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The certainty of change : a research into the interactions of the decoration on the western walls of the cult chapels of the mastabas at Giza during the Old Kingdom

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Chapter XI

The results, analysis and correlation.

I. Preliminary considerations.

One of the conclusions of this research project is that the composition of the decoration of the western wall of the cult chapel as a whole is not static over time. During the Old Kingdom several mutations took place on it, mutations which can be divided as follows:

1. Changes concerning the (sub)themes.
2. Changes in interactions between the (sub)themes.
3. Changes in type of cultic activity.

I.1. Changes concerning the (sub)themes.

1. Chronological changes are the following:
 - a. Changes in the *number* of (sub)themes placed on the elements of the western wall of the cult chapel.
 - b. Changes in the *types* of (sub)themes employed on the elements of the western wall of the cult chapel or on the western wall as a whole (changes in the repertoire).
 - c. Changes in the *employment* of the available wall space by the (sub)themes.
2. Shifts, importations, disappearances and introductions can be:¹
 - a. From one part of the false door or section of the wall to another on the same element of the western wall of the cult chapel (e.g. from wall section 3 to 2 on the western wall, or from the architrave to the door jambs on the false door).
 - b. From one element of the western wall to another (e.g. from the false door to the remaining surface of the western wall).
3. The following elements of the whole western wall can show chronological changes in *type* Ia, Ib or II (a/b) cultic character:
 - a. (Sub)themes.
 - b. One or more elements of the western wall.
 - c. The western wall as a whole.

I.2. Changes in interactions.

Some of the (sub)themes which are placed simultaneously on the whole western wall, possibly influence each others' presence or absence.

The influence between (sub)themes can also manifest itself through the formation of a group of (sub)themes.

I.3. Special functions.

The (sub)themes which are employed on the whole western wall are all related to the cult, but within this they can either be closely connected to the cult itself or serve a special purpose in the functioning of the cult chapel. These special purposes can be:

¹ For the definition of these terms, see « Technical terms and abbreviations ».

1. A unifying function: the (sub)theme is placed in the vicinity of larger (sub)themes to “fill in” the space left open between them, thus combining the larger (sub)themes.
2. An identifying/signalling function: the (sub)theme is placed in such a way that it is visible for passers-by, thus drawing their attention to the mastaba and its cult chapel (this type of function is beyond the scope of the research project at hand).
3. A signalling/guiding function: the (sub)theme is placed in such a way that it incites a passer-by to enter into the chapel and guides him/her further into its interior into the direction of the false door.

II. Summary.

II.1. Changes concerning the (sub)themes.

II.1.1. Changes over time.

II.1.1.1 The number of (sub)themes on the whole western wall.

If over the whole period of the Old Kingdom the total number of (sub)themes showing a chronological development and placed on the elements of the whole western wall is determined per period in figures VII.17, IX.1 and IX.3, and gathered in a diagram (figure XI.1), the result is that it changed from a minimum of 13 to a maximum of 17.² In other words the number of (sub)themes placed on the total western wall of the cult chapel changed but little. It is possible that this restriction in number is partly caused by the space available on the various parts of the false door(s). However, this lack of space was not a factor in the placing of (sub)themes on the remaining surface of the western wall, because in that case (sub)theme 5, a (sub)theme with an explicit unifying function,³ would not have been employed there.

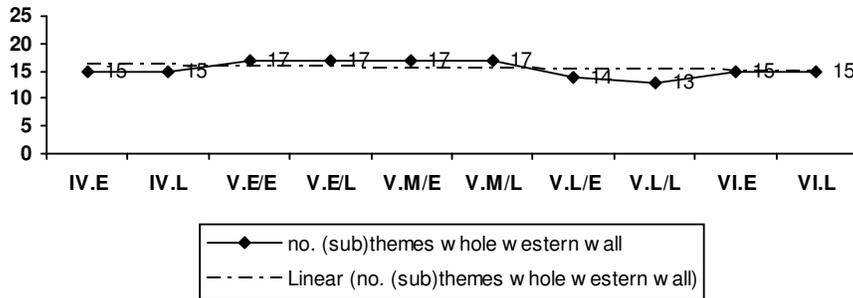


Figure XI.1: The chronological development of the number of (sub)themes placed on the whole western wall.

The restriction in the number of (sub)themes that were placed on the whole western wall of the cult chapel does not mean that there were no changes in the repertoire. The compilations of the decoration of the western wall (table IV.1a.Vol.2) and the parts of the false door (table VIII.1.Vol.2) clearly show

² In Van Walsem, *Sense*, 285 it is proposed that during the Old Kingdom an ever increasing repertoire of (sub)themes accumulated. If this is true, this increase must have taken place on the other walls of the cult chapel, because from figure XI.1 it is evident that, at least in the necropolis of Giza, this is not the case on the western wall of the cult chapel. The stability of the number of available (sub)themes on the whole western wall is corroborated by the increased placing of the same (sub)theme on several wall sections of the western wall (combinations) (figure VI.3a).

³ Harpur, *DETOK*, 71 suggests that the employment of (sub)themes with a unifying function is a “true Egyptian fashion” and gives the offering bearers and members of the family as examples of such a type of (sub)theme. Both, however, are contradicted by the results of this current research project.

that during the Old Kingdom some (sub)themes fell into disuse, while others were newly introduced to the various parts and sections of the western wall.

II.1.1.2. Changes in the repertoire of (sub)themes.

Possibly the disappearance from the door jambs of (sub)themes 34 (offering bearers), 35 (priests), 36 (containers/standards) and finally 31 (wife/family), as proposed in chapter VIII, is caused by the strong increase of the frequency of employment of (sub)theme 33 (the offering formula) on the door jambs (figures VIII.3 and 4a,b).⁴

This chronological development of (sub)theme 33 (the offering formula) on the door jambs of the false door has been interpreted as part of a change that took place throughout the 5th dynasty on a more overall scale in the cult chapel, a change in the repertoire that was connected with an alteration of the mode of cultic food supply for the *ka* of the deceased.

The importance of the offering formula is evident from its importation from the architrave to the door jambs and the panel of the false door in the period V.L/L (figure VIII.3). That the number of tombs in which the offering formula was actually placed on the panel is small (3 times according to table VIII.1.Vol.2), was probably due to lack of space.

Even its rare presence on the panel shows that the shift of the non-ideographic offering list from the panel to the western wall, did not require the replacement by another (sub)theme (figure XI.2). Although the offering formula was already present on the door jambs and/or the architrave, apparently the owners of the tombs in which the offering formula was also placed on the panel wanted to stress the magical function of the offering table scene on the panel by adding yet another implement of magical food supply.

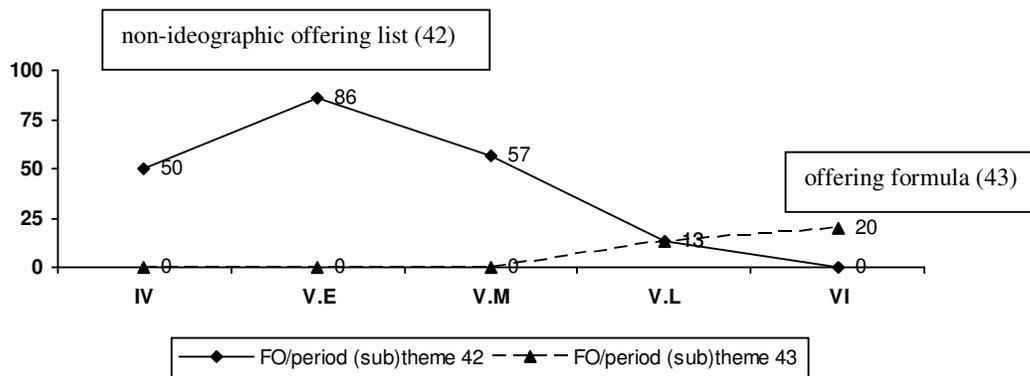


Figure XI.2: The chronological development of (sub)themes 42 and 43.

From this one may conclude that, although it is highly unlikely that the basic ideas about the whole western wall changed dramatically (its purpose was and remained the sustenance of the *ka* of the deceased by supplying food), yet, the way in which these ideas were expressed altered over the course of the 5th dynasty.

⁴ In the same period (sub)theme 42 (non-ideographic offering list) is transferred from the panel of the false door to the western wall, and, although there may be a connection between the two mutations, it is not possible to prove a direct link between the shift of the non-ideographic offering list and the increasing frequency of employment of (sub)theme 33 (the offering formula).

II.1.1.3. Possible changes in the employment of the available wall space.

During the period IV–V.M the habit of placing the same (sub)themes on different parts of the western wall at the same time (combinations) increased rapidly (figure VI.3a), while the number of (sub)themes that were placed on the whole western wall does not change much over time (figure IV.1).

One of the possible explanations is that at the start of the 4th dynasty part of the available wall space remained empty, and that in the period IV–V.M a trend toward a more fully decorated western wall developed. In that case the restriction in the number of (sub)themes that could be placed on the western wall would have caused the increased employment of combinations in that period as is shown in figure VI.3a. However, this apparently correct argument is contradicted by the fact that from the start of the 4th dynasty, the western wall at least was completely filled with decoration.⁵

Another argument might be the employment of (sub)themes with a unifying function. In figures VI.4 and VI.5 there are indications that (sub)themes 5, 10 and possibly 7 have such a function, and it is this function which automatically calls forth the introduction of combinations.⁶ The chronological development of (sub)themes 5 and 7 (diagrams IV.5.Vol.2 and IV.7.Vol.2) show that they were placed on the wall from IV.E on, and at a very stable frequency of employment. Only (sub)theme 10 is introduced in a later period (V.M) (diagram IV.10.Vol.2).

