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The coronation ritual of the falcon at Edfu : tradition and innovation in ancient Egyptian ritual composition

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5 RECONSTRUCTION OF THE RITUAL

5.1 ESTABLISHMENT OF THE RITUAL SEQUENCE

As it was concluded in the previous chapter it is not possible to establish the ritual sequence of the coronation ritual of the falcon on the basis of spatial arrangement of the eight ritual scenes on the temple wall. Additional information is needed and in the case of the coronation ritual of the falcon essential information concerning the course of the ritual events can be found in the inscriptions themselves. Texts 7, 50 and 63 summarise the events that took place. In this paragraph a new reconstruction of the ritual sequence shall be proposed on the basis of a detailed analysis of these texts.

Text 7: E VI 102, 3 – 103, 6

“Ritual of the installation of the living *b3* of Ra as king of Upper- and Lower-Egypt, who is upon the *srh* as the great *bik*-falcon, the dappled of feathers: Appearance of this noble god, Horus Behdeti, the great god, the lord of the sky, upon his great *st*-throne, while his Ennead is with him. Travelling before him to the *r3-pr* of the *Pr-Bik* in great crowds, while no-one speaks to another. Calling out the names of the god’s servants and (god’s) fathers, who come in large numbers, one by one, until His Majesty inclines towards one of them. Proceeding on the part of this servant of the *gmhsw*-falcon to the *wsh-t*-hall of the *Pr-Bik*. Standing in the doorway of this place in front of this god (i.e. Horus Behdeti). Fetching the *drtyw*-falcons, that resemble Ra in their colour, before this god, one by one. He (i.e. the god) reaches (his decision) in peace concerning his *b3*, and he is satisfied about the establishment of his inheritance. Then, letting His Majesty (i.e. the falcon) appear in the *s3d n h3w* in front of this god. Reaching *St-Wrt* in order to receive kingship from the hand of his father Horus Behdeti, the great god, the lord of the sky. Presenting *mdt*-ointment, tying a *wsh*-collar, offering a *hh*-symbol made of gold, giving him (i.e. the falcon) life (*nh*) and dominion (*w3s*), giving him *nh*-flowers in the name <of> the Ennead that is in this temple. Then, travelling of this god (i.e. the falcon), while the Majesty of this noble god Horus Behdeti, the great god, the lord of the sky, the lord of *Msn*, appears behind him, so that he reaches the *Pr-Bik-Ntry* in order to sit on his *nst*-throne as King of Upper- and Lower-Egypt, on the *st*-throne of Ra-Horakhty, for the length of *dt*- and *nhh*-eternity, while being offered all the good things by his son Shu in his embodiment of servant of the *gmhsw*-falcon. Proceeding (back) in peace on the part of the Majesty of this noble god Horus Behdeti, the great god, the lord of the sky, the lord of *Msn*, to his palace of life, wellbeing and health. Rejoicing as high as the sky by all the people of this town. Feasting and feasting again and organising a feast by the men and women until the end of the first day of this festival. “Royal appearance”, it is called. This festival is celebrated every year. The king of Upper- and Lower-Egypt, the lord of the Two Lands (empty cartouche), the son of Ra, the lord of the crowns, Ptolemy, celebrates this festival every year, not ever perishing and not ever decaying”.

Text 7 is part of Scene 1 and provides us with the most extensive description of the ritual sequence. It is said that Horus appears with his Ennead. Unfortunately, the text does not mention exactly where the god appears, but it is most probable that the ritual started in the main temple, where the cult statue of Horus resided. Next, Horus and his Ennead are taken in procession to a location referred to as ‘the *r3-pr* of the temple-domain of the *bik*-falcon (*Pr-Bik*)’.¹³³⁰ Here, the names of the god’s servants and the (god’s) fathers are recited “until His Majesty (i.e. Horus) inclines towards one of them”. This passage seems to refer to the selection of the priest who takes the role of the king. Next, the servant of the *gmhsw*-falcon proceeds to the *wsh-t* of the *Pr-Bik*, where a number of *drtyw*-falcons are introduced to Horus.

¹³³⁰ See paragraph 5.3.1 for the *Pr-Bik*.

The term *wsht* generally refers to any principal hall or court of a temple building and a descriptive adjective is usually added to specify the type of *wsht*.¹³³¹ In Text 7, ‘the *wsht*-hall / *wsht*-court of the temple-domain of the *bik*-falcon’ is the place where Horus chooses the falcon that shall be his living incarnation. The falcon then appears in the *sšd n h^cw*, generally translated as ‘window of appearances’.¹³³² Next, Horus and the falcon are taken in procession to *St-Wrt*. This term can refer either to the main temple building as well as to the sanctuary. Here, the sacred falcon receives kingship from Horus Behdeti. Several ritual acts are carried out: the presentation of *md*-ointment, the tying of a *wsht*-collar, the offering of a *hh*-symbol in gold, the offering of *nh* and *w3s*, and the presentation of *nh*-flowers in the name of the Ennead. Then, Horus and the falcon are taken in procession to the *Pr-Bik-Ntry*, ‘the temple-domain of the divine *bik*-falcon’.¹³³³ Here, the falcon is enthroned as king of Upper- and Lower-Egypt and it is presented with food-offerings by the servant of the falcon. Horus returns in procession to ‘his palace of life, wellbeing and health’, i.e. the main temple, and the people of the town celebrate.

Text 50: E VI 93, 8 – 94, 2

“Horus Behdeti has appeared in *Msn* in his form of occupant of the *St-Wrt*-throne, while he, namely His Majesty (i.e. the sacred falcon), is upon the *wst*-throne of Horus, his *bhdw*-throne in his *bw-hmr*-litter, and the *b3*'s of Pe and Nekhen carry His Majesty towards the door of the *sšd n s3b-šwt*. The king himself censes before him (i.e. Horus Behdeti), so that his *k3* reaches the *m3rw* of his (sacred) animal, in order to unite himself with the *b3* of Ra upon his *nst*-throne as the divine *bik*-falcon upon his *srh*, in order to make appear the *si3*-falcon in the *sšd n si3*, and in order to appoint the *drty*-falcon as ruler, forever. He (i.e. Horus Behdeti) places himself upon his *srh* in his *tn3t*-litter, in order to elevate his *k3* amongst the *b3*'s of the gods forever and ever, in order to lead the great *bik*-falcon from his *m3rw* to *Msn*, in order to unite the *b3* of Ra (i.e. the living falcon) with his mighty being (i.e. the cult statue of Horus), in order to enter the *Hwt-Bik* in the presence of the Majesty of Horakhty, in order to elevate the *si3*-falcon in the presence of the dappled of feathers, so that the *b3* (i.e. the living falcon) receives kingship from his mighty being at his festival of the establishment of his inheritance, so that he receives the Good Year in her good names and a long lifetime in happiness. His heart (i.e. Thoth) comes and assigns his years, Thoth, the great, assigns his annals with millions of *sd*-festivals, hundreds of thousands of years, ten thousands and thousands of months, hundreds and decades of days, so that his hours are infinite and his years are eternities”.

Text 50 is part of Scene 5 and provides us with a brief description of the ritual sequence. Horus appears with the sacred falcon in *Msn*. They are carried in procession by the souls of Pe and Nekhen to “the *m3rw* of his (sacred) animal, in order to unite himself with the *b3* of Ra”.¹³³⁴ The procession to the *m3rw* seems to be depicted in the accompanying image. Here, the falcon appears in the *sšd n si3*, generally translated as ‘the window of the *si3*-falcon’.¹³³⁵ Next, they are brought in procession from the *m3rw* to *Msn*, presumably the main temple. Here, the sacred falcon receives kingship from Horus. In Text 50 reference is also made to the Good Year and to Thoth, both depicted in the accompanying Scene 5.

Text 63: E VI 262, 15 – 263, 6

“Horus Behdeti has appeared in *Bhdt* in his embodiment of falcon of gold, while he is as king of Upper- and Lower-Egypt on his *wst*-throne of Horus, on his *nst*-throne in his

¹³³¹ P. Spencer, *The Egyptian Temple. A Lexicographical Study*. London etc. 1982, 77.

¹³³² See paragraph 5.3.2 for the *sšd n h^cw*.

¹³³³ See paragraph 5.3.1 for the *Pr-Bik-Ntry*.

¹³³⁴ See paragraph 5.3.2 for the *m3rw*.

¹³³⁵ See paragraph 5.3.2 for the *sšd n si3*, which seems to be a synonym for *sšd n h^cw*.

tnḥt-litter. He places himself on his *isbt*-throne in his *bḥdw*-throne since the beginning, together with the great *bik*-falcon, the dappled of feathers, so that his *k3* will arrive at his *m3rw* in *Msn* in order to provide his shrine with life and dominion, to unite with his Majesty (i.e. the falcon) in his *sšd n ḥꜥw* at his festival of the establishment of his inheritance, to establish the office of the sacred animal of Horakhty when he receives his kingship from his father, to exalt the *bik*-falcon in the *Pr-Bik-Ntry*, to make appear the great *si3*-falcon on his *srḥ*, to spread the love for him, to enlarge his awe inspired terror, to subdue all the hearts in the entire land, to triumph over the enemies, to drive away the rebels, to make distant the foes from his way. The king of Upper- and Lower-Egypt is before him with the incense-vessel, praising her Majesty (i.e. Sakhmet) in order to protect him. The lord of the reed-brush for writing (i.e. Thoth) comes with the books for his protection and with the spells for repelling the <evil> eye, preparing his path until entering the *Hwt-Bik*, announcing his stride to his *Pr-Bik*. His times are millions, his years are hundreds of thousands, *nḥḥ*- and *dt*-eternity are on his *srḥ*!”

Text 63 is part of Scene 6 and provides us with a brief description of the ritual sequence. Horus appears with the sacred falcon in *Bḥdt*. They are brought in procession to the *m3rw*, where the falcon is installed in the *sšd n ḥꜥw*.¹³³⁶ Next, the falcon receives kingship from Horus and it is exalted in the *Pr-Bik-Ntry*. Reference is made to the repelling of enemies, rebels and foes, to the king censuring, to Sakhmet who is invoked and to Thoth, as depicted in Scene 6.

The following reconstruction of the ritual sequence can be established on the basis of Texts 7, 50 and 63:

Ritual sequence	Source
a) Appearance of Horus and his Ennead, presumably in the main temple	Text 7
b) Procession of Horus and his Ennead to the <i>r3-pr</i> of the temple-domain of the <i>bik</i> -falcon (<i>Pr-Bik</i>)	Text 7
c) In the temple-domain of the <i>bik</i> -falcon (<i>Pr-Bik</i>): - selection of the servant of the falcon - selection of the sacred falcon (in the <i>wsḥt</i> of the <i>Pr-Bik</i>)	Text 7 Text 7
d) Procession of Horus and the sacred falcon to the <i>m3rw</i>	Texts 50 and 63
e) In the <i>m3rw</i> : - appearance resp. installation of the sacred falcon in the <i>sšd n ḥꜥw</i> resp. <i>sšd n si3</i> - union of Horus with the sacred falcon	Texts 7, 50 and 63
f) Procession of Horus and the sacred falcon from the <i>m3rw</i> to <i>St-Wrt</i> resp. <i>Msn</i>	Texts 7 and 50
g) In <i>St-Wrt</i> resp. <i>Msn</i> : transmission of kingship from Horus Behdeti to the sacred falcon: - presentation of <i>md</i> -ointment - tying of the <i>wsḥ</i> -collar - offering of a <i>ḥḥ</i> -symbol in gold - presentation of <i>ꜥnḥ</i> and <i>w3s</i> - presentation of <i>ꜥnḥ</i> -flowers in the name of the Ennead	Texts 7 and 50 Text 7 Text 7 Text 7 Text 7 Text 7
h) Procession of Horus and the sacred falcon to the <i>Pr-Bik-Ntry</i>	Text 7
i) In the <i>Pr-Bik-Ntry</i> : - enthronement of the sacred falcon - offering to the sacred falcon by Shu as servant of the falcon	Text 7 Text 7
j) Procession of Horus back to the main temple	Text 7
k) Celebrations by the people of town	Text 7

Table 5.1 Identification of the ritual sequence of the coronation ritual of the falcon.

¹³³⁶ See paragraph 5.3.2 for the *m3rw* and the *sšd n ḥꜥw*.

