focus on the way in which everyday life takes place. At street level, one meets “the ordinary practitioners”. These *Wandermänner*, as De Certeau describes them, move through the “urban text”, thereby embodying a fundamental, spatial form of existence. The same notion of ‘embodied space’ is exemplified in archaeologist Tim Ingold’s study (1993) on the temporality of the landscape.

17 Samuels 1979, 62.

18 Snape 2011.

19 The deceased are here referred to as *ꜥḫ. w ʕs. w n. w imn. tyt ʕnh-tj. wy*, “blessed souls of the Western Ankhatawy”. See e.g. the graffito of the Scribe, Hednakhte (Nineteenth Dynasty, *temp.* Ramesses II year 47): Navrátilová 2015, 108-111, 170-173 (M.2.3.P.19.3).

deities, primarily Sokar.²⁰ Ptah and Sokar played important parts in the religious life and afterlife of the local residents. Since the Old Kingdom (c. 2543-2120 BCE), the chief deity of Memphis, Ptah, was connected to the chthonic deity Sokar, a god of death, and the syncretic connection Ptah-Sokar-Osiris has been well attested since the Middle Kingdom (c. 1980-1760 BCE).

Ptah-Sokar-Osiris gained further significance during the reign of Amenhotep III (c. 1378-1339 BCE), a rise to prominence which coincided with grand construction works in the temple of Ptah at Memphis, and with construction works in the Serapeum,²¹ the underground tombs with aboveground chapels built for the sacred Apis bulls. The Serapeum was one of the foremost sites of religious significance at Saqqara. It was even considered the entrance to the netherworld and, by extension, every tomb shaft or cavern accessed from the same elevated desert plateau could be designated as *rꜣ-šꜥꜣ.w*, ‘mouth of subterranean passages’.²² Rosetau is also where the so-called *šꜥꜣ.t* shrine and *ḥnw* barque sanctuary of Sokar were located, supposedly in the desert between Saqqara and Giza.²³

These sacred sites were visited at set times during annual festivals, or – as in the case of the Serapeum – at irregular intervals, depending on the age of a particular Apis bull.²⁴ The funeral of the sacred Apis bull was a major event,²⁵ and the carefully laid out necropolis infrastructure facilitated easy access for all who participated. The paved processional way leading up to the Serapeum, for example, was accessed from the valley below by making use of pre-existing, millennium-old pyramid causeways.²⁶ Precisely at the point of entry to the desert plateau is a cluster of New Kingdom tomb chapels from the late Eighteenth Dynasty.²⁷ Renewed interest in this section of the necropolis also led to a revival of the cults for the two deified Old Kingdom

rulers whose pyramids stood at the ‘entrance’ to the cemetery: Menkauhor (Fifth Dynasty, c. 2373-2366 BCE) and Teti (Sixth Dynasty, c. 2305-2279 BCE). The section of the elevated desert plateau where the access route to the desert sanctuaries met the monuments of deified kings came to serve as a kind of magnet for tomb building in the New Kingdom.²⁸

If the Teti Pyramid Cemetery represented such a prime piece of necropolis ‘real estate’, then how can we possibly explain the way some major tombs are located all the way south of the Unas causeway, far removed from all of the New Kingdom sacred sites? In the following section, I shall argue that the Unas South Cemetery was in fact favourably situated in relation to contemporary sacred sites located on the desert plateau and to the sanctuaries and urban areas in the valley below. Routes connecting these locations made this section of the necropolis a key point of entry to the elevated desert plateau. To support my argument, I will consider the wider landscape at Memphis and view the necropolis as a place that was meant to be visited by the living – on visits that were not exclusively associated with funerals. This will be illustrated with references to the annual festival of the god Sokar.

The Sokar Festival at Memphis

The annual festival for the god Sokar offers textual evidence for tomb visits that were not related to the funeral.²⁹ After providing a brief introduction of the festival as celebrated at Memphis, I will explain how it relates to the necropolis.

The Memphite deities did not dwell exclusively in their sanctuaries built for the purpose of their veneration; rather, they would leave regularly in processions staged at multiple annual festivals in order to visit locations in the surrounding area. Although we are rather ill-informed about the festival and its particulars, the Sokar festival must have been one of the highlights on the Memphite temple calendar.

We are fortunately much better informed about the Theban Sokar festival, which was modelled after the old Memphite tradition. At Thebes, the festival took place between days 21 and 30 of the fourth month of the Akhet season, which corresponds to the end of the annual Nile flooding. These dates also correspond to the Khoiak festival, celebrated in honour of Osiris, Egypt’s prime netherworld deity.³⁰ Khoiak was performed to promote the successful rebirth of Osiris. At the god’s national centre

20 Raue 1995, 257; Van Dijk 1988, 42. In ancient Egypt, necropolis sites were, in general, regarded as domains of the gods. This is aptly illustrated by a common word for necropolis, *ḥr.t-nṯr*, which translates as “that which is under [the charge of] the god” (Ockinga 2007, 139 n. 2).

21 Vercoutter 1984.

22 Schneider 1977, I, 277.

23 Abd el-Aal (2009, 5 and pl. 3b) suggests that this is the place where some New Kingdom chapels were dedicated in the New Kingdom, at modern-day Kafr el-Gebel or Nazlet el-Batran, to the south of the Giza plateau. See also Abdel-Aal/Bács, forthcoming; Bács 2008. Edwards (1986, 36) considers the Shetayet shrine at Rosetau as the Lower Egyptian counterpart of the Abydene tomb of Osiris.

24 See Thijs 2018 with further references.

25 E.g. Frood 2016.

26 Dodson 2016, 13-15; Nicholson 2016.

27 Compare to the Theban necropolis at Dra Abu el-Naga, which was considered prime necropolis real estate because festival processions staged as part of the Beautiful Festival of the Valley started there, exactly opposite the temple of Amun at Karnak (Ullmann 2007). See also Rummel 2018; Ockinga 2007.

28 Compare, again, to the early New Kingdom cemetery at Dra Abu el-Naga North, where tombs clustered around the royal tombs of the Theban Seventeenth Dynasty: Polz 2007, 231-250.

29 The Sokar festival did, of course, have funerary connotations, see below.

30 Eaton 2006; Gaballa/Kitchen 1969.

of worship, Abydos, Osiris was led in procession from his temple, via a sacred route, to his desert tomb at *pkr* (Peqer, modern-day Umm el-Qaab).³¹ There, his mummified image produced in the previous year was buried. On the way to Peqer, various royal memorial temples and other local shrines were visited by the god and his entourage.³² Non-royal individuals set up stelae and statues in chapels along this sacred route so as to remain present at the processions forever.³³ Like Khoiak, the Sokar festival had a funerary role, agricultural significance and connections with kingship as well. Memphis was considered the place where kingship “resided”,³⁴ and Sokar’s Memphite rituals and festivals were very likely influenced by the rites, mythology and festival usages of Osiris.³⁵ These facts make the festivals at Thebes and Abydos excellent material for comparison to the Memphite tradition.

Much of the Sokar festival took place behind closed temple doors – except for day 26. That day marked the zenith of public celebrations. From Theban sources, we know that the day was considered a ‘public holiday’.³⁶ This suggests that the visit of the god’s barque to the necropolis was a sort of public event, which may have attracted scores of people to watch the god make his way to and through the cemetery.³⁷ What exactly happened on day 26? From early times onwards, the festival on that day included what is referred to as *phr h3 inb.w*, the “circumambulation of

the walls”. This is when the god’s image was placed in his so-called *Henu* barque and dragged (*s3z*) on a *mflh* sledge or shouldered by priests. Prominent officials had the honour of ‘following Sokar’ on the occasion, and they even expressed the wish to bear Sokar’s sledge along with the king around the temple walls and up to the necropolis.³⁸ This privilege was not the prerogative of living officials. The deceased, too, wished to participate, in perpetuity. This is what we gather from certain offering formulae carved in tomb walls, statues, and stelae. A text inscribed on the doorjamb of a senior official named Pay, for example, expresses the wish to “make the circuit around the walls” as he dwells in “the sacred land (i.e. the necropolis) together with those who are in the following of the Lord of Perpetuity, Osiris, the Ruler of the Netherworld (*hk3 igr.t*)”.³⁹

A rare source for the Sokar festival as celebrated on day 26 at Saqqara is presented by the text carved on the stela of Ptahmose, the Overseer of the King’s Apartments, whose tomb stood in the Unas South Cemetery.⁴⁰ The stela text starts with an offering formula addressing Ptah-Sokar-Osiris, and then references the start of the festival at Memphis:

“...[1] An offering which the king gives to Ptah-Sokar-Osiris who is in the Shetayet shrine (*stzy.t*), United with Life, Lord of Rosetau. When your processional image appears (*hc s3m-k*) [2] in Memphis (*Ka* temple of Ptah, *Hw.t-k3-Pth*, and White Walls, *Inb.w-hd*),⁴¹ Mistress of Provisions, there is rejoicing in the noble Henu barque (*hnw spsy*).”

From line 6 onwards the text makes reference to visiting the necropolis:

“...[6] When you (i.e. Ptah-Sokar-Osiris) open the sight of those in the necropolis (*n.ty m iwgr.t*), the Westerners say: “Welcome! Welcome!” (...) [7] (...) When your rays lift the hearts of those under the covers, they uncover [8] their limbs that they may breathe your breath of life. When your voice is heard going around in [9] the great valley (*phr m in.t wr.t*, “necropolis”) of Memphis (*Hw.t-k3-Pth*), and you are pulled in your festival (*sti-k m hb-k*), every god gives to you [10] praise, their arms in adoration of your face, and they are excited, their hearts [11] pleased when they see your face.”

31 See e.g. Julia Budka in this volume; Effland/Effland 2010a; 2010b.
 32 The temple of Seti I at Abydos contained a chapel dedicated to Sokar (*hw.t Skr*: Eaton 2007), and we know of various priests of the Ramesside period connected to the *hw.t Skr* in the Theban temple of Millions of Years of Amenhotep III (Gaballa/Kitchen 1969, 29). The Saqqara tomb of Ptahmose, Mayor and Chief Steward in Memphis, records an offering formula expressing the wish to ‘partake in the offerings in the *hw.t Skry*’ (Staring 2014, 471, text I.17 [2]).
 33 Richards 2005, 125-172; O’Connor 1985.
 34 Redford 1986, 298.
 35 Gaballa/Kitchen 1969, 23.
 36 For textual references to inactivity on day 26, see Jauhiainen 2009, 166-167; Helck 1964, 157 (no. 10), 160, as documented in hieratic ostraca from Deir el-Medina, dated to the Ramesside period. The references pertain to the highly specialised community of royal workmen at Deir el-Medina, c. 600 km south of Memphis. The question whether the work-free days could be extrapolated to the rest of Egypt and Egyptian society remains open to debate. One could argue, however, that if the community of workmen at distant Deir el-Medina were allotted a day off during the Sokar festival, a similar situation would have certainly existed at the centre of Sokar’s veneration, at Memphis. For a discussion of the Ancient Egyptian concept of ‘public holidays’ (and the dissimilarities to the common national festivals of today), see also: Kemp 2018, 262-270 (references to the Opet festival and the Beautiful Festival of the Valley); Spalinger 1998, 245, 250-251 (references to the Opet festival and the Sed festival).
 37 In stela Louvre C 226 the day is referred to as: *hrw n.(y) phr inb.w r m3 hb 3z m Inb(.w)-hd*, “day of going around the walls to see the great festival in Memphis” (Pierret 1878, 34).

38 For example, in the Theban tomb of Neferhotep (TT 50), God’s Father of Amun (Hari 1985, pl. 35).
 39 Florence, Museo Archeologico inv. no. 1605 = 2600 (Raven 2005a, 31 [27], pls 36, 38).
 40 New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art inv. no. 67.3. Ptahmose is dated to the late Eighteenth to early Nineteenth Dynasty.
 41 For Memphis and its toponyms in the New Kingdom, see Staring 2015c, 169-172, with further references.



Figure 13.2. Satellite image of the Memphite region, showing the location of ancient Memphis and the desert plateau at Saqqara. Image by Google Earth, adapted by Nico Staring. **Legend:** 1. Serapeum | 2. Pyramid of Menkauhor | 3. Pyramid of Teti | 4. Pyramid of Djoser | 5. 'Bubasteion' rock-cut tombs | 6. Pyramid of Unas | 7. Unas causeway | 8. Unas South Cemetery | 9. 'Ras el-Gisir' | 10. Wadi Tabet el-Guesh | 11. Pyramid of Pepi I | 12. Valley temple of Unas | 13. Proposed location of New Kingdom temples of Millions of Years | 14. Modern village of Saqqara | 15. Ancient Memphis | 16. Temple of Ptah, West Gate, Ramesside period | 17. Temple of Ptah precinct | 18. Modern city of Bedrashein | 19. River Nile | 20. Bedrashein-Saqqara road | 21. Shortest route from New Kingdom Memphis (temple of Ptah) to the necropolis at Saqqara | 22. Bahr el-Libeini.

The text concludes with Ptahmose who expresses the wish to continue to participate in the festival forever:

“...[11] Ptahmose of Memphis [12], he says: “I am one of your true followers on this day of pulling you (i.e. Ptah-Sokar-Osiris), for I am in front of you (*iw=i gr ḥz.t=k*, i.e. in front of the god in his barque) (...) [13] (...) May you grant that I rest (in) a tomb (*s.t n.t nhḥ*, lit. “place of eternity”) on the west of my city, Memphis (*ḥr imn.tyt n.t niw.t=i Ḥw.t-k3-Pth*), [14] that I reach my father and my forefathers who have gone in peace, with my limbs firm in [15] royal favour (*ḥs.wt nsw.t*),⁴² may he grant to me a good old age and that I reach the state of veneration (*im3ḥ*) without any

evil in my limbs, all his followers [16] behind me/in my lead, pulling me to the west. How fortunate is the blessed one for whom these things are done.”

What options did the deceased have to secure their perpetual participation in the procession? Evidently, there were two main routes to reach that goal. First, the deceased could wish (as expressed in writing) for the gods to allow their statue to continue following Sokar, an act which involved the living to carry actual statues of the deceased.⁴³ Second, the deceased could wish for their *ba* to continue following Sokar by possessing a tomb located along the processional way. Indeed, text sources

42 Compare the early Nineteenth Dynasty tomb of Ptahmose, Mayor and Chief Steward in Memphis: “Recitation: “Welcome (in peace) to the west, may you unite with your place/house/temple of eternity (*ḥnm.t(w) m ḥw.t=k n.t nhḥ*), your tomb of everlastingness (*is=k n.t d.t*), may you be buried in it after an old age, you being in the royal favour to rest in Ankhtawy (*iw=k m ḥs.wt nsw.t r ḥtp m ḥḥ-t3.wy*)”” (Staring 2014, 469, text I.13).

43 See e.g. the inscription on the back-pillar of a statue of Ray, Overseer of the Double Granary (Nineteenth Dynasty), from the temple of Ptah at Memphis: “... may you follow Sokar and unite with the Lord of the *Henu* barque. May you lay your hands upon the draw-ropes (...) when [he] encircles the walls of Ptah” (Petrie 1909, pl. 19, right); and wooden statuette Leiden inv. no. AH 211 of Ramose (from Deir el-Medina, Scribe of the Treasury of the temple of Thutmose IV (Boeser 1925, 4, pl. 6): “... may they (i.e. the gods) grant that this statue may endure and follow Sokar at the festival ... when one goes around the walls....”.

inform us that on the day of circumambulation and the subsequent necropolis procession, priests made offerings at the tombs.⁴⁴ Thus, one could imagine that it was highly desirable to have a tomb located in a prominent position along the processional route at one's disposal.⁴⁵ I would argue that this desire (more generally linked to aspects of landscape phenomenology)⁴⁶ had a profound effect on patterns of tomb placement. Before addressing that topic, I will first consider the question of where and how the Unas South Cemetery was accessed. In my view, part of the answer can be found in another text, dated to the reign of Amenhotep III. This text also sheds light on the wider cultic landscape "on the West of Memphis".

Linking the Valley to the Desert Plateau: Royal Memorial Temples and Their Relationship to the Necropolis

The main source underlying my proposed evaluation of the cultic landscape west of Memphis (fig. 13.2) is the autobiographical text inscribed on the statue of Amenhotep Huy, a key official in the late Eighteenth Dynasty reign of Amenhotep III.⁴⁷ The statue depicts Huy as a seated scribe and it may have stood (in a secondary context?) in the temple of Ptah at Memphis – at least that is where the statue was found by archaeologist William Matthew Flinders Petrie.⁴⁸ The titles-of-office identify Huy as, *inter alia*, Chief Steward in/of Memphis and Overseer of (Construction-)works in United-with-Ptah. Excerpts from the autobiographical text relevant to our discussion are given below in translation:

"...[1] [This statue was] given as a favour [from the king] (and placed) in the temple of Neb-Maat-Re United-with-Ptah (*ḥw.t Nb-Mꜣꜣ.t-Rꜥ-ḥnm.t-Pth*) which His Majesty, life, prosperity, health, made anew for his father [Ptah-who-is-south-of-his-wall in] 'the cultivated land' [on] the West of Memphis (*ḥw.t-kꜣ-Pth*) on behalf of (...) Amenhotep (Huy)."