The forming of multiple placements (combinations) by (sub)theme 5, the most important of the (sub)themes with a unifying function (chapter VII, sections IV.1 and IV.3), levels off early in the 5th dynasty (figures VI.3b). The repertoire of larger (sub)themes having been established,⁷ the ratio combinations/period of (sub)theme 5 reached a maximum value (figure VI.3b), and so did the same ratio for (sub)theme 7 (figure VI.3d), only to start to decrease from that period on, thus making the unifying function of (sub)theme 7 doubtful.⁸

On the door jambs of the false door combinations are frequently employed, but this cannot be to fill empty space between larger (sub)themes (because there is hardly any); probably it is meant to enhance the effect of optical symmetry.⁹

II.1.2. Shifts, importations, disappearances and introductions.

Table VIII.1.Vol.2 shows that the decoration of the architrave is not subject to a chronological development.¹⁰ On all the other wall sections and false door parts chronological changes occur, changes that can be caused by the following mutations:

⁵ In order to determine whether proof can be found for this statement, in table IV.1a.Vol.2 all the tombs with a complete western wall were gathered. The number of (sub)themes/tomb was determined for every period (= no. (sub)themes / period). The chronological development of these values is represented in figure IV.1. and no reliable indication can be found that the number of (sub)themes employed increases during the period IV. Yet when the coverage with decoration of every complete western wall as given in table IV.1a.Vol.2, is studied, it is apparent that a western wall which is only partially decorated is extremely rare.

⁶ It is evident from other stages of this research project that, although (sub)theme 10 has a unifying function, its purpose is totally different, and based on a change in type of food supply which took place in the course of the 5th dynasty. This is also the reason for the late introduction of the (sub)theme on the western wall (transition from V.E. to V.M).

⁷ The larger (sub)themes are (sub)themes 1 (tomb owner alone, standing or sitting), 2 (tomb owner standing with family), 3 (tomb owner sitting at the offering table) and later (sub)theme 11 (the non-ideographic offering list).

⁸ A probable explanation for the decrease of the number of combinations/period for (sub)theme 7 (figure VI.3d) is that after V.M the priests became less important, because they are connected with the actual food supply for the *ka* of the deceased, and the importance of this type of food supply started to decrease around the same period (figure X.6).

⁹ LÄ, VI, 129-32, s.v. "Symmetrie", there 130.

¹⁰ Concerning the drum of the false door it has been remarked (chapter VIII, section I.1) that only the name, and exceptionally a title of the tomb owner is placed on that section of the false door, which leads to the conclusion that no chronological development could take place there. This is not true for the drum over the entrance into the cult chapel, because this drum is usually much larger than the one in the false door, it can easily contain, next to

1. A shift or importation of a (sub)theme on the same element.
2. A change in placement of a (sub)theme to another element.
3. The disappearance of a (sub)theme.
4. The appearance of a (sub)theme.

II.1.2.1. The shift of (sub)theme 2 (tomb owner with family).

An example of a change in placement on the same element is the shift of (sub)theme 2 from one section of the western wall to another (see figure XI.3). During the period IV–V.E/L (sub)theme 2 is the most important (sub)theme on the western wall, and during this period it is transferred from wall section 3 to wall section 2. It is only after V.E/L, when its frequency of employment starts to decline, that (sub)theme 3 becomes the main type I (sub)theme (figure XI.4).¹¹

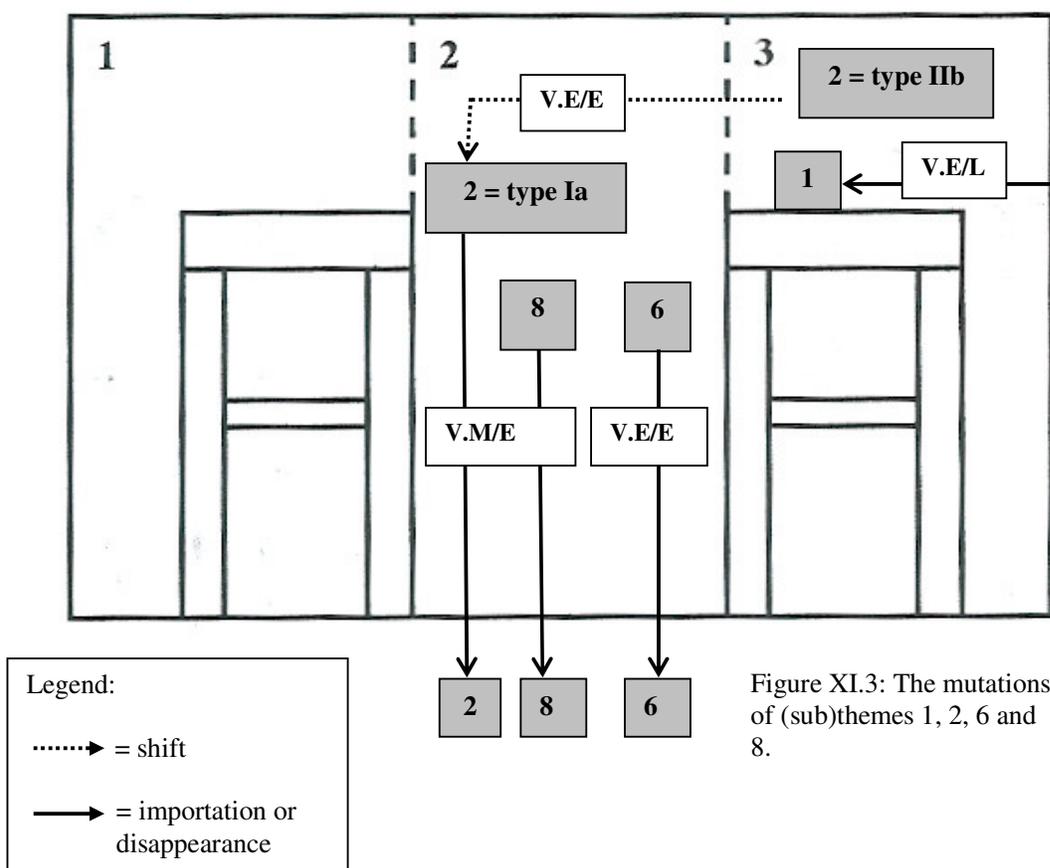


Figure XI.3: The mutations of (sub)themes 1, 2, 6 and 8.

This shift of (sub)theme 2 also brings about a change in its cultic character. Depending on the wall section on which it is placed, it is of type IIb or type Ia cultic character (type Ia on wall section 2 and type IIb on wall section 3), while (sub)theme 3 has a type Ib cultic character only when placed on the western wall.

name and titles, a depiction of the tomb owner, or even of the tomb owner sitting together with his wife (Harpur, *DETOK*, figure 15, page 455).

¹¹ Here the designation “type I” without further distinction has been used, because only the fact that it is type I and not type II is important.

During the period in which (sub)themes 2 and 3 were both employed on the western wall, they do not occur on the same wall part (table VI.1.Vol.2), and it is from this fact that their difference in type I cultic character has been defined.¹²

The function of (sub)theme 2 on wall section 3 is not directly cultic; it is placed there with a signalling/guiding function (type IIb cultic character). On that wall section it is placed without any accompanying (sub)themes. When (sub)theme 2 is transferred to wall section 2 it takes on a type Ia cultic character and it is accompanied by (sub)themes 6 and/or 8, with which it forms a group, thus turning it into a scene from the daily life of the tomb owner.

At the end of period IV (sub)theme 2 is permanently placed on wall section 2,¹³ and its signalling/guiding function (type IIb) opposite the entrance is taken over by (sub)theme 1.¹⁴

Conclusions concerning (sub)theme 2 and its cultic character:

1. The main (sub)theme of the group with type Ia cultic character shows the tomb owner with family ((sub)theme 2) while the accompanying (sub)themes 6 (personified estates) and 8 (scribes) are attributes to illustrate the familial and professional (daily) life the tomb owner lived while still on earth.¹⁵ It shows him/her not only with members of the family, but also with the persons who worked on the estates and who brought in produce. The scribes, important for the administration of the estates, are shown performing the various tasks which belong to their responsibility. This indicates that in period IV-V.E the daily life of a high ranking person was considered to be of such importance that a depiction of the tomb owner with familial and professional entourage was deemed necessary to guide visitors further into the cult chapel in the direction of the false door. Starting from period V.E/E the importance of the guiding role of the scene of the daily life of the tomb owner diminished and for a short time (V.M – V.L/E) this role was taken over by the tomb owner standing alone ((sub)theme 1).¹⁶
2. The diminution in the frequency of employment of (sub)theme 2 on wall section 2 is linked to the transfer of the non-ideographic offering list from the panel of the false door to the western wall and to the transfer of the offering table scene from the southern to the western wall of the chapel.

¹² (Sub)theme 2 is the only (sub)theme that changes its cultic character if transferred from one wall section to another.

¹³ At a later stage the possibility that, although placed on ws 2, (sub)theme 2 still had a type IIb character is discussed.