As pointed out in paragraph 4.1, the decoration of the temple wall is primarily a visual composition made under the constraints of the *grammaire du temple* and as such it does not constitute a direct reproduction or visualisation of a ritual handbook. Furthermore, the available space on temple walls is limited and therefore often only selections of a ritual sequence are represented on the temple walls. The discrepancies between the texts summarising the ritual and the wall decoration show that this is also the case for the coronation ritual of the falcon. We may assume that due to space restrictions, only the most important or characteristic features of the ritual were chosen to be depicted. Several events or ritual acts are depicted or mentioned in the eight ritual scenes that are not referred to in the ritual programme texts, for example the invocations to the Good Year and to Sakhmet, and the rituals and recitations for the protection of the bedroom, the protection of the house and the protection of the body. At the same time we also see that several events are mentioned in the ritual programme texts that are not depicted in the eight ritual scenes. For example, the events that took place in the *Pr-Bik* (ritual sequence phases *a-c*) are not depicted in the first and second registers of the interior face of the northern enclosure wall. The choice not to include these events in the decoration of the two registers may have been determined by the specific characteristics of the ritual. Text 7 informs us that the coronation ritual of the falcon was carried out each year (E VI 103, 4-5). On the basis of this text, it is generally assumed that each year a new sacred falcon was selected to be the beneficiary of the ritual.¹³³⁷ Unfortunately, not much is known about the life and death of the sacred animals, except in the case of the sacred bulls, which were venerated until death, after which a new sacred specimen was selected.¹³³⁸ The sources do not mention whether or not a new sacred falcon was chosen each year, nor do we know what may have happened to the “dethroned” falcons if a new specimen was chosen each year. The fact that Text 7 indicates that the ritual is performed each year does not mean necessarily that each year a new falcon is chosen as the incarnation of Horus. Perhaps the selection of a new sacred falcon was a unique event that only took place after the old falcon had died. Conversely, the rituals for the renewal and confirmation of royal power were carried out each year. This distinction between that part of the ritual that was carried out on an annual basis (ritual sequence phases *d-k*)¹³³⁹ vs. that part of the ritual that was carried out on an irregular basis depending on the life span of the sacred falcon (ritual sequence phases *a-c*) may be reflected in the selection of scenes depicted in the first and second registers, in the sense that only the events that were carried out each year are depicted on the temple wall, stressing as such the importance of the annual and continued repetition of the renewal and confirmation of royal power.

5.2 POSITION OF THE SCENES IN THE RITUAL SEQUENCE

The ritual sequence of the coronation ritual of the falcon which has been established (see Table 5.1) on the basis of Texts 7, 50 and 63 forms the framework into which the eight ritual scenes may be placed.

¹³³⁷ See for example M. Fitzenreiter, *Tierkulte im pharaonischen Ägypten*. Ägyptologie und Kulturwissenschaft 5. Munich 2013, 139.

¹³³⁸ Fitzenreiter, *Tierkulte*, 136-142.

¹³³⁹ For the events that took place in the *m3rw* as forming part of the annually repeated ritual, see paragraph 5.3.

5.2.1 SCENES 1 AND 2

Scenes 1 and 2 depicting the anointment and the presentation of the *ḥḥ*-symbol and the *ʿnh*-bouquet can be associated with ritual sequence phase *g* on the basis of Text 7: “Reaching *St-Wrt* in order to receive kingship from the hand of his father Horus Behdeti, the great god, the lord of the sky. Presenting *mdt*-ointment, tying a *wsh*-collar, offering a *ḥḥ*-symbol made of gold, giving him (i.e. the falcon) life (*ʿnh*) and dominion (*w3s*), giving him *ʿnh*-flowers in the name <of> the Ennead that is in this temple”. On the basis of this text it is not possible to determine where precisely the ritual acts associated with Scenes 1 and 2 were carried out, as the term *St-Wrt* can refer to the main temple as well as to the sanctuary. The question of the identification of the locations where the various stages of the coronation ritual of the falcon were carried out shall be further explored in paragraph 5.3.3.

5.2.2 SCENES 3 AND 4

As demonstrated in paragraph 4.2.2 the ritual acts of Scenes 3 and 4, i.e. the presentation of choice portions of meat and the fumigation of fragrant resin, are closely connected. In Scene 3 the king is repeatedly identified with Shu in his embodiment of the servant of the *gmḥsw*-falcon.¹³⁴⁰ Considering these data, in combination with the information given in Text 7, Scenes 3 and 4 may be associated with ritual sequence phase *i*: “Then, travelling of this god (i.e. the falcon), while the Majesty of this noble god Horus Behdeti, the great god, the lord of the sky, the lord of *Msn*, appears behind him, so that he reaches the *Pr-Bik-Ntry* in order to sit upon his *nst*-throne as King of Upper- and Lower-Egypt, upon the *st*-throne of Ra-Horakhty, for the length of *dt*- and *nḥḥ*-eternity, while being offered all the good things by his son Shu in his embodiment of servant of the *gmḥsw*-falcon”. Following this line of reasoning, Alliot’s reconstruction according to which these events took place in the main temple¹³⁴¹ can be rejected. It also follows that Scenes 3 and 4 represent the main ritual acts that were carried out in the *Pr-Bik-Ntry*¹³⁴² at the end of the ritual sequence, which explains why these scenes are represented prominently and in symmetrical position in the center of the second register.

5.2.3 SCENES 5 AND 6

Scenes 5 and 6 depict a procession with Horus and the falcon. Explicit reference is also made in Text 50 to the Good Year and to Thoth, who are also both depicted in Scene 5. In Text 63, which forms part of Scene 6, it is said that the king stands before the falcon with the incense vessel while he is invoking Sakhmet for protection. Explicit reference is also made to Thoth here. Both Sakhmet and Thoth are depicted as part of Scene 6. In Text 50, which forms part of Scene 5, it is said that Horus and the falcon are carried in procession by the souls of Pe and Nekhen to the door of the *sšd n s3b-šwt*, while the king censens before them. This event seems to be depicted in the accompanying image. If we take the *sšd n s3b-šwt* to be a synonym for *sšd n ḥꜥw* and *sšd n s3b*, it follows that this scene depicts the procession to the *m3rw*. This interpretation is indeed confirmed in the text: “the souls of Pe and Nekhen carry His Majesty towards the door of the *sšd n s3b-šwt*. The king himself censens before him (i.e. Horus Behdeti), so that his *k3* reaches the *m3rw* of his (sacred) animal, in order to unite himself with the *b3* of Ra”. Text 63 also refers to the procession taking Horus and the falcon to the *m3rw*:

¹³⁴⁰ Texts 23, 25, 26, and 29.

¹³⁴¹ See paragraph 4.1 for a discussion of Alliot’s analysis of the ritual.

¹³⁴² See paragraph 5.3.1 for the *Pr-Bik-Ntry*.

“his *k3* will arrive at his *m3rw* in *Msn* in order to provide his shrine with life and dominion, to unite with his Majesty (i.e. the falcon) in his *sšd n hꜥw* at his festival of the establishment of his inheritance”. This procession of the falcon and Horus to the *m3rw* seems to be depicted in Scenes 5 and 6. This explains why the figures in Scenes 5 and 6 are depicted ‘facing out’ of the temple, as the events depicted here took place outside the main temple.¹³⁴³ As such, Alliot’s reconstruction according to which Scenes 5 and 6 represent the first ritual acts being carried out in the main temple (identified by him as the reception of the sacred falcon and Horus by Hathor upon their arrival in the main temple) can be rejected.¹³⁴⁴ The placement of the invocations to the Good Year and to Sakhmet next to the images showing the processions in Scenes 5 and 6 suggests that the invocations were recited in association with the appearance of the sacred falcon in the *sšd n hꜥw*.¹³⁴⁵ The texts confirm that this appearance involved the union of Horus with the falcon. During this moment of transition, divine protection was needed, which was guaranteed by the recitation of the invocations to the Good Year and Sakhmet, in which the equivalence between Horus, the sacred falcon and the king and their protection is central.

5.2.4 SCENES 7 AND 8

Unfortunately Texts 7, 50 and 63 do not refer to the ritual acts forming part of Scenes 7 and 8. As such it is not possible to place these scenes in the ritual sequence on the basis of these texts alone. However, the accompanying inscriptions to Scenes 7 and 8 provide us with several clues as to where the ritual acts depicted in these scenes were carried out. The description of the ritual for the protection of the body ends with the following remark: “I do this, remaining and enduring in the *Pr-Bik-Ntry*, without end and without interruption, forever.”¹³⁴⁶ The description of the ritual for the protection of the house ends with a similar remark: “I summon the gods, while making your protection, so that they make the protection of your house until the sky is opened. I do this continuously in the *Pr-Bik-Ntry* (so that) protection is made during the night until the end of *dt*-eternity.”¹³⁴⁷ This suggests that the rituals and the recitation of the spells associated with Scenes 7 and 8 took place in the temple-domain of the divine *bik*-falcon,¹³⁴⁸ at the very end of the ritual sequence, associated also with the “enthronement and exaltation” of the sacred falcon in the *Pr-Bik-Ntry*. This conclusion seems to be further supported by the introduction to the ritual for the protection of the bedroom, which reads: “Words to be spoken by his Majesty: I have come to you, great *bik*-falcon, dappled of feathers, when Ra sets in the land of life, equipped with the ritual (book) of the protection of the bedroom, so that I make the protection of your house, of your seat and of your bedroom”.¹³⁴⁹ The theme of the ritual being the protection of the bedroom and the expression “when Ra sets in the land of life”, suggest that this ritual took place during the night. These data fit with the description given in Text 63, where reference is made to rituals for repelling enemies and foes in association with the exaltation of the sacred falcon in the *Pr-Bik-Ntry* at the end of the ritual sequence, i.e. at the end of the day. As such, Alliot’s reconstruction according to which Scenes 7 and 8 represent the third series of ritual acts being carried out in the main temple can be rejected.¹³⁵⁰

¹³⁴³ See paragraph 5.3.2 for the *m3rw*.

¹³⁴⁴ See paragraph 4.1 for a discussion of Alliot’s analysis of the ritual.

¹³⁴⁵ See paragraph 5.3.2 for the *sšd n hꜥw*.

¹³⁴⁶ Text 98: E VI 299, 6 – 300, 10.

¹³⁴⁷ Text 82: E VI 144, 15 – 145, 11.

¹³⁴⁸ See paragraph 5.3.1 for the *Pr-Bik-Ntry*.

¹³⁴⁹ Text 82: E VI 144, 15 ff..

¹³⁵⁰ See paragraph 4.1 for a discussion of Alliot’s analysis of the ritual.

Ritual sequence	Ritual scene
a) Appearance of Horus and his Ennead, presumably in the main temple	not depicted
b) Procession of Horus and his Ennead to the <i>r3-pr</i> of the temple-domain of the <i>bik</i> -falcon (<i>Pr-Bik</i>)	not depicted
c) In the temple-domain of the <i>bik</i> -falcon (<i>Pr-Bik</i>): - selection of the servant of the falcon - selection of the sacred falcon (in the <i>wsh</i> t of the <i>Pr-Bik</i>)	not depicted
d) Procession of Horus and the sacred falcon to the <i>m3rw</i>	Scenes 5 and 6
e) In the <i>m3rw</i> : - appearance resp. installation of the sacred falcon in the <i>sšd n hčw</i> resp. <i>sšd n si3</i> - union of Horus with the sacred falcon	not depicted
f) Procession of Horus and the sacred falcon from the <i>m3rw</i> to <i>St-Wrt</i> resp. <i>Msn</i>	not depicted
g) In <i>St-Wrt</i> resp. <i>Msn</i> : transmission of kingship from Horus Behdeti to the sacred falcon: - presentation of <i>md</i> -ointment - tying of the <i>wsh</i> -collar - offering of a <i>hh</i> -symbol in gold - presentation of <i>čnh</i> and <i>w3s</i> - presentation of <i>čnh</i> -flowers in the name of the Ennead	Scenes 1 and 2
h) Procession of Horus and the sacred falcon to the <i>Pr-Bik-Ntry</i>	not depicted
i) In the <i>Pr-Bik-Ntry</i> : - apotropaic rituals - enthronement of the sacred falcon - offering to the sacred falcon by Shu as servant of the falcon	Scenes 3, 4, 7, 8
j) Procession of Horus back to the main temple	not depicted
k) Celebrations by the people of town	not depicted

Table 5.2 Positioning of the eight ritual scenes in the ritual sequence of the coronation ritual of the falcon.