44 See stela Louvre inv. no. C 226: Gaballa/Kitchen 1969, 67; Pierret 1878, 34. See also pAnastasi IV, 4,5: "...May your soul become divine among the living, may you mingle with the virtuous spirits and walk with Osiris in Rosetau on the day of the feast of Sokar" (Caminos 1954, 143, and further text references on p. 147).

45 See also Bács 2008, 111-122.

46 Landscape phenomenology studies the (past) human experience of the landscape. For a critical review of phenomenological approaches in archaeology, see Johnson 2012.

47 Murnane 1998, 213-214.

48 Statue Oxford, Ashmolean Museum inv. no. 1913.163 (*Urk. IV*, 1793-1801), found in a disturbed context: Petrie 1913: 33-36, pls 78 [bottom, right], 79-80. The fragment of another scribe's statue of Amenhotep Huy, probably from Memphis (Cairo JE 27862 = CG 1169), likewise contains a reference to the circumambulation made during the Sokar festival (El-Sayed 1982).

The statue, a gift from the pharaoh, was originally set up in a temple named Neb-Maat-Re (i.e. the prenomen of king Amenhotep III) United-with-Ptah – a temple constructed under the supervision of Huy:⁴⁹

"...he (i.e. the king) promoted me [13] to direct the construction works in his house of Millions of Years, which he made anew in his cultivated land west of Memphis [14] upon the bank/foreshore of Ankhtawy."

We only know of this temple from textual sources, there is no archaeological evidence of its former existence.⁵⁰ The description given by Huy provides us with a good indication for the temple's former location: it was built *m bꜣḥ n.y imn.tyt ḥw.t-kꜣ-Pth ḥr idb n.y ḥnh-tꜣ.wy*, "in the cultivated land of West of Memphis, upon the banks of Ankhtawy". This is a very specific reference to the edge of the Nile valley at the foot of the escarpment of the Saqqara plateau.⁵¹

What kind of temple did Amenhotep Huy build for his king? The temple Neb-Maat-Re United-with-Ptah is of the so-called royal memorial type. Temples of that type were built primarily for the royal cult and were founded by the ruling king, even though the central sanctuary was dedicated to the prime local deity, which at Memphis would have been Ptah.⁵² By drawing a parallel to Amenhotep III's royal memorial temple at Thebes (Kom el-Heitan), the full name of the Memphite temple can be reconstructed

49 Built in the third decade of Amenhotep III's reign: Murnane 1998, 213.

50 A man named Mery-Ptah (*temp.* Amenhotep III) held the title Steward in the temple of Neb-Maat-Re. The upper part of a stela from his lost tomb (Leiden inv. no. AP 11; the lower part is in the Petrie Museum, London inv. no. UC 14463) shows him along with members of his family, including his brother, the High Priest of Ptah, Ptahmose, and his father, the Vizier, Thutmose (Staring 2015a, 530, cat. V.27; Boeser 1913, 8, no. 27, pl. 14).

51 In pSallier IV, verso 2,1 ("A letter concerning the wonders of Memphis"), the *nsw.w-b.ty.w n.ty(w) im.y-wr.t n.ty(t) ḥr imnt n(.yt) ḥw.t-kꜣ-Pth*, "the kings of Upper and Lower Egypt who are in the west and who are in the West of Memphis" (Gardiner 1937, 89, 15-16) may be the kings for whom memorial temples were built at Memphis. Papyrus Sallier dates to the reign of Ramesses II. According to Caminos (1954, 342), *im.y-wr.t*, "the West", in the above passage refers to Thebes (cf. *Wb. I*, 73, 10: *im.y-wr.t Wꜣs.t*). However, since it is here mentioned as part of a list of deities at Memphis, I would argue that "the West" in both cases refers to the Memphite necropolis (see also *Wb. I*, 73,11). The same text also includes a reference to "Ptah-who-is-under-his-moringa-tree-of-Men-Maat-Re-United-with-Ptah" (pSallier IV, verso 1,8), the temple of Millions of Years of Amenhotep III which was over one century old when the papyrus text was composed.

52 Ullmann 2002, 661-670. The central sanctuary of the royal memorial temples at Thebes was dedicated to Amun-Re. In the Ramesside temples, Amun was worshipped in a specific form identifying him with the king.

Ahmoese, early Eighteenth Dynasty (c. 1539-1515 BCE)
The presence of possibly the earliest New Kingdom temple of this type at Memphis is suggested by the texts inscribed on two stelae formerly situated in the stone quarries of Maásara (Tura), on the east bank of the Nile opposite Memphis. ^a The stelae are dated to year 22 of Ahmoese and record the quarrying of white limestone for several temples of Millions of Years, including one at Memphis.
Thutmose III, mid-Eighteenth Dynasty (c. 1468-1414 BCE)
The General of the Lord of the Two Lands, Amenemone (Eighteenth Dynasty, <i>temp.</i> Horemheb), whose 'lost' tomb should be located at Saqqara, ^b bore the title Great Steward in the temple of Men-kheper-Re (prenomen of Thutmose III). ^c
Amenhotep II, mid-Eighteenth Dynasty (c. 1414-1388 BCE)
Evidence for the Memphite temple of Amenhotep II is found in the tomb stela of the Royal Butler, Ipu (<i>temp.</i> Tutankhamun, c. 1319-1310 BCE). ^d Ipu's father, Neferhat, bears the title Lector Priest of Aa-kheperu-Re (prenomen of Amenhotep II). Possible material evidence for the temple is provided by the mud bricks stamped with the name Aa-kheperu-Re found in the Unas South Cemetery. ^e A number of these mud bricks were excavated from the fill of the burial shaft in the tomb of Ry (see the text, below). The quarrying of limestone, at Tura, destined for this temple is recorded on a stela of the Overseer of Works in the temples of the gods of Upper and Lower Egypt, Minmose, dated to year 4 of Amenhotep II. ^f
Horemheb, late Eighteenth Dynasty (c. 1305-1290 BCE)
One tomb-inscription gives the name of a temple of Horemheb as <i>ts hwt Dsr-hpr(.w)-Rc-stp.n-Rc sz Pth mr.y-b'h</i> , "the temple of Djoser-kheperu-Re Setep-en-Re (prenomen of Horemheb) Son of Ptah who loves the inundated land". ^g The reference to the <i>b'h</i> -terrain likely points to the same place as where the temple of Amenhotep III was located. An individual identified as the "son of his son", named Iniua, served in the temple as a First Prophet (<i>hm-nr tp.y</i>). The relief-decorated block bearing the inscription was found during the excavation of the tomb of Iniua, Chief Steward of Memphis (<i>temp.</i> Tutankhamun-Horemheb). The tomb of Iniua is located immediately south of the tomb of Horemheb, which served as the <i>de facto</i> memorial temple of the deified king in the Ramesside period.
Rameses II, Nineteenth Dynasty (c. 1279-1213 BCE)
Rameses II's Memphite 'Ramesseum' was named "the temple of Rameses Mery-Amun in the house of Ptah". ^h Three Chief Stewards of this temple built their tombs in the Unas South Cemetery: Ptahmose, Nebnefer, and Mahu.

Table 13.1. Overview of a selection of temples of Millions of Years of the New Kingdom at Memphis.

a. *Urk.* IV, I, 24-25 (Ahmoese, year 22).

b. Staring 2017, 603-608.

c. The stela of the Steward of the Vizier, Menkheper (Leiden inv. no. AP 53), whose tomb is today lost, records two Deputies of the temple of Men-kheper-Re, Thutmose and Amunemmeruef (Staring 2015b, 527, cat. V.12; Boeser 1913, 2, no. 3, pl. 14). The stela can be dated to the reigns of Thutmose IV-Amenhotep III. At the time, Thutmose (see n. 49) was the northern Vizier. Two members of the temple's priesthood are known as late as the Saite Period (Pasquali 2011, 11 [A.21-23]). Haring (1997, 432) assigns Amenemone to the Theban memorial temple of Thutmose III.

d. Stela Leiden inv. no. AP 9.

e. Weiss 2015a; Raven et al. 2014-2015, 7 (with further references in n. 3). Another possibility is that the mud bricks originate from a structure of which an east-west oriented wall was excavated a few metres south of the Unas causeway (Lacher-Raschdorff 2014, 98, with figs 18, 47, and pls 18e, 42f). The wall includes bricks stamped with the name Aa-kheperu-Re (not the name Djoser-kheperu-Re, the prenomen of Horemheb, as initially proposed by the excavators and followed by Raven et al. 2011, 28). It is not clear what type of structure this has been. It is worth noting that some pre-Ramesside temples of Millions of Years, at Thebes, were constructed of mud bricks. Closer to the Tabet el-Guesh approach to the Unas South Cemetery (see the text, below), c. 200m south of the tomb of Ry, an unspecified number of bricks stamped with the prenomen of Amenhotep II were found in a debris-filled space of an Old Kingdom tomb (El-Ghandour 1997, 13, no. 5, pl. 12). One further brick stamped with the prenomen of Amenhotep II was found in the brick work of a monument built atop a hilly outcrop c. 1 km north-east of the Serapeum at Saqqara North (Yoshimura/Takamiya 2000, 171, figs 2, 3.8, pl. 19).

f. *Urk.* IV, 1448, 4-14; Ullmann 2002, 96-102.

g. Relief Cairo TN 31.5.25.11 (Schneider 2012, 121-122, fig. V.2; early Nineteenth Dynasty).

h. Staring 2015c, 178-180.

to read *hwt n.yt hḥ.w m rnp.wt Nb-mz^c.t-Rc-hnm.t-Pth m pr Pth*, 'temple of Millions of Years of Neb-Maat-Re United-with-Ptah in the house of Ptah'.⁵³

The location of the Memphite memorial temple of Amenhotep III mirrors the cultic landscape as we know it from Thebes. There, the remains of various temples of Millions of

53 This temple remained operational at least until the reign of Rameses II, when reference to it was made in pSallier IV (verso 1.8): "Ptah-who-is-under-his-moringa-tree-of-Neb-Maat-Re-United-with-Ptah" (Morkot 1990, 335). The temple was administratively attached to the temple of Ptah at Memphis (Haring 1997, 169, 390).

Years are situated, to this day, on the edge of the cultivated land, the ancient *b^ch*-terrain,⁵⁴ and the non-royal desert necropolis serves as a backdrop to the scene.

The Memphite temple of Amenhotep III did not stand in isolation. Text references point to the former existence of several royal memorial temples of predecessors and successors (Table 13.1).⁵⁵

Besides being the location of various temples of Millions of Years, the foreshore of Ankhtawy also accommodated a temple of Ptah. The son of Amenhotep Huy, Ipy (*temp.* Akhenaten-Horemheb), who succeeded his father in office as Chief Steward of Memphis, bore the title *hm-ntr tp.y h^w.t Pt^h m p³ b^ch*, ‘First Prophet in the temple of Ptah in the *b^ch*-terrain’.⁵⁶

The recovered tombs of high-ranking officials serving the above-mentioned temples are all situated in the Unas South Cemetery. At Saqqara, evidence for a spatial relationship between the royal memorial temples and the private tombs of those professionally associated with them is again provided by the autobiographical text of Amenhotep Huy. This text informs us about the income-generating endowment he created to maintain his tomb-cult and supply it with offerings in perpetuity. This arrangement involves the temple of Amenhotep III:

“...[22] Now behold, I appointed property by written deed out of my fields, my serfs, and my cattle on behalf of the statue (*twt*)⁵⁷ of Neb-Maat-Re whose name is [United-with-Ptah] [23] which His Majesty [had made] for his father Ptah in this temple (*m r-pr pn*). (...) [31] I say: “Listen you *wab* priests, lector-priests and gods-servants of United-with-Ptah and every steward of the king [32] who shall exist hereafter in Memphis (*Inb.w*), His Majesty has given you [33] bread and beer (...) and all good things to nourish you in [34] his temple of United-with-Ptah in the morning of every

day; do not covet [35] my provisions which my own(?) god decreed for me so as to do me [36] honour at my tomb (*is-d*).[37] (...) I appointed property by written deed for this statue (*twt*) of the king which is in [38] his temple (*h^w.t=f*) in exchange for his giving to me divine offerings that come in and came forth from [39] before his statue (*hnty*) after the ritual sacrifice has been made, so as to establish my provisions for [40] future generations to come”.

In this section of the text, we learn that Amenhotep Huy had donated all his property to the statue of the king in the temple United-with-Ptah. This property was then used by the temple to produce offerings for the statues of Ptah and the king. In an act of ‘diversion of offerings’, the same food offerings were taken up to the necropolis and deposited in the tomb of Amenhotep Huy, an act which had to be repeated daily, forever.⁵⁸ Those responsible for the maintenance of the offering cult were a *wab*-priest and a lector-priest. They would have been the final beneficiaries of these food-offerings. The same priests may have built their own chapels near the tomb of Huy. Such a practice is evidenced by the chapels (each including a stela and offering table) of Yamen and Peraa(er)neheh, built in the same Unas South Cemetery. Both men served in the offering cult of Maya, the great Overseer of the Treasury in the reigns of Tutankhamun and Horemheb. They possessed offering chapels for their personal cult, and these were built right against the south exterior wall of Maya’s tomb.⁵⁹

The relationship between the tomb of Amenhotep Huy and the royal memorial temple described in the autobiographical inscription suggests that the two were located not far from each other. There is additional archaeological evidence to corroborate this hypothesis. Huy’s tomb was excavated in 1821 or 1822, and although its precise location is today lost, there are indications that it was situated in the east section of the Unas South Cemetery. Excavator Amalia Nizzoli recorded its location

54 As already suggested by Gardiner (1913, 35) and followed by Kitchen 1991, 93 and fig. 1. Others (e.g. Snape 2011, 466 with n. 6; Angenot 2008, 10; Jeffreys/Smith 1988, 63-64) propose to situate the temple United-with-Ptah adjacent to the temple of Ptah at Memphis and hypothesise that it was demolished under Akhenaten and that later Ramesses II built the West Gate of the temple of Ptah on the spot. Garnett (2011) and Johnson (2011) also situate it close to the temple of Ptah, although they argue that almost certainly the temple remained intact during the Amarna period.

55 This overview is not meant as an exhaustive list of Memphite New Kingdom temples of Millions of Years. The selection serves to illustrate the point that Amenhotep III built a temple in line with a local Memphite custom that had existed since the beginning of the New Kingdom and which continued into the Ramesside period. For more references, see e.g. Pasquali 2011, *passim*.

56 Pasquali/Gessler-Löhr 2011, 281-299; Pasquali 2011, 93 [B.67].

57 The *twt* statue is usually translated simply as ‘statue’; *hnty* statue (mentioned below) refers to a ‘processional statue’: Morkot 1990, 331-332.

58 The quantities transported by them daily have been calculated to amount to over one sack of grain of c. 80 litres (380 sacks annually): Haring 1997, 142. The tomb of Amenhotep Huy may have been accessible for a prolonged period of time following his interment, because he features among the venerated ancestors depicted on the so-called *fragment Daressy*, a relief-decorated tomb-block from Saqqara dated to the Ramesside period. The block has not been seen since Egyptologist Georges Daressy (1864-1938) copied it at Saqqara. For the *fragment Daressy*, see Mathieu 2012 (p. 819 n. 1 has an extensive list of bibliographic references, and pp. 839-841 focus on Amenhotep Huy).

59 Raven 1997.



Figure 13.3. The tomb of Ry and chapel 2013/7 after excavation in 2013, looking north-west. Photo: Nico Staring.

“...at Saccarah, near Memphis, on the chain of hills which separates the left bank of the Nile from the sands of the deserts (...) not more than a quarter of an hour from ‘the town of Memphis’.”⁶⁰

Years later, archaeologist James Quibell referred to the same location as

“...Ras el-Gisr ‘the head of the embankment’ (...) that much-dug area on the desert edge at the end of the dyke leading from Bedrashein.”⁶¹

The village of Badrashein is situated just east of the ruin fields of Memphis, on the banks of the Nile (fig. 13.2). The old road from Badrashein to the village of Saqqara ran through the ruins of the temple of Ptah at Memphis.⁶² Ras el-Gisr is where the Coptic Monastery of Apa Jeremias is located on a gentle slope just below the high desert. There,

Quibell found a quartzite stela inscribed for Amenhotep Huy,⁶³ which indicates that the tomb must be close by.

In sum, the sacred landscape at Memphis included the city-temples of Ptah and other deities, and to the west of the city, at the foot of the desert escarpment, New Kingdom pharaohs built temples of Millions of Years. Prominent citizens of Memphis built their tombs – or *ḥw. wt n. wt nḥḥ*, “temples of eternity”⁶⁴ – on (the slope of) the desert plateau, which could be seen from the monuments of their kings and the temple of Ptah at Memphis. Based on parallels to festivals celebrated at Thebes and Abydos, the procession of the god Sokar on day 26 of his festival travelled to chapels housed in various royal temples before heading up to the necropolis.⁶⁵ Easy access to this part of the necropolis was possible via a wadi just north of the pyramid of Pepi I (modern Tabbet el-Guesh),⁶⁶ via the gentle slope over the

60 Hayes 1938, 13.

61 Quibell 1908, 63. The dyke is visible in a photo showing the excavations at the time of the inundation season: Quibell 1909, pl. 2.

