Significance of identity, individuality & ideology in Old Kingdom tomb iconography

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Part 2

Chapter 5
Criteria for the Selected Motifs

Part 1 abstained from extensive discussions of the attributes of the individual motifs found in the elite tombs in Dynasties 5 and 6, because the objective was to establish an understanding of whether generic (i.e. common) values of iconography could apply to funerary art. The present section deals with the criteria for the selection of the motifs to be analyzed in Part 2.

The West wall of the chapel is now accepted as being primarily concerned with the ritualistic function involving the hereafter;[487] therefore the selection will be from the other walls, and focus on their composition, placement, and communicative nature. The idea is to show that the culturally generic aspects of identity, individuality, ideology, and memory in the iconography of the Memphite tombs of the elite officials are an all-encompassing broad phenomenon, despite the stylistic uniformity that Memphite artists strove towards.

It is accepted that to confine oneself only to the secular nature of the other walls, would be too simplistic an approach because:

- It ignores the fact that scenes which appear secular at one level (e.g. the physical act of dragging a statue may at a higher level be ritual e.g. the censing of the statue in these dragging scenes). Even at its most basic level that of grave goods, which although made in this world, were ostensibly understood to have a putative use in the hereafter. This dichotomy of reality is endemic throughout ancient Egyptian iconography.
- It ignores the religious context in which the ancient Egyptians lived.

These all-important religious activities are often shown in the form of rituals, which follow a set, repeated, sometimes rehearsed pattern (dominated by customs, conventions, traditions, taboos linked to decorum) in which the

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[487] Junker, *Giza* vol. 3, 103. See also Bonnet, *Reallexikon der Ägyptischen Religionsgeschichte* 867.

participants play relatively fixed roles. Such rituals allow little scope for an individual person to vary the ritual, because the rituals are "patterns of thought that attribute to phenomena supra-sensible qualities which… are not derived from observation"[488]. On the other hand the ritual demands that the dead represented in the form of visible icons, be treated with respect and understanding as distinct individuals, a corollary of which is that the dead thereby persist in the memory too. Once it is realized, that the concept of memory is the basis of all funerary art, it follows that the workings of this idea play a crucial role, indeed are the key ingredients of what are termed the generics.

Secular activities being less subject to religious restrictions allow the individual more scope to do things in his own way, and thus to express his particular self. It becomes obvious that the expressing of the self will also involve the individual in all those common values, which are called 'generic'. One cannot deny that the individual's activities in real life might also have had a religious foundation, but because this is not directly observable in the iconography of Old Kingdom elite tombs, they cannot be pursued in detail.

The tomb-owner is the central figure, therefore his involvement either directly or indirectly with people and things, results in his personal differentiation[489]. This is an archeological fact, the consequence of being part of a community. This would also suggest some correlation between the esteem which was given to him during his life, and that which was given to him in his tomb, again pointing to the existence of generics in the tomb and its contents.

Having established that certain values are found in all funerary art it is now proposed to select the motifs and see the extent of their application in the activities of the tomb-owner.

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[488] M. Gluckman, "Les Rites de Passage," in *Essays on the ritual of social relations*, ed. M. Gluckman and C. D. Forde (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1962), 22. See also W. James, *The ceremonial animal: a new portrait of anthropology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003) 107.

[489] Lepsius, *Denkmäler aus Ägypten und Äthiopien* pls. 3, 25, 44, 69, 86 & 89.

Numerous motifs could be chosen to show commemoration; demonstrating identity, individuality, and ideology as different, culturally significant aspects. It is acknowledged that unbiased representative selection is crucial yet difficult. If one looks closely at all non-ritual scenes, it becomes obvious that they all contain some form or other of generic values. Equally, it is clear that the motifs selected must cut across a cross section of the known representations, such that they include the tomb-owner during the different parts of his life. The selected motifs then should include the following abstract/iconological themes:

1. The social rank of the tomb-owner and the number and composition of persons having duty relationships towards him.
2. Active/Passive participation by the tomb-owner in a communal act.
3. Participation by members of his family, kin, and community in pursuance of commemoration.
4. Inclusion of many varieties of elevated status goods made in this world but also required in the hereafter.
5. Indications of perceived idioms of identity, ideology, and individuality (directly or indirectly) existing as part of funerary art.

In line with the above guidelines, the selected iconographic motifs including related inscriptional texts are:

- Carrying-chair scene
- Taking-Account scene
- Mourning as part of the funeral processes scene

As with everything connected with Egyptology, there will always be exceptions, and it may well be that the choice of motifs will be subject to objections, all the more so when the material is incomplete or missing. However this is no excuse for avoiding an attempt to understand the causes of the conception, creation, and cultural impact of the iconography. If at a later date certain causal concepts need to be amended, this is not a disaster,

because the very attempt can be illuminating, as knowledge can also come in small increments.

I have selected the above-mentioned motifs for consideration because these represent the full length of a life; they are clear illustrations of the continuing emphasis on the generics. Additionally I feel that the processes and outcomes in them seem to unfold faster which can lead to more clarity.

My method will be to use a multi-pronged approach basing it on the macro analysis of the widespread 'socially engineered' (the generics) indications that directly affected ancient Egypt (the subject of Part I of this study). The consequences of these generics, intended and otherwise as depicted in the selected iconography (the subject of Part 2), then enable one to move down and dig deeper to uncover facts and reliable data that support, or refute, the big picture analysis.

Each of the scenes will at first be deconstructed in detail, and then contextualized to highlight the cultural significance of the parties/objects/inscriptions; finally generic (common patterns) will be identified.

For ease of reference these motifs are included in a separate volume as follows:

- Carrying-chair numbered   001- 0037
- Taking Account numbered   0051- 0088
- Mourning numbered   00101- 00103

Chapter 6
The Carrying-Chair

Compared to today's society, our grandparents had a different mindset, e.g. attitudes and perceptions about morals, obligations, class, etc. The ancient Egyptians probably had an even more different mindset: such that whilst a modern person might be able to translate the Egyptians' words and actions accurately, the perception, and meaning of both of these may differ. Consider the carrying-chair motif which for the ancient Egyptians could mean a number of things. Status probably was the main reason. However status can cover a wide variety of areas, e.g. those associated with age (e.g. village elders' experience, health), kinship structure as in feudal aristocracies, and wealth as with modern social classes.

For arguments sake let us begin as a starting point with the following non-controversial propositions:

- that the number of carrying-chair motifs is but a minor selection of that which may have existed, - that as wood rots easily we do not have any existing actual carrying-chairs, - that the carrying-chair was a scarce and valuable resource.

Because funerary expenditure was one prime concern of the elite's existence and because this was not equal, the possession of an independent means of transport meant a higher level of status, wealth, and comfort. The depiction of such an object would therefore imply an equivalent association in the afterlife.

One can therefore conclude with a high degree of probability, that the possession of a carrying-chair was an elite attribute. The detailed analysis of the carrying-chair motif and its components attempts to attain some precision in dealing with such and related concepts, when assessing the role of the generics in Egyptian art and society.

6.1 General Characteristics

The motif of the carrying-chair and its occupant(s) are found among the reliefs in the mastabas of the elite of the Old Kingdom as given in Appendix 'A'[490] and was a symbol of high social rank and importance[491]. The oldest depiction of a possible carrying-chair is that seen in the Narmer/Scorpion

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[490] A detailed list of all related scenes appears in Appendix 'A' of the list of tombs.

[491] Goedicke, "A Fragment of a Biographical Inscription of the Old Kingdom," 9.

mace head[492]. Motifs depicting the palanquin appear as early as Dynasty 4 (in the tomb of Nefermaat in Maidum) and it subsequently becomes part of the funerary tomb decoration and appears on the Dynasty 5 and 6 Old Kingdom mastaba walls of the elite. Consequently there is a huge gap in our knowledge between the earliest appearance of this motif and that depicted in Nefermaat.

The earliest attested word, which could refer to the description of a royal carrying-chair, is *wṯs*, seen in the offering list of the tomb of Nefer-hetep-Hathor in Dynasty 3, indicating a determinative of the carrying-chair[493]. The word *wṯs* however has an earlier etymology, and has the meaning of lift or raise, both in the physical sense as well as symbolically[494]. These chairs are also called *ḥwdt / ḥwdw* in the non-royal arena and are attested from Dynasty 5 onwards[495]. The Wörterbuch lists another word *rpwt*[496] meaning palanquin but this is now considered a nisbe form meaning "she of the palanquin" and refers to the image of the person inside the palanquin, rather than the palanquin itself[497].

Junker has pointed out to another association: that of an Old Kingdom title *wrꜥi*, attested in the tomb of Seneb, and which could be taken to mean either one who belongs to the carrying-chair or one who has the right to be carried in a carrying-chair[498]. This meaning of the title is now open to question[499].

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[492] J. E. Quibell and F. W. Green, *Hierakonpolis*, vol. 2 (London: Egyptian Research Account, Memoir 5, 1902) pls. 26 B/C. Original in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, E3631. For a detailed line drawing of the Scorpion and Narmer Maceheads see Smith, *A History of Egyptian Sculpture and Painting in the Old Kingdom* 113-15.

[493] Murray, *Saqqara Mastabas* pl. II.

[494] For numerous examples of usage see R. Hannig, *Ägyptisches Wörterbuch I: Altes Reich und Erste Zwischenzeit* (Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern, 2003) 387.

[495] Ibid. 933.
[496] A. Erman, H. Grapow, and W. F. Reineke, *Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache*, Unveränderter Nachdruck. ed., 7 vols. (Berlin: Academie-Verlag, 1971) II, 414, 12A.

[497] W. Ward, "Lexicographical miscellanies," *Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur* no. 5 (1977): 268.

[498] Junker, *Giza* vol. 3, 211. See also Jones, *An Index of Ancient Egyptian Titles, Epithets and Phrases of the Old Kingdom* 383-84.

However if Junker is correct, then the connection with the title could allude to either being rich, having connection to someone rich or having a social identity which goes with being transported in a carrying-chair, in all cases a sign of distinction. There seems to be no difference in the names "palanquin", "carrying-chair", "litter", and "sedan", these words are to be considered as synonymous and will be so used.

The carrying-chair from Dynasty 4 onwards comes in various shapes and designs, sometimes just an adapted chair to sit on, and at other times complete with arms, backrest, and floor to squat on with a roof for protection against the sun[500]. It is evidenced in all periods[501], although its use after the Middle Kingdom is restricted to gods and royalty. By the end of the Hyksos period[502] the war-chariot and horse become familiar to elite Egyptians, accordingly the carrying-chair motif disappears from elite tombs entirely.

Its importance as a sign of elite display of wealth and rank can best be understood and established by looking at two elite Old Kingdom tombs albeit from Deir el-Gebrawi those of Aba and Zau[503]. In the tomb of Aba part of the carrying-chair motif depicts two sunshade carriers (pl. 8). The other part (pl. 10), from which plate 8 is severed but to which it belongs (because of the equivalence of the gap between the northern and southern part of the wall they are on), depicts the [carrying-chair] headed by a person described as an "overseer of … who is in the heart of his master". He is followed by 6 male singers clapping their hands, and by a group of dancers in special headgear of a red ball attached to a tress. The next registers represent a funeral scene

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[499] U. Rössler-Köhler, "Sänfte," in *Lexikon der Ägyptologie, vol. 5*, ed. W. Helck, E. Otto, and W. Westendorf (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1984), 338.

[500] J. Vandier, *Manuel d'archéologie égyptienne*, vol. 4 (Paris: A. et J. Picard, 1964) 330.

[501] Ibid. 351-63.

[502] K. Sethe, *Urkunden der 18. Dynastie: historische-biographische Urkunden* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1909) IV, 3, l. 6. In the autbiography of Admiral Amosis, the king used a war-chariot against the Hyksos at Avaris. Accordingly the chariot and horse are known since the end of the Hyksos period.

[503] Davies, *The rock tombs of Deir el Gebrâwi* vol. I & II. The reason for the choice of this scene lies in its being one of the most detailed and complete scenes.

which Davies aptly describes as "the honours paid to the prince when carried to his tours of inspection, and the last honours paid to his body as he as borne to his tomb would seem very closely allied in the Egyptian mind"[504].

In the tomb of Zau we have a full depiction of a carrying-chair motif with 4 sunshade carriers and the tomb-owner sitting under an elaborately decorated canopy. Preceding him are 12 females representing his estates (incidentally this is the same number and type as in Aba plate 7). Underneath the palanquin is a complete version of the carrying-chair song. "Better is it when full, than when it is empty"[505].

If one were to place the scenes side by side, the gaps in each can be filled. It becomes apparent that one is dealing with a ceremony (a formal occasion) of the highest importance in the personal and social life of the tomb-owner, one which has important cultural ramifications because it is a way of inferring and embracing social rank by individuals and the community.

In the iconography there are also depictions of empty carrying-chairs being carried as in the tombs of Mereruka[506]and Ty[507]. These examples denote ownership/access to elevated status goods, pointing to status and accordingly contribute to the extension of the debate on the relationship of the tomb owner and the others, and the way these others played a meaningful role in relaying his identity as seen in the genre of a carrying-chair motif.

The issue whether these represent furniture without any context is irrelevant-because all grave goods have a locational context, i.e. they are found in the context of the monumental grave. Admittedly in the contemporary world an empty inexpensive car by itself would convey limited meaning, e.g. a means of transport or if it was an expensive car, access to a valuable resource as well. However it cannot be denied that if found in the garage of a mansion or a palace, it has by this association a meaning even when not occupied.

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[504] Ibid. vol. I, pl. 8 & 10 and p. 15.

[505] Ibid. vol. II, pl. 8 and p. 11-12.

[506] Duell, *The Mastaba of Mereruka* Vol. 1, pl. 14.

[507] Épron et al., *Le Tombeau de Ti* Vol. 1, pl. 17.

Indeed, even an empty car itself conveys some limited information on its owner's cultural embeddedness.

Accordingly in keeping with the view that the deciding factors context, place plus usage are to some extent present; depictions of empty carrying-chairs will be included in this thesis but only so far as they point to access to scarce resources.

However some fragmented motifs, which have been described as belonging to a carrying-chair scene, will not be included in this study, because some of the motifs are so damaged and/or fragmented that it is impossible to come to any definite conclusions. However it may well be that future research could uncover lost fragments, and to cover such eventualities, brief details of these fragments will be found in "Appendix B Carrying-Chair Fragments".

One secondary purpose of the carrying-chair is that of being part of the offering list (as already indicated), evidenced as early as Dynasty 3 in the offering list in the tomb of Nefer-hetep Hathor (in Dynasty 3 the offering list usually contained the possessions of the deceased)[508]. Its main purpose was that of transport because this is evident. A trip in the carrying-chair may have been undertaken for a wide variety of purposes. This included an inspection of the estates, an excursion to get some rest and recreation, official business, to inspect the craftsmen working on his tomb[509], to make payment to those craftsmen working on his tomb[510] or it may even represent an imaginary journey overland into the "beautiful West"[511]. The journey to the west is a

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[508] W. Barta, *Die altägyptische Opferliste, Münchner Ägyptologische Studien (3)* (Berlin: Verlag Bruno Hessling, 1963) 33. In contrast in Dynasty 4, the amount of food in the offering lists as a proportion of the other items, increases and in Dynasty 5, the list is entirely made up of food; furniture and other items are not mentioned in the lists.

[509] H. Junker, *Giza*, vol. 11 (Wien: Hölder-Pichler-Tempsky A.G., 1953) 250.

[510] A. M. Roth, "The practical economies of tomb building in the Old Kingdom: A visit to the Necropolis in a Carrying Chair," in *For his Ka: Essays offered in memory of Klaus Baer*, ed. D. P. Silverman (Illinois: The Oriental Institute, 1994), 232-34, 38.

[511] Borchardt, *Denkmäler des Alten Reiches* Vol. 1, pl. 1536. In the tomb of Ipy the deceased wishes to attain the mountain heights of the necropolis by land and the carriers sing a song which has the following refrain: " Better that the sedan chair (with the deceased) be occupied, than that it be empty".

symbol of being dead, and this would then be an example of metonymy. From Dynasty 4 onwards, its use as a method of transport both for official and private purposes is well attested[512]. In so far as it was used for official purposes, one might expect it to be gifted by the king but evidence on this is sparse[513].

The iconography reveals that the carrying-chair involves an object, which is used to transport a person of rank, the carrying of which is done predominantly by other human beings and in a few cases by animals[514]. A significant fact is that of being carried above the heads of the surrounding people. It would seem that being depicted above the common masses and in a sitting position was more prestigious, than shown standing or being placed beneath or at par with them. This would seem to be the evidence from the conventions of hierarchy in tomb decoration where the tomb-owner is always at a symbolical higher level as well as some inscriptions. In the Instructions of Ptahhotep it is said

> "If you are in the antechamber, Stand and sit as fits your rank, which was assigned you on the first day"[515].

This theme is continued in the New Kingdom Instructions of Any

> "Do not sit, when another is standing, One who is older than you, Or greater than you in his rank"[516].

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[512] Dunham et al., *The mastaba of Queen Mersyankh III: G7530-7540* Fig. 5. See Épron et al., *Le Tombeau de Ti* pl. XVI. Also A. M. Blackman and M. R. Apted, *The rock tombs of Meir*, vol. 5 (Oxford: The University Press, 1953) pl. XXXI,. and S. Hassan, *Excavations at Giza 1930-1931*, vol. II (Cairo: Government Press, Bulâq, 1936) Fig. 240.

[513] Sethe, *Urkunden des Alten Reiches* 43, 16f. See also P. Kaplony, "Eine neue Weisheitslehre aus dem Alten Reich (*) Zusätze und Nachträge," *Orientalia* 37 (1968): 344."Als mittler zwischen König und Volk wird er mit einer Sänfte belohnt im Auftrag des Königs..." This would imply that the gift of a carrying-chair was also a symbol of recognition bestowed by the highest authority in the land for esteemed work.

[514] See appendix "A" for a complete list.

[515] Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature* vol. I, 67. Similarly in PT § 490 (Faulkner, "The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts" (Oxford: 1969), Unas says " I am the [steward] of the gods. I sit before him[the sungod]". This suggests that architecture (the antechamber) could have subtle cultural meaning at an early stage in the development of Egyptian society and that a code of social behaviour was already in existence.

Therefore a carrying-chair motif should contain:

- An object within which one can be transported
- Person(s) who are carried
- Persons who do the carrying
- Appurtenances of rank, wealth, and power associated with the carried person/s
- The symbolic attributes of the carried person could also be reflected in his carriers
- Other evidence of material wealth and power
- Indications of a journey, which, if it is to the west would have religious implications or in the case of travelling to give thanks to the craftsmen, be of a secular nature

6.2 Distinctive Characteristics

6.2.1 Material

One has to assume that the carrying-chair was made of wood. The only textual reference is an indirect one from the Westcar papyrus, in which the king's son Hardedef is ordered by the king to fetch the magician Dedi, who is transported in a carrying-chair of ebony, the poles of which are made of *sesnedjem* wood and sheathed in gold (leaf)[517]. A similar type of carrying-chair is pointed out by Newberry in the tomb of Dejuhtynakht at el-Bersheh. He points to the fact that the white and black colours used on the carrying-chair "point to the combination of ivory and ebony, which are so often mentioned in Egyptian texts as the most luxurious materials for furniture"[518]. Another far later reference is from a verse in the Old Testament in which King Solomon is said to have made for himself a carrying-chair of cedar from

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[516] M. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, vol. 2: The New Kingdom (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976) 139.

[517] Simpson, ed., *The Literature of Ancient Egypt* 19, 7. 10. Compare the sedan in the tomb of Hetepheres which was also guilded.

[518] P. E. Newberry, G. W. Fraser, and F. L. Griffith, *El Bersheh*, vol. 1 (London: Egypt Exploration Fund, 1893) 30.

Lebanon, having uprights of silver, a headrest of gold, seat of purple stuff and lined with leather[519].

It is known that Egypt was very deficient in wood and that very little local wood could be used for carpentry[520]. Indigenous wood consisted mainly of willow (*Salix subserta*), tamarisk (*Tamarix nilotica*), oil producing trees such as acacia (*Acacia nilotica*), moringa (*Moringa peregrina*), and palm trees, mainly the dom-palm (*Hyphaene thebaica*) and the date palm (*Phoenix dactylifera*). The timber of the date palm trunks is useless for building or large furniture because of its fibrous wood. The other local timbers could be used for boxes and coffins but because of its short planks, it was quite inappropriate for larger furniture like a carrying-chair. Appropriate wood was thus imported and evidence exists of this from Dynasty 1 right through to the end of the Old Kingdom[521]. *Cedar* from Lebanon, *Ash* from Syria and ebony from tropical Africa and Punt (Somalia?) were imported, indicating in addition that such wood was a valuable commodity and a scarce resource. Exactly what type of wood was used is now not verifiable.

The tools required for the manufacture of the wooden furniture, are evidenced as far back as early Dynasty 1, copper tools were in existence then, including the saw, the mallet and chisel for cutting mortise holes, plus the adze for shaping and smoothing wood[522].

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[519] J. R. Mueller, K. D. Sakenfeld, and M. J. Suggs, *The Oxford study Bible: revised English Bible with the Apocrypha* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992) Song of Songs, verse 3:9.

[520] Lucas and Harris, *Ancient Egyptian Materials and Industries* 429.

[521] Lebanese timber is evidenced in Dynasty 1 tombs, in the Dynasty 2 tomb of Khaskhemui, from the Palermo Stone, where it says that Senefru (Dynasty 4) sent 40 ships to acquire cedar from Lebanon. For the evidence from Pepy 1 see M. Eaton-Krauss, "Fragment of Egyptian Jar Lid," in *Ebla to Damascus: Art and Archaeology of Ancient Syria*, ed. H. Weiss (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1985), no. 79. 170.

[522] Emery, *Archaic Egypt* 216-22.

Carpentry was indeed far advanced as seen in the existence of a vast quantity of carpentry tools found in tomb 3471 at Saqqara, as well as the existence of the jointing, specifically the mortise & tenon joint, which replaced thonging[523]. Unfortunately no elite carrying-chair has to date been discovered apart from a royal carrying-chair.

Fig. 2: Reproduction of the carrying-chair of Queen Hetepheres l: Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. 38.874

A questionable reconstruction of this royal carrying-chair (the only one physically available) is that of Hetepheres: one is on display in the Cairo Museum and the other at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. Both reproductions indicate that the chair is very short in length; this was for a woman, and since the officials of the king were all males, this cannot be taken as a representational prototype[524] for the elite royal kinsmen. Thus any deduction from these measurements as to general size, embellishments if any, consequential figuring of the actual number of porters required for its cartage, would be incorrect. However the fact of its preservation, and the bits

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[523] W. B. Emery, *Excavations at Saqqara: Great Tombs of the First Dynasty*, vol. I (Cairo: Government Press, 1949) 19.

[524] Dimensions provided by the Metropolitan Museum at Boston are: Length of carrying poles = 207.5cm; Seat back = 52cm; Seat = 53.5cm. This would then mean that the available carrying pole after deducting the seat area is only 51cm. at either end, not leaving room for many porters! Reisner questioned the reconstruction on two grounds: that it was based on a depiction from the tomb of Queen Meresankh lll; and that the reconstructors did not make due allowance for the fact that wood may have shrunk over time.

of gilded decoration found would indicate at the very least, that it was made from hard wood and precious metals were used in its decoration, i.e. an elevated status good. The seats in both reproductions use some sort of wooden plank; however evidence suggests that this is not quite correct. The carrying-chair may have had seats which were made from papyrus twine similar to present day caning - this seems to be the inference from the archaeological finds by Petrie in Tarkhan[525].

6.2.2 Canopy

As there is no way of determining the exact dimensions of a regular carrying-chair, the main difference between the iconographic depictions seems to arise from the presence, or absence of a canopy.

The function of the canopy as a protection from the fierce Egyptian sun is an obvious inference, and one would expect to find the canopy in all such chairs but this is not so. In view of the conservative nature of Egyptian society, it is also surprising to find a wide variation in the type and shape of these canopies. Furthermore even if it is present, one sometimes also sees sunshade and fan carriers. A definite typology of canopies does not exist and while Vandier has tried to order these on the basis of function, his method of ordering is still unsatisfactory because it is more appropriate to use a geometrical type which is more definitive[526]because it eliminates the problem of change in usage which could distort the typology.

The easiest discernible way of identifying them (canopies) is to address their shapes, into five (mainly geometrical) types[527] as follows:

1. Arched-   built with an arched roof having a vault

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[525] W. M. F. Petrie, G. A. Wainwright, and A. H. Gardiner, *Tarkhan 1 and Memphis V* (London: British School of Archaeology in Egypt and Egyptian Research Account, Publication 33., 1913) 9-12 & 23. Petrie notes the frequent use of baskets for coffins, for the laying of the body on a tray made of reeds, large branches being used for the roofing of a coffin, and the use of various types of webbing for beds.

[526] Vandier, *Manuel d'archéologie égyptienne* vol.4. 339-41. He tries to bring some order into the debate.

[527] For the tombs in which they occur see Chart 1.

2. Curved-   with no line having a straight part
3. Square-   having four equal sides forming four right angles
4. Trapezoidal-   having four sides, two of which are parallel
5. Decorated-   with wood cut indentations similar to a *kheker* pattern

From the evidence it would seem that the canopy can be thought of either as a fixture or as a temporary awning made of lighter materials, which could be assembled as and when the occasion demanded. In the tomb of Ipy, two men are holding up the canopy from poles which are carved in the shape of a blunt bulb end, over which light material in this case decorated, is suspended[528]. Where, one does find evidence of some sort of a more durable fixed span, it is by indirect inference only, that of a monkey shown clambering down the canopy as in the Middle Kingdom tomb of Pepyankh[529]. None of the Old Kingdom carrying-chair scenes at Giza and Saqqara depicts a monkey climbing the canopy. Whether the canopy was a permanent fixture or not, is therefore still an open question. For purely functional reasons, it had to be made of light material otherwise it would be top heavy and subject to sway and thus become unstable. In this connection mention must be made of a scene albeit in a provincial tomb of the Old Kingdom, where the canopy is so elaborately decorated that it conveys the impression of a very substantial affair. It supports the weight of monkeys shown clambering on to its roof and it certainly looks top heavy[530]. It may be that here we are noticing the extension of material goods in symbolic form as an indication of status and high culture, no matter how impracticable it might have been.

Chart 1 below, indicates the types of canopies present and no apparent pattern favouring a particular type can be deduced[531].

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[528] Also shown in the tombs of Niankhkhnum & Chnumhotep (fig, 60), Ptahotep ll, Perneb, Itisen, Iymery, Ipy, Seshemnefer.

[529] Blackman and Apted, *The rock tombs of Meir* vol. V, pl. 31.

[530] Kanawati, *The Rock Tombs of El-Hawawish: the cemetery of Akhmin* vol. I, fig. 13 & vol. II, fig. 21.
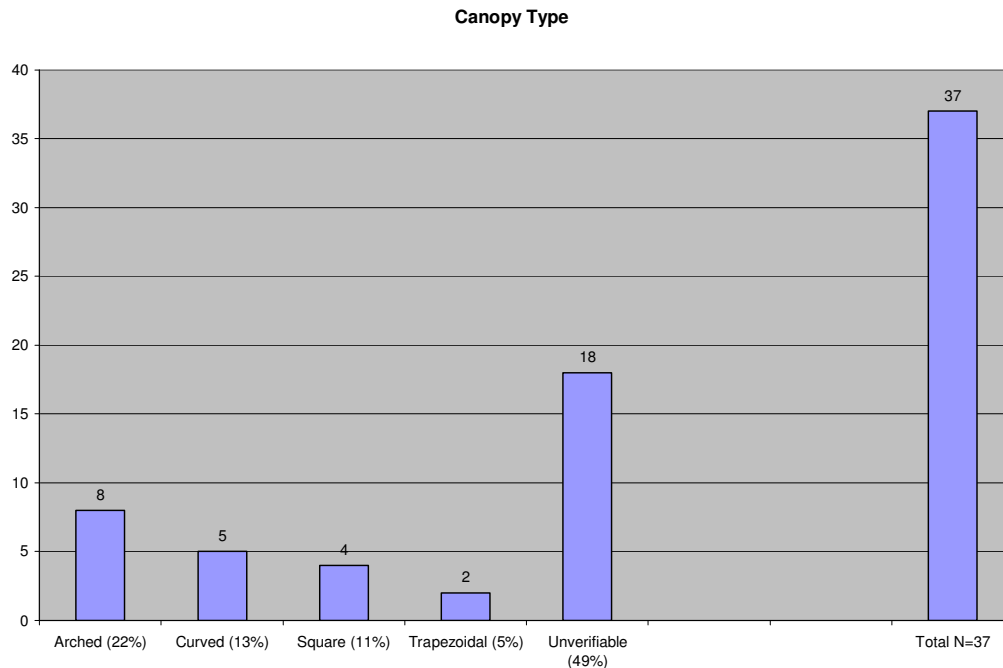
Canopy Type

Chart 1: Canopy Type

More than 50% of all carrying-chairs are shown to have some sort of canopy. This result could be even higher (60%) if the carrying-chairs in the tombs of Kagemni, Senedjem-ib-inti, and Ptahshepses are included (unfortunately these only suggest a canopy because of their structure but do not depict one as such). The rest of the scenes with carrying-chairs because of their poor state of preservation (those marked unverifiable), do not depict a canopy. Since more than half the scenes do have one, it may be that a canopy is part of the carrying chair. Moreover the type of canopy because of its visibly

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[531] 8 Arched = Ankhmare, Itisen, Kayemnofret, Khnumenti, Perneb, Ptahotep ll, Sabwibbi and Seshemnefer.
2 Trapezoidal = Ipy and Meryteti (pl. 47).
5 Curved = Iymery, Niankhkhnum (pl. 60), Sankhuptah, Seshemnefer-Tjetti, Hezi.
4 Square = Metjetji, Nimaatre, Neferkhuwi and Qar.
-Decorated = Ipy and Meryteti (pl. 47) which are also both trapezoidal in shape.
18 Unverifiable = Ankhmahor, Khnumhotep (pl. 61), Hetepenptah, Idu, Insnfrweshtf, Kagemni, Mereruka (pls. 153b & 158), Merwtetiseneb, Niakauisesi, Nefermaat, Pepydjedi, Ptahshepses, Rahshepses, Senedjemib.inti, Seneb, Ty, Waatetkhethor and fragment from unknown owner in Leiden Mastabase no. 008a.

striking presence can be related to an ulterior visible effect, which may result in the reinforcement of status and cultural embeddedness.

6.3 Porters

A carrying-chair implies by its name that it is being carried and the mode of carrying is in most cases through human agency and in only three cases the use of donkeys is attested[532].

The humans are termed the porters. They are important because they are coupled to a set of values that in ancient Egypt must have paralleled or imitated those of their superiors and their attributes will now be discussed.

6.3.1 Headdress

Short curled hair is attested as early as Dynasty 2[533]. It would seem that by early Dynasty 4, short hair was the common form for all classes[534]. This plus the fact that short hair could be depicted in a way that looks like a "wig", leads to difficulties. Invariably, the determination of whether or not the short crop of hair is a short "wig" or just the normal style of hair, poses a problem, and no criterion has been found for deciding one way or another. There is "little evidence for the use of false hair in the Old Kingdom"[535] but this should not be taken to mean that there is no evidence; all it means is that categorical statements on this matter should be avoided.

The available archaeological record illustrates a broad range. The royal statuary of the head of Menkaure depicts him with short-cropped hair

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[532] In the tombs of Khuwer, Niankhkhnum (pl. 42) & Khnumhotep (pl. 43).

[533] J. E. Quibell, *Excavations at Saqqara (1912-1914): archaic mastabas* (Le Caire: L'Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 1923) pl. XXVIII, 1.

[534] Lepsius, *Denkmäler aus Ägypten und Äthiopien* pls. 8b & 11. See also Smith, *A History of Egyptian Sculpture and Painting in the Old Kingdom* pl.40a and 42c.

[535] J. Fletcher, "Hair," in *Ancient Egyptian Materials and Technology*, ed. P. T. Nicholson and I. Shaw (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 496. See also I. Shaw and Nicholson, *The British Museum Dictionary of Ancient Egypt* 134.

indicated by irregular striations, which do not extend to the back of the head and to the side burns[536].

Fig. 3: Head of Menkaure. Museum of Fine Arts Boston. 09.203

The non-royal statue of Senefru-nefer the overseer of palace singers is informative. He wears no "wig" but his short hair is depicted by an incision marking the hairline, which is then the only indication of short hair being shown.

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[536] UC 14282 at the Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology, is a fragment of the head of Neferefre Dynasty 5. It shows him wearing a tight fitting "skull cap" with striations very similar to Menkaure and which certainly indicates hair.

Fig. 4: Snefru-nefer. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna ÄS 7506

On the occasions that "wigs"[537] were worn by the elite and /or his personnel these consisted of two versions: a short version consisting of curls overlapping each other and the other a longer version covering the nape of the neck[538]. It has been suggested that in the latter part of the Old Kingdom, a new style evolved in that the ears were always shown as exposed on persons wearing shoulder length wigs[539]. In the carrying-chair scenes the only example showing an ear when wearing a shoulder length "wig", is that in the tomb of Ipy – all others with similar headgear never show an exposed ear. Further when the tomb-owner is wearing a shoulder length "wig", all other subsidiary attendants are never shown wearing this form of "wig"[540]

The porters are an ever-present element of the carrying-chair motif and they appear with 'headgear' of a short, tight fitting, curled "wig", which in some representations covers the ears, while in others the ears are exposed. All elite males never appear without a "wig" or a close fitting cap. The most

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[537] On hair and wigs generally see P. T. Nicholson and I. Shaw, *Ancient Egyptian Materials and Technology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) 495-501.

[538] Lepsius, *Denkmäler aus Ägypten und Äthiopien* pls. 21 & 74 (c) for an example of each type.

[539] E. Brovarsky, "A Second Style in Egyptian Relief of the Old Kingdom," in *Egypt and Beyond; Essays presented to Leonard H. Lesko*, ed. S. E. Thompson and P. Der Manuelian (Brown University, 2008), 56.

[540] See the tombs of: Ipy, Seshemnefer and Seshemnefer.Tjetti.

prestigious is the shoulder length "wig"; with hair that can be arranged in strands or curls while the commoner form is that of the short round "wig". Robins suggests that "the intricate styling of the wigs… shows that their wearers had the resources to acquire and maintain them. All this is in natural contrast to the unkempt, balding, and sometimes graying natural hair of the non-elite labourer…[541]" This also shows that "wigs" can point to different ways of presenting identity, in that the former denotes senior status; while the latter a junior one. While this is true in certain tomb scenes, it may not always be the case because the full range of hairstyles is not depicted in the mortuary art. Economic reasons alone could dictate a differentiation in status, "wigs" being visible signs of being able to wear the hair of others as well as being able to hide the visible signs of ageing and baldness an exception being that seen in the bust of Ankhaf[542]. The comparison with the balding, unkempt hair of the ordinary worker in mortuary art is self-evident.

The visual image is an indication of an important social purpose central to the pre-occupation of the tomb-owner, and as such, it would be quite inappropriate for even his servants to be improperly attired. This may be an explanation of why the short "wig" is always shown, even though the everyday pattern was short-cropped hair. It is probable too that another reason for "wigs", "was to keep parasites at bay while allowing for the indulgence of hairstyles"[543] in keeping with culturally accepted preferences.

In line with the projection of identity and a certain elite ideology it could be that there is never any occasion, when a porter is displayed without either a close fitting or with a horizontal row of small curls type of short "wig".

Generally from evidence at Deir el-Bahri of a "wig" workshop (there is no evidence of a similar "wig" workshop from the Old Kingdom), it is now certain that the material used in the manufacture of "wigs" was human hair[544]. This

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[541] G. Robins, "Hair and the Construction of Identity in Ancient Egypt " *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* XXXVl (1999): 63.

[542] Smith, *A History of Egyptian Sculpture and Painting in the Old Kingdom* pls. 14 & 15.

[543] J. Fletcher, "A Tale of Hair, Wigs and Lice.," *Egyptian Archaeology*, no. 5 (1994): 32.

[544] Ibid.: 33.

probably was the case in the Old Kingdom too because hair and its depiction in most societies has some meaning. Just like clothing of some kind in general is a normal feature in many societies, it being used to protect and enhance those attributes of the human physique which its owner wishes to project. Likewise the exposed hair and beard can become a way of indicating differentiation. The way it is depicted can convey different significances ranging from erotic, magical, and religious[545] to encoding information about gender, age, social status,[546] and it may be that the headgear of the porters is evidence of some of this encoding.

6.3.2 Attire

The majority of the porters are dressed in what is a strip of cloth covering the loins with a sheath in front. The nearest hieroglyphic word for an unworked piece of cloth is *dȝiw* but whether this was a loincloth is unclear[547]. The loincloth has been described as a simple linen triangle with strings at two corners which were tied around the waist. The free pointed end of the triangular cloth was then draped down the back, pulled through the legs, and tucked in at the front. "Cloth loincloths were used by most of the population of Egypt for virtually all of the Pharaonic period"[548]. It is usually worn by men engaged in strenuous activities, e.g. agricultural workers[549] and this is a pointer to its generally non-elite status.

There are 17 tombs showing porters wearing this type of garment[550] and porters wearing short kilts are depicted in 10 tombs[551]. There are 9 tombs in

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[545] P. Derchain, "La perruque et le cristal," *Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur*, no. 2 (1975): 55-57.

[546] Robins, "Hair and the Construction of Identity in Ancient Egypt ": 55.

[547] Erman, Grapow, and Reineke, *Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache* V, 417, 3. This word fully written as
or in its abbreviated version also appears in the Old Kingdom biography of Weni, and in Papyrus Westcar (Blackman,1988: 9, 26-10,17).

[548] G. Vogelsang-Eastwood, *Pharaonic Egyptian Clothing* (Leiden: Brill, 1993) 10.

[549] J. Vandier, *Manuel d'archéologie égyptienne*, vol. 6 (Paris: A. et J. Picard, 1978) 55-56.

which the porter's attire is unverifiable and there is 1 case of porters wearing a sheath dress in the tomb of Waatetkhethor.

 All these tombs are dated to Dynasty 6. Could it then be that one is witnessing in this attire the increasing tendency in the elite of showing their own importance and a diminution on the dependency on the king? Or could it be that these are indications of individuality?

However, no porters are shown wearing pointed kilts which are reserved for the elite. It is of interest to note that the loincloth is also seen on the porters in the carrying-chair scenes at Deshasha, Meir, Deir el-Gebrawi, and el-Hawawish[552].

While the loincloth is never seen on the elite in the Old Kingdom, yet its appearance on the standard-bearers in front of the vizier on Narmer's palette would not entirely rule this out. By Dynasty 4 indications are that it is the type of clothing worn by those of a lower socio-economic status.

As mentioned the porters are also shown dressed in the short kilt. This is attested from pre-dynastic times since the Scorpion mace head. The short kilt is a garment worn by men and covers parts of the lower body. Variations of this garment are observed in the iconography, e.g. in length and way of presentation: pleated, flapped, short, pointed, below knee length, etc.[553] depending on the status of the person and the context in which it is worn.

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[550] 17 Loin cloths in the tombs of Ankhmare, Insnfrweshti, Ipy, Itisen, Iymery, Khnumenti, Mereruka (fragment.),   Neferkhuwi, Niankhkhnum (Fig. 60), Nikawissi, Nimaatre, Ptahshepses, Sabwibbi, Sankhwptah, Senedjemib.inti, Tjeti, and Ty.

[551] 10 Short kilts in the tombs of: Hezi, Kagemni, Mereruka (pl. 158), Meryteti (pl. 47 & 48), Hetepniptah, Pathhotep, Qar, Seneb, Seshemnefer and Nefermaat. 9 tombs in which the porters' attire is unverifiable: Ankhmahor, Idu, Kayemnofret, Khnumhotep, Metjetji, Merwtetiseneb, Pepydjedi, Perneb, and Rahshepses.

[552] See Kanawati, "Deshasha", 1993: 48, Blackman, "Meir", vol. 5, 1953: pl. XXXI, Davies, "Deir el Gebrawi", vol. 2, 1902: pl. VIII and Kanawati, "el-Hawawish", vol. 1 & 2, 1980-1981: pl. 13 and 21 respectively.

[553] E. Staehelin, *Untersuchungen zur ägyptischen Tracht im Alten Reich, Münchner Ägyptologische Studien (8)* (Berlin: Verlag Bruno Hessling, 1966) 253-57.   See also Vogelsang-Eastwood, *Pharaonic Egyptian Clothing* 53-71. For a review across the periods see H. Bonnet, *Die ägyptische Tracht bis zum Ende des Neuen Reiches, Untersuchungen zur Geschichte und Altertumskunde Ägyptens (no. 2)* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1917) 1-73.

The porters when wearing the short kilt are always shown wearing the plain variety as in the tomb of Seneb where they are also identified by name as Shedji and Perw respectively[554]. As the majority of tombs show the porters in the loincloth, this would seem to be the preferred choice. Carrying a heavy wooden chair with the added weight of the tomb-owner and moving in a specific direction in a specific manner is not an easy task and this may have something to do with the type of sparse clothing worn by the porters. In keeping with the rules of lived practice (decorum), the porters are never shown entirely devoid of any clothing covering the lower extremities.

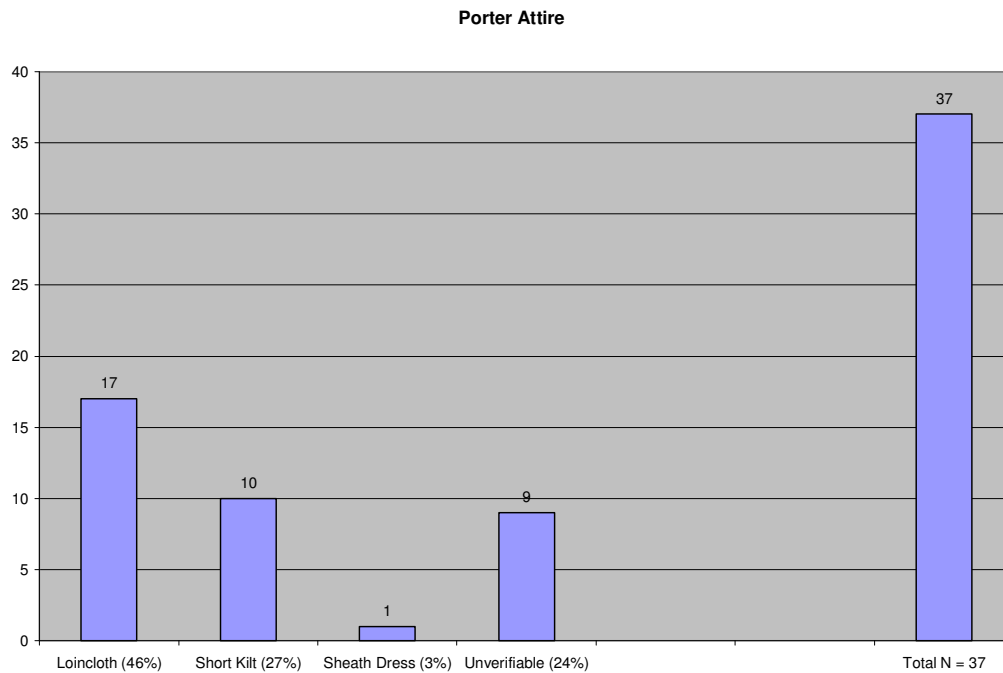Chart 2 below summarizes these findings.

Porter Attire

Chart 2: Porter Attire

6.3.3 Porter Count

The presence of the number of other personnel (they are present in nearly all motifs, for example offering bearers) is an indication of the social status of the tomb-owner because this indicates the number of people having social obligations vis-à-vis the deceased. If this is correct then one would also have

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[554] Junker, *Giza* Vol. 5, fig. 20.

to concur, that the depiction of porters in all carrying-chair motifs, is likewise an indication of status even if they are only wearing loincloths.

Admittedly they are an essential element, for even where the carrying-chair is shown empty but being carried, it is on the shoulders of porters as in Mereruka[555]. Here the carrying-chair is being carried away from Mereruka and his wife who are shown viewing this action. However when a carrying-chair is being presented to the tomb-owner it is never carried on the shoulders and the presenters are never attired in a loincloth. In the tombs of Seshathetep[556] and Ty[557] this is the case and can be explained as the offering of an elevated status good to people of high rank. This is observed from their accompanying titles and attire, e.g. the Elder of the House, Meni in the motif in Seshathetep and Sealer, Inspector of Sealers, and Funerary priest in the tomb of Ty. Indeed the representation here goes further, because when combined with all the other appurtenances connected with the carrying-chair, a picture is evoked not in terms of its functionality but in terms of the type of grave goods commanded by the elite and thus reveals cultural embeddedness.