In conclusion, the analysis of the placement of the eight ritual scenes into the ritual sequence shows that each symmetrical, i.e. complementary, pair of scenes is associated with a specific ritual sequence. The analysis also shows the cohesion of the scenes for each register. The first register shows the first phase of the ritual, i.e. the procession to the *m3rw* (Scenes 5 and 6) and the rituals of the renewal and confirmation of royal power that were carried out subsequently in the main temple (Scenes 1 and 2). The second register shows the second phase of the ritual, i.e. the protective rites which took place in association with the enthronement of the sacred falcon in the *Pr-Bik-Ntry* (Scenes 7 and 8) and the final offering- and fumigation rituals that also took place in the *Pr-Bik-Ntry* (Scenes 3 and 4).

5.3 IDENTIFICATION OF THE RITUAL LOCALITIES

The inscriptions clearly show that various stages of the ritual were performed in various locations of the temple-precinct:

- the *Pr-Bik* / *Pr-Bik-Ntry*
- the *m3rw*
- the *sšd n hčw* / *sšd n si3* / *sšd n s3b-šwt*
- *St-Wrt* / *Msn* (i.e. the main temple)

The identity of some of the locations such as the main temple can be relatively easily determined on the basis of the inscriptions, but especially the identifications of the *Pr-Bik / Pr-Bik-Ntry*, the *m3rw* and the *sšd n ḥꜥw / sšd n si3 / sšd n s3b-šwt* need further elaboration.

5.3.1 THE *Pr-Bik / Pr-Bik-Ntry*

The mere existence of the falcon-cult at Edfu implies the presence of sacred animals as well as structures associated with their breeding, feeding, cult and mummification. Strabo described that the Apis bull at Memphis had its own temple, which was preceded by a court in which there was another temple where the bull's mother was kept.¹³⁵¹ Diodorus mentioned the ceremonies associated with the Apis of Memphis, the Mnevis of Heliopolis, the ram of Mendes, the crocodile of Lake Moeris, and the lion of Leontopolis saying that the animals were kept in sacred enclosures and that they were treated with great care.¹³⁵² These accounts suggest that the enclosures for the sacred animals were located in an area of the temple-precinct that was accessible to visitors. The same conclusion can be reached based on Strabo's account of the sacred falcon kept at Philae,¹³⁵³ which he saw and described as follows: "(...) to me it appeared to be in no respect like the hawks in our country and in Egypt, but was both greater in size and far different in the varied colouring of its plumage. They said that it was an Ethiopian bird, and that another was brought from Ethiopia whenever the one at hand died, or before. And in fact the bird shown to us at the time mentioned was nearly dead because of disease".¹³⁵⁴

In the so-called Book of the Temple, a handbook describing the ideal Egyptian temple, including its architectural arrangement and the duties of the priests and other personnel,¹³⁵⁵ the domain of the sacred animals is described in a section dealing with the area outside of the temple, where the places for the purification of the king before entering the temple were also located.¹³⁵⁶ The embalming place for the sacred animals (*wꜥbt*) was also located outside of the temple enclosure.¹³⁵⁷ The sacred animals are also referred to in the section on the duties of the priests and other temple personnel. It is said about the writers of the divine books that they are responsible – together with the personnel of the scriptorium, the Sakhmet-priests and the conjurers of scorpions – for the protection of the sacred animals.¹³⁵⁸ Amongst the personnel for the sacred animals were 16 herdsmen who guarded them in their sanctuaries but also when they went into the fields, together with the females and their young.¹³⁵⁹ As pointed out in

¹³⁵¹ Strabo, *Geographika*, Book XVII, Chapter 1, section 31.

¹³⁵² Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheca historica*, Book I, Chapter 84.

¹³⁵³ For the Coptic legend of the end of the falcon-cult at Philae, see E.A.W. Budge, *Miscellaneous Coptic Texts in the Dialect of Upper Egypt*. London 1915, 445 and 961; W. Spiegelberg, "Der Falkenkultus auf der Insel Philae in christlicher Zeit", in: *AfP* 7 (1924), 186-189.

¹³⁵⁴ Strabo, *Geographika*, Book XVII, Chapter 1, section 49.

¹³⁵⁵ E.g. J.F. Quack, "Organiser le culte idéal: le manuel du temple", in: *BSFE* 160 (2004), 9-25; J.F. Quack, "Die Dienstanweisung des Oberlehrers aus dem Buch vom Tempel", in: H. Beinlich *et al.* (eds), *5. Ägyptologische Tempeltagung: Würzburg, 23.-26. September 1999. Ägypten und Altes Testament* 33. Wiesbaden 2002, 159-171; J.F. Quack, "Das Buch vom Tempel und verwandte Texte: ein Vorbericht", in: *ARG* 2 (2000), 1-20.

¹³⁵⁶ J.F. Quack, "Die Rolle des heiligen Tieres im Buch vom Tempel", in: M. Fitzenreiter and S. Kirchner (eds), *Tierkulte im pharaonischen Ägypten und im Kulturvergleich: Beiträge eines Workshops am 7.6. und 8.6. 2002*. Internet-Beiträge zur Ägyptologie und Sudanarchäologie 4. Berlin 2003, 113.

¹³⁵⁷ Quack, in: Fitzenreiter and Kirchner (eds), *Tierkulte*, 114.

¹³⁵⁸ Quack, in: Fitzenreiter and Kirchner (eds), *Tierkulte*, 115.

¹³⁵⁹ Quack, in: Fitzenreiter and Kirchner (eds), *Tierkulte*, 116.

paragraph 2.3.1, the feeding and maintenance of the sacred falcon is mentioned in the Elephantine Papyri P Berlin 13547 and P Berlin 15529.¹³⁶⁰

The inscriptions on the statue-base of Djedhor from Athribis also provide information on the structures for the cult of the sacred animals in the area of the temples.¹³⁶¹ In the autobiographical inscriptions on the sides of the statue-base, Djedhor mentions his titles in relation to his work in the temple-domain of the sacred falcon of Athribis. The structure referred to in these inscriptions is the *w^cbt*, i.e. the place where the sacred falcons of Athribis were mummified and which was located to the south-east of the temple, in the area consecrated to the cult of the sacred falcons.¹³⁶²

As Kessler pointed out, the structures for the cult of the sacred animals were usually located in the area in front of the pylon and were ranked in the Ptolemaic decrees among the *r-pr* institutions of Egypt.¹³⁶³ This matches the description in Text 7, where it is said that Horus appears in procession (presumably in the main temple) and proceeds to “the *r3-pr* of the *Pr-Bik*”. According to ritual programme texts 7, 50 and 63 the selection of the servant of the falcon and of the sacred falcon itself was carried out in the *Pr-Bik*. Alliot translated the term *Pr-Bik* as ‘temple du faucon’, but considering the fact that the domain of the sacred animals comprised various structures associated with their breeding, feeding, cult and mummification, it seems more appropriate to translate *Pr-Bik* as ‘the temple-domain of the *bik*-falcon’.

It is striking that the location mentioned in phases *b-c* at the start of the ritual is referred to as *Pr-Bik*, whereas the location mentioned in phases *h-i* at the end of the ritual is referred to as *Pr-Bik-Ntry*. Here, the sacred falcon was enthroned and presented with offerings by the servant of the falcon. We might be dealing here with two different locations, the *Pr-Bik* being a place associated primarily with the breeding and keeping of falcons (referred to as *drtyw* in Text 7), and as such with the selection of the sacred falcon, whereas the *Pr-Bik-Ntry* was the place where the sacred falcon incarnating Horus was kept after its investiture. Another – more plausible – possibility is that the *Pr-Bik* and the *Pr-Bik-Ntry* are one and the same location, which is referred to as *Pr-Bik-Ntry* at the end of the ritual, because the falcon became only divine (*ntry*) after the rituals of the renewal and confirmation of royal power (which brought about the divinisation of the falcon) in the main temple had been carried out. Possible remains of the *Pr-Bik* / *Pr-Bik-Ntry* are probably buried under the modern town of Edfu.

Alliot identified the *Pr-Bik* with structure L, located at the south-eastern corner of the temenos, opposite the mammisi (Fig. 5.1)¹³⁶⁴ Structure L is oriented towards the main temple, measures ca. 2 metres in length and ca. 1 meter in width and consists of two layers of blocks decorated with figures. Unfortunately, the third layer of blocks, which presumably contained the accompanying inscriptions, is now completely lost. The lower layer of blocks is decorated with papyrus and lotus flowers. The upper layer of blocks is composed of eight small scenes (Figs. 5.2 – 5.9).

¹³⁶⁰ See M. Müller, “Among the priests of Elephantine Island. Elephantine Island seen from Egyptian sources”, in: *WdO* 46, 2 (2016), 233, with reference to Zauzich, *Papyri* and K.-Th. Zauzich, *Ägyptische Handschriften II. Verzeichnis der Orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland 19/2*. Wiesbaden 1971, 57.

¹³⁶¹ Alliot, *Culte*, 589-591.

¹³⁶² Jelinková-Reymond, *Statue guérisseuse*, 97-100; 106-108

¹³⁶³ Kessler, *Tiere*, 45; 52-56.

¹³⁶⁴ Alliot, *Culte*, 574-583, esp. 580.

[Image under copyright restrictions]

Figure 5.1 Left: Plan of the Edfu temple complex with the arrow indicating structure L. After: Bagnall and Rathbone, *Egypt*, 229. Right: Plan of structure L.

[Image under copyright restrictions]

Figure 5.2 Structure L, scene 1 (north face). From: E Mamm, pl. LVI, 1.

Two fecundity figures are knotting the heraldic plants of Upper- and Lower-Egypt. Two goddesses (perhaps Nekhbet and Wadjet?) are standing to the left and right of this scene, each holding two palm ribs. The sacred falcon is standing on top of the *sm3-t3wy*-symbol.

[Image under copyright restrictions]

Figure 5.3 Structure L, scene 2 (south face). From: E Mamm, pl. LVI, 2.

The king is standing with raised hands or presenting an offering in front of the sacred falcon on the *srh*. A male and a female deity are depicted to the right of the falcon. The male deity stands upon two scorpions and two crocodiles and is holding two scorpions and two snakes in his hands. The female deity is also holding two snakes in her hand – parts of the relief are destroyed so it can no longer be determined what she was holding in the other hand and whether she also stood on crocodiles.

[Image under copyright restrictions]

Figure 5.4 Structure L, scene 3 (west face, left). From: E Mamm, pl. LVI, 3.

The king presenting an offering is facing two other male figures – probably deities – holding *w3s*-sceptres and *ʕnh*-symbols.

[Image under copyright restrictions]

Figure 5.5 Structure L, scene 4 (west face, central). From: E Mamm, pl. LVI, 3.

The king is standing with raised hands or presenting an offering in front of the sacred falcon on the *srh*. A male and a female deity are depicted standing to the left of the falcon, the male deity holding a *w3s*-sceptre and an *ʕnh*-symbol and the female deity holding a *w3d*-sceptre and an *ʕnh*-symbol.

[Image under copyright restrictions]

Figure 5.6 Structure L, scene 5 (west face, right). From: E Mamm, pl. LVI, 3.

Two male figures are facing each other. The king on the right is spearing the crocodiles depicted under the feet of the deity on the left, who is holding two scorpions in his hands and has a falcon-tail.

[Image under copyright restrictions]

Figure 5.7 Structure L, scene 6 (east face, left). From: E Mamm, pl. LVI, 4.

Two male figures are facing each other. The king on the left is spearing the crocodiles depicted under the feet of the deity on the right, who is holding two snakes and two scorpions in his hands.

[Image under copyright restrictions]

Figure 5.8 Structure L, scene 7 (east face, central). From: E Mamm, pl. LVI, 4.

The king is standing with raised hands or presenting an offering in front of the sacred falcon on the *srh*. A male and a female deity are standing to the right of the falcon, the male deity holding a *w3s*-sceptre and an *ʿnh*-symbol and the female deity holding a *w3d*-sceptre and an *ʿnh*-symbol.