62 See e.g. the fold-out map of Memphis, 1955, in Anthes 1959.

63 Quibell 1912, 84. Until a few years ago, the quartzite stela was still visible lying at exactly the same spot as where Quibell had left it (Gessler-Löhr 2007, 68 and n. 18, after an observation by M.J. Raven). It was recently removed and transferred to the antiquities magazine at Saqqara (Mohammad M. Youssef, personal communication).

64 See e.g. n. 42, above.

65 Eaton 2007.

66 See Dobrev 2017, 53 and fig. 1.



Figure 13.4. Satellite image of Saqqara showing the New Kingdom tombs in the Unas South Cemetery. Image: Google Earth (November 2017), adapted by Nico Staring.

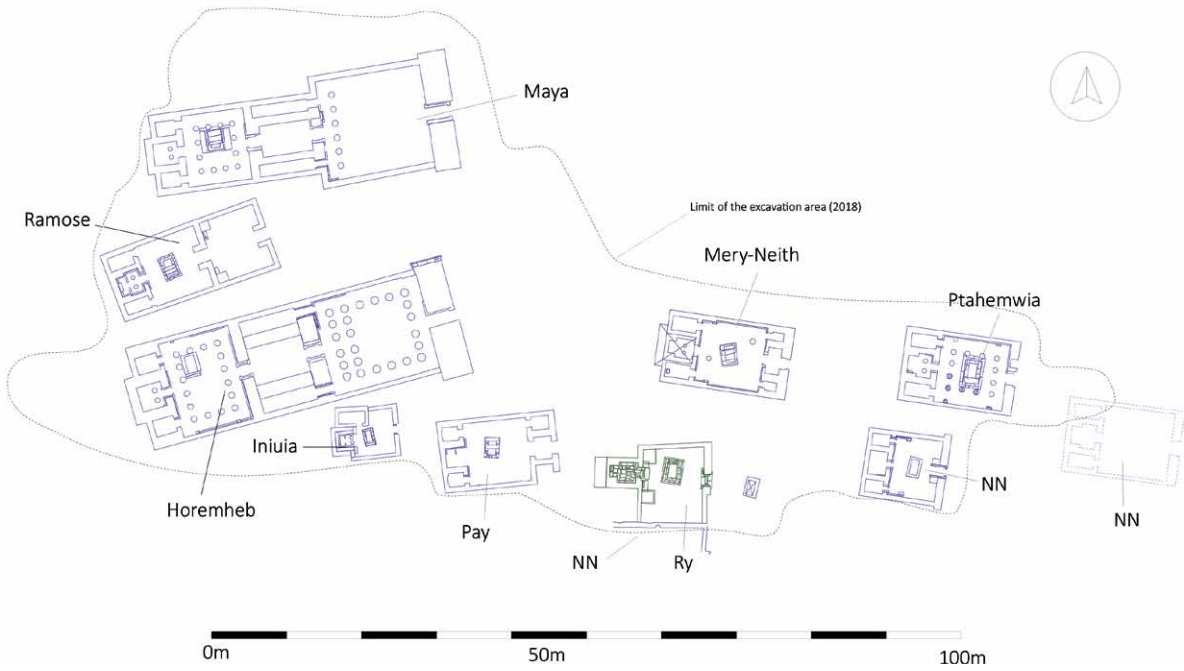


Figure 13.5. The Unas South Cemetery in the late Eighteenth Dynasty, *temp.* Horemheb. Image: Nico Staring.

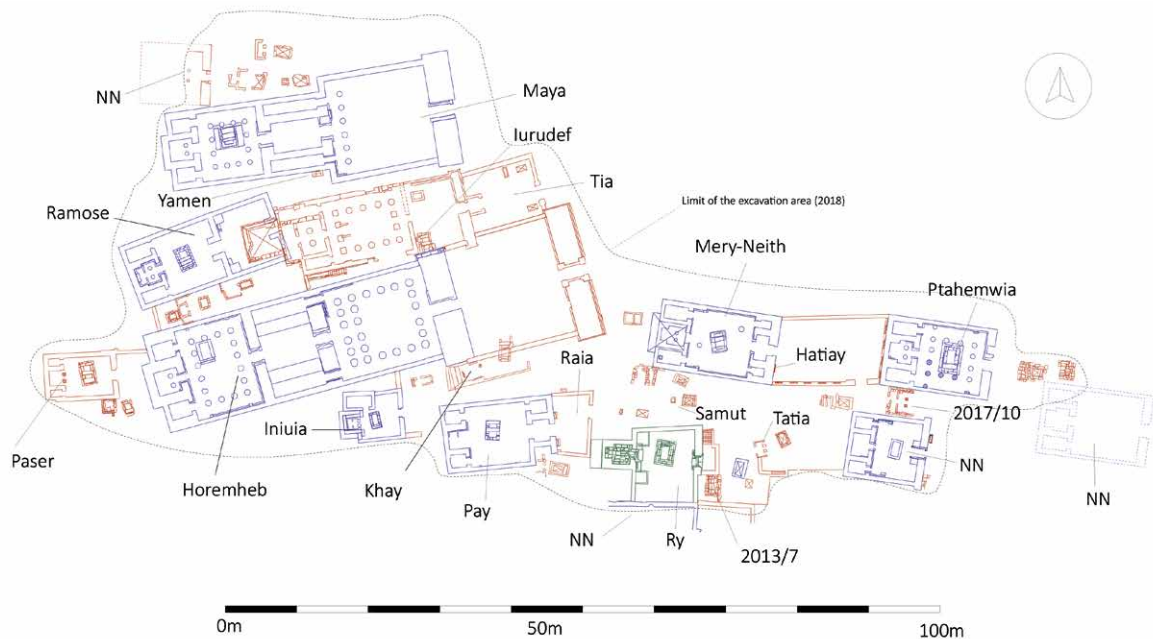


Figure 13.6. The Unas South Cemetery in the late Nineteenth Dynasty. Image: Nico Staring.

Ras el-Gisir, or via the Fifth Dynasty pyramid causeway of Unas.⁶⁷ Arriving from Memphis, the southern wadi-approach and Ras el-Gisir slope would have offered the shortest route. The spatial distribution of the monumental tombs shows that this cemetery grew in a northward direction from the Eighteenth to the Nineteenth Dynasty. This observation also favours a southern approach, with the earliest tombs situated closest to the point of entry.

Use of Cemetery Space at Saqqara

Having established the spatial context in which the Unas South Cemetery is situated, let us now turn to the use of space within the cemetery itself. A premise underlying my narrative of the cemetery development is that movements of people who visited the necropolis influenced burial patterns (choice of tomb location), and vice versa.⁶⁸ The tomb of a high-ranking army official named Ry (figs 13.3-13.4),⁶⁹ or rather the section of the cemetery in which the tomb is located, will be taken as an example to illustrate this point.

The initial owner of the tomb, Ry, was a Chief of Bowmen and Overseer of Horses who had his tomb constructed in the late Eighteenth Dynasty reigns of Tutankhamun to Horemheb (early) (fig. 13.4). What did the Unas South Cemetery look like when Ry started building his tomb? Unfortunately, we are rather ill-informed about the pre-Amarna period development of this section of the necropolis. The earliest archaeological evidence for private tombs at this site dates to the reign of Amenhotep III, when Amenhotep Huy built his funerary monument, which is now lost. The tombs dated to this time period were probably (partially) cut into what the ancient Egyptians referred to as the *dhn.t wr.t 'nh-t3.wy*, 'great cliffs of Ankhtawy'.⁷⁰

In a later phase of the cemetery's development, in the time of the late Eighteenth Dynasty reigns of Tutankhamun to Horemheb (fig. 13.5), we encounter the 'distinctly Memphite' monumental freestanding tomb superstructures, also referred to as 'temple-tombs'.⁷¹ Thus, the plot selected by Ry was surrounded by monuments, which were fairly new at the time. Ry's neighbour to the west was Pay, the Overseer of Cattle and the Overseer of the King's Apartments at Memphis (*temp.* Tutankhamun);

67 Note that the valley temple of Unas is also situated at the edge of the cultivation, on the banks of an ancient lake. The valley temple and pyramid temple of Unas are connected by a causeway measuring 690 metres in length.

68 See Raven 2000, 136-138 ("patterns of association"), 140-141 ("access and communication"); Martin 1991, 117, for some preliminary observations on the same issues.

69 Staring 2019; Raven et al. 2012-2013.

70 C. Martin 2009, 49-50, listing Late Period attestations from the Memphite necropolis. The hypothesised situation in the cliff south of the Unas causeway likely compares to the contemporary rock-cut tombs in the cliffs near the later Bubasteion at Saqqara North (e.g. A.-P. Zivie 2012).

71 Van Dijk 1993, 198-203.



Figure 13.7. Chapel 2007/10, looking west, built between the tombs of NN (left) and Ptahemwia (right). Photo: Nico Staring.

to the north stood the tomb of Mery-Neith, the Greatest of Seers (high priest) and the Steward in the temple of the Aten in Memphis (*temp.* Akhenaten-Tutankhamun); and his neighbours to the east and south are still unknown. Moreover, located within a radius of 50 metres were the tombs of two of the most influential officials of Tutankhamun's tenure: Horemheb, the Generalissimo (several building phases), and Maya, the Overseer of the Treasury and Overseer of Works on All Monuments of the King. The latter may have been buried as late as year 9 of king Horemheb.⁷² When we add to these archaeologically excavated tombs the prosopographic information recorded on tomb-elements taken from the same section of the cemetery (now kept in museum collections worldwide), the image of a field reserved exclusively for courtiers emerges. Thus, the court cemetery includes stewards of temples of Millions of Years (the temples that are located at the foot of the escarpment), high-ranking army officials (incl. royal butlers), overseers of (royal) construction works, "harim" officials, and high priests.⁷³

Ry's tomb was built as a not completely freestanding structure. Its construction made use of the north exterior wall of a neighbouring tomb (?) to the south (fig. 13.5). This association by proximity may point to a certain relationship that Ry and his neighbour had while still alive, or one transcending the generations, either along family lines or through professional associations. Yamen and Peraanerheh, the priests responsible for the maintenance of Maya's offering cult, perpetuated the professional relationship to their patron by connecting their chapels with the latter's monumental tomb. The case of Ry also likely reflects a perpetuated professional relationship. The superior in rank to

72 Van Dijk 1993, 76-79.

73 Staring 2017; 2014-2015.

Ry was the General, Amenemone (see table 13.1), who also served as the steward in the nearby Memphite temple of Millions of Years of Thutmose III.

The cemetery continued to develop after Ry's funeral had taken place (fig. 13.6). Existing tombs were adapted, and new chapels were added in the ever-diminishing space available between pre-existing structures.⁷⁴ The son and successor in office of Pay, Raia (*temp.* Horemheb-Seti I), enlarged the tomb of his father by adding an open forecourt. It is clear that space between the tombs of Ry and Pay was limited, and this influenced the form and layout of Raia's annex. An axial approach to the new entrance doorway was not an option; therefore the entrance was shifted to the north.

In the areas to the north and east of the tomb of Ry, additional chapels were built, which date to the (early) Ramesside period. A four-sided stela inscribed for a Stonemason named Samut, apparently without an accompanying superstructure, was set up halfway between Ry and Mery-Neith;⁷⁵ a chapel for a Priest of the Front of Ptah, Tatia, occupied the open space to the east;⁷⁶ and a final Ramesside chapel, labelled feature 2013/7 and of unknown ownership, was built right against the southeast facade of Ry's tomb.⁷⁷ The position of the shaft of chapel 2013/7 (if indeed identified correctly) suggests that the "dead-end road" leading up to it served as its courtyard.

The changes and additions all around the tomb of Ry had their effect on the accessibility of certain parts of the cemetery. The corridor leading up to the entrance of Ry's tomb may have been constructed in conjunction with these later building activities. In so doing, those responsible for the tomb's maintenance, likely members of Ry's (extended) household, changed the approach by 'funneling' visitors southward. The need to do so stemmed perhaps not so much from the building of new chapels immediately east of the tomb entrance, but rather from the blocking of a passage further east. In the 'street' between the tombs of Ptahemwia (late Eighteenth Dynasty, *temp.* Akhenaten-Tutankhamun) and its anonymous neighbour to the south (late Eighteenth Dynasty), a chapel of Ramesside date was built (chapel 2007/10; fig. 13.7). After closing this passageway, the only remaining means of accessing the tomb of Ry would have been through the narrow space between the south wing of the pylon of Horemheb and the west wall of the tomb of Mery-Neith. The passage was, in

fact, flanked by a stela inscribed for a man named [Pen]dua and his family, set against the exterior wall of Horemheb's pylon, and a tomb shaft situated immediately west of the exterior wall of Mery-Neith's tomb chapel (chapel 2002/2; fig. 13.6).⁷⁸ Thus, even via this route, people would have had to step over someone's burial space.⁷⁹

The development of this cemetery in the Ramesside period was further influenced by the fact that general Horemheb became king. As pharaoh, he started to construct his royal tomb in the Valley of the Kings (KV 57) at Thebes.⁸⁰ Despite the new tomb in the south of Egypt, his Memphite monument, built when he was general of the army, did not go out of use. On the contrary, it was *de facto* transformed into a royal memorial temple.⁸¹ Various priests maintained the cult of the deified king for an extended period of time, and "pious" visitors left graffiti.⁸² As a result of this course of events, the tomb-turned-memorial temple of Horemheb came to serve as a magnet for subsequent construction works in the cemetery. This is, for example, illustrated by the tomb of Tia, the brother-in-law of Ramesses II. His tomb was wedged in the narrow space between the pre-existing tombs of Horemheb and Maya. Its construction makes use of the north exterior walls of Horemheb's tomb, thereby associating Tia, whose tomb is described by the excavators as a "royal monument",⁸³ with the 'founder' of the Ramesside dynasty.⁸⁴ It has been suggested that, in order to reinforce their own legitimacy, both Seti I and Ramesses II widely promoted the cults of their deceased fathers and the royal ancestors. A monument of the dynasty's founder, embedded in an ancient landscape of religious significance and royal presence (e.g. in terms of New Kingdom temples of Millions of Years and Old Kingdom pyramids), presented an excellent opportunity to do so. The tomb of the deified king may have also influenced

74 Note that high officials did not stop constructing monumental tombs in this cemetery. In the Nineteenth Dynasty, numerous monumental tombs were built in the north section of the Unas South Cemetery (see Tawfik 1991). Thus, the small chapels built in the available spaces between the big, late Eighteenth Dynasty tombs were not introduced because of a lack of available cemetery space.

75 Raven et al. 2014-2015, 13.

76 Oeters 2017.

77 Raven et al. 2012-2013, 11, figs 6-7.

78 Raven et al. 2011, 60, no. 29, fig. on p. 61 (date: "Nineteenth or Twentieth Dynasty").

79 If indeed the space between the stela and tomb shaft was part of what could be termed 'burial space'.

80 Davis 1912.

81 Construction of his Memphite tomb may have continued when Horemheb became king. The subterranean complex, for example, was "directly modelled on the royal tombs of the last kings of the Eighteenth Dynasty before the Amarna period" (Van Dijk 1993, 46). The first pylon and forecourt may have also been constructed at that time (see also Raven et al. 2011, 27, who consider the option that the enlargement of the superstructure happened in the Ramesside period to facilitate the deceased king's cult). The tomb of Horemheb also served as the burial place of his first wife (?), Amenias (who may have died early in the reign of Tutankhamun), and his second wife, queen Mutnodjmet (who died in regnal year 13 of her husband). At a later stage, the tomb-complex (shaft-complex i) saw the interment of members of the court (?) of Ramesses II (Schneider 1996, 3).

82 Staring 2018; Martin 2016, 68.

83 Martin 1997. For critique of this view, see Teeter 2003.

84 A dynasty otherwise founded on "politically shaky ground", according to Brand 2005, 27.



Figure 13.8. Relief-decorated blocks (Berlin inv. no. ÄM 7278) from the north wall of Ry's tomb (antechapel), showing the deceased couple (left) and a group of offering bearers and officiants (right). Copyright SMB Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung, photo: Jürgen Liepe.

the positioning of funerary monuments elsewhere in the cemetery. Anonymous chapel 2007/10 (figs 13.6 and 13.7), situated a mere 50 metres west of Horemheb's entrance pylon, serves as an example. It may have been built along one of the prevailing access routes leading up to the tomb-temple of the deified king. Visitors passed through the street in between the monumental tombs of Ptahemwia and NN when they arrived from the valley below. By building a chapel at precisely that location, the owner of chapel 2007/10 deliberately blocked one possible route leading up to the king's monument. Future visitors, entering the cemetery from the southern Tabbet el-Guesh or Ras el-Gisir approach, now had to pass by this chapel and make a detour to reach the same destination. The choice for that exact location may thus have been the result of strategic decision-making, aimed to attract the attention of a maximum number of passers-by, both in the present and future. The same choice and resulting changes to the cemetery infrastructure also affected the accessibility of other, pre-existing tombs, both positively and negatively.

Patrimonial Relationships and the Social Dimension of Burial

The life histories of individual tombs at Saqqara, such as in the example of Ry, highlight a development in the social dimension of burial that was previously observed in the Theban necropolis of Deir el-Medina.⁸⁵ Research has shown that tombs of the Eighteenth Dynasty tended to house individuals, couples, or small family groups.⁸⁶ Tombs of the Nineteenth

⁸⁵ Meskell 1999.