¹⁴ In table VI.1.Vol.2 (sub)theme 2 is employed again during period VI, twice on wall section 3 (in both cases in a type C cult chapel (see chapter IV, section 1)). These are the tombs of Sekhemka (PM, III¹, 221, plan XXXI), with a cruciform cult chapel and Hetepnptah (PM, III¹, 94-5, plan XXVI) both of them with the entrance in the middle of the eastern wall of the cult chapel. In both cases the (sub)theme is not opposite the entrance (although this is less obvious in the chapel of Hetepnptah), meaning that in this period, although placed on wall section 3, it is not placed there in order to exert a type IIb cultic character.

¹⁵ That these three (sub)themes form a group is discussed in chapter VII (section III.3). From table VI.1.Vol.2 it can be deduced that only on wall section 2 is this group forming tendency evident.

¹⁶ During period IV in two tombs (ʿAnkh-haf (PM, III¹, 196-7, plan XXXI); Akhtihotp (PM, III¹, 200-1, plan XXXI)) (sub)theme 2 has been placed on wall section 2. The entrance in the eastern wall of the chapel of ʿAnkh-haf is more to the south than usual, but the presence of (sub)theme 2 opposite the entrance is apparently important enough to have it placed on wall section 2. The orientation of (sub)theme 2 remained southwards (looking in the direction of the place where the southern false door used to be) (Harpur, *DETOK*, 394 [39]). In the chapel of Akhtihotp the choice of the place of (sub)theme 2 is wall section 2 irrespective of the place of the entrance.

Conclusions concerning (sub)theme 3 and its cultic character:

1. The main (sub)theme with a type Ib cultic character shows the tomb owner sitting in front of an offering table (on the whole western wall (sub)themes 3 and 40). Like (sub)theme 2, the main (sub)theme with a type Ia cultic character, these (sub)themes are in fact a scene composed of several attributes (the ideographic offering list, utensils to clean the hands, loaves on the table, etc.). However, it does not show the tomb owner taking part in a family meal but in the afterlife situation of consuming the offered food. (Sub)themes with a type Ib cultic character are involved in the depiction of the various aspects of the actual offering cult (the production, the transport, the stocking and offering of food).
2. From early in the period V.E/E (sub)theme 2 was placed on wall section 2 only, while (sub)theme 3 was exclusively placed on the southern wall. In the period V.E/L (sub)theme 3 could also be placed on the western wall, but *not* on the same section of the wall as (sub)theme 2 (table VI.3.Vol.2).¹⁷ During the period V.M/E (sub)theme 3 was totally confined to the western wall, while (sub)theme 2 was no longer placed there.
3. Although during the period V.E/L-V.M/E (sub)theme 3 appears also to be placed on wall section 3, it does not take over the signalling/guiding role of (sub)theme 2.¹⁸

II.1.2.2. The shift of (sub)theme 42 (the non-ideographic offering list).¹⁹

The importance of the non-ideographic offering list placed on the panel increased,²⁰ resulting in an increase in actual size. The consequence was that it became too large for the false door panel, and at the transition from V.E to V.M it started to be transferred to the remaining surface of the western wall (there becoming (sub)theme 11) (figure VIII.5).²¹ On that wall it showed a strong preference for wall section 2 (figure VI.5).

The FO/period curves of (sub)themes 3 and 11 (figure VIII.9b) indicate a direct connection between the shift of the non-ideographic offering list from the panel to the western wall and the shift of the depiction of the tomb owner at the offering table from the southern to that same wall.²²

As already discussed in chapter III (section VI.2), FO/period curves are not irrefutable proof of the existence of a connection between two (sub)themes. Proof has to be derived from the CP/period curve of the interaction, and in figure VIII.9b the existence of the connection is reasonably well, shown by

¹⁷ Harpur, *DETOK*, 71.

¹⁸ Three tombs have (sub)theme 3 on wall section 3 (Merib, PM, III¹, 71-2; Seshemnufer [I] PM, III¹, 142-3 and Kapunesut PM, III¹, 135). The tombs are L-shaped and (sub)theme 3 is placed opposite the entrance over the northern false door. In the chapels of Merib and Kapunesut the tomb owner is sitting at the offering table with one or more priests in front of him. This means the scene has a cultic character and not a signalling/guiding one. In the chapel of Seshemnufer [I] the tomb owner and his wife are sitting opposite each other and the tomb owner is looking to the right, which is the wrong orientation for guiding passers-by towards the false door(s).

¹⁹ Barta, *Opferliste*, 51, 59.

²⁰ Barta, *Opferliste*, 2 divides the older offering lists into „the list for the ritual offering“ and „the inventory offering list“ (e.g. the ideographic offering list, which is part of (sub)themes 3, 40 and 41 in this research project, but which is a list of the goods to be given to the deceased during the funeral). Barta, *Opferliste*, 45.

²¹ In LÄ, V, 1130, s.v. «Speisetischszene» it is proposed that at the end of period IV (sub)theme 42 was also placed on the wall sections next to the false door(s). The claim that the non-ideographic offering list was already in IV.L placed on the western wall is correct (see chronological ordering IV.1.Vol.2). In this research project only the periods with a FO/period which is high enough to prove the placement to be a real development or the result of “trend setting”, are taken into account (e.g. for (sub)theme 11 in diagram IV.11.Vol.2 the FO/period of period IV is 25%, while during period V.M it is 64%, the former might be considered as the first appearance of what later became an “established” tradition).

²² El-Metwally, *Grabdekoration*, 7 also proposes a strong association between the offering table theme and the offering list.

the curve of the CP/period of the interaction between (sub)themes 3 and 11.²³ This means that (sub)theme 3 was transferred from the southern to the western wall in direct connection with the shift of the non-ideographic offering list from the panel to that same wall (see chapter VIII, section III.2.2).

On the panel of the false door a association existed between (sub)themes 40 (tomb owner at the offering table) and 42 (the non-ideographic offering list) (CP = 73%).²⁴ After the shift of the latter to the western wall, an interaction of even greater strength came into being between (sub)themes 3 and 11 (CP = 83% in figure V.2). As can be expected, the cultic character of the non-ideographic offering list remained unchanged (type Ib) during this shift. This loss of a type Ib (sub)theme on the panel cannot be considered to be compensated for by the extremely rare importation of (sub)theme 43 (the offering formula), also of type Ib.

The conclusion to be drawn is that the non-ideographic offering list and the offering table scene had been together on the panel for such a long time that their being together had become “a tradition”. The growing size of the list and its subsequent transfer to the western wall made an offering table scene on the western wall necessary. This scene, which until then had normally been placed on the southern wall, was now transferred to the western wall.

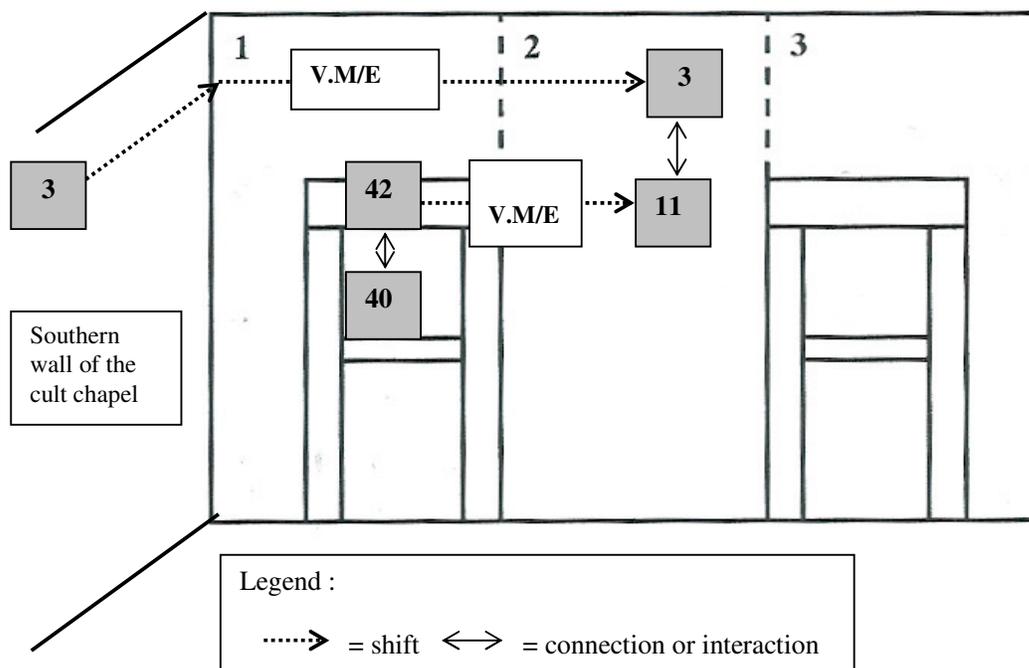


Figure XI.4: The mutations of (sub)themes 3 and 11.

The mutations and interactions as described in section II.1.2.2. of this chapter are gathered in figure XI.4.

²³ The CP/period values have been determined in table VI.1.Vol.2.

²⁴ The CP value is determined in table VIII.1.Vol.2.

II.1.2.3. The change in the frequency of employment of the offering formula ((sub)themes 63, 33 and 43).