[Image under copyright restrictions]

Figure 5.9 Structure L, scene 8 (east face, right). From: E Mamm, pl. LVI, 4.

The king with raised hands – presenting an offering – is facing a deity holding a sceptre. A second figure is presumably lost.

On the basis of the decoration of structure L it is impossible to determine whether the rituals associated with the selection of the sacred falcon in the *Pr-Bik* (ritual sequence phase *c*) were actually carried out at structure L, as Alliot proposed. It is clear, however, that the sacred falcon has an important place in the decoration of structure L, as well as the various deities holding and standing on scorpions, crocodiles and snakes. These scenes are clearly of an

apotropaic nature and remind one of the Horus-cippi depicting Horus on the crocodiles.¹³⁶⁵ Alliot identified structure L as an altar,¹³⁶⁶ but this seems unlikely considering its height and the fact that it is decorated on all faces. Alliot remarked that the four sides are not vertical but present a slight slope.¹³⁶⁷ The strong apotropaic character of the decoration of structure L, which reminds one of the Horus-cippi associated with the so-called ‘healing’ statues,¹³⁶⁸ suggests that it may have served some kind of magical purpose. The measurements of structure L suggest that it may have been a support or pedestal of some kind, its rectangular shape suggesting that it may perhaps have served as a pedestal for a large falcon-statue.¹³⁶⁹ Possible remains of the structure of which structure L may once have formed part are now completely lost, so it can not be ascertained whether structure L formed part of a larger structure or whether it formed a monument on its own. Its decoration – in which the sacred animal and apotropaic magic are prominent – suggests that structure L may have functioned in the context of popular religion and temple medicine¹³⁷⁰ rather than forming part of the temple-domain of the sacred falcon.

5.3.2 THE *m3rw* AND THE *sšd n hꜥw*

After the selection of the falcon in the *Pr-Bik*, the falcon and Horus are brought in procession to a location referred to as the *m3rw*, where the falcon appears in the *sšd n hꜥw*.¹³⁷¹ The term *sšd* is usually translated as ‘window’ and as such it refers to an opening in a building as a means of communication with the outside. Therefore, the term *sšd n hꜥw* is usually translated as ‘window of appearances’.¹³⁷²

In the Edfu inscriptions associated with the rituals of 1 Tybi, the *sšd n hꜥw* is closely associated with the *m3rw* and refers to the place where the sacred falcon was made to appear (*shꜥ*)¹³⁷³ and where it was united (*shn*) with Horus.¹³⁷⁴ The *sšd n hꜥw* is also mentioned in the context of the rituals of 1 Tybi in the inscriptions of the west face of the east tower of the Edfu pylon,¹³⁷⁵ but here no reference is made to the *m3rw*. On the east face of the west tower the *sšd n si3* is associated with the *m3rw*.¹³⁷⁶ The *sšd n hꜥw* is also closely associated with the

¹³⁶⁵ For a discussion of the interpretation of the theme of deities standing on dangerous animals, see J. Quaegebeur, “Divinités égyptiennes sur des animaux dangereux”, in: Ph. Borgeaud, Y. Christe and I. Urrio (eds), *L’animal, l’homme, le dieu dans le Proche-Orient ancien: actes du colloque de Cartigny 1981*. Les Cahiers du CEPOA 2. Leuven 1984, 131-143.

¹³⁶⁶ Alliot, *Culte*, 580.

¹³⁶⁷ Alliot, *Culte*, 579. The inclination is clearly indicated on the line-drawings of structure L in E Mamm, pl. LVI.

¹³⁶⁸ Most healing statues consist of a figure in standing position which holds or supports a Horus-cippus.

¹³⁶⁹ Perhaps one of the huge falcon-statues that are now located in front of the pronaos.

¹³⁷⁰ For temple medicine in Ptolemaic Egypt, see Ph. Lang, *Medicine and Society in Ptolemaic Egypt*. Studies in Ancient Medicine 41. Leiden 2013.

¹³⁷¹ The *sšd n hꜥw*, *sšd n si3* and *sšd n s3b-šwt* seem to be synonyms. In the remainder of this analysis we shall therefore refer only to the *sšd n hꜥw* in order to avoid repetition.

¹³⁷² *Wb.* IV, 301-302; Wilson, *Ptolemaic lexikon*, 936.

¹³⁷³ E VI 93, 11: “in order to make appear the *si3*-falcon in the *sšd n si3*”; E VI 102, 9: “letting His Majesty (i.e. the sacred falcon) appear in the *sšd n hꜥw*”.

¹³⁷⁴ E VI 93, 13-14: “so that his *k3* reaches the *m3rw* of his (sacred) animal, in order to unite himself with the *b3* of Ra”; E VI 263, 1: “to unite with his Majesty (i.e. the sacred falcon) in his *sšd n hꜥw*”.

¹³⁷⁵ E VIII 148, 11-12: “May your Majesty sit upon the *bhdw*-throne since the beginning, as Horus the great, the dappled of feathers, in order to make your *k3* enduring in your *sšd n hꜥw* during your beautiful festival of establishing your inheritance and in order to make enduring the office of the animal of Horakhty when he receives his kingship”.

¹³⁷⁶ E VIII 110, 1-3: “The living *b3* of Ra has come from Punt so that he is appointed as ruler forever. He will come from his *m3rw* on his *tnt3t*-litter, so that his *k3* reaches the dappled of feathers, in order to give him the *hh*-

m3rw in the context of the rituals of 1 Tybi in the inscriptions on the lateral interior faces of the first pylon of Philae.¹³⁷⁷ Based on the textual material from Edfu and Philae it can be concluded that the *sšd n hꜥw*, i.e. the place where the sacred falcon appeared and was united with Horus, was located at the *m3rw*.

Alliot translated *sšd n hꜥw* as ‘la loge (royale) de l’apparition’, which he identified as being part of the *Pr-Bik*. He concluded: “C’est dire que la marque distinctive de ce temple est de posséder une loge royale *sšd*, pour l’apparition du roi divin”.¹³⁷⁸ In addition, he proposed that the terms *sšd n s3b-šwt* (which he translated as ‘(le temple de) la loge (royale) du (dieu) *s3b-šwt*’), *sšd n si3* (which he translated as ‘(le temple de) la loge (royale) du faucon-*si3w*’) and *m3rw* were synonyms for the *Pr-Bik*.¹³⁷⁹ As he identified the *Pr-Bik* with structure L,¹³⁸⁰ he suggested that the appearance of the sacred falcon in the *sšd n hꜥw* took place there. However, there is no conclusive evidence supporting Alliot’s suggestion, and as pointed out in paragraph 5.3.1, the decoration of structure L suggests it may have functioned in the context of popular religion rather than forming part of the temple-domain of the sacred falcon.

Other Egyptologists, including Fairman,¹³⁸¹ Derchain,¹³⁸² Cauville,¹³⁸³ Kurth,¹³⁸⁴ and most recently Konrad,¹³⁸⁵ Fauerbach¹³⁸⁶ and Martzloff¹³⁸⁷ all follow the initial suggestion of Junker,¹³⁸⁸ identifying the *m3rw* and the *sšd n hꜥw* with the pylon and in particular with the bridge of the pylon, where the sacred falcon supposedly appeared to the public. This theory is based mainly on the decoration of the lateral interior faces of the pylon towers of Edfu and Philae, which depict two scenes representing the sacred falcon in the context of the rituals of 1 Tybi.¹³⁸⁹ As such, it is generally assumed that the sacred falcon was brought in procession to the bridge of the pylon, where it was displayed to the public. This reasoning is based on the view that the relief decoration of a specific location depicts the rituals that actually took place here, but it remains to be seen whether this hypothesis can be maintained.

First of all, the presentation of the sacred falcon to the public at this stage of the ritual does not make sense: at this point, but the rituals for the transmission and confirmation of royal power of the falcon had not yet been carried out. One would rather expect an appearance of the falcon to the public to have taken place after the completion of these rituals.

Moreover, the assumption that the falcon appeared to the public is not supported by the source material: it is not mentioned in any of the Edfu inscriptions, nor in the accounts of the

symbol with *ꜥnh*, *dd* and *w3s*, namely this bouquet of flowers of <the Ennead> and the span of time of *hh*-eternity in the *sšd n si3* and upon his *bhdw*-throne in the *Pr-Bik-Ntry*. <Come in haste> to *Msn*, <you with turquoise skin>, so that your Majesty is <united> with your statue”.

¹³⁷⁷ Ph I 74, 2-3: “May you reach your *m3rw*, *si3*-falcon in your *sšd*”; Ph I 77, 6-11: “The living *b3* of Ra has come from Punt and is appointed as ruler, forever. [...] in his *m3rw* in his *sšd n hꜥw* so that his *k3* reaches the dappled of feathers, so that he is given *hh* with *ꜥnh*, *dd* and *w3s*, namely this *ꜥnh*-bouquet of Ra”.

¹³⁷⁸ Alliot, *Culte*, 575.

¹³⁷⁹ Alliot, *Culte*, 575.

¹³⁸⁰ See paragraph 5.3.1.

¹³⁸¹ H.W. Fairman, “Worship and festivals in an Egyptian temple”, in *BJRL* 37 (1954-1955), 190.

¹³⁸² Ph. Derchain, “Remarques sur la décoration des pylônes ptolémaïques”, in: *BiOr* 18 (1961), 47-49.

¹³⁸³ Cauville, *Essai*, 196.

¹³⁸⁴ Kurth, *Treffpunkt*, 280-282.

¹³⁸⁵ K. Konrad, *Architektur und Theologie: Pharaonische Tempelterminologie unter Berücksichtigung königsideologischer Aspekte*. Königtum, Staat und Gesellschaft früher Hochkulturen 5. Wiesbaden 2006, 117-154.

¹³⁸⁶ U. Fauerbach, *Der grosse Pylon des Horus-Tempels von Edfu. Eine Bauforscherische Untersuchung*. Bamberg 2005, 112-120.

¹³⁸⁷ Martzloff, *Décoration*, 88-89, 217 and 255.

¹³⁸⁸ Junker, in: *WZKM* 26 (1912), 42-62.

¹³⁸⁹ See Figs. 3.6 – 3.9.

classical authors, who referred in some cases to the ceremonies associated with the sacred animals (see above). Martzloff stated: “Nous savons, par le récit de Strabon, que le balcon du premier pylône de Philae était utilisé lors des cérémonies d’intrônisation du faucon. Lors de cette célébration, l’animal, officiellement reconnu comme le représentant vivant du faucon Horus sur terre, était présenté aux fidèles”.¹³⁹⁰ However, Strabo does not mention any ceremony in which the falcon was displayed to the public on the bridge of the pylon; he only refers to the fact that a living falcon was venerated at Philae: “A little above the cataract lies Philae, (...). Here, also, a bird is held in honour, which they call a hawk, though to me it appeared to be in no respect like the hawks in our country and in Egypt, but was both greater in size and far different in the varied colouring of its plumage. They said that it was an Ethiopian bird, and that another was brought from Ethiopia whenever the one at hand died, or before. And in fact the bird shown to us at the time mentioned was nearly dead because of disease”.¹³⁹¹ Moreover, the source material from Edfu does not support the assumption that the falcon appeared to the public: Text 7 (E VI 102, 9) states that the falcon appears “in the *sšd n ḥꜥw* in front of this god (i.e. Horus)”, which suggests that the falcon is introduced at this stage of the ritual to Horus of Edfu, rather than to the public.

As pointed out above, the suggestion that the sacred falcon appeared to the public on the bridge of the pylon is based primarily on the decoration of the lateral interior faces of the pylon towers of Edfu and Philae. However, the hypothesis is not supported by what is actually depicted in these scenes: both scenes depict the falcon facing the interior of the temple, i.e. the court (H’) and the sanctuary, rather than the area in front of the pylon. If the scenes on the lateral interior faces of the pylon towers are to be taken as evidence reflecting the events that actually took place on the bridge of the pylon, one would expect the falcon being depicted facing the area in front of the pylon.