The numbers of porters vary from scene to scene; there is no hard, fixed rule as to the number employed. Presumably this would depend upon the type of chair, the weight of the carried person and possibly limited by the surface area of the wall which was available for its depiction. Equally one should realize that for reasons of displaying individuality/ideology the number of porters depicted could be exaggerated.

The actual number has posed a problem for some; however there is in my opinion no problem in counting the total number of porters in a scene, provided one observes the scene from the angle of what is depicted, and what is physically possible.

The carrying-chair has to be in a balanced state in order for it to be transported in a fitting manner. Depending on the position of the seat relative

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[555] Duell, *The Mastaba of Mereruka* Vol. 1, pl. 14.

[556] Junker, *Giza* Vol. 2, fig. 31, p. 185. The bearers of the carrying-chair wear a pleated short skirt.

[557] Épron et al., *Le Tombeau de Ti* vol.I, pl. 17.

to the carrying poles, the center of gravity will shift from the middle, to the front, or rear, depending upon the weight load.

The obvious fact that there have to be two carrying poles, on either side of the base of the chair is self-explanatory.

These being the minimum requirements it follows that the porters who are shown in profile, have to be duplicated or shown in a way that they appear duplicated in a similar manner to the picture from the tomb of Metjetji below.

Fig. 5: (Toronto Museum No.3) Tomb of Metjetji showing overlapping effect on a herd of donkeys (5 donkeys/7 ears/8 legs).

To do otherwise in the supposed name of objectivity and scientific detachment, in that one is forced only to count what is actually depicted, is an impossible myth, and I intend to follow the above method. In this respect Petrie, Junker and Brovarski, are correct in their method of counting of the

porters[558] the count being multiplied by 2 even when only one line of them is shown.

Using this method results in a total number of 12 porters for the oldest extant carrying-chair motif that in the early Dynasty 4 tomb of Nefermaat at Medum. Application of this method to all carrying-chair scenes reveals two particulars:

- The total number of porters in all carrying-chair scenes in which there are porters, is on average about 20. The only written evidence that we have on the number of porters is from the tomb of Washptah (early Dynasty 5) - for whom the king allocated ten porters[559] and if this refers to only one part of the palanquin, then the total number would neatly add up to the postulated average. However if this refers to the actual total number, which as it was a gift from king Sahure could be considered ideal, then the average number postulated is in excess and it maybe that the excess number shown includes reserve porters which could be required for a long journey.

- The total number of porters range from as low as four to as high as thirty-six as per chart 3.

The porter count could not be verified in ten tombs. Seven of these are much damaged and/or are in a fragmentary state while three tombs show carrying by donkeys and have not been included[560].

Finally, the legs of the porters are always shown moving in unison and harmony, random foot movement is never depicted.

The numbers of porters and their portrayed movement is an attribute which plays a role in the self-presentation of the tomb-owner and thus has an important bearing on the perception of his cultural significance.

Chart 3 below is a summary of the total porter count in the various tombs.

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[558] Petrie, *Medum* 26. See also Junker, *Giza* vol. 5, 83. Also Brovarski, "The Senedjemib Complex", 120.

[559] Sethe, *Urkunden des Alten Reiches* 41, l. 18-19.

[560] The seven tombs are those of Ankhmahor, Idw, Kaemnofret, Metjetji, Merwtetiseneb, Perneb, and Sankhwptah. The cartage by donkeys appears in Khuwer's tomb and the tombs of Niankhkhnum & Khnumhotep (fig. 42 & 43) which for the carrying-chair motif are to be considered as two tombs although they are in a joint tomb.
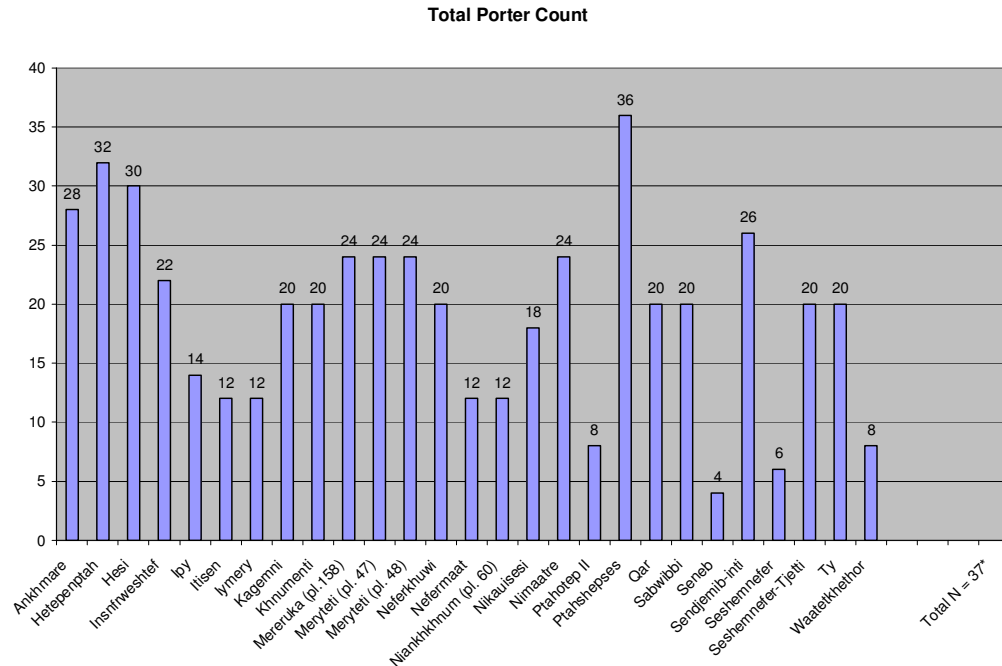
Total Porter Count

Tombs with more than one carrying-chair motif, e.g. Meryteti are counted as one tomb.

The numbers above the tomb-owner's name refer to the actual number of porters present but NOT the number of tombs.

- The total population of N = 37 includes 10 tombs in which the porter count could not be verified plus tombs with cartage on donkeys and thus are excluded.

Chart 3: Total Porter Count

6.3.4 Distribution of Porters

The placement of porters has primarily to do with the Egyptian's notion of comfortable and stable transport and indirectly with the status of the tomb-owner.

In twelve tombs there are an equal number of porters in the front and the rear and this coincides with the postulated criterion of practicality for counting the porters[561]. In twenty-one tombs[562] it was not possible to segregate the

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[561] 12 as in Ankhmare, Iymery, Itisen, Mereruka (pl. 158), Meryteti (pl. 48),Nefermaat (equal front and rear numbers assumed), Niankhnum (pl. 60), Nimaatre, Sabwibbi, Seneb, Ty and Waatetkhethor.

[562] 21 Unverifiable: Ankhmahor (F), Insnfrweshtf, Ipy, Idu, Kagemni, Kaemnofret, Khnumenti, LMP 008a (F), Mereruka (F-pl.153b), Metjetji (F), Neferkhuwi (F), Merutetiseneb (F), Meryteti

front and the rear number conclusively; for reasons of compositional balance, no delineation between front and rear was noticeable, or where they may be part of a fragment, or the available evidence was only textual.

In two tombs the number of porters in the front exceeds the number at the rear[563] and in two other tombs porters at the rear exceeds those in the front[564].

Chart 4 below summarizes the distribution of porters.
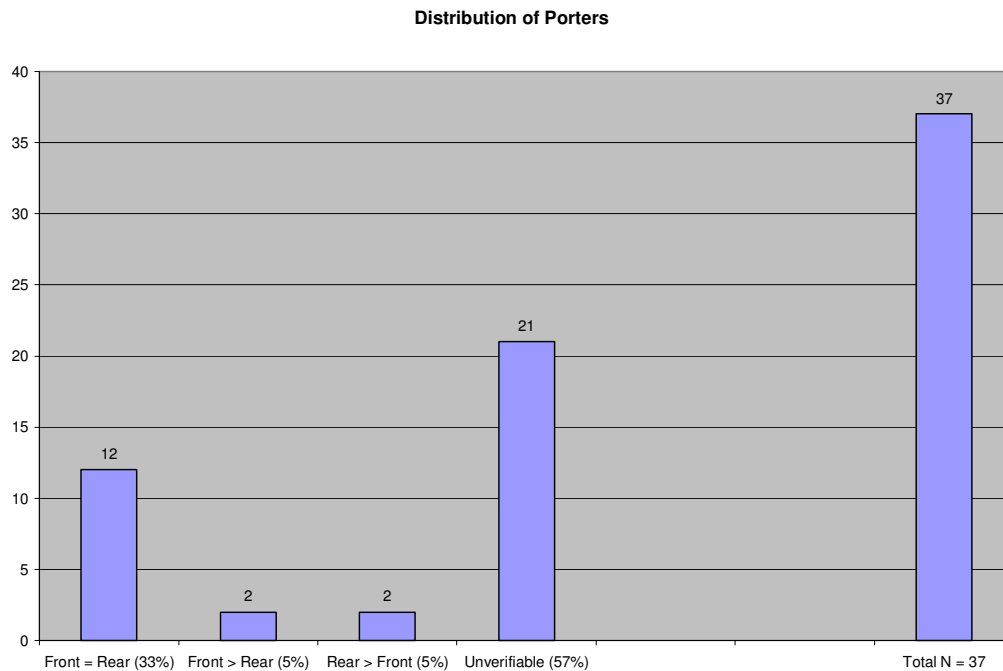
Distribution of Porters

Chart 4: Distribution of Porters

Tempting as it is to explain these unequal numbers, as indicating that the weight has been reallocated, and so deserves more carrying power and therefore more porters, will not do. It fails to explain the fact that the carrying pole is never shown as of unequal lengths, which would be the case if unequal number of porters were the norm. In any case porter placement is a

(pl. 47), Pepydjedi (T), Perneb (F), Ptahotep ll, Rahshepses (F), Seankhuiptah, Seshemnefer, Seshemnefer.Tjetti (F), Hezi. "F" indicates a fragment and "T" denotes textual evidence only.

[563] 2 as in Hetepenptah and Nikauisesi.

[564] 2 as in Qar, and Seshemnefer.Tjetti.

function of available gripping place as the reproduction of the carrying-chair of Hetepheres evidences; both the poles are 207.5-cms in length. If for arguments sake, all carrying-chairs were equivalent in design to the Hetepheres reproduction, then the gripping place available means that the number of porters should be equal both in front and rear. If this is not so then it is a physical impracticality to have any porter under the carrying chair, because there is no place to grip, he would indeed be carrying the weight on his head and hands. The base of the chair and the pole are constructed to allow for a grip either by allowing for vertical or horizontal spaces between the pole and the seat (as observed in the tombs of Ipy, Khnumenti, Seshemnefer, and Niankhkhnum-fig. 60). Another method yielding identical results would be to allow for metal loops away from the seat base through which the carrying pole could be threaded (as seen in the tomb of Ty). In both instances a space is created which can be used for the purpose of gripping and cartage.

Further, the majority of the carrying-chair motifs present a balanced composition, with equal numbers of porters in the front and rear. In these motifs all the porters are shown bearing the pole.

My observations conclude that where there is a discrepancy between the front and rear porters, this is due to either:

- The scene being part of a fragment and so one cannot conclusively count the number of porters present[565].

- The base of the carrying-chair covers practically the full length of the carrying pole such that there is no necessity to keep this part of the motif balanced, by equal number of porters in front and rear. The focus is on the person being carried and the carrying-chair[566].

- The base of the carrying-chair is also part of the base of the register line and the focus is on the tomb-owner[567]. The procession of carrying

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[565] As in Sakhwptah and Ankhmahor.

[566] Niankkhnum's carrying chair covers nearly the length of the pole.

[567] Meryteti (pl. 47). Compare this with Meryteti (pl. 48) where the porters are clearly displayed on either side of the pole.

porters forms part of the next register, whose focus is on the number of people in the procession, and not necessarily only on the porters. It therefore becomes unnecessary to balance the number of porters.

- Another reason for a different number of porters at the front and the rear may be related to the sizes of the porters. A short man would carry a lesser load if placed between two tall men. If the men are lined up in order of height (which appears to be the case as observed), the focus shifts from height to brute strength and there will be less men required at the bigger/stronger men's end of the poles. This could be one explanation for the unequal number shown and would explain all cases. However, even if the artist was aware of this, such unaesthetic deviations are never shown, as these would deviate from the essential elements of the scene, and be against decorum.

- Another equally convincing reason may be that travel over some distance-required reserve porters shown 'carrying' but in fact were reserves and that this could be the cause for the unequal number of porters per side. Unlike the previous reasoning this would not work against decorum and is my preferred explanation.

6.3.5 Carrying Method

Before discussing the carrying method the issue of the relationship between the carried and the carriers needs to be addressed because it gives a vital clue to cultural significances. The question is what is this hierarchical relationship between the carried and the carriers based upon?

It is known that the public carrying of the living or dead king, was an indication of the political and social power structure that was incorporated in his office. The king when alive and dead must have been carried on something, because he could not be touched (the Rawer Incident see page 56). This carrying then raises two issues:

1. the decorum related one of being carried in a suitable manner, and

2. the symbolic related one, of this being in addition an interpretation of political power.

The use of the carrying-chair and its being part of royal and elite furniture is well evidenced. The material evidence ranges over a wide period of the Old Kingdom. From the Dynasty 3 offering list of Nefer-hetep-Hathor (see page 180), to the actual find from the Dynasty 4 tomb of Hetepheres (see page 187), and the numerous Dynasty 5 biographical inscriptions displaying the king's concern for an official making clear that the chair brought from the residence was to carry a person aloft (see pages 55-56).

However these inscriptions do not say anything about the political power which is symbolic of the image behind the carrying-chair. For this we have to turn to the Pyramid texts, where the king is said to be carried, lifted into the barque of Sokar with all his powers intact and thus we have the first hint of any symbolic significance[568]. Another clue is from the New Kingdom sarcophagus of King Merenptah which attests to his power, and the way it is supposedly shown; "he being lifted and carried on the back (*wts=i s'h=k ꜣwi=i ḥr=k*) and the Ennead carrying him in a carrying-chair (*rmn<t> w psḏt ḥr-sp3*)"[569].

A vague hint to the hierarchical relationship between the carried and the porters is also given in the porter's song in the tomb of Ipi where they implore a god as follows: "O Sokar, who is on the sand come and protect N".

Admittedly there are differences in the exercise of royal and private symbols of authority, and between cultic and daily life actions, but the similarities cannot be ignored. It is suggested that similar to the display of social and political power which was present in the carriage of a 'living' king[570], the elite in pursuance of a particular social identity and maybe ideology, utilize the

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[568] Faulkner, *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts* § 1823, 24, 26 & 27.

[569] J. Assmann, "Die Inschrift auf dem äusseren Sarkophagdeckel des Merenptah," *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Abteilung Kairo* 28 (1972): 48 & 56. This is a New Kingdom example and so while care has to be taken in extrapolating backwards into the Old Kingdom and to non-royals, yet the symbolic significance is clear.

[570] Rössler-Köhler, "Sänfte," Lexikon der Ägyptologie, vol. 5, 334-39.

carrying-chair as one way in which to project its and their own importance. In the elite this is evidenced to the extent allowed by decorum, which results in them being depicted as being carried aloft on human hands, carrying instruments of power – the $s\underline{h}m$ sceptre, and an appeal to a god Sokar for protection. Even though there are very few examples[571] of displaying the sceptre, nevertheless it depicts power and control that is similar in meaning to when the living king is seen carrying it, albeit as a delegate of that power. The actual representation is to being lifted up and being carried, whereas its symbolic reference is to power. However in the context of the carrying-chair motif, the literal and the symbolic melt into each other, such that the difference between their daily life and cultic usage is difficult to determine. Accordingly these actions that of being carried and that of carrying the sceptre (or the baton and rod which appear in the majority of carrying-chair motifs) become powerful symbols in their own right. Thus 'Sehbild and Sinnbild' are combined, political power and the social/cultural structure obviously fuse into each other, and meaning is created self evident to all, of status constituting elements (the identity of eliteness and the implication of power and control).

Three methods of carrying are known during the Old Kingdom:

1. At the porter's hip level, as depicted in the tombs of Nefermaat, Meryteti (pl. 48), Mereruka (pl. 158), and Waatetkhethor. The empty carrying chairs as part of the offerings are excluded although these are shown being carried at hip level in the tombs of Ty (pl. 17 (third section), Ptahshepses pl. 10, Mereruka pl. 14, and Waatetkhethor pl. 57a.

2. At the shoulder level which is the norm for all of the other carrying-chair motifs[572].

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[571] In the tombs of Ptah-hotep (pl. 39), and Seshemnefer (fig. 3).

[572] 31 as in the tombs of: Ankhmahor, Ankhmare, Niankhnum (pl. 60), Hesi, Idw*, Insnfrweshtf, Ipy, Itisen, Iymery, Kagemni, Kaemnofret, Khnumenti, Mereruka (pl. 153b),

3. Carried on a chair strapped between a pair of donkeys.

Method 1 is represented initially in Dynasty 4 (Nefermaat), and thereafter in Dynasty 6 in the combined tomb of Mereruka/Meryteti/Waatetkhethor of the Old Kingdom; it is restricted to these four known tombs only. The majority of the other known tombs show method 2 and only three tombs[573] indicate method 3. Two other tombs are excluded: the tomb of Rahshepses (textual description only) and that of Pepydjedi[574] as unverifiable. The carrying methods are shown chart 5 below, with the clear preponderance of evidence in favour of the shoulder level method.

Carrying Method
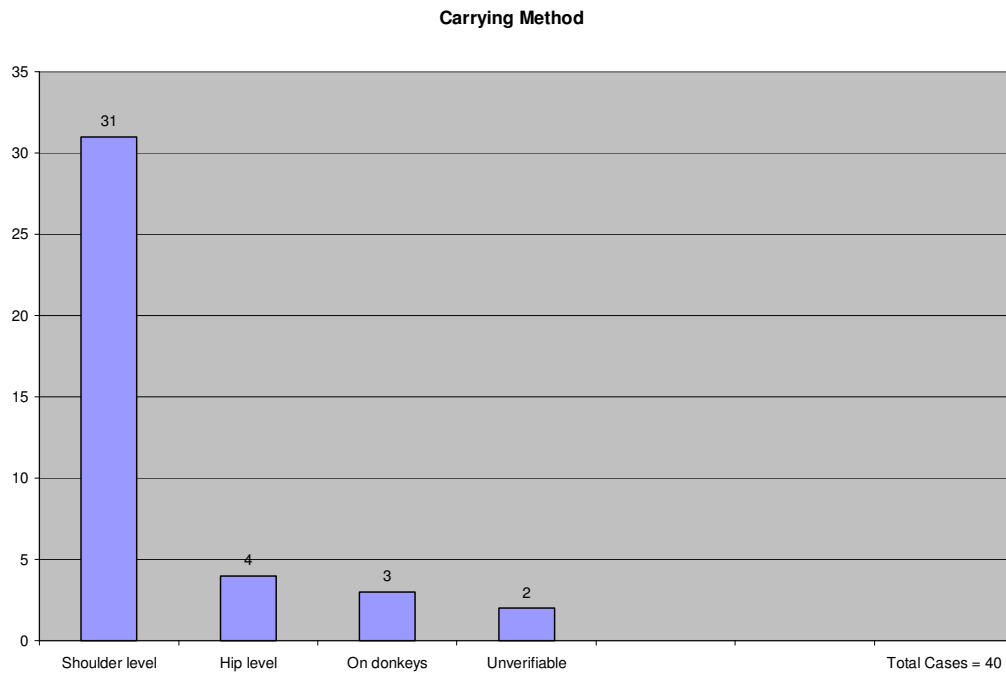
- **Duplication**: The total number exceeds 37 by 3 because Mereruka and Meryteti occur in both shoulder and hip level methods and Niankkhnum occurs in both

Meryteti (pl. 47), Metjetji*, Merwtetiseneb, Neferkhuwi, Nikauissi, Nimaatre, Hetepniptah, Perneb*, Pathhotep 2, Ptahshepses, Qar, Sabwibbi, Seankhuiptah, Seneb, Senedjemib-inti, Seshemnefer, Seshemnefer-Tjeti and Ty (pl. 16). The three tombs marked with an asterisk, are open to question but because of the size of their chairs, the chairs shown are assumed to have been carried at shoulder level and therefore included in the shoulder level method in chart 5.

[573] 3 as in Khuwer, Niankhkhnum (pl. 42), Khnumhotep (pl. 43).

[574] 2 as in Pepydjedi and Rashepses. See also Mariette and Maspero, *Les mastabas de l'ancien empire* 401-02.

shoulder level and carriage by donkey methods; therefore do NOT add column figures.

Chart 5: Carrying Method

Chart 5 reveals that the carrying-chair was most probably carried at shoulder level. In the iconography sometimes both hands are shown being used to carry and sometimes only one and sometimes the carriers are inside the carrying pole and sometimes outside the carrying pole. Is there an explanation for this?

Approximately 90% of modern humans are right handed. Let us assume for our purposes that the majority of Egyptians were right handed too[575].

Directionally left or right movement can be accomplished by the use of the correct arm and hand with the body outside/inside the pole. The pole would give stability of direction and vision could be ascertained by a simple vertical movement of the neck or a downward glance at the feet of the person in front. This implies that the porters are probably experienced at following the man in front, but this argument could be fallacious if experience is something which we can assume, but not decide on objectively. In any event any carrying by being inside/outside the pole and carrying with the wrong arm would have a disastrous effect. Accordingly from the view of the observer, the correct and practical way of depicting the carrying in profile, would be any of the following, using either of the hands:

1. For movements from left to right: view would be that of either right hand, right shoulder and head inside pole or right hand, right shoulder and head outside pole.

2. For movements from right to left: view would be that of either left hand, left shoulder, head outside pole or left hand, left shoulder and head inside pole.

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[575] M. K. Mandal and T. Dutta, "Left handedness: Facts and Figures across Cultures," *Psychology and Developing Societies* 13 (2) (2001): 173. "About 90% of the population exhibit directionally consistent right handed preference for most unimanual activities and for activities which matter in terms of consequences, the right hand is chosen".

3. Any other combination would be impracticable and undignified.

As the porters are shown to be of similar height this attribute has been excluded from consideration.

Consider the four scenes of carrying in the tombs of Mereruka (pl. 158), Meryteti (pl. 48), his mother Waatetkhethor (pl. 69), and Nefermaat. The method of carrying with both hands at hip level and with the carriers inside the pole does indicate stability. However the base of the massive chair directly obstructs the line of the rear carriers and even though the right position and arms are being used, the iconography shown is impractical. Because these are the only scenes known occurring in the same tomb complex and belonging to the same family (Mereruka) and period (Dynasty VI), (except Nefermaat) they can be explained away as examples of individuality or even archaism.

The majority of the carrying-chair motifs depict carriage on the shoulders. Since this motif is shown in profile as is usual in Egyptian art, it follows that it very much depends which direction of movement is being shown. Depending on this, the correct combination of arms, shoulders, and placement of carrying pole will be required. The essential point and one on which no importance has been attached in the literature, is the position of the head with respect to the carrying pole which also allows one to deduce the carrying shoulder. The hands, shoulder, and carrying pole are always aligned whereas the head can be inside or outside the pole depending upon which hand is used as well as the direction. The position of the head with respect to the carrying pole should provide additional stability in the direction of the movement and if correctly aligned will provide for freedom of movement of the head with little possibility of heads and arms being engaged in contorted positions.

A closer analysis will reveal that while this may have been the case in practice it was not always depicted correctly in the iconography.

Regarding the methods of carrying there are 21 tombs which correlate to the fact that the porters are both outside the carrying pole, and are carrying on

the correct shoulder and arm[576]. The fact that sometimes we see both arms being used is to me immaterial, if the correct shoulder and arm are also in operation. In early or middle Dynasty 5 there is no evidence of incorrect depictions. There are 6 correct depictions, which occur in early Dynasty 6[577], and one[578] in late Dynasty 5 or early 6.

Three tombs depict an incorrect method[579]. It is interesting to note that most of the incorrect depictions occur in periods from late Dynasty 5 onwards and never earlier.

As already mentioned the main attribute of correctness is not some arbitrary distinction, but the fact that a carried object has to move in a certain predetermined direction in a proper manner, such that operatives are able to utilize their visual capacity fully and the profile view represents these attributes. The way the artist has chosen to depict the carrying-chair motif gives rise to the following issues:

- Certain representations show evidence of image super imposition to create an affected sense of duplication[580]. The depiction in some tombs of a double set of porters (which was the reality depicted in those tombs) results in the compression of the carrying-chair motif. The carrying pole is shown being shared by both groups of porters, e.g. in the tombs of Khnumenti, Kagemni, Mereruka (pls. 14, 53b & 158), Meryteti (pl. 48) and Seshemnefer, which enhances the reality of the picture because it shows at a glance that there were two sets of porters without the use of additional wall space.

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[576] 21 as in the tombs of Ankhmare, Hetepenptah, Khnumenti, Kagemni, Ipy, Iymery, Mereruka (pl. 153b & 158), Meryteti (pl. 47), Niankhkhnum (pl. 60), Nimaatre, Neferkhuwi, Ptahotep II, Ptahshepses, Sabwibbi, Seankhuiptah, Senedjemib-inti, Seneb, Seshemnefer, Seshemnefer-Tjeti, Ty (pl. 16) and Hesi. For comments in this regard see Junker, *Giza* vol. XI, 253-54.

[577] Mereruka, Kagemni, Sankhuptah, Nikauissi, Khnumenti, and Hezi.

[578] Seshemnefer.

[579] 3 as in the tombs of: Insnfrwishtf, Itisen, and Nikauisesi.

[580] Kaplony, *Studien zum Grab des Methethi* 23., or figures list no. 5.

- Again in some of these motifs the rear porter's view appears to be totally impaired by the back/base of the carrying-chair especially those showing the palanquin being carried at hip level (Nefermaat, Waatetkhethor, Meryteti (pl. 48), and Mereruka (pl. 158). However there are other representations showing the shoulder carrying method where the rear porter's vision is also shown as 'if impaired' (e.g. in the tombs of Ty (pl. 16), Ankhmare, Niankhkhnum (pl. 60), Nimaatre, Senedjemib-Inti, Seshemnefer-Tjeti, Itisen and Qar. This would imply that the artist was not aware of or incorrectly depicted, what was a most important signal of cultural embeddedness for the elite tomb-owner, which is highly unlikely to be the case. A suggested explanation which would result in zero impairment of vision would be to observe the porters as though they are on the sides of the palanquin which occupies a space in the middle. This is noticeable in the eight tombs cited above and shows the artists understanding and solution to the complex problem of depicting in profile view, something of a three dimensional nature.

- Another method of solving this problem has been to show the porters directly underneath the base of the carrying-chair such that the base appears elevated and centered while the porters appear on its side, resulting in unimpaired vision (e.g. in the tombs of Ipy, Kagemni, Meryteti (pl. 47), Ptahotep II, Seankhuiptah, Khnumenti and Hesi). Depicting porters underneath the base of the carrying-chair implies that there is unimpaired vision and draws attention to the prominence of what is above. In the tomb of Seneb while the porters are not shown underneath the carrying-chair yet the effect is to enhance the image of the tomb-owner, and to divert the spectator away from the fact that he was a dwarf resulting in both aesthetic and cultural significance.

- Finally in ten tombs[581] the representations are so damaged or non-existent as to give no hint as to the porter's method of carrying and these have been excluded from the summarizing chart below. Chart 6 shows that the majority (62%) of the motifs showing the carrying of the palanquin were in fact represented correctly.

Accuracy of Depiction of Carrying by Porters
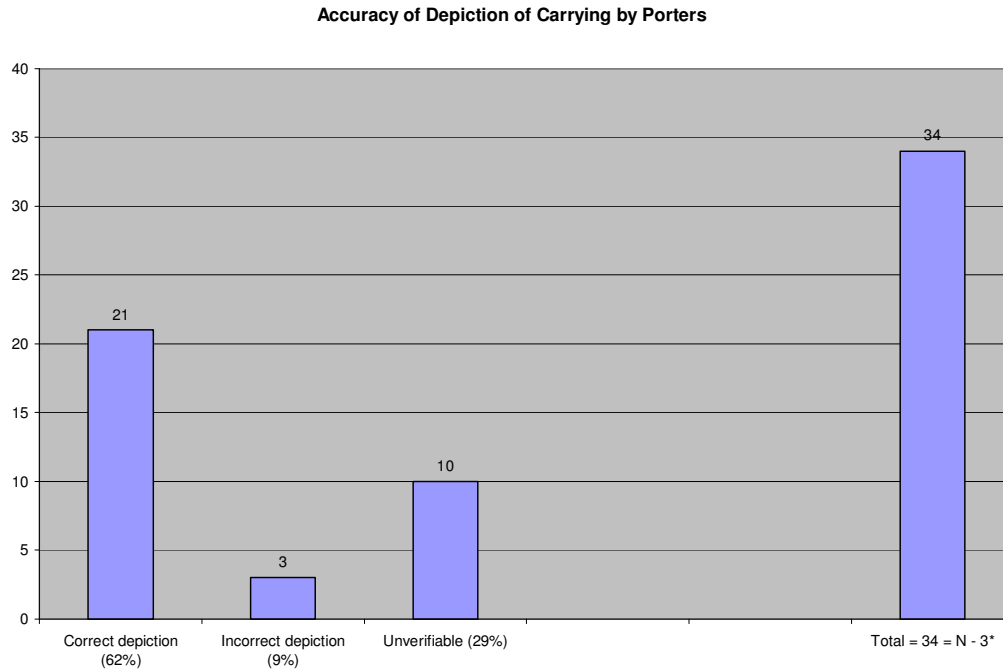
- Three tombs contain depictions of carrying on a donkey and these have been excluded.

Chart 6: Accuracy of Depiction of Carrying by Porters

6.3.6 Hands as Indicators of Cultural Embeddedness

An interesting phenomenon in the iconography is the use to which the hands of the porters are put. While the majority of representations show cartage of the palanquin by both hands[582], when only one hand is used, the free hand is:

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[581] 10 tombs as in Ankhmahor, Idu, Kaemnofret, Khnumhotep, Metjetji, Merwtetiseneb, Pepydjedi, Perneb, Qar, and Rahshepses.

[582] 4 Hanging empty by side = Itisen, Niankhkhnum (Fig. 60), Nimaatre and Sabwibbi.
4 Carrying short baton = Insnfrweshtif [R], Kagemni [R], Mereruka (pl.53b) [R], and Seshemnefer [R].
1 Carrying rolled cloth = Meryteti (pl. 47).

- Hanging empty by the side or
- Carrying a short baton or
- Carrying a rolled cloth

The instances in which the free hand is carrying anything are few in comparison and indeed the implication of any cultural significance behind this may be questioned, if the only goal was the secure transport of the tomb-owner. Apart from sometimes a baton[583] and in one instance a rolled cloth[584] by each porter, there is no evidence of the porters carrying any other status goods. However, whenever they carry anything in addition to the carrying-chair, the right hand is the one always used. That the baton is a status good can be inferred from the tomb of Seshemnefer, where the porters carry batons with bulbous ends, which at first glance look very much like that of a *sḫm* sceptre (but which may have been just a short club with a bulge at its end). In the context of the representation, it is quite clear that it is not a sceptre because it would detract from the tomb-owner, who is carrying a *sḫm* sceptre as well as a large staff with a bulbous end. This motif is part of the false door and rituality may be at play here.

The need for sticks and batons however needs an explanation. It either had a functional use, i.e. the necessity of making a way through crowded paths and/or a means of signaling to the troupe of porters (this may be the implication of the baton being carried by the second leading carrier as in the tomb of Hesi). Another use would be a sort of livery for the personnel, attesting to the owner's wealth and social standing, e.g. in the tombs of Insnfrweshti, Kagemni, Mereruka, and Seshemnefer. If this is so, this still leaves open the question why it is not shown in all tombs. Are these cases

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21 Both hands carrying = Ankhmare, Hesi*, Ipy, Iymery, Khnumenti, Mereruka (pl.158), Meryteti (pl. 48), Neferkhuwi, Nefermaat, Nikauisesi, Hetepniptah, Ptahotep II, Ptahshepses, Qar, Seankhuiptah, Seneb, Senedjemib-inti, Seshemnefer-Tjeti, Ty, Waatetkhethor (pl. 69) and Waatetkhethor (pl. 57a).
9 Unverifiable = Ankhmahor, Idu, Kaemnofret, Khuwer, Merwtetiseneb, Metjetji, Pepydjedi, Perneb and Rashepses.
Note letters between [ ] refer to right or left hand and * denotes an exception explained in the text.
[583] Insnferweshti, Kagemni, Mereruka and Seshemnefer.

[584] Meryteti (pl. 47).

then to be understood as attempts at change which did not take on i.e. instances of individuality?

These questions and their implications cannot be proven overwhelmingly as the tomb of Mereruka would indicate. Here we have two motifs (excluding pl.14 which depicts an empty carrying-chair), each of which has different significances as follows:

- In Mereruka pl. 158 he is shown being carried on a carrying-chair, yet the porters are not shown holding any status goods
- Finally in the fragmentary scene in pl. 53b showing the cartage of a palanquin by porters, they are shown with batons.

Therefore both the functional and the status enhancing explanations given are open to doubt, if one tomb is enough evidence to go by. However it must be conceded that the emphasis on details underlies the fact that the tomb-owner is being carried by other humans in a manner which highlights him as a member of an exclusive variety or at least someone who the community thinks needs this special care, thus again pointing to elite status and cultural embeddedness.

Chart 7 is a summary of the data.

Use of Porters' Hands
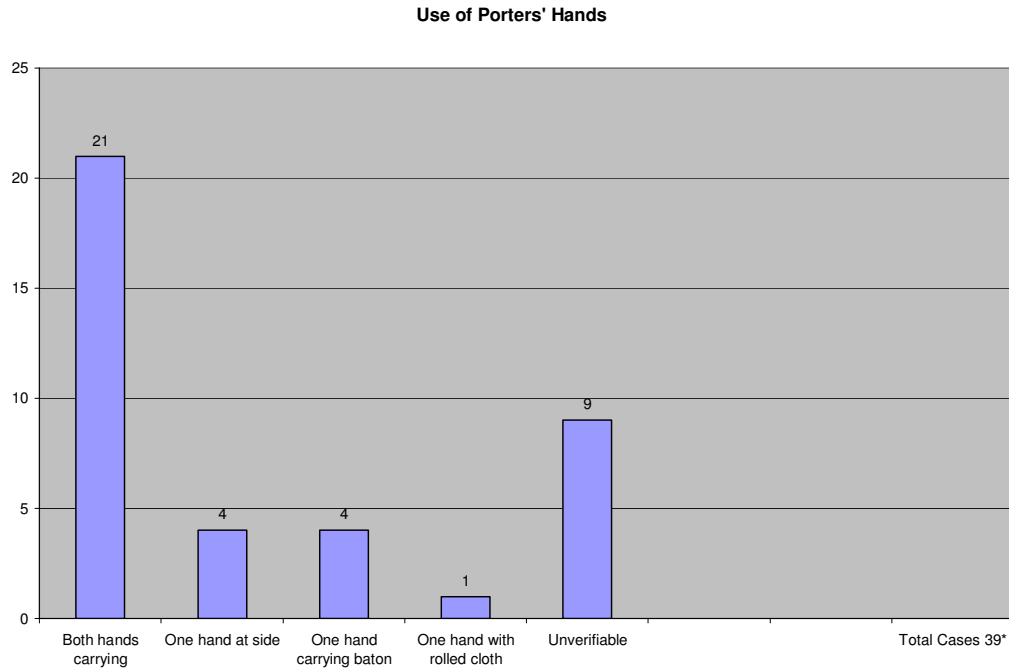
- • Duplication occurs across the tombs, e.g. Waatetkhethor has two plates (pl.57a & 69) depicting carrying with both hands; therefore do not add the numbers above. The numbers above refer to the cases and NOT to the number of tombs.

Chart 7: Use of Porters' Hands

6.4 Other Escorts

Frequently together with the porters, five other types of escorts are present:

1. Sunshade and Fan Carriers
2. Dwarf
3. Animals
4. Supervisor(s)
5. Subsidiary Attendants carrying Tomb-Owner's Belongings

6.4.1 Sunshade and Fan Carriers

These escorts are connected with the same utilitarian purpose as the canopy, (i.e. protection of the carrying-chair occupant from the heat and flies), however they are being treated separately like all 'the other escorts' because

it was thought that analyzing each element of the scene might throw some more light on their cultural interdependencies.

These carriers are additional to and separate in function from the porters, their main function being to enhance the state of ease and enjoyment of the journey for the tomb-owner.

The common sunshade in the Old Kingdom tombs is composed of a rectangular piece of material spread over diagonal struts with another rectangular fringe on the side. It was carried on a long pole which is shown either touching the middle of the diagonal struts or shown as ending at the bottom edge of the rectangular top, each example illustrated in the tomb of Nimaatre and Seankhuiptah respectively. The term for the sunshade is *sbꜣ* and the bearers are designated as *ẖryw sbꜣw* referred to as a title in the tomb of Nimaatre[585]. See fig. 6 below.

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[585] Hassan, *Excavations at Giza 1930-1931* vol. II, fig. 240., or see figures list no. 6.

(To face page 220.)
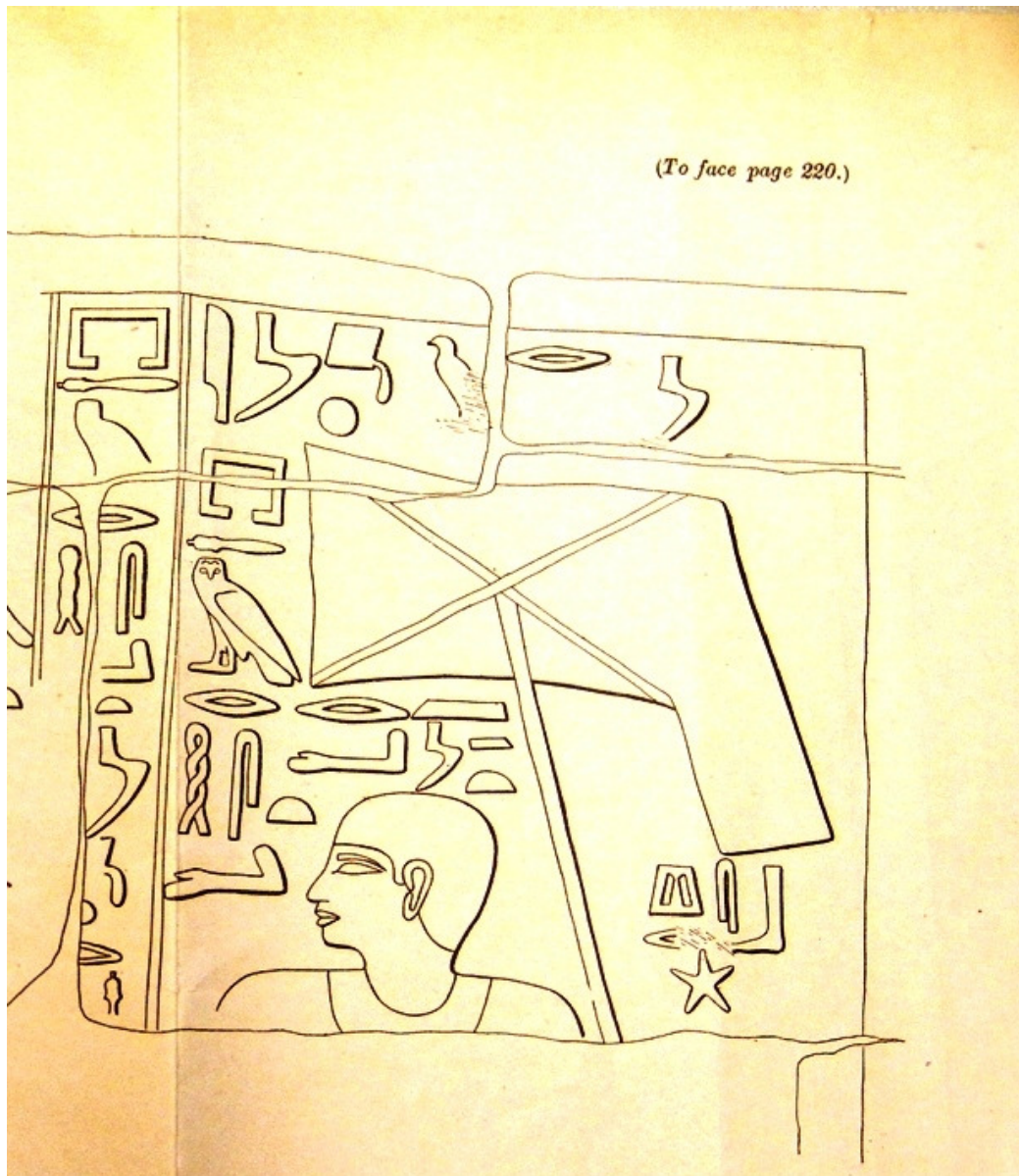
Fig. 6: Tomb of Nimaatre   (Hassan, *Excavations at Giza*, II, fig. 240)

Indeed in the tomb of Seneb[586], the sunshade carrier wearing a short kilt is even identified as a person named *ḥts*, a remarkable co-incident for a lowly job.

It may well be questioned, why any additional contraptions (sunshades) were needed, when the canopy was present. This is all the more evident in the tomb of Ipy, which depicts 5 persons carrying three large sunshades both

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[586] Junker, *Giza* vol. 5, fig. 20.

behind and in front of the carrying-chair, and a depiction in the tomb of Seankhuiptah with at least three sunshades.

One obvious answer would be to look at functionality keeping in mind the geographical position of Egypt near the equator. The rays of the sun will be at an angle in the morning and late afternoon, while they will be practically perpendicular nearing midday and so travelling during these periods would require an adjustable shade cloth. Of course the sun cannot be both behind and in front of the carrying-chair at the same time, i.e. the portrayal of many sunshade carriers adds to the argument that the representation depicts social status and to a lesser extent the actual reality. Therefore sunshades help to project and broadcast a signal about the importance of the human so accompanied. The attire of the sunshade carrier has some relation to the identity and status of the person for whom he carries the sunshade too. An example from the tomb of Mereruka[587] is instructive. In plate 167, Mereruka with his mother Nedjetempet and wife Waatetkhethor are depicted viewing agricultural activities. A man behind them in a pointed kilt is shown carrying a sunshade. Additionally as part of the agricultural activities scene (plate 168) another man is carrying a sunshade but this time for some officials and not Mereruka. The interesting point is that this man (holding a sunshade for officials) is shown wearing only an apron with his penis and scrotum in full view. While this is only a single example, yet it is a pointer to the levels of depicted hierarchy and their ultimate connection with the generics.

Indeed in the Narmer mace head, 2 sunshade carriers are seen just behind the person described as a $\underline{t}$ [ꜣty] and they are wearing a short kilt just like the $\underline{t}$ [ꜣty].

Another possible reason for sunshades could be a requirement of the tomb-owner. He desired that when alighting at some point or other from the carrying-chair that sunshades be present for his comfort and status enhancing attributes.

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[587] Duell, *The Mastaba of Mereruka* vol. 2, pl. 167 & 68.

As we do not have any knowledge of the health of particular tomb-owners, one cannot comment on this aspect which may also influence the use of this type of shade.

The sunshades carriers are depicted in 11 tombs[588]. The majority are dated to Dynasty 6 with only the tomb of Senedjemib-Inti dated to late Dynasty 5 (V.8 M-L).

Although the fan is depicted in only 4 carrying chair motifs; that in the late Dynasty 5 tombs of Khuwer, and Ty, and in the early Dynasty 6 tombs of Waatetkhethor and Hesi; its use in the iconography is seen much earlier as in the Dynasty 4 mastaba of Neb-em-akhet. The types shown being carried by female bearers, are both the lotus type and the flap-fan[589]. Another type made of palm fronds is also known. Their appearance unlike the sunshade which may appear at the front and rear of the procession is always at the rear of the procession, and never in the front. That all these types were elite status goods can be inferred from their appearance in the Dynasty 4 mastaba of Queen Meresankh III, where all three types occur in the northern and southern entrance jambs, shown being carried by her female servants[590].

Even if their exchange worth was modest and well within the means of the others, yet their appearance as part of a ceremonial scene would indicate that their importance lay in the depiction of their functionality, being publicly shown for performance by another person for the benefit of the tomb-owner.