⁸⁶ See also the observations in Polz 1995, 30, 39. As early as the late Seventeenth and early Eighteenth Dynasty, tomb complexes at Dra Abu el-Naga (consisting of a single-room funerary chapel with open courtyard and entrance pylon, and a tomb shaft, accessed from the court, with two chambers at the bottom) were used for the tomb owner's extended household, thus incorporating individuals of different social levels (Polz 2005, 235). Polz suggests that the superstructures associated to these shaft tombs may have been used not only for the extended household of the tomb owner, but also for those buried in the tomb shafts clustered around the chapel. Those shafts had no superstructures associated to them – at least not built in durable material such as mud bricks.

and Twentieth Dynasty were complexes that contained larger numbers of individuals, including several generations of the same family and extended families.

According to the data currently at our disposal, Ry and his wife, Maia, had no children. Consequently, mortuary rituals such as the purification of the deceased couple and their offering table (fig. 13.8) were performed not by their offspring, but by individuals who were professionally associated with Ry. The two officiants are identified, in writing, as subordinates in rank, or in other words, members of Ry's extended household. They are the Stablemaster, Maia, and the Servant, Ahanefer. By having their names and titles inscribed in the tomb of a powerful patron (a superior in rank), members of an extended household were able to secure their permanent presence in the following of their patron.⁸⁷

The wish for one's permanent presence in the following of a patron can also take material form. Ry, as we have observed, built his tomb against the north exterior wall of another pre-existing structure. In so doing, he associated himself with that tomb owner, a man who has tentatively been identified as the General, Amenemone, Ry's superior in rank.⁸⁸ The chapel that was later added to the east facade of Ry's tomb (no. 2013/7) may be a further example of association by proximity, perhaps meant to accommodate one of the officiants (and their family) depicted in the tomb of Ry. In my view, this organisation of burials reflects the prevailing patrimonial household structure of Egyptian society in the New Kingdom.⁸⁹ The respective tombs and chapels position their owners in the funerary landscape as part of a grouping according to patrimonial household lines.⁹⁰

According to the case study on Deir el-Medina, in the transition period from the late Eighteenth Dynasty into the Ramesside period, tomb architecture changed to accommodate extended households within the planned tomb complex. The same pattern can be observed at Saqqara. One example is provided by the tomb of the Overseer of the Treasury, Tia, the brother-in-law of Ramesses II.⁹¹ A subordinate of Tia named Iurudef, a Scribe of the Treasury, was buried in the second courtyard of his superior in rank, along

87 Staring 2018, 90; Ragazzoli 2013, 288; Den Doncker 2012, 24-25. Two Saqqara tomb stelae derive from the tombs of servants (*sdm-ꜥꜥ*): stela Berlin inv. no. ÄM 7273 of Nehehenitef (Roeder 1924, 150-152; Nineteenth Dynasty; probably Unas South Cemetery); and stela Neuchatel inv. no. Eg. 428 of Nakht-Amun (*hr. y sdmw. w n. w wꜥꜥ nsw Hri* and *sdm-ꜥꜥ n. y wꜥꜥ nsw Hri*; Málek 1988, 131-132; Nineteenth Dynasty; Teti Pyramid Cemetery). The stela of Nakht-Amun possibly derives from the tomb of his superior, the Royal Butler, Hori. This situation compares well to that of Iurudef, Scribe of the Treasury, who was buried within the tomb complex of his superior, Tia (see main text, above). The pit burial of only one *sdm-ꜥꜥ* has been attested archaeologically. Burial 99/5 is situated immediately south of the south wall of Horemheb's inner courtyard (Raven et al. 2011, 39, 72, figs I.16, I.21; *temp.* Amenhotep III).

88 Staring 2019.

89 For the patrimonial household system of New Kingdom Egypt, see: Warden 2014, 16-20; Schloen 2001, 255, 313-316. For patronage systems in Egypt, see also: Eyre 2016; Campagno 2014; Moreno Garcia 2014; 2013; Lehner 2000.

90 For a comparable grouping of cenotaph chapels in the Abydos North Cemetery (Middle Kingdom), near the temple of Osiris, see: Adams 2010 (with similar observations made earlier in O'Connor 1985, 174; Leprohon 1978; Simpson 1974, 4 n. 6). As to the case study, the chapel and stela of a man named Nakht, Adams (2010, 17) concludes that "[h]e is represented as both an individual and as part of a social unit, itself represented materially by the entirety of the grouping of architectural and archaeological features, the chapels with their stelae, the individuals represented on the stelae, the shaft tombs, and the burials they once contained." Polz (2007, 243, 249) has observed a similar grouping of tomb chapels in the late Seventeenth to early Eighteenth Dynasty cemetery at Dra Abu el-Naga (example: tomb chapel K91.3). The chapels built against the exterior wall of the pylon entrance of tomb K91.3 had no tomb shafts, which means that the burials of the individuals for whom the chapels (possibly including stelae) were built, were located somewhere else (see also Polz 2003, 81-83). Polz also suggests that the cenotaph tombs at Abydos were in fact used as cult places for those buried in unmarked shaft tombs at Thebes and other contemporary cemeteries. Smith (1992, 219) observed that, in the Theban necropolises of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Dynasties, the "grouping of poorer burials with wealthier ones is clearly more the norm than the exception".

91 Martin 1997. Recently, the Cairo University mission in the Unas South Cemetery, led by Prof. Ola el-Aguizy, excavated a Ramesside tomb that was built over the course of three generations: Iurokhy, Yupa and Hatay. <https://www.livescience.com/62514-ancient-general-tomb-saqqara.html> (last accessed on 03.07.2018).

with members of his own family.⁹² Tia's forecourt contained another two tomb shafts to accommodate additional burials. This goes to show that a single tomb complex served to provide burial space for the extended household of the high-status main owner. In this manner, family members and subordinates were able to secure their permanent presence in the following of a higher-ranking individual.⁹³

Concluding Remarks

In this paper, I have proposed to study the development of the Saqqara New Kingdom necropolis by focusing on the day-to-day use of the site. The built environment provides the setting for human activity, and spaces separating individual tomb structures create possible thoroughfares. Thus, in the cemetery, movement of people from location X to location Y is embodied⁹⁴ in the patterns of tomb distribution. The necropolis as a place for the living was illustrated by proceedings highlighted in the Sokar festival – one of many occasions for the inhabitants of Memphis to visit their cemetery. It has been proposed that the nearby royal monuments played an important part in the site-specific development in terms of tomb distribution. The brief biography of one section of the Unas South Cemetery, as illustrated with the tomb of Ry, showed that it developed rather organically. This development reflects departures from the desired life-paths or emic ideal biographies of tombs.⁹⁵ It shows that the life history of a tomb continues where the life of its builder ends, and whatever happens to such a tomb subsequently (in terms of architectural layout, occupancy, etc.) may not necessarily reflect the pre-conceived image that motivated its construction.⁹⁶ The same applies to the broader setting, the landscape in which the tombs are located. In the words of Samuels, there is a “landscape of impression”, a layer of ideologies and cultural representations of space and place (including planning concepts), which provide the context to create the physically visible, materialised landscape, the “landscape of expression”.⁹⁷ The two inform each other and are in constant motion. These concepts are key in the biographical approach. Thus by adopting a biographical approach to studying the history of a necropolis site, one is steered away from a view centred exclusively on the tomb owner and his (self-)interests. Instead, this approach emphasises the enduring influence that the landscape, including old monuments, can have on the behaviour of people. In that view, tombs should be regarded not as ready-made monuments but rather as, what archaeologist Cornelius Holtorf calls, “works in progress in a continuous state of becoming”.⁹⁸ It is the necropolis at large where individuals and groups interact with and shape their environment, and where the environment influences the actions of individuals and groups. The landscape is, to conclude in the words of Tim Ingold, “never complete: neither ‘built’ nor ‘unbuilt’, it is perpetually under construction.”⁹⁹

92 Raven 1991. The same court accommodated another chapel of which little remains.

93 This same wish underlies the act of inscribing certain types of graffiti. The graffitiists secured their permanent presence in the following of the tomb owner without requiring to be buried there. Staring 2018. Some of these graffiti are also discussed in the contribution of Lara Weiss in this volume.

94 Ingold 1993, 167.

95 Fontijn 2013, 157.

96 Paraphrasing Ingold's observation (1993, 162), an argument made along the same lines as Fontijn (n. 95, above): “Virtually by definition, an artefact is an object shaped to a pre-conceived image that motivated its construction, and it is ‘finished’ at the point when it is brought into conformity with this image. What happens to it beyond that point is supposed to belong to the phase of use rather than manufacture, to dwelling rather than building.”

97 Samuels 1979. Compare this to what is called “instantiation” in the Lived Ancient Religion approach, arguing that any cultural framework is made up of a “horizon of experience” and a “horizon of expectation” (Albrecht et al. 2018, 5-7). Both aspects are said to have an impact on an actors' interests and motivations for instantiating religion. These horizons can be equated to Samuels's “landscape of impression”.

98 Holtorf 2015, 168.

99 Ingold 1993, 162.

Architectures of Intimidation

Political Ecology and Landscape Manipulation in Early Hindu Southeast Asia

Elizabeth A. Cecil¹

From the riverine coast of central Vietnam, to the highland jungles of Southern Laos, and the wetland mangroves of northwest Java, Southeast Asia's earliest Hindu polities were defined by their unruly geography. Absent the contiguous terrain and infrastructure of a centralised state, these complex ecological zones developed distinctive spatial patterns of political authority. The kingdoms of Champa, Zhenla, and Taruma were archipelagos of power – i.e. distinct nodes of governance separated by intractable regions.² How was a ruler's authority translated in places where entire populations could evade direct control? This paper develops the concept of 'landscape manipulation' to explore the technologies of power used to cultivate these "non-state spaces".³ Extending beyond utilitarian modes of territorialisation,⁴ landscape manipulation emphasises the strategic use of architecture by powerful elites to fundamentally, and often violently, transform the spiritually charged topographic features of local geographies into political landscapes. Thinking beyond the Anthropocene, this project incorporates political ecology, temple

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2 I have adopted the model of the archipelagic polity from Adam T. Smith, whose work on the Urartian landscape builds on Paul Zimansky's attention to physical geography in early state formation. With the exception of James C. Scott (see below) scholarship on early Southeast Asian polities is often de-spatialised. Geographic models that transcend modern political boundaries – such as the current 'Monsoon Asia' model – consider trade networks and coastal mobility, yet present the insular landscape as if it were a homogenous territory. See Smith 1999; also Smith 2003; Zimansky 1985.

3 In his study of upland Southeast Asia (i.e. 'Zomia') James C. Scott (2009) draws attention to a fundamental geographic tension between the civilised space of the agrarian lowlands and the highland regions – what Scott terms a "non-state" or "anarchist zone". Although the material I will present is significantly earlier than Scott's late and post-colonial evidence, I argue that this geographic tension also registered in the politics and material culture of premodern Southeast Asia.

4 Landscape manipulation is the material implementation of religious and political ideologies and aesthetics rather than purely functional interventions in landscape, such as roads supportive of infrastructure or the development of state-held agricultural tracts. Landscape manipulation can also be distinguished from the use of landforms or the management and control of natural resources by elite groups. I do not wish to posit a clear binary since landscape manipulation can include utilitarian aspects, but these projects are incorporated within larger built interventions designed to both control *and* transform local geography. See: Lansing 1991.

architecture, and landscape design to show how power was materialised by bending the land to one's will and, in doing so, exerting control over and reshaping terrain in ways that would permanently alter an individual's perception and experience of the spaces in which they lived and worked. By highlighting the dynamic interactions between people and built environments, and considering the effective agency of natural environments, I work to show how monumental art and architecture can be used to understand politics as a spatial practice.

Practices of landscape manipulation were particularly efficacious because they are informed by a defining feature of Hinduism: namely, a religious ecology expressed in the celebration of the natural world and the spiritual magnetism of prominent geographic features. More than just eye-catching landmarks, distinctive mountain peaks, natural springs, rivers, etc. are manifestations of divine presence called *svayambhu*, (natural or self-existent) deities in Sanskrit. The sites of these manifestations are often places of pilgrimage called *tīrthas*, terrestrial and cosmic 'crossings' that confer a multitude of rewards to those people who visit them – ranging from material wealth to spiritual liberation (*mokṣa*). These natural wonders were considered more ritually efficacious than constructed shrines or images because they were spontaneous revelations, and not the work of human hands. This religious ecology, in which the physical geography was fully saturated with power and agency, was, I argue, the basis for the development of a political ecology in which the landscape was similarly understood as a source of empowerment, rather than passive ground waiting to be vivified by human actions. Monuments designed to control or co-opt these powerful places served as effective agents of empire because they enabled control of natural places that were widely recognised as sources of divine presence.⁵

From 'Sanskrit Cosmopolis' to Vernacular Landscape

In the earliest polities of Southeast Asia, mountains, forests, and rivers revered as the abode of tutelary deities and ancestors, and the heart of subsistence economies, were systematically reworked as royal

temple sites dedicated to Hindu deities beginning in the late Fifth Century CE. My project develops the concept of 'landscape manipulation' to describe the technologies of power deployed to transform these local geographies into spiritually charged political landscapes. To clarify, my definition of 'landscape' maps closely onto the Sanskrit word *kṣetra* ('field'). A *kṣetra* is not *only* a field for growing crops, but is also used to designate a theatre for human and divine activity. Landscape, by this definition, is not simply physical terrain. It is physical terrain designed to serve human aims and ambitions. 'Landscape manipulation' refers to practices that extend beyond utilitarian modes of territorialisation to recover the material implementation of religious and political ideologies and aesthetics, rather than functional interventions in landscape, such as roads supportive of infrastructure or the development of state-held agricultural tracts. I do not wish to posit a clear binary, since landscape manipulation can include utilitarian aspects, but these projects are incorporated within larger built interventions designed to both control *and* transform particular geographies. Through centuries of directed labour and accretional building practices, including monumental architecture, hydrological systems, iconographic and epigraphic programs, those in power transformed regional landmarks into royal religious centres emblematic of Hindu polities.

This paper works to show how the manipulation of a mountain in Southwest Laos provided both the physical terrain and the ideological ground for the building of Hinduism in the land that would become part of the Khmer Empire. Hindu religious institutions were integral to the elite effort to articulate the hierarchical vision of society that supported the development of the Khmer political regime. A regime in which the reciprocal relations of ritual specialists and rulers ensured the ordered functioning of society, the prosperity of the land, the productivity of the people, and the pleasure of the gods.

Important work has been done to show how the introduction of Hinduism in Southeast Asia was ideologically-driven and catalysed through elite (i.e. Sanskritic) registers of artistic and political production. The use of Sanskrit in royal communications began in the late Fifth Century, which initiated a period of intense social connectivity in South and Southeast Asia. Flourishing maritime trade enabled the movement of people on a previously unprecedented scale. The interactions between political elites, merchants, artisans, intellectuals, and religious specialists significantly altered the cultural geography. Sanskrit poetry (*kāvya*) became the language of political power and social ambition *par excellence*. The trans-regional adoption of Sanskrit-inflected cultural forms – from art and architecture to belles-lettres and ritual – engendered what Sheldon Pollock has termed the

⁵ Sheldon Pollock (2009) comments that while things like temples and victory pillars can be fame-producing, fame remains "amorphous until embodied in some language; it remains unintelligible unless that language can speak in the figures of speech that explain to us the otherwise inexplicable". In this argument, fame needs the 'language of the gods', an eternal language, to overcome transience. These epigraphic performances were important investments, but these linguistic performances in the Sanskrit cosmopolis did not do the work of domination, control, and intimidation that were necessary in order to truly gain and maintain power in the land of the Khmer.