The identification of the term *m3rw* with the pylon can furthermore be rejected on the basis of lexicographic evidence. The term that is usually used to describe the pylon is *bḥnt*, deriving from the verb *bḥn* ‘being vigilant’.¹³⁹² This, of course, refers to the protective function of the pylon, warding off the forces of chaos as expressed in its decoration.¹³⁹³ It is telling that the term *bḥnt* is not mentioned in any of the inscriptions associated with the rituals of 1 Tybi. If the pylon had such an important role in the coronation ritual of the falcon, one would expect to find the term *bḥnt* in the inscriptions concerning this ritual. The term *m3rw*, conversely, is mentioned several times in the ritual texts, referring specifically to the location where the falcon appears in the *sšd n ḥꜥw*. However, in the Egyptian sources, the term *m3rw* is never used to designate the pylon¹³⁹⁴ and it is not associated in any way with the pylon, the pylon towers or the bridge of the pylon.¹³⁹⁵ In short, there are no lexicographic arguments to justify the identification of the term *m3rw* with the pylon or bridge of the pylon. Nevertheless, in Konrad’s recent study on temple architecture, the term *m3rw* was all the same identified with the pylon in the case of Edfu and Philae,¹³⁹⁶ this identification being based solely on the idea that the location where the falcon appeared is to be identified with the bridge of the pylon, an assumption which is taken as factual.

¹³⁹⁰ Martzloff, *Décoration*, 255.

¹³⁹¹ Strabo, *Geographika*, Book XVII, Chapter 1, section 49.

¹³⁹² Spencer, *Egyptian temple*, 192-196.

¹³⁹³ D. Arnold, *Lexikon der ägyptischen Baukunst*. Munich/Zürich 1994, 199; B. Jaros-Deckert, *LÄ IV*, 1982, 1202-1205 “Pylon”.

¹³⁹⁴ Arnold, *Lexikon*, 146; R. Hanke, *LÄ III*, 1980, 1102-1103 “Lusthaus”; *Wb. II*, 30: “Lusthaus, Gartenanlage, Haltestelle bei der Prozession”.

¹³⁹⁵ See further below for a discussion on the presence of the terms *m3rw*, *sšd n ḥꜥw* and *sšd n s3* in the scenes on the lateral interior faces of the pylon towers at Edfu and Philae.

¹³⁹⁶ Konrad, *Architektur*, 117-154.

Kurth suggested that besides the presentation of the falcon to the public, there was another reason, founded on theological considerations, for making the falcon appear on the bridge of the pylon.¹³⁹⁷ The architectural form of the pylon was associated with the *3ht*, the two towers being metaphors for the eastern and western mountains, associated as such with the rising and setting of the sun.¹³⁹⁸ As the falcon appeared between the towers of the pylon, it was identified with the renewed morning-sun, symbolising as such its transformation from sacred animal into the *b3* of Ra.¹³⁹⁹ It is true that the inscriptions of the pylon towers refer to the sacred falcon as the *b3* of Ra, but this does not prove conclusively that the sacred falcon *actually* appeared between the pylon towers. After all, this theme is not restricted to the decoration of the pylon towers; it recurs throughout the inscriptions associated with the eight ritual scenes on the interior face of the northern enclosure wall.¹⁴⁰⁰

The idea of the pylon as a cult place for the sun-god seems to be based on Stadelmann's analysis of the *šwt-R^c* structures in New Kingdom temples.¹⁴⁰¹ The *šwt-R^c* structures usually consisted of a shrine dedicated to the sun-god, comprising an open court and an altar. Amongst the examples cited by Stadelmann are the Ra-chapels in the temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahari, in the temple of Seti I at Gurna, in the temple of Ramesses III at Medinet Habu, in the temple of Karnak, and at Abu Simbel. In the case of Medinet Habu, Stadelmann associated the *šwt-R^c* not only with rooms 17-19 comprising an open court with an altar, but also with rooms 30-32 and with the staircase leading from room 17 to the roof, from where presumably the bridge of the second pylon could be reached. Based on the decoration of the bridge of the pylon which shows baboons adoring the rising and the setting sun, Stadelmann suggested that the bridge of the pylon formed part of the *šwt-R^c* complex in Medinet Habu.¹⁴⁰² In the case of the temple of Abu Simbel the situation is slightly different, as the rock-cut temple does not have a pylon. Stadelmann identified the chapel situated in the north-eastern corner in front of the temple as a pylon-shrine ("Pylonheiligtum"), with an open kiosk and an altar.¹⁴⁰³ Graefe saw in the presumed appearance of the falcon on the bridge of the pylon at Philae and Edfu a continuation of the solar cult places associated with the pylon at Medinet Habu and Abu Simbel.¹⁴⁰⁴ However, the bridge of the pylon as a solar cult place does not have a rich tradition in New Kingdom times, as it seems to be attested only in the case of Medinet Habu and Abu Simbel, and the evidence from the New Kingdom and later periods of Egyptian history does not suggest that we are dealing here with a rich or continuous tradition. Furthermore, the pylon bridges and staircases of the pylon towers in temples dating to the later periods of Egyptian history are not decorated and do not refer in any way to cultic activities that may have been carried out here. If this structure occupied such an important place in the rituals of 1 Tybi, one might expect to find decoration and inscriptions referring to the cultic activities associated with it on the walls of the staircases in the pylon towers, similar to the decoration of the staircases leading up to the roof chapels where the New Year's rituals were carried out.¹⁴⁰⁵

¹³⁹⁷ Kurth, *Treffpunkt*, 280-281.

¹³⁹⁸ Arnold, *Lexikon*, 199; B. Jaros-Deckert, *LÄ* IV, 1982, 1202-1205 "Pylon".

¹³⁹⁹ Kurth, *Treffpunkt*, 280-281.

¹⁴⁰⁰ For example Text 6 (E VI 100, 14 – 102, 3); Text 7: E VI 102, 3 – 103, 6; Text 39 (E VI 305, 13 – 308, 8); Text 50: E VI 93, 8 – 94, 2.

¹⁴⁰¹ R. Stadelmann, "šwt-R^cw als Kultstätte des Sonnengottes im Neuen Reich", in: *MDAIK* 25 (1969), 159-178.

¹⁴⁰² Stadelmann, in: *MDAIK* 25 (1969), 169-172.

¹⁴⁰³ Stadelmann, in: *MDAIK* 25 (1969), 176-177.

¹⁴⁰⁴ E. Graefe, "Der Sonnenaufgang zwischen den Pylontürmen", in: *OLP* 14 (1983), 68-69.

¹⁴⁰⁵ In two scenes on the north face of the west tower of the Edfu pylon, depicting standard carriers and bark carriers, reference is made to processions (E VIII 96, 4 – 99, 18). However, these inscriptions do not suggest that the sacred falcon appeared on the bridge of the pylon. No reference is made to the sacred falcon, nor to processions leading into the pylon staircase. Considering the placement of these inscriptions next to the pylon

In his attempt to trace the continuation of the concept of the pylon bridge as a solar cult place where the sun-god actually appeared, Graefe also referred to depictions of Egyptian temple pylons on Alexandrian coins dating to the Roman period and to the Nile mosaic of Palestrina, which show a figure over the pylon gateway.¹⁴⁰⁶ He took these representations as evidence reflecting the actual appearance of the temple-god between the pylon towers. However, this is not necessarily the case. These images may also depict a ritual activity that is amply attested in ancient Egypt, namely the appearance of the god when he is taken in procession through the pylon gateway, or perhaps the appearance of the god in the roof chapel(s) of the temple, as amply attested in the case of the New Year's rituals. This interpretation is supported by the fact that on these coins not only images of birds are depicted between the pylon towers, but also images of Isis and Harpocrates (?),¹⁴⁰⁷ which are not thought of to have appeared between the pylon towers. Graefe also refers to a relief in the temple of Isis at Philae, depicting a lion (Miysis) on top of a temple pylon.¹⁴⁰⁸ However, one can not imagine taking this depiction as evidence for the appearance of an actual lion on the bridge of the pylon. The fact that the figures on the coins are depicted over the pylon gateway may simply be due to non-Egyptian conventions of style as well as to practical reasons: the only space available for a clear image of the deity on these small coins was the empty space over the pylon gateway.

An additional argument against the hypothesis of the appearance of the falcon on the bridge of the pylon as the renewed morning-sun is offered by an analysis of the orientation of the Edfu pylon forms. The temple of Edfu is oriented north-south, which means that the pylon towers are located in the east and in the west. This means that the morning-sun does not rise between the pylon towers; the rays of the early morning-sun can not even reach the bridge of the pylon as they are blocked by the eastern pylon tower. It follows that it was not possible to convert the theological concept of the falcon rising between the pylon towers as the renewed morning-sun into a ritual reality.

Another indication suggesting that the events depicted on the lateral interior faces of the pylon towers do not represent a ritual reality is the depiction of Horus, Thoth and Atum who present the falcon with the symbols of the transmission of royal power, rather than the king. If these scenes were to depict actual cultic events, one would expect the king to carry out the rituals for the falcon. The presence of the gods rather than the king places these scenes in the divine sphere rather than in the earthly sphere.

An analysis of the architectural features of the pylon provides further arguments for the rejection of the hypothesis that the falcon appeared on the bridge of the pylon. Fauerbach's investigation of the construction and architecture of the Edfu pylon shows that the passage between the pylon towers measures 2.02 m x 8.69 m, its height being 5 m, measured from the floor level of the bridge to its roof surface (Fig. 5.10).¹⁴⁰⁹ In order to display the sacred falcon on the bridge of the pylon one would need to climb the 5 m high sidewalls of the interior of the bridge in order to reach the roof surface of the bridge. Only the south side of the roof surface was accessible, by means of a ladder-staircase construction: the lower part of this wall forms a kind of landing, measuring 1.74 m in height and 0.51 (west) – 0.62 (east) cm in width,

gateway, these merely refer to the processions that led from the interior of the temple building through the pylon gateway to locations outside of the main temple and vice versa.

¹⁴⁰⁶ Graefe, in: *OLP* 14 (1983), 72 ff. with reference to P. Naster, "Le pylône égyptien sur les monnaies impériales d'Alexandrie", in: *Antidorum W. Peremans Sexagenario ab alumnis oblatum*. Studia Hellenistica 16. Leuven 1968, 181-190; S. Handler, "Architecture of the Roman coins of Alexandria", in: *AJA* 75, 1 (1971), 57-74.

¹⁴⁰⁷ Graefe, in: *OLP* 14 (1983), 75 with reference to Naster, in: *Antidorum W. Peremans*, 186-188.

¹⁴⁰⁸ Graefe, in: *OLP* 14 (1983), 75 with reference to Bénédite, *Philae*, pl. XL.

¹⁴⁰⁹ Fauerbach, *Pylon*, 112.

on top of which there was a small staircase, leading to the roof surface.¹⁴¹⁰ In order to reach the staircase one would need to climb the “ladder” with the use of the steps and grasping holes (Fig. 5.11), then walk a distance of nearly 9 m balancing over the narrow landing to the opposite corner, where the staircase was located. The staircase has now been destroyed, but remains of the stairs can still be discerned on the wall surface (Fig. 5.11). The mere rigmarole of reaching the roof surface of the bridge sheds considerable doubt upon the suggestion that the sacred falcon was brought here in the context of an official ceremony, carried by priests balancing over a 50 cm narrow landing and climbing a “ladder” using grasping holes.

[Image under copyright restrictions]

Figure 5.10 Left: view from above of the bridge of the Edfu pylon, from east to west. From: Fauerbach, *Pylon*, pl. 18b. Right: view from east to west of the corridor of the bridge. From: Fauerbach, *Pylon*, pl. 28b.

[Image under copyright restrictions]

Figure 5.11 Left: south wall of the bridge. Center and right: ladder-construction with steps and grasping hole. From: Fauerbach, *Pylon*, pl. 39a-c.

¹⁴¹⁰ Fauerbach, *Pylon*, 112.