In the motif where the tomb-owner is depicted being carried in a chair hung between two donkeys, e.g. in the tomb of Khuwer, a male person carrying a frond type of fan is shown behind the tomb-owner[591]. The only other

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[588] In the tombs of: Ankhmahor (R1), Hezi (FRM3), Ipy (FR5), Insnfrweshtf (R1), Kagemni (FR2), Merwtetiseneb (F1), Seankhuiptah (FR2), Senedjemib-inti (F1), Seshemnefer.tjetti (R1), Seneb (F1) and Waatetkhethor (R1). In the brackets: the alphabetical abbreviation denotes the placement of the sunshades (F = front, R = rear, FR = front/rear, FRM = front/rear/middle and the numbers denote their occurrence.

[589] S. Hassan, *Excavations at Gîza 1932-1933*, vol. IV (Cairo: Government Press, Bulâq, 1943) Fig. 82, p. 143-44.

[590] Dunham et al., *The mastaba of Queen Mersyankh III: G7530-7540* pl. 3a & 3b.

[591] S. Hassan, *Excavations at Giza 1933-1934*, vol. V (Cairo: Government Press, Bulâq, 1944) 245, fig. 104.

depiction of a palm frond type of fan is in the tomb of Hesi, where an attendant on a separate sub-register immediately behind the carrying-chair is depicted with one[592]. The presence of this type of fan may have something to do with the incidence of flies and such like or equally it may indicate an element of individuality. Of-course this does not explain why the other two similar motifs in the joint tomb of Niankhkhnum and Khnumhotep (pl. 42 and 43), do not depict a fan bearer.

Two other tombs depict a lotus type fan: that of Waatetkhethor where a female identified as an overseer of linen is seen holding a lotus fan and walking behind the carrying-chair and in that of Ty where two men in short who are part of the carrying-chair processional train are each depicted carrying a lotus fan .

As these are the only 4 tombs with such a representation, it would appear at first glance that the fan did not take on as a regular part of the carrying-chair motif. However this could be equally said about the sandal bearers, who appear in only 8 carrying-chair motifs[593], yet their importance as an elevated status good is well known[594], as indicated by significant precedents, e.g. Narmer palette and Mace head. It is suggested that a similar attitude could be taken towards the fan-carrying sub-motif because it appears in the royal tomb of Meresankh III and therefore its importance should not be underrated. The sunshades seem to be more popular as per Pie Chart 8 below in comparing the ratio of sunshades and fans in the carrying-chair scene but this is based on a total population of only 15.

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[592] N. Kanawati, *The Teti Cemetery at Saqqara: the tomb of Hesi*, vol. 5, *The Australian Centre for Egyptology: Reports 14* (Warminster: Aris and Phillips Ltd., 1999) pl.55.

[593] In the tombs of: Ankhmare, Khnumhotep (pl. 43), Hezi, Iymery, Khnumentii, Niankhnum (pl. 42), Ptahshepses and Ty.

[594] The sandal carrier initially was the prerogative of a specific person who was authorized to be exposed to the personal belongings of the king. See Staehelin, *Untersuchungen zur ägyptischen Tracht im Alten Reich* 94-100, esp. 97.

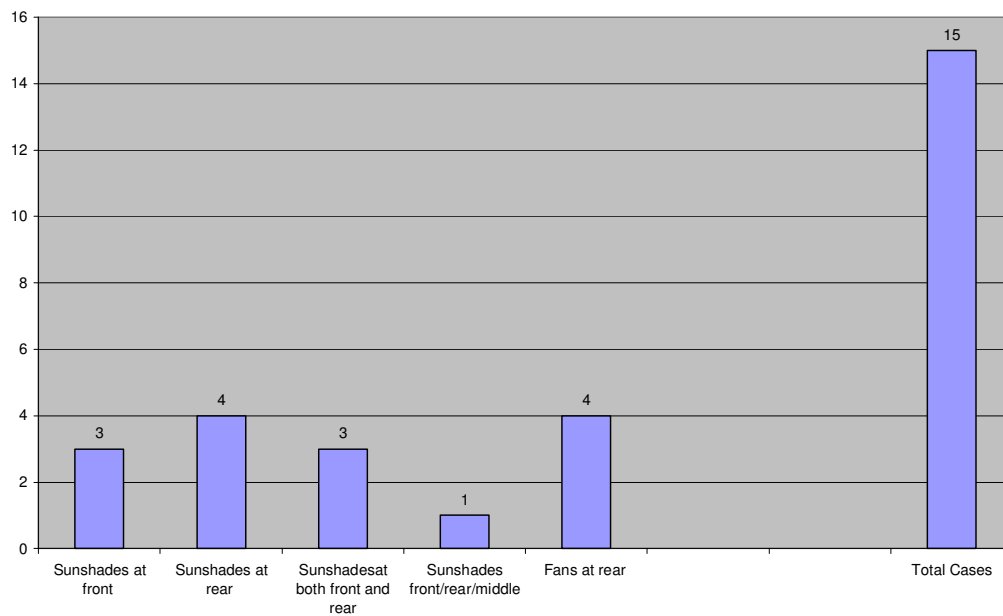**Ratio of Sunshade and Fan Carriers**
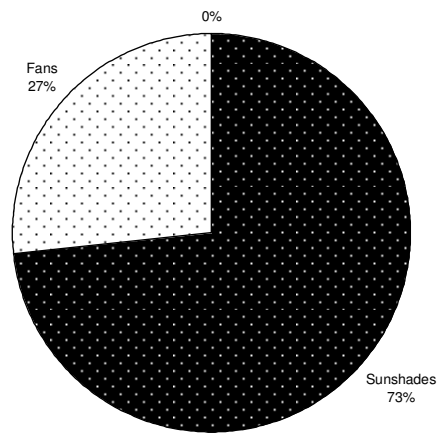
The above pie chart shows the ratio of cases of sunshade and fan carriers of the (15) total cases found

Pie Chart 8: Sunshade and Fan Carriers

Chart 9 below gives their frequency and placement in the carrying-chair motif.

Sunshade and Fan Carrier Placement

The above numbers do NOT depict the number of carriers.

Chart 9: Sunshade and Fan Carrier Placement

<u>6.4.2 Dwarves</u>

As early as Dynasty 1, the canon of bodily proportions appears to be established in Egypt, e.g. as seen in the Narmer Palette. The body is divided to fit grids which fit the idealized image of the human body, and "as a standardization of the natural proportions of the body these ratios constitute in themselves a system of human proportions, an elementary canon, which was fully established at the beginning of dynastic times when the artistic traditions of Egypt were inaugurated"[595]. Following these iconographic conventions, the dwarf is standardized in a way that represents him as such but does away with the ugliest aspects of the deformity, although the dwarf is shown with a large head, a long trunk, and shorter limbs. The earliest depiction is in 2 stelae of dwarfs, found in the surrounding chambers of the tomb of the Dynasty 1 king Semerkhet, "which show the dwarf type clearly"[596]. In most cases he is also shown wearing a kilt but can also appear naked[597]. At times in the iconography, it is difficult to distinguish between a boy and a dwarf especially when the boy is clothed and does not have a youth lock[598]. Be that as it may, the dwarf is a popular feature and there are twenty-two reliefs in various motifs in which dwarfs are shown tendering pet animals[599].There are several theories as to the popularity of dwarfs in the social life of Egypt[600]. However it is suggested that the popularity of the dwarf

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[595] E. Iversen, "The Canonical Tradition," in *The Legacy of Egypt*, ed. J. R. Harris (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 58. See also Schäfer, *Principles of Egyptian Art* 326-34. See also G. Robins, *Proportion and Style in Ancient Egyptian Art* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994) 64-69. She builds on and refines the Canon and Proportions in Egyptian Art as proposed by Iversen, her critique is to be found on pages ibid. 40-63.

[596] Petrie and Griffith, *The Royal Tombs of The First Dynasty, Part I* pl. 35, numbers 36 & 37. In addition he indicates that two dwarf skeletons were also found in the adjoining chambers "L" and "M" of the king's tomb.

[597] As in the tomb of "Niankhkhnum and Khnumhotep", pl. 60. Another earlier example is from Dunham & Simpson "Merysankh III", 1974: fig. 8, where a naked female dwarf is depicted.

[598] Lepsius, *Denkmäler aus Ägypten und Äthiopien* plate 36c.

[599] On favourite pets see E. Brunner-Traut, "Lieblingstier," in *Lexikon der Ägyptologie, vol. 3*, ed. W. Helck, E. Otto, and W. Westendorf (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1980), 1054-56.

[600] V. Dasen, *Dwarfs in Ancient Egypt and Greece* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1993) 89.

in Old Kingdom iconography can best be understood by relating it to some form of superstition which could be related to the disproportions of the body. Since the Middle Kingdom, but truly popular by the New Kingdom is the deformed god Bes. There are however no attested depictions of Bes in the Old Kingdom[601], depictions of deities in this period being a rarity. Accordingly it is difficult to justify this as a reason for his popularity in the Old Kingdom.

The dwarf is seen in a range of social positions, including as an eminent person close to the king as in Seneb[602]. Two textual inscriptions both from Dynasty 6 also indicate the earliest attested term of *dng* referring to being a small man. Other Egyptian words for small men are also known like *d3g*[603], *nmw*, and *ḥwʿ*[604]. It would seem that being small qualified him for ritual performances in the dances of the god *ib3w ntr*[605]. The evidence from the titles on the statues of dwarfs found in the Old Kingdom and the representations on the walls of the mastabas distinguishing them from others of lower rank indicate that they were personalities[606] in their own right, and had a high socio-economic status. Nevertheless the impression from their placements in the iconography, often underlines their role as a human pet, resulting from roles such as an attendant bearing personal attire, as a tenderer of animals, and as an entertainer (dancer, musician, or singer)[607]. In

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[601] L. Borchardt, *Das Grabdenkmal des Königs Sáhu-re* (Leipzig: 1913) Pl. 22, d, 9 for Bes like features. For a description see p. 38-39 of the accompanying volume marked 'Text'.

[602] Dasen, *Dwarfs in Ancient Egypt and Greece* 127. Seneb has 20 titles inscribed on his false door, among them- Overseer of the dwarfs incharge of linen, Great one of the litter, Overseer of the crew of *kz* ships and Overseer of the *iwḥw* . In another example from the tomb of Ty a dwarf named Pepy is leading pet animals and is designated as Overseer of the *iwḥw* (the precise meaning of this title is not known but it could have something to do with animal tendering).

[603] Hannig, Grosses Handwörterbuch, p. 970.

[604] Hannig, Ägyptisches Wörterbuch I, p. 631, and 788 respectively.

[605] Faulkner, *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts* p. 191, § 1189. "I am that pygmy of 'the dances of god' who diverts the god in front of his great throne".

[606] Z. Hawass, "The Statue of the dwarf Perniakhw, recently discovered at Giza," *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Abteilung Kairo* 47 (1991): 160.

the Middle Kingdom a change occurs and the dwarf comes to be associated with sexuality and fertility[608].

Even when they occupy a secondary role, their status is enhanced by them being placed as close as possible to the tomb-owner.

In the carrying-chair scenes, the dwarfs are either shown immediately behind the tomb-owner, underneath his carrying-chair, on a separate register below the carrying-chair and even on a sub-register of their own[609]. This is the only case when variations in scale do not reflect the importance of the personages (excluding the tomb-owner) in Egyptian art. The dwarf is recognised and accepted as a personage in his own right and is distinguished as such, e.g. by being named[610].

In these positions, he is usually, but not always associated with leading either a dog and/or a monkey on a leash. This should not be taken as a menial task because the animals were usually the favourite pets of the tomb-owner and possibly his family, accordingly it can be argued that looking after status enhancing 'animals' was indeed a privilege.

In 12 carrying-chair motifs, dwarfs are present; eight depict a dwarf leading an animal[611], and four not leading an animal[612].

Sometimes the dwarfs carry a small stick shaped like a spatula, which looks large in comparison to their physique, as in Mereruka. At other times, dwarfs escorting animals are shown carrying a large brachiomorphic shaped baton as

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[607] Dasen, *Dwarfs in Ancient Egypt and Greece* 109-34. See also Junker, *Giza* vol. 5, 8-11.

[608] Dasen, *Dwarfs in Ancient Egypt and Greece* 140-42.

[609] Behind tomb-owner as in Ankhmahor, Kaemneferet and Khnumeti. Underneath the carrying-chair as in Ankhmare, Niankhkhnum(pl. 60), Mereruka(pl. 158), Nikawissi, Seshemnefer.tjetti, Waatetkhethor. Separate register below the carrying-chair as in Kagemni and Meryteti (pl.47). On a sub-register as in Itisen.

[610] H. Altenmüller and A. M. Moussa, *Das Grab des Nianchchnum und Chnumhotep*, *Archäologische Veröffentlichungen 21* (Mainz am Rhein: Philip von Zabern, 1977) p. 129 where the dwarf is named Qd(w)n.s.

[611] 8 as in the tombs of: Ankhmare, Ankhmahor, Kagemni, Kaemnofret, Mereruka (pl. 158), Nikauisesi, Seshemnefer-tjetti and Waatetkhethor.

[612] 4 as in the tombs of: Itisen, Khnumenti, Meryteti (pl. 47) and Niankhkhnum (pl. 60).

in the tomb of Ty[613]. In the same tomb a 'dwarf' named Pepy is shown wielding a brachiomorphic stick which is proportional to his size[614], similar to the depiction in the tomb of Kayemnofret[615]. Carrying a stick in Egyptian art is normally surrounded with some sort of status and authority. While it may be that the physical stature of the dwarf required him to carry a stick, especially when tendering animals, nevertheless sticks themselves in Egyptian Art usually indicate a symbol of authority, and thus reflect the status of the person having such a symbol.

Four motifs provide further support for a personality of the dwarf. These motifs show the escorter as an adult man[616]. In four of these motifs, the tendering of animals is being done by men in pointed kilts[617], itself a symbol of status, and in the tomb of Ipy he even carries a rod of authority in his left hand. Dwarfs may appear either leading the procession as in the tomb of Ipy or following it as in the tomb of Sabwibbi. Usually they appear in the middle of the porters and so appear to divide the porters into two groups. Where this could not be accommodated, the procession train being presumably too long, the animal tenderer appears in another register as in the tomb of Itisen. One inference from this could be that the tendering of pet animals was an important task and one which was worthy of being shown in an elite tomb.

Accordingly at least in this respect in the Old Kingdom, the dwarf was on a social par with other 'normal' human beings. Confirming this observation are 3 depictions of young boys performing the escorting roles[618], if one is to accept

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[613] H. Wild, *Le Tombeau de Ti: La Chapelle*, vol. II (Le Caire: L'Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 1953) pl. CXXVI. Although this example is not from a carrying-chair motif, nevertheless it is a scene in which a dwarf is shown escorting a monkey in the genre of a scene which shows the retinue of an elite tomb-owner.

[614] Épron et al., *Le Tombeau de Ti* vol. I, pl. XVI.

[615] W. K. Simpson and S. E. Chapman, *The offering chapel of Kayemnofret* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1992) Fig. 17 (b), E. The South Wall.

[616] 4 adult men as in the tombs of: Ankhmare, Hezi, Itisen (here three men each lead 2 dogs, a monkey and a baboon) and Sabwibbi respectively.

[617] In the tombs of: Ankhmare, Ipy, Itisen, and Sabwibbi.

the scene in Hetepniptah as one of this type. In another depiction a boy is pictured directly under the palanquin carrying a bag on his left shoulder with a bucket in his right hand[619]. There is also one scene, in which part of the foot and the curved back of a hunchback is shown leading a monkey[620].

The life of dwarfs who were not part of an elite's retinue is not known, but it can be presumed that as they were a rarity, they had value, and that they would very likely have been part of an elite's status enhancing entourage if the autobiography of Harkhuf, and the reference in the Pyramid texts (§1189) are any indications[621]. The equation of rarity and value was recognized early as observed in the entrance ramp to the tomb of Semerkhet, which was found saturated with perfumed oil to a depth of three feet. Petrie in his excavation report writes:

> "Here the space was filled to three feet deep with sand saturated with ointment … hundredweights of it must have been poured out here" and that after nearly 5000 years the scent was "so strong … that it could be smelt over the entire tomb"[622].

This abundant use of rare products (oil being an imported luxury) and the corresponding elevation of status in its conspicuous use by royalty were, it would appear, not lost on the elite. The dwarf in elite tombs may therefore represent both these aspirations. His use in the iconography may be likened to the use in modern state funerals of carrying the treasured possessions of the deceased in the cortège. A summary of dwarfs and other escorters of animals are given in Chart 10 below.

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[618] 3 as in the tombs of: Hetepenptah, Neferkhuwi and Ty (boy/dwarf is shown in a pointed kilt).

[619] In the tomb of Nimaatre.

[620] In the tomb of Waatetkhethor.

[621] Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature* vol. I, 27. "Hurry and bring with you this pigmy [dng] whom you brought from the land of the horizon-dwellers, live, hale, and healthy, for the dances of the god, to gladden the heart, to delight the heart of King Neferkare, who [may he] live[s] forever".

[622] Petrie and Griffith, *The Royal Tombs of The First Dynasty, Part I* p. 14.

Dwarfs and Other Escorts
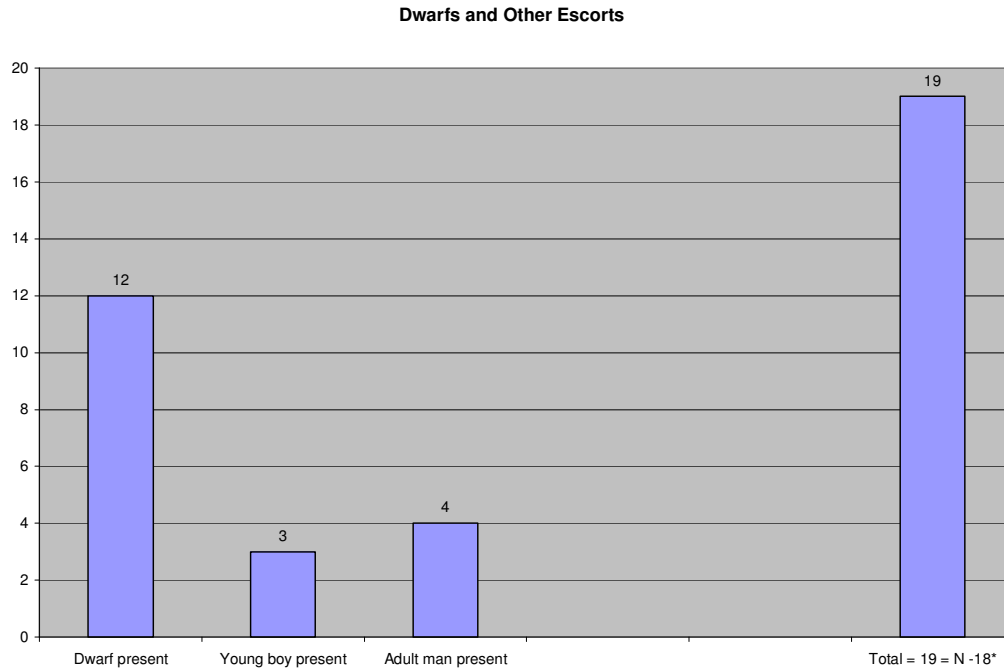
- 18 Tombs (49%) have no animals being actively led.

Chart 10: Dwarfs and Other Escorts

6.4.3 Animals

There are two types of animals found in the carrying-chair scenes: the dog - $\underline{t}zm$ and the monkey - ky[623]

Since pre-dynastic times, the dog appears on White Cross-lined pottery[624] and ivories[625] and later on in palettes as part of the hunting scene. Without going into detailed zoology, the dogs as seen on the various palettes[626], fall into two defined categories: dogs with floppy rounded ears and a long, bushy, hanging tail, and dogs with pointed ears and a short curly tail. The former may be

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[623] R. O. Faulkner, *A concise dictionary of Middle Egyptian* (Oxford: University Press, 1962) 308 & 285 resp.

[624] J. C. Payne, *Catalogue of the Predynastic Egyptian collection in the Ashmolean Museum* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993) 422-24. In contrast to the African hunting dog, Lycaon pictus has floppy ears and a long hanging tail.

[625] Gebel Tarif handle, Cairo Museum CG 14285 and the Davis comb, Metropolitan Museum, New York. 30. 8. 224. See also J. E. Quibell, F. W. Green, and W. M. F. Petrie, *Hierakonpolis*, vol. 1 (London: Egyptian Research Account, Memoir 4, 1900) pl. 12. no. 7.

[626] For a list of the palettes, see H. G. Fischer, "A fragment of Late Predynastic Egyptian relief from the Eastern Delta," *Artibus Asiae* 21 (1958): 65.

related to the hyena and belong to the species of *Lycaon Pictus*. Their placement on the outer edges of the palettes, have lead researchers to suggest their role as keepers of order, and controller of things disorderly[627], what Kemp calls the "containment of unrule in the universe"[628], possibly an ideological symbol in the early formation of the state.

The other type of species is the domesticated Egyptian dog, referred to as the *tzm*.

With the emergence of the ideology of the supreme king, representations of the *Lycaon Pictus* disappear, as the preservation of order over disorder is now the sole prerogative of the pharaoh.

The domesticated dog however continues in the representations, and one of the motifs in which he frequently appears, is that of the carrying-chair.

The existence of dogs in a human environment, where dogs are not used as food, makes a statement about their usefulness (hunting, companionship, guard-duties, etc.) in that society, as witnessed by the existence of a number of pre-dynastic animal burials[629]. Additionally because all the dogs in the carrying-chair motif have a collar, sometimes in addition a buckle, and a leash, the fact of differentiation of this breed, would imply social importance in that it is a pointer to a scarce resource, and one that has to be well looked after. Furthermore they are usually, but not always, tended to by humans who have a special status, e.g. dwarfs, and adults. The dogs also are near the tomb-owner and have pride of place and are shown both free and being led, which hints at their domesticated nature.

These representations of dogs invoke various ideas as to their functionality and cultural symbolism: of hunting, of the breeding of specialized species, of forms of non-human companionship, of display of power and control over a non-human species etc., they also in addition point to access to areas of society and 'products', not readily available. By depicting these 'products' in

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[627] J. Baines, "Symbolic roles of canine figures on early monuments," *Archeo-Nil*, no. 3 (1993): 59.

[628] Kemp, *Ancient Egypt: Anatomy of a Civilization* 92-98.

[629] J. Boessneck, *Die Tierwelt des alten Ägypten* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1988) 23.

the elite tombs, in the context of nearness to the tomb-owner, they also become valuable pointers to a certain status, and to the fact of social inequality.

It may be that the dog's status as an elite symbol was a reflection from an earlier pre-dynastic period, when as part of royal iconography lions and dogs are equated as belonging to the royal domain[630].

Moreover, since the connection of royalty and lions is unequivocal even before Dynasty 1 (Hunters palette), what we may be witnessing in these carrying-chair scenes is the encroachment by the elite on privileged symbols of strength and loyalty, which were at one time the domain of the chief/ruler, represented by the dog.

It would therefore seem that the dog was a preferred animal, and in this context the elite took on the habit of having pet dogs following the royal example (the king probably had dogs in daily attendance, both as guard dogs as well as hunting companions).

Probably symptomatic of the attitude of the Egyptian towards pet dogs, is a Middle Kingdom official who describes himself as "a dog that sleeps in the tent, a dog of the couch whom his mistress loves"[631].

The affection shown to pet dogs is also evidenced in the recorded names of dogs in the archeological finds, totaling some eighty. These names are not only terms of endearment e.g. (Abutiu), but refer to characteristics which these dogs must have displayed, e.g. (Good Herdsman, Reliable, Brave One, North Wind, and Antelope). In the tomb of Nikauisesi all the three dogs under the carrying-chair are identified and named (Bai, Baq, and Idji)[632]. Some were also buried in an appropriate manner; being provided with individual inscribed coffins and stelae[633].

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[630] Quibell, Green, and Petrie, *Hierakonpolis* vol. 1, pl.19. no. 6. and Quibell and Green, *Hierakonpolis* vol. 2. pl. 66.

[631]Lange and Schäfer, *Grab-und Denksteine des Mittleren Reichs* no. 20506, b, line 2ff.

[632] N. Kanawati, *The Teti Cemetery at Saqqara: The Tomb of Nikauisesi*, vol. 6, *The Australian Centre for Egyptology: Reports 14* (Warminster: Aris and Phillips, 2000) 44.

Deification of dogs is another type of evidence proving the importance of this animal. Three deities are known from very early on in the canine form: Wepwawet: the opener of the ways, Khentamentiu: foremost of the westerners, and Anubis: god of cemeteries and embalming[634]. All of them relate in some way to the hereafter and clearly point to the dog having a preferred status, which the tomb-owner aggregates for himself in the carrying-chair motifs, such that his desired elite image is broadcast and maintained.

Another animal seen in the carrying-chair motif is the monkey.

Perhaps due to their playful nature, all monkeys in the procession train are depicted being led on a leash; there being one exception, in the tomb of Waatetkhethor. Here the monkey walks between two dogs. It may also be that apart from their other qualities, the dogs were also trained to keep the monkey in line.

It is clear that the dog was more popular than the monkey not because he appears in sixteen depictions as compared to the monkey's twelve[635] but because the scenes in which the dogs appear, depict them not only singly but also in multiples, on a leash or without, always with a flamboyant collar and sometimes named. The monkey in contrast always appears singly, apart from one exception[636], is always on a leash or controlled by leading dogs and never named or especially collared, only a simple round band is apparent and no specific monkey burials are evident. An example from the tomb of Nikauisesi makes the convention apparent; here a monkey sitting on the head of the

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[633] G. A. Reisner, "The Dog which was honored by the King of Upper and Lower Egypt," *The Brooklyn Museum Annual, Brooklyn* XXXIV, no. 204 (1936).

[634] G. Hart, *The Routledge dictionary of Egyptian gods and goddesses*, 2nd ed., *Routledge dictionaries* (London: Routledge, 2005). See also DuQuesne, *The Jackal Divinities of Egypt: From the Archaic Period to Dynasty X*.

[635] In the tombs of: Ankhmare (1), Hesi (4), Ipy (1), Itisen (2), Imyery (1), Kagemni (2), Mereruka [pl. 158] (3), Neferkhuwi (2), Nikauisesi (3), Niankhnum [pl. 58] (1), Hetepenptah (1),Sabwibbi(2), Senedjemib-inti (1), Seshemnefer-Tjeti (1), Ty (1) and Waatetkhethor (3). The dog count is indicated by the number between the rounded brackets. The monkeys are depicted in the tombs of: Ankhmahor, Ankhmare, Itisen, Kagemni, Kaemnofret, Mereruka [pl. 158], Nikauisesi, Hetepenptah, Sabwibbi, Seshemnefer-Tjeti, Ty and Waatetkhethor.

[636] In the tomb of Sabwibbi a pair of monkeys are shown being led.

dwarf is shown together with three dogs and while the dogs (Bai, Baq, and Idji) and the dwarf (Iri) are all named the monkey is not.

In an unusual scene in the tomb of Sabwibbi, two young dogs[637], and two monkeys are depicted being led by an adult holding a bucket and a brush in the other hand. The puppies are however shown farthest away from the viewer; the focus seems to be on the monkeys, which is strange.

Another exceptional scene is that in the tomb of Hetepniptah, where the monkey is given favored status, being shown nearer to his master than the dog.

An analysis of the scenes indicates that there are ten scenes depicting both dogs and monkeys[638], and six scenes which depict dogs only[639]. Only two representations depict just a monkey; however both of these are fragments and thus are questionable[640]. See Chart 11 below.

Animals

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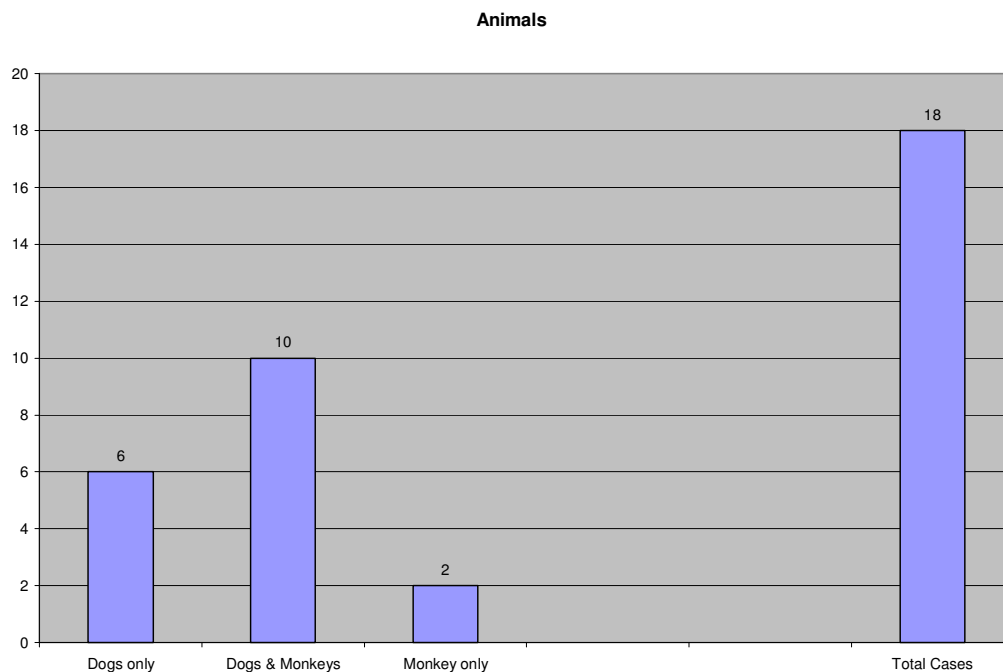
[637] P. F. Houlihan, *The Animal World of the Pharaohs* (London: 1996) 76-77. A round headed and pendant ears are signs of a young dog and this is also seen in the tomb of Sabwibbi.

[638] 10 as in Ankhmare, Itisen, Hetepenptah, Kagemni, Mereruka (pl.158), Nikauisesi, Sabwibbi, Seshemnefer.tjetti, Ty and Waatetkhethor.

[639] 6 as in Ipy, Iymery, Neferkhuwi, Niankhkhnum (pl. 58) Senedjemib.inti and Hezi.

[640] 2 as in Kaemnofret and Ankhmahor (fragment).

*19 tombs (51%) have no animals depicted. The above figures do not relate to the number of individual animals.

Chart 11: Animals

All the monkeys are of the slender variety of the species *Cercopitheci*. One example of a baboon of the species *Papio Cynocephalus* being led by an adult is seen in the tomb of Itisen.

Considering their lower status because they are never depicted on their own or with an elaborate collar nor buried appropriately, their depiction in the carrying-chair motif can be seen as part of motif development. Another possible explanation may be that the monkeys represent the individuality of the tomb-owner. The reality of his life and relationships is being used for the development of certain motifs and certain sub-motifs as a starting point for the development of an image, which encompasses complex ideas of the totality of the tomb-owners reach in all earthly domains.

The monkey is clearly a pet animal, was imported, was more difficult to control "en masse" and so has some rarity value. If however one takes into consideration all the scenes of the many monkeys shown on the sailing ship motifs, then this fact, together with its purely domestic use and uncontrollability, would probably relate to a diminished value as compared to the dog.

The inclusion of the baboon in the carrying-chair motif is probably to its association with Thoth, who by Dynasty 1, is depicted as a baboon in a sitting posture. However this would then mean that there would be more baboons shown as compared to monkeys but there is only one instance of a baboon being depicted[641].

The placement of the animals also reveals that most of the time, the animals are placed underneath the carrying-chair, there being twelve examples of dogs[642] and eight examples of monkeys[643] plus a sole example of a baboon in

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[641] In the tomb of Itisen the procession of animals is being led by two dogs, followed by a monkey and then a baboon.

the procession[644]. Apart from providing an aesthetically pleasing view, it serves to show the dominance and control of the tomb-owner and thus his social prestige.

In two cases the dogs are depicted behind the procession and in three cases the monkeys[645] are behind. As an artistic ploy it is understandable and in keeping with the focus on the occupant of the palanquin. However in three cases,[646] the animals (two cases of dogs and one of a monkey) are placed in front of the tomb-owner, which is unusual in that it would detract from the status of the owner. However the cases can be explained. In all these cases, the way the picture is composed reveals that the artist understood the needs of decorum. The composition in the tomb of Ankhmare shows a man with a pointed kilt holding a graceful monkey on a separate sub-register which appears to be in front of the procession. The most probable explanation for this is the lack of space in depicting a full processional train and it may well be that this is part of the rear procession. Validating this is the sandal bearer who is shown immediately above in a separate sub-register (usually they are shown walking behind the procession). In any event even if this was an error, which is highly doubtful, it is somewhat corrected by showing the dignity of the man (leading the monkey), who wears a pointed kilt, while at the same time doing a gesture of reverence. In the tomb of Niankhkhnum, a man in a pointed kilt identified as [*ḥm kꜣ iri ꜥnwt ẖ* [*nw*] – funerary priest and manicurist Khenu is leading the pet dog who is both elaborately collared and named *ḥknn*. In the tomb of Ipy, the dog is also part of the front procession, bounded on either side by the imposing figures of two men holding rods of authority, and does not detract from the main actor. It is this single factor, which is

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[642] 12 as in the tombs of: Ankhmare, Hetepenptah, Itisen, Iymery, Kagemni, Mereruka (pl. 158), Nikauisesi, Neferkhuwi, Senedjemib.inti, Seshemnefer.tjetti, Ty and Watethathor.

[643] 8 as in the tombs of: Itisen, Kagemni, Mereruka (Fig. 158), Hetepenptah, Nikauisesi, Seshemnefer-Tjeti, Ty and Waatetkhethor.

[644] In the tomb of Itisen.

[645] The dogs are so shown in the tombs of Hezi and Sabwibbi, and the monkeys are so depicted in the tombs of Ankhmahor, Kayemnofret and Sabwibbi.

[646] In the tombs of: Ankhmare (monkey), Ipy and Niankhkhnum (dog) (pl. 60).

elementary in deciding questions of decorum in the foregoing three unusual representations. However in no carrying-chair scene, are the animals placed above the tomb-owner.

Charts 12 (I) and (II) below indicates that the placement of animals underneath the carrying-chair was the usual practice, and that decorum required that no animals be placed in a position that would detract from the social position of the tomb-owner. Specifically this chart focuses only on the placement of the animals vis a vis the tomb-owner and is not to be understood as showing the number of individual animals.

```
              0
              DOGS
              ABOVE

2                TOMB              2
DOGS            OWNER            DOGS
IN FRONT                         IN REAR

              12
              DOGS
              BENEATH
```

Chart 12 (I): Dog Placement

```
              0
              MONKEYS
              ABOVE

1                TOMB              3
MONKEYS         OWNER           MONKEYS
IN FRONT                         IN REAR

              8
              MONKEYS
              BENEATH
```
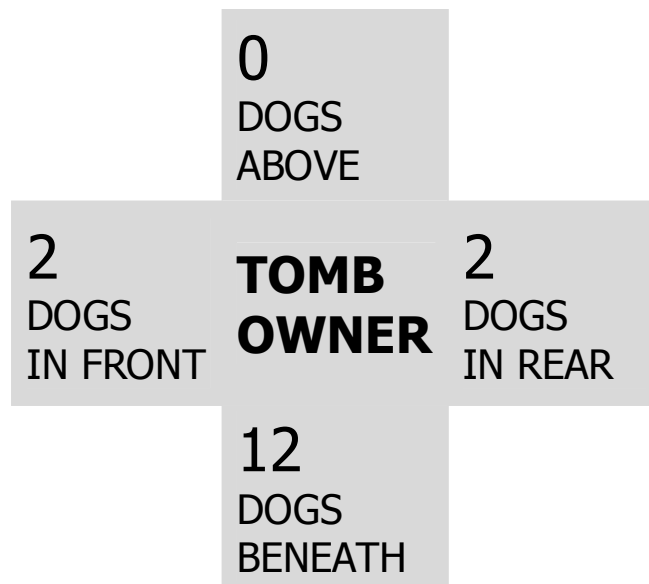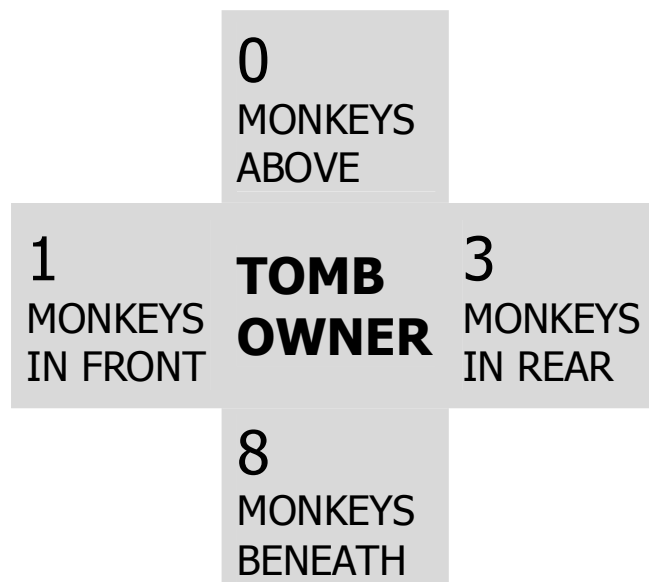
Chart 12 (II): Monkey Placement

The numbers above refer to the number of cases, where the animals have a specific position relative to the tomb-owner but NOT to the number of actual animals in each tomb.

Charts 12 (I) & (II) show animal placement from 18 tombs (49% of the total 37 tombs examined).

6.4.4 Supervisor(s)

This section will describe all the people, who do not carry the palanquin nor escort animals and who are seen in the vicinity of the carrying-chair as part of the procession, or in front of an animal on which there is a palanquin. For ease of reference, they can be subdivided into two groups:

1. Men known from the literature as supervisors or coordinators. Their apparel does not usually differ much from that of the porters. However a higher status may be inferred by the type of kilt being worn and in four carrying-chair scenes,[647] this is actually depicted. The supervisors are shown either in the front, at the rear or both at the front and rear of the procession; an exception being that in the tomb of Kagemni, where the supervisor carrying a rope sling on his right shoulder is represented in the middle of the two groups of porters[648]. Supervisors are depicted in a variety of ways:

   - with one arm lightly resting on the carrying pole and the other arm holding a rope sling, a staff or a piece of cloth
   - as the lead man appropriately dressed and carrying a rod of authority
   - immediately behind the palanquin with one arm resting on the back of the chair

The distinguishing feature would seem to be that while he may have an arm on the carrying pole, he is never shown doing any actual carrying. It is admitted that persons depicted as such in the representations may also have other functions but it can hardly be doubted that persons with authority are required for specific directional movement involving many persons; a modern day example would be the role of the major domus in military parades.

Supervisors are frequently described in the iconography as having special status, e.g. the inscription in the tomb of Ptahshepses, where the supervisor

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[647] In Ipy, Kagemni and Sabwibbi the supervisor is wearing a pointed kilt, while in Nikauisesi he wears a flapped kilt.

[648] F. W. von Bissing, *Die Mastaba des Gem-ni-kai*, vol. 1 (Berlin: Verlag von Alexander Duncker, 1905) pl. 22.

is addressed as the "favoured one"- *ẖr: ẖr(y) ḥs(wt)* translated as "he who is under the favour". This caption is addressed to the man, who is depicted as holding the rope sling. His ostensible function was to 'lead' the porters, ensure that the correct pace was set, and supervise the journey as befitted the customary requirements of the elite, which both included comfort and a dignified pace. If some twenty porters are moving in uncoordinated and different rhythms, the palanquin will shake incessantly and the journey will be an uncomfortable one for all parties concerned.

Whether the supervisor was one of the porters who had been given a supervisory role, e.g. foreman, is difficult to say from the iconography. Certainly from the inscription and depiction in the tomb of Ptahshepses, he probably was one of them because he is shown wearing the same type of clothing (loincloth). However he could be manifesting any of the following:

- providing a comfortable journey for the tomb-owner[649]

- showing his master that the favour, he had been given as head of the procession was indeed earned by enduring the taunts of the other porters[650]

- using the sling for signaling as well as maybe enforcing discipline[651] and forcing a path - in much the same way as the porters with batons could do through the crowded, narrow ways (apart from the punishment scenes there are no scenes which show the function of these batons)

- Most depictions of supervisors show them wearing a pointed kilt but there are a few in which he appears in a short kilt. However in three representations he is shown wearing the same attire as the porters, namely a loincloth. These are in three important tombs, that of Mereruka (pl. 53b) Seshemnefer-Tjetti, and Ptahshepses, which are in

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[649] Vandier, *Manuel d'archéologie égyptienne* vol, IV. 346

[650] M. Verner, *Abusir-I: The Mastaba of Ptahshepses* (Prague: Charles University-Prague, 1977) 99."Look well forward. You quiet down, you favoured one".

[651] C. Boreux, *Études de nautique égyptienne* (Le Caire: Institut Français d'archéologie orientale du Caire, 1925) 413.

Saqqara, Giza and Abu-Sir respectively and which date from late Dynasty 5 to mid. Dynasty 6; no explanation as to why this occurs can be made

Supervisors are present in at least 16 representations (43%) of the known tombs[652]. In most of the motifs they carry a sling but they may also carry a stick/rod.

If one accepts that the controlling person may also be represented in sub - registers then this number would increase. Of course it may well be that the lead porter was also the co-coordinator, as depicted in the tomb of Seankhuiptah - in which case the value of the term 'supervisor' might be somewhat diminished but not the implications for social status vis- à- vis the tomb-owner.

6.4.5 Subsidiary Attendants Carrying Tomb-Owner's Belongings

Subsidiary attendants are shown carrying various belongings, presumably of the tomb-owner as part of the procession, who may wear distinctive apparel. They may be depicted under the carrying-chair (both in front of and behind) or near it in a sub-register and may be specifically identified and described.

Men:

- carrying the belongings of the tomb-owner
- depicted as part of the procession but not carrying anything
- not including dwarfs /hunchbacks[653]/young boys

When these men are shown immediately under the carrying-chair, the implication is that they are part of the close attendants or close members of the tomb-owner's household/family.

Excluded are the porters of the chair, sunshade carriers, escorts of animals, and supervisors (who were dealt with above) and the tomb-owner (who will be dealt with soon).

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[652] Khnumhotep (pl. 43), Niankhkhnum (pl. 42 & 58), Hesi, Khuwer, Insnfrwishtef, Ipy, Itisen, Iymery*, Kagemni*, Mereruka* (pl. 53b), Meryteti (pl. 47), Nikauisesi*, Ptahshepses*, Seankhuiptah*, Ty and Seshemnefer-Tjetti*. Those marked with an asterisk indicate that a rope sling is present, whereas all the others have only sticks/rods as markers of authority.

[653] Personal communication from Professor A. M. Roth : New York University 2010.

These subsidiary persons present a problem.

If one accepts that a depiction of the whole procession in a profile view would take up many walls, then one must also accept that parts of the procession may be shown in different registers. Additionally the total number of people, who are shown catering to the needs of the tomb-owner, would be an indication of his status and power and the community's social duties towards him.

In terms of this logic, all these other persons would then have to be ranked and then added together to indicate any emerging patterns, taking into account all available ranking indications and their position in front, behind or underneath the tomb-owner or in the various sub-registers. However the weight given to each of these items would have to be different, precisely because of the observed differences in status and rank that they may portray, e.g. title, family relationship, appearance, etc. Herein lies the difficulty, because this is something which is difficult to measure objectively: what for example is the difference between two overseers - one of the house and one of linen? How is one to rate the different relationships of the tomb-owner towards his parents, wife, eldest son, other sons and daughters, closest colleagues, etc? A good example of this difficulty is the carrying-chair representation in the tomb of Iymery[654]. The person in the carrying-chair is not the tomb-owner but his father identified as Shepseskafankh. The register is divided such that the procession train appears below the carrying-chair as well as on a sub register behind, under, and in front of Shepseskafankh.

The others carrying the various belongings appear behind (a man carrying a curved rod and sack across his shoulders) and below the carrying-chair (two men, one carrying a flywhisk, a bucket and ladle, the other carrying a table and a pair of sandals); both these men wear a flapped short kilt and are identified as Ny-ankh-Re and Ny-ptah respectively).

His three sons are depicted facing the carrying-chair in differing scale - beginning with the eldest described as "his eldest son, his beloved,

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[654] K. Weeks, *Mastabas of Cemetry G 6000*, ed. P. Der Manuelian and W. K. Simpson, vol. 5, *Giza Mastabas* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 1994) Fig. 32.