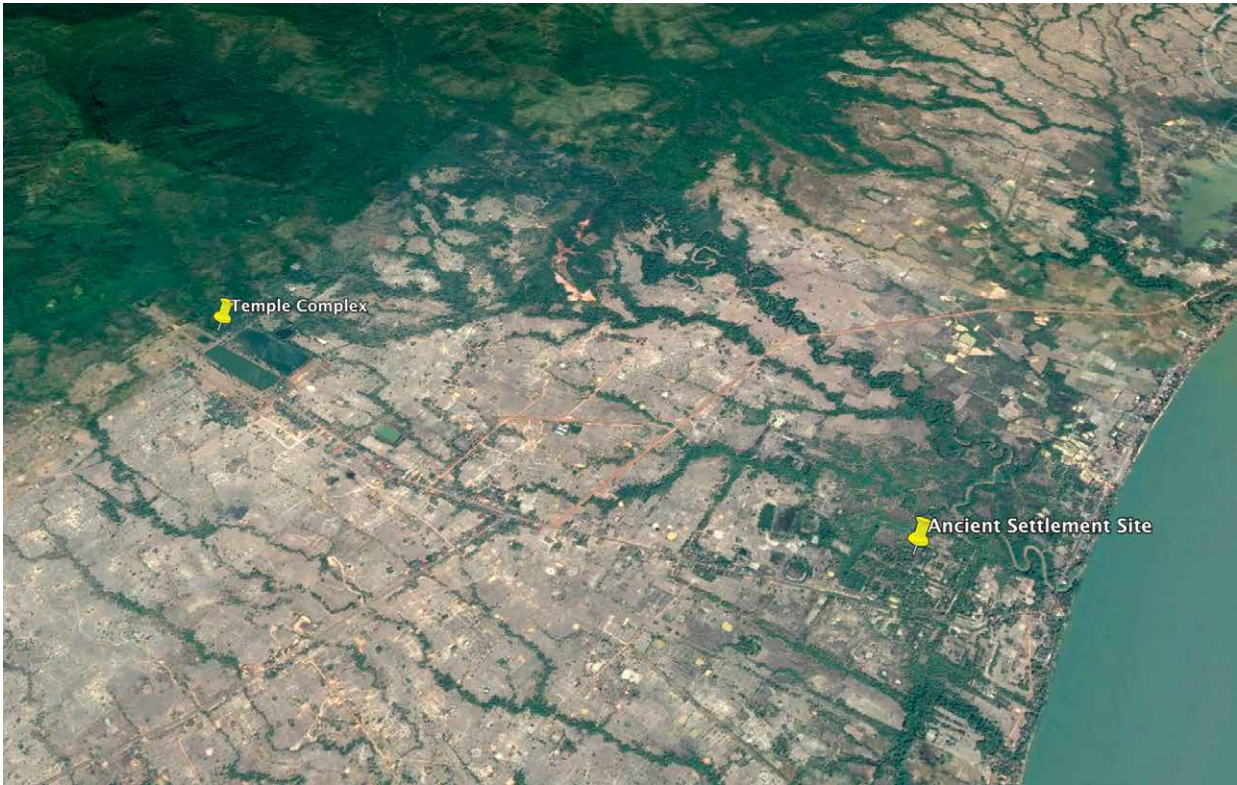


Figure 14.1. Champassak District, Southwest Laos, satellite map.



Figure 14.2.
Mt. Phu Kao
(Lingaparvata).

‘Sanskrit Cosmopolis.’⁶ While attuned to the imbrication of aesthetics and politics, this rarified world of Sanskrit discourse remains untethered from physical geography and alienated from the very people, places, and politics that it supposedly linked. Also missing from this picture are the infrastructures of social, economic, and gender oppression that supported the implementation of elite ambitions ‘on the ground’. My project reverses the traditional scholarly angle by examining the spatial and material expression of Hinduism in the vernacular landscape to show how these cultural forms were deployed to transform the land in ways that naturalised power.

Landscape Exemplar: Vat Phou

The mountain that oriented the Khmer polity is located in what is today the Champassak district of Southwest Laos, a collection of small villages on the bank of the Mekong River. This is the edge of James C. Scott’s ‘Zomia’, an unruly geography dominated by mountains and jungle over which the distinctive peak of a mountain, known locally as Phu Kao presides. The mountain is part of the Dangrek Range, connected with the larger Khorat Plateau, which was an important meeting place for overland trade and travel in mainland Southeast Asia.⁷ The regional importance of the mountain derives from its two remarkable features. The peak is crowned by a natural stone monolith approximately 60 feet tall. It serves as a landmark for both overland and riverine travel.⁸ The second feature is a natural spring that flows from the mountain top and emerges as a small stream from the rocks at the base of an adjacent mountain.

The political manipulation of this mountain, the spring, and the land surrounding it began in the Fifth Century when a Sanskrit inscription reimagined it as a *svayambhu* deity presiding over a new polity called Kurukṣetra – an allusion to the site of the *Mahābhārata* epic’s final battle. This inscription also initiates the transformation of the mountain into the Hindu God Śiva. First as the Liṅgaparvata, (Liṅga Mountain) a title that homologises the mountain’s crowning stone monolith – its ‘characteristic mark’, which is the meaning of the term *liṅga* – with the *liṅga* of Śiva, which is often represented as a phallic emblem. This Śaiva connection is developed further in subsequent inscriptions that identify the mountain deity as Bhadrēśvara, the ‘Prosperous Lord’, the five-headed, ten-armed anthropomorphic Śiva whose image, still standing at the base of the mountain, is emblematic of Śaiva Siddhānta, a trans-regional Hindu religious institution. Manifested as the ‘Prosperous Lord’, the god of the mountain became the tutelary deity of

the region’s rulers and, eventually, the patron deity of the emergent Khmer empire. The expansive Eleventh Century temple complex dedicated to Bhadrēśvara still stands at the foot of the mountain where it is presently dedicated to the Buddha.

Today called simply Vat Phu (Temple Mountain) this was the geographic heart and sanctified centre from which the Khmer political landscape extended south to, what is today, Cambodia.⁹

To pixellate our vision of the political manipulations of landscape, my study focuses on three significant historical phases in the architectonics of this area: *participation*, *amplification*, and *mastery*. These phases identify the ways in which political ideologies and social hierarchies were materialised over time in a process I liken to a premodern gentrification.

1. *Participation* marks the initial stage when a ruler’s claim to a landscape feature was proclaimed. Boundary stones and other markers were erected to demarcate sanctified spaces. Inscriptions identify local landmarks with major deities from the Hindu pantheon, and emblems of these deities were carved in highly visible places (boulders, riverbanks, cliff faces, etc.).
2. *Amplification* entails the intensification of structural interventions clustered in prominent places – i.e., around the source of a natural spring, river ford, or mountain pass. Iconography on temples and monuments blends royal and religious imagery to materialise the connections between ruler, deity, and place.
3. *Mastery* is the culmination of the gentrification process. Roads and fortified processional routes replace natural paths of access. Temple grounds are flooded to create massive reservoirs, eliminating quotidian paths. Rivers are re-directed and dammed to create cultivable land for temple administrators. Monuments are embellished with figures emblematic of Hindu religious authority. Finally, inscriptions prohibit residential and recreational uses of land.

6 Pollock 2009.

7 Lorrillard 2014.

8 A feature of landscape design that Paul Wheatly (1983) has termed the “Axis of Power”.

9 Lorrillard 2018; 2014; 2010-2011. A number of later K-numbered inscriptions refer back to this heartland in ways that connect the religious and political authority of the Angkorian rulers to their engagement with the sacred mountain and its monumental temple complex. The road, leading south from Vat Phou was punctuated at every seven kilometres with monuments, water tanks, and inscriptions that served as an institutional link that materialised this cultural memory and connected the later rulers to the mountain. On these connections see Cecil forthcoming.



Figure 14.3. Vat Phu temple complex, satellite map.



Figure 14.4. Vat Phu temple complex, central shrine.

Participation – The Inception of a Polity (c. Fifth Century CE)

The inception of the political landscape that developed around the mountain is marked by a monumental late Fifth Century inscription (K365)¹⁰ found at an ancient settlement site called Vat Luang Kao. The site occupied an area of approximately 1 × 1 miles on the western bank of the Mekong River. Excavations completed in the late 1990s reported ramparts enclosing numerous foundations of ancient structures and water tanks. The inscription was discovered near the confluence of the Mekong and a smaller tributary flowing inland. The text, in Sanskrit language and Brahmi script, is carved on the four faces of a massive (approximately six foot) stone boundary marker (or *sima* stone), used to demarcate sanctified areas.

This inscription introduces the mountain as Liṅgaparvata, a reference to its crowning monolith, and a play on the phallic verticality of that feature. I argue that the Sanskrit title initiates a larger process of transformation that situated this regional landmark within a ‘Hindu’ landscape by claiming it as a natural (*svayambhu*) manifestation of Śiva.

The agent behind this inscription is Devānīka – described as ‘the great king of kings, the illustrious Śrī Devānīka’ in the epigraph. In constructing the persona of this king, Devānīka’s (presumably Brahmin) poets portray him as anointed by the gods themselves (Śiva, Viṣṇu, and Brahmā) and model him on the heroes of the Sanskrit epic, the *Mahābhārata*. Yet, this movement toward a construction of an idealised and universal sovereignty is grounded within a particular geographic context. We are told that king Devānīka came from a distant country (*dūradeśāt*) and obtained royal power by the grace of the venerable Śrī Liṅgaparvata.

(12)

... *pūrvamatena bhagavatā*
śrīliṅgaparvatenāsmīn dūradeśād ā(13)nūtādhiṣṭhito
mahādhīrājyaiśvārye
viśiṣṭaviṣpaṣṭāṣṭārddhākṣara(14)maṅgalanāmadheyo
dviṣadanekānikāvāptavijayo
vijaya iva (i5) mahārājādhīrājas śrīmāñ chrīdevānīkaḥ

... The great king of kings, the illustrious Śrī Devānīka— whose name, clear and distinguished, is comprised of an auspicious set of four syllables; (who) like Arjuna is victorious over numerous enemy armies – brought from a distant land, he was established in this position of supreme Lordship by the ‘Old God’, the venerable Śrī Liṅgaparvata ...

10 Coedès 1956. The citations of the inscription that follow are reproduced from Coedès’s edition. I have provided my own translation.



Figure 14.5. Inscribed stone stela (K365), c. Fifth Century CE, Vat Phu site museum.

Previous studies have taken this reference to a distant land literally and attempted to determine king Devānīka’s ancestry and place of origin – G. Coedès and Claude Jacques link him with the kingdom of Champa and the early settlement at Si Thep in Thailand.¹¹ I suggest that we interpret the reference to the ‘faraway land’ as a kind of rhetorical device that styled Devānīka as the figure of the “Stranger-king” explored by Graeber and Sahlins in their recent study of kingship.¹² In this interpretation, the distance is not alienating; rather, it gestures to a kind of universality that provides a needed distinction between the ruler claiming power and the people and region he claims

11 Jacques 1962.

12 We could compare this with the tradition of Indic kings being descended from the Sun, Moon, or from epic heroes in a way that is similarly distancing.

to rule.¹³ Devānīka's spatial distance (expressed by *dūra*) from the land he worked actively to claim is countered in the language with an affiliation to the mountain, the area's venerable geographic feature, which is described as *pūrvamata* (ancient). The term (or variants of) *pūrvamata* has been noted by Michael Vickery in his study of Khmer inscriptions as a way to refer to localised deities that are integrated within the Hindu pantheon (typically as forms of Viṣṇu or Śiva).¹⁴ So, while the new ruler pays deference to the old mountain god, he does so with a new, Sanskrit appellation that works to transform the local landmark into the emblem of Śiva and, in doing so, the sanctified centre of a new religious landscape. This change in name also serves to integrate the mountain with a sphere of Śaiva ritual practice. The *liṅga* is the ritual focus of Śiva devotion. The object, understood as a manifestation of the Lord, was ritually lustrated and garlanded. In both text and image, great emphasis is placed on the efficacy of these rituals, the necessity of their proper performance (religious specialists) and the manifold rewards that Śiva offered his devotees – from quotidian benefits like health, well-being, and fertility, to the fortune, power, and military prowess desired by rulers.

In addition to expressing Devānīka's political aspirations, the inscription introduces a specific name for the site it marks. This is Kurukṣetra, named after the site of the battle in the *Mahābhārata* epic. Significantly, the language used to describe this place is not that of a political centre, but a place of pilgrimage (*tīrtha*).

*saṅvvarddhanam mahāpāpapāvanaṃ mahātīrttham
ñ cakāra (9)*

He established this great *tīrtha* [...] which effects prosperity and the purification of serious wrongdoings.

In Sanskrit, a *tīrtha* marks a point of crossing both terrestrial and cosmic. Typically oriented around remarkable features – a river confluence, mountain, etc. – *tīrthas* are destinations for pilgrimage that confer salvific rewards to human visitors. The position of the inscription at the confluence of two rivers conforms with the geographic

parameters of a *tīrtha*, and adds further support to the king's claims to rule by divine favor. Devānīka, and/or his Brahmin agents, are well-aware of the importance of Kurukṣetra as a *tīrtha* and quote a number of verses from the *Mahābhārata* to praise it. For example:

*kurukṣetraṃ gamiṣyāmi kurukṣetre vasāmy aham |
ye vasanti kurukṣetre te vasanti triviṣṭape | | 11*

I will go to Kurukṣetra, I will remain in Kurukṣetra
Those people who dwell in Kurukṣetra dwell in the
highest of the three heavens
(MBh 3.81.175cd-176ab, but with the order of the two
lines reversed)

While the text of the inscription proclaims the pious effort to transfer the sanctity of the South Asian epic Kurukṣetra to a local point of 'crossing', the stone object that bears this text communicates a different message. The shape of the stone echoes a traditional 'sima' or boundary marker, but on a much grander scale. It is a monumental reflex of this familiar object. This is not a place of crossing, but the imposition of a boundary. The imposition of this boundary initiates a process of transformation of a vernacular landscape into a bounded geography and, I argue, the centre of a political landscape. Covered on all four faces with a Sanskrit inscription, the object is the material linchpin for the ideological claims it publicises. It is the stake in the ground that anchors the canopy of a universal sacred and political geography in the here and now. And it is the mouthpiece, the stone megaphone, that projects the eternal message to the four corners for eternity.

At the same time, the object also recalls the shape of the *liṅga* and makes material reference to the mountain deity from which Devānīka derives his political authority. While I would not argue that the object was intended as a *liṅga* – in the strict sense of a ritually installed object of worship, I do suggest that the monument was designed in such a way as to call forth both the boundary stone and the devotional icon in material form.

These material and poetic acts serve as what scholar of religion Thomas Tweed has described as religious mediators – acts and expressions that bridge temporal and spatial distance, and produce new states of being that make the distant close.¹⁵ Tweed's emphasis on religion as facilitating crossings and acts of place-making is apt here, but it is important to stress that only a select few would have been able to access all the communicative registers (spatial, material, and textual) required to be persuaded by these mediators and participate in the crossing. In

13 As Sahlins and Graeber (2017) explain, "native rulers assume the identity and sovereignty of exalted kings from elsewhere and thus become foreigners – as in the Indic kingdoms of Southeast Asia – rather than foreigners becoming native rulers. The polity is in any case dual: divided between rulers who are foreign by nature – perpetually so, as a necessary condition of their authority – and the underlying autochthonous people, who are the "owners" of the country. The dual constitution is constantly reproduced in narrative and ritual, even as it is continuously enacted in the differential functions, talents, and powers of the ruling aristocracy and the native people."

14 Vickery 1998.

15 Tweed (2008, 157-158) uses the idea of a 'cascade' of mediators that transform as they bring close what was imagined as distant. See also Latour 2005.



Figure 14.6. Remains of stone shrine and water basin at source of spring, Vat Phu temple complex.

this sense, Hinduism is used not to invite religious participation or cross boundaries by collapsing the distance separating the divine from the quotidian. Quite the opposite, ‘Hinduism’ here creates and enforces boundaries through the intensification of spatial, moral, and temporal differences that separate the ruler from those whom he rules. And, as a result, the places once familiar are now ideologically and materially transformed.

Amplification – Jayavarman’s Gentrification Project (c. Seventh Century CE)

The stratigraphy of the settlement site indicates that it underwent a number of expansions and remained active into the Eighth-Ninth Century. Brick temple foundations and decorative lintels were excavated at the site, but the material evidence indicates that this area did not endure as the religious centre of the polity. The vast majority of built interventions were concentrated around the mountain at the outlet of a natural spring that flows from the Liṅgaparvata. Early manipulations around the mountain involved hydrological systems that collected the spring water, as well as small shrines and brick foundations around the water outlet.¹⁶

These built interventions designed to amplify the area around the spring are roughly contemporaneous with an inscribed stone stela from the second half of the Seventh Century and issued in the time of the ruler Jayavarman (K 367), which was discovered in the vicinity of the water source. The purpose of the inscription was to amplify the sanctity of the area by aiding in its development as a space for ascetic practice. The opening lines of the five-verse record invoke Śiva as the deity who incinerates the god of Love, Kāma, when the latter dared to distract him from his asceticism by shooting him with the arrow of desire.

*śakrādir vvijito mayā mama śarā moghaṃ gatā na kvacit
 so []vaddhyaś ca madhus sakhā mama sadā vaśyāñ ca nṛṇāṃ manah [/*]
 ity evaṃ viḡaṇayya mānasabhavo vyaddhuṃ gatas tatkṣaṇaṃ
 yadroṣekṣaṇajātabhasmanicayo rudreṇa jeḡyātām [//1//]*

16 The spring continues to be a centre of religious activity for local ritual specialists and healers as well as the Buddhist community, which now controls the site.

Let Rudra (Śiva) be perpetually victorious! Whose furious gaze made the Mind-Born god (i.e. Love) but a heap of ashes with just a glance when Love took aim to shoot him with the assumption, “I have conquered Indra and the other gods; my arrows never miss their target; my partner, Springtime, is invincible; and human hearts are eternally under my control.”

This sobering preamble sets the tone for the austerity measures that the inscription recommends. Following two verses in praise of Jayavarman, the second half of the record includes a series of interdictions aimed at circumscribing residential, agrarian, and recreational activities on Śrī Liṅgaparvata. The articulation of these rules in the highly aestheticised language of Sanskrit, in metrical verses, and in stone, indicates their perceived necessity and gravity. I interpret this inscription as evidence of a pre-modern process of gentrification that displaced undesirable people and practices to make way for a new and pious elite. These efforts to amplify the sanctity of the land also introduced new modes of demarcating space that were not present in the earlier inscription of Devānīka – these spatial categories include the Śaiva *āśrāma* and the *bhūmaṇḍala*, about which I will say more in a moment.