Despite the bad accessibility of the bridge of the pylon, Fauerbach followed without question the theory that the falcon appeared to the public on the bridge of the pylon: “Die Dachfläche der Pylonbrücke ist der einzige Teil des großen Pylons von Edfu, von dem wir sicher wissen, dass auf ihm Kulthandlungen stattgefunden haben. Hier ‚erschien‘ der heilige Falke, eine lebendige Verkörperung des Horus, im Verlaufe seiner jährlichen Inthronisation”.¹⁴¹¹ Moreover, she interpreted the function of certain constructional elements of the pylon in the context of this assumption, stating, for example, that a line of dowel holes present along the edge of the southern roof surface (visible on Fig. 5.10, left) can only be seen in relation to the presentation of the sacred falcon on the bridge: “Ob die Vorrichtung dem Schmuck oder dem Sichtschutz dienen sollte oder beidem, ist nicht zu sagen, sie kann aber nur in Zusammenhang mit den Kulthandlungen gestanden haben, die mit der Erscheinung des heiligen Falken verbunden waren”.¹⁴¹² This is however not necessarily the case: any kind of light, temporary structure may have been anchored here and it is impossible to say whether the dowel holes date to the Ptolemaic period or to a much later period of Egyptian history. A suggestion similar to that of Fauerbach was proposed by Dijkstra in the case of the first pylon of Philae.¹⁴¹³ He interpreted a series of postholes in the lateral interior faces of the pylon towers as being part of a construction supporting the “cage” in which the sacred falcon was displayed to the public. However, these postholes have been made crudely, cutting right through the relief decoration, and may just as well be of a more recent date, similar to the many other postholes that are visible on the pylon towers and the pylon bridge. These postholes served most probably to anchor wooden constructions to the stone monument in the period after the temples were abandoned as religious centres, when they were made fit for human habitation and storage of goods.¹⁴¹⁴

The identification of the *m3rw* and the *sšd n ḥꜥw* with the pylon and the bridge of the pylon cannot be sustained and therefore it should be investigated to what structure the term *m3rw* refers in the context of the coronation ritual of the falcon at Edfu.¹⁴¹⁵

The earliest attestation of the term *m3rw* dates from the time of Amenhotep III¹⁴¹⁶ and it is mentioned in a building inscription on the original obverse of the Israel-stela.¹⁴¹⁷ The description of the *m3rw* follows that of the Luxor temple. It is described as being situated “in front of (*ḥft-ḥr*) the Southern Opet” and identified as “a resting-place for my father during his beautiful festival”. It thus seems to have functioned as a temporary resting-station of Amun during the Opet-festival. The text also mentions that the god is inside the *m3rw* “like Ra when he appears in the horizon”. The place is said to be embellished with flowers and a basin that connects it to the Nile. The text also says that the *m3rw* was the place where the god received tribute. Cabrol concluded that the *m3rw* was a structure comprising a platform and a basin, located in front of the Luxor temple:¹⁴¹⁸ “C’est un endroit où chacun peut voir les manifestations officielles telles que l’arrêt de la barque processionnelle d’Amon, après son

¹⁴¹¹ Fauerbach, *Pylon*, 117.

¹⁴¹² Fauerbach, *Pylon*, 116.

¹⁴¹³ J.H.F. Dijkstra, “Horus on his throne: the holy falcon of Philae in his demonic cage”, in: *GM* 189 (2002), 7-10.

¹⁴¹⁴ D. Kurth, “Edfu”, in: K.A. Bard and S.B. Shubert (eds), *Encyclopedia of the Archaeology of Ancient Egypt*. London etc. 2005, 270. Illustrated for example in *Description de l’Égypte*, pls. 48-49 (structures are clearly visible here, attached to the front of the pylon and positioned on the pronaos of the Edfu temple)

¹⁴¹⁵ For an overview of the term *m3rw*, see Konrad, *Architektur*, 117-154.

¹⁴¹⁶ R. Hanke, *LÄ* III, 1980, 1102-1103 “Lusthaus”.

¹⁴¹⁷ CG 34025; *Urk.* IV, 1651.7 – 1652, 9.

¹⁴¹⁸ A. Cabrol, *Les voies processionnelles de Thèbes*. Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 97. Leuven etc. 2001, 605, with reference to a depiction of a similar structure in the tomb of Neferhotep (TT 49) (see Cabrol, *Voies*, 433-436).

déchargement de l'Ousirhat et avant son entrée dans le temple, lors de la fête d'Opet. Par ailleurs, c'est un lieu où se déroule la réception par le roi des tributs étrangers présentés comme offrandes à la divinité. Enfin, la darse remplit la fonction pratique de bassin de retenue lors de la crue et protège le temple".¹⁴¹⁹

Actual remains of a *m3rw* are known from Amarna, where it is referred to as *p3 m3rw n p3 Itn m 3ht-Itn* "the *m3rw* of Aten in Akhetaten". Kemp described the site of Maru-Aten as follows: "Maru-Aten lay on its own, 1.5 km (0.9 miles) south of the southern limits of the city and perhaps not far from the river towards which it faced. It consisted of twin enclosures surrounded by buttressed brick walls, one of the enclosures larger than the other. Both enclosures seem to have been mainly given over to shallow pools or lakes and to gardens planted with trees, with small pavilions of various kinds set around the edges, some of brick and some of stone. A long narrow stone causeway and pier, with a decorated kiosk at the end, projected into the larger lake. The most distinctive elements to have survived lay in the northeast corner of the larger enclosure. A square artificial island surrounded by a ditch supported a stone platform bearing an open-air offering-place. Behind it, and occupying the corner of the enclosure, was a long pillared construction that shaded a series of interlocking T-shaped water-basins. These were surrounded by a gypsum pavement painted with designs from nature, divided into panels. Fragments of carved stone from the buildings also celebrated nature through the use of plant motifs. Maru-Aten, both in its design and in its name (which means 'Viewing-place of the Aten'), reflects the search for tranquillity to be found in sunlit gardens where shrines add a spiritual dimension".¹⁴²⁰ Kemp identified the Maru-Aten – and specifically its northern enclosure – as a garden temple (*šwt R^c* "sunshade"),¹⁴²¹ a place "where the cult of the sun could be celebrated and where the royal owner could find some peace and leisure".¹⁴²²

The material discussed above shows that we do not have sufficient evidence to determine what exactly the term *m3rw* referred to in the New Kingdom, but generally speaking the term seems to refer to one or more shrines/pavilions set within a natural setting of gardens and water. After the New Kingdom, the term *m3rw* is not attested again until the Ptolemaic and Roman periods.

A place referred to as "northern *m3rw*" (*m3rw mhty*) is known from an inscription from Armant.¹⁴²³ In this case the *m3rw* seems to be the destination of a journey of the god from Armant to *Ddm*, a site across the Nile. Considering the fact that el-Tod is located opposite Armant across the Nile, Sauneron proposed that this was where the "northern *m3rw*" was located.¹⁴²⁴ In this case, the *m3rw* seems to have been a resting-station for the god during his processions between Armant and *Ddm*. Sauneron suggested that the location of the "northern *m3rw*" may be identified with the remains of a kiosk that was once located in the south of the temple-domain of el-Tod, near the sacred lake.¹⁴²⁵

The term *m3rw* is also attested on a Buchis stela from Armant in association with the enthronement of the sacred bull.¹⁴²⁶ On another Buchis stela it is mentioned that a bull that

¹⁴¹⁹ Cabrol, *Voies*, 606-607.

¹⁴²⁰ B.J. Kemp, *The city of Akhenaten and Nefertiti: Amarna and its people*. Cairo 2012, 119, fig. 2.16, pl. XXXVII.

¹⁴²¹ B.J. Kemp (ed.), *Amarna Reports VI*. EES Occasional Publications 10. London 1995, 455 and 458.

¹⁴²² Kemp, *City*, 121.

¹⁴²³ S. Sauneron, *Villes et légendes d'Égypte*. Bibliothèque d'Étude 90. Cairo 1983, 65.

¹⁴²⁴ Sauneron, *Villes*, 65.

¹⁴²⁵ Sauneron, *Villes*, 65. For the remains of the kiosk, see P. Barguet, "Tôd: rapport de fouilles de la saison février-avril 1950", in: *BIFAO* 51 (1952), 105-110.

¹⁴²⁶ S. Hodjash and O. Berlev, *Egyptian reliefs and stelae in the Pushkin Museum of Fine Art, Moscow*. Leningrad 1982, Nr. 147; L. Goldbrunner, *Buchis: Eine Untersuchung zur Theologie des heiligen Stieres in Theben zur griechisch-römischen Zeit*. Monographien Reine Elisabeth 11. Turnhout 2004, 245 and 248.

was born in Thebes is transferred to Armant, where a *m3rw* is erected for it.¹⁴²⁷ Kessler identified the *m3rw* mentioned in these inscriptions with a platform erected in the forecourt of the temple of Armant, which may have served for the presentation of the sacred bull either after its installation or before its interment in the Bucheum.¹⁴²⁸ This identification was rejected by Goldbrunner, who proposed that the *m3rw* at Armant was not a stone structure as in Edfu, but rather a light structure, made of perishable material such as wood, which was erected when needed for specific ceremonies such as the coronation of the sacred bull.¹⁴²⁹

In the inscriptions of the Edfu temple the term *m3rw* is mentioned repeatedly in the context of the festivals of the gods. In some cases the Edfu inscriptions specify the term *m3rw*, such as in the case of *m3rw rsy* “southern *m3rw*”, which was identified by Chassinat as the *mammisi*, located to the south of the temple.¹⁴³⁰ Another case seems to be the *m3rw* of king *Mn-ib-Rc*, the tradition of which seems to date back to the Middle Kingdom.¹⁴³¹ The inscriptions associated with the rituals of 1 Tybi refer to *m3rw=f n Msn* “his *m3rw* of Mesen”¹⁴³² and to *m3rw n cwt=f* “the *m3rw* of his (sacred) animal”.¹⁴³³ In both texts, the context describes the appearance of Horus in the main temple and his procession to the *m3rw*, where the sacred animal appears and unites with Horus in the *sšd n hꜥw*.¹⁴³⁴ In her elaborate analysis of the term *m3rw*, Konrad followed the view of Junker,¹⁴³⁵ Fairman,¹⁴³⁶ Derchain,¹⁴³⁷ Cauville¹⁴³⁸ and Kurth,¹⁴³⁹ identifying the *m3rw* of the falcon with the pylon, where the sacred falcon supposedly appeared as the renewed sun-god on the date of 1 Tybi.¹⁴⁴⁰ As demonstrated above, this identification can not be sustained.

Based on the sources presented above, Arnold defined the *m3rw* as follows: “Von Garten umgebene Barkenstationen, die in der Nähe eines Teiches oder Kanals errichtet wurden. (...) Sie wurden schon hypothetisch als verkleinerte Darstellungen des Kosmos gedeutet, mit der Wiedergabe der Wasserläufe, die der Sonnengott während seiner Nachfahrt zu durchqueren hat”.¹⁴⁴¹ Konrad concluded: “Seit Amenophis III. bis etwa zum Ende der Ramessidenzeit und dann erst wieder von der 26. Dynastie bis ins 2. Jh. v. Chr. dient das *m3rw* als ein festinstalliertes Stationsheiligtum während einer Prozession eines jährlich zelebrierten Götterfestes bzw. der Beisetzung eines heiligen Tieres. Die theologische Konzeption eines solchen *m3rw* lässt das Heiligtum dabei zu einem Ort werden, an dem die hier verehrte Form des Sonnengottes regeneriert in seiner vollen Schöpfungskraft auftritt”.¹⁴⁴²

Additional evidence which has not been taken into consideration before in discussions regarding the location of the *m3rw* of the sacred falcon at Edfu, can be found in the so-called

¹⁴²⁷ Goldbrunner, *Buchis*, 245 and 248.

¹⁴²⁸ Kessler, *Tiere*, 45. See also R. Mond *et al.*, *Temples of Armant: a preliminary survey, vol. I: Text*. Memoirs of the Egypt Exploration Fund 43. London 1940, 14.

¹⁴²⁹ Goldbrunner, *Buchis*, 248 and 250-251.

¹⁴³⁰ M.E. Chassinat, “Le mar du roi Menibré, à Edfou”, in: *BIFAO* 30 (1931), 299; Alliot, *Culte*, 581.

¹⁴³¹ Chassinat, in: *BIFAO* 30 (1931), 299-303; Alliot, *Culte*, 581-582.

¹⁴³² E VI 262, 17.

¹⁴³³ E VI 93, 10.

¹⁴³⁴ E VI 93, 11: “in order to make appear the *si3*-falcon in the *sšd n si3*”; E VI 102, 9: “letting His Majesty (i.e. the sacred falcon) appear in the *sšd n hꜥw*”; E VI 93, 13-14: “so that his *k3* reaches the *m3rw* of his (sacred) animal, in order to unite himself with the *b3* of Ra”; E VI 263, 1: “to unite with his Majesty (i.e. the sacred falcon) in his *sšd n hꜥw*”.