Acquaintance [of the king Iymery], his other son, described as "the scribe Shepeskaf-ankh the younger" and presumably his youngest son described as "the scribe". They are followed by a man described as his brother identified as Neb-meny. All of them wear pointed kilts and have short "wigs", except for the eldest son (who happens to be Iymery and is drawn in large scale) and is shown wearing a shoulder length wig and a broad collar. Additionally, they all make formal gestures of reverence, which "probably had social significance" and the one made by the brother has been stated to be a rare occurrence[655].

Ranking therefore is impossible and all one can say is that the nearness to Shepseskafankh and scale of drawing would favour Iymery. However this cannot be followed for the other persons described who are all drawn on the same smaller scale. Are we to rank the sandal carrier ahead of the one carrying the flywhisk? Again if a person is identified more than once in the tomb, is he more important than someone who is only mentioned once but has a higher title? These problems cannot be solved; therefore my solution is to treat all persons carrying the tomb-owner's belongings irrespective of their being identified or not, on an equal footing. Persons drawn on a larger scale and wearing status goods will be accorded differential treatment.

From the iconography it appears that the carriage of the belongings of the tomb-owner and freestanding personnel evidencing a variety of gestures are a standard depiction of the carrying-chair motif and is found in the majority of the scenes[656].

It is assumed that the items being carried were required for the comfort of the tomb-owner. These include the ewer and basin Sawtj (which constituted

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[655] Ibid. 39.

[656] In the tombs of: Ankhmare, Ankhmahor, Chnumhotep (fig. 43), Hetepniptah, Hezi, Insnfrweshtf, Ipy, Itisen, Iymery, Kagemni, Kayemnofret, Khuwer, Khnumenti, Mereruka (fig. 14 & 158), Meryteti (fig. 47), Neferkhuwi, Nikauisesi, Niankhkhnum (fig. 42 & 60), Nimaatre, Ptahshepses, Qar, Sabwibbi, Seankhuiptah, Seneb, Senedjemib-inti, Seshemnefer.tjetti, Ty and Waatetkhethor.

the equipment for everyday hand washing during the Old Kingdom)[657], a wood chest/box/casket (commonly used for the storage of linen, jewellery, cosmetics and other similar items)[658], a sack for his clothes, a rod, throw stick, and sandals. Junker points out that attendants carrying sandals, staff of authority, bucket plus brush and sack for clothes is a distinctive feature of the carrying-chair motif, and that men carrying the tomb-owner's belongings are never followed by men bearing food and meat, which has an altogether different connotation[659].

Only eight tombs depict specific sandal bearers as part of the carriage of goods sub-motif[660] and indeed the sandals can be displayed even where the tomb-owner is depicted wearing sandals[661], as in the tomb of Niankhkhnum/Khnumhotep. Evidence of their use is found as early as Dynasty 1 at Saqqara[662]. The only fact with relative certainty is that there is no scene, which only depicts a lone sandal carrier as part of the carrying-chair procession, and that carriage of goods judging by its frequency, is a definite part of the carrying-chair motif.

The positioning of those that are both freestanding and making gestures of reverence towards the tomb-owner will now be considered.

Gestures of reverence could be offering thanks, or a public display of goodwill towards the tomb-owner. In Nimaatre's tomb in front of his palanquin, are three men, all wearing pointed kilts, one is in the act of handing something (a

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[657] D. Arnold, "Reinigungsgefässe," in *Lexikon der Ägyptologie, vol. 5*, ed. W. Helck, E. Otto, and W. Westendorf (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1984), vol. V, 213-30.

[658] H. Altenmüller, *Die Wanddarstellungen im Grab des Mehu in Saqqara, Archäologische Veröffentlichungen 42* (Mainz: 1998) pl. 98.2.

[659] Junker, *Giza* vol. 5, 84.

[660] Ankhmare, Khnumhotep (pl. 43), Hesi, Iymery, Khnumenti, Niankhkhnum (pl. 42), Ptahshepses and Ty.

[661] Sandal bearers are depicted as symbols of royal authority as far back as the Narmer Palette, he is labelled a "servant of the ruler".The implication is a religious and a symbolic one as evidenced from the stela erected by Khaskehmwi at Hierakonpolis. He describes himself as "effective sandal against the hill-countries". Since then they feature prominently as part of the depiction of a pharaoh. Archaeological evidence pointing to the take up by the elite of this custom, is then of little surprise.

[662] Emery, *Archaic Egypt* 233, fig. 138.

scroll?) to the tomb-owner and behind the tomb-owner is another man in a pointed kilt. All the others are in a posture of a gesture, which Roth suggests is an act, which confirmed the payment, the tomb-owner made to the craftsmen[663] for work done on his tomb.

The positioning of these 'other persons' does not follow any strict pattern; they are always represented such that they appear to surround the carrying-chair in front, behind or below the palanquin procession but never above. A modern analogy would be the security services surrounding politicians and celebrities. By analogy therefore the appearance of these other persons around the central figure of the tomb-owner, could be a symbol which provides information about the tomb-owner in socio-cultural terms. This also reinforces the view that all these other persons carrying the tomb-owner's belongings irrespective of where they occur in relation to the carrying-chair, should not be treated separately but as part of the carrying-chair motif. Accordingly it has been decided to include all those men, irrespective of their particular placement in the context of the carrying-chair motif. The justification being that a motif in a tomb is an expression of varied processes, which are seldom transparent but which in the end result in an autonomous depiction - one which contains everything necessary for it to be recognized as a specific motif and a carrier of cultural value.

Moreover, one way of defining the status of the tomb-owner is by depicting subsidiary figures having various attributes of stable well-known identities, which then serve as a marker against which the tomb-owner's own status can be defined – a kind of comparing of socially significant yet hierarchically based elite cultural vocabulary[664]. Further any particular pattern in the placement of these subsidiary figures will also influence both their position

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[663] Roth, "The practical economies of tomb building in the Old Kingdom: A visit to the Necropolis in a Carrying Chair," 230.

[664] I understand Van Walsem as implying that the individual's position in society is also measured against a pre-existing cultural vocabulary which includes his ability to communicate with the living, and the parameters of funerary culture as well as decorum. See Walsem, *Iconography of Old Kingdom elite tombs: analysis & interpretation, theoretical and methodological aspects* 11-12.

and that of the tomb-owner. From the data[665] it became clear that they appear equally both behind and in front of the carrying-chair and in a minority of cases they appear below it too. However they never appear above the occupant of the carrying-chair. It is best to consider these other persons as appearing in all areas surrounding the tomb-owner because they are part of the carrying-chair processional train, the very existence of which serves to exhibit the discretionary power and control which the tomb-owner had over a certain number of persons in his household, reflecting his social position. Chart 13 below summarizes the data.

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[665] Ankhmahor (B), Ankhmare (RF), Chnumhotep (fig. 43- RF), Niankhnum (pl. 42 & 60- RF), Hesi (RF), Khuwer (RF), Insnfrweshtf (F), Ipy (RF), Itisen (RFB), Iymery (RF), Kagemni (RF), Kayemnofret (R), Khnumenti (RF), Mereruka (pl. 158- RFB), Meryteti (pl. 47 & 48- RF), Neferkhuwi (RF), Nikauisesi (F), Nimaatre (RF), Hetepniptah (B), Ptahshepses (R), Qar (RFB), Sabwibbi (RFB), Seankhuiptah (F), Seneb (B), Senedjemib-inti (RF), Seshemnefer-tjetti (R), Ty (RFB) and Waatetkhethor (RFB).
R = Rear of carrying-chair (3), F = Front (3), B = Below (3), RF = (13), RFB = (6).

0
ABOVE
CARRYING-
CHAIR

3 (8%)
FRONT OF
CARRYING-
CHAIR

TOMB OWNER

3 (8%)
REAR OF
CARRYING-
CHAIR

3 (8%)
BELOW
CARRYING-
CHAIR

13 (36%)
REAR & FRONT
CARRYING-
CHAIR

6 (16%)
REAR, FRONT & BELOW
CARRYING-
CHAIR
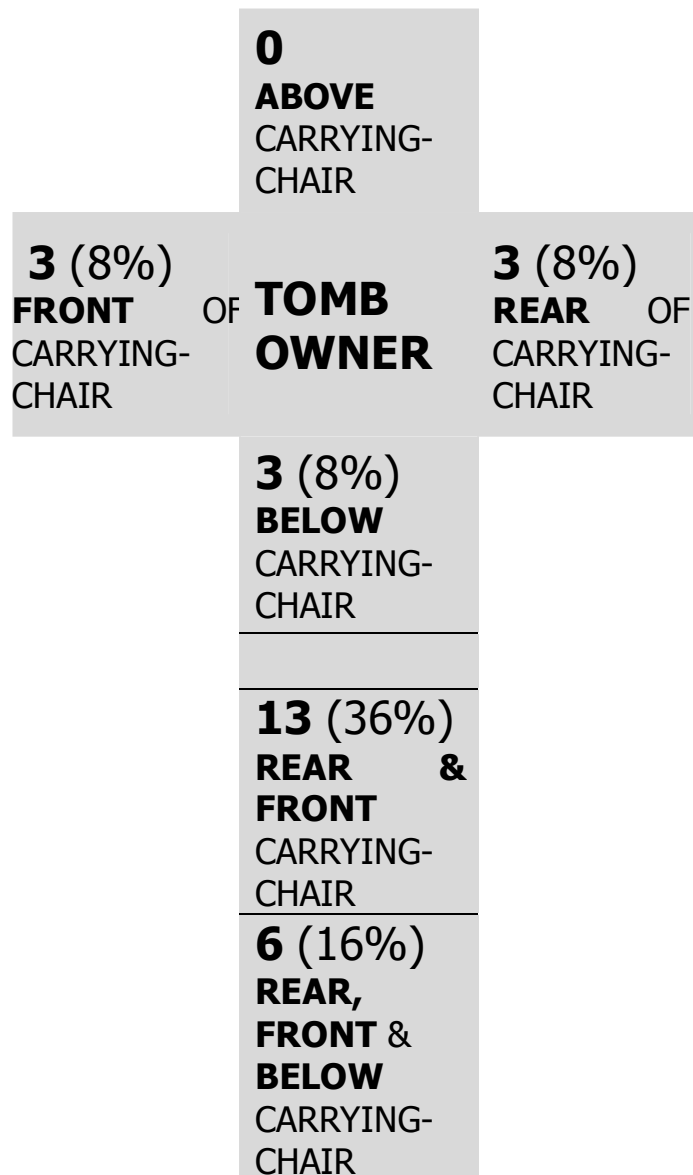
The numbers above refer to the number of tombs, where the attendants have a specific position relative to the tomb-owner but NOT to the number of actual attendants in each tomb. Dwarfs are excluded.

Chart 13 shows attendant placement from 28 tombs (76% of the total 37 tombs examined).

Chart 13: Attendant Placement by Tombs

Attendants' Clothing

The clothing too of these predominantly male persons (females in the case of Waatetkhethor) and any other relevant markers, is certainly a pointer of their status. In all cases they are shown either wearing a pointed kilt or a short kilt and apart from 2 exceptions (in the tomb of Seshemnefer.tjetti and Khnumenti) they are never depicted wearing a loincloth. These two exceptions need an explanation.

In the tomb of Seshemnefer.tjetti, a man in a loincloth is represented in a sub-register. He holds a staff curved at the end and the other hand is holding what looks very much like a rope sling used by the supervisors. The position of the supervisor in a separate sub-register would be incompatible with his function of co-coordinating the train of porters. Perhaps the compressed nature of the scene required him to be depicted in a sub-register, which in actual terms should be with the porters and so in my opinion should not be recognized as an 'other escort'.

In the tomb of Khnumenti, 7 men in 3 separate sub-registers are shown behind the palanquin. Six of them wear a loincloth and only one wears a pointed kilt but they are all carrying articles, which appear to be the belongings of the tomb-owner, e.g. sandals, head-rests, walking stick, etc. already encountered in the other tombs. In addition there is a nude dwarf carrying a box on his head and a bucket in his right hand.

Appearing in front of the tomb-owner is part of a man wearing a pointed kilt and presenting him with a scroll and a person presenting him with a lapwing (maybe his son).

The deliberate nature of the attire of only one of the attendants, points to a distinction being made in the composition of the processional train, but it is difficult to justify why the other carriers are wearing loincloths, when in all the other tombs the pointed kilts dominate the scene and are the preferred clothing as in Chart 14.

Apart from identifying the predominant type of clothing and position of the attendants, another way of establishing a pattern, would be to equate the

tombs to the type of attendant - mainly by initially ranking them into family and non-family and equating the clothes they wear.

Twenty-eight tombs depict attendants[666]. In 7 of these tombs, 'his son' is identified. Where sons and attendants appear together, both categories are always shown wearing a pointed kilt, with two exceptions in the tombs of Kagemni and Ty, where short kilts are shown being worn.

Of the 28 tombs where clothing was identified, there were:

> 17 cases of attendants wearing pointed kilts,
>
> 12 cases of attendants wearing short kilts,
>
> 1 case of females wearing sheath dresses[667].

A clear majority of the attendants wore a pointed kilt.

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[666] In the tombs of: Ankhmare*, Ankhmahor, Khnumhotep (pl. 43), Hetepniptah, Hesi, Insnfrweshtf, Ipy, Itisen, Iymery*, Kagemni*, Kayemnofret, Khuwer, Khnumenti, Mereruka (pls. 14 & 158*), Meryteti (pl. 47), Neferkhuwi*, Nikauisesi, Niankhkhnum (pls. 42 & 60), Nimaatre, Ptahshepses*, Qar, Sabwibbi, Seankhuiptah, Seneb, Senedjemib-inti, Seshemnefer.tjetti, Ty* and Waatetkhethor. Asterisks indicate the 7 tombs, which also depict a son as an attendant.

[667] 17 cases of attendants in Pointed Kilts = Ankhmare, Hetepniptah, Insneferweshtef, Ipy, Itisen, Kagemni, Khnumenti, Mereruka (pl. 158), Meryteti (pl. 47), Neferkhuwi, Niankhkhnum, Nimaatre, Ptahshepses (pl. 60), Qar, Sabwibbi, Senedjemib.Inti & Seankhuiptah.
12 cases of attendants in Short Kilts = Khnumhotep (pl. 43), Hesi, Ipy, Kagemni, Kayemnofret, Khuwer, Niankhkhnum (pl. 42), Nikauisesi, Qar, Seneb, Ty & Waatetkhethor.
1 case of attendants in Sheath Dresses = Waatetkhethor.

Main Clothing of Attendants
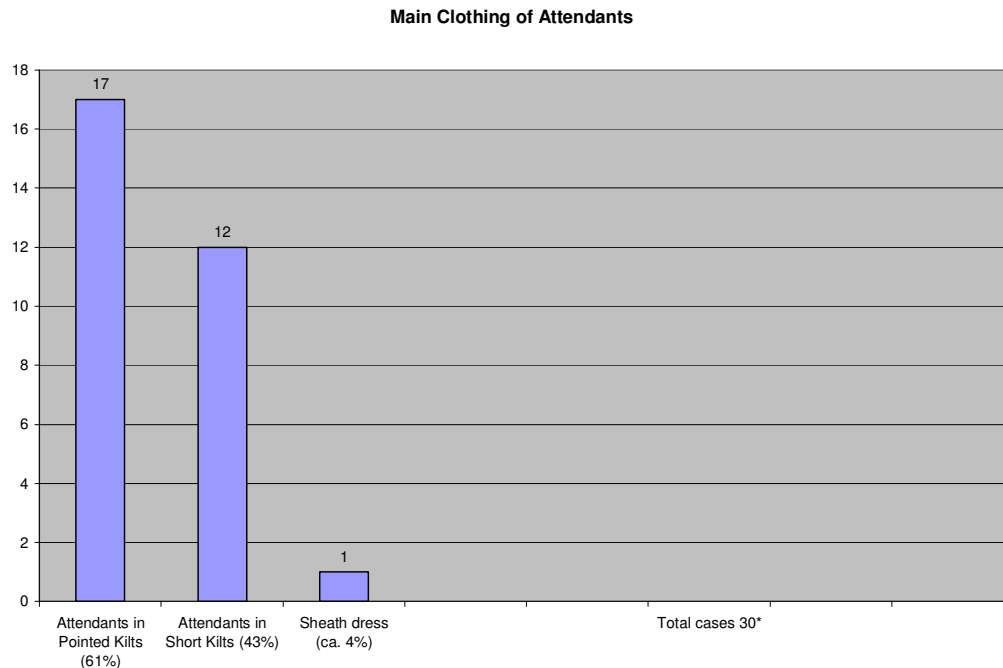
* Chart 14 relates to 28 tombs with attendants (76% of the total 37 tombs examined). 9 (24%) tombs depict no attendants.
The numbers above refer to the number of cases in which attendants wear a particular type of clothing but NOT to the number of actual attendants in each tomb. These numbers should not be added because of duplication in clothing across the tombs.

Chart 14: Clothing of Attendants

6.5 Tomb-Owner

The central focus in Egyptian funerary art is always on the tomb-owner and this is not different in the carrying-chair motif, where certain of his attributes are highlighted in various ways, e.g. by:

- Occupancy (number of occupants of the carrying-chair)
- Posture (way he sits in the carrying-chair)
- His attire
- His body adornments
- Objects he displays in his hands
- Objects handed to him

These attributes will now be discussed.

6.5.1 Occupancy

The carrying-chair is always occupied by the tomb-owner - the focus of attention, and therefore he is generally the sole occupant, in keeping with his social position.

There are however 3 exceptions

- In the complex of Mereruka who is shown together with his son Meryteti in one carrying-chair[668]. Kanawati regards the double occupancy as "an attempt to indicate Mereruka's wish to assign the chapel to Meryteti" which would explain why on the adjoining North wall, Meryteti is depicted as a child with the side lock of youth in a carrying-chair with his mother Waatetkhethor. Another explanation may lie in the individuality of the scene. This scene is never found anywhere else. It may be that the occupants are trying to relay a message that their eldest beloved son is their undisputed heir - a sort of a testament much like the presentation of the heir by medieval European aristocracy.
- Also in the complex of Mereruka, his son Meryteti is shown with his mother Waatetkhethor in the same carrying-chair.[669].
- In the tomb of Iymery, the tomb-owner's father (Shepseskafankh) is depicted in the carrying chair. This may relate to filial affection similar to that seen in the rock tomb of Djau, where Djau asserts that although he could have built a tomb for himself he desired to be buried near his father in the same tomb, so that he could "see him

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[668]W. Wreszinski, *Atlas zur ägyptischen Kulturgeschichte* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1914). He titles the scene as "Der Herr und die Frau in der Sänfte" but Kanawati seems to think that it is Mereruka and his son Meryteti because of the remains of the kilts (see Kanawati, N. Mereruka and his family (Part I): the tomb of Meryteti, The Australian Centre for Egyptology: Reports 21. Oxford: Aris and Phillips Ltd., 2004, 28. He is correct because there are no known carrying-chair scenes depicting the tomb-owner and his wife.

[669] Ibid. pl. 11. Meryteti is shown wearing an amulet, a youth lock of hair and holds a lettuce in his right hand and a flying bird (toy) in the other hand. What is also unusual is that even though he is depicted as a boy, he is shown wearing the full long kilt?

everyday"[670]. Possible explanations are that two massive tombs would have been very costly or that this could be the expression of individuality by these tomb-owners wishing to consolidate their position as the heir[671]. In both tombs the sons are depicted modestly, while the father is given pride of place and adornments. In Iymery the eldest son is shown standing in a slightly bowed posture facing his father, who is being carried in a palanquin; while in Djau the son depicting a lector priest band is shown behind his father who is adorned in a panther skin even though the father did not or could not provide a tomb for himself[672].

Because the centre of focus is always the tomb-owner, all these instances are quite unusual and never appear in any other carrying-chair scene.

6.5.2 Posture

The posture of the tomb-owner reveals that the majority (58%) favoured the squatting position[673], as in Chart 15 below.

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[670] Davies, *The rock tombs of Deir el Gebrâwi* Vol. II, pl. 7.

[671] It would appear that burial of a parent by the eldest son, was a precondition of recognition as rightful heir. See W. Helck, *Wirtschaftsgeschichte des Alten Ägypten im 3. und 2. Jahrtausend vor Chr.* (Leiden/Köln: E. J. Brill, 1975) 76-77.

[672] Davies, *The rock tombs of Deir el Gebrâwi* 35-38.

[673] 21 (58%) Squatting = Ankhmahor, Ankhmare, Khnumhotep (pl. 43), Idw, Itisen, Kagemni, Khuwer, Mereruka (pl. 158), Meryteti (pls. 47 & 48), Metjetji, Neferkhuwi, Niankhkhnum (pls. 42 & 60), Nikauisesi, Nimaatre, Perneb, Ptahotep II, Ptahshepses, Qar, Seneb, Seshemnefer-Tjetti and Ty.
8 (21%) Sitting = Ipy, Kayemnofret, Khnumenti, Nefermaat, Sabwibbi, Senedjemib-inti, Seshemnefer and Waatetkhethor.
8 (21%) Unverifiable = Hetepniptah, Hezi, Insneferishtef, Iymery, Merwtetiseneb, Pepydjedi, Rahshepses and Sankhwptah.
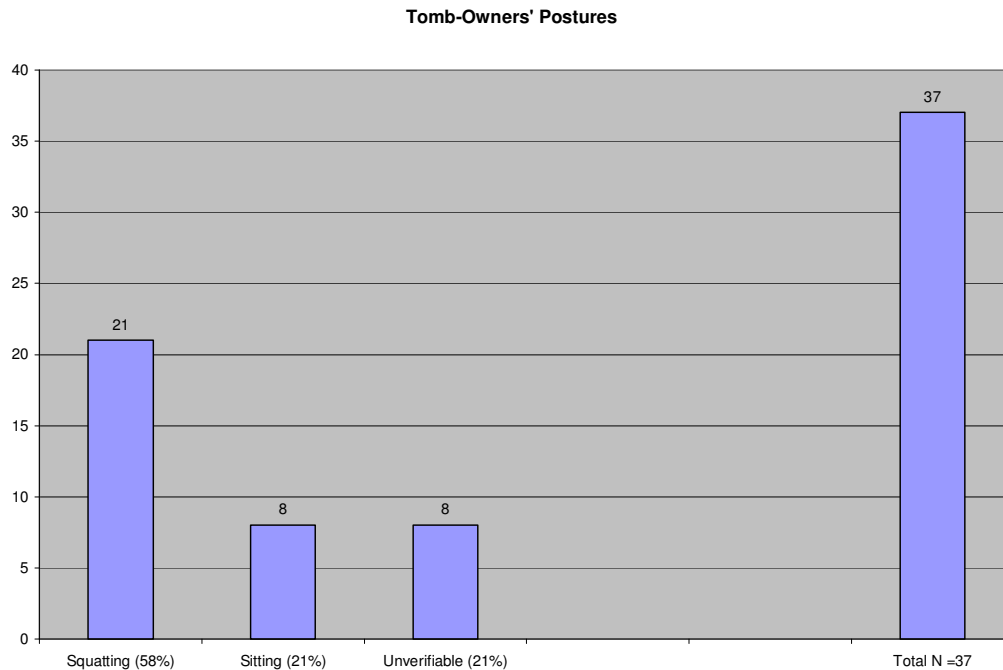
Tomb-Owners' Postures

Chart 15: Tomb-Owner's Posture

The squatting position is one in which the buttock and the soles of the feet are at the same level. At least from Dynasty 5 onwards, the form of chair evolves to a type which has high back and arms and a low platform but without legs: the high back and arms providing an anchor for holding onto during locomotion. The low platform which is in fact the floor of the carrying-chair also provides stability to the occupant, who has to 'sit' either with legs drawn up or in a kneeling position, both of which postures are part of the squatting position[674].

Indeed it makes sense to be in the squatting posture because when one is being carried in a procession, it would not be in keeping with the status, rank or decorum to be transported other than in an pre-ordained and accepted manner. The squatting position may have been the equivalent of a valuable object of display. May be one is witnessing artistic influence here because it is easier and more effective to display one compact unit rather than a not so compact one, which would be the case of a sitting display. The sitting position

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[674] Lepsius, *Denkmäler aus Ägypten und Äthiopien* pls. 42, 47, 52, 56, 57, 61 and 74 (c).

is that seen in the Nefermaat type of chair, the oldest example of its kind. Nefermaat[675] is depicted sitting in an upright position, with his buttock higher than the soles of his feet and with his legs touching the bottom of the chair frame and would appear to be the more "comfortable". He is shown in a sitting position and more significantly is being carried at hip level to reduce the risk of top heaviness. The squatting position is a refinement of this position because it enables a smoother movement, and is depicted in 45% (35%+8%+2%) of the 37 tombs depicting the carrying-chair motif (see Chart 16).

The squatting mode of transportation would not only imply order and social position but would also make the desired impact of a dignified pose and authority on all concerned. The majority of squatting scenes depict the tomb-owner with both feet flat on the base of the extension.

However in the tombs of Insneferishtef, Itisen, Kagemni, and Nikauisesi, the nearer foot is shown flat while the farther foot rests on its heel on the extension. In between these feet is a round cylindrical object, clearly seen in the tomb of Kagemni, which Harpur explains as an object that was used to weigh the kilt down to prevent it from billowing, especially when the occupant's hands were occupied in holding on to the carrying chair and to any other objects of status display[676]. We do not know what this object was made of but in any case it would have to be heavy enough to weigh down his kilt and as such it could have been either of wood, copper or stone. While its depiction may be artistic license it could also indicate individuality in having access to a privileged object whose use was associated with another status object, i.e. the long kilt.

6.5.3 Attire

Apart from any other considerations of the generics, both the sitting and the squatting postures could have an effect on the attire of the occupant. Where

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[675] Petrie, *Medum* pl. 21. See also Harpur and Scremin, *The tombs of Nefermaat and Rahotep at Maidum: Discovery, Destruction and Reconstruction* 55-76.

[676] Y. Harpur and P. Scremin, *The Chapel of Kagemni* (Reading: Oxford Expedition to Egypt, 2006) pl. 278, p. 174.

the rear and feet of the occupant are at the same level as the platform of the chair, practical reasons would dictate the long skirt as a preferred mode of dress. However in the case of the sitting position, where the feet are below that of the seat, the pointed kilt or short kilt could also come into question[677].

The common clothing of the Egyptian male was the short kilt, a rectangular piece of fabric held up by cords or a cloth belt and wrapped tightly around the waist. The front of the kilt was loose enough to permit the legs to move freely.

A version of this short kilt was a stiffly starched front that stood out in the form as an inverted "v", which would have made any sort of physical labour impossible which I refer to as the pointed kilt. Perhaps its main function-was to distinguish the wearer with enhanced and exaggerated masculinity or as one who did not have to do physical labour.

A similar aspiration may have led to the adoption of the long skirt style, which came down below the knee but was otherwise similar to the pointed kilt and was even more impractical for manual work. I will refer to this as the long kilt.

As far as females were concerned, the common attire was a sheath held up by shoulder straps. It enveloped the body rising to just under the breasts. In some cases this is replaced by wider straps that cover the breasts completely.

Representations of the various types of clothing are amply demonstrated in the iconography. The four pictures (A-D) given below however are examples from actual finds in the Old Kingdom, which depict the attire mentioned above[678].

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[677] Staehelin, *Untersuchungen zur ägyptischen Tracht im Alten Reich* 253-57.

[678] H. A. Schlögl, ed., *Le Don du Nil: Art Égyptien dans les Collections Suisses* (Basle: 1978).

Fig. 7: (Picture "A") clearly depicts the sheath dress as well as the shortened version of the pointed kilt. From the stela of Hetepneb (Private Collection Basle)

Fig. 8: (Picture "B") comprises two men showing short kilts and evidences the fact that these were worn by both the elite (Akhethetep) and an ordinary offering bearer. Akhethetep with sceptre and staff in short kilt from Collection Kofler-Truniger, Luzern and the offering bearer in short kilt form Collection Dr. E. Borowski, Basle. (Catalogue des stèles, peinture et reliefs égyptiens de l'Ancien Empire et de la Première Période Intermédiaire, Paris 1990)

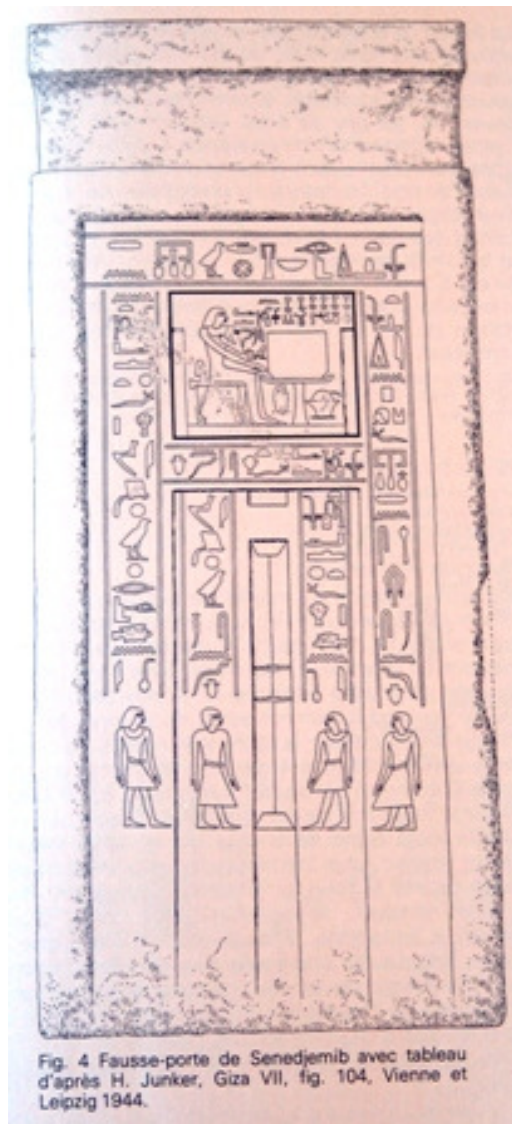Fig. 4 Fausse-porte de Senedjemib avec tableau d'après H. Junker, Giza VII, fig. 104, Vienne et Leipzig 1944.

Fig. 9: (Picture "C") is from a false door depicting the two versions of the pointed kilt: the one ending just above the knee and the other below the knee. Junker *Giza*, vol. 8, fig. 104

Fig. 10: (Picture "D") Metjetji in ceremonial attire: Photograph by author at the Brooklyn Museum, New York

All of the above range of attire can be seen worn by the occupants of the carrying-chair. Apart from the primary utilitarian purpose, one would expect the Egyptian craftsman to produce something in which there would be some relationship between the need for display, the need for practicality and the need for accuracy and realism. However as Schäfer points out while the Egyptians were capable "of producing true portraits, the tendency to the typical and idealizing is dominant"[679]. If this is correct, then one would expect that the squatting pose would demand a long kilt and a sitting upright pose would be satisfied with a short or a pointed kilt. Females would be expected to wear a sheath type dress, indeed there is one example of a female in a carrying-chair, and she wears the sheath dress with straps that cover her breasts[680]. It is of interest that her son who is also in the same palanquin and who is in a squatting pose is clearly wearing a long kilt.

The results tabulated in the Chart 16 below reveal that a certain correlation exists between posture and dress.

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[679] Schäfer, *Principles of Egyptian Art* 18.

[680] Wreszinski, *Atlas zur ägyptischen Kulturgeschichte* pl. 11.

Relation between Posture and Dress
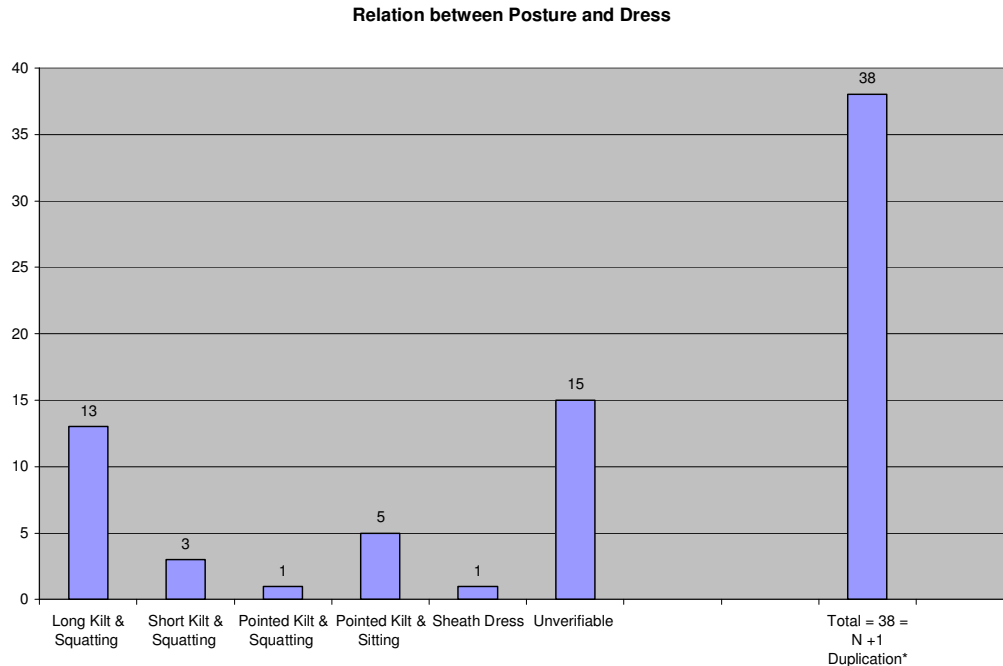
*Duplication** occurs because in the tomb of Niankhkhnum, pl. 42 depicts a short kilt and squatting posture and in pl. 60 he is shown in a pointed kilt and sitting posture.

The numbers above refer to the tombs in which these posture and dress occur.

Chart 16: Relationship between Posture and Dress

Chart 16's analysis of posture and type of attire reveals that the squatting posture together with the long kilt as well as the pointed kilt with an inverted "v" flap was the predominant mode of attire when using a carrying-chair carted by humans[681]. Importantly in this chart both spatial posture and the attire of the occupant have been combined to project a result enabling one to identify more than one aspect, quantify it, and see how these act together.

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[681] 13 cases of Long kilt and squatting = Ankhmahor, Ankhmare, Idw, Itisen, Kagemni, Mereruka (pl. 158), Meryteti (pls. 47, 48), Nikauisesi, Nimaatre, Patahshepses, Qar, Seshemnefer.Tjetti and Ty.

3 cases of Short kilt and squatting = Khnumhotep (pl. 43), Niankhnum (pl. 42) and Khuwer.

1 case of Pointed Kilt and squatting = Perneb.

5 cases of Pointed kilt and sitting = Ipy, Khnumenti, Niankhkhnum (pl. 60), Sabwibbii and Seshemnefer.

1 case of a Sheath dress = Waatetkhethor.

15 Unverifiable = Hetepniptah, Hezi, Insnferwishtef, Iymery, Kayemnofret, Mejetji, Merwtetiseneb, Neferkhuwi, Nefermaat, Pepydjedi, Ptahotep II, Rahshepses, Sankhwptah, Seneb and Senedjemib.inti.

The results from the verifiable tombs are quite telling and produce a better understanding of the degree to which the elite were enmeshed in the social network emphasizing clothes and display, consolidating the fact that the pointed kilt with a prominent inverted "v" projection and the long kilt are markers of elevated status clothing[682] of the elite. In no tombs is a squatting posture shown with other than a long kilt, the only exception being in the tomb of Perneb. This could be explained away as part of a presenting a document scene, where the carrying-chair is no longer held aloft but on the ground; if so, then allowance for adjustment of the kilt may have to be provided for.

In the three tombs where the tomb-owner is riding in a carrying chair on the backs of donkeys he wears a short kilt even though he is in the squatting position[683]. This may be explained by the necessity of wearing tight fitting attire much like that worn by present day sport enthusiasts and in my opinion is not an exception.

Similar co-relationship exists between the pointed kilt and the sitting posture. A single exception is that in the tomb of Ptahotep II, where the panther hide is given prominence being depicted worn over a kilt (not shown) in a carrying-chair. Appearing as it does on a false door and the fact of the tomb-owner's priestly titles obviates the need for any further explanation.

6.5.4 Body Adornments

When the body is understood as an object, then the imagery produced by its adornment, serves in the creation of meaning in this world and the hereafter. It is known that both men and women adorned their heads with "wigs", their faces with cosmetics, and their bodies with jewellery; the differences in style probably broadcast differences in social status. Generally the reliefs today are so weathered that any trace of cosmetic paint is seldom visible in the carrying-chair scenes. However other archaeological remains do attest to the

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[682] Staehelin, *Untersuchungen zur ägyptischen Tracht im Alten Reich* 10 & 20.

[683] In the tombs of Khnumhotep, Niankhkhnum and Khuwer.

fact that both sexes used either green or black paint around the eye[684]. The composition of both colours is known: ground malachite for green and ground galena for black, which became more common in the New Kingdom. These were mixed into a paste with fat and stored in kohl jars for personal use[685]. As far as the face is concerned almost all men have no facial hair in relation to the carrying-chair motif, with one exception that from the tomb of Khuwer[686]. While it was common in Dynasty 4 and 5 of the Old Kingdom for men to have mustaches, they are seldom seen after this period[687]. "False beards" were worn by pharaohs on ceremonial occasions, some gods are depicted with "false beards", and evidence exists that beards were in vogue since the earliest times[688]. However, whether it was "false" has never been proven and so, must remain an open question.

As far as items of adornment are concerned, there is evidence of the "wig" and jewellery, plus other regalia, which the tomb-owners display and to these I will now turn.

6.5.4.1 "Wigs"

Both sexes adorned the head by the use of a "wig". While there is evidence of a variety of "wigs", the ones that we see in these motifs, are restricted to the short curly or skull fitting "wig" and the shoulder length fuller "wig".

Hair in many societies is charged with meaning. It has religious and magical significance. In the way it is worn, it also encodes information about gender, age, and social status[689]. Just as the human body is as Barkan puts - "simultaneously abstract and concrete, general, and specific the "wig" too is

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[684] For a description of the use of various colours in a Dynasty 5 tomb see H. G. Fischer, "A Scribe of the Army of the Fifth Dynasty," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 18 (1959): 240-41. For general details on colour conventions in the Old Kingdom see Smith, *A History of Egyptian Sculpture and Painting in the Old Kingdom* 257-63.

[685] Lucas and Harris, *Ancient Egyptian Materials and Industries* 83.

[686] Lepsius, *Denkmäler aus Ägypten und Äthiopien* pl. 17.

[687] Staehelin, *Untersuchungen zur ägyptischen Tracht im Alten Reich* 93.

[688] Ibid. 92.

[689] Robins, "Hair and the Construction of Identity in Ancient Egypt ": 55-69.

both of the body and not of it, natural product, and a work of art, a culturally dynamic abstract concept and a material artifact subject to time"[690]. It thus possesses powerful symbolic and ideological values. In the period under study, 24 carrying-chair motifs may be construed as showing "wigs" of which 7 are of the striated shoulder length type[691]. The only exception is in the tomb of Niankhkhnum (pl. 60), where he is claimed to be without a "wig"[692]. In 13 tombs[693] the "wigs" were unverifiable, primarily because of the time-damaged nature of the scene such that the headgear if there was one, has suffered at the hands of time.

Harpur states, "out of a total of forty-five extant carrying-chair scenes seventeen show the major figure without a "wig""[694]. It is unknown how she derives this but she probably included all scenes with a carrying-chair whether or not these are occupied, are fragments, and possibly a few provincial scenes. The earlier discussion about porter's headgear, mentions the difficulty of deciding unambiguously whether a real "wig" is present or not and so it would have been helpful if Harpur had given a set of criteria. Harpur's assertion that Kagemni does not wear a "wig" and that it shows the owner in a relaxed image "rather like a man discarding a tie for a less formal occasion" is questionable. A way of getting around the problem is to consider the "wig" as a "coiffure" in which case the question then becomes one of style, rather than distinguishing between real hair and "artificial" hair. However the problem remains to be resolved.

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[690] L. Barkan, *Nature's work of art: the human body as image of the world* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975) 3.

[691] 24 as in the tombs of: Ankhmahor, Ankhmare, Khnumhotep (pl. 43)*, Idw*, Ipy*, Itisen, Iymery, Khuwer, Kagemni, Kaemnofret*, Khnumenti*, Metjetji, Merwtetiseneb, Neferkhuwi, Niankhkhnum (pl. 42)*, Nimaatre, Perneb, Ptahhetep ll, Ptahshepses, Sabwibbi, Seneb, Senedjemib-inti, Seshemnefer* and Waatetkhethor. Those marked with an asterisk denote a shoulder length wig while all others wear the short wig.

[692] Altenmüller and Moussa, *Das Grab des Nianchchnum und Chnumhotep* 129.

[693] In the tombs of: Hesi, Insnfrweshtef, Mereruka, Meryteti, Nikauisesi, Nefermaat, Hetepniptah, Qar, Sabwibbi, Seankuiptah, Seshemnefer-tjetti, Pepydjedi, and Ty.

[694] Harpur and Scremin, *The Chapel of Kagemni* 424.

The tomb-owner in a majority of the carrying-chair scenes from the Memphite region, sports a "wig". Admittedly "wigs" are not only associated with festal or ceremonious occasions, yet they seem to be omnipresent both on the tomb-owner as well as the other people including porters, much like the costume of the lord of the manor and his coach bearers in medieval aristocracy[695]. If one accepts that the carrying-chair motif when shown is the depiction of a ceremonial occasion, then the fact that "wigs" would be obligatory on such occasions, is self-explanatory.

6.5.4.2 Jewellery

Invariably present around the tomb-owner's necks is jewellery. It is known from the material record that a variety of neckwear was worn, e.g. chokers especially by women, single, and multiple strand necklaces plus broad collars, which could be up to 260 mm wide, hence the name. The broad collar known as *wsḫ* is also present in the majority (57%) of depictions[696] but there is no way of distinguishing from the reliefs, the various types of material used in their production. This could have been one useful tool in deciding on the levels of eliteness. In most of the examples there are depictions of multiple strands of beads, tubes or maybe amuletic figures, which terminate in solid endings, which serve to anchor the many strands and which have mostly lost their original colour. Possibly the original broad collars were covered with precious metals in keeping with the status of the tomb-owner like the one now in Vienna but this is no longer apparent[697].

In the tomb of Kagemni, he is shown wearing both a collar as well as a chain with an amulet shaped like a heart, which supposedly gave the wearer

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[695] Livery "… arose because medieval nobles provided matching clothes to distinguish their servants from others". See *The Oxford Pocket Dictionary of Current English*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

[696] 21 cases of collars present in the tombs of: Ankhmahor, Ankhmare, Khnumhotep (pl. 43), Idw, Ipy, Itisen, Kagemni, Khnumenti, Khuwer, Meryteti (pl. 47), Metjetji, Neferkhuwi, Niankhkhnum (pls. 42 & 60), Perneb, Ptahhetep II, Ptahshepses, Sabwibbi, Seneb, Sendjemib-inti, Seshemnefer and Waatetkhethor. See also E. Haslauer, "Bestattungsschmuck aus Giza," in *Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen in Wien 87* (1991).

[697] See the example now in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, ÄS 9072 of a broad collar dated between Dynasty 5 and early Dynasty 6, made of faience and gold leaf.

protection (*mkt*) and divine intervention[698], should he require it. This small amulet is crafted with tiny holes so that it could be hung on a necklace.

Amulets were made of a variety of materials (precious stones, metals, wood and faience) and were produced according to strict convention, as seen from the MacGregor Papyrus[699], which has an unusual list of seventy-five amulets with their names and religious functions presented in a grid. Alas the bottom part of the amulet worn by Kagemni is partly visible, one can just detect what should be the curved part of the top of the heart, but as the rest is hidden by the hand of the tomb-owner one cannot tell its exact nature and therefore unable to comment on its precise protective significance[700]. Indeed this is the only time that we see an amulet being worn in a carrying-chair motif and this could probably have something to do with individuality.

In most scenes where there is a "wig" (24 cases), there is a collar present (21 cases). In the few scenes where this is not, these are either damaged, or the upper part is missing and so unverifiable. A relational link between the collar and the "wig" is thus well established.

The Egyptians also adorned their arms and legs with ornaments like the bracelet and anklet[701]. In the Old Kingdom the most common form of material used was ivory[702], bone[703], tortoiseshell[704], horn[705], and gold[706]. The carrying-

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[698] Faulkner, *A concise dictionary of Middle Egyptian* 119.