Originally the offering formula was placed only on the architrave of the false door ((sub)theme 63 in table VIII.1.Vol.2), but from the period V.L it was more frequently placed on the door jambs (figure VIII.3).²⁵ Consequently, several of the (sub)themes, until then placed on the door jambs and illustrating the cultic activity in front of the false door, disappeared. These were (sub)themes 31, 34, 35 and 36, whose disappearance strongly influenced the type Ib cultic character of the false door (figure IX.5).²⁶

Apart from (sub)theme 33, only (sub)themes 30 (tomb owner alone, standing or sitting) and 32 (name, title(s)) remained placed on the door jambs of the false door, thus emphasising their importance on the western wall as a whole.

On the door jambs and the architrave the name/title(s) was by far the most important (sub)theme, even more than the depiction of the tomb owner (figures VIII.13 and VIII.15). On the panel both of them were of nearly the same importance (figure VIII.14).

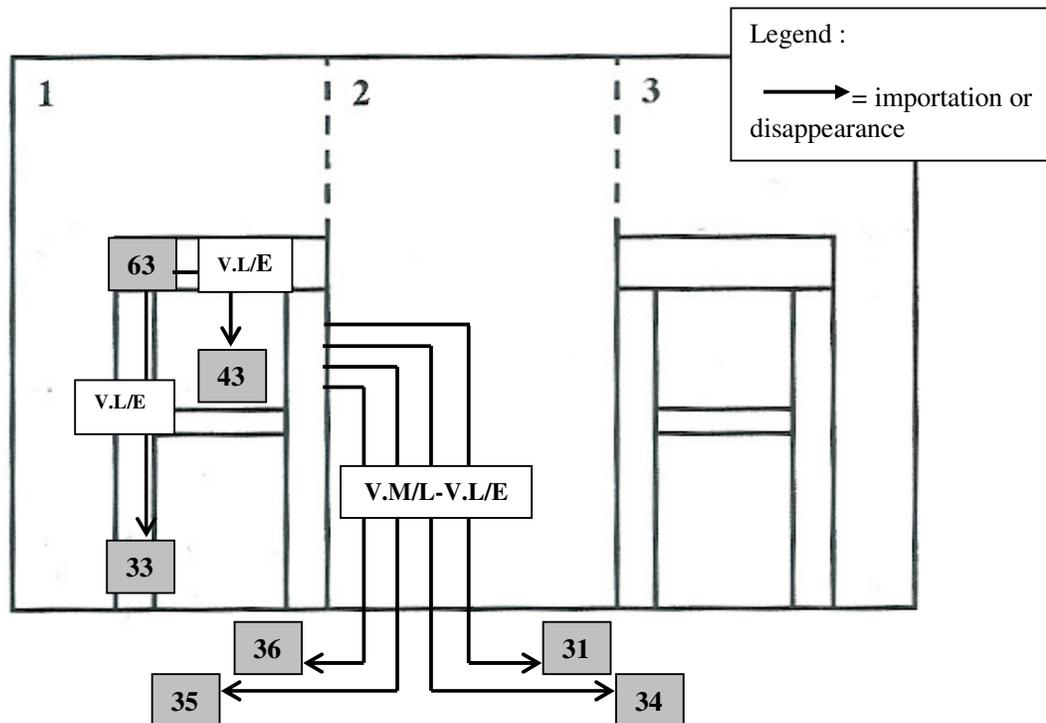


Figure XI.5: The mutations of (sub)theme 33 and the (sub)themes on the door jambs.

²⁵ Strudwick, *False door*, 40 proposes that the introduction of the offering formula on the door jambs might be connected to a change in the concept of the false door, brought about by the introduction of the cornice and the torus moulding during the period V.M/L (Wiebach, *Scheintür*, table I). In Wiebach, *Scheintür*, 137-8 it is stated that during the 5th dynasty the false door was increasingly separated from the western wall by the employment of the cornice and the torus moulding. This caused the false door to lose its function as a “door” to the interior of the tomb and to become more of a shrine. This change of emphasis could be the basis for the increasing importance of the offering formula on the false door, and this proposed change from a door to a shrine might then be connected to the change from actual offering cult to magical food supply as proposed in this research project. In Strudwick, *False door*, 40 it is proposed that the first appearance of door jambs with name/title(s) ((sub)theme 32) and offering formula ((sub)theme 33) took place in V.E, but that the type with name/title(s) remained scarce in the second half of the 5th dynasty.

²⁶ A causal connection between the two is certain, but it cannot be determined which is caused by which.

In the period V.L the offering formula was imported from the architrave on the panel of the false door ((sub)theme 43) and on the door jambs ((sub)theme 33) (figure VIII.3). The conclusion to be drawn is that from the period V.L/E on the importance of the offering formula increased strongly. However, seeing the FO value (7%, table VIII.1.Vol.2), it is not probable that the offering formula was placed on the panel to compensate for the loss of the non-ideographic offering list.²⁷

Despite the apparent importance of the offering formula, it was never placed on the remaining surface of the western wall. This supports the near certainty that the false door was and always remained the most important element for the cult, whether actual or magical.

The mutations mentioned above are gathered in figure XI.5.

II.1.2.4. The importation of (sub)theme 1.

For a short period (V.E/L–V.L/E) the effigy of the tomb owner standing alone ((sub)theme 1), was placed on the western wall. It was not placed there to enhance its type Ib cultic character, but to serve as a depiction of the tomb owner opposite the entrance of the cult chapel, in order to incite visitors to enter and to guide them further into the cult chapel (type IIb cultic character) (figure VII.2). Possible conclusions to be drawn from this are:



Figure XI.6: The false door of Nesutnefer (G 4970) (PM, III¹, 143-4).
(From Kanawati, *Giza II*, plate 18).

The basic idea of the tomb owner standing next to or in the recess (the entrance) of the false door can be imitated on elements or sections of the whole western wall. The question remains whether the standing tomb owner ((sub)theme 1) opposite the entrance of the chapel and the tomb owner standing next to the entrance of the false door ((sub)theme 30) have the same cultic function.

The cultic function of the tomb owner standing opposite the entrance of the chapel is clear; it consists of signalling to passers-by to enter and then guiding them towards the false door(s). There are two types of depiction of the tomb owner standing (see figure XI.6):

1. The tomb owner in the door recess.
2. The tomb owner on the door jambs.

The tomb owner, when depicted in the recess of the false door, can be considered to be coming out of the netherworld behind the false door in order to receive the offering laid out in front of it.

It is not likely that the tomb owner on the door jambs ((sub)theme 30) has the same function. This

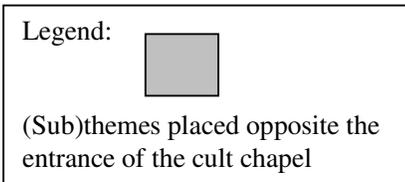
depiction has rather the intention of inciting visitors to place an offering on the stone in front of the false door, thus playing an important role in the actual cult and having a type Ib cultic character).

²⁷ Although (sub)theme 43 is introduced on the panel, it is rarely placed there (in table VIII.1.Vol.2 only 3 times on a total of 45 tombs with certain presence or absence, resulting in a FO value of 7%). This scarcity is confirmed by Barta, *Opferformel*, 3.

Although later in the Old Kingdom the cult became more infused with magic,²⁸ the actual cult was never completely abandoned and (sub)theme 30 could continue to play its important role on the door.

	name	PM	sth 2	sth 1
IV	Khufukha'ef [I]	188-90	3	
	Akhtihotep	200-1	2	
	ʿAnkh-haf	196	2	
	Nufer	72-4	1	
	Kaemsekhem	201-2	3	
	Minzedef	203-4	3	
	Neferma'et	183	1.3	
V.E	G 5030	145	2	
	Merib	71-2	2	
	Iteti	193	3	
	Seshethotp [I]	149-50	2	
	Person	48-9	2	
	Nesutnufer	143-4	2	
	Kanufer	77-8	2	
	Seshemnufer [I]	142-3	2	
	Sethu	135-6		3
	Kanenesut [I]	78-9	2	
V.M	Kapunesut	135	2	
	Thenti	141-2		3
	Ra'kha'ef'ankh	207-8	1	
	Redi	---		3
V.L	Kadua	244-5		3
	Ra'wer [II]	162-3		3
VI	Niuty	133	1	
	Sekhemka	53	1	
	Akhmerutnesut	80-1	2	
	Sekhemka	221	1.3	
	Hetepniptah	94-5	1.3	
	Kahif	76	2	

Figure XI.7: The inviting and guiding role of (sub)themes 1 and 2 in combination with their wall section.



A (sub)theme placed opposite the entrance, guiding visitors further into the cult chapel, appears to be important,²⁹ because even after the shift of (sub)theme 2 to wall section 2 it continued its guiding role (figure XI.7).

It was only when (sub)theme 2 could no longer fulfil this role, due to its near disappearance early in V.M, that a new depiction of the tomb owner, a depiction possibly derived from the false door, was placed on wall part 3.³⁰ The role of an inviting (sub)theme on the entrance thicknesses, combined with a guiding (sub)theme opposite the entrance, might have been of primary importance because the “Fortdauer” of the tomb owner depended on offerings

and/or prayers of visitors or passers-by.³¹ Another possible way of making the entrance to the cult chapel more obvious is the “en échelon” planning of the mastaba field.

In a mastaba field which has an “en échelon” planning the mastabas are laid out in such a way that, at least in the original planning, the entrance of the cult chapel of a mastaba could be seen between the two mastabas in the row in front of it (figure XI.8).