¹⁴³⁵ Junker, in: *WZKM* 26 (1912), 42-62.

¹⁴³⁶ Fairman, in: *BJRL* 37 (1954), 190.

¹⁴³⁷ Derchain, in: *BiOr* 18 (1961), 47-49.

¹⁴³⁸ Cauville, *Essai*, 196.

¹⁴³⁹ Kurth, *Treffpunkt*, 280-282.

¹⁴⁴⁰ Konrad, *Architektur*, 125-126 and 143.

¹⁴⁴¹ D. Arnold, *Die Tempel Ägyptens: Götterwohnungen, Kultstätten, Baudenkmäler*. Zürich 1992, 38. See also Arnold, *Lexikon*, 146.

¹⁴⁴² Konrad, *Architektur*, 151.

Book of the Temple mentioned in paragraph 5.3.1. Here, the domain of the sacred animals is referred to as *m3rw* in hieratic and as *ššt* in demotic. The section describing the *m3rw* was translated by Quack as follows: “Vorschrift für den *m3r.w*-Bezirk, den Wohnsitz (*s.t n.t ḥmsi*) dieses Gottes, wobei er sehr verdeckt ist (*ḥbs r mnḥ*) [mit] zwei Schreinen zur Rechten und Linken [.....] in ihnen, so daß er die Sonne in ihnen sieht, denn gut fühlt sich jedes Tier dabei, die Sonne zu sehen; sie leben von ihren Strahlen. Man öffnet eine Tür [.....] zur Tür des linken Schreines. Er reicht nach außen(?). Der Gott kommt heraus [aus ihm, sobald] dieser Tag seines Dahinscheidens eintritt. Man erbaut weitere 6 Schreine außerhalb von ihnen, einen gegenüber dem anderen [von] ihnen allen [.....] erste [...] trefflich [...] dieses Gottes zum Mittelsaal. Eine Tür [ist geöffnet zu] diesem Bezirk des Erscheinens (*ššt ḥʿi*) des heiligen Tieres, denn(?) [...] Wächter und Türhüter. Man öffnet die Tür des Platzes des Sitzens im [..... zur] Linken dieses Gevierts, so daß er herauskommt [...] ein Pronaos mit Säulen [.....] offen, um außen um den Tempel herumzugehen. Jede Außentür des Bezirkes (des heiligen Tieres) ist offen, so daß man um diesen Tempel herumgehen kann. Man macht [...], die rund um es zu seiner Rechten und Linken sind”¹⁴⁴³.

Based on the sources presented above, combined with the reconstruction of the ritual of 1 Tybi as presented in paragraph 5.1, I would like to propose the following hypothesis concerning the location of the *m3rw*: phases *c-e* of the ritual took place in the temple-domain of the *bik*-falcon (*Pr-Bik*), of which the *m3rw* and the *ššd n ḥʿw* formed part. In the early morning Horus was taken in procession to the *Pr-Bik*, where the selection of the falcon took place. This event was probably situated in the location where the falcons were bred and kept and which also formed part of the *Pr-Bik*. After the selection of the falcon, it was brought in procession together with Horus to the *m3rw*, which was also located in the *Pr-Bik*. Here, the falcon appeared and united with Horus in the *ššd n ḥʿw*. These rituals of the *m3rw* and the *ššd n ḥʿw* formed the first stage of the rituals of the renewal and confirmation of royal power and have a crucial place in the rituals of 1 Tybi: at this moment the mystic union between the god and his sacred animal took place:¹⁴⁴⁴ the falcon that has just been selected is now endowed with the divine essence, making it the living incarnation of the god. These events have nothing to do with the presentation of the falcon to the public, but are concerned with the transformation of the selected falcon to a *bik*-falcon and *b3* of Ra. After the rituals for the transmission of royal power were carried out in the main temple, the falcon was returned to the *Pr-Bik* (now referred to as *Pr-Bik-Ntry*). Here, it remained in the *m3rw*, which was a stone structure comprising various rooms and a *ššd n ḥʿw*, as confirmed in the Book of the Temple. We know from the accounts of the classical authors that the dwellings of the sacred animals also comprised fields where the sacred bulls could graze in a natural environment. It is conceivable that the sacred falcon was kept in an aviary within a natural setting of green and water. As such, the concept of the *m3rw* in Ptolemaic times was not that far removed from the concept of the *m3rw* in the New Kingdom.

The arguments presented above show that the identification of the *m3rw* and the *ššd n ḥʿw* with the pylon and the bridge of the pylon can not be sustained. This leads to the question why the scenes associated with the coronation ritual of the falcon are depicted on the lateral interior faces of the pylon towers and why the terms *m3rw*, *ššd n ḥʿw* and *ššd n si3* are mentioned explicitly here.

An important theme in the decoration of the pylon, and in particular of the pylon gateway, is that of the solar course. This is also expressed in the symbolism of the pylon towers, which are associated with the rising and setting of the sun, as mentioned above. This symbolism of the pylon towers may explain the choice for depicting the scenes in which the

¹⁴⁴³ Quack, in: Fitzenreiter and Kirchner (eds), *Tierkulte*, 113.

¹⁴⁴⁴ E VI 93, 13-14 and E VI 263, 1.

transmission and confirmation of royal power of the falcon are central on the lateral interior faces of the pylon towers. As pointed out above, the theme of the sacred falcon as the renewed morning-sun and *b3* of Ra is central in the rituals of 1 Tybi and as such it is referred to repeatedly in the eight ritual scenes on the interior face of the northern enclosure wall. Kurth presumed that the decoration of the pylon towers reflects an actual ritual event, namely the appearance of the sacred falcon as the renewed morning sun on the bridge of the pylon.¹⁴⁴⁵ However, to my mind the choice for depicting the scenes with sacred falcon as the *b3* of Ra on the lateral interior faces of the pylon towers was not determined by an actual ritual or cultic activity that supposedly took place here, but rather by the *symbolism* of the pylon towers being associated with the rising and setting of the sun. The same is true for example in the case of the annihilation scenes, which form a prominent feature of the decoration of the temple pylon. The fact that this type of scene is depicted prominently on the pylon does not mean necessarily that the depicted rituals – such as the killing of antelopes, tortoises and hippopotami – were actually carried out at the entrance to the temple. The prominence of annihilation scenes in the decoration of the pylon merely stresses the protective function of the pylon, the theme of warding off the forces of chaos being expressed in the decoration. The same reasoning applies to the location of the eight ritual scenes depicting the coronation ritual of the falcon: one should not assume that the rituals of 1 Tybi were actually carried out in the passage associated with wall I' simply because the eight ritual scenes illustrating these rituals are depicted on this wall.

As for the terms *m3rw*, *sšd n hꜥw* and *sšd n si3*, it is true that these are mentioned in the inscriptions on the lateral interior faces of the pylon towers,¹⁴⁴⁶ but also this does not mean that the pylon and the bridge of the pylon are therefore to be identified with the *m3rw* and the *sšd n hꜥw*. After all, a number of other localities are also mentioned in these scenes,¹⁴⁴⁷ without the suggestion being made that these should therefore be identified with the pylon or the bridge of the pylon. Furthermore, the terms *m3rw*, *sšd n hꜥw* and *sšd n si3* are also mentioned elsewhere in the Edfu temple in relation to the appearance of the sacred falcon on the date of 1 Tybi.¹⁴⁴⁸ The mere fact that the name of a specific location or cult place is mentioned in the inscriptions on a particular wall does not mean necessarily that this wall – or the space of which it forms part – should thus be identified with the cult place or locality mentioned in the inscription.¹⁴⁴⁹ Furthermore, the terms *m3rw*, *sšd n hꜥw* and *sšd n si3* are only mentioned in those scenes on the pylon which are associated with the sacred falcon and in particular with the rituals of the transmission and confirmation of its royal power.¹⁴⁵⁰ The same is true for the first pylon of Philae.¹⁴⁵¹ If the pylon or the bridge of the pylon were to be identified with the *m3rw*, one would rather expect this term to recur in other scenes depicted on the pylon, which is not the case. Consequently, it must be concluded that the presence of the terms *m3rw*, *sšd n hꜥw* and *sšd n si3* in the scenes on the lateral interior faces of the pylon towers is not connected to the specific location or the particular surface on which they are inscribed, but to the specific ritual that is depicted here, namely the transmission and

¹⁴⁴⁵ See Kurth, *Treffpunkt*, 280-281.

¹⁴⁴⁶ E VIII 109, 11; E VIII 110, 1; E VIII 110, 3; E VIII 148, 12; Ph I 74, 2; Ph I 74, 3; Ph I 76, 11; Ph I 77, 8.

¹⁴⁴⁷ E VIII 108, 16 – 110, 6: *St-Wrt*; *Hwt-Hr*; *Bhdt*; *Twnt*; *Hnty-i3bt*; *Wtst-Hr*; *Tw Nšny*; *Pr-Bik-Ntry*; *Ndm-ꜥnh*; *Hwt-Bik*; E VIII 147, 4 – 148, 12: *St-Wrt*; *Wtst-Hr*; *Twnt*; *Hnty-i3bt*; *Hwt-Hr*; *St-Nfrt*; *Bw-Wr*; *Hwt-Kn*; *Bhdt*; *St-Wnp*; *Tw-nšny*; *Hwt-Bik*; *Msn*; *Ndm-ꜥnh*; *P-n-Rꜥ*; *Pr-Bik*.

¹⁴⁴⁸ E VI 93, 10; E VI 93, 11; E VI 93, 13; E VI 102, 9; E VI 143, 10; E VI 152, 2; E VI 153, 5; E VI 156, 5; E VI 262, 17; E VI 263, 1; E VI 297, 16.

¹⁴⁴⁹ For example, references are made throughout the Edfu temple inscriptions to the rituals in the mammisi, mentioning explicitly the mammisi, but it is clear that the mammisi is located to the south-west of the main temple.

¹⁴⁵⁰ E VIII 109, 11; 110, 1; 110, 3; 148, 12.

¹⁴⁵¹ Ph I 74, 2-3; 77, 8; 77, 15.

confirmation of royal power of the sacred falcon, in which the *m3rw*, *sšd n ḥꜥw* and *sšd n si3* had an important place. Here, the falcon was officially introduced to Horus as his living incarnation and at this moment the mystic union of Horus with the falcon took place, transforming the latter into a *bik*-falcon and making it the *b3* of Ra.¹⁴⁵² These events took place in the *m3rw*, which was located in the temple-domain of the *bik*-falcon (*Pr-Bik*). This explains also why the *Pr-Bik* and the *Pr-Bik-Ntry* are mentioned explicitly in the scenes on the lateral interior faces of the pylon.¹⁴⁵³

One of the main themes of the decoration of the Edfu pylon is the transmission and confirmation of royal power.¹⁴⁵⁴ As Martzloff concluded: “Le décor constitue donc un véritable hymne à la divinité et s’attache à présenter le dieu comme l’héritier légitime de la fonction royale, le souverain des deux Égypte et le garant du bon ordre sur terre. Reconnu par l’ensemble du collège divin, il transmet ensuite sa fonction à son représentant vivant sur terre, le roi. De ce fait, le passage de la porte est décoré de représentations évoquant la confirmation du pouvoir royal, ce qui permet au souverain, lorsqu’il pénètre dans le temple, d’être reconnu comme l’héritier d’Horus”.¹⁴⁵⁵ However, she fails to integrate into this conclusion the fact that in the Ptolemaic period divine kingship was considered to be incarnated in the sacred animals instead of in the human ruler. At Edfu, the sacred living falcon had taken the place of the human ruler and the transmission and confirmation of its royal power formed one of the main rituals carried out each year. As such, the decoration of the pylons of Edfu and Philae refers not only to the transmission and confirmation of royal power of Horus and the king, but also to that of the sacred living falcon. Upon entering the temple, the royal power and kingship of the ruler needed to be confirmed and this was expressed symbolically in the decoration of the pylon and especially that of the passage of the pylon gateway. This does not mean that the king (or the officiant in the role of the king) was actually crowned upon entering the temple. The same is true for the sacred falcon as the incarnation of divine kingship in Edfu. Whenever it entered the main temple its royal power and divine kingship were confirmed by making reference to the rituals of 1 Tybi, and in particular to the rituals that were carried out in the *m3rw* and the *sšd n ḥꜥw*, where the falcon was united with Horus and transformed to a *bik*-falcon and *b3* of Ra. This is the reason why the scenes referring to the confirmation of royal power of the falcon on the date of 1 Tybi are depicted on the pylon towers. The scenes in the passage of the gateway in particular refer to the transmission and confirmation of kingship of Horus and the human ruler,¹⁴⁵⁶ whereas the scenes in the “passage” between the pylon towers refer to the transmission and confirmation of royal power of the sacred falcon. As such, the earthly aspect of royal power was confirmed on an earthly level in the passage of the gateway, whereas the celestial aspect of royal power was confirmed on a heavenly level in the “passage” between the pylon towers.¹⁴⁵⁷ The decoration of the two passages, which may be seen as a point of contact between heaven and earth and inside and outside, expresses the religious situation and the relations between Horus, the king and the sacred falcon, rather than a ritual reality.¹⁴⁵⁸

¹⁴⁵² E VI 102, 9; E VI 93, 13-14; E VI 263, 1.