[699] P. J. Capart, "Une liste d'amulettes," *Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde (45)* (1908): 14-21. It is admitted that this is a New Kingdom papyrus and that all it can evidence is the continuing protective nature of amulets and its connection with changing New Kingdom funerary practices.

[700] Harpur and Scremin, *The Chapel of Kagemni* pl. 278. See aslo Bonnet, *Reallexikon der Ägyptischen Religionsgeschichte* 26-31, for the magical functions attributed to amulets. See also C. Andrews, *Jewellery, 1: From the Earliest Times to the Seventeenth Dynasty* (London: British Museum Publications, 1981) 44-45.

[701] 6 cases of bracelets in the tombs of: Ankhmahor, Idw, Kagemni, Mereruka (pl. 158), Meryteti (pl. 47) and Waatetkhethor.
1 case of anklets in the tomb of: Waatetkhethor.1 case of an amulet in the tomb of Kagemni.

[702] G. Brunton, *Matmar: British Museum Expedition to Middle Egypt, 1929-1931.* (London: Egypt Exploration Fund, 1948) tombs 800 and 17.

[703] Ibid. 865.

chair scenes show a kind that consisted of flexible strings of beads or other brightly coloured stone like carnelian, as well as those made of pure bands of gold with inlays of stone. However, the bracelets actually recovered in this period are made from faience having strands of ring shaped beads divided by bead spacers at regular intervals. This separation of the rows of beads would have provided additional strength to the bracelet, as well as being a possible fashion statement if both the bracelet and the broad collar were made of matching material[707]. However this explanation cannot be backed up with actual numbers.

It might be expected that both the limbs and the head would be adorned to the same extent but this cannot be proved conclusively. Erosion and grave robbery have played havoc here and therefore it may be wrong to assume that bracelets/anklets were not worn to the same extent as the "wig" and the collar, just because they do not appear so in the archaeological record. Similarly the "false beard," if it indeed was an elite option, could be expected to be prominent on ceremonial occasions but there is no evidence for this. This is especially relevant when one is confronted with a scene whose very nature calls for elaborate personal pomp and display of which all six items (bracelet, anklet, "wig", broad collar, amulet, and may be "false beard") are an integral part. There is only one example in this motif of a "false beard", which is in the tomb of Khuwer (LD ll, pl. 43(a)). These objects contributed to the survival of the deceased in the memory of their social surroundings. They were a means of eliciting eliteness without having to spell it out.

Chart 17 below summarizes these findings.

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[704] Petrie, *Diospolis Parva: The Cemeteries of Abadiyeh and Hu* tomb N 19.

[705] G. Brunton, *Mostagedda and the Tasian Culture, British Expedition to Middle Egypt, First and Second Years, 1928, 1929.* (London: Egypt Exploration Fund, 1937) tombs 243 and 677.

[706] Z. Ghoneim, *Horus Sekhemkhet: The Unfinished Step Pyramid at Saqqara*, vol. 1 (Cairo: 1957) 13-14.

[707] Haslauer, "Bestattungsschmuck aus Giza," 9-21.

Body Adornments of Tomb-Owner
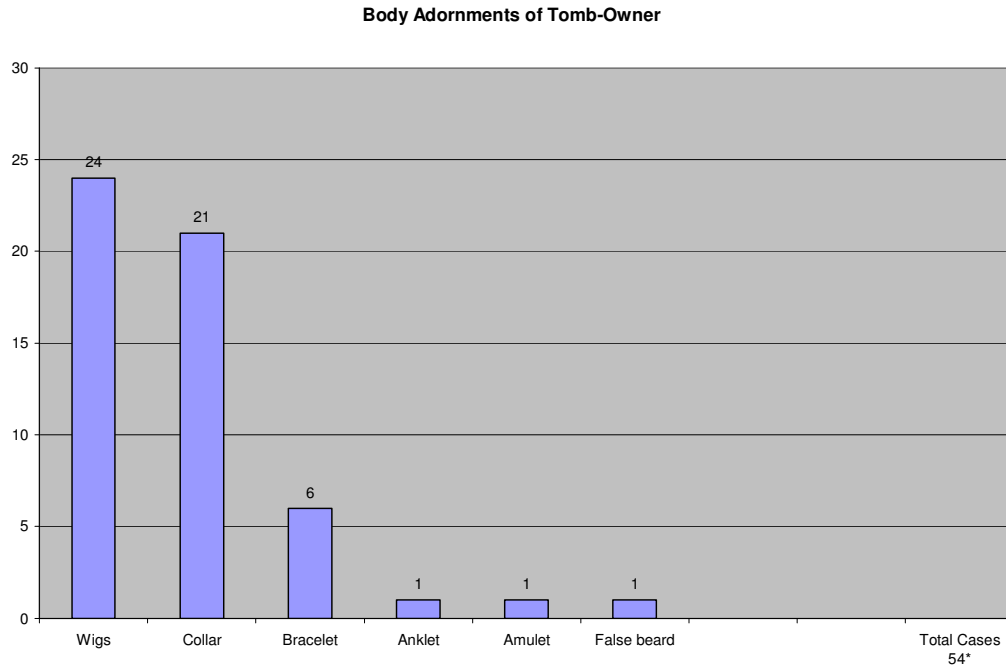
*Duplication of adornments in 17 tombs. The numbers above refer to the number of cases with adornments but NOT to the number of adornments.

Chart 17: Body adornments of tomb-owner

6.5.4.3 Ceremonial Objects

The occupant of the carrying-chair is also shown with objects, which may be either symbols of office or ceremonial objects. These objects include the baton, large rod, sceptre ($s\underline{h}m$)[708], flywhisk[709] (usually made from foxtails), rolled cloth, papyrus scroll and the lotus bud. Various combinations of these appear in the carrying-chair motif; the only certainty being that these objects are depicted in one or both hands of the tomb-owner. Fischer suggests that the baton substituted for the unwieldy sceptre as a symbol of authority and may be the reason why it is found in thirteen of the carrying-chair motifs[710].

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[708] A. H. Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar*, 3rd. ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1957). Usually this is the $s\underline{h}m$ scepter also known as $^cb\mathcal{3}$. See also Faulkner, *A concise dictionary of Middle Egyptian* 241 and 40 respectively.

[709] Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar* 510. He terms this a flagellum. The flail was used to encourage/restrain cattle and it could similarly imply the coercive encouragement/restraining power of the king, which symbolism was taken up by the elite.
[710] H. Fischer, "Notes on Sticks and Staves in ancient Egypt," *The Metropolitan Museum Journal, New York*, no. 13 (1978): 18-19.

One would expect these to occur in all similar scenes in keeping with its objective (display of wealth plus status, to consolidate his status plus identity and to depict the transport of the tomb-owner) and this is indeed so[711] as in Chart 18 below.

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[711] 13 cases of batons = Ankhmahor, Ankhmare, Niankhkhnum (pl. 60), Idw, Ipy, Itisen, Kagemni, Kaemnofret, Khnumenti, Meryteti (pl. 47), Merwtetiseneb, Ptahshepses and Sabwibbi.
7 cases of large rods = Khnumhotep (pl. 43), Khuwer, Nefermaat, Niankhkhnum (pl. 42), Ptahetep ll, Seshemnefer and Seshemnefer.Tjetti.
2 cases of Scepters = Ptahotep ll, Seshemnefer.
6 cases of Flywhisks = Ipy, Iymery, Qar, Merwtetiseneb, Meryteti (pl. 47), Senedjemib.inti.
2 cases of a Rolled Cloth = Khnumenti, Khuwer.
4 cases of Papyrus scrolls being handed over = Qar, Metjetji, Nimaatre, Perneb.
1 case of a Lotus bud = Waatetkhethor.
None = Seneb, Mereruka (pl. 158), and Perneb.
Unverifiable = Hesi, Hetepniptah, Insnfrweshtef, Meryteti (pl. 48), Neferkhuwi, Nikauisessi, Pepydjedi, Rahshepses, Sankhwptah, and Ty.

Goods inferring Status
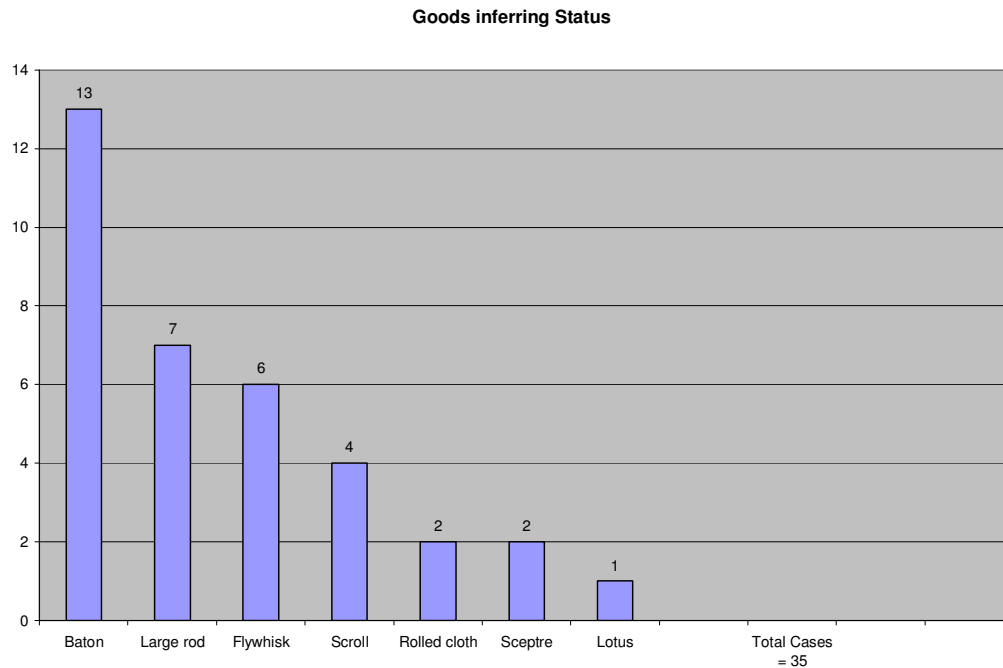
*Duplication occurs in 11 tombs of which there are two tombs with more than one plate and 9 tombs with more than one status good therefore these should not be added. The above numbers show how many cases there are in which the status goods occur but NOT the numbers of goods themselves. In 3 tombs no status goods present and in 10 tombs these were unverifiable.

Chart 18: Goods Inferring Status

Three tomb owners Seneb and Mereruka (pl. 158) and Perneb are not depicted carrying any status goods. An explanation may be that the first two persons did not need to show attributes of eliteness because both were married to the king's daughter and in addition in the case of Seneb his dwarfishness would be accentuated if objects were depicted (but then why do others who are similarly placed insist on showing these attributes?). The better reasoning would be to explain these deviances as instances of individuality resulting in the particular iconography because this would then not have to be a value based judgement but one which is accepted as an example of human behavior which would also explain the non-carrying of status goods. Perneb seems to be concentrating his attention on the receiving

of a papyrus but a comparison with a similar motif in the tomb of Qar, would not preclude him from carrying a status good and so this too can be explained as a probable case of individuality.

The obvious thing about these ceremonial objects is that they are depicted in such a way as to give more prominence to the arm carrying them. However in those cases where only one object is carried, it is interesting that this is shown at all times in the hand which is furthest away from the viewer. This is in keeping with the basic principle of Egyptian art, which was to display the reality in relief to present the human form in a perfect way (in the carrying-chair motif this would be the hand on armrest) and at the same time not detracting from the unambiguous nature of the scene, which would be the portrayal, of how an elite was to be depicted holding an object, while in a carrying-chair[712]. The presentation then of the tomb-owner such that both arms could be seen as part of an ideal body and the portrayal of ceremonial objects in a manner that these are not obstructed, makes obvious sense. Further by displaying the object in this way, the object's reality and worth was enhanced because it and not the arms became the focus of attention, pointing to the object's social/cultural significance. Whether or not there is any correlation between the hand carrying an object and the direction of movement of the carrying-chair, is uncertain. In any case, any correlation has extremely limited value because it is of no use in indicating the direction of travel, nor is it in any way essential to the focus of this study as stated in the 'Introductory Remarks'.

Considering that the requirements of decorum would be satisfied if both arms hold status objects, then it is surprising that only 10 tombs depict carrying of these goods in both hands[713]. In contrast, there are 40% tombs (14 tombs) showing the tomb-owner carrying an object in one hand only[714]. Included

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[712] H. Fechheimer, *Die Plastik der Ägypter* (Berlin: Bruno Cassirer Verlag, 1918) 48-57 for examples.

[713] In the tombs of: Khuwer, Ipy, Khnumenti, Merwtetiseneb, Niankhkhnum (pl. 42), Khnumhotep (pl. 43), Ptahhetep II, Qar, Senedjemib-inti and Seshemnefer.

among these are 4 tombs, which have one arm missing and therefore all one can say is that there are 10 tombs showing a complete body and arms but which definitely depict the holding of the status object by one arm only. In 12 tombs this depiction was not verifiable[715].

The three exceptions are the tombs of Seneb and Mereruka (pl. 158), and Perneb which are the only Old Kingdom carrying-chair motifs in which the occupants do not carry any status goods (8% of the total population - 37 tombs examined). In the joint tomb of Niankhkhnum and Khnumhotep, both tomb-owners are depicted squatting in a carrying-chair on donkeys and holding onto a short baton with both hands.

Chart 19 summarizes these findings and shows that ca. 70% of the total population display some form of status goods being carried in one or both hands of the tomb-owner. As to which of the hands was preferred the evidence is too sparse to come to any conclusion.

The unverifiable tombs represent some 30% of the total population and even if all of these were definitely found to have no such depiction it still would not matter much.

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[714] In the tombs of: Ankhmahor, Ankhmare, Itisen, Iymery, Kagemni, Kayemnofret, Metjetji, Niankhnum (fig. 60), Nefermaat, Ptahshepses, Sabwibbi, Senedjemib-inti, Seshemnefer-Tjetti and Waatetkhethor.

[715] In the tombs of: Hesi, Hetepniptah, Insnfrweshtef, Mereruka (pl. 158), Meryteti (pl. 47). Neferkhuwi, Nikauisesi, Nimaatre, Pepydjedi, Rahshepses, Seankhuiptah and Ty.

Carrying Status Goods
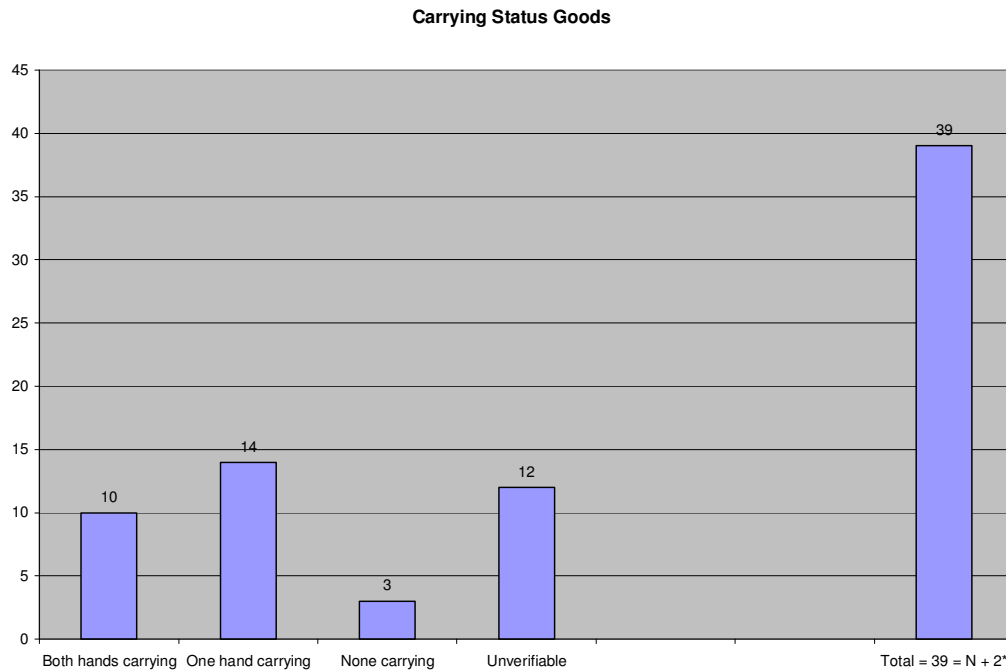
***Duplication** occurs between the first and second columns because there are two tombs with carrying shown on more than one plate. The above numbers show how many tombs there are in which the status goods occur but NOT the numbers of goods themselves.

Chart 19: Carrying status goods

6.6 Captions and Titles

Old Kingdom captions/titles reveal scant information about the elite's lives, society, or economic organization. Titles include both those held by the tomb-owner and those of his attendants and they will be treated separately.

Using captions and titles to elicit such information, presents the following difficulties:

- The material record's poor preservation making parts illegible is particularly troublesome, because for the Old Kingdom to have existed as long as it did, it must have had an adequate bureaucracy with many attendant records, which would have been useful for Egyptology. This difficulty applies to all historic studies but is particularly vexing in the context of smaller illegible inscriptions.

- Documents preserved especially of the period prior to and including the Old Kingdom, are extremely limited. Even when inscriptions are to hand, they are seldom narrative as evidenced by the Dynasty 5 Abusir papyri, which is really an archive of the local pyramid temples and a number of legal texts mainly related to endowments[716]. From Dynasty 5 onwards, personal details in the autobiographies begin to develop but these are more in the type of a career progression, and comments on the society of that period are never directly portrayed.

- Captions on representations in elite tombs were probably subject to the individual whim of the tomb-owner (subject of course to the provisions of decorum) and one can never be certain, of the extent to which individuality influenced the depiction of certain captions in the representations.

6.6.1 Captions

There are few captions and these relate to:

- Tomb-owner's self eulology/inspection visit (for the work done on his tomb[717])
- Porter's Songs[718]
- Porter's Remarks to Supervisor[719]
- Tomb-owner's business/objectives

In all of these, one can detect the concentration of the ideas, which were necessary to promote those concepts which I have termed generic as regards the tomb-owner, as well as ethical ideas of conduct regarded as conducive to societal welfare. These ideas seem to be shared by the members of the group, as seen in the captions below.

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[716] For details see P. Posener-Kriéger and J. L. de Cenival, *Hieratic Papyri in the British Museum. Fifth Series. The Abu Sir Papyri* (London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1968). For private Old Kingdom documents see Goedicke, *Die privaten Rechtsinschriften aus dem Alten Reich*.

[717] In the tombs of: Ankhmare, Neferkhuwi and Nimaatre.

[718] In the tombs of: Ipy, Itisen and Mereruka.

[719] In the tomb of Ptahshepses.

6.6.1.1 Tomb-Owner's Inspection Visit

In the tomb of Ankhmare, just above the carrying-chair motif, the caption reads:

> "Proceeding in peace homewards after viewing the work which was done in his tomb of the necropolis, the administrator of the granary Ankhmare".

> (sḏ3t m ḥtp r ẖnw m-ẖt m3 [k3] t irt m [is]=f [n] ḥrt-nṯr ḥry-tp šnwt ʿnḫmʿrʿ)

In the tomb of Neferkhuwi, it reads,

> "Proceeding in peace to the residence after seeing the work that was done in his tomb of the necropolis. This tomb was made for him because he was well venerated before god. As for his tomb, every craftsman who made it, he gave them a very great payment, so that they praised all the gods on behalf of him, the overseer Neferkhuwi".

> (s[ḏ]3t m[ḥtp r ẖnw]
> m ẖt m3[3] k3t ir [.ti]
> m [is] .f n ẖrt.nṯr
> [ir n.f is] .f [pn]
> [m šw i] m3ẖ.f [nfr ẖr nṯr]
> [ir is] .f ḥmt nb
> ir sw rdi.n.f n.sn. ḏb3
> ʿ3 wrt dw3.n.sn n. f nṯrw n
> [imi]-r...[Nfr-ẖw-w(i)].

Nimaatre's carrying-chair captions are much damaged but parts of the above phraseology are there.

Relevantly in all the three carrying-chair scenes where thanksgiving is depicted, the tomb-owners (Ankhmare, Neferkhuwi, and Nimaatre) are shown being carried from the inside of the tomb to the outside door of the tomb, and thus correspond with the captions pertaining to the purpose of the visit.

Examples of thanksgiving captions for the building of a tomb are also evidenced in other motifs[720], sometimes in detail.

In the tomb of Hetepherakhti[721], it reads:

> "I have made this tomb from my rightful means, and never took the property of anyone".
>
> (*ir. n (.i) is pw m išt (.i) mȝꜥ, n sp ity (.i) ḫt nt rmṯ nb*).

The details of payments are inscribed on the left doorjamb.

Similarly in the tomb of Remenu-ka[722] it reads:

> "As for this tomb, I made it because I was venerated before people and before god. Never was a block of stone belonging to any man brought to me for this tomb, because one remembered the judgement in the West. This tomb was made on bread and beer which I gave to all the craftsmen who made this tomb, I having given them previously very great payments in great quantity of linen of all kinds for which they asked and they praised god for it".
>
> (*ir is pn n(i) ḏt.(i)*
>
> *ir.n.(i) sw m- šwt imȝḫ.(i) nfr ḫr nṯr*
>
> *ni ḥm sp in.t(i) n.(i) inr n(i) rmṯw nb(w) (i)r is.(i) pn n sḫȝ.t(i) wḏꜥ-mdw m imntt*
>
> *ir.n.(i) is pn ḥr t ḥnḳt rḏi.n.(i) n ḥmwt nb(w)t ir(w)t is pn*
>
> *sk igr rḏi.n.(i) n.sn ḏbȝw (ir ꜥȝt wrt m sšr nb dbḥ.n.sn dwȝ.n sn nṯr ḥr.s*).

In the tomb of Inti it reads[723]:

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[720] E. Edel, "Inschriften des Alten Reichs " *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Orientforschung, Berlin.*, no. I (1953): 328-29. The caption in the tomb of Mehuakhti reads: "Concerning this tomb of mine, it was for bread and beer that it was made for me, and all the craftsmen who built it thanked me, after I had given them garments, oil, copper, barley in great quantity, saying: O all the gods of the necropolis, we are satisfied, our hearts being satisfied with the bread and beer that Mehuakhti, the venerated one, has given to us".

[721] Sethe, *Urkunden des Alten Reiches* 50. l, 1-2.

[722] Hassan, *Excavations at Giza 1930-1931* Fig. 206, p. 173.

"As to every craftsman - it was after they had built this (tomb) [that I satisfied them], so that they praised god for it. (It) was pleasant for them to make. They never really suffered from working too much, with the result that they might thank praise god for it".

(*ir ḥmwt nb(w)t [sḥtp.n.(i) sn] ir.n.sn nw dwȝ.sn n.(i) nṯr ḥr.s mrii n.sn irt [ni] šn.n.sn[is] irt ʿȝ wrt m-mrwt dwȝ.sn n.(i) nṯr im*).

6.6.1.2 Porter's Song

From the material record, it would appear that although there are variations of the porter's song which appears in 4 Memphite representations[724], their basic sentiment is quite clear. Although carrying the chair, might be a burden, nevertheless to carry their lord on it, is the porters' highest joy. A full version[725] reads:

"Go down in order to protect the prosperous

 Go down in order to protect the healthy

 O Sokar, who is on the sand come and protect N

 Act verily as [I] wish it full more than when it is empty".

In the tomb of Ipi where this song appears, it can be related to the wish of reaching the hereafter by travel overland in a carrying-chair to:

"attain the mountain heights of the necropolis".

Abbreviated versions of the song are present in the tomb of Mereruka:

"I like it filled, more than it is empty"[726].

Altenmüller suggests that this could also refer to the consolidation of the social identity and ideology of the elite[727]. Hieroglyphs referring to *wr* and

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[723] Sethe, *Urkunden des Alten Reiches* 70, l. 5-10.

[724] In the Memphite tombs of: Ipi, Mereruka (pl. 158), Sabwibbi, and Senedjemib. Inti, and in the provincial tombs of: Djau (Deir-el-Gebrawi, vol. II, pl.8), Pepyankh (Meir, vol. 5, pl. 31) and Shepsi-Pu-Min/Kheni ("el-Hawawish", vol. II, fig.21 & p. 26). For a detailed analysis of the porter's song see also R. Van Walsem, "Sense and Sensibility. On the Analysis and Interpretaion of the Iconography Programmes of Four Old Kingdom Elite Tombs," in *Dekorierte Grabanlagen im Alten Reich*, ed. M. Fitzenreiter and M. Herb (London: Golden House, 2006), 302-03.

[725] Translated by Heerma Van Voss in Phoenix (14): 1968, 131.

[726] Duell, *The Mastaba of Mereruka* vol. I, pl. 53 (b).

mḥnk are evident in the song: the former meaning great/mighty and the latter refer to persons who worked either for the king or another lord and who could be 'leased' by others, i.e. not so great. Accordingly he suggests that their juxtaposition is comparable to the words "empty" and "full" ; when the carrying-chair is full the tomb-owner's status is established but not so when it is empty.

Another variation in the tomb of Senedjemib-inti immediately before the sole sunshade carrier, reads:

"Go in your [carrying-chair] satisfied one".

The porters sing the carrying-chair song, which may have the triple purpose of - revealing the burden of their occupation, the joy in having the honour to carry the tomb-owner and the implicit well wishes for his life in the here and possibly in the hereafter[728].

6.6.1.3 Porters' Remarks to Supervisor

In the tomb of Ptahshepses[729] a conversation is inscribed relating to remarks between a supervisor and porters which points to the hierarchical nature of society and the nature of the consideration for the occupant of the carrying-chair.

The interpretation is (translation results in incomplete ideas and therefore meaning is derived by analogy with the tomb of Kagemni) that the supervisor has reminded one of the porters:

"to behave yourself, do [his] task properly and calm down"

ir rk nfr t(w)t (i)'Iḥr nty ḥnᶜ M33 n=k n tpt-rdk wrt

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[727] H. Altenmüller, "Das Sänftenlied des Alten Reiches," *Bulletin Sociétè d'Égyptologie, Genève*, no. 9-10 (1984-1985): 28. The idea of setting up a certain social position by the tomb-owner in terms of a cultural vocabulary including attire, headgear, elevated status objects etc. can be understood by all. Nevertheless to postulate that these culturally significant terms can be established by a combination of hieroglyphs can surely be of limited effect, especially when the target audience is literate and presumably already aware of these subtle connotations.

[728] Erman, *Reden, Rufe, und Lieder auf Gräberbildern des Alten Reiches* 52-53.

[729] Verner, *Abusir-I: The Mastaba of Ptahshepses* 99. He remarks that the inscriptions here "are not easy to interpret".

The porter replies that the supervisor should rather look forward and fulfill his duties as the leader of the palanquin procession.

"Look well forward! You quiet down, you favoured one".

ḥr=k m ḫ3t nfr ihr ẖr(y) – ḥs(w) t pw

6.6.1.4 Tomb-Owner's Other Objectives

In the tomb of Niankhkhnum and Khnumhotep (pl. 42 and 43), the journey in a carrying-chair slung between two donkeys, is characterized by the caption:

"Proceeding to the beautiful West",

sḏ3t r imnt nfrt

The purpose of the journey can relate to the funerary journey of the deceased or the inspection of his tomb which was being built in the west.

In pl. 60 of the same joint tomb, Niankhkhnum is depicted in a carrying-chair and the objective following his name and titles, is given as

"Proceeding to the fields to view all work in the fields",

h3it r sḫt r m33 k3t nbt nt sḫt

The importance of the porter's song and the other captions illustrating the tomb-owner's objectives, is the manner in which matters of respect and moral certitude are being shown by all the participants: the tomb-owner by paying the craftsmen, the craftsmen at being happy that they are so appreciated, and the porters in their refrain.

The Porter's Song should be understood in the wider context, to include the official journeys, the recreational ones, plus the final one to the beautiful West and are secular in concept. One cannot read more into the song based on the evidence[730], and their objective is neatly summed up in the scene which appears on the false door of Ptahhotep II[731]. Inscribed on the left jamb, where the hieroglyphs translate as follows:

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[730] Walsem, "Sense and Sensibility. On the Analysis and Interpretaion of the Iconography Programmes of Four Old Kingdom Elite Tombs," 303. He correctly states that the porter's song has "no deeper metaphorical implications" unlike the baseless assertion by Strudwick who believes that the song is "an allusion to the desire to be brought back to earth after death". See Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age* 418.

[731] Murray, *Saqqara Mastabas* vol. I, pl. 8.

"entering the house of eternity in most excellent peace, he being in a
state of worthiness before Anubis at the head after he has received the
funerary offerings at the top of the pit, after the tour, after the service
of making him a revered one by the lectors by reasons of his
exceedingly great favour before the king and Osiris".

This translation expresses the purposes of the journey and the respect shown
towards the tomb-owner. These inscriptions were debatably written by the
tomb-owner and as such have questionable veracity. If building and
decorating a tomb was a joint effort (no matter how small), then it is highly
unlikely that in a well-knit small community, such continued baseless
assertions would have been tolerated and propagated successively. That this
expression of mutual respect persisted through successive pharaonic
generations with little alteration to its fundamental character, proves the point
of a connectivity based on levels of hierarchy.

6.6.2 Titles and Epithets used in the inscriptions

6.6.2.1 Tomb-Owner's Titles

The following discussion will not consider the philology or meaning of titles, to
avoid any unnecessary speculation about the ancient Egyptians' mindset.

In this study, titles are used as a means of illustrating the social position of
the tomb-owner and any agency relationships with the subsidiary figures that
are found in the iconography.

Titles usually followed the career path of the official, as demonstrated in the
Dynasty 4 tombs of *Pḥrnfr* and *Mtn*[732]. Instructive of the general situation
regarding titles, are the titles of Pehernefer- he had two of the highest titles
ḥ3ti-ʿ and *ḥri-tp* as well as overseer of the treasury (*imi-r3 pr-ḥd*) and overseer
of the royal granaries (*imi-r3 šnwt nbt nt nswt*) yet he had forty other rank and
administrative titles. Presumably these were required at that time for the

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[732] H. Junker, "Phrnfr," *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde* no. 75 (1939):
63-72. For Metjen see Lepsius, *Denkmäler aus Ägypten und Äthiopien* pls. 4, 5, 6 & 7. See
also Strudwick, *The Administration of Egypt in the Old Kingdom. The Highest Titles and their
Holders.* 85. A similar conglomeration of titles is that of Nefermaat, ibid: 110.

fulfillment of his duties, and were based on what was the trend at the time[733].
As this is the case for most of the elite persons, one can sense in the string of titles, an attempt to portray the order in which these were accumulated, the increase in the order of social prestige and something akin to a type of Old Kingdom curriculum vitae.

There is a difference in titles in the administration of Lower and Upper Egypt in that each of these areas did not have the same official titles; the meanings of titles used by the elite tomb-owner thus follow a certain set pattern which is outside the scope of this study.

Accordingly the tomb-owner holds those titles which are typical of the period and place, identifying him as a person who is in the upper echelons of society in terms of social identity[734]. Significantly the carrying-chair motif makes a clear division between the statuses of the tomb-owner, his family, and the remaining subsidiary figures. These relationships then are more informative about the structure of Egyptian society than the string of titles of the tomb-owner. The strings of titles generally appear in a long series of columns above the representation of the tomb-owner; the most important titles tend to be displayed on the false door and grouped as near as possible to his name[735]. Accordingly this would imply that the titles which one finds in the carrying-chair motifs are not the most important ones he possessed but this cannot be proven.

In the earliest example of a carrying-chair motif in the tomb of Nefermaat, are the following titles:
Above the carrying-chair:

> "Hereditary Prince, Count, Guardian of Nekhen, Chief Justice and Vizier, Stolist of the God Min, Priest of the Goddess Bastet, Priest of the Goddess Shezmetet, Priest of the Ram of Mendes, Nefermaat".

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[733] Baer, *Rank and title in the Old Kingdom; the structure of the Egyptian administration in the fifth and sixth dynasties* 5.

[734] Ibid. 234-39.

[735] Helck, "Titel und Titularen," in Lexikon der Ägyptologie, vol. 6, 599.

On the offering panel on the false door are:

> "Hereditary Prince, Count, Guardian of Nekhen, Seal bearer of the King of Lower Egypt, King's eldest son. Nefermaat".

On the drum there appears:

> "Hereditary Prince Nefermaat".

Running in vertical columns on the extreme sides of the offering panel, are a repetition of the titles already encountered in the offering panel[736].

Rather than trying to rank these titles which are outside the scope of this study, it is suggested that one other way of looking at all these various titles is to accept that the more titles that are displayed in motifs other than the false door, the more important are these as an indicator of status. One goal of this exercise is to illustrate the concept of the tomb-owner's status. Whether or not he is designated by numerous or a few, the plethora of titles is of little consequence, because a single title in itself can denote an established designation of an area of responsibility, which because it depended initially on the authorization by the king, comes to have residual value, and indicates eliteness. Consequently the eliteness of Nefermaat is immediately made plain. Likewise a survey of the tomb owners in the carrying-chair motif reveals that these are elite persons of varying degrees - not all are of the highest order of hereditary prince, yet most belong to the highest officials in the administration and it is not intended to enumerate each of these because ranking titles is of little relevance to this study[737].

6.6.2.2 Titles of the Other Attendants

More illuminating than the titles of the tomb-owner, are those associated with the attendants including certain members of his family, who are in the vicinity of the carrying-chair.

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[736] Harpur and Scremin, *The tombs of Nefermaat and Rahotep at Maidum: Discovery, Destruction and Reconstruction* 68-70.

[737] For details on the development of administrative titles see: Endesfelder, "Formierung der Klassengesellschaft," 40-43.

Generally in the Memphite tombs under study, the identified subsidiary figures are not divided into separate groups but are part of the larger motif. They frequently form part of the mortuary cult and are attached to all types of scenes, e.g. banqueting, carrying-chair, etc. with other, non-identified figures but in all cases the image of the tomb-owner is evident nearby, thus they all fit into the design of the motif.

Most significantly in the Memphite region, these subsidiary figures are never shown with members of their own or the tomb-owner's family but separately. The very existence and identification of these attendants and their role in the mortuary cult, sets them apart from all others and points to the interdependencies, which must have existed between the tomb-owner and his attendants. I use the term mortuary cult broadly to (1) enable an understanding in the larger context of the monumental tomb and (2) differentiate between the relationship connecting the tomb-owner and other things and people, compared to his relationship with his immediate family.

On the one hand there are those subsidiary figures that are necessary for the composition of the motif, e.g. the porters - without whom there would be no carrying-chair motif. Then there are the officials and family members who may be specifically attired, wigged, described by title, or identified by name. The officials show only a few titles; therefore it is not possible to give a precise picture of their standing in the community. But if their depicted titles are anything to go by, then some of these indicate that they had jobs connected to the running of a large elite household, e.g. the titles of overseer of the estate - *imy-r pr* or follower/elder of the domain -*smsw / smsw pr*. These officials worked for the tomb-owner but also had other underlings beneath them. Other titles suggest that they also had outside duties, e.g. overseer of the gang of workmen – *imy-r iswt* and director of the gang of workmen – *ḫrp ist*. The officials' titles suggest responsibility both during the tomb-owner's life as well as in his mortuary cult but do not reveal a specific function in the household. Those titles which belong to the family members most notably his son/s is/are general; the eldest son is usually the 'testamentary' and rightful

heir of the tomb-owner while the combination of family members represented probably points to the collective grief of the family/clan.

The critical factor is that these were not just ordinary persons but officials who had a certain standing in the local community which tended to set them apart both in life and in the tomb art, where they may be designated by name, title, and their access to the tomb-owner's belongings. This personal commitment between the tomb-owner and attendants consolidates and maintains the identity of the tomb-owner and points to the nature of Egyptian society during this period. Accepting this line of argument also implies that the tomb-owner's sphere of influence over the community of dependants (especially the funerary priests), had to be maintained. One way this was done was analogous to the royal mortuary cult, where the king's influence over the priesthood was greatly increased because of their continuous rotation and dependency on the reversionary offerings and because the mortuary cult was staffed by a group of continually part-time rotating officials, one month out of every ten[738]. Priests and other higher status officials were also given priesthoods in the royal mortuary cult and thus had even more status and rewards.

A similar arrangement and functioning may have applied to the elite mortuary cult, but it must be stressed that information about the structure of private mortuary cults is less known, than that about royal mortuary cults[739]. In any case the rotational arrangement of the number of people, who had a dependency relationship to the tomb-owner, greatly increased his influence over a certain section of the community. This meant that the tomb-owner was guaranteed loyalty/dependency/service during his lifetime and for his funerary cult, while the funerary priests received status and reward during the lifetime

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[738] A. M. Roth, "The Organization and Functioning of the Royal Mortuary Cults of the Old Kingdom in Egypt," in *The Organization of Power: Aspects of Bureaucracy in the Ancient Near East*, ed. M. Gibson and R. D. Biggs (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1987), 133-40. I am assuming that the elite mortuary cult had some similarities to the royal mortuary cult because of the basic desire to emulate the king by rituals, e.g. the transformation of the deceased into a venerated one in the hereafter.

[739] See A. M. Roth, *Egyptian phyles in the Old Kingdom: The Evolution of a System of Social Organization*, *Studies in ancient oriental civilization (48)* (Chicago: The Oriental Institute 1991).

of the tomb-owner and after his death. Implicitly by being included in his cult and in his iconography, any particular identified subsidiary figure comes to have higher status than others not so included – a most suitable arrangement for all concerned. Additionally it is suggested that the identification of specific subsidiary individuals and their titles could indicate that (like the eldest son but at a different level) they too were legitimated as the rightful heirs and benefactors of his mortuary cult - a kind of 'will'.

Therefore it is suggested that these subsidiary figures should be understood as occupying a midway position between that of the tomb-owner and the rest of the population and this underpins their mutual interdependency.

The identity of the tomb-owner is entrenched in "the firm belief in a post-mortem existence, not as an anonymous shadow, but in complete preservation of personal identity as it has developed during the lifetime of an individual"[740].

Concomitantly it must be assumed that because there were higher levels of priesthood who belonged to phyles in the Old Kingdom[741], that this must have imposed a greater burden on the posthumous assets of the tomb-owner, which in due course probably was one of the many reasons which contributed to the eventual breakdown of the Old Kingdom.

Accordingly while the titles of the tomb-owner's attendants provide certain links to the items of generics, the underlying idea of this study, yet their statistical analysis poses problems.

At the outset it became apparent that associating the number of people holding certain titles as an attribute of the social identity of the tomb-owner would lead to problems. Because the nature of the material record is such, that it is impossible to say with any certainty that a tomb-owner, who for example only depicts 2 of his four attendants with titles, had less social

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[740] J. Assmann, "Preservation and Presentation of Self in Ancient Egyptian Portraiture," in *Studies in Honor of W. K. Simpson*, ed. Peter Der Manuelian (Massachusetts: Henry N. Sawer Company, Charlestown, 1996), Vol. I, 80.

[741] Roth, *Egyptian phyles in the Old Kingdom: The Evolution of a System of Social Organization* 3.

significance than one, who thanks to preservation, shows all 4 attendants with similar titles.

It became equally clear that ranking these titles would be an equally futile exercise, because of the uncertainty involved in any method of ranking depending on meanings based on modern understanding of hierarchy, but which cannot be linked into the actual understandings which the ancient Egyptians may have had. While some of the titles are clear-cut in the context of hierarchical implications, others are difficult to position, e.g. the difference between an inspector and an overseer ($s\underline{h}d$ / imy-r) is obvious, however that between an overseer and a director ($\underline{h}rp$ / imy-r) is less so. These problems lead me to suggest an alternative, which while not overcoming all the objections aired above, may at least assist in indicating the frequency of the type of official or family member that is depicted.

Accordingly a partial attempt to minimize the above problems is to consider the frequency of a certain type of official or family member with a title using the following method:

1. All the various attendants' and family members title's were collated.
2. Only one genre of any title was counted, e.g. 7 seal bearers would have the same weighting as 1 seal bearer in a tomb. All similar titles were grouped under the main function, e.g. "sealer", would include "sealer in the monthly service" etc. Titles with two functions would be treated as 2 separate functions, e.g. "scribe and sealer" would then appear as 1 scribe and 1 sealer for that tomb.

Steps (1) & (2) were then repeated for all the titles within the tombs known to have a carrying-chair.

A survey of all the titles appearing in the carrying-chair representation using the above method resulted in 19 tombs which displayed titles relating to the subsidiary persons, and these were in accordance with the suggested method

segregated into 8 major genres of titles Table 2 - "Grouped Titles and Occurrences" [742].

Their attested titles, their transliteration, and their tomb(s) (superscripted), also appear in "Appendix F".

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[742] In order to determine the frequency of title appearance in the carrying chair scene, the tombs in which they appear have been designated with a superscript as follows:

a1 - Neferkhuwi, Roth, "A Cemetery of Palace Attendants", (1995): fig. 191.
a2 - Perneb, Hayes, "The Sceptre of Egypt", vol. 1, (1959): fig. 51.
a3 - Ptahshepses, Verner, "Abusir-1, The Mastaba of Ptahshepses", (1977): pls. 53-55.
a4 - Kagemni, Harpur and Scremin, "The Chapel of Kagemni", (2006): fig. 278.
a5 - Metjetji, P. Kaplony, "Studien zum Grab des Methethi", (1976): fig. 2.
a6 - Iymery, K. Weeks, "Mastabas of Cemetery G 6000", (1994): fig. 32.
a7 - Nikauissesi, N. Kanawati, "The Teti Cemetery at Saqqara," 6, (2000): fig. 55.
a8 - Hesi, N. Kanawati, "The Teti Cemetery at Saqqara", 5, (1999): pl. 55.
a9 - Niankhkhnum, Altenmüller and Moussa, "Das Grab des Niankhkhnum und Khnumhotep", (1977): figs. 42 & 60.
a10 - Khnumhotep, Altenmüller and Moussa, "Das Grab des Niankhkhnum und Khnumhotep", (1977): fig. 43.
a11 - Qar, W. K. Simpson, "The Mastabas of Qar and Idu", (1976): pl. XI (b).
a12 - Mereruka, P. Duell, "The Mastaba of Mereruka", vol. 1 & 2, (1938): pl. 14 & 158. (Mereruka is known to have 7 sons; Meryteti, Pepyankh, Memy, Khenty, Apref, Khenu & Nefer but the scene only identifies 9 brothers & 2 sons).
a13 - Ty, Épron, "Le Tombeau de Ti", (1939): pl.16/17.
a14 - Itisen, S. Hassan, "Excavations at Giza", vol. 5, (1944): fig. 123.
a15 - Senedjemib.Inti, E. Brovarski, "The Senedjemib Complex", part 1, (2001): fig. 40-41.
a16 - Seshemnefer.Tjetti, H. Junker, "Giza", vol. 11, (1953): fig. 100.
a17 - Sabwibbi, Borchardt, "Denkmäler Des Alten Reiches", vol. 1, (1937): pl. 1419.
a18 - Meryteti, N. Knanwati, "Mereruka and his Family", part 1, (2004): fig. 47.
a19 - Waatetkhethor, N. Kanawati, "Mereruka and his Family", part 2, (2008): fig. 69.

<u>Table 2</u>   **<u>Grouped Titles & Occurrences</u>**

|	
<u>11 Occurrences</u>	**<u>Overseer</u>**
	Overseer[a4, a7, a12]
	Overseer of the house[a2, a14]
	Overseer of linen[a4, a8, a12, a16, a17, a19]
	Overseer of scribes[a15]
	Overseer of the gate of Nesuhor[a11]
<u>7 Occurrences</u>	**<u>Priests</u>**
	Funerary priest[a9, a10, a13, a17, a18]
	Inspector of funerary priests[a3, a6, a10]
	Funerary priest and Elder of the dockyard[a17]
	Lector priest[a3]
<u>7 Occurrences</u>	**<u>Scribes</u>**
	Scribe[a1, a3, a5, a6, a10, a11, a14]
<u>5 Occurrences</u>	**<u>Family Members</u>**
	His eldest son, his beloved[a3, a6]
	His son[a3, a4, a6, a12, a13]
	His brother[a6, a12]
<u>4 Occurrences</u>	**<u>Seal Bearers</u>**
	Seal bearer[a4, a13]
	Sear bearer in monthly service[a13]
	Inspector of seal bearers[a2, a4, a13, a17]
<u>4 Occurrences</u>	**<u>Archivist</u>**
	Archivist[a2, a5, a6, a14]
<u>2 Occurrences</u>	**<u>Director</u>**
	Director of the gang of workmen[a7]
	Director of followers[a8]
<u>1 Occurrence</u>	**<u>Court Councilor</u>**
	Court councilor, Sole councilor, Servant of the throne[a3]
<u>Occurrences</u>	**<u>Others denoting a particular activity</u>**
	Physician[a1]
	Barber[a9, a13]
	Manicurist[a9]
	Carpenter[a9]
	Follower[a4]
	Inspector of the fowling pond[a13]
	Inspector of hairdressers of the Great House[a13]

An attempt was made in the table below to correlate the above-mentioned titles with the dating of the tombs. This revealed that no specific titles can be attributed to either Dynasty 5 or 6 – the titles appear in both periods.