This type of layout was introduced in the later phase of the eastern field of the necropolis of Giza (G 7540/50/60 and G 7650/60; date: IV.L), and also in a group of mastabas in the western field, designated cemetery G 2000. Roth proposes that the passer-by was attracted toward the entrance of the

²⁸ LÄ, V, 563-74, s.v. “Scheintür”, there 565.

²⁹ In table VI.1.Vol.2 the tombs with either (sub)themes 1 or 2 on the western wall are selected and gathered in figure XI.7. In this figure the wall section on which the (sub)theme is placed is given as a number and its placement opposite the entrance of the cult chapel is marked in grey. It is evident that during period IV (sub)theme 2 was consistently placed opposite the entrance, and that at the end of period V.E the employment of (sub)theme 2 for this purpose ends, and the function is ultimately taken over by (sub)theme 1. It looks likely that (sub)theme 2 as the most important (sub)theme depicting a scene from the daily life (type Ia), can at the same time have a guiding (type IIb) function, but in figure XI.7 (sub)themes 1 and 2 are 16 times (out of 30) placed opposite the entrance (amounting to 53%).

³⁰ This signalling/guiding role of (sub)theme 2, extended in the sense that it can even have this cultic type IIb role when placed on wall section 2 is admitted to figure VII.18. This has no influence on the cultic character of the western wall, because this is determined by the Ia and Ib cultic character.

³¹ LÄ, VI, 659, s.v. « Totenkult, Totenglauben ».

cult chapel by its decoration, but the type and the precise place of the decoration are not given.³² According to Jánosi “en échelon” planning was introduced in the period IV.L.³³

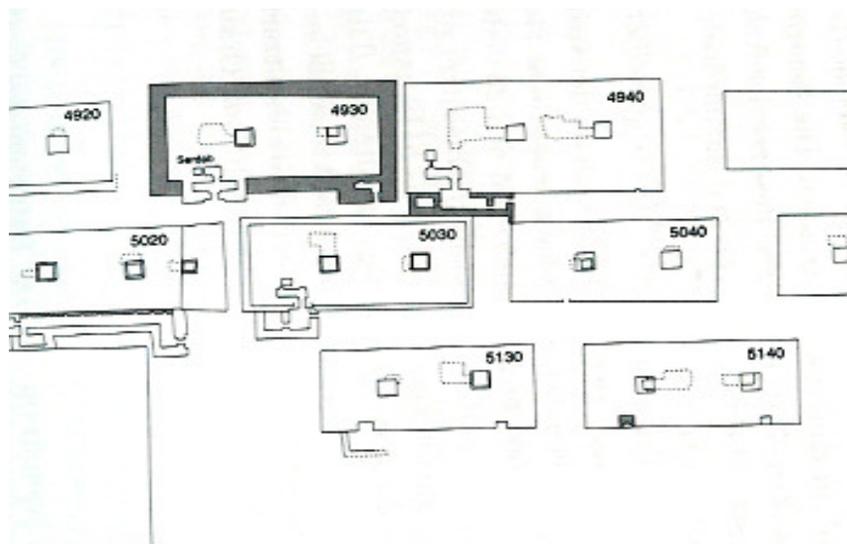


Figure XI.8: Detail of the “Cemetery en échelon” at Giza; (Jánosi, *Giza*, Abb 54, page 239).

In figure XI.9 the three items with a signalling/guiding function have been gathered according to their chronological development.

From this figure it can be concluded that there is no apparent connection between the introduction of the “en échelon” planning and the shift of (sub)theme 2 or the importation of (sub)theme 1.

Of the 5 tombs with (sub)theme 1 on wall section 3 (table VI.1.Vol.2), only two are in a necropolis constructed in a “en échelon” planning.³⁴

	wall section	IV.E	IV.L	V.E/E	V.E/L	V.M/E	V.M/L	V.L/E
(sub)theme								
2	3							
2	2							
1	3							
	« en échelon » ³⁵							

Figure XI.9: The chronology of the signalling/guiding decoration and cemetery layout

The mutations involving (sub)themes 1 and 2 are gathered in figure XI.10, and in order to show the connection between the mutations of (sub)themes 1 and 2, the latter have been introduced from figure XI.3.

II.1.2.5. The increase in frequency of employment of (sub)theme 3.

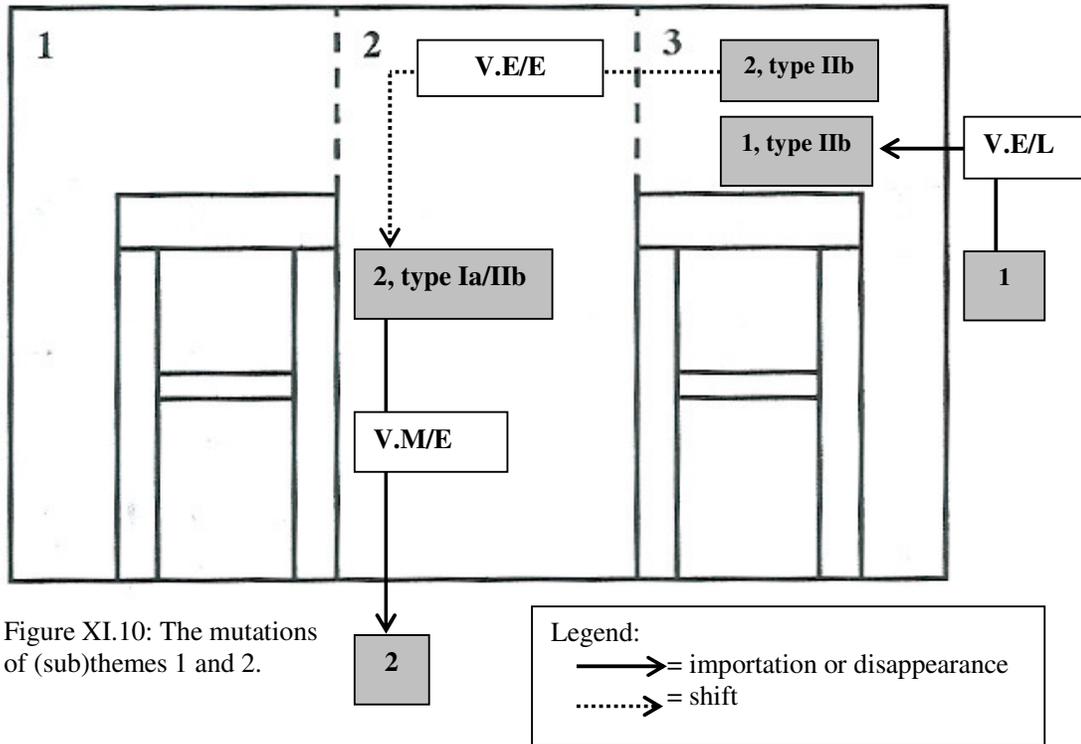
³² Roth, *Gmast* 6, 25.

³³ Jánosi, *Giza*, 240.

³⁴ Thenti, G 4920, PM, III¹, 141-2; Redi, G 2086, Roth, *Gmast* 6, figure 6).

³⁵ The light grey filling refers to phase I in the cemetery north-east of mastaba G 2000 where for a short period some tombs were placed in such a way that there was a semblance of “en échelon” planning (Roth, *Gmast* 6, plate 131 and figure 5, page 25).

In figure VI.13 it is shown that when the presence of (sub)theme 3 on the western wall increased, its presence on the southern wall decreased. This development is closely related to the chronological development of the non-ideographic offering list both on the panel and the western wall (figure VIII.5). The increasing presence of (sub)theme 3 on the western wall is not influenced by the presence of the offering table scene on the panel (figure X.1).



II.1.2.6 The disappearance of (sub)themes.

It is highly probable that the disappearance of (sub)themes 6 (personified estates) and 8 (scribes) (both of them of type Ia) is caused by the disappearance of (sub)theme 2 (tomb owner with family) with which they formed a scene from the daily life of the tomb owner.³⁶ The problem is that (sub)theme 6 disappeared in the middle of V.E while (sub)themes 2 and 8 did this at the transition from V.E to V.M (table VI.1.Vol.2).

In the 6th dynasty (sub)themes 2 and 8 returned on the western wall, but with a different cultic character (type Ib instead of type Ia) (figure VII.7).³⁷ This re-introduction at the start of the 6th dynasty cannot be connected with the change in food supply, because figure X.6 shows that that change had already ended in that period.

³⁶ In table VI.1.Vol.2 on the western wall of the cult chapel of ʿAnkh-haf (PM, III¹, 196-7, plan XXXI) (sub)themes 2 and 6 have both been placed on wall section 2. The reason is that the entrance to the chapel is on the eastern wall, but in front of the northern side of wall section 2. (Sub)theme 2, although on wall section 2, is placed opposite the entrance (Harpur, *DETOK*, plan 394 [39]), and, consequently, has a signalling/guiding role (type IIb) there. This indicates that, although (sub)themes 2 and 6 are on the same wall section, they have different cultic characters, and consequently, they form no group.

³⁷ This cannot be caused by an archaizing trend, because the term “archaizing” is defined as a return to old forms which are in no way traditionally connected with those of the period with the archaizing tendency (LÄ, I, 386, s.v. “Archaismus”). There has been no break in tradition between the period in which the (sub)themes fell into disuse (V.M/E (table VI.1.Vol.2)) and the 6th dynasty, the period of their reinstatement on the western wall.