In Verse 4, the inscription designates the venerable Liṅgaparvata as a place of non-violence where living creatures should not be harmed.

*tasya śrījayavarmabhūpater ājñānubhāvoda[yā]d
atra śrīmati liṅgaparvva[tava]re ye sthāyinaḥ prāṇi[naḥ] [/*]
vaddhyantān na janena kenacid api prāptāparādhāh kadā
devāya pratipāditam yad iha tad dhemādīkam siddhyatu [//4//*]*

As a consequence of the firm command of the Lord of the Earth, the illustrious Jayavarman, those living beings who dwell on this most excellent and illustrious Liṅga Mountain should not be harmed by any person even if, at times, they misbehave. May the offerings of gold and other things presented to the God here be efficacious!

*devasyāsya yathābhilāṣagamanā gacchantu naivāśra[me]
yānārohadhṛtāpatraracanābhyutksiptasaccāmaraiḥ [/*]
poṣyāḥ kukkurakukkuṭā na ca janair ddevasya bhūmaṇḍale-
ṣv ity ājñāvanīpasya tasya bhavatu kṣmāyām alaṅghyā nṛṇām [//5//*]
(Śārdūlavikrīḍita)*

In the sanctified area belonging to the God, people may not move about freely, they should not go around seated in palanquins, holding opened umbrellas, or while waving fancy yak-tail fans overhead. Within the territories belonging to the God, people should not keep dogs nor raise chickens. This command of the king is inviolable for the people of the earth!

In Verse 5 the term *āśrāma* is introduced to refer to a sanctified area specific to the deity of the mountain. An *āśrāma* does not *necessarily* imply the presence of a structural temple, although it could, what it more clearly suggests is a sanctified space of devotional activity and ascetic practice. The second new term introduced in Verse 5 is *bhūmaṇḍala*. Again, the exact parameters of this designation are unclear, but I take it to refer more broadly to an area over which the deity had ‘juridical control’ which could also include temple agrarian lands and other spaces used for the support of the deity and the people associated with his worship. The *bhūmaṇḍala*, then, is a more expansive area that included, but extended significantly beyond the sanctified area of the *āśrāma*.

Their precise parameters notwithstanding, the prohibitions put forth in Verses 4 and 5 work to sanctify these spaces by cultivating a ‘reverential attitude’. The explicit articulation of these rules also suggests that such behaviours were not intuitive, that is,

that the space of the deity was not widely understood in this way or as requiring such behaviours and practices. These rules were intended, I would argue, to limit access to and use of the mountain for residential or recreational purposes. Hunting, for example, is not permitted. Given the sanctity of the *āśrama*, the inscription declares that this was a place where people should proceed on foot (i.e. not mounted on vehicles). Displays of material wealth or social prestige are also prohibited (i.e. people should travel without parasols or other insignia of royalty and emblems of social prestige like chowries). I interpret the ban on keeping chickens or dogs as a move to maintain ritual purity by restricting residential and perhaps also agrarian usage. As the composers of the inscription express clearly, these measures were made to ensure the efficacy of devotional and donative practices at the site.

Much of this ceremonious language would have fallen on deaf ears, however, since Sanskrit poetry was inaccessible to the majority of the population. The ruler (or the religious specialists or ascetic who commissioned the inscription) certainly would have had to employ people to communicate and enforce these admonitions. This linguistic distance is another expression of social disparity that served to further amplify the distinction between the sanctified space and the quotidian landscape.

Amplification – Ascetics and the Mountain Caves

This theme or ideal of renunciation becomes definitive of the architectural space – images of long-haired, bearded ascetics, their knees bound in a meditational posture, appear throughout the temple complex and their figures adorn the bases of numerous columns where they offer support to the crowning lintels that feature figures of royalty brandishing weapons.

An architectural metaphor for the reciprocal socio-political relationship between ruler and religious specialist. Note the small *maṇḍapas* that frame the ascetics in the pillar images. Remains of collapsed stone cellas, perhaps intended as meditational cells or dwellings for religious specialists are preserved in the forested area of the mountain behind the temple complex.

In addition to constructed cells, ascetics also developed the natural caves near the spring. Slightly later than the record of Jayavarman, these cave inscriptions attest to the development of the hermitage (*āśrāma*) as the abode of ascetics. This example, edited and dated paleographically by Dominic Goodall to the late Eighth/early Ninth Century is engraved on the overhang of a natural cave on the northeast slope of the mountain.¹⁷

17 Goodall 2015. I have reproduced Goodall's edition of the cave inscription here and provided my own translation.



Figure 14.7. Brahmanical ascetic sculpted on pillar base, Vat Phu temple complex.

K.723

(1) *samādhaye sarvvatapodhanāñā(2)ṃ*
iyam guhā vaktraguheti nāmnā
 (3) *sā nirmmitā vaktraśivena śaktyā*
 (4) *vibhāti bhaddreśvaraśailapārśve //*
 (5) *kaṃ to chdyās guhā kaṃ ti ruḥ pnāñ doṣa*

This cave, named 'Vaktra's Cave', which was prepared with great effort by Vaktraśiva as a sanctuary for all of the ascetics, shines forth from the side of the Bhadreśvara Mountain.

[Old Khmer] Don't obstruct the cave! Don't damage the partition! (It would be) a fault.

K.724

kaṃ pi tve gāra le guhā

[Old Khmer] Don't use the cave as a dwelling!

This cave inscription introduces an individual with a name ending in *-śiva*, a characteristic initiation name given to religious specialists of the Śaiva Siddhānta tradition.¹⁸

18 Goodall 2015.



Figure 14.8. Collapsed stone cella, Vat Phu temple complex.



Figure 14.9. Site of K723 cave inscription, c. Eighth-Ninth Century.

Vaktraśiva invests in the preparation of a cave as a space available to all ascetics. Since the cave in which the inscription was engraved is a natural rather than a man-made excavation, Vaktraśiva's work of preparing it likely involved augmenting the natural feature, cleaning the surrounding area of overgrowth, building around the enclosure, and ensuring that those using it respected its transformed state as a sanctuary (*samādhi*). This was apparently not an easy task, the inclusion of *śaktyā* suggests something achieved with effort or hard work. The additional prohibitions in Khmer that direct the visitor to maintain these efforts and respect its sanctity by refraining from using the cave as a dwelling echo the behavioural changes commanded in Jayavarman's inscription. And

while there is not explicit mention of a ruler in the epigraph, Vaktraśiva's renovation in the territory of the deity was likely supported by those in power. His transformation of the natural cave into a space for Śaiva ascetics certainly seems to fit within the purview of Jayavarman's efforts to amplify the sanctity of the landscape through the imposition of Brahmanical Hinduism.

Vaktraśiva's inscription also introduces a significant new detail: the mountain is no longer referred to as Liṅgaparvata or as the generic 'deva' of Jayavarman's record. We are now introduced to the Mountain known as Bhadreśvara. The introduction of the name Bhadreśvara (the 'Prosperous Lord') identifies a specific deity and does so using the suffix *-śvara* commonly applied to *liṅgas* ritually installed for worship in temples. But in this case the 'personal name' uniquely refers to the mountain itself, the *svayambhu* manifestation of the Lord Śiva.

I hypothesise that the presence and activities of the religious specialists occasioned this important change in the nomenclature and way of envisioning the deity. The Śaiva Siddhanta teachers also carried with them specific modes of envisioning and representing the anthropomorphic Śiva in iconography: in particular, the 5-headed Sadāśiva. This distinct icon was specific to these Śaiva practitioners for whom each head, representative of an aspect of the deity, corresponded to one of their five potent verbal formulas (*mantras*). Considering this Śaiva Siddhanta influence helps to contextualise and analyse one of the most central icons at the site, which is also contemporaneous with the cave inscriptions: a bas-relief carving on a large boulder representing Śiva flanked by the deities Brahmā and Viṣṇu.

Previous studies have identified the sculpture as a *trimūrti* – a representation of the three primary male deities of the Hindu pantheon in which each represents a distinct, yet interconnected, phase of the cosmological process.¹⁹ This description is not accurate. This image communicates the supremacy of Śiva. Brahmā and Viṣṇu occupy subordinate positions in the composition, flanking the central deity and making gestures of reverence. This is not a representation of three equally powerful gods; rather, an icon demonstrating the victory of Śiva in his full five-headed and ten-armed glory. I interpret this image as a distinctive representation of the *liṅgodbhava* ('Manifestation of the Liṅga') myth, a foundational narrative in which Śiva manifests himself as a fiery *liṅga* of light. Brahmā and Viṣṇu are challenged to find the beginning and end, respectively, but they fail and admit the supremacy of Śiva. Śiva then emerges in anthropomorphic form from the *liṅga*. Icons that represent this narrative typically depict the moment of emergence (i.e. the icons

show both the *liṅga* and the anthropomorphic form, ex. South Indian Image). In this image, the figure of Śiva emerges from a natural boulder, part of the Mountain Liṅga itself. By representing the manifestation of Śiva as Bhadreśvara, in an iconographic style characteristic of the Śaiva Siddhanta, emerging from Liṅgaparvata itself, the artists made a bold theological statement: the 'Old God' of the local tradition was now fully transformed into the Prosperous Lord Śiva of the Hindu tradition.

Mastery – The Unity of Ruler, Deity, and Mountain

Excavations and surveys completed in the late 1990s by archaeologists M. Lorrillard, C. Hawixbrock, and M. Santoni have significantly enhanced our understanding of the stratigraphy and development of the site.²⁰ Their images reveal a brick terraced platform surrounding the rock-cut image of Śiva that was accessed via a small staircase. This brick foundation provided a space for ritual worship and may have been covered by a *maṇḍapa*, conforming with the characteristic structure of the earliest Southeast Asian temples.²¹ The excavation also revealed the foundations of a long, pillared hall and a wall, contemporaneous with this brick platform, that extended between the rocky outcrop with the Śiva icon, to another large boulder to the south. This wall blocked the eastern approach to the natural spring. On the south side, a retaining wall was built between the rock face of the mountain and a large boulder.

Large boulders blocked the approach from the north. The construction of these walls and porticos directed access to the spring via one primary route – a long straight hall. I interpret this effort to 'master' the landscape, by circumscribing the area and by using architecture to orchestrate movement to and through it, as an indication of its perceived importance or sanctity to those designing the space.

The enclosing of the spring area was followed by the construction of a stone temple (likely completed in c. Eleventh Century CE) built atop the foundations of an earlier brick structure, presumably a shrine as well. The cult object of this later temple has been replaced by images of the Buddha so we can only hypothesise the form of the deity it housed – perhaps an icon of Bhadreśvara or a *liṅga* fashioned from a piece of stone from the mountain. The temple received water from the spring via an underground aqueduct that channelled the flow of water to the back of the central shrine where it could be used for the lustration of the cult image. The fashioning of the aqueduct is yet another example of the ways in which the design of the

19 Jacques/Lafond 2007, 73.

20 Lorrillard 2010-2011; Santoni/Hawixbrock 1999; 1998.

21 On these early temple forms see Dhar 2018.

Figure 14.10. Relief carving of Bhadrēśvara flanked by Viṣṇu and Śiva on natural boulder, Vat Phu temple complex.



Figure 14.11. Remains of stone wall enclosing natural spring, Vat Phu temple complex.



site was predicated on the manipulation of this landscape for political purposes. No longer part of a public space that could be accessed via multiple paths and for various reasons, the architecture silences that multivocality by showing that the flow of water serves a sole purpose: to bathe the Lord Śiva.

The area surrounding the shrine was further developed on an axis, from the flat surrounding plain to the base of the mountain through a prolonged ascent consisting of five terraced levels. The visitor to the site first encounters three vast water tanks (only two of which still hold water) and proceeds along a processional path lined by a stone balustrade and flanked by two smaller water tanks. The surrounding water mirrors



Figure 14.12. View of ascent to central shrine from upper terraced level, Vat Phu temple complex.



Figure 14.13. Reflection of Liṅgarvata in one of the water tanks framing the processional path, Vat Phu temple complex.

the mountain in the distance, creating a reflection that serves to create an experience of interiority, as if one is actually venturing inside the mountain. The collection of water served the practical purpose of storage for the dry season, but this demonstration of control over natural resources is a potent symbol of power. The water also gestures to religious and ritual concerns surrounding purification and serves as a visual lustration of the *liṅga* mountain through landscape design. The processional

path regulates access to the temple and the spring and effectively eliminates alternative approaches or quotidian paths by submerging them in water. The imposing administrative buildings that line the processional path also serve to control access and limit spaces for participation.

The aspirations to mastery expressed in the built landscape are echoed in another monumental Sanskrit inscription – a four-sided stela – discovered buried beside



Figure 14.14. Administrative buildings lining processional path, Vat Phu temple complex.

the entrance to one of the administrative buildings in the course of renovations at the site in 2013 (K 1320).²²

This Tenth Century record provides important evidence regarding the development of the mountain and the surrounding area as a zone of political control under Īśānavarman II and corresponds to the Angkorian-period temple landscape that survives today. A primary purpose of the inscription is to record taxes in the form of goods, objects, and animals to the deity Bhadreśvara, designated as the Śiva here in this place (*iha, atra*).

Verse 7

*pāyād apāraduritād iha śaṅkaraś śrībhadreśvaro
bhuvanabhadrakaraś ciraṃ vaḥ (8)
yasyāṅghrinīrajarajo `vajayad rajāṃsi tejāṃsi
tejayati bhaktibhṛt(ā)m adabhram //*

May the Śiva of this place, Śrī Bhadreśvara (“The Prosperous Lord”), long protect you from endless want, he who effects prosperity (*bhadra*) in the world, the dust of whose lotus feet conquered impurities [and] intensely empowers the energies of the upholders of devotion/of those who support his worship.



Figure 14.15. Remains of stone railing and balustrade lining the processional path, Vat Phu temple complex.

²² The verses cited from the inscription are reproduced from the edited text published by Goodall/Jacques 2014. I have provided my own translations.

Verse 60

(39) *sa kamvujendro nijarājyaśāke jitān nṛpād
dāyam upājahāra (40) jitas tu bhaktyātra hare
'nuvarṣalabhyaṃ karaṃ liṅgapurād vyatārīt //*

In the era of his sovereignty, The Khmer Lord was offered gifts from conquered prince(s); but, since he was himself conquered by devotion, he donated the taxes acquired each year from Liṅga City to the Śiva of this place.

Verse 96

(41) *devasvavuddhyātra niveditāś śrī- bhadreśvare
liṅgapurākarāyaḥ
(42) mayā saman dattakam ṛddhapuṇyā vandhor hi
dharmmas sahadharmmakāraḥ //*

You who are rich in merit! I have presented the revenue from the goldmine that is Liṅga City to the Prosperous Lord of this place, with the understanding that it is the property of the God. [It is] an adoptive practice equal with me. For the pious act of a kinsman creates a shared duty.

A second significant change concerns the description of the place itself. In the Tenth Century a new term is introduced: Liṅgapura (city, settlement of the Liṅga or of Śiva). This shift in nomenclature indicates a shift in focus from the defining landscape feature (i.e. the mountain) to the demarcation of a larger 'administrative zone' – *pura* could indicate a kind of settlement or developed urban and agricultural zone over which the temple, and the deity, presided. For this deity is not only an object of veneration, but an independent juridical personality capable of owning property and commanding his own micro-economy: For example, In Verse 92 of the same inscription, the servants and slaves of the deity and those who live in in his āśrāmas are exempt from doing labour for the king and from paying taxes to government officials.

Further, the Liṅgapura administrative zone provides the goods donated in honour and support of the deity. This list is extensive and too large to reproduce here so I mention only a few highlights: ten elephants, 12,000 peacock tail feathers, 100 parakeets and 200 monitor lizards. Fragrant woods, spices, resins, and herbs from the surrounding mountains. Agrarian surplus, like paddy, millet, and mung beans from the cultivated lowland areas, and gold and other precious materials sourced from the Mekong River. The donative and economic realia of epigraphs are typically understood as practical or administrative, but the list given here is also ideological since it is a textual performance of the king's control of the landscape. This comprehensive list shows the ruler's ability to mobilise



Figure 14.16. Inscribed stone stela (K1320), c. Tenth Century, Vat Phu site museum.

resources from every geographic zone under his rule and to make those resources available to the deity as surplus.

As a poetic composition, the inscription repeats a key set of motifs and images. Royal power is homologised to a mountain – the supporter of the earth (*mahibhrt*). The king himself is likened to a mountain and his power is described as unwavering (*acalita*, also a synonym for mountain). Finally, the ruler is celebrated as both victorious warrior and ideal lover. He is repeatedly described as the handsome god of Love, in the flesh. These poetic motifs are also mobilised in significant and striking

ways to express mastery of the landscape. I conclude with one particularly potent expression that likens the earth, with the mountains as her breasts, to the virginal bride deflowered by the ruler. In this verse, it is the ruler that makes the land productive and fertile.