Table 3   **Grouped Title Occurrence by Dynasty**

Tomb-Owner	Dynasty	Overseer A	Priests B	Scribes C	Relatives D	Seal Bearers E	Archivists F	Director G	Court Councillor H	Others I
a6 Iymery	**V.3L**		✓	✓	✓		✓			
a9 Niankhkhnum a10 Khnumhotep a3 Ptahshepses a14 Itisen	**V.6L-7** **V.6-8?**	✓	✓✓ ✓	✓ ✓✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
a15 Senedjemib.Inti a1 Neferkhuwi a13 Ty a2 Perneb a7 Nikauisesi	**V.8M-L** **V.8-9**	✓ ✓	✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓			✓✓
a18 Meryteti a12 Mereruka a17 Sabwibbi a19 Waatetkhethor a16 Seshemnefer.Tjetti	**VI.1**	✓✓✓ ✓✓	✓✓		✓	✓		✓		✓
a4 Kagemni a5 Metjetji	**VI.2**	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			
a8 Hezi	**VI.3**	✓						✓		
a11 Qar	**VI.4**	✓		✓						
Occurences →		11	7	7	5	4	4	2	1	4

Note: The ticks in the table have been grouped so that where there is no distinct separation between dynasty periods, e.g. between V. 8M-L and V. 8-9, they appear clustered together. Where this is not the case, e.g. VI.3 and VI.4, the ticks appear in the middle of the table.

More instructive is Pie Chart 20 below. It indicates the frequency of main titles of the subsidiary figures in the 19 tombs (52% of the total population of 37 tombs) which result in keeping with established conceptions of mortuary art in that a preponderance of overseers, scribes, and priests are present. Additionally it indicates the status of the tomb-owner which is maintained and enhanced by his being surrounded by a cross section of elite members of society, and thus a pointer to the generics. There is a conspicuous constant public reminders of power by the Old Kingdom elite (e.g. in the display of being carried in a carrying-chair with baton wielding porters). This has the same effect as the comparable anonymous use, e.g. the monopoly of the mass media, weapons of immediate destruction, etc. by those in power today, but who do not display this at all times.

Titles of Subsidiary Figures
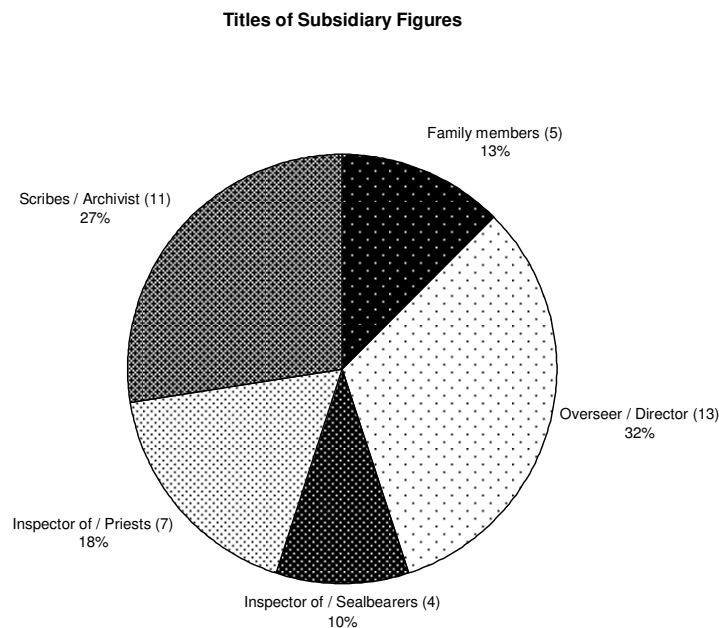
The above pie chart is intended to give an idea of the main titles used by subsidiary figures but NOT to the number of tombs in which these occur. For data see table 2.

Pie Chart 20: Titles of Subsidiary Figures

6.6.2.3 Implications of Language Games

Part 1 p. 19 refers to Wittgenstein and his theory of language games which among other things, considers that some problems and their solutions are related to the way language is used to formulate questions. It was felt that Wittgenstein's use of language games to explain certain philosophical problems or ambiguities, might assist in clarifying how the ancient Egyptians felt about certain things, i.e. the ancient Egyptians' mindset will be considered to be expressed in their language game(s). By considering a number of language games, it is hoped that one (or more) will coincide with the Egyptians' original language game(s) of the "emic" type. The modern "etic" type language game that is most consistently relevant to the evidence is then likely to be the one most similar to the original language game (and its associated attitudes to be the ones most similar to those of the ancient Egyptians, a shift from the initial etic starting point to an end point of varying emic degree(s).

Language Game 1: Social & Economic Value

At the elementary level, the carrying-chair consists of pieces of joined wood. Its value depends entirely upon the people who use it (initially royalty), the material out of which it is made and the functionality of the product. The modern response depends on which of these element(s) is required for proving a certain issue and all or any of these will be influenced by the particular cultural embeddedness of the analyst. People who live in places where there is abundance of hard wood and of animals used for baggage and transport, would probably pay very little attention to these elements. Again others could pay more attention to these because these elements of utility and transport are an essential element of their own culture. Different cultural environments could thus produce different approaches as to the system of government; functionality of certain products, e.g. the carrying-chair and the material used to produce these scarce products and this is why the responses to the carrying-chair scene in its most elementary form will be different. Objects which belonged to the dead elite, e.g. the carrying-chair, can also be

thought to be imbued with the same essential nature as their previous elite owners. The object's social value and the values associated with the elite tomb-owner become synonymous because the object reminds one of his past prestige. The object thus comes to have some power to influence people's minds[743], which in turn serves to reinforce and maintain the generics.

Language Game 2: Role & Societal Analysis

At yet another level, one can use the carrying-chair's role in the analysis of a society at a particular point in time. It then becomes necessary to examine such diverse factors as:

> Who carries it?
>
> How is it carried?
>
> How many are involved in the process?
>
> What do these carriers wear?
>
> Who is the occupant?
>
> What attributes does he try to show?

These issues then become part of the current language game responses which expand on the understanding of that society.

Language Game 3: Societal Change

At the third level of enquiry into change as an aspect of cultural development another language game was played by asking such questions as:

> Why habits/mores change?
>
> Are there any general triggers of change?
>
> Why are there certain changes in the carrying-chair motif such as its different material forms, usage by the elite and differences in subsidiary attributes, e.g. number of porters, attire, etc.?
>
> Is culture doomed to disappear, etc.?

Such changes (part of the answer) could be attributed to the aberrations of individual behaviour and be widespread but this could not be pursued

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[743] B. J. Mills and W. H. Walker, eds., *Memory Work: Archaeologies of Material Practices* (Santa Fe: School for Advanced Research Press, 2008) 81.

because of the limited nature of the time frame of this study (however where possible, references to other periods were made). Another answer can be attributed to the fact that because every more or less closed system ultimately degrades toward a state of maximum entropy this situation will, result in automatic non-deliberate change. Societies are seldom completely closed systems because these are composed of a combination of varied internal and external sub-systems, which respond to societal pressures by introducing differences which change pre-ordained customs/traditions. Societies generally tend to evolve rather than completely die off; even modern day Egypt, can be considered as a transformation following the displacement of the original pharaonic culture by (amongst others) the present day Islamic Society.

The carrying-chair motif as a symbol of Egyptian elite society is evidenced early in the history of Egypt but by Dynasty 5 & 6, it presents a new, fresh and an energetic view of the elite, one which depicts boldness and unlimited promise of potential upward movement. There was change in its usage, character and depiction, as evidenced from the pre-dynastic to the late period, e.g. from a chair used for royal ceremonial religious purposes such as the heb sed festival (as in Narmer mace head from Hierakonpolis Main deposit in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. E3631), through usurpation by the elite for transport in the Old Kingdom, and eventually mainly for the processional carrying of gods' statues in the New Kingdom. Further from the late Middle Kingdom onwards, the use of the carrying-chair starts to diminish and finally becomes obsolete during the Hyksos period. Thus what appears as change or even decay, nevertheless appears in another form in another time zone, e.g. the horse and wagon during the early 18th Dynasty, replace the carrying-chair as an elite attribute, comparable to the nineteenth to the twentieth century's exchange of the horse carriage for automobiles by the elite. This then is an example of change and evolution because of the interaction of the elite, who ensure that change, is entrenched, and that entropy as meaning a progress towards a dead culture, does not develop or takes longer. In due course of time, differences in the way social and religious issues were addressed in the

context of the carrying-chair motif, also become noticeable, e.g. differences in the number of porters, the type of canopies, attire, etc.

Language Game 4: Generic Involvement

The language game that I extended for the carrying-chair motif was identified from the start as one in which aspects of identity, individuality and ideology, would be explored in the context of these representations, which are present in Dynasty 5 & 6 Old Kingdom elite tombs. This demanded that the search for the clues to these issues, employ a wide variety of approaches to illustrate the relationship between the tomb-owner and his subsidiary attendants depicted in this motif. I tried as much as possible to eliminate some of my own cultural baggage especially in relation to the levels of hierarchy and use was made of statistical tools. I am fully aware that cold mathematics can never fully explain human systems; however mathematical quantification enabled me to draw useful analogies, which are shown in 29 charts and 9 tables.

The crucial point to observe is that in all the four language games that are being used to elicit different responses, none encapsulates an answer suitable for all occasions. This substantiates the hypothesis by Wittgenstein, that there can be no one single and final meaning and it all depends on which language game is being employed, which theory has been applied to Egyptian Art by:

Frankfort (multiplicity of approaches)[744], Hornung (Quantum Theory) and more recently refined by Van Walsem (in explaining how things can exist in an either /or situation)[745].

The analysis of the carrying-chair has resulted in a foray into many multifaceted and competing worlds and perhaps this complexity is best summed up in the words of Williams, he writes:

> "Every human society has its own shape, its own purposes, and its own
> meanings. Every human society expresses these, in institutions, and in

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[744] H. Frankfort, *Ancient Egyptian Religion* (Harper and Row, 1961).

[745] Hornung, *Conceptions of God in ancient Egypt: the one and the many* 241. See also alternative comments by Van Walsem, "The Struggle Against Chaos as a "Strange Attractor" in Ancient Egyptian Culture," 321-23 and 33-34.

arts and learning. The making of a society is the finding of common meanings and directions, and its growth is an active debate and amendment under the pressures of experience, contact, and discovery, writing themselves into the land. The growing society is there, yet it is also made and remade in every individual mind. The making of a mind is, first, the slow learning of shapes, purposes, and meanings, so that work, observation, and communication are possible. Then, second, but equal in importance, is the testing of these in experience, the making of new observations, comparisons, and meanings. A culture has two aspects: the known meanings and directions, which its members are trained to, the new observations and meanings, which are offered and tested. These are the ordinary processes of human societies and human minds, and we see through them the nature of a culture: that it is always both traditional and creative; that it is both the most ordinary common meanings and the finest individual meanings"[746].

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[746] R. Williams, *Resources of hope: culture, democracy, socialism* (New York: Verso, 1989) 4.

Chapter 7

Officials' Records-Taking Account

This chapter sketches the relations between the living and the dead especially with regard to the dialogue that is conducted in presenting records, of presumably the tomb-owner's property. I have purposely chosen the "Taking-Account" motif as representing part of the officials' records because it directly relates to a particular cultural aspect of society's members; in the way they communicate with each other and because communication is an indispensable element of all existence. The salient point is, that there is a change in the modes of human interaction, from primary oral to written and that this change becomes embedded in different forms of communication and display, of which the Taking-Account motif is one such example.

At its most basic level communication can be of an oral nature but with increasing societal complexity, this process is supplemented by other forms. Writing becomes a crucial part of this social process and eventually becomes a crucial component of the organization and administrative elements of a culture. Organization and administration together with communication then play a role in the stability and unity of a society, which is essential for its ordered and secure existence[747].

Communication and display of document records also reflects the broader concerns of the elite, one of which must have had to do with material possessions, since their well thought-out display in some form is omnipresent in all the tomb depictions. In order for these actions to have maximum societal impact, they are made to become part of the monumental culture and related ceremony. In the private elite tombs of the Old Kingdom communication, display, material possessions, and ceremony are combined to form part of the Taking Account motif, based on a continuing belief in the religious and cultural concepts of the time and ultimately reflect the generics and individuality in specific cases.

7.1 Confronting the Tomb-Owner with Written Records

This motif will consider the inspection and transfer of the officials' records. It will be called the 'Taking Account' motif because this verb (not to be confused

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[747] N. de G. Davies, *The Tomb of Rekh-mi-Re at Thebes*, 2 vols. (New York: PMMA, 1943) vol. I, 18, 25 & 33. Theban tomb TT 100 is a New Kingdom tomb, however it clearly indicates this process of organization, and communication, i.e. the tomb-owner says that he was responsible for the maintenance of the archives, appointment, supervision of officials, and exercise of law. See also G. P. F. van den Boorn, *The duties of the Vizier: civil administration in the early New Kingdom* (London: Keagan Paul, 1988).

with the financial procedures of the accountancy profession) covers all that is depicted in this motif, e.g.

- Reflects both protagonists
- Demonstrates the relative status of the protagonists
- Deals with the idea of the tomb-owner's property
- Illustrates possibly simultaneous oral and written communication.

There is no commonly accepted alternative terminology but in contrast to my choice of terminology, some authors may prefer other words, particularly if they want to emphasize a particular component factor. In the literature this motif has been referred to as "Presenting the Scroll"[748] but this highlights only one aspect of the obvious activity - that of the presenter and takes focus away from the tomb-owner, which my classification does not. Further even if all the presenting individuals were officials who were in some form directly or indirectly connected with the king and so of high standing, Egyptian art does not usually allow any diminution of the focal point of view of the tomb-owner. Accordingly one cannot demote these scenes simply to that of presenting the scroll, highlighting one function of the presenter, and Baines assertion is nearer the mark when he stresses that "complex cultural topics could only be communicated in writing through visual arrangements" and that "its formal character is probably its most significant aspect"[749].

Taking–account refers to an act within a particular context in which assent and deliberation are required. In the Old Kingdom context both of these are apparent from the depictions themselves. This contrasts with those communicative articulations which are so general as to be applicable in any context, and where no assent or deliberation is required.

This motif's development can be traced tentatively to the time when the principal requirement was the provisioning of the deceased with food. From actual food to written offering lists, to depictions and models of food, to

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[748] P. Der Manuelian, "Presenting the Scroll," in *Studies in Honor of W. K. Simpson*, ed. P. Der Manuelian (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 1996), 561-88.

[749] Baines, *Visual and written culture in ancient Egypt* 149-52.

prayers and the biographical inscriptions in Dynasty 5; the strongest support that the dead need provisioning is found in the Pyramid Texts, where it is the primary requirement for the king[750]. These ideas of what was essentially a provisioning requirement are depicted in the:

- Banqueting motif, where offerings are presented to the passively watching but non-eating tomb-owner.
- Taking-Account motif, where the proffered papyrus document suffices.

Whether this development as ordered above actually took place, is debatable[751].

The Taking-Account motif and the form in which it is depicted in elite tombs of the Old Kingdom provide a non-verbal language. Both the tomb itself and the tomb-owner, function to unite the members of his group of people (as evidenced in the funerary rituals), and to make permanent those property rights, which the tomb-owner had prior to his death.

The endowing of permanence (through display) to property rights across generations was a factor in the claims of lineal descent and must therefore be regarded as significant.

A prominent feature during the pharaonic period was the administration and written recording in the archives of wills, title deeds, taxes, etc.[752] The word "administration" is to be understood as including the state's apparatus in its entirety and the means employed for its effective functioning – communication and recording are two facets of this intricate web.

The nature of the source material is patchy and numerous studies have focused on certain specific aspects[753], e.g. seal impressions and their related

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[750] Faulkner, *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts* § 474. "…the corpse is bound for the earth, and what men receive when they are buried is its thousand of bread and its thousand of beer".

[751] Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature* vol. I, 3-8. See also Junker, *Giza* vol. 3, 58-59.

[752] Posener-Kriéger and Cenival, *Hieratic Papyri in the British Museum. Fifth Series. The Abu Sir Papyri* pl. XXXIV.

[753] For seal impressions see Kaplony, *Die Inschriften der ägyptischen Frühzeit* vol. II, & III. Also Roth, *Egyptian phyles in the Old Kingdom: The Evolution of a System of Social Organization*. Also Strudwick, *The Administration of Egypt in the Old Kingdom. The Highest Titles and their Holders*. Also Goedicke, *Die privaten Rechtsinschriften aus dem Alten Reich*.

offices, the phyle system, aspects of the administrative system of the Memphite region and legal inscriptions relating to the Old Kingdom.

The Taking-Account motif allows for a more specialized approach by highlighting certain relevant aspects of the early administrative system, especially those related to communication and documentation, which existed from Dynasty 1 into the Old Kingdom[754]. These aspects ensured the elite's effective economic control, derived during the recording of products from their estates, official gifts from the king and taxes on excess of produced goods[755].

Eventually, this was not only an elite concern and it must have filtered down to all people for their specific needs, i.e. how information given, recorded and shared becomes an integral part of society at all levels. This is why this motif has been chosen because it permeates in different forms of communication through all levels of society.

In the elite mastaba decoration repertoire of the Old Kingdom, there occurs a motif in which an official 'presents' the tomb-owner with a document possibly concerning some aspect of his $pr\ dt$ (goods of his funerary endowment)[756]. The presentation of this document is depicted in a wide variety of ways, but

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[754] W. B. Emery, *The tomb of Hemaka*, *Service des Antiquités de l'Egypté: Excavations at Saqqara* (Cairo: Government Press, Bulâq, 1938) 14. Although there is evidence for the existence of papyrus as a writing material, no examples of written papyrus have survived from the earliest dynasties.

[755] Trigger, *Early Civilizations: Ancient Egypt in Context* 45-46. His analysis of early civilizations, found that elites in every analyzed state, were able to expropriate economic surpluses from the poorer classes and use them to their advantage.

[756] E. Seidl, *Einführung in die ägyptische Rechtsgeschichte bis zum Ende des Neuen Reiches* (Glückstadt: J. J. Augustin, 1951) 44. The hieroglyphic symbol for house is attested since Dynasty 1. By Dynasty 4 it comes to have an extended meaning as evidenced in the tomb of Metjen; "von dem aus ein im Lande verstreutes, umfangreiches, grund herrschaftliches Vermögen für alle Zeit verwaltet werden soll - durch die dereinst im Haus befindlichen Nachfolger des Meten", see (Urk. 1. 4, 10 [C7]). This is evidence for the multi-faceted meaning of this common symbol relating to a host of concepts such as house, house owner, estate, his family, his heir and in all probability to the goods of his funerary endowment ($pr\ dt$). See also Manuelian, "Presenting the Scroll," 582 & 85. Indeed in Der Manuelian's article, he mentions ($pr\ dt$) only three times but in view of the extended meaning in the context of offerings, reversionary and invocation offerings, I suggest that the document should be understood to be connected with some aspect of his funerary estate.

in all cases the presenter/s always faces the tomb-owner. In keeping with the objects of this study (see Introductory Remarks) the following sub-motifs which mainly concern practices that characterize the Egyptian's interaction with the divine sphere, shall be excluded:

- Offering rituals with priests reciting formulae from a papyrus scroll held in front of them[757]
- Officials inscribing papyri generally and reciting invocations or other cultic recitations in front of the tomb-owner.

This part of the thesis will therefore be limited to document offerers and the tomb-owner and the word *m33* shall have no overriding meaning, i.e. the motif can still be that of Taking-Account even if the word *m33* is present, provided the viewing is that of general items and not specific ones. How then, does one explain the presence of a person holding a document in front of the tomb-owner with varied captions? There is no definite answer to this question and the following solutions have been proposed:

- Accept all such motifs as nonspecific presenting motifs; however this is probably incorrect because this fails to explain why there is no reference to the document at all.
- Another solution provided by Der Manuelian is to de-emphasize the captions when he says that, "The presence or absence of a specific hieroglyphic caption is unrelated to the presence or absence of a more general, overall scene description relating directly to the large scale figure of the tomb-owner"[758].

However this too, is imprecise because in such cases textual evidence is being relegated to something of no import. In addition the scene could describe a document which is being inspected by the scribe, in order to ensure that the items and goods depicted are correctly accounted for. The document then is just for the scribe's benefit and has nothing to do with the tomb-owner. In

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[757] Badawy, *The Tomb of Nyhetep-ptah at Giza and the Tomb of Ankhmahor at Saqqara* pl. 17.

[758] Manuelian, "Presenting the Scroll," 563.

the tomb of Nebet[759], the inspection or receipt by the tomb-owner of the proffered document from as many as twelve proffering scribes is nowhere captioned. Instead all the focus is on the items that are seen and described as such by the tomb-owner. The frequent captions specify what she is viewing, despite men, each with a document being present. The captions are specific in nature, e.g.

- "bringing wine to you my lady"
- "viewing the wine"
- "viewing the wine brought from the palace"
- "viewing the gifts that are brought"
- "viewing the agricultural labour"
- "viewing all the hoofed animals"

If the scribes are seen with a document but are only "counting" the goods in the tomb-owner's presence, this cannot be a "taking-account" motif because this is a passive act of seeing by the tomb-owner. However if this is a presentation of the document, then it could be a taking-account motif. Accordingly, distinguishing whether a document is being presented or not, in the absence of any supportive caption, makes certainty of interpretation very difficult.

In a largely pre-literate society, the artist is probably more accurate when he portrays the actual objects rather than texts of the object. A modern analogy where people are conditioned to accept symbols as substitutes for reality is seen when we accept pieces of printed-paper as money instead of gold. Similarly in Old Kingdom Egypt, the proffering of a document has to be differentiated from all the other viewing motifs because it represents a very precise signal, one which is not casual but causal in effect.

The determination of 'taking account' motifs will be based on the following guidelines.

<u>Definite Proof</u> if both:

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[759] P. Munro, *Der Unas-Friedhof Nord-West: Das Doppelgrab der Königinnen Nebet und Khenut*, vol. 1 (Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern, 1993) 66 and pl. 3/38.

1) Presence of a tomb-owner, a presenter and a document AND.

2) Sufficient proof of taking-account in the form of :

    a) Caption(s) stating the handing over, extending, proffering etc. of
       the document to the tomb-owner &/or

    b) Depiction of tomb-owner's obvious acceptance of the document

<u>Insufficient proof</u> (even when tomb-owner, a presenter, and a document are depicted) if:

1) No supportive captions are present

2) Scribes with a document in their hands, described or shown as counting
    goods, which are viewed by the tomb-owner in a passive manner
    requiring little or no conscious effort or deliberation

3) No obvious receipt by tomb-owner

An example from the tomb of Idut makes this clear. It meets the definite proof guidelines 1) All persons and a document are present and 2a) The caption reads,

    m33 nḏt-ḥr rnpt nbt nfrt innt n=s m ḥwwt ni nwt

    "inspecting or viewing the gifts and all good offerings of the year which
    are brought for her from the estates and the towns"[760].

The depiction shows a document being presented. Therefore this scene would fall into the category of a Taking-Account motif. A contrasting example is that from the tomb of Seshathetep.heti which does not meet the guidelines above, and is therefore not to be considered a taking account motif[761].

It must be stressed that even with the above scheme difficulties persist, one good example being that in the tomb of Meryib[762]. In Meryib's entrance

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[760] N. Kanawati, *The Unis Cemetery at Saqqara: the tombs of Iynefert and Ihy (reused by Idut)*, *The Australian Centre for Egyptology: Reports 19* (Oxford: Aris and Phillips, 2003) vol. 2, fig. 71.

[761] N. Kanawati, *Tombs at Giza*, vol. 2, *The Australian Centre for Egyptology: Reports 18* (Warminster: Aris and Phillips Ltd., 2002) pl. 45. Here it is clear from the captions that the son/scribe is counting all the property.

thicknesses the Taking-Account motif can be said to be composed such that if one were to put the Southern entrance thickness behind the Northern one the depiction would be a fully detailed Taking-Account motif. In the latter part the tomb-owner is depicted with his son Meryib junior, and the seal bearer of the festival ointment Isi presents a specific document, followed by the supervisor of linen. The caption reads:

> "Presenting the list by the seal bearer of the festival and the supervisor of linen".

Above these two figures another caption reads:

> "Viewing the invocation offerings brought from the house of the king"

and presumably, this is what the list being presented contained.

On the Southern entrance thickness, the tomb-owner in shoulder length striated "wig", panther skin outer garment with "false beard", bracelets and a rod of authority is seen with his three children (two daughters Sedjenet and Nesdjerkai and a son Meryneteru-khufu). The caption reads:

> "Viewing the valuable (*ḫtmt*)[763] offerings brought from the house of the king".

In contrast to the previous caption, this caption probably refers to general valuables but there is no specific document or a presenter and so this southern part would not meet the above guidelines (although the combined northern and southern parts would meet the guidelines). This is a good example of the difficulties of the taking-account motif.

A further confusion is in the use of the same verb *m33* for viewing and presentation in the captions, which cannot be easily resolved. Because there are different verbs which exist, and were used to describe such actions, it is incredulous that the ancient Egyptians were unaware of the subtle differences. The same verb may have slightly different meanings, which might only be detected in the context of their usage and as such it is exceedingly difficult to draw a line between multiple meanings of such a verb, e.g. *m33*. Similar problems exist in the Taking-Account motif in the tombs of Meresankh

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[762] Junker, *Giza* vol. 2, 127-30.

[763] Hannig, *Die Sprache der Pharaonen: Grosses Handwörterbuch* 627. (List of?) Valuables.

III, and Kahfkhufu I[764]. This is why I have chosen to differentiate these apparently similar motifs as far as is possible.

Admittedly these are arbitrary guidelines, but it is necessary to distinguish between two types of different yet ostensibly similar scenes. Many of the viewing scenes come under the general rubric of *m33* scenes. These include actions such as viewing, in order to view by the tomb-owner, and sometimes the recitation of glorifications indicated by the words *m33/r.m33/šdt*.

Contrasting with these, are those scenes in which a specific reference is made to the acts of handing, proffering, giving, extending, and spreading of a document, indicated by the words *di/rdi/rdit/di.t/siꜥ/ꜣwt*. In distinguishing these scenes, it is hoped to make transparent the fine distinction between seeing and inspecting/taking-account. "Seeing" is an act of little interpretative cultural value, while "inspecting", i.e. Taking-Account, imposes a certain discipline on the giver and the receiver and emphasizes a significant cultural habit, which is being communicated and documented. It is the defining and main parameter of this motif and contrasts with any incidental activity.

I have referred to them as "Taking-Account" scenes because this title incorporates most of the notions associated with reporting, fully cognizant of the fact that this nomenclature does no justice to all the different ways the scene is represented and captioned, and that grey areas exist even when applying the guidelines proposed.

Some of the motifs clearly point to the ceremonial transfer of a document and its contents, indicated by the tomb-owner extending his hand to receive the document[765]. At other times this can be understood from the use of the verb *rdit* but this has similar problems as already indicated when discussing the verb *m33*. The point of focus is distributed between the tomb-owner and his sub-ordinate and the various depictions show the subordinate in a wide

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[764] Dunham et al., *The mastaba of Queen Mersyankh III: G7530-7540* fig. 3 (b) and 12. See also W. K. Simpson, S. E. Chapman, and G. A. Reisner, *The mastabas of Kawab, Khafkhufu I and II: G7110-20, 7130-40, and 7150, and subsidiary mastabas of Street G7100* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1978) fig. 28 & 29.

[765] In the tombs of Kahif, Kaninisut, Neferkahay, Qar, and Senedjemib.Mehi

variety of poses, which could be accidental or deliberate but this cannot be established[766].

The meaning of this motif can best be understood if one contrasts this ceremonial function (formal occasion where careful attention is paid to form and detail) with that of a liturgical one as in the Pyramid Texts or an aesthetic recreational one as in the banqueting scenes but there are overlapping grey areas. Indeed the motif indicates the tomb-owner's relative power over other people, which would not be demonstrated if he was depicted alone. The tomb-owner is seen actively exercising control over his (pr $\underline{d}t$ - goods of his funerary endowment, official business, recreational goals, etc.); previously partly seen in the royal iconography of Senefru the first king of Dynasty 4[767], which now becomes part of private elite tombs. This control is shown when the tomb-owner is presented with the list/accounts and he inspects and accepts them. Accordingly this scene may have a variety of cultural meanings including the generic, all of which are related to the social position of the tomb-owner, e.g.

- Communicating with other elite
- Documenting of his endowment goods by scribes
- Implementing what is described or presented permanently
- Honouring the deceased
- Legitimizing the presenter/s
- Legitimizing and showing control of inheritance?

The last mentioned "acts" are problematic because of a lack of evidence and have to be reconciled with the way property was known to be transferred and inherited, and can be ascertained only on a textual basis[768]. In the Old Kingdom the normal way property was transferred and inherited, is well defined. If you wanted to buy property for use during your life only, you had

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[766] For details of the various poses by the presenter, see Manuelian, "Presenting the Scroll."

[767] A. Fakhry, *The Monuments of Senefru at Dashur II* (Cairo: 1963) Fig. 16; redrawn by B. Garfi.

[768] T. Logan, "The Imyt-pr Document: Form, Function, and Significance," *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt*, no. XXXVll (2000): 71.

to have a sales document known as a *swnt*. However if you wanted to pass this property to your heirs, you would also need an *imyt-pr* document. Since the eldest son was normally present at the funeral, could this be the depicted handover of the inheritance? Whether the Taking-Account motif has any relation to this, is unclear.

My interest is to demonstrate that in Taking-Account of his worldly goods, the tomb-owner is in fact demonstrating that although he is dead, he still can ask the living to be accountable as per his wishes when he was alive, something which carries significant meaning with regard to his identity and his desire to be remembered posthumously.

The four main elements of the Taking-Account motif subject to the rules proposed (see page 296-302) would then be as follows:

1. Presence of a document as the central focus of the motif around which the tomb-owner is shown Taking-Account, which can include viewing, inspecting, accepting, reading, or hearing the proffered document.

2. Person(s) is/are shown bringing, reading, giving, or reporting the document in the immediate presence of the tomb-owner. A hallmark of this scene is that the presenter is always shown facing the tomb-owner with his back to the offerings.

3. The document shown is usually a papyrus scroll as the vehicle by and through which information is being organized and delivered to the tomb-owner[769]. The document has no one form and can be open, rolled up and sometimes appears in a stiffened form, which gives it the appearance of a stiff board.

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[769] J. Cerný, *Paper and Books in Ancient Egypt* (London: 1952) 21-29. He gives a useful history of papyrus and its use in writing in ancient Egypt.

4. The appropriate captions relating to what is being done are sometimes informative but not always so. Indeed one has to be careful not to mix up the two types of scenes (i.e. 'taking account' and accompanying activity) and as already indicated; the essential attribute of all 'taking account' motifs, is the implied element of assent and deliberation based on its context of usage.

Similar to the methodology followed in the previous (Carrying-Chair Motif) chapter, the rest of the present chapter will deconstruct the Taking-Account motif in its context.

7.2 Recipient's (Tomb-Owner's) Posture

Generally the male tomb-owner's relatively formal posture and dress with the maximum display of rank and wealth, indicates he is attending an important ceremony. The majority of the tomb-owners in this Taking-Account motif are male, there being only six females[770], who have this motif in their tomb.

In Dynasties 4 to 6 the tomb-owner is either standing or sitting with no significant preference for either position. Further both postures and genders occur in the dynasties mentioned and there appears to be no specific pattern[771]. Chart 21 below illustrates the type of posture and the gender of the tomb-owner. For the details of these tombs, please refer to "Appendix C".

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[770] In the tombs of: Hemetra, Idut, Khentkawes, Khenut, Meresankh lll, and Nebet.

[771] 18 Standing males: In the tombs of Ankhamhor, Fetekty, Iymery, Iynefert, Kagemni, Kairer, Kaniniswt, Kaemnofret, Khafre-ankh, Meryib, Neferbauptah, Niankhkhnum & Khnumhotep, Ptahhotep II, Sekhemka, Shetwi, Tjenti, Ty (pl. 128)i and Whemka.
5 Standing females: In the tomb of Hemetra, Khentkawes, Khenut, Meresankh III, and Nebet
14 Sitting males: In the tombs of Kahif, Kanefer, Khafkhufu I, Khnumenti, Nefer, Nefer & Kahay, Nesutnefer, Perneb, Qar, Rashepses, Seneb, Senedjemib.mehi, Seshathotep and Ty (pl.56).
1 Sitting female: In the tomb of Idut.
1 Unverifiable: The Taking-Account motif in the tomb of Mereruka (pl. 51).

Tomb-Owners' Posture & Gender
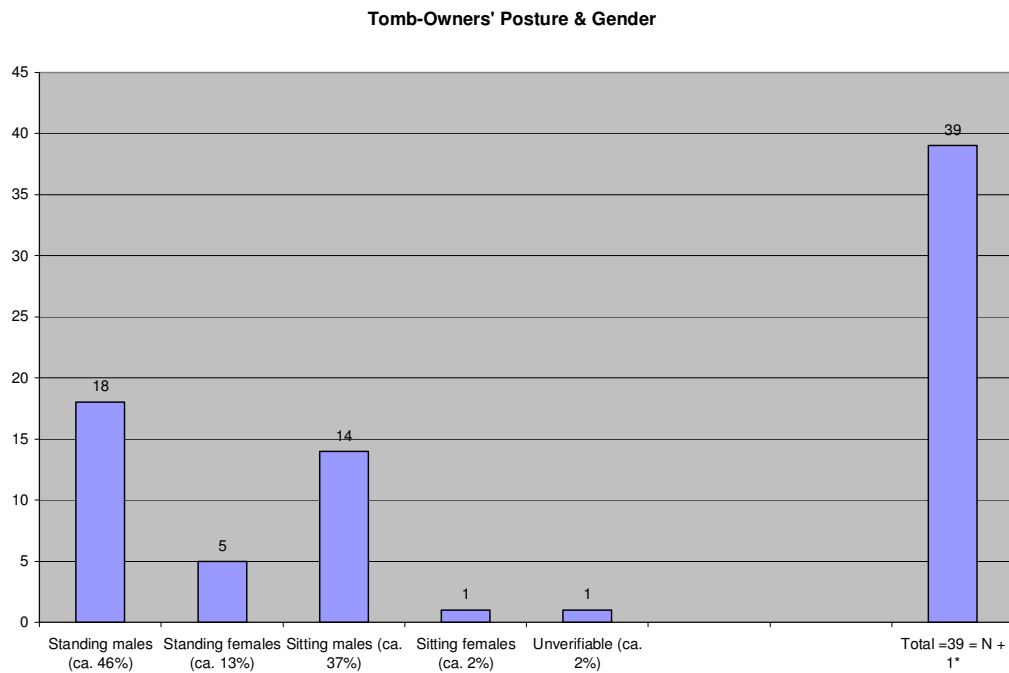
* **Duplication** occurs because there are two different plates (Ty pl.56 & 128) in one tomb. The above numbers show how many tombs there are indicating posture and gender.

Chart 21: Tomb-Owners' Posture & Gender

7.3 Recipient's Other Attributes

7.3.1 Rods, Scepters, and Rolled Cloth

The hieroglyphs which describe the word rod and the different names for rods are numerous[772]. Rods have an ancient lineage and are evidenced as grave goods as far back as the early Dynasty 1 graves at Tarkhan[773]. Considering that these rods were made of wood and subject to decay, the rod must then have some other symbolic function/s such as those encompassing power,

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[772] A. Hassan, *Stöcke und Stäbe im pharaonischen Ägypten bis zum Ende des Neuen Reiches*, *Münchner ägyptologische Studien (33)* (München Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1976) 6-9. He has collected 74 such names.

[773] Petrie, Wainwright, and Gardiner, *Tarkhan 1 and Memphis V* pl. 8. Three rods were found measuring 107, 117, and 124cm. all of which are now in the Petrie Museum, under catalogue numbers 8466, 8467, and 8468.

office, and dignity, depending on the person using them. The hierarchical nature of Egyptian society meant that rods were used by different people - by the old man in the village, the official, the elite, and the king. While the overlap between uses in most of these categories, makes delineating precise function impossible, nevertheless it enables one to understand how the ancient Egyptians might have understood the words/concepts relating to power, office and dignity. Since the rod's use as an instrument of coercive physical power is outside this study my concentration is on the rod as a visible symbol:

- of the individual's passive social position
- and an active symbol of the office, which defines the holder's position in the state administrative role

Both the above categories fuse into each other in the representations of the elite. Their noticeable presence in the majority of the Taking-Account motifs acts as a requirement for the recognition of the position and the responsibility of the tomb-owner concerned and incorporates power, office, and dignity. The rod then is more than just a fancy adornment because of its link with certain official positions and occupations and comes to symbolize the essence of dignity. The rod's ubiquitous appearance in grave decoration and grave goods, demonstrates in some ways the dignity of the person carrying it. Whether it was in the hands of the king, the elite official, or just an old man in the village, its symbolic function was understood by society which can be seen even in Egypt today (carrying a stick is common feature of the village headman), albeit in less exaggerated form. Indeed the overseer or an official without a rod of authority was an unthinkable proposition in ancient Egypt. Its presence materializes social identity as well as the ideology of fulfillment of a duty towards society because only then could you be in a position to carry such a symbol. The degree of dignity, symbolized in the act of being represented holding a rod of authority would probably vary with the different levels of social position, and can be usefully examined by the use of levels of the language game. In this language game the different facets (levels) of the tomb-owner shall be considered.

At the level of the elite, it probably denoted a certain minimum of religious and cultural knowledge, which prerequisites in turn symbolized that a type of life and actions accepted as ground values by society were led by the individual. At the level of the high official, it probably meant that the office holder in the fulfillment of his duties used his power and his character in following the principles of *M3ˁt*. Although the vizier (chief official) is present in the Old Kingdom elite tombs yet in his depiction with the staff and sceptre as symbols of authority, he is not differentiated from other officials. The earliest ordination of a vizier of which we have textual evidence, is that from the autobiography of the vizier Rekhmire, in which he writes that the king gave him the staff of experience (metaphor for the attainment of an official rank)[774].

At the level of seniority by virtue of experience alone, would imply that being old was by itself a symbol that one was worthy of carrying this emblem and thereby of being treated accordingly by his juniors.

It is not clear how far these different levels of language game were connected to reality and it is correct to assume that "…there are exaggerations on both sides, the picture of the ideal rule of justice was never one of attainment, and the corruption of the ruling class differed from age to age and from individual to individual. Egypt was never wholly noble or wholly corrupt"[775].

The elite in the majority of the Taking-Account motifs hold emblems of power in their hands, which are the rod of authority and either a sceptre or a rolled cloth.

The same attributes of authority are combined in many different ways in this motif. Therefore whilst these attributes are accurately numbered in the following text and charts, one must be careful

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[774] Sethe, *Urkunden der 18. Dynastie: historische-biographische Urkunden* IV, 1076, l. 4. "The king gave me a rod of experience".

[775] H. Frankfort et al., *The intellectual adventure of ancient man; an essay on speculative thought in the ancient Near East* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1946) 87.

when using these numbers because simple addition of them can involve duplication errors.

Depictions of rods in any combination of **sitting or standing** are found in twenty-three tombs, i.e. 61% of all examined tombs[776].

7.3.2 Standing plus Attributes of Authority

There are 18 depictions of **standing** tomb-owners, of which 15[777] hold a rod of authority and 3 are unverifiable as to their position (Fetekta, Kairer, and Ptahhotep II).

The earliest sceptre comes from a grave in Helwan and points to the earthly dignity that this must have represented[778] because in all probability it was a royal attribute as evidenced in the Pyramid texts, which in time was usurped by the elite. Its appearance in grave decoration would be expected in places where the tomb-owner is the main centre of cultic attention, especially on false doors and entrance thicknesses, in motifs in which the purpose is to depict the tomb-owner in his official capacity, where he is also shown in full ceremonial regalia.

Of the 15 instances depicting a standing male tomb-owner in the Taking-Account motif holding a rod of authority there are eight instances where the tomb-owner is depicted with a rod in one hand and the sceptre in the other[779] and six instances[780], where the tomb-owner is depicted holding a rod in one hand and a rolled cloth in the other. There is one instance (Ty pl. 128) where

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[776] 23 combinations of sitting or standing tomb-owner with rod: in the tombs of Ankhmahor, Fetekty, Iymery, Iynefert, Kaninswt, Kaemnofret, Kagemni, Kanefer, Khafkhufu I, Khafre-ankh, Meryib, Nefer, Neferbauptah, Nesutnefer, Niankhkhnum/Khnumhotep, Rashepses, Sekhemka, Seneb, Seshathotep, Shetwi, Tjenti, Ty (pl.128 & pl.56), and Whemka.

[777] 15 cases of standing with rod in the tombs of: Ankhmahor, Iymery, Iynefert, Kaniniswt, Kaemnofret, Kagemni, Meryib, Neferbauptah, Niankkhnum/Khnumhotep, Sekhemka, Shetwi, Tjenti, Whemka, Khafre-ankh, and Ty (pl. 128)

[778] H. Junker, *Giza*, vol. 12 (Wien: Hölder-Pichler-Tempsky A.G., 1955) 8.

[779] 8 Standing and carrying a rod and a sceptre in the other hand: in the tombs of Ankhmahor, Kagemni, Kaninswt, Meryib, Sekhemka, Shetwi, Tjenti, and Whemka.

[780] 6 Standing and carrying a rod and piece of rolled cloth in the other hand: in the tombs of Iymery, Iynefert, Kaemnofret, Khafre-ankh, Neferbauptah, Niankhkhnum/Khnumhotep.

the tomb-owner is standing with a rod only but with no other attributes (sceptre/rolled cloth) of authority

A summary is provided in chart 22 below.
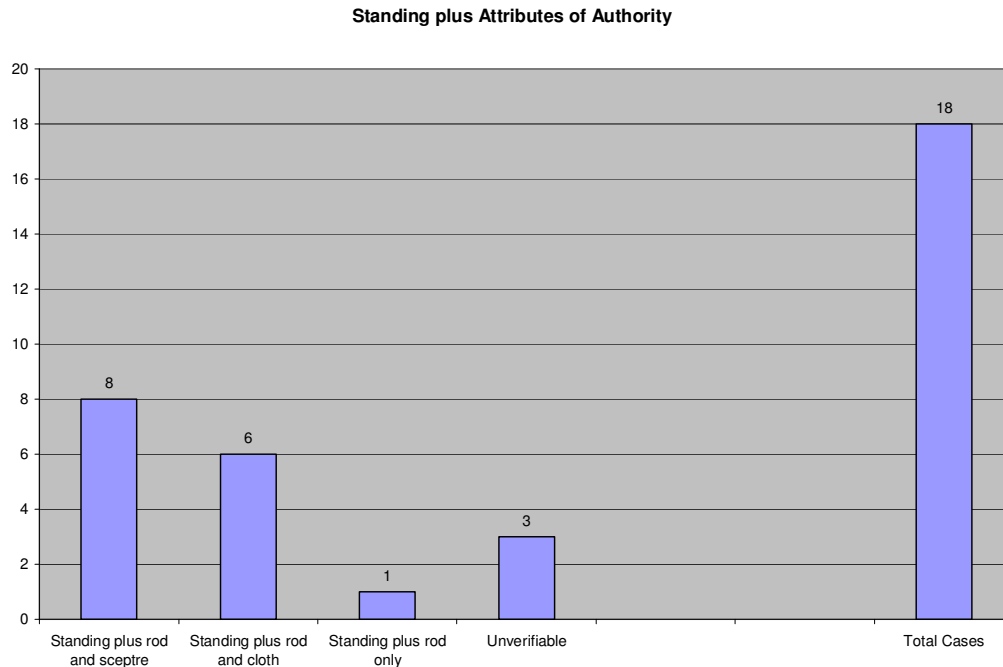
Standing plus Attributes of Authority

Chart 22: Standing plus Attributes of Authority

The rolled piece of cloth probably had a utilitarian function used much like a handkerchief but it could also have ideological functions because it is being shown in a ceremonial occasion. This then results in a statistically significant percentage of nearly 83% (in chart 22- 15 out of 18 standing male tomb-owners are depicted with a symbol of authority).