II.1.2.7. The introduction of (sub)themes.

(Sub)theme 10 (piles of food offerings) is introduced on the western wall in the period V.M/E.³⁸ Its primary role, as already discussed in chapter VII (section IV.2), is a unifying one. Its employment on the western wall increased in order to enhance the importance of the magical food supply. A

comparison between diagram IV.10.Vol.2 and figure X.7 shows that the start of the increase of the magical food supply, of the type Ib cultic character of the western wall, and of the FO/period value of (sub)theme 10 were practically simultaneous.

During the 5th dynasty (sub)theme 42 (the non-ideographic offering list, panel) was transferred to the western wall ((sub)theme 11). This caused the transfer of the offering table scene from the southern to the western wall of the cult chapel (figure XI.4).

(Sub)theme 4 was introduced in the period V.E/E (table VI.1.Vol.2); possibly it was imported from the jambs of the false door.

The mutations of (sub)themes 4 and 10 discussed above are gathered in figure XI.11.

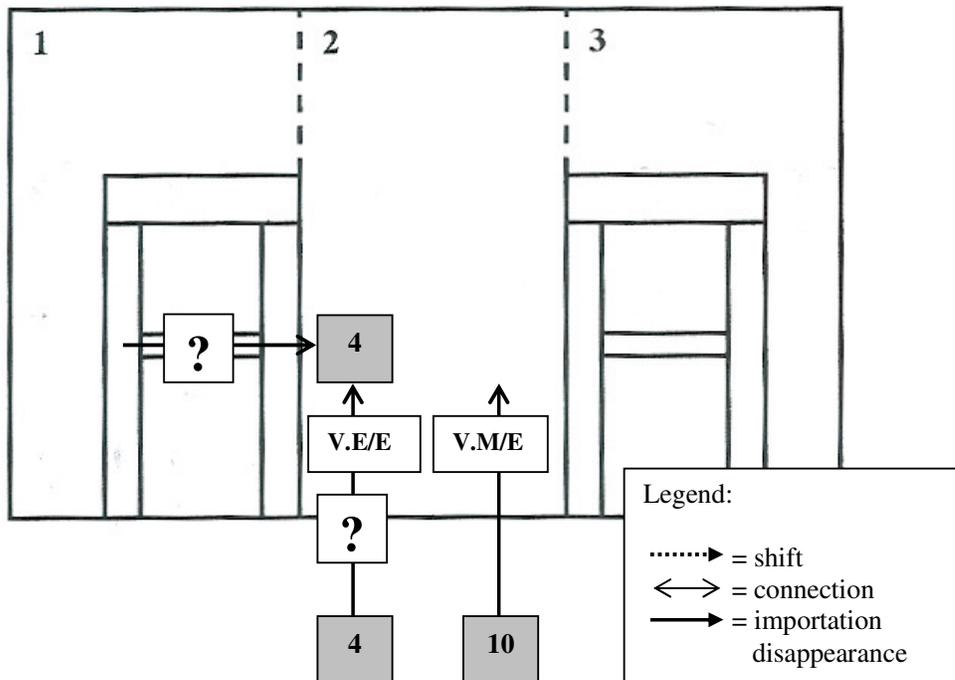


Figure XI.11: The mutations of (sub)themes 4 and 10.

II.1.3. Changes in the cultic content.

The cultic content of each of the elements of the whole western wall of the cult chapel has its own chronological development (figure IX.7). These developments are discussed in the following sections II.1.3.1 and II.1.3.2.

³⁸ Robins, *Offerings*, 957-63.

II.1.3.1. The (remaining surface of the) western wall.

The remaining surface of the western wall is the only element of the whole western wall on which (sub)themes of both type Ia and Ib cultic character coexist. Because these characters are completely different, it is useless to consider the chronological development of the two of them together any further.

The fact that in figure IX.7 is shown that at the transition from the 4th to the 5th dynasty both types Ia and Ib of the cultic character of the remaining surface of the western wall started to increase, indicates that at that moment there was no intention to diminish the importance of the actual cult; apparently both types of cultic character were of the same importance, and the intention was to increase the total type Ia/Ib cultic character of the wall. The type Ib cultic character of the false door remained the same. However, early in the 5th dynasty suddenly the type Ia cultic character started to lose importance, while the type Ib cultic character continued to gain in importance on the western wall. This is the moment that the first indications of a change in the meaning of the western wall become apparent.

II.1.3.2. The false door.

The chronological development of the type Ib cultic content of the door jambs forms a horizontal line until a decrease sets in at the end of V.M (figure IX.4); for the panel it remains a horizontal line throughout the Old Kingdom (figure IX.2). This decrease is due to the disappearance of (sub)themes 31, 34, 35 and 36, only to a small amount countered by the importation of (sub)theme 33 from the architrave.

For the false door as a whole the line giving the chronological development is horizontal until V.M/L, from V.L/E on this line continues horizontally but at a lower value (figure IX.5).

Thus the increasing trend toward a magical supply of food for the *ka* of the tomb owner, which had already set in on the western wall, meant that those (sub)themes on the false door that were connected to the actual cult in front of it were finally given up. In their place a (sub)theme of ultimate importance for the magical food supply was placed on the elements of the false door: the offering formula ((sub)themes 33 and 43) (figure VIII.3).

II.1.3.3. The whole western wall.

The chronological development of the type Ib cultic content of the whole western wall is obtained by taking together the values of the curves in figure IX.6, and the resulting development, which is a horizontal line, is shown in figure IX.8. This means that, although the developments on the false door and the remaining part of the western wall oppose each other (figure IX.6), the result is that no overall change in type Ib cultic character takes place on the total western wall.

II.2. Interactions.

II.2.1 On the same element.

II.2.1.1. Between (sub)themes 2 and 3.

The most important conclusion about the interaction between (sub)themes 2 and 3 is that, although they can appear together on the western wall, they never appear together on the same section of the western wall.

In figure VII.4 the role of (sub)theme 2 is threefold:

1. When placed on wall section 3 opposite the entrance of the cult chapel, its role is signalling/guiding (type IIb).

2. When placed on wall section 2 it forms a group with (sub)themes 6 and 8 (table VI.1.Vol.2), which gives it a role as a scene from the daily life of the tomb owner (type Ia). However, during the period V.E/E (sub)theme 2 is placed on wall section 2 but in such a way that it is opposite the entrance of the cult chapel (figure XI.7, also see figure VII.18). In that case the (sub)theme could be considered also to be of type Ib.
3. In the period VI the (sub)theme is again placed on the western wall, but this time in a type Ib cultic character.

(Sub)theme 2 is the main (sub)theme on the western wall until V.E/L, after which it loses its signalling and guiding role (figure XI.7), while at the same time its role as a scene from the (idealized) daily life of the tomb owner continues until the end of V.M/E (table VI.1.Vol.2).

From the start of period V.E/L (sub)theme 3 takes over the role of main (sub)theme. According to figure VII.18, (sub)themes 2 and 3 coexist during the period V.E. In this period the frequency of (sub)theme 2 on the western wall decreases and that of (sub)theme 3 increases (figure VI.10).

Possible causes are:

1. Even if only one false door has been placed on the western wall, the available space is not sufficient to place the two (sub)themes together on the same wall section (an argument which is unlikely, certainly in the case of only one false door on the wall).
2. The two (sub)themes are incompatible for cultic reasons; the working hypothesis of their difference in cultic character ((sub)theme 2 = mainly type Ia on section 2, (sub)theme 3 = type Ib) is based on this consideration.

II.2.1.2. Between (sub)themes 33 and 31, 34, 35 and 36.

The offering formula has always been placed on the architrave, but from the period V.L/E on it is also placed on the door jambs as well as on the panel of the false door (figure VIII.3). About the same period (sub)themes 31, 34, 35 and 36 disappear (figures VIII.4a and VIII.4b). Only (sub)themes 30 and 32 remain on the door jambs, together with the newly imported “magical” (sub)theme 33, the latter because it is of absolute necessity for the cultic function of the false door which derived its importance more and more from the magical food supply, partly losing its central role in the actual supply of food.

In chapter VIII (section II.4.3) the stating of the name and title(s) of the tomb owner and the reciting in a written form of the offering formula has been given as the purpose of the architrave of the false door. After V.M the (sub)themes depicted on the door jambs and on the panel are the same as the ones normally placed on the architraves (tomb owner, name/title(s) and offering formula), the only difference being the panel on which the tomb owner is sitting in front of an offering table. This means that the decoration of the whole false door is meant to state the identity of the tomb owner and play a role in the magical food supply by way of the table scene and the offering formula.

II.2.1.3. Between (sub)themes 2, 6 and 8.

After the disappearance of (sub)theme 2 from section 2 of the western wall, (sub)themes 6 and 8 are no longer employed either (figures VII.6a-c). Table VI.1.Vol.2 shows that from the moment (sub)theme 2 appeared on wall part 2 of the western wall, these three (sub)themes were preferentially placed on the same wall section and formed a group.³⁹

³⁹ Table VI.1.Vol.2 shows that also during period IV (sub)themes 2, 6 and 8 were employed at the same time, but only in one case are they placed on the same wall section (Kaemsekhem, G 7660, PM, III¹, 201-2). In this chapel the three (sub)themes are placed together opposite the entrance into the chapel. The plan of the western wall (PM, III¹, plan XXXI) shows that the uncertainty in the division into sections 2 and 3 of the wall section north of the false door might lead to a slightly different division than the one used in table VI.1.Vol.2. The conclusion is that it is highly probable that here too the three (sub)themes are not placed on the same wall section.