¹⁴⁵³ E VIII 110, 3 and E VIII 148, 2.

¹⁴⁵⁴ See Cauville, *Essai*, 189-202; Martzloff, *Décoration*, 171-244, esp. 243-244.

¹⁴⁵⁵ Martzloff, *Décoration*, 244.

¹⁴⁵⁶ Martzloff, *Décoration*, 241-242; Cauville, *Essai*, 192-197.

¹⁴⁵⁷ As such, the scenes refer to the king entering the temple on floor-level and the falcon entering the temple from the sky. The bandeau-inscriptions of the pylon towers indeed repeatedly refer to the falcon as the *b3* of Ra that comes to the temple from the horizon or from heaven, in order to take possession of the temple and its cult statue. See E VIII 67, 6 – 68, 4; 68, 6-12; 110, 15 – 111, 15; 111, 17 – 112, 6.

¹⁴⁵⁸ The fact that we are dealing here with a religious situation is also clear from the presence of deities carrying out the ritual acts rather than the king in the scenes on the lateral interior faces of the Edfu pylon.

5.3.3 THE RITUAL LOCATIONS OF SCENES 1-8

5.3.3.1 Scenes 1 and 2

Alliot suggested that the ritual acts depicted in Scenes 1 and 2 took place in the second hypostyle hall (W) or in the pronaos (C').¹⁴⁵⁹ He pointed out that the name of the second hypostyle hall, *Wsh-t-h^c*, refers to the place where the royal coronation took place. Indeed, the confirmation of royal power forms the main theme of the decoration of the second hypostyle hall and its doorway.¹⁴⁶⁰ The anointment and the presentation of the *hh*-symbol and the *nh*-bouquet are found in close association on the south wall of the second hypostyle hall.¹⁴⁶¹ In addition, the first part of the hymn to Scene 2 (Text 17) recurs in a scene on the thickness of the doorway to the second hypostyle hall, depicting the anointment of the messenger-birds in the context of the rituals of the confirmation of royal power.¹⁴⁶² Based on the ritual programme texts we can be sure that this stage of the ritual took place in the main temple.¹⁴⁶³ However, despite this clear association of the second hypostyle hall with the theme of the confirmation of royal power, we can not say with certainty whether the rituals for the renewal and confirmation of royal power on the date of 1 Tybi took place in the second hypostyle hall or in another room in the main temple. In fact, the importance of the theme of confirmation of royal power in the second hypostyle hall and its doorway is related to the confirmation of royal power of the king (or the officiant in the role of the king) upon entering the temple rather than to actual coronation ceremonies or rituals for the confirmation of royal power taking place here.

5.3.3.2 Scenes 3 and 4

Alliot suggested that the ritual acts depicted in Scenes 3 and 4 formed the final ritual acts that took place in the sanctuary (A).¹⁴⁶⁴ However, as argued in paragraph 5.2.2 the presentation of choice portions of meat and the fumigation of fragrant resin may be associated on the basis of Text 7 with ritual sequence phase *i*, which took place in the *Pr-Bik-Ntry* at the end of the ritual sequence.

5.3.3.3 Scenes 5 and 6

Alliot proposed that Scenes 5 and 6 depict the arrival of Horus and the falcon in the main temple, where a ceremony of their reception by Hathor in the forms of Mut¹⁴⁶⁵ and Sakhmet took place.¹⁴⁶⁶ He suggested that the ritual acts depicted in Scenes 5 and 6 took place in the second hypostyle hall (W) or in the pronaos (C').¹⁴⁶⁷ However, as argued in paragraph 5.2.3 the associated inscriptions to these scenes suggest that these depict the procession of Horus and the falcon to the *m3rw*. The placement of the invocations to the Good Year and to Sakhmet next to the images showing the processions in Scenes 5 and 6 implies that the

¹⁴⁵⁹ Alliot, *Culte*, 614.

¹⁴⁶⁰ Cauville, *Essai*, 114-128. See also paragraph 3.1.1.3.

¹⁴⁶¹ See paragraph 4.2.1.

¹⁴⁶² Text 17: E VI 270, 10 – 273, 7 = E II 14, 21 – 15, 6. See paragraph 3.1.1.3.

¹⁴⁶³ See paragraph 5.1.

¹⁴⁶⁴ Alliot, *Culte*, 632 and 648.

¹⁴⁶⁵ In fact to be identified as the goddess of the Good Year, see paragraph 2.5.

¹⁴⁶⁶ Alliot, *Culte*, 613. See paragraphs 2.5 and 2.6 for an analysis of Scenes 5 and 6.

¹⁴⁶⁷ Alliot, *Culte*, 614.

invocations were recited in association with the appearance and union of the sacred falcon with Horus in the *sšd n hꜥw*, which conforms to the theme of the invocations.¹⁴⁶⁸

5.3.3.4 Scenes 7 and 8

Alliot suggested that the ritual acts depicted in Scenes 7 and 8 were carried out in the sanctuary (A).¹⁴⁶⁹ He based this assumption on the inscriptions associated with Scene 7. In Text 82 it is said that torches were lit, which implies, according to Alliot, that the rituals took place in the darkest part of the temple, i.e. the sanctuary. In addition, Text 83 mentions “the protection of his house, the protection of his *st*-throne, the protection of his bedroom, the protection of his temple, the protection of his *hꜥ*-shrine, the protection of his *kꜣr*-shrine, the protection of his processional barque, the protection of his clothes, the protection of his amulets, the protection of his adornment”. According to Alliot, these items could only have been found altogether in the sanctuary.¹⁴⁷⁰ However, these data do not provide conclusive evidence to support the idea that the ritual acts associated with Scenes 7 and 8 took place in the sanctuary. The enumeration of localities and items in Text 83 is rather meant to stress that every single aspect of the sacred falcon, including its paraphernalia and its immediate surroundings, are protected. The fact that torches are lit does not mean necessarily that the ritual took place in the sanctuary. The lighting of candles or torches was a well-known ritual procedure meant to drive away evil forces.¹⁴⁷¹ In the present case, the lighting of torches may also suggest that the ritual took place during the night. This hypothesis is supported by Text 82, associated with Scene 7, which introduces the ritual for the protection of the bedroom as follows: “I have come to you, great *bik*-falcon, dappled of feathers, when Ra sets in the land of life, equipped with the ritual (book) of the protection of the bedroom, so that I make the protection of your house, of your seat and of your bedroom”.¹⁴⁷² The phrase “when Ra sets in the land of life” suggests that the ritual was carried out during the night.

On the basis of the accompanying inscriptions to the figures of Onuris-Shu in Scenes 7 and 8, where he is said to purify the *sšd n sꜣb-šwt*¹⁴⁷³ and to drive away the rebels from the *sšd n sꜣꜣ*,¹⁴⁷⁴ Cauville suggested that the events depicted in Scenes 7 and 8 were carried out on the bridge of the pylon: “Sur le deuxième registre figurent tous les rituels de protection qui entourent le banquet final. On remettait au dieu l’amulette-*wꜥꜣ*, le lien-*seneb* et diverses petites amulettes. En même temps étaient psalmodiés deux rituels de conjuration: “protéger la maison” et “protéger le corps”. Cette récitation devait se faire lorsque l’oiseau était présenté à la foule sur le “balcon d’apparition”; le massacre d’Apophis et de Seth, effectué par Onouris, est situé justement sur le *sšd*, le “balcon d’apparition”.¹⁴⁷⁵ However, as pointed out in paragraph 5.3.2 the *sšd n hꜥw* can not be identified with the bridge of the pylon. It formed part of the *mꜣrw*, which was located in the temple-domain of the *bik*-falcon (*Pr-Bik*). Furthermore, the texts associated with the figures of Onuris-Shu in Scenes 7 and 8 only refer to the apotropaic character of the god in association with the *sšd*. It can not be concluded on the basis of these texts that the rituals for the protection of the bedroom and the body took place on the bridge of the pylon. As shown in paragraph 5.2.4, the location referred to in the texts associated with these rituals is the *Pr-Bik-Ntry*, suggesting that the performance of the rituals and the recitation of the spells associated with Scenes 7 and 8 took place in the temple-

¹⁴⁶⁸ See paragraph 5.2.3.

¹⁴⁶⁹ Alliot, *Culte*, 632.

¹⁴⁷⁰ Alliot, *Culte*, 632.

¹⁴⁷¹ See paragraph 3.7.3.2a.

¹⁴⁷² E VI 144, 15 – 145, 1.

¹⁴⁷³ Text 74: E VI 143, 8-10.

¹⁴⁷⁴ Text 92: E VI 297, 16-17.

¹⁴⁷⁵ Cauville, *Essai*, 168-170.

domain of the divine *bik*-falcon. In Text 63 reference is made the repelling of enemies and foes in association with the exaltation of the sacred falcon in the *Pr-Bik-Ntry*. Considering our analysis of the location of the *m3rw* and the *sšd n h^cw* as forming part of the temple-domain of the *bik*-falcon (*Pr-Bik / Pr-Bik-Ntry*), the references to the purification of the *sšd n s3b-šwt* and to the driving away of rebels from the *sšd n si3* in the accompanying inscriptions Onuris-Shu in Scenes 7 and 8 make perfect sense.

Ritual sequence	Ritual scene	Location
a) Appearance of Horus and his Ennead	not depicted	Presumably in the main temple
b) Procession of Horus and his Ennead	not depicted	To the temple-domain of the <i>bik</i> -falcon (<i>Pr-Bik</i>)
c) Selection of the servant of the falcon Selection of the sacred falcon	not depicted	In the temple-domain of the <i>bik</i> -falcon (<i>Pr-Bik</i>)
d) Procession of Horus and the sacred falcon	Scenes 5 and 6	To the <i>m3rw</i> , which is located in the temple-domain of the <i>bik</i> -falcon (<i>Pr-Bik</i>)
e) Appearance / installation of the sacred falcon and union of Horus with the sacred falcon	not depicted	In the <i>sšd n h^cw</i> , which forms part of the <i>m3rw</i>
f) Procession of Horus and the sacred falcon	not depicted	From the <i>m3rw</i> to the main temple (<i>St-Wrt / Msn</i>)
g) Transmission of kingship from Horus Behdeti to the sacred falcon: - presentation of <i>md</i> -ointment - tying of the <i>wsh</i> -collar - offering of a <i>hh</i> -symbol in gold - presentation of <i>nh</i> and <i>w3s</i> - presentation of <i>nh</i> -flowers in the name of the Ennead	Scenes 1 and 2	In the main temple (<i>St-Wrt / Msn</i>)
h) Procession of Horus and the sacred falcon	not depicted	To the temple-domain of the <i>bik</i> -falcon (<i>Pr-Bik-Ntry</i>)
i) Enthronement of the sacred falcon Offering to the sacred falcon by Shu as servant of the falcon	Scenes 3, 4, 7, 8	In the temple-domain of the <i>bik</i> -falcon (<i>Pr-Bik-Ntry</i>)
j) Procession of Horus	not depicted	From the temple-domain of the <i>bik</i> -falcon (<i>Pr-Bik-Ntry</i>) to the main temple
k) Celebrations by the people of town	not depicted	

Table 5.3 Reconstruction of the ritual sequence of the coronation ritual of the falcon, with placement of ritual scenes and identification of ritual localities in the reconstructed sequence.