The three exceptions are in the tombs of Fetekta, Kairer, and Ptahhotep II. While Fetekta and Kairer are now damaged and fragmented, judging by what is left, they probably had in their pristine state some sort of symbol of authority, that of Ptahhotep II can be explained in terms of individuality. Ptahhotep II holds no symbols of authority whatsoever and a comparison with the tombs of Kagemni and Shetwi is instructive. In both these cases the tomb-owners are similarly attired and presented but each also holds a rod and sceptre as well. Another explanation lies in the depiction of all the farmwomen bringing in the varied detailed produce and animals, which being

symbols of extreme wealth and authority, were thought to be enough in themselves.

Although the rod is frequently depicted in the standing position, it is not restricted to this posture and is seen in the sitting position but not with the same frequency. In five cases the tomb-owner is depicted in a sitting posture on a carved chair, with the left hand holding only a rod at an angle in front of him, with the other empty arm resting on his lap[781] uncannily similar in their display of both intent and relaxation, as in the standing position. In two cases the tomb–owner holds in addition to the rod, a piece of rolled cloth[782] and in two cases he holds only a flywhisk[783].

Rod Types

The majority of the tomb-owners (seventeen-74%) are shown with a rod of which the knobbed-rounded end is on top, while five tomb-owners hold a simple straight rod[784]. The only exception is that in the tomb of Kaninswt, where he is depicted holding a rod with the knobbed-rounded end at the bottom. This is surprising as rods with knobbed end downwards (typifying the hieroglyph for *mdw*) are depicted only up to the time of Khufu. From his reign, rods with knobbed end on top are depicted in the hands of the officials as confirmed by the 74% majority in the Taking-Account motif[785].

These objects of obtrusive power and display, maintain, reinforce, and consolidate the sphere of the elite's authority, especially in a society in which inequality was accepted as a normal condition, and where rank was

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[781] Kanefer, Khafkhufu I, Nefer, Nesutnefer and Seshathotep.

[782] 2 Sitting with rod and rolled cloth: in the tombs of Rashepses and Ty (pl. 56).

[783] In the tomb of Nefer & Kahay, and Qar.

[784] Knobbed-rounded end on top: in the tombs of Iymery, Iynefert, Kagemni, Kanefer, Kayemnofret, Khafre-ankh, Kahafkhufu I, Meryib, Nefer, Neferbauptah, Niankhnum /Chnumhotep, Rashepses, Sekhemka, Seshathotep, Shetwi, Tjenti, and Ty.
Straight rods: in the tombs of Ankhmahor*, Fetekty*, Nesutnefer, Seneb and Whemka. (Tombs marked with an asterisk are ambiguous because of their damaged nature).

[785] H. G. Fischer, "Stöcke und Stäbe," in *Lexikon der Ägyptologie, vol. 6*, ed. W. Helck, E. Otto, and W. Westendorf (Wiesbaden: O. Harrassowitz, 1986), 49-57.

expressed in terms of lifestyle display[786]. The rod, the sceptre and the rolled cloth were used to form a concept of the prevailing social relations, which were the hallmark of the lifestyle of the elite, which clearly distinguished it and their proponents. While these status symbols were originally part of the sphere of royal religion, their depiction in private tombs is evidence for the way certain symbols were chosen by the elite in order to disseminate the social meaning of the term 'elite', which in time became a widely understood concept and an icon. They also provide a pointer to the way certain items of perceived value become co-opted, are indicative of the complex additions and omissions which in due time form the basis of the generics and the reason why Egyptian Art cannot be understood if the generics are ignored.

The constituent of the elite life style, expressed in commemorative art in these status symbols in the Taking-Account motif probably was a reflection of the reality of elite life.

A significant majority in the Taking-Account motif display a combination of these elements of rod, sceptre, and rolled cloth.

Standing with Lotus Bloom

There are 6 female tomb-owners in the Taking-Account motif[787]. Five of these are in the standing posture of whom 3 (Khenut, Meresankh III, and Nebet) are holding a lotus bloom which has other connotations including attributes of authority. When they are shown with a lotus bloom to their nose, the other free hand hangs down the side. During the various periods of Egyptian history, the lotus bloom came to symbolize a wide variety of meanings[788]: continual life and regeneration, feminine beauty, hypnotic effect, erotic

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[786] B. G. Trigger, "Monumental Architecture: A Thermodynamic Explanation of Symbolic Behaviour," *World Archaeology* 22 (1990): 119-32.

[787] 6 as in the tombs of: Hemetra, Idut, Khenut, Khentkawes, Meresankh III, and Nebet.

[788] G. Pieke, "Der Grabherr und die Lotosblume," in *The Old Kingdom Art and Archaeology* ed. M. Barta (Prague: Czech Institute of Egyptology, 2006), 259-80.

connotations, pleasing perfume and connection to love poetry[789], most of which may have something to do with vanity but not authority. The motif of the lotus being sniffed originated in Dynasty 4 with women and in the second half of Dynasty 6 came to be also used by men[790] as a symbol of rejuvenation.

In the Taking-Account motif, only Khenut, Meresankh III, and Nebet clearly hold a lotus bloom. In the case of Khnetkawes it is unclear whether she holds a lotus bloom because the upper part is missing but it is possible she too held a lotus bloom based on their similarities to the composition of Meresankh III. The exception is in the case of Hemetra, who is shown holding nothing.

The sitting posture is illustrated in the tomb of Idut, where she is shown holding a lotus bloom in the typical fashion to her nose.

7.3.3 Sitting plus Attributes of Authority

Sitting in any **combination of attributes** occurs in 19 cases of which 4 are duplications resulting in 15 tombs involving sitting with attributes of authority[791].

Carved Chair

The tomb-owner sits in a carved chair with feline or bulls' legs[792] and in three cases, that of Qar, Perneb, and Khnumenti, he is depicted being sat in a carrying-chair, while being presented with a scroll[793].

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[789] L. Manniche, "Reflections on the Banquet Scene," in *La Peinture Egyptienne Ancienne: Un Monde de Signes á Préserver*, ed. R.Tefnin, *Monumenta Aegyptiaca 7* (Bruxelles: Fondation Égyptologique Reine Élisabeth, 1997), 34.

[790] J. Dittmar, *Blumen und Blumensträusse als Opfergabe im alten Ägypten*, vol. 43, *Münchner Ägyptologische Studien* (Berlin: Verlag Bruno Hessling, 1986) 132-33.

[791] 15 tombs with various attributes of authority as in: Kahif, Sendjemib.Mehi, Perneb*, Rashepses*, Khnumenti*, Qar*, Idut, Kanefer, Kahfkhufu I, Nefer, Nefer & Kahay, Nesutnefer, Seneb, Seshathotep, and Ty (pl. 56).
*Tombs marked with an asterisk contain duplications.

[792] Feline legs: in the tombs of Idut, Kahif, Rashepses, Seneb, Ty and Sendjemib.Mehi.
Bull's legs: in the tombs of Kanefer, Kahfkhufu I, Nefer, Nefer & Kahay, Nesutnefer, and Seshathotep.
Carrying-chair: in the tombs of Qar, Perneb and Khnumenti.

Chairs are part of the early offering lists and the hieroglyph for the chair is an unassuming sort of legless seat. However, chairs are used in the word *špss* which depicts a man seated on a chair with animal legs, meaning 'to be noble and/or wealthy' and sometimes even a chair by itself is understood to denote this concept[794]. Thus the chairs' importance can be seen from the hieroglyph for noble/wealthy. Interestingly, the association of the type of carving on the chairs' legs with attributes of divine and royal power (bulls and feline) is another indication of their importance. While bovine legs appear earlier on and continue right into the New Kingdom, the preference from Dynasty 5 onwards is for feline legs[795]. It would seem that making of furniture legs was an important craft as indicated by the title - *imi-rꜣ wꜥrt n irw wḥmt* "Overseer of the guild of makers of furniture legs". This also supports in some respects Cherpion's method of dating, at least as far as the type of socle is concerned[796], because those depictions with feline carved legs in this motif are all dated to between late Dynasty 5 and 6, while those with bulls' legs are all dated to an earlier period.

In 10 instances the carved chairs have a small cushion, further reinforcing the attributes of eliteness. There are only 4 instances of carved chairs with no cushions.

Lotus Bloom

There is only one tomb showing a female with a lotus bloom (Idut).

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[793] W. K. Simpson, *The Mastabas of Qar and Idu* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1976) fig. 27. See also Hayes, *The scepter of Egypt: a background for the study of the Egyptian antiquities in the Metropolitan Museum of Art* vol. I, fig. 51. See also E. Brovarski, P. Der Manuelian, and W. K. Simpson, *The Senedjemib Complex. Part 1, The mastabas of Senedjemib Inti (G2370), Khnumenti (G2374), and Senedjemib Mehi (G2378), Giza mastabas* (Boston: 2001) 120-22, fig. 86.

[794] P. E. Newberry, *Beni Hasan*, vol. I (London: K. Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1893) pl. 26, col. 206. See also Hannig, *Ägyptisches Wörterbuch I: Altes Reich und Erste Zwischenzeit* (Mainz, 2003) 1293.

[795] H. G. Fischer, "Stuhl," in *Lexikon der Ägyptologie, vol. 6*, ed. W. Helck, E. Otto, and W. Westendorf (Wiesbaden: O. Harrassowitz, 1986), 91-99. See also G. Killen, *Egyptian Furniture* (Warminster: Aris & Phillips Ltd., 1980) fig. 30.

[796] Cherpion, *Mastabas et hypogées d'Ancien Empire: la problème de la datation* 25-41.

<u>Flywhisk and Rolled Cloth</u>

The flywhisk is depicted in the two tombs that of Nefer & Kahay and Qar. Its relation to a symbol of rank and dignity can only be inferred indirectly from the fact that in the Old Kingdom, it is never carried by any other than the elite. Additional supporting evidence that it was not an ordinary item comes from its depiction on the architrave of the false door in the late Dynasty 5 tomb of Sekhemka, where the tomb owner is twice portrayed sitting on a carved chair with feline legs and holding a flywhisk[797].

The above frequencies confirm the fact that the rod, sceptre, and rolled cloth were part of the ceremonial habitat. However there are three exceptions (Perneb, Kahif, and Senedjemib.Mehi).

The tombs of Perneb and Kahif which do not depict any of the authoritarian attributes (rod, sceptre, or rolled cloth) need to be explained. In the case of Perneb the possession of a carrying-chair is a statement in itself much like the modern day possession of a private jet plane. The case of Kahif is difficult to explain because the sitting posture does not preclude the holding of a rod of authority - and this could then be another case of individual behaviour. Certainly the combination of the huge space occupied by the figure of the sitting tomb-owner on a chair with carved feline legs, which occupies as Junker puts it "bis zur Höhe der dritten Gabenreihe"[798], plus the elaborately painted wall carpet of plant fibres and papyrus broadcasts an assemblage of value and wealth and needs no further comment . In the tomb of Senedjemib.Mehi the tomb-owner is seen extending his hand to receive the scroll and therefore it would be impossible to show him also holding another attribute of authority. In any event if any such was essential it is seen in his elaborately carved chair with high back and feline claws.

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[797] Murray, *Saqqara Mastabas* vol. 1, pl. 8.

[798] H. Junker, *Giza*, vol. 6 (Wien: Hölder-Pichler-Tempsky A.G., 1943) 114.

The frequency of authoritarian attributes in the sitting position is illustrated in Chart 23 below and the rod's combination with other items would appear to augment the status of the tomb-owner in the Taking-Account motif[799]. A comparison with Chart 22 is equally instructive in that it exposes the dominant position of the rod, as an eminent symbol of authority in ceremonial motifs.

Sitting plus Attributes of Authority
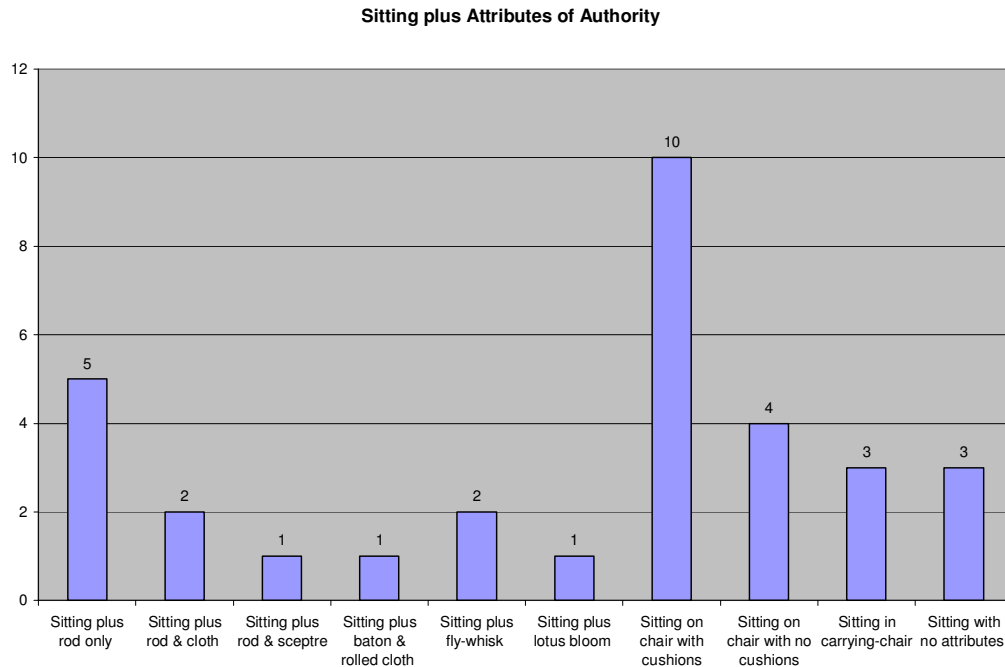
In 15 (ca. 40%) of the 38 tombs, he/she is sitting carries various combinations of the above-mentioned elevated status goods. Duplication occurs in the above columns.

Chart 23: Sitting plus Attributes of Authority

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[799] 5 Sitting with rod only in the tombs of: Kanefer, Khafkhufu I, Nefer, Nesutnefer, and Seshathotep.
2 Sitting with rod and rolled cloth: in the tombs of Rashepses and Ty (pl.56).
1 Sitting with rod and sceptre: in the tomb of Seneb.
1 Sitting with baton & rolled cloth: in the tomb of Khnumenti.
2 Sitting with flywhisk: in the tombs of Nefer & Kahay, and Qar.
1 Sitting with lotus bloom: in the tomb of Idut.
10 Sitting on a chair with cushions: in the tombs of Idut, Kahif, Khafkhufu I, Khnumenti, Nefer & Kahay, Nefer, Nesutnefer, Seneb, Seshathotep,, and Ty (pl. 56).
4 with no cushions: in the tombs of Senedjemib.Mehi, Qar, Perneb, and Rashepses.
3 Sitting with no attributes (rod/sceptre/rolled cloth): in the tombs of Kahif, Perneb, and Senedjemib.Mehi

Taken together all these symbols of authority (rod, sceptre, flywhisk and carved chair/cushion) and hope (lotus bloom), demonstrate the important significance of these items for the elite especially in the manner of their conventional depiction.

Unmistakably age, experience, authority, and beliefs of the after-life are combined with the dominant figure of the tomb-owner holding these elevated status goods, to produce a non-verbal statement, which needs little elaboration. Indeed this can be seen as a composite symbol of the male elite, their power, and control. Even if there are no texts extolling their status similar to that which is so predominant in the biographies, nevertheless these examples illustrate the fact that symbols do not have to be described. Compositions which include norms/beliefs, encompass (in this case what it was to be an elite) and which are widely known and understood, then have the tendency to become self-fulfilling icons, such that their ideology is accepted without demur. Once this dominant ideology is widely accepted the aspirations of the common people become totally submerged in the quest for a better life, just like the elite. Incentive and unquestioning acquiescence to the current norm then result in an ordered society – supporting the myth of harmony and collective endeavour.

7.3.4 Jewellery and Sandals

The tomb-owners are depicted with evidence of various types of jewellery including the bracelet, anklet, chokers, broad collar, and chains with an amulet. I have also included in this category sandals, because these are well known hallmarks of elevated status good since pre-dynastic times and because the particulars of their depiction reminds one of the detailed work that must have been required to produce them, similar to that of the jewellery. It was thus thought that jewellery and sandals would fit together in an exposition of status symbols worn on the person of the tomb-owner in the Taking-Account motif. It is outside the scope of this study to go into the physical nature of the jewellery or sandals, my interest being to elicit only

that type of information that could be of assistance in supporting or otherwise my hypothesis of the widespread existence in funerary art of the generics.

Jewellery and/or sandals appear in 29 cases (76% of the total population of 38 tombs). In the majority of the tombs (23 cases) the protagonists are seen wearing a broad collar (*wsḫ*). In those 6 cases where there was no collar depicted nor can now be seen, there was always another adornment present; the bracelet is depicted in 3 cases (tombs of Kaniswt, Nesutnefer, and Qar); two depict the tomb-owner wearing sandals (tombs of Shetwi and Ty- pl. 56), and one with a bracelet and sandals (tomb of Ankhmahor). While the bracelet and collar are seen being worn together in the majority of tombs, the evidence where this is not the case, points to only 6 such tombs, and thus is not a statistically significant number. However taken together with the damaged and fragmentary nature of much of the evidence, it is perhaps wise not to be categorical about this correlation. The only certainty is that all of the 29 tombs depicting jewelry or sandals, depict the tomb-owner with external evidence of adornments, and they show at least one component which may be any or a combination of the following elevated status goods[800]; bracelets, anklets, broad collars, amulets or sandals as shown in chart 24 below.

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[800] 23 Broad collars: in the tombs of Hemetre, Idut, Iymery, Iyenfert, Kagemni, Kahif, Kanefer, Khafkhufu I, Khnumenti, Meresankh III, Nebet, Nefer, Niankhkhnum & Khnumhotep, Ptahhotep II, Rashepses, Sekhemka, Seneb, Shetwi, Whemka, Perneb, Senedjemib.mehi, Nefer & Kahay, and Ty (pl. 128).
12 Bracelets: in the tombs of Ankhmahor, Hemetre, Idut, Iymery, Kaniswt, Khafkhufu I, Khenut, Nebet, Nefer, Nesutnefer, Qar, and Seshathotep.
5 Sandals: in the tombs of Ankhmahor, Kagemni, Shetwi, and Ty (pl.56 & 128).
2 Amulets: in the tombs of Kagemni and Ptahhotep II.
3 Anklets: in the tombs of Hemetre, Idut, and Nebet.

Jewelry & Sandals
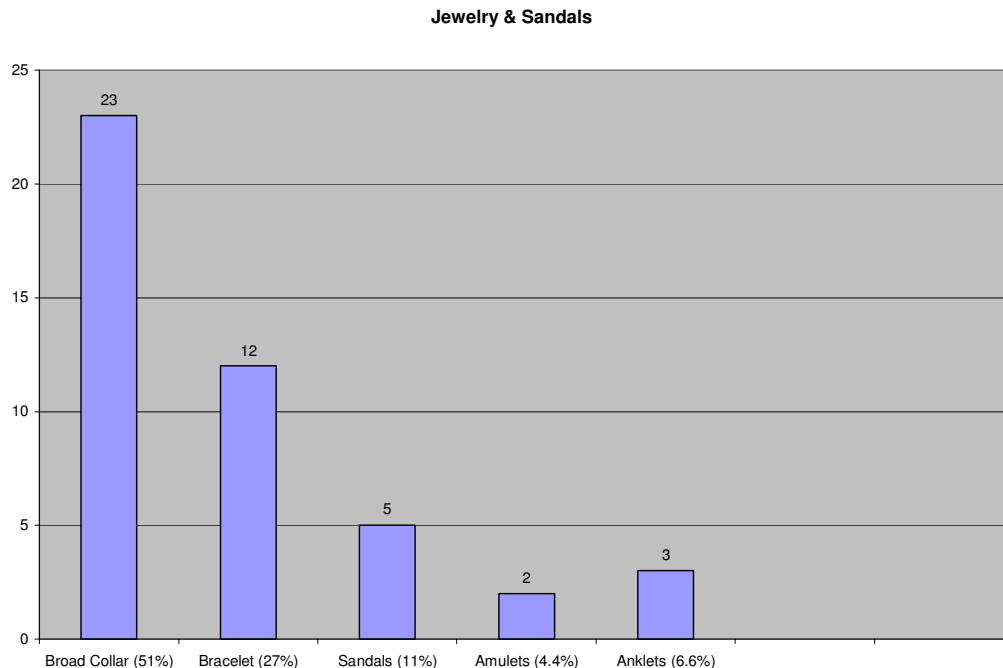
*Data is from 29 tombs from a total population of the 38 tombs examined. Duplication of adornments/sandals in tombs results in the above total (45), and the above percentages are based on this figure and NOT the total number of tombs NOR the amount of jewelry or sandals.

Chart 24: Jewellery and Sandals

7.3.5 Headdress and "False Beard"

In a hierarchically ordered society, identity and its creation become extremely important requisites in projecting the social standing of an individual. The means employed can be verbal or non-verbal as in visible outer appearance. Examples of the first method are the type of speech and the emphasis on kinship relationships as indicated by the words his father, his mother, his eldest son, his daughter etc. occurring numerously in a variety of motifs. Examples of the latter method are the manner of attire, style of hair and facial appearance, all of which may be indications of a certain social status.

What we witness in the motifs in the elite tombs is the compulsion of all members of society to try to construct such an identity, which because it

changes over time in accordance with the individual's station in life, then also becomes a pointer to the generics.

Headdress

It is not possible to tell from the material record whether an ancient Egyptian has a hairstyle that resembles a "wig" or wore an actual "wig". There is no evidence that Old Kingdom Egyptians made or wore "wigs", although it is possible, because a later New Kingdom wig workshop was discovered at Deir-el-Bahri. A headdress is a manner of arranging or styling real or artificial hair and the name "wig" is now strongly associated with a style of artificial headdress. This thesis uses the word "wig" to denote a style of headdress but the use of this name should not be thought of as supporting the claim that false hair or wigs were actually worn in the Old Kingdom.

An item of cultural impact is the type of "wig" worn by the tomb-owner. Considering the warm climate of Egypt, it seems strange that one would resort to some form of head covering. A closer look at the functional structure of the "wig" reveals the reason. It helped to dissipate the heat from the shaven head as well as provide protection against the sun. However if this were the only reason, one would expect to find this as the normal style of all in that period. However this is not the case and one must look to the symbolic significance of the "wig", the social position of its wearers and the occasion when it was worn.

There is not a great difference in the incidences of a short curly "wig" ending at the cape of the neck, and the full "wig" falling beyond the shoulder, and in the Taking-Account motif both occur. It would seem that right from the earliest times, these were regular items of dress for the elite; the vizier on the reverse side of the Narmer palette, is shown wearing a full "wig" and the sandal carrier on the front side is shown wearing a short "wig"[801].

In the Taking-Account motif, all the females shown with intact upper bodies wear a full tripartite "wig", apart from Idut, who is shown with the lock of

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[801] J. E. Quibell, "Slate palette from Hieraconpolis," *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde*, no. 36 (1898): 81-84.

youth pointing to her adolescent status[802]. The headband with a filet tied in a buckle usually in the shape of a papyrus bud, is also present in a few motifs and where it is present, it is always in conjunction with a short "wig" indicating the elevation of this part of the tomb-owner's body as a focusing element[803].

The male tomb-owners wear "wigs" as follows:

1. Short tightly fitting wig with the topmost curls higher than the rest, in finely divided vertical lines, fitting like a skullcap, which by early Dynasty 5 are less pronounced than they were during Dynasty 3 and 4[804] (see page 191/3). While in the beginnfing and right until early Dynasty 4, it is the predominant headdress of the elite, it begins to be shown on the non-elite after this period[805].

2. Shoulder length "wig" which can cover the ears and which is exclusively worn by the elite, their family, and the lector priest. While it is often depicted as composed of strands it can also appear smooth. It is never worn by non-elite servants. This shoulder length "wig" is rarely depicted in the early Old Kingdom, being altogether absent at Maidum; nevertheless it appears frequently by Dynasty 5, when it is the predominant and preferred type of "wig" especially in the elite tombs at Saqqara[806]. However, the short tight fitting "wig" (1) is never fully displaced and continues to be used in the Old Kingdom.

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[802] In the tombs of: Hemetra and Meresankh III.

[803] In the tombs of: Kagemni, Nebet, Ptahhotep ll, Shetwi and Whemka.

[804] Cherpion, *Mastabas et hypogées d'Ancien Empire: la problème de la datation* 55-56.

[805] Smith, *A History of Egyptian Sculpture and Painting in the Old Kingdom* pl. 40 (a), 42 (c) and 49. These Dynasty 4 examples show villagers and servants with a short curled hairdo. In the tombs of: Kanefer, Meryib, Nefer, Nefer & Kahay, Perneb, Rashepses, Seneb, Tjenti, Ty (pl.56), and Whemka. (Total 10).

[806] Cherpion, *Mastabas et hypogées d'Ancien Empire: la problème de la datation* 57-58. Seen in the tombs of: Iymery, Iynefert, Kahif, Kaniniswt, Kayemnofret, Khafkhufu I, Khafre-ankh, Khnumenti, Neferbauptah, Nesutnefer, Niankhkhnum & Khnumhotep, (pl. 13), Sekhmeka, Sendjemib. Mehi, and Seshathotep. (Total 14).

3. Short tight fitting "wig" with a headband, which tapers into mostly two filets-a long and a short one and which is held by a papyrus shaped buckle or as a stiff ribbon knot, both types being attested in Dynasty 5 and 6[807].

4. Tripartite "wig", in which the hair is divided into three distinct lappets - falling on either side of the breasts and on to the back. The hair can appear smooth, twisted, or braided in strands. The only indication of one's natural hair is a strip of hair which is sometimes visible under the "wig" on the forehead. Examples of this type of "wig" are frequent among the female population and while these instances are those of elite females like Meresankh III, and Nebet (plus also Khamerernebti, and Waatetkhethor in non-taking account motifs), nevertheless unlike their male counterparts these "wigs" are also to be seen on their servants and villagers[808].

It is not surprising that the elite marked their status by preference for a certain style of headdress and this is all the more apparent when the occasion is a ceremonial one, which may have posthumous generic connotations.

Of the corpus of 38 tombs analyzed, 6 belonged to female tomb-owners, and 5 were unverifiable due to their current damaged state. The resulting 27 male tomb-owners depict the following headdress:

Long striated (37%),

Short curled "wig" (26%).

Headband with the filet accounts for a lesser number (8%).

However, considering that the short curled "wig" with filet and buckle is essentially a sort of ornamental headband worn as a crown, it would not be too radical to include this with the figure for the long striated "wig", which was only worn by the elite. The result then becomes 45% as against 37% and is statically significant to show that there is a good probability of the long

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[807] Ibid. 58-59. Seen in the tombs of: Kagemni, Nebet (Female), Ptahhetep II, and Shetwy.

[808] Smith, *A History of Egyptian Sculpture and Painting in the Old Kingdom* pl. 4, & 13 (a). For its depiction on villagers see G. Steindorff, *Das Grab des Ti* (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1913) pl.112.

striated "wig" being a dominant feature of the Taking-Account motif as an important occasion.

Of the 6 female tomb owners in the Taking-Account motif, the upper part is damaged in 2 (Khenut and Khnetkawes) and in the tomb of Idut the female tomb-owner is shown with a side lock of youth. Three females (Hemetra, Meresankh III, and Nebet) are shown with the tripartite "wig" and it can be assumed that this too was the case with the damaged motifs.

Chart 25 below summarizes the findings for the male tomb-owners'.
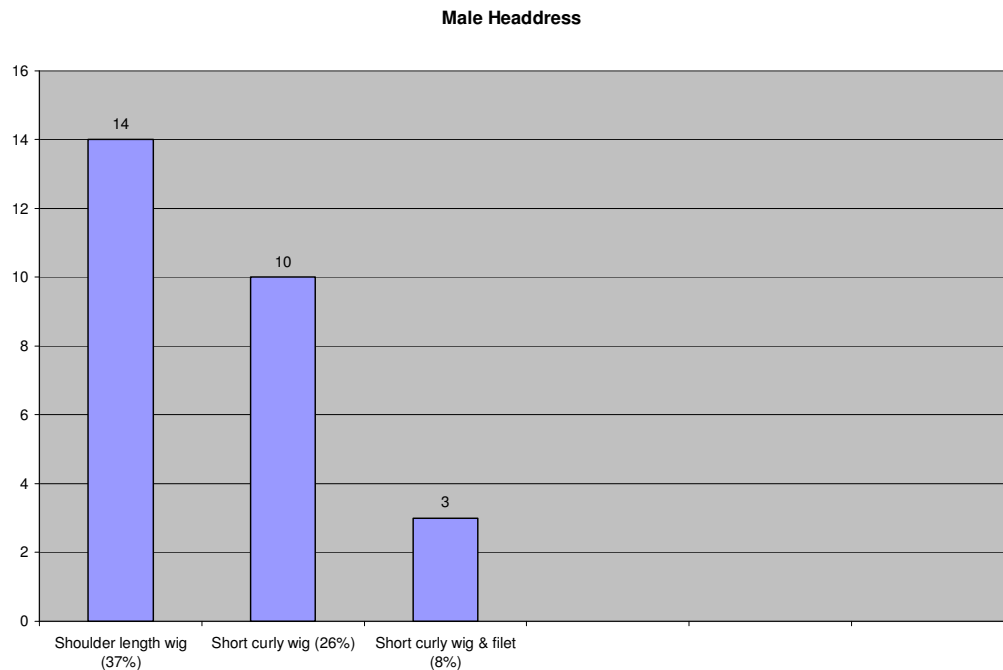
Male Headdress

* The numbers above represent tombs in which the particular headdress was worn. The percentages are based on the total number (38) of tombs examined and NOT on the total of the above figures.

Chart 25: Male Headdress

"False Beard"

There are significant arguments[809] that the ancient Egyptians did not wear "false beards". Apparently there was a fashion to grow hair on their chins linked by narrow strips of hair to their scalp hair and this narrow strip of hair

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[809] J. Kunst, "De Baard in de koningsikonografie van het Oude Rijk en het Middenrijk (The Beard in royal Iconography in the Old and Middle Kingdom)" (M. A. thesis, 1995).

looked liked a string holding a false beard in place. Because of this visual effect, most Egyptologists find it convenient to continue to refer to this custom as a "false beard" even when there is no definite evidence to this effect.

One would also expect the "false beard" to be part of every presentation scene because of its royal precedents depicted as far back as the time of the Narmer palette[810] but this is not the case. While the "false beard" is depicted on Narmer, it would not seem to be far stretched, to assume that this style also came to be adopted at first by the other male members of the royal family and finally by the elite, due to its royal precedent associated with higher status. The "false beard" appears on men as early as the pre-dynastic period[811] and continues into early Dynasty 2^{812} as well as being sporadically evidenced at Giza in the Dynasty 4 elite tombs of Wepemnefret and Iwnw[813].

However, just because it appears infrequently does not mean that it was a "false beard". It may be that due to the nature of some damaged cases, this is not verifiable now but in all clear motifs where the "false beard" is present, it is clearly distinguished. Its appearance in certain scenes then may reflect a personal choice which may be an indicator of individuality.

Interestingly, it is frequently represented in the Taking-Account motif in Dynasties 5 and 6; fifteen tomb-owners are shown with a "false beard", of which six appear together with the shoulder length "wig" and eight appear together with the short curled variety[814]. Considering that the "false beard", the $ẖry-ḥb$ lector priest sash, the rod, sceptre, and the long striated "wig" are

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[810] Quibell, "Slate palette from Hieraconpolis," 36. Taf. XII-XIII.

[811] Petrie and Griffith, *The Royal Tombs of The First Dynasty, Part I* pl. XIV (9).

[812] Köhler and Jones, *Helwan II: The Early Dynastic and Old Kingdom Funerary Relief Slabs* 140-41.

[813] Reisner, *A History of the Giza Necropolis* vol. 1, pl. 17. For Iwnw see Junker, *Giza* vol. 1, fig. 31.

[814] "False beard" in the tombs of Kagemni, Kahif, Khafkhufu I, Khnumenti, Meryib, Nefer, Nefer & Kahay, Nesutnefer, Ptahhotep II, Rashepses, Sekhemka, Senedjemib. Mehi, Seshathotep* (Note that Junker, Giza 2. fig. 29 does not display a "false beard" on Seshathotep whereas Kanawati, Giza II, fig. 47 does), Tjenti, and Whemka.

all depicted in the standing figure of a predynastic king Den-Setui (Wedymuw), it is probably correct to categorise the appearance of these as elements on the body of elite tomb-owners, as a display of high status.

As to why in certain periods or cemeteries, the "false beard" was not depicted, the evidence does not permit one to draw any definite conclusions.

7.3.6 Attire

Attire as a visual expression is culturally comprehensible. In continuation with the object of this work of exposing the generics, I will focus on the use of the word attire in its symbolic functions, as a means of identification and decoration. This will enable me to draw conclusions regarding identity but this does not mean that it may not have had any other functions, e.g. protective, which in this context is irrelevant but which of-course was its original function.

If one accepts that the Taking-Account motif had its progenitor in the basic desire of all deceased irrespective of their social status, that they be adequately provisioned in the hereafter, then the early representations of the funerary goods categorize this as a formal occasion. Being a formal occasion demanded that its representation also contain elements of formality which could be disposed of in other less ceremonial motifs.

In addition, the type of attire worn in which the ideology of kingship is promoted[815] (e.g. in votive ceremonial palettes, the founding of temples, the heb sed festival, the smiting of the enemy etc.), are also pointers to occasions when attire played an important role, which to the extent feasible, was copied by the elite. In the New Kingdom the 'gold of honour' and the 'tribute presenting' motif displays the elite in a specific situation from which elements of ceremonial accoutrements can be seen. However, in the Old Kingdom there are very few such occasions, (rewarding scenes are restricted to weavers and

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[815] H. Altenmüller, "Feste," in *Lexikon der Ägyptologie, vol. 2*, ed. W. Helck, E. Otto, and W. Westendorf (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1977), 182-84.

even then they are "relatively unusual in private tombs, being currently confined to a few at Giza and Saqqara")[816].

In the few rewarding scenes in the Old Kingdom, the weavers are depicted with either a short "wig" and a headband or a tripartite "wig" and a sheath dress but they are too few to make any definite conclusions[817].

The textual evidence from the biographies that of Sabni and Nekhebu while relating to being rewarded, are unhelpful, because of the absence of any description as regards the manner of dress or headdress[818].

The Taking-Account motif depicts the majority of the male tomb-owners wearing the formal kilt which can include a ceremonial long kilt ending below their knees, a pointed kilt with a flared trapezoidal front, an elaborately side pleated short kilt or a normal short kilt. The actual variations in the details, e.g. cloth material, dating criteria etc. of these above-mentioned types of attire have been examined elsewhere[819] and are outside the scope of this study.

These kilts either depict a knot or an elaborate belt with a buckle, a panther skin outer garment with shoulder knot or half-oval tags (similar in concept to the aiguillettes (an ornamental braided cord worn on uniforms/academic dress, where it denotes an honour). In two cases, they are also depicted with the sash of a lector priest. All the above-mentioned items and type of clothing are symbols of a certain perceived status because they appear in some

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[816] Harpur and Scremin, *Decoration in Egyptian tombs of the Old Kingdom: studies in orientation and scene content* 114. She cites six examples, four being - from the tombs of Seneb and Nebemakhet at Giza, and Ptahhotep and Akhethetep from Saqqara. It is unclear why gold was given to weavers. This could mean that the product created, linen, was of high value or that the weavers were of a high social status similar to officials.

[817] For a general description of these rewarding scenes see Junker, *Giza* vol. 5, 41-60.

[818] For Sabni see Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt: Historical Documents* vol. 1, § 372. For Nekhebu see D. Dunham, "The Biographical Inscriptions of Nekhebu in Boston and Cairo," *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 24 (1938): 2.

[819] Staehelin, *Untersuchungen zur ägyptischen Tracht im Alten Reich* (Berlin: 1966). See also Bonnet, *Die ägyptische Tracht bis zum Ende des Neuen Reiches*.

combination in all the royal and elite tombs[820]; I shall examine their frequency of occurrence and possible background.

Kilts

The connection to ceremonial occasions and type of kilt has already been referred to on page 323. The short kilt however, because it was also worn by the common man calls for an explanation, as this would not be the sort of kilt expected to be worn on a ceremonial occasion. In six motifs the tomb-owner is depicted with a short kilt in a sitting position sometimes with an outer garment of panther skin. The frequencies and the tombs in which these occur are shown below:

Table 4	**Attire & Position**		
Tomb-Owner	**Short Kilt**	**Sitting Position**	**Panther Skin Garment**
Kahif	✔	✔	✔
Kanefer	✔	✔	X
Nefer	✔	✔	X
Nefer & Kahay	✔	✔	✔
Nesutnefer	✔	✔	✔
Seneb	✔	✔	X

The sitting position does not allow for the depiction in profile of a ceremonial kilt and the distortion is evident when one observes how the flared kilt is depicted in the tomb of Rashepses[821]. Further in three of the instances (in the tomb of Kahif, Nesutnefer, and Nefer & Kahay), the tomb-owner is wearing an enveloping panther skin outer garment, which distorts the image even further. The tomb-owner is however depicted in all six cases being attended to by men, in five instances wearing the long knee-length kilt and in 1 instance, a pointed flared kilt. In these circumstances, it is hardly likely that

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[820] In Utterance 263 it is stated, "… my panther-skin is on me, my sceptre is in my arm, my baton is in my hand, and I rule for myself those who have gone to it". See Faulkner, *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts* § 338.
[821] Lepsius, *Denkmäler aus Ägypten und Äthiopien* pl. 64 (a).

the main protagonist would be wearing anything less than his juniors and it is probably due to the way in which the sitting tomb-owner is depicted in profile that adequate portrayal of the kilt becomes exceedingly difficult. Accordingly the short kilt can be explained away.

Another item of adornment in connection with the kilt is the fact that the ceremonial pleated kilt always displays a belt and a buckle in the six instances where it occurs in the Taking-Account motif.

Analysis of the male tomb-owners in the thirty-two tombs examined revealed the following:

>The below knee length long kilt accounted for 25% of the examples,
>
>The pointed kilt with a flared trapezoidal front extending away from the body for 34% of the examples,
>
>The side pleated short kilt in 19% and the normal short kilt in the balance of 19% with one unverifiable amounting to 3%[822].

The frequency of occurrence of all the kilts depicted in the Taking-Account motif is given in the Chart 26 below.

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[822] 11 Pointed Flared Kilts: in the tombs of Ankhmahor, Iynefert, Kagemni, Khnumenti Niankhkhnum/Khnumhotep, Perneb, Ptahhotep II, Rahshepses, Senedjemib.Mehi, Seshathotep and Ty (pl.56 & 128).
8 Long below knee-length Kilts: in the tombs of Fetekta, Iymery, Kayemnofret, Kairer, Khafre-ankh, Neferbauptah, Qar, and Shetwi.
6 Pleated Kilts: in the tombs of Kaninswt, Khafkhufu I, Meryib, Sekhemka, Tjenti, and Whemka.
6 Short Kilts: in the tombs of Kahif, Kanefer, Nefer, Nefer & Kahay, Nesutnefer, and Seneb. 1 Unverifiable Kilt: Mereruka (pl. 51).

Types & Frequencies of Kilts
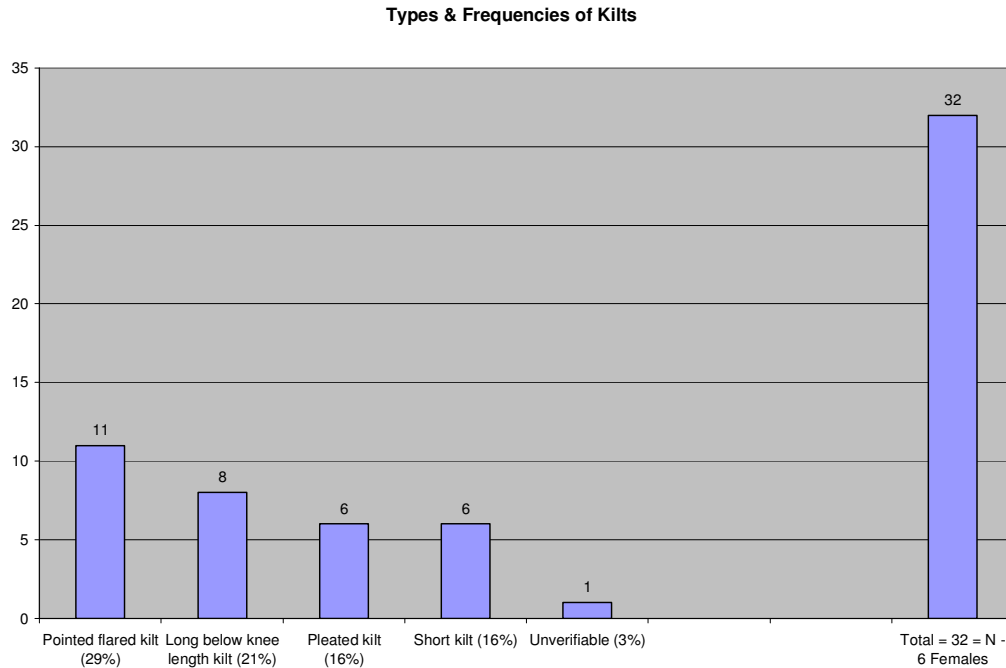
*The above numbers refer to the tombs with the above types of male dress

Chart 26: Types and Frequencies of Kilts

Panther Skin Outer Garment, Shoulder Knot, and Lector Sash:

The panther skin garment with tags is a rare occurrence and is seen in the Dynasty 4 tomb of prince Nefermaat at Maidum. Another example is the undated seated figure of ꜥnḫ at the Leiden Museum, who has the title of a *smw* priest. These high ranked individuals are attested from the Old Kingdom into the New Kingdom[823]. They were originally connected with the Opening of the Mouth ritual, where they performed the role of son for father in the funeral ceremonies and were initially the sole wearers of this distinctive item of priestly dress, the panther skin outer garment sometimes with the shoulder tags[824]. Thereafter these tags disappear and then occur in the early Dynasty 5 tomb of Kaninswt, who has among other titles – "son of the king, living son of the king and sem priest" and who is depicted with such tags in all of his tomb

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[823] D. M. Doxey, "Priesthood," in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt, vol. 3*, ed. D. B. Redford (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 69.

[824] Staehelin, *Untersuchungen zur ägyptischen Tracht im Alten Reich* 57-60.

representations including that in the Taking-Account motif[825]. While the reason is unclear it may be connected with a desire to show his individuality because he had all the relevant titles – twenty in all.

Contrary to Kaninswt, who is standing and a sem priest, a latter example is in the early Dynasty 6 tomb of Kahif, where although he is shown in a sitting posture the tags are clearly seen (Junker incorrectly describes this as some sort of a clasp-"Umhang aus Pantherfell, der auf der linken Schulter mit einer Schliesse zusammengehalten wird")[826].

The shoulder knot[827] though is a more regular occurrence, is generally encountered especially where the tomb-owner is involved in a ceremony, e.g. banqueting, Taking-Account, scenes in which he is viewing his estate, etc. However there are wide variations here too. In the tomb of Kahif, the Taking-Account motif displays as indicated both a panther skin outer garment and shoulder tags while in the same tomb the banqueting motif on the South Wall depicts him in a short kilt – the only insignia of eliteness being a short beard.

In the Taking-Account motif, the panther skin with shoulder tags appears in two tombs, while that with shoulder knot appears from early Dynasty 5 and well into Dynasty 6 in six tombs, with one tomb that of Ankhmahor being unverifiable, since the relevant upper part of the panther skin garment is missing[828]. Of the 38 tombs analyzed, two that of (Ankhmahor & Kairer) were unverifiable and of the remaining 36, six are of females who usually do not wear a panther skin (although there are examples of females in another context- sitting before an offering table and wearing a panther skin garment (e.g. Neferiabet)[829] or standing (e.g. Atet in Maidum)[830]. The eight instances

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[825] Junker, *Giza* vol. 2, fig. 15, 16, 18,19 & p. 159.

[826] Junker, *Giza* vol. 6, 114.