II.2.2. On different elements.

No proof has been found of interactions between (sub)themes placed on different elements of the western wall.

II.3.Special functions.

II.3.1. The unifying function.

(Sub)themes with this function were placed only on the remaining surface of the western wall, apparently the sole place where they could be employed, because on the parts of the false door space is scarce and consequently there are no (sub)themes to be unified. Chapter VII, section IV discusses three (sub)themes with a possible unifying function:

1. (Sub)theme 5 (servants bringing food offerings) can be placed next to (sub)themes of a type Ia and Ib cultic character. It is a (sub)theme with an universal unifying function which is employed throughout the Old Kingdom (figure VII.11).
2. (Sub)theme 7 (priests) is not employed as a (sub)theme with a unifying function (figure VII.14).
3. (Sub)theme 10 (piles of food offerings) has a unifying function with a slight preference for (sub)themes with a type Ib cultic character (figures VII.12 and VII.13). It is introduced on the western wall starting the period V.M, the period in which the means of food supply for the *ka* of the deceased was changing (figures X.7 and X.8), consequently its main purpose is to unify (sub)themes which are placed on the western wall to enhance the magical food supply.

II.3.2. The “signalling/guiding” function.

On the western wall this function is performed by (sub)themes 1 and 2 during several consecutive stages. In the course of this research project “en échelon” planning has been proposed as another possible “signalling/marketing” criterion (figure XI.11), but in fig. XI.9 it is evident that the short term signalling/guiding function of “en échelon planning” has no role in the changes that took place on the western wall.

From figure XI.9 it can be concluded that, whatever its form (effigy on the western wall or possibly “en échelon” planning), the signalling/guiding function continues throughout the Old Kingdom. The disappearance of (sub)theme 2 as a (sub)theme with such a function has not been caused by the construction of the mastaba field in “en échelon” planning.⁴⁰

On the western wall, during the early part of the 5th dynasty, the signalling/guiding role of the effigy of the tomb owner with family ((sub)theme 2) was taken over by one of the tomb owner alone (standing or sitting) ((sub)theme 1).⁴¹ During period V.L/E (sub)theme 1 was in all probability transferred to the entrance thicknesses.⁴²

⁴⁰ The “en échelon” planning, which was probably introduced to enhance the visibility of the decoration placed on the exterior wall of the mastaba at both sides of the entrance, did not spread homogenously over the necropolis of Giza neither chronologically nor topographically.

⁴¹ A reason for this change could be the increasing preference for a more magical cult which increased the importance of (sub)themes with a content directed less to the life of the tomb owner than it had been, and also less to the idea that the tomb owner was actually living in the tomb.

The conviction that the deceased was not living in the tomb gained ground, and consequently it was only by way of magic that the *ka* of the deceased could be reached and thus its sustenance could be assured.

⁴² It is beyond the scope of this research project to further investigate this assumption.

After the disappearance of (sub)theme 1 from wall section 3 other (sub)themes were placed there. The choice and the frequency of employment on wall section 3, the frequency of placement of (sub)themes on wall section 3 after the disappearance of (sub)theme 1 is illustrated by table VI.1.Vol.2.

The result is that (sub)theme 4 (members of the family) is the one most frequently placed on that wall section (a FO/period value of 43% after the disappearance of (sub)theme 1 versus 11% before), which might indicate that the signalling/guiding function had not been discarded on the western wall, but had been taken over by (sub)theme 4. However, because during the period in which on wall section 3 (sub)theme 1 was employed as the signalling/guiding (sub)theme, the FO value of (sub)theme 4 was also 43% it is likely that (sub)theme 4 had no signalling/guiding function at all.

III. A compilation of the mutations of the (sub)themes throughout the Old Kingdom.

In this section a compilation is given of the mutations of the (sub)themes on the western wall of the cult chapel during three periods of the Old Kingdom. These periods are IV – V.E, V.M and V.L – VI.

III.1. The mutations during the period IV – V.E (figure XI.12).

The most important mutations in this period are concerned with the signalling/guiding function of the decoration on wall sections 2 and 3.

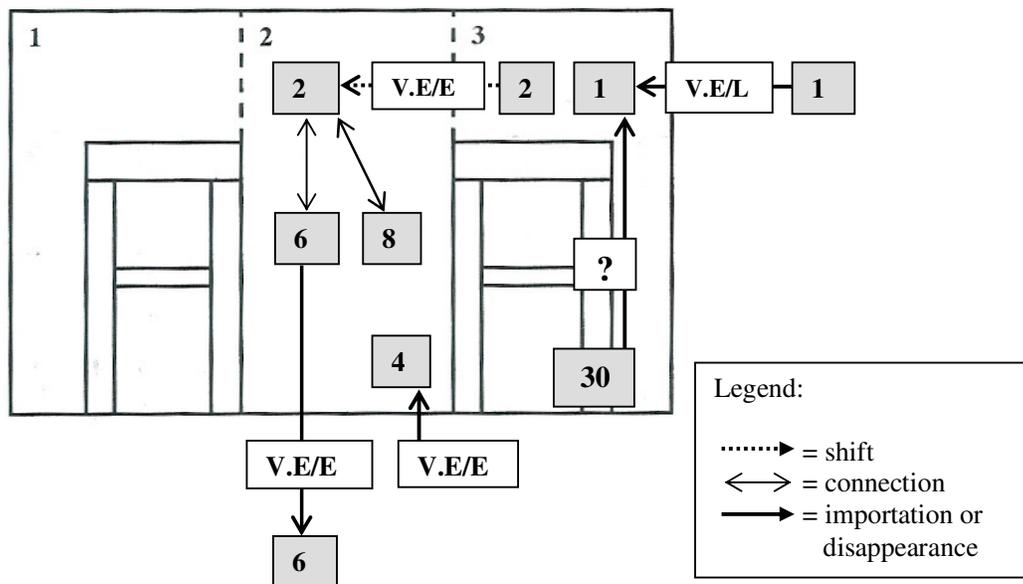


Figure XI.12: The mutations during the period IV – V.E.

1. (Sub)theme 2 shifts in period V.E/E from wall section 3 to wall section 2 (where it forms a group with (sub)themes 6 and 8), and although now part of a scene depicting the daily life of the tomb owner, the (sub)theme also continues to exert a guiding function until V.E/L.
2. From V.E/L on this function is taken over by (sub)theme 1 until the end of period V.L/E. It is possible that (sub)theme 1 is taken over from (sub)theme 30 (tomb owner alone, door jambs), in order to exert nearly the same guiding role as (sub)theme 30 has on the door jambs

III.2. The mutations during the period V.M (figure XI.13)

During this period numerous mutations involving the western wall and the false door(s) take place. It is probable that in these diverse mutations the entrance thicknesses play an important role, but it is beyond the scope of this research project to take these factors into consideration.

In the model of figure XI.13 two distinct groups of mutations can be discerned, one during the period V.M/E and the other during the period V.M/L.

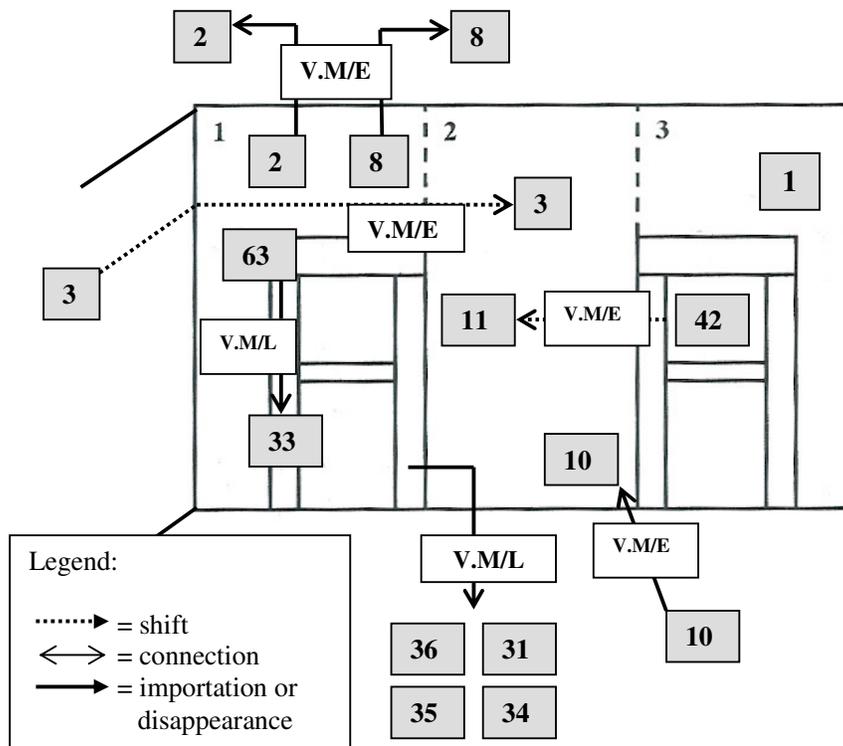


Figure XI.13: The mutations during the period V.M.

III.2.1. The mutations during the period V.M/E (figure XI.13a).