Verse 44

*uddāmadānakarikumbhavidāraṇasrudasrai raṇe
varavadhūr iti rāgam ārdram
yenādareṇa dadhatodayinī vyadhāyi dhātrī
dharādharapayodharanirbharaśrīḥ //*

The earth was made to ‘rise up’, the earth who has expansive wealth in the mountains that are her breasts, by him [the king] who, taking her as his beautiful new wife, affectionately engendered (upon her) a ‘wet passion’ in the form of the rut that streamed from the temples of his elephants in battle.

In just a few lines, the poet captures perfectly the ethos and aesthetics of mastery that underpin the manipulation of the landscape. Rather than the earth personified as source of fertility, here the ruler is credited with the earth’s fecundity and flourishing (her being *udayinī* ‘rising up’, flourish, climax). The mountains, a testament to the earth’s vertical ascendance, are likened to her breasts, and the source of her expansive wealth (*nirbharaśrīḥ*). Since he both occasions and controls these mountains, the ruler is master of this ‘*śrī*’, a term commonly used to denote a specific currency – namely, royal power and fortune. In language both organic, erotic, and violent, the ruler’s activities engender *rāgam* (redness, passion). The *rāgam* is further qualified with *ārdram* – a term that simultaneously evokes the fresh wetness of new vegetation and sexual excitement. This ‘redness’ is likened to rut of the battle elephants while also evoking the colour of passion and the blood of his virginal bride. Both poetry and architecture herald the transformation of the ‘earth’ from an active subject or

source of empowerment and agency into a commodity, a resource to be used and dispensed at the ruler’s will.

Conclusions

To understand how Hindu religion was enacted as both a spatial and material practice in the early Khmer polity, I have explored some significant features in the architectonics of the religious landscape around the mountain and viewed through the lens of three phases: participation, amplification, and mastery. Accessing these layers not only sheds a new light on the regionally distinct manifestations and uses of Hinduism in Southeast Asia, but opens a broader discussion about religion as a spatial and material practice.

Architecture was integral to this process of localizing and materialising the authority of Sanskritic culture and served as a proclamatory medium that communicated with places and people inaccessible through texts and rituals, which were the domain of initiated specialists. The encoding of power relations in large-scale and enduring structures (i.e. monuments) was intrinsic to their design. Moreover, monumental architecture aided in the forcible remaking of terrain in ways that would permanently alter an individual’s perception and experience of the spaces in which they lived and worked. Archways, colonnades, courtyards and shrines orchestrate movement, obscure sightlines, and restrict and grant access. In this way, architecture cultivates an embodied experience of dominance that could never be achieved through words alone. The political aspirations materialised in architecture were supported by iconographic and epigraphic programs. By further reifying the experience of control, these images and texts in stone aided in civilising wild places and cultivating systems of profound inequality. Manipulation involves strategic modifications to defining geographic features in ways that fundamentally, and even violently, alter people’s experience of their environment.

Attending the Grave on a Clear Spring Day

Ancient and Modern Linked Ecologies of Religious Life

Anna Sun

Ethnographic Notes from Contemporary Shanghai

It usually takes less than an hour to go by car from downtown Shanghai to *Fushouyuan* Cemetery (The Garden of Blessed Longevity), which is in the suburbs of this great metropolis of 25 million residents. But it took almost three hours on the warm and sunny April morning I visited because of terrible traffic. I was in the passenger seat of a late model Volkswagen, and Mr. Gao, who was driving, was calm and undisturbed. He said rather cheerfully, to me and also to his parents who were seated in the back: “This is simply par for today. As I said before, if we couldn’t manage to leave really early in the morning to beat the traffic of Qingming, we’d just have to accept it.”¹

A good-natured man in his late thirties, Mr. Gao was a high-level engineer specializing in subway technologies and had been an executive of the Shanghai public transit system for several years. The day was in fact not so bad, he explained to me while we waited in the long line of traffic that was barely moving, because it could have been much worse, as in previous years. Although the public transit system was excellent in Shanghai, many cemeteries didn’t have a subway stop near them, so it was easier for people to drive if they owned a car. Besides, they all have a lot to carry with them to take to the cemeteries, and driving indeed makes more sense.

As we were finally moving out of the congested part of our journey and going into the suburban areas, with more open roads and less dense traffic, Mr. Gao pointed me to a line of people waiting outside a subway station surrounded by newly built high-rises, many of whom carrying large shopping bags and bouquets of flowers. “It is not a regular bus stop,” he said, “but today there are special buses leaving from these subway stations to major cemeteries all around Shanghai.”

1 My fieldwork in Shanghai is part of my project “The Social Life of Prayer in Contemporary Urban China”. My research in Shanghai consists of participant observations and face-to-face interviews conducted from 2010 to 2017. The sites of observations include 15 religious sites (temples devoted to Buddhist, Daoist, Confucian, and other traditional deities; mosques; and Protestant and Catholic churches) and two cemeteries. All names have been changed to protect the privacy of the people I have interviewed.

The day was special indeed, for almost everyone in China, no matter whether they lived in urban or rural areas, had the obligation to attend the graves of deceased family members on the Day of Qingming. *Qingming Jie*, often translated as ‘Qingming Festival’, is the Chinese Day of the Dead. The word ‘*jie*’ is a specific term in Chinese ritual life. In everyday usage, it sometimes refers to a festival event, and sometimes refers simply to an important ritual date.² The ritual day of Qingming is one of the most important for most people who follow the Chinese ritual calendar. It is often called the ‘Day of Tomb Sweeping’ as well, which is an accurate description of the main ritual activity required: sweeping the tomb of a deceased family member, usually a parent or a grandparent, and make offering with prayers on the gravesite.

In order to fulfill the ritual duties of Qingming, many have to undertake the journey of retuning from wherever they may be living today to their home city or village where the deceased family members are buried. In fact, there has been so much travelling during this period that the government made Qingming an annual national holiday in 2008, giving every citizen a three-day vacation in order to meet their ritual needs. This allows for better national planning for travel, even though one still needs to book air or train tickets months in advance. According to *China Daily*, this year “China’s railway network saw more than 45 million trips during the four-day Tomb Sweeping Day break [...] a 9.5 percent increase from last year.”³

But Mr. Gao and his parents are among the fortunate ones who do not need to leave where they are. I met the Gao family a few days before Qingming, in the Mu-En Protestant Church in downtown Shanghai, an area where I had been conducting interviews for my ethnographic project on prayer life in urban China. Mr. Gao’s parents were seated next to me in the crowded church, and I learned from our conversation after Sunday service that they were both long time Christians and regulars at the church. Mrs. Gao converted first, about twenty years ago, who then converted her husband, a pattern common among Chinese Christians. Both were recently retired bank managers, and both cared about living a good Christian life. Our conversation led to their invitation to join them for their annual family visit to *Fushouyuan* Cemetery, where the elderly Mr. Gao’s parents were buried.

When we finally reached our destination, it was impossible to miss the entrance to the cemetery: a gigantic stone gate greeted us from afar, as if it were the entry to a great imperial palace. Mr. Gao parked the car in the enormous parking lot, and I saw a digital billboard showing the total number of cars and visitors at any given hour in the cemetery: at 11 o’clock, when we entered,

there were 7,776 cars in the parking lot, and an estimated 20,000 visitors bringing their offerings to their ancestors.

It took at least half an hour before we reached the grave of Mr. Gao’s deceased parents. We had to follow the dense flow of visitors through the many winding paths of the cemetery. There were literally tens of thousands of tomb-sweeping families, most of whom were carrying offerings and flowers. But it was no hardship, for the paths were broad and lined with well-landscaped trees and flowers, and the general mood of the people around me was not one of subdued grief, but cheerful eagerness. In fact, the cemetery feels like a vast park, with sculptures and fountains interspersed among the endless sections of identical graves, all made of gray stone.

I asked Mrs. Gao what kind of offerings people carried with them, and she told me to wait until we reached the grave. I understood her as soon as we got there. On the grave right next to the one that belonged to the Gao family, completely identical in design and size, was a grave headstone showing the names and pictures of the deceased parents. And right beneath it, on a block of stone no bigger than the size of a large newspaper, was a full offering set in place: two candles still burning; an incense holder with half-burnt incense sticks; five small plates of cooked fish, chicken, bok choy, rice, and fresh grapes; a small bottle of Chinese baijiu, a popular strong liquor made from grain; and three oranges, half-peeled. I also noticed a tin basket set at the foot of the grave, with a huge pile of white paper ash in it. “What could this be?” I asked. “That is spirit money,” Mrs. Gao said, “something to be sent to one’s ancestors through burning.”

In the long line of identical graves in this corner of the immense cemetery, the grave of the Gao family was one of very few without the ritual spread. The elderly Mr. Gao took out a white cloth to clean the grave stone. He did it with great care, and pass the cloth to Mrs. Gao and their son for them to symbolically participate in the tomb-sweeping as well. He then placed the bouquet of white lilies he had brought underneath the grave headstone. “We don’t make ritual offerings because we are Christians,” he explained to me. “But this doesn’t mean this date is not important to us. We come here every year at the Day of Qingming to pay our respect to our ancestors. We don’t pray to them, the way others do, but we pray to God to bless their souls.”

“How about the spirit money?” I asked. “We don’t offer it either, naturally. Our pastor explicitly forbids us from burning spirit money, and she has explained many times that this is like idol worship. But a lot of people in our church still do it surreptitiously. They think the spirits of their ancestors would be upset if they don’t do it. I guess everyone has to figure out such things for themselves.”

Looking around us, I could see hundreds of graves in all directions in the gentle light of spring, most of which were being attended as we were speaking. Under a

2 For a historical account, see Teiser 1996.

3 “Qingming Brings Rush of Rail Travel,” *China Daily*, April 5, 2017.

clear, blue sky, white smoke rose from many corners of the cemetery, the signs of spirit money being delivered to the underworld, where the deceased loved ones were receiving this gift of care from their descendants. It would be only natural for one to hope that the ancestors would bestow their blessings to the ones making the offerings. One would understand it not as an expression of instrumental exchange, but rather the unbroken, eternal bond only possible between the dead and the living.

Necropolis, from Saqqara to Shanghai

Most people think of great necropolises as an ancient phenomenon, as in Saqqara or Giza. But necropolises are very much part of our Twenty-First Century lives. There are at least 12 major cemeteries in Shanghai, with an average price of 60,000 yuan (\$10,000 USD) per square metre in 2018. An online English-language article captures the situation well: “Soaring Cemetery Prices: Too Expensive to Die.” It states: “According to the annual financial report by the *Fushouyuan* International Group, a listed company in the Hong Kong Stock Exchange and owner of major cemeteries in places like Shanghai, Henan, Shandong, and Liaoning, the cost of a tomb plot averaged around 80,211 yuan (US\$ 12,400) in 2015, even higher than that of a newly built house.”⁴

A Forbes report entitled “Chinese Eye Alternative Funerals as Graveyard Price Skyrocket” also notes the same development: “The cost of grave plots in China are rising so fast that they’re beginning to outpace the country’s housing markets. According to a 2015 funeral development report jointly issued by China’s Ministry of Civil Affairs and the Social Sciences Academic Press, Beijing residents shell out 80,000 yuan (\$12,000) on average for funeral expenses. The same year, China’s National Bureau of Statistics reported that the average annual salary for a worker in Beijing’s private-sector was 52,902 yuan (\$7,956). If a worker somehow managed to save every penny from their paychecks, it would take them nearly a year and a half to afford a burial.”⁵ The Chinese government has indeed been promoting “eco-friendly funerals,” such as sea burials or “tree and flower burials, where vegetation is planted on top of a person’s remains,” presumably without a tomb and tomb stone.

But these measures to steer the urban population away from securing land plots in major cemetery are clearly not working. Large cemeteries on the outskirts of cities, such as Fushouyuan of Shanghai, the one I visited with the Gao family, are clearly flourishing despite the high prices (and the fact that the price is usually only for a twenty-year lease,

not in perpetuity). As one of a dozen or so major cemeteries in Shanghai, Fushouyuan is not unique in its impressive layout, although it may be the largest at 400,000 square metres, or 40 hectares. The company that owns it, the Fushouyuan International Group, has 15 cemeteries all over the country, and is one of the most successful companies on the Hong Kong stock market, according to a Bloomberg report: “The soaring cost of burial plots is a key drive in Fu Shou Yuan’s earnings. [...] That helped give the US\$2 billion company a gross margin of 80 percent last year, compared with Apple’s 38 per cent.”⁶

The reasons for the high demand for cemeteries outside major cities are multiple. According to the World Population Review, Shanghai is “the largest city proper in the entire world,” with 24 million residents in 2016 and “an average population density of 2,059 people per square kilometer.” With 6,340 square kilometres in size, it encompasses not only urban spaces but also suburban and rural areas, with about 90% of its population urban and 10% rural. Even though it has one of the highest life expectancies in the world and the highest in China (83 years), its aging population is dying at a steadily rising rate.⁷ There are certainly not enough burial sites in the city center, and new cemeteries have already moved to the margins of the metropolis. The growth of necropolis is, paradoxically, a sign of the growth of the city; it is a sign of its vitality, for the never-ending cycle of life must contain death.

Like great metropolises in ancient Egypt, Shanghai today has great diversity, including diversity of class, race and ethnicity, nationality, and place-related identity. The last one is particularly strong, with native-born residents sharing a strong Shanghainese identity as the “local people” and treating others as “people from elsewhere”, especially the migrant workers. There are also multiple languages being spoken, from Mandarin Chinese to Shanghainese Chinese, other local dialects, dialects from other provinces, English, and other foreign languages. Last but not the least, there is also a great diversity of religions. “The Five Major Religions” according to the official Chinese state classification – Buddhism, Daoism, Protestantism, Catholicism, Islam – are all thriving in Shanghai, as well as a strong Confucian religious tradition (See Sun 2013). There are also the less populated religious groups such as Hinduism, Judaism, and Baha’i, mostly represented by foreigners but not exclusively so. For example, I have interviewed a Chinese woman – an academic at a leading university in Shanghai – who has recently converted to Baha’i.

4 Yiming 2016.

5 Rechtschaffen 2017.

6 “Chinese Cemetery Giant Cashes In on High-end Funeral Demand,” *The Straits Times*, April 4, 2018.

7 World Population Review website, (<http://worldpopulationreview.com/world-cities/shanghai-population/>), retrieved on February 20, 2019.

The kind of religious diversity I have observed in Shanghai can be summarised as follows:

- More options for sacred sites.
- More diversity yet less direct conflict between religious institutions.
- More foreign and transnational influences.
- More diffused, multiple geographical and social centres of religion.
- More anonymous individuals, hence more likely the pursuit of multiple new practices and networks.

Such patterns do not apply to metropolises that are dominated by a singular, monotheistic religious authority, but they reflect the kind of complex yet organic religious life one witnesses in a polytheistic or mixed poly-monotheistic world. This is the realm of linked religious ecology.

The Idea of Linked Religious Ecology

Chinese religious life is a puzzle to any observer from the West. In survey data, we learn that the Chinese are not particularly religious: 93.9% do not “belong to a religious denomination,” according to the 2001 World Values survey. However, once we ask questions about religious practice – ancestral worship, burning incense in temples, etc. – we get an entirely different picture: 73.8% have conducted some combination of religious practices in the past year.⁸ In 2016, the number of people who engage in ancestral rituals is even higher: at least 80% surveyed have conducted “tomb-sweeping” activities “in the past year.”⁹

If we examine Chinese religious life not from the theoretical framework of committed beliefs and membership, a perspective rooted in Protestant theology and practice, but from a metaphor of “linked ecology” of pluralistic practices and institutions – “repertoires” and “toolkits,” in Michele Lamont’s and Ann Swilder’s terms – a new understanding might emerge. This concept was first articulated by Andrew Abbott, who suggests that we need to understand the structure of social processes through “reconceptualizing the social world in terms of linked ecologies, each of which acts as a (flexible) surround for others.”¹⁰

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the term “ecology” was borrowed from the German word *Oecologie*, used for the first time in 1866 in E. Haeckel’s *Generelle Morphologie*. The term was first used in English in 1875, in a discussion of botany and zoology. The OED

defines the term as referring to “the branch of biology that deals with the relationship between living organisms and their environment. Also: the relationships themselves, esp. those of a specific organism.” The concept of ecology has long been used in the social sciences, from “human ecology, a study of the geographic conditions of human culture” (1908) to “cultural ecology” (1976), to “urban ecology” (2004). The sociological use of “ecology” refers to “the study of the relationship between people, social groups, and their environment” (OED 2019).

The religious world in contemporary urban China is a network of interconnected systems of beliefs, practices, institutions, and actors from different religious traditions, both monotheistic and polytheistic, which coexist in the same social and political environment. It is not unusual for someone in Shanghai today to make offerings at different sacred sites for different purposes at different times of the year, especially if she were not a Christian or Muslim. Muslims and most Christians, particularly Protestants, are supposed to refrain from ritual activities outside of the boundaries of their professed religious tradition. However, as we can see from the case of Mr. Gao and his family, Protestants can still find ways to acknowledge and honor the importance of certain ritual dates in the Confucian tradition, such as the Day of Qingming.¹¹

Under the great shadows cast by innumerable skyscrapers in metropolises like Shanghai, Beijing, and Hong Kong, sacred sites from diverse religious traditions – Buddhist, Daoist, Confucian, Islamic, Christian, and others – are sought out by people who have inherited this complex religious world both culturally and ritually. Although they may rely on Twenty-First Century digital technologies to navigate most aspects of their lives, when it comes to ritual life, they still do it in the old-fashioned, analogue way by conducting rituals in person at sacred sites. In recent years there have been attempts to create digital ritual activities online, such as making offerings by clicking on a symbol of incense on a virtual altar on a computer screen or in an app on a smart phone. However, it has not been successful at all in enticing people to move into a digital ritual world.