1. (Sub)theme 3 (the tomb owner at the offering table) is transferred from the southern to the western wall of the chapel.
2. (Sub)theme 42 (the non-ideographic offering list on the panel of the false door) is gradually transferred to the remaining surface of the western wall.
3. (Sub)theme 10 (piles of food offerings) is introduced on the western wall.
4. The frequency of employment of (sub)themes 2 (tomb owner with family) and 8 (scribes) decreases sharply, and both (sub)themes disappear from the western wall. (Sub)theme 6 (personified estates) had already fallen into disuse during the period V.E/L (figures XI.12 and XI.13).

It is evident that the scene of the tomb owner at the offering table, which could be located on more than one place on the walls of the chapel (southern wall and panel of the false door), in this period became concentrated on the western wall. The result, not only of this tendency of concentrating the (sub)theme, but also of the introduction of the depiction of food offerings and the non-ideographic offering list, is to enhance the magical supply of food for the *ka* of the deceased.

III.2.2. The mutations during the period V.M/L (figure XI.13b).

1. (Sub)themes 31 (family of the tomb owner), 34 (offering bearers), 35 (priests) and 36 (containers, standards) are no longer placed on the door jambs.
2. (Sub)theme 63 (the offering formula on the architraves) is, from this period on, placed also on the door jambs of the false door ((sub)theme 33).

The scene(s) from the daily life of the tomb owner as depicted on the western wall ((sub)themes 2 and 8) fall(s) into disuse, as do nearly all (sub)themes involved with the actual supply of food for the *ka* of the deceased.

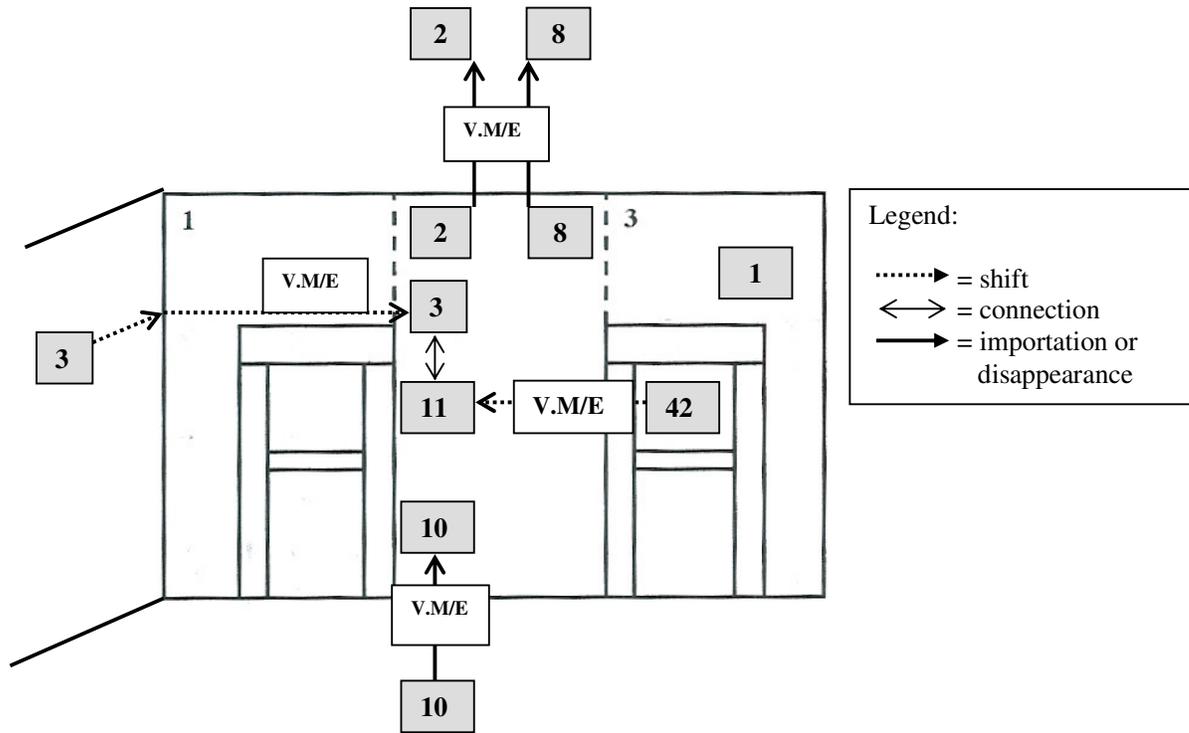


Figure XI.13a: The mutations during the period V.M/E.

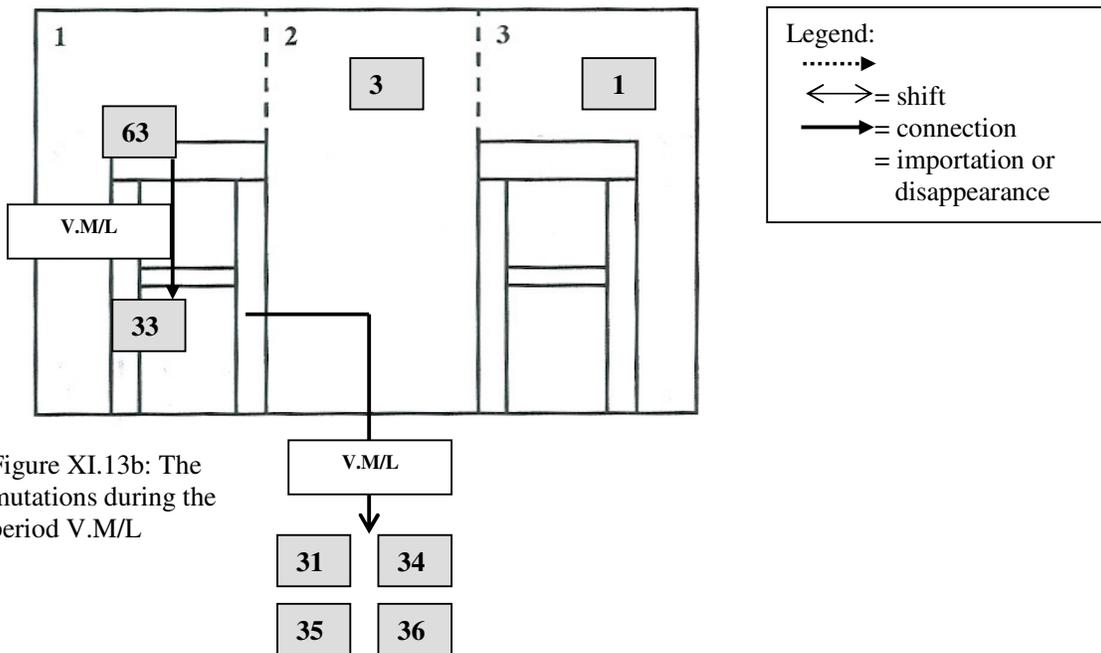


Figure XI.13b: The mutations during the period V.M/L

III.3. The mutations during the period V.L - VI (figure XI.14).

The mutations in this period are few and relatively unimportant.

1. The disappearance of (sub)theme 1 from wall section 3 of the western wall.
2. (Sub)themes 2 and 8 return on the western wall, but without preference for a specific section.⁴³
3. It is possible that the signalling/guiding function of (sub)theme 1 on wall section 3 is taken over by (sub)theme 4 (members of the family).
4. The offering formula ((sub)theme 63) appears on the panel of the false door ((sub)theme 43), but this placement is rare.

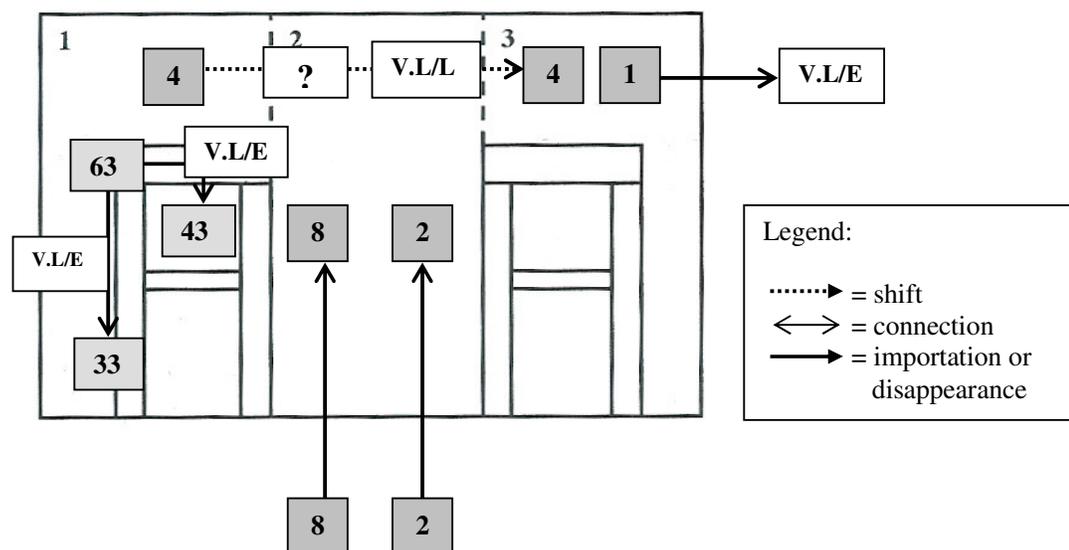


Figure XI.14: The mutations during the period V.L – VI.

⁴³ Figure VII.18 indicates that both (sub)themes return on the western wall with a type Ib cultic character.