It is of great importance to conduct rituals in person, on the right ritual date, and often with the right people, such as one’s immediate family, which is particularly true for Confucian rituals.

The linked ecological system of Chinese religious traditions consists not only of varieties of sacred sites, objects, texts, activities, beliefs, but also of gods and goddesses, and the spirits of one’s deceased family members, or ancestors. The deities – mostly from Buddhist and Daoist traditions – do not command universal ritual

8 The 2007 Horizon “Chinese Spiritual Life Survey,” the Association of Religious Data Archives.

9 The 2016 Horizon “The Meaning of a Good Life Survey.”

10 Abbott 2005, 246. See also Sun 2018.

11 For detailed discussion of the relationship between Confucianism and Christianity, see Sun 2013.

Sacred Ritual Dates	Sites	Ritual Offerings	Recipient of Prayers	Content of Prayers
Chinese New Year Eve (Lunar New Year)	Home altar and/or graveside	Burning incense and spirit money; lighting candles; offering food	Spirits of deceased family members (ancestral spirits)	Expressions of care and reverence
The First Day of Chinese New Year	Buddhist temples; and/or Daoist temples (occasionally Confucius temples as well)	Burning incense; offering donations	Buddhist deities; Daoist deities of the New Year; other deities	Seeking blessings in the new year
The Day of Qingming	Graveside and/or home altar	Burning incense and spirit money; lighting candles; offering food	Spirits of deceased family members (ancestral spirits)	Expressions of care and reverence
Winter Solstice*	Graveside and/or street corner (for burning paper money)	Burning incense and spirit money; lighting candles; offering food	Spirits of deceased family members (ancestral spirits)	Expressions of care and reverence
Between winter solstice and Chinese New Year	Daoist temples	Burning incense; burning paper offerings; offering donations	The God of the New Year (<i>taisui</i>)	Seeking blessings in the new year
Other ritual dates: Death anniversaries	Graveside and/or home altar; Buddhist temples; Daoist temples	Burning incense; burning paper offerings; offering donations to temples	Spirits of deceased family members (ancestral spirits); Buddhist deities; Daoist deities	Seeking blessings for the spirits of deceased family members

Table 15.1 Lived ritual calendar in contemporary Shanghai.

* The same rituals are conducted on the tenth day of the tenth month on the lunar calendar for Northern China.

attention from everyone. Their influences often vary regionally, and one's engagement with them has a great deal to do with one's family tradition as well as one's own choice, or religious agency. There is a spaciousness to one's ritual imagination in these diverse and porous religious realms.

However, it may be argued that ancestral rites are not, for the most part, a matter of individual choice. Empirically, ancestral rites remain the most practiced religious rituals in China today, as they have been for thousands of years.¹² Their centrality in the Chinese religious system is made possible by the fact that one doesn't need to be a "card-carrying," self-avowed Confucian to be the person who take seriously the ritual duties stipulated by the Confucian tradition. The notion of a singular and exclusive religious identity is very much rooted in a monotheistic imagination, and it does not have much explanatory power in the cases where the pluralistic religious life is the norm.

Here is a composite list of some of the most practiced rituals in contemporary Shanghai, based on my fieldwork (see table 15.1). Although not everyone would conduct all the rituals on all the dates mentioned, it is likely that people strive to do as much as they can. As I have been told over and over again in interviews: "It doesn't matter greatly if you are doing everything correctly, or if you follow all the important ritual dates. What matters is the fact that you try to do as much as you can with a dutiful heart."

The vibrant religious life in Shanghai today, with polytheistic traditions – from ancestral rituals to rituals for diverse deities – coexisting with monotheistic religions such as Christianity and Islam, is not unlike what one might see in ancient Egypt or Rome. The logic of practice of such complex lived religions can be found not through analysis of belief systems or analysis of institutional memberships, but through accounts of ritual life in relation to space and time. The theoretical framework proposed by Nico Staring, Huw Twiston Davies and Lara Weiss for their book project is indeed valuable: "human interaction with the environment and vice versa can be examined in an ancient culture from three perspectives, namely by studying individual and group practices such as offerings, and by analyzing various media through the examination of the transmission of texts and images, and by studying spatial features of the landscape, which together form a cultural geography."¹³ These are the fundamental elements that holds together religious life in any great society, from ancient to modern, from Saqqara to Shanghai.

12 For a historical account, see Von Falkenhausen 2006.

13 See Staring/Twiston Davies/Weiss in this volume, 8.

Abbreviations

<i>ÄA</i>	Ägyptologische Abhandlungen
<i>ÄAT</i>	Ägypten und Altes Testament
<i>AcAn</i>	Acta antiqua
<i>ACE Reports</i>	Australian Centre for Egyptology Reports
<i>ACE Studies</i>	Australian Centre for Egyptology Studies
<i>ADAIK</i>	Abhandlungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Kairo
<i>AegLeod</i>	Aegyptiaca Leodiensia
<i>ÄF</i>	Ägyptologische Forschungen
<i>AH</i>	Aegyptiaca Helvetica
<i>AJA</i>	American Journal of Archaeology
<i>AJPA</i>	American Journal of Physical Anthropology
<i>Ä&L</i>	Ägypten und Levante
<i>Am. Sociol. Rev.</i>	American Sociological Review
<i>APAA</i>	Archaeological Papers of the American Anthropological Association
<i>ARA</i>	Annual Review of Anthropology
<i>ARAM</i>	ARAM Society for Syro-Mesopotamian Studies
<i>ARC</i>	Archaeological Review from Cambridge
<i>ARG</i>	Archiv für Religionsgeschichte
<i>ArOr Supp</i>	Archiv Orientalní Supplementa
<i>ArsOr</i>	Ars Orientalis
<i>ASAE</i>	Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte
<i>ASE</i>	Archaeological Survey of Egypt
<i>ASP</i>	American Studies in Papyrology
<i>AV</i>	Archäologische Veröffentlichungen, Deutsches Archäologisches Institut Abteilung Kairo
<i>BAAe</i>	Beiträge zum Alten Ägypten
<i>Bae</i>	Bibliotheca Aegyptiaca
<i>BACE</i>	Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology
<i>BAK</i>	Beiträge zur altägyptischen Königsideologie
<i>BAR</i>	British Archaeological Reports
<i>BAR IS</i>	British Archaeological Reports International Series
<i>BASOR</i>	Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research
<i>BAW RAO</i>	Bibliothek der Alten Welt, Reihe der Alte Orient
<i>BdE</i>	Bibliothèque d'Étude
<i>BEFEO</i>	Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient
<i>BEHE SHP</i>	Bibliothèque de l'École pratique des hautes études, IVe section: Sciences Historiques et Philologiques
<i>BeitrÄg</i>	Beiträge zur Ägyptologie
<i>BEM</i>	Bulletin of the Egyptian Museum
<i>BESTud</i>	Brown Egyptological Studies
<i>BICS</i>	Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies
<i>BIFAO</i>	Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale

<i>BiOr</i>	Bibliotheca Orientalis	<i>HdO</i>	Handbuch der Orientalistik
<i>BMFA</i>	Bulletin of the Museum of Fine Arts	<i>HTR</i>	Harvard Theological Review
<i>BMPES</i>	British Museum Publications on Egypt and Sudan	<i>IBAES</i>	Internet-Beiträge zur Ägyptologie und Sudanarchäologie
<i>BMSAES</i>	British Museum Studies in Ancient Egypt and Sudan	<i>IJO</i>	International Journal of Osteoarchaeology
<i>BSAE/ERA</i>	British School of Archaeology in Egypt / Egyptian Research Account	<i>IJPA</i>	International Journal of Public Administration
<i>BSEG</i>	Bulletin de la Société d'Égyptologie de Genève	<i>JAA</i>	Journal of Anthropological Archaeology
<i>BZ</i>	Beiträge zur Sudanforschung	<i>JAEl</i>	Journal of Ancient Egyptian Interconnections
<i>BZÄ</i>	Beiträge zur Ägyptologie	<i>JANEH</i>	Journal of Ancient Near Eastern History
<i>CAJ</i>	Cambridge Archaeological Journal	<i>JAOS</i>	Journal of the American Oriental Society
<i>CASAE</i>	Cahiers supplémentaires des ASAE	<i>JARCE</i>	Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt
<i>CBD</i>	Catalogue of the Books of the Dead in the British Museum	<i>JAS</i>	Journal of Archaeological Science
<i>CCE</i>	Cahiers de la céramique égyptienne	<i>J. Asiat.</i>	Journal Asiatique
<i>CCEM</i>	Contributions to the Chronology of the Eastern Mediterranean	<i>JASREP</i>	Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports
<i>CdE</i>	Chronique d'Égypte	<i>JCG</i>	Journal of Cultural Geography
<i>CENiM</i>	Cahiers Égypte Nilotique et Méditerranéenne	<i>JEA</i>	Journal of Egyptian Archaeology
<i>CHANE</i>	Culture and History of the Ancient Near East	<i>JECs</i>	Journal of Early Christian Studies
<i>CNIP</i>	Carsten Niebuhr Institute Publications	<i>JEH</i>	Journal of Egyptian History
<i>CNMAL</i>	Collections of the National Museum of Antiquities at Leiden	<i>JEOL</i>	Jaarbericht van het Vooraziatisch-Egyptisch Genootschap "Ex Oriente Lux"
<i>CRIPeL</i>	Cahier de Recherches de l'Institut de Papyrologie et d'Égyptologie de Lille	<i>JESHO</i>	Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient
<i>CT</i>	Coffin Texts	<i>JIP</i>	Journal of Indian Philosophy
<i>DFIFAO</i>	Documents de fouilles de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale du Caire	<i>JMA</i>	Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology
<i>DGÖAW</i>	Denkschriften der Gesamtakademie, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften	<i>JNES</i>	Journal of Near Eastern Studies
<i>EA</i>	Egyptian Archaeology	<i>JÖAI</i>	Jahreshefte des Österreichischen Archäologischen Instituts in Wien
<i>EAO</i>	Égypte – Afrique et Orient	<i>JSA</i>	Journal of Social Archaeology
<i>EAZ</i>	Ethnographisch-Archäologische Zeitschrift	<i>JSSEA</i>	Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities
<i>EES EM</i>	Egypt Exploration Society Excavation Memoirs	<i>KÁT</i>	Kleine Ägyptische Texte
<i>EES OP</i>	Egypt Exploration Society Occasional Papers	<i>Karnak</i>	Cahiers de Karnak
<i>ET</i>	Études et Travaux	<i>KAW</i>	Kulturgeschichte der Antiken Welt
<i>EtudEg</i>	Études d'Égyptologie	<i>KSG</i>	Königtum, Staat und Gesellschaft früher Hochkulturen
<i>EU</i>	Egyptologische Uitgaven	<i>LÄ</i>	Lexikon der Ägyptologie
<i>GHP</i>	Golden House Publications	<i>LAPO</i>	Littératures anciennes du Proche-Orient
<i>GM</i>	Göttinger Miszellen	<i>LD</i>	Lepsius Denkmäler (see bibliography)
<i>GOF</i>	Göttinger Orientforschungen, Abteilung IV	<i>LGG</i>	Leitz, Lexikon der ägyptischen Götter und Götterbezeichnungen (see bibliography)
<i>HÄB</i>	Hildesheimer Ägyptologische Beiträge	<i>LingAeg</i>	Lingua Aegyptia
<i>HAT</i>	Handschriften des altägyptischen Totenbuches	<i>LingAeg SM</i>	Lingua Aegyptia Studia Monographica

<i>MAIBL</i>	Mémoires de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres	<i>RRE</i>	Religion in the Roman Empire
<i>MAJA</i>	Münchner Arbeitskreis Junge Ägyptologie	<i>SAGA</i>	Studien zur Archäologie und Geschichte Altägyptens
<i>MÄS</i>	Münchner Ägyptologische Studien	<i>SAK</i>	Studien zur altägyptischen Kultur
<i>MÄU</i>	Münchner Ägyptologische Untersuchungen	<i>SAOC</i>	Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilisation
<i>MBh</i>	Mahābhārata	<i>SASAE</i>	Supplément aux ASAE
<i>MDAIK</i>	Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo	<i>SAT</i>	Studien zum Altägyptischen Totenbuch
<i>MEEF</i>	Memoir of the Egypt Exploration Fund	<i>SDAIK</i>	Sonderschrift des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Abteilung Kairo
<i>Meroitica</i>	Meroitica. Schriften zur altsudanesischen Geschichte und Archäologie	<i>SHR</i>	Studies in the History of Religions
<i>MET</i>	Mond Excavations at Thebes	<i>Signata</i>	Signata. Annales des Sémiotiques
<i>MIFAO</i>	Mémoires publiés par les membres de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale	<i>SP</i>	Specimina Nova, Dissertationum ex Instituto Historico Universitatis Quinqueecclesiensis (De Iano Pannonio Nominatae)
<i>MKS</i>	Middle Kingdom Studies	<i>SSR</i>	Studien zur spätägyptischen Religion
<i>MonAeg</i>	Monumenta Aegyptiaca	<i>ST</i>	Sociological Theory
<i>MVCAE</i>	Material and Visual Culture of Ancient Egypt	<i>StudAT</i>	Studien zur Altägyptischen Totentexten
<i>NEA</i>	Near Eastern Archaeology	<i>SUBBH</i>	Studia Universitatis "Babeş-Bolyai" Historia
<i>NKMN</i>	New Kingdom Memphis Newsletter	<i>SudNub</i>	Sudan & Nubia. The Sudan Archaeological Research Society Bulletin
<i>OBO</i>	Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis	<i>SUPP SHAW</i>	Supplemente zu den Schriften der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse
<i>OIMP</i>	Oriental Institute Museum Publications		
<i>OIP</i>	Oriental Institute Publications		
<i>OIS</i>	Oriental Institute Series	<i>TbtT</i>	Totenbuchtexte
<i>OLA</i>	Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta	<i>TC</i>	Textual Cultures
<i>OM</i>	Orientalia Monspeliensia	<i>TTS</i>	Theban Tomb Series
<i>OMRO</i>	Oudheidkundige Mededelingen uit het Rijksmuseum van Oudheden	<i>TÜBA-AR</i>	Türkiye Bilimler Akademisi Arkeoloji Dergisi
<i>ORA</i>	Orientalische Religionen in der Antike	<i>Urk</i>	Urkunden (see Helck 1955-1961 and Sethe 1909 in bibliography)
<i>PalHiero</i>	Paléographie hiéroglyphique	<i>UZK</i>	Untersuchungen der Zweigstelle Kairo des Österreichischen Archäologischen Instituts
<i>PALMA</i>	Papers on Archaeology of the Leiden Museum of Antiquities		
<i>PAM</i>	Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean	<i>WA</i>	World Archaeology
<i>PBA</i>	Proceedings of the British Academy	<i>WAW</i>	Writings from the Ancient World
<i>PCMA</i>	Polish Center of Mediterranean Archaeology	<i>Wb</i>	Wörterbuch (see Erman/Grapow in bibliography).
<i>PdÄ</i>	Probleme der Ägyptologie	<i>WES</i>	Warsaw Egyptological Studies
<i>PIAAS</i>	Publications of the Institute for Asian and African Studies	<i>YES</i>	Yale Egyptological Studies
<i>PM</i>	Porter and Moss, Topographical Bibliography (see bibliography)	<i>ZÄS</i>	Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde
<i>PMMA</i>	Publications of the Metropolitan Museum of Art	<i>ZBA</i>	Zaberns Bildbände zur Archäologie
<i>PPYE</i>	Publications of the Pennsylvania-Yale Expedition to Egypt	<i>ZDMG</i>	Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft
<i>RdE</i>	Revue d'Égyptologie		
<i>RiME</i>	Rivista del Museo Egizio		
<i>RR</i>	Romanic Review		

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PERSPECTIVES ON LIVED RELIGION

Religion in the ancient world, and ancient Egyptian religion in particular, is often perceived as static, hierarchically organised, and centred on priests, tombs, and temples. Engagement with archaeological and textual evidence dispels these beguiling if superficial narratives, however. Individuals and groups continuously shaped their environments, and were shaped by them in turn. This volume explores the ways in which this adaptation, negotiation, and reconstruction of religious understandings took place. The material results of these processes are termed “cultural geography”. The volume examines this “cultural geography” through the study of three vectors of religious agency: religious practices, the transmission of texts and images, and the study of religious landscapes.

Bringing together papers by experts in a variety of Egyptological and other disciplines, this volume presents the results of an interdisciplinary workshop held at Leiden University, 7-9 November 2018 and kindly funded by the *Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research* (NWO) Vidi Talent Scheme. The 15 papers presented here cover the archaeology of religion and religious practices, landscape archaeology and ‘cultural geography’, textual transmission and adaptation, across not only the history of Egypt from the Early Dynastic to the Christian periods, but perspectives on ancient Sudanese archaeology, early and medieval south-eastern Asia, and contemporary China.