[827] Staehelin, *Untersuchungen zur ägyptischen Tracht im Alten Reich* 54-57.
[828] Shoulder tags: in the tomb of Kahif and Kaninswt.
Shoulder knot: in the tombs of Kayemnofret, Nefer & Kahay, Nesutnefer, Shetwi, and Tjenti.
Unverifiable: in the tomb of Ankhmahor since relevant upper part is damaged.

[829] Manuelian, *Slab Stelae of the Giza Necropolis* 58-61.

[830] Petrie, *Medum* pl. 18.

of males wearing a panther skin outer garment in the Taking-Account motif thus represent only 26% of the analyzed tombs and based on this percentage no conclusion is possible.

Interestingly in six of these examples, the tomb-owners are shown wearing an ordinary short kilt and in the majority (four cases) wear this under a panther skin; thus partly obscuring it as well as emphasizing their functions as a *sm* priest[831].

In three instances in the Taking-Account motif the tomb-owner is depicted with the sash of a lector priest, implying his role and knowledge with that of the lector priest[832]. These priests were primarily concerned with reciting the spells in the funerary rituals and were a distinct group of priests who had the specialized understanding necessary for the conduct of funerary rites. They are usually depicted with a pointed kilt and wide sash worn diagonally across the chest or draped on one shoulder and are identified as the *ẖry-ḥbt* or the one who literally carries the sacred texts. They were well versed in the hieroglyphic signs of the ritual texts and ensured that the ceremonies were performed in accordance with the written tradition. The earliest members of this group of priests were members of the royal family but by the Middle Kingdom this title could be held by any literate official[833]. Accordingly the depiction of the sash on the tomb-owner can be related both to secret knowledge and the implication that he was someone who devoted his life to its maintenance, which generates a related respect in society and in time becomes a direct pointer to social identity.

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[831] In *Kahif, Nefer & Kahay, Nesutnefer and Tjenti's* tombs the panther skin covering is shown, while in two cases that of Seneb and Nefer this is not so. Seneb can be explained by the fact that the artist was at pains to hide the dwarfism of the deceased, while Nefer is shown sitting on a carved chair with bulls legs and cushion, wearing wristlets, a broad collar and "false beard", while holding a large rod of authority-thus the emphasis shifts away from the short kilt.

[832] Wearing a sash across chest: in the tombs of Khafre-ankh, Meryib and Sekhemka.

[833] Doxey, "Priesthood," The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt, vol. III, 69.

7.4 Presenter

7.4.1 Presenter's Attributes

Encountered in all the Taking-Account motifs, is the depiction of a male presenter, who is in the act of 'holding' a document, in the majority of instances in the direction of the tomb-owner. There is no depiction of a female presenter, although there are at least six instances of a female tomb-owner with the Taking-Account motif in her tomb. This is indeed surprising when it is known that females did act as funerary priestesses (from the reign of Khufu right through to Dynasty 6, thirty female priestesses are evidenced in the necropolises of Giza and Saqqara)[834], and in light of the fact that priests were literate.

Since the presenter is usually depicted as a scribe, one must conclude that the presenter was an 'educated' person of some status and if one includes those presenter(s) who are identified as the son(s) of the tomb-owner, the implication that the presenter was not of low socio-economic class, is reinforced.

Of the 38 tombs examined:

> There are 22 tombs (58%) in which presenters are overseers[835].
>
> There are 7 tombs (18%) in which the presenters are sons and where other relatives are depicted viewing the Taking Account occasion[836].
>
> There are 9 tombs (24%) in which the presenter's title is unverifiable[837].

However, even if this is not an accident of preservation and they were all just scribes, their literacy qualifies them as respected members of the tomb-

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[834] Y. G. Lemke, "Die nichtköniglichen Priesterinnen des Alten Reiches (4.-6. Dynastie)" (Ph.D dissertation, Julius – Maximilians – Universität Würzburg, 2008) 193-94.

[835] Overseer of the house in the tombs of: Fetekta, Hemetra, Idut, Iymery, Kagemni, Kairer, Kaniniswt, Kayemnofret, Khentkawes, Khenut, Mereruka (pl. 51), Meresankh lll (fig. 12), Meryib, Nebet, Niankhkhnum/Khnumhotep (fig. 13), Perneb, Rashepses, Seneb, Senedjemib-mehi, Seshathotep, Tjenti, and Ty (fig. 56 and pl. 128).

[836] In the tombs of: Khafkhufu I, Khafre-ankh, Nefer, Nesutnefer, Ptahotep II, Qar and Sekhemka.

[837] In the tombs of: Ankhmahor, Iynefert, Kahif, Kanefer, Khnumenti, Nefer & Kahay, Neferbauptah, Shetwi, Whemka.

owner's circle and as important members of the community. An analysis of the relationship between the tomb-owner and the presenters' titles follows on page 352. The tomb-owner in the Taking-Account motif communicates this vision of his eliteness, which is again a pointer in the direction of the generics. Based on the motifs, the presenter is usually the first person in the procession to face the tomb-owner because the attention of the tomb-owner is a requirement of these motifs[838]. This position is maintained even when there are multiple presenters depicted, there being ten such instances[839], which account for about 25% of the tombs with this motif; they range from mid. Dynasty 4 to early Dynasty 6 but no correlation between time frame and changed depiction can be established. Should this be looked at as exceptional behaviour in view of the fact that all the other twenty-eight tomb-owners depicting this motif show only one presenter? Possibly these ten cases are examples of individuality by which the tomb-owner is trying to emphasize his own status by bolstering this with more than one presenter, i.e. he had so many possessions that more than one scribe was required. One would have thought that the motifs showing train upon train of offering bearers, the banqueting motif with its plethora of foods, etc. which are pervasive especially in tombs from Dynasty 5 onwards, would have sufficed but this would be to succumb to the tendency to see ancient societies from the perspective of our own experience.

Attire

It would be expected that being one of the main officiants in this ceremony, an appropriate form of dress would be perceptible and this is indeed the case in all the Taking-Account motifs. The analysis showed that there are 17 presenters with long, below knee length kilts and 20 with the pointed flared kilt. Therefore no preference for one or the other can be established. There

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[838] Manuelian, "Presenting the Scroll," 193-94.

[839] In the tombs of: Iynefert, Kagemni, Kairer, Kahfkhufu I, Kaninswt, Khenut, Nebet, Nefer, Rashepses and Tjenti.

are only 2 instances of the presenters wearing an elaborately pleated kilt and one only with a short kilt[840]. These are summarized in Chart 27 below.

Presenters' Attire

Below knee length kilt (44%): 17	Pointed flared kilt (53%): 20
Pleated kilt (5%): 2	Short kilt (2.5%): 1

Total = N+1* = 38 + 2*
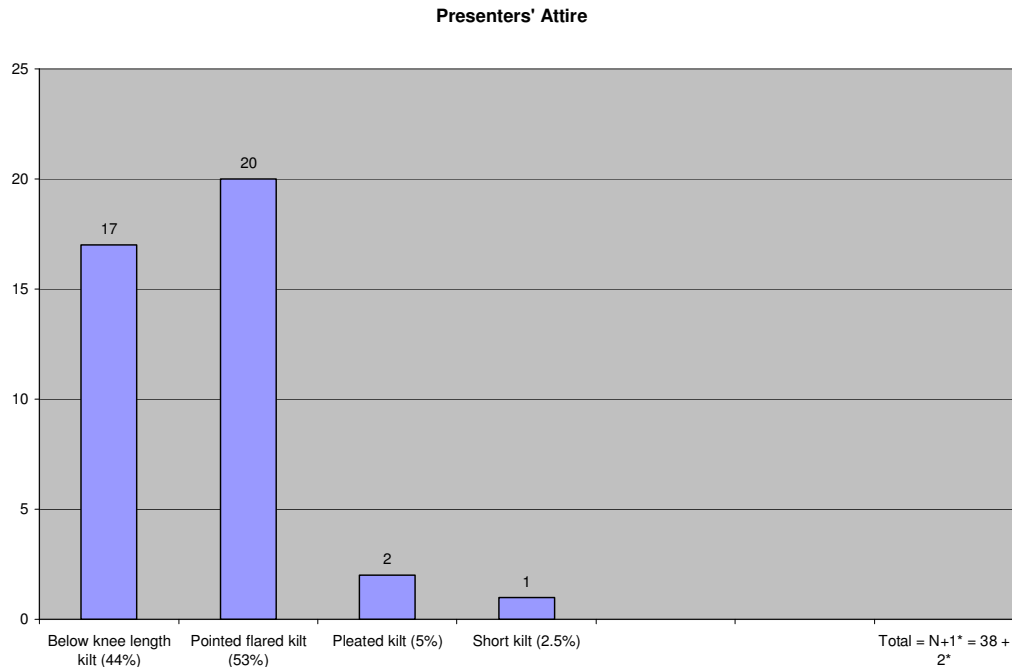
* Duplication occurs because the tomb of Ty depicts the same type of kilt in two plates (pl. 56 & 128) but is only one tomb and also in the tomb of Nefer where two different types of kilts are shown in the same motif, therefore the total exceeds the number of tombs. The above numbers refer to the tombs but NOT the number of presenters.

Chart 27: Presenters' Attire

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[840] 17 Below knee length kilts: in the tombs of Hemetra, Iymery, Kanefer, Kaninswt, Kayemnofret, Khafre-ankh, Meresankh III, Nefer & Kahay, Nefer*, Neferbauptah, Nesutnefer, Qar, Sekhemka, Seneb, Senedjemib. mehi, Seshathotep, and Whemka.
20 Pointed flared kilts: in the tombs of Ankhmahor,Fetekta, Idut, Iynefert, Kagemni, Kahif, Kairer, Khentkawes, Khenut, Khnumenti, Mereruka, Nebet, Nefer*, Niankhkhnum/Khnumhotep, Perneb, Ptahotep II, Rashepses, Shetwi, and Ty (pl. 56 & 128).
2 Pleated kilts: in the tombs of Khafkhufu I and Meryib.
1 Short kilt: in the tomb of Tjenti. ***Note: Nefer* depicts the knee length and the pointed flared kilt, therefore these have duplicate entries.

<u>Headdress</u>

The headdress presents the same problem as was referred to in the carrying-chair analysis, i.e. that of distinguishing between "wigged" heads and non-wigged heads. In an important ceremony as depicted in this motif, some form of head covering would be an essential requirement, especially when the majority of the presenters are high officials. Accordingly unless there is a definite depiction of the long striated "wig", I will be assuming that the presenters have a short curly "wig". Having said this, I realize that the stylistic problem in the depiction of the headdress, is not solved but as it is outside the scope of this study, it cannot be taken any further[841]. The iconography reveals that the majority of the presenters have as their headdress; some form of the short curly "wig" falling to the nape of the neck and covering part of the forehead. In two instances in the tombs of Qar and Khnumenti, the damaged nature prevents any assumption.

One definite exception is that in the tomb of Kahafkhufu, where the two presenters are very elaborately attired with striated shoulder length full "wigs"; wear a pleated short kilt, a "false beard", and the sash of the lector priest in a manner similar to that of the tomb-owner. The explanation may lie in the fact that they are the two sons of the tomb-owner identified as Wetka and Iunka; the caption reads:

> "Presenting the document by the king's son Wetka … and Iunka"[842].

In the tomb of Khafre-ankh, the son is depicted doing the presenting and he also wears the same attire as his father but has only a short "wig". In all other instances where sons are present and not doing the actual presenting but follow the presenter, e.g. in the tombs of Kahif and Meryib, no such correlation was found.

Two instances (about 5%) distinctly show the presenter wearing a collar and a further two depict the presenter with a "false beard"[843]. If the objective was

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[841] Staehelin, *Untersuchungen zur ägyptischen Tracht im Alten Reich* 84-91 & 178-82. She gives details of masculine and feminine wig types and their occurence .

[842] Simpson, Chapman, and Reisner, *The mastabas of Kawab, Khafkhufu I and II: G7110-20, 7130-40, and 7150, and subsidiary mastabas of Street G7100* 12-13.

to enhance the status aspect of the tomb-owner, then it may well be that these few instances may be considered as individualistic. One can also blame the nature of the preserved archaeological remains but it is highly doubtful that the tomb-owner would have wanted the presenter to be depicted in an equivalent manner.

The dominance of the presenters' short curly "wig" is indicated in Chart 28 below.

Presenters' Headgear
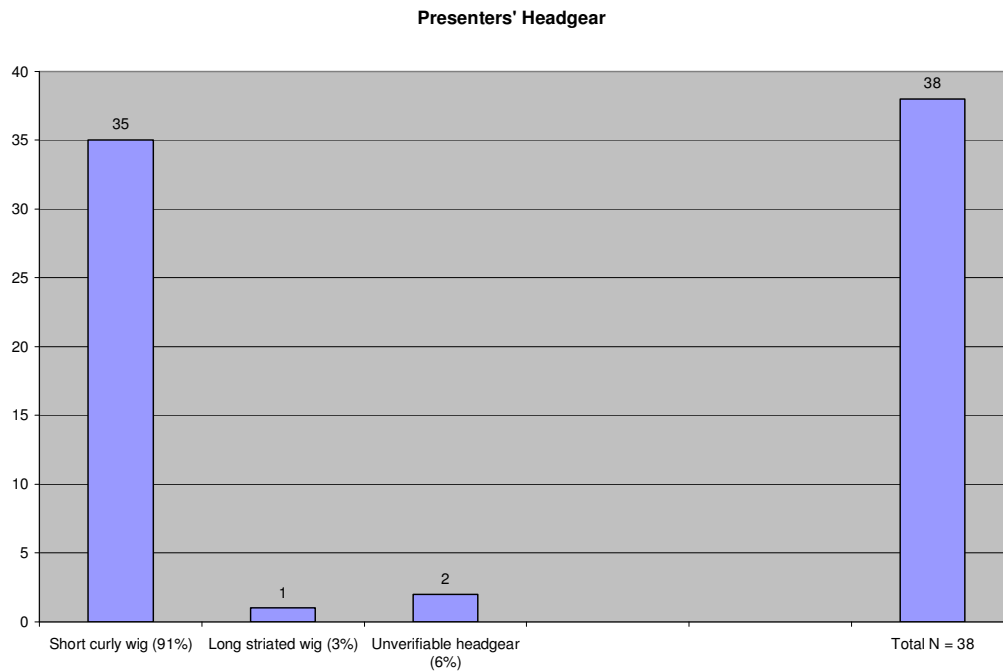
* The above numbers refer to tombs depicting the specific type of headdress but NOT to the number of presenters wearing it. The first column consists of all of Appendix "C" apart from the three tombs of Kahafkhufu I, Qar, and Khnumenti.

Chart 28: Presenters' Headdress

As is apparent from the above chart that the presenter in all cases is appropriately attired and wigged, however it would appear from the depictions that were it not for his size, he would appear to have a partial similarity to the main protagonist – the tomb-owner.

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[843] "False beard": in the tombs of Khafkhufu I, and Meresankh III.
Collar: in the tombs of Nefer & Kahay and Ptahhotep II.

In line with the research assumptions (2) and (3)[844], humans have a strong tendency to want to inter-relate with others. The obvious exceptions are hermits. Even monks & nuns inter-relate with their own gender to some extent. Attitude adoption or herd instinct is associated with wanting to belong, often to something bigger than themselves. Many animals have this instinct, dogs ally themselves with the dominant human, but for humans, there are varied types of association. Some people settle for the easiest, closest, most convenient herd; others for a group at their maximum extreme of acceptability, e.g. exclusive clubs/ideological associations. The individual's decision to appear as part of a particular group is often the only significant decision in his life because after the decision has been made, he is loyal to all of the group's attitudes, rather than be a heretic. Sometimes the individual does not even decide to join a particular group but just follows the rest of his peers. The amount of adjustment/compromise varies with the individual and the available groups. Its importance with respect to presenters is as follows.

Identification with the norms of the powerful is possibly the biggest factor for servants. In a stable society, its elite would dominate the 'Zeitgeist' of their society and by adopting elite norms the servant would feel part of society. By adopting these norms, the servant can even partly predict his master's whims, which eases the servant's burden. The elite domination of the servant and of his society is so great that the servant has little choice. In considering themselves from the same point of view, they become to identify themselves with their lord's attitudes and in the case of the Taking-Account motifs, would appear to go so far as to become his accessory. In this way the presenter is detached from himself, aligns himself totally with that of his lord, and finally ends up by creating a similar appearance for himself like his master. A similar analogy can be seen in present times: the majority of USA citizens, who although they are working class, vote for rich candidates (who do nothing for the poor), apparently because the voters can delude themselves that they are closer to success in the American dream. An extreme modern example is the

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[844] See Chapter I, section 2-Research Assumptions

Stockholm syndrome, where the kidnapped absorb the ideology of their captors and retain the ideology long after their release[845].

In a hierarchical society based upon religious beliefs as in Old Kingdom Egypt, where authority was assigned to the king, one might expect that elite society tends to become immobile and people come to accept their static lot.

When the mind-set of the elite changes, there is a corresponding change in the attitude of their servants, who adopt the attitude of their masters, and this results in socio-economic shifts. These shifts can be related to some aspects of the generics which would come to be depicted on the wall paintings.

The adoption by the servants of the outwardly appearing norms of the elite, results in a propagation and preservation of the elite status, primarily for the tomb-owner but secondarily also for the presenter, whose position is confirmed and maybe this facilitated change in the structure of ancient Egyptian society. This is in direct contrast with the idea of a hierarchical society in which there can be no change.

7.5 Gifts

There are 3 problems when considering "gifts" as part of the Taking-Account motif and in its analysis:

1. The exaggerated numerical nature of the provisions described in many instances make any comparison between the thousands of bread, beer, alabaster vessels and linen, statistical or otherwise, a near impossibility.

2. Impossibility of defining the essential differences between categories, e.g. of various staple food items like bread and beer[846] increases the difficulty of categorization.

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[845] W. Graebner, *Patty's got a gun: Patricia Hearst in 1970s America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).

[846] Lepsius, *Denkmäler aus Ägypten und Äthiopien* pl. 35. See also Barta, *Die altägyptische Opferliste* 47-50. The offering list in the Dynasty 5 tomb of Debehni is typical of the difficulty - with 20 different types of 'bread' and 7 types of 'drinks' etc.

3. In any event the document itself supposedly contained a list of what was being shown or presented and as such, it would seem superfluous to have depictions of the listed gifts, or maybe this is another example of abundant caution/double insurance on the part of the elite.

The gifts can be the document itself and in the majority of instances depictions of desert animals, cattle and fowl being led behind the presenter. While the document is always prima facie the first element of the present there is no special pattern recognizable in the order of the other gifts and several combinations are observable[847]. Of the 38 tombs examined, twenty-four (63%) had some combination of desert animals, cattle, fowl and other food as the main gifts[848]. These are usually shown being led or brought to the tomb-owner following the presenter or may appear in a register below. Five tombs (13%) had no verifiable depictions of any gifts although the captions indicate otherwise and this could well be due to the problem of preservation[849], most of them being severely damaged. The remaining nine tombs (24%) present difficulties[850]: while the majority of these can be explained in terms of reading the motif in conjunction with a representation of provisioning appearing nearby on an adjoining wall or entrance thickness, two tombs defy such an explanation.

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[847] C D F: in the tomb of Iymery
D F C: in the tomb of Senedjemib-Mehi
F C D: in the tombs of Nefer
D C F: in the tombs of Kahif, Kagemni, and Niankhnum/Chnumhotep
F C: in the tomb of Meresankh III
D C: in the tombs of Kayemnofret, Kanefer, and Ptahhotep II
C F (fig. 13) and C D C D (fig. 17) in the tomb of Nebet

***Note: C=Cattle, D=Desert Animals, and F=fowl.

[848] Desert Animals, Cattle, Fowl, and Food: in the tombs of Idut, Iymery, Iynefert, Kagemni, Kahif, Kanefer, Kayemnofret, Khafre-ankh, Khentkawes, Mereruka (pl. 51), Nebet, Nefer, Nefer & Kahay, Nesutnefer, Niankhkhnum/Khnumhotep, Perneb, Pathhotep II, Sekhemka, Seneb, Seshathotep, Shetwi, Tjenti, Ty (pl. 128), and Whemka.

[849] No depiction: in the tombs of Fetekta, Kairer, Qar, Rashepses, and Khnumenti.

[850] Depictions which require an explanation: Ankhmahor, Hemetra, Ka-ni-nswt, Khafkhufu I, Khenut, Meresankh III, Meryib, Neferbauptah, and Senedjemib-Mehi.

In the tomb of Khafkhufu I, the Taking-Account motif appears ostensibly on the inner northern jamb, where the tomb-owner's sons are presenting him with a document, each which has hieroglyphic characters on it. These characters read:

> "a thousand of young bulls, antelopes, young goats, gazelles, *sr*-geese, *ṯrp* geese, *st*-ducks and *mnwt* pigeons"

thus presumably dispensing with the need to depict the gifts themselves. The caption on the Northern jamb set in vertical lines facing the tomb-owner reads:

> "Viewing the invocation offerings which are brought from the king's house (and) from his towns of the funerary estate …"

Underneath this are characters, which again depict the thousand sign together with the head of the type of animal meant.

Similarly on the southern jamb opposite is a caption which read, "Viewing the sealed deliveries which are brought from the house of the king …" Underneath this are the characters indicating a thousand together with sealed jars, and linen. However, there is no person presenting a document. This suggests that both these jambs should be read together, which would then indicate that the gifts are recorded on the documents being presented by his sons (Wetka and Iunka).

The other difficulty is from the tomb of Senedjemib-Mehi. Here the presenter is immediately followed by a punishment scene and in the following register by cattle being offered. Does this mean that food was not important? I would suggest that this would be an incorrect reading of this scene. Indeed this is the clearest possible evidence that while food was important, ignored duties could result in punishment. Normally punishment scenes are a genre in themselves but here it is being combined with a motif, which evokes a connection with power and material wealth, to communicate control over people belonging to his community. While this is the only punishment scene in conjunction with a Taking-Account motif, nevertheless its importance is in the individuality shown.

Another issue in connection with gifts is as follows: if the reference point is only taken to be the offerings following the presenter, there would be no need for a separate document listing for what was already depicted. The fact that a document is illustrated in a prominent manner in every Taking-account motif and the main actors are in ceremonial attire and adornments, is an affirmation of the socio-economic embeddedness of communication and display which are its hallmarks. Altenmüller belittles this issue and describes all such motifs as merely an extension of the offering scene: a variety of long and short narrative by stressing the gifts only[851]. Considering that both of these are compulsive acts, essential in elite human behaviour right throughout the pharaonic times if not earlier, and have their basis in the importance which they attached to these modes in their civilization, they are well understood. However, just because something is important, does not mean that it is useful, usual or has to have similar meaning, wherever depicted. Offerings abound in all tombs because they are the central preoccupation of one basic element: provisioning for the deceased depicted in the paradigmatic early slab stelae and the motif of the tomb-owner before a table of food. Accordingly when patterns of offerings which resemble each other, closely appear in other places and motifs, the duplication must involve a refinement of the original meaning, implying that the tomb-owner chose to use the same situation but to handle it in terms different to the dominant purpose.

Undoubtedly the Taking-Account motif is about material possessions but the context of its usage with a presenter of a document associated with individuals of high social rank and the stress on the resources collected and expended by the tomb-owner for his posthumous benefit, has to be understood in terms of negotiating and elevating social status. Understood in this way, the gifts themselves when depicted become subsidiary to the main issue of Taking-Account.

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[851] H. Altenmüller, "Presenting the *nḏt-ḥr* offerings to the tomb owner," in *The Old Kingdom Art and Archaeology*, ed. M. Barta (Prague: Czech Institute of Egyptology, 2006), 25-35.

7.6 Document Material and Type

7.6.1 Material

Most of the presenters seem to be holding some sort of rectangular piece of material, which I have assumed to be papyrus because paper was not invented at this time in Egypt. Closer examination reveals that in the majority of cases it indeed was papyrus because there is not a single motif in which the presenter does not use both hands (papyrus being pliable) to present the document. However even then, one has to be careful to ascertain that it is actually a document and a Taking-Account motif.

A case in point is that in the tomb of Akhethetep[852]. The southern entrance thickness shows two men holding a large piece of rectangular material right in front of the tomb-owner, who is seen in the act of accepting it and which on a cursory examination may be taken to be a document of some sort. In fact based on a similar scene in the tomb of Werirni at Sheikh Said[853], the depiction is that of a piece of cloth being presented and not a document.

Most of the presenting motifs do not have anything written on the documents, at least nothing that is legible today[854]. The ancient Egyptians probably knew what this scene meant and it could be that this was a symbolic form of showing the reality of presenting in a two dimensional way. If this is correct, then anything that was being presented, whether it had writing or not, would allude to the variety of meanings, which are lost to us today. What the documents in these motifs contain is not clear but following on from the inscriptions, it probably pertains to material possessions, either of the tomb-owner, (e.g. the offerings and gifts which are being brought from the estates

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[852] C. Ziegler, *Le Mastaba d'Akhethetep*, *Musée du Louvre Éditions* (Louvain: Peeters, 2007) fig. 35 (loose plate).

[853] Manuelian, "Presenting the Scroll," 566.

[854] The exceptions being in the tombs of: Fetekta, Khafkhufu I, and Meryib. Each of these three instances contains writing. It has been conjectured that these persons are giving accounts concerning the tomb equipment; the papyrus roll records the individual items. See W. Helck, *Altägyptische Aktenkunde des 3. und 2. Jahrtausends v. Chr.*, *Münchner Ägyptologische Studien (31)* (Berlin: 1974) 5-6.

once owned by the tomb-owner) or gifts from the king (see Documents and Captions pages 344-347 for the actual textual description).

7.6.2 Document Type

The various inscriptions have been collated by Der Manuelian[855] according to the way the document is being held. While this might be of use in stylistic examinations, it is of limited use in studies where the symbolic meaning of what is being done is far more significant, than how it is being done. The motifs are not very clear as to 'what is being done' and indeed, it is easy to switch between showing, causing it to be shown, reading, proffering etc. if one were to rely entirely on the profile view of the depictions alone. Accordingly one must also rely on the captions. The problem then becomes one of relating the philological meaning of the various inscriptions and this presents us with a dilemma: the same word in Old Egyptian can have a variety of very similar yet distinctive meanings. However if one analyses the captions, we find that most of these start with an infinitive verb like *di*[*di.w*], *di.t, rdi*[*rdi.w*]*, rdi.t, siᶜ.t, ꜣw.t, šd.t,* and like all infinitives, these describe an action as such, which in Egyptian can only be recognized by the way it is used grammatically, and not only by its form[856]. The captions contain the verbs frequently encountered in presenting motifs and they all relate to action of some sort; seeing, presenting, extending, reciting, inspecting, or proffering. Because the motif in question mainly involves two persons: the recipient (tomb-owner) and the one doing the presenting (presenter), it is obvious that in order to be clear both the depiction and caption should correlate. If this is not the case then identifying its precise meaning becomes an exceedingly difficult task. An example of this difficulty is seen in the tomb of Meresankh III, were the caption and the motif contradict each other. While the motif is clear, the caption reads "viewing the writing [by] the overseer of the funerary

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[855] Manuelian, "Presenting the Scroll," 561-88.

[856] B. G. Ockinga and H. Brunner, *A concise grammar of Middle Egyptian: an outline of Middle Egyptian grammar* (Mainz Philipp von Zabern, 2005) 53-55. Infinitives which do not end in a 't' should end with a 'w', which in many cases is omitted. These are to be treated as nominal infinitives based on the syntax, where these appear. I thank Professor J. F. Bourghouts (Leiden University) for pointing this out to me.

priests," which would mean that the overseer is doing the viewing or it can be broken down to mean "viewing the writing" by Meresankh III, the presentation being done "by the overseer of funerary priests"[857].

Rare examples where the meanings are clearer are in the tomb of Kayemnofret and Khafkhufu I. Here the presenter is described as "presenting the document" and the tomb-owner is described as "viewing the list of funerary gifts brought as funerary offerings" and "viewing the invocation offerings" respectively[858].

In most other instances, one has to fall back on decorum and assume that the tomb-owner was literate as well, that seeing and inspecting were continuing prerogatives of the deceased, while all other actions are being done by the 'presenter', who is the subordinate in this drama. It is constructive to contrast this use of language with that in the Old Kingdom autobiography. In this genre, the tomb-owner broadcasts what he has done for others, so that his status is improved[859]. By contrast, in the Taking-Account motif, it is the presenter, who is doing the action but it is clear from the motif that he is the subordinate. This act is then just one part in the enhancement of the status of the tomb-owner; the central driver of status must however be seen in the fact that he broadcasts his access to resources, from which he could receive, even when deceased. Thus we must draw on the greater scale of depiction, of the tomb-owner's unique symbols of office, the evident respect showed by the presenter and the vaguely hinted system of rank and identity. The captions used in the presentation motifs are then used to look at wall paintings and reliefs, to elucidate meaningful affirmations and cultural comparisons. How far these are true is another matter and one way of avoiding this debate, which one can never solve, is to look at them as

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[857] Dunham et al., *The mastaba of Queen Mersyankh III: G7530-7540* p. 20 & fig. 12.

[858] Lepsius, *Denkmäler aus Ägypten und Äthiopien* 91 c. For Khafkhufu I see Simpson, Chapman, and Reisner, *The mastabas of Kawab, Khafkhufu I and II: G7110-20, 7130-40, and 7150, and subsidiary mastabas of Street G7100* fig. 29.

[859] E. Edel, "Untersuchungen zur Phraseologie der ägyptischen Inschriften des Alten Reiches," in *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Instituts für Ägyptische Altertumskunde in Kairo* (Berlin: 1944), 31-56.

Assmann does, i.e. "this truth is subject to changes with every new identity and every new present. It lies in the story, not as it happened but as it lives on and unfolds in collective memory[860]" what he terms memohistory.

Indirectly all these instances are pointers to the hierarchical position/status of the two protagonists and the underlying fact that wealth and status during the Old Kingdom, came mainly from participation in the government: one requirement of which was the ability to administer and communicate. Texts and inscriptions should be regarded as one part of a range of practices which produce culture and again point to the generics of the people involved.

With a view to exposing the different meanings, their nuances and perhaps the way the Egyptians themselves may have perceived the different categories of meaning, I summarize the captions in their context below.

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[860] J. Assmann, *Moses the Egyptian: The Memory of Egypt in Western Monotheism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997) 14.

7.7 Documents and Captions

The use of different words by the ancient Egyptians when describing similar things/actions must have been a differentiating use of the meaning itself and this presents a difficulty in being categorical about a particular meaning. Consider the word for an offering. We have evidence of 6 different words (*nḏt-ḥr, wḏb-rd, pḥrt, prt-ḥrw, mḏ3t, sš*) used to convey some meaning of an offering in the Taking-Account motif. Each of these can be in the broad sense be taken to be an explanation of what is being offered but in the differentiated sense, which probably was how the Egyptians understood it, its meaning has different textures. This may relate to the document/list itself, to mortuary offerings in general, as well as to a combination of these two. While the philological debate is outside the scope of this study, similar limitations/ extensions are to be understood as applying to the captions in the table below.

Table 5	**Document Type**
nḏt-ḥr	Offerings [861]
wḏb-rd/ pḥrt	Reversionary offerings [862]
sš n niwt n pr ḏt	Document of towns of the funerary estate[863]
sš n iḫt bnrt	Document of sweet things[864]

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[861] In the tombs of: Khentkawes, Ptahhotep II and Sekhemka. See also Altenmüller, "Presenting the *nḏt-ḥr* offerings to the tomb owner," 32. He conjectures that *nḏt-ḥr* were offerings which were presented as in an act of worship, during a ceremony.

[862] Meryib, Niswtnefer, and Seshathotep (Kanawati: *Giza ll*, p. 28 describes this as *pḥr.t* contrary to Manuleian ("*Presenting the Scroll*", 1996: 580). Because there is no leg determinative Kanawati's translation is to be preferred. The word *wḏb-rd* is not to be confused with *int-rd* the "removing the foot" ritual and for its meaning in the sense of "returning from the cult-chamber in order to carry the offerings elsewhere", see A. H. Gardiner, "The Mansion of Life and Master of King's Largess," *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 24 (1938): 87-88.

[863] In the tomb of: Ka-ni-nswt. See J. J. Perepelkin, *Privateigentum in der Vorstellung der Ägypter des Alten Reichs*, trans. R. Müller-Wollermann (Tübingen: Dissertations Druck Darmstadt, 1986) 109. For the purposes of this study *pr-ḏt* shall be understood to include not only the personal house of the official but all his privately earned income. Altenmüller stresses that the word has a nuanced judicial and technical use, and in common with other words which indicate possession and property, a 'streng terminolologischen Stellenwert' is not detectable. See H. Altenmüller, "Besitz und Eigentum," in *Lexikon der Ägyptologie, vol. I*, ed. W. Helck, E. Otto, and W. Westendorf (Wiesbaden Otto Harrassowitz, 1975), 733.

mdȝt sš n ꜥwt, n iwȝ imy mdt, n wndw[865]

...ndt [ḥr] innt m niwt=f[866]

m ḥwt niwwt=s n pr dt[867]   Document of sheep and goats, oxen in stall and short horned cattle respectively Offerings which are brought from his village from her villages and estates.

INSPECTING

sš r mȝȝ prt ḥrw offerings[868]   Document for Inspection (of the) invocation

rdit r mȝȝ   Presenting for inspection[869]

rdit sš n ḥmw-kȝ   Presenting the document [of/by]? the funerary priests[870]

rdi[t] sš r mȝȝ <...> pr dt   Presenting the document for inspection [of] the funerary estate.[871]

rdit sš   Presenting the document[872]

rdit sš n ndt ḥr   Presenting the document of offerings[873]

dit sš n pr-dt   Presenting the document of the Funerary estate[874]

rdit sš r mȝȝ prt ḥrw   Presenting the document for inspecting invocation offerings[875]

rdit sš r mȝȝ   Presenting the document for inspection[876]

di[t] sš in ḫtmw sti-ḥb ḥry-tp sšr   Presenting the document by the sealer of the festival ointment and the supervisor

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[864] Niankhkhnum and Khnumhotep
[865] Kagemni
[866] Fetekta
[867] Khenut
[868] Shetwi
[869] Ty (fig. 128)
[870] Meresankh III
[871] Tjenti, Ty, Neferbauptah
[872] Kayemnofret
[873] Khentkawes and Ptahhotep II
[874] Seneb
[875] Shetwi
[876] Neferbauptah and Ty [849 (a)] (fig.56)

	of linen[877]
di.t sš in s3 nswt wtk3	Presenting the document by the king's son Wetka[878]
rdit sš n ndt-ḥr	Presenting the document of offerings[879]
rdit sš ndt-ḥr imy-r ḥmk3 K3nfr	Presenting the list [of] offerings by the overseer of the funerary priests Kanefer[880]
rdit sš niwwt n…sš ip rmt	Presenting the document of villages of and…the document of the census of the people[881]

VIEWING

m33 sš	Viewing the document/ See the document[882]
m33 sš n pḫrt..	Viewing the document of reversionary offerings[883]
m33 ndt-ḥr innt r prt ḥrw..	Viewing the gifts which were brought as funerary offerings…[884]
m33 pr[t]-ḥrw int m pr-nswt m niwwt=f pr dt	Viewing the invocation offerings which are brought from the king's house [and] from his villages of the funerary estate[885]
m33 ndt-ḥr rnpw.t nb.t nfrt innt n=s m ḥwwt niwwt	Viewing gifts and vegetables all good offerings of the year which are brought for her from the estates and the towns[886]
m33 sš n ndt ḥr nt in prt-ḥrw	Viewing the list of his funerary gifts brought as funerary offerings[887].

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[877] Meryib
[878] Khaf-khufu I
[879] Sekhemka, and Ptahhotep II
[880] Kanefer
[881] Ka-ni-nswt
[882] Whemka, Meresankh lll, Seshathotep, Niswtnefer, Kayemnofret
[883] Nisutnefer and Seshathotep
[884] Iymery
[885] Khaf-khufu I
[886] Idut

m33 ḥsb ḥḳ3.w ḥww.t niww.t=f mḥw šmꜥw

Viewing the account of the governors of his villages of Lower and Upper Egypt[888]

m33 ḫtmt innt pr-nswt

Viewing the *ḫtmt* offerings, those that have been brought from the house of the king[889]

m33 nḏt-ḥr innt m niwwt=f nbt ṯzt iḫt bnrt r pr ḏsr

Viewing the gifts brought from all his villages and the accumulation of sweet things in the "red house"[890]

PROFFERING

siꜥ mḏ3t n...

Proffering the document of...[891]

[m3]3 siꜥ mḏꜥt n

overseeing the proffering
of the document of...[892]

siꜥ mḏꜥt sš n

Proffering the document of lists of...[893]

BRINGING

int nḏt-ḥr in niwwt nt pr-ḏt nt šmꜥw

Bringing the offerings by the villages of the funerary estate of Upper Egypt[894]

EXTENDING

3w.t sš

Extending or spreading the document[895]

READING/HEARING

šd.t n=f sš n ḳrst=f diit n=f m ḥtp di nswt imi-r k3t sši

"Reading to him the document for his burial equipment which was given to him as an offering which the king gives, the overseer of works Seshi".[896]

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[887] Kayemnofret
[888] Rahshepses
[889] Meryib
[890] Niankhkhnum/Khnumhotep
[891] Kagemni
[892] Kagemni
[893] Kagemni
[894] Ptahhotep II
[895] Mereruka
[896] Ankhmahor

7.8 Presenter's Relationships to the Tomb-owner

An aspect which may be of assistance in understanding cultural implications, is to seek the filial relationships of the presenters, i.e. whether family is shown as part of the line of the procession following the presenter and is present in the Taking-Account motif. The three main types of subordinate participants in the Taking-Account motif are scribes, officials, and/or sons. Ideally the main cult officiate was the son of the owner probably reflecting the myth of Horus in which Horus performs the funerary offices for his dead father[897]. This connection between death and lasting beneficial effects (vindication by the divine tribunal) on the inheritor means that it was easy to believe in an equivalent myth relating to the life of the elite or for that matter all Egyptians. It is never directly shown on the depictions of the Old Kingdom but indirectly, probably due to the interconnection between burial and inheritance. An inscription from the door architrave of Tjenti reads

An inscription from the door architrave of Tjenti reads

> "I am her (Bebi, his mother's) eldest son and heir, I am the one who buried her in the necropolis".[898]

However, as Klebs observes, this could include others "Das Verzeichnis aller dieser Dinge ist auf eine große Papyrusrolle geschrieben und wird dem Herrn von einem Schreiber oder Beamten oder auch von einem seiner Söhne überreicht oder zum Lesen vorgehalten ..."[899] If the eldest son was the

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[897] A. M. Blackman, *Gods, priests, and men: studies in the religion of pharaonic Egypt*, *Studies in Egyptology* (London: Kegan Paul International, 1998) 266-72. It is accepted that this evidence points to an annual play being performed in later times, where the victory of Horus was commemorated in addition to securing a prosperous reign for the future king. However the earlier reliance on Horus of Behdet would imply a much prior connection in Egyptian history. See also Kemp, *Ancient Egypt: Anatomy of a Civilization* 98. He writes that "the myth of the state…was a clever transformation of an earlier, more generalized statement of an ideal world…created as part of the great codification of court culture…in effect a process of internal colonization at an intellectual level".

[898] Sethe, *Urkunden des Alten Reiches* 164, l. 2-3. See also J.J. Janssen and P. W. Pestman, "Burial and Inheritance in the Community of the Necropolis Workmen at Thebes," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient.* 11 (1968): 140.This "rule" of inheritance by the eldest son is accepted right into the New Kingdom (usually it was the eldest son who buried his parents). In papyrus Bulaq X (recto) it says: "let the possessions be given to him who buries". The authors in footnote 3 on p. 164 say as follows, "so far as we know these principles also apply to the law of inheritance at other periods".
[899] L. Klebs, *Die Reliefs des Alten Reiches* (Heidelberg: Carl Winters 1915) 23.

presenter, then it could be that this motif was part of establishing inheritance rights.

The tomb-owner had two obsessions:

1. Provisioning for the after-life (in which both the rise of specialist priests and the developments in religion must have played a significant role) and

2. Being remembered (i.e. what was displayed and its permanence was significant).

Obsessions (I assume obsessions to be rational), led to among other things the construction of social goals, of which the perpetuation of memory and the resulting components of generics are an integral part. One of the ways to achieve these goals was to accumulate and display as many titles as possible because success in this life was a precursor to owning a mastaba or appropriate rock-cut tomb. By the time of his death, the tomb-owner was usually mature and influential enough to realize that the heritage of his life and epoch could only be maintained and expanded by the next generation of family and high officials. Therefore he chose among other things to depict in his tomb these persons, especially in ceremonial scenes; scenes which he probably realized were constructive in the maintenance and furtherance of his 'obsessions' and which would influence later generations and most importantly, those which emphasized his social reality.

If my theory about the Taking-Account motif being a primarily ceremonial event with cultural significance for the community is correct, the major and minor participants can be seen as confirming the social goals of the tomb-owner, in the way they are described and depicted therein.

7.8.1 Titles of Presenters

Of the total number of 38 tombs examined:

22 cases (58%) have "overseer" as one title of the presenter[900].

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[900] Overseer of the house in the tombs of: Fetekta, Hemetra, Idut, Iymery, Kagemni, Kairer, Kaniniswt, Kayemnofret, Khentkawes, Khenut, Mereruka (pl. 51), Meresankh lll (fig. 12),

7 cases (18%) in which the presenter exhibits titles other than overseer but equally prestigious[901]

9 cases where the presenter's title is unverifiable[902].

If one combines the cases where the presenters have other titles with those where they have the title of overseer, the percentage shoots up to a significant 76% (58+18), testifying to among other things, the importance of the occasion of the Taking–Account motif.

The presenter has other titles across a wide range of tombs and periods and these have been collated by Der Manuelian[903].

It is important to know statistically significant numbers, yet it was felt that because this study deals with social significance as one aspect of the depictions, sorting titles would give a better indication of the range, which is lost when one combines them in all encompassing titles like overseer. As already observed the majority of presenters have titles. That these are depicted and identified, demonstrates the social and functional relationship and the connection to the tomb-owner during his lifetime. Hidden behind the titles is the network in which an alliance of reciprocal duties was formed between superior and subordinate. A good parallel to similar depictions is in the royal temples, where the king is shown with high officials, who too had a social and functional relationship to the king[904]. Because the king provided his officials and favoured employees with priesthoods and offices in pyramid and sun temples, so the official's personnel received ka priesthoods in his tomb

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Meryib, Nebet, Niankhkhnum/Khnumhotep (fig. 13), Perneb, Rashepses, Seneb, Senedjemib-mehi, Seshathotep, Tjenti, and Ty (fig. 56 and pl. 128).

[901] In the tombs of: Khafkhufu I, Khafre-ankh, Nefer, Nesutnefer, Ptahotep II, Qar and Sekhemka.

[902] In the tombs of: Ankhmahor, Iynefert, Kahif, Kanefer, Khnumenti, Nefer & Kahay, Neferbauptah, Shetwi, Whemka.

[903] Manuelian, "Presenting the Scroll," 564.

[904] P. Posener-Kriéger, *Les archives du temple funéraire de Néferirkarê-Kakaï (Les papyrus d'Abousir): traduction et commentaire* (Le Caire: Institut français d'archéologie orientale du Caire, 1976) 384-91. The numerous and differently titled officials who were involved in various functions, related to the mortuary temple of Neferirkare are depicted here.

and cult, which gave rights to land and income in return for duties that were presumably not very strenuous[905].

A note of caution is required when examining the titles: while the titles may be self-explanatory, they only provide a glimpse at a specific point in time (death), at a specific place (tomb in the necropolis) and only information that the elite want to show; as such they are heavily biased towards an un-changing view of society. Of-course it will have become apparent by now that my work vehemently disagrees with such a stylized viewpoint.

A sample list of the titles and their varied occurrences in the tombs are appended in the table below:

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[905] H. Junker, "Die gesellschaftliche Stellung der ägyptischen Künstler im Alten Reich," *Sitzungsberichte der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien*, no. 233/1 (1959): 50-69.

Table 6   <u>**Presenters' Titles**</u>

Title	Translation	Tomb-Owner
ḫtmy sṯi-ḥb	Sealer of the Festival Perfume	Meryib
ḫry-ḥb smsw	Eldest Lector Priest	Qar
sš	Scribe	Meresankh III
sš nswt sꜣ=f	Royal Scribe, his son	Nisutnefer
sš ḥm(w)-kꜣ pr ꜥꜣ	Scribe of the Funerary Priests of the Palace	Idut
sš ḥm(w)-kꜣ	Scribe of the Funerary Priests	Iymery
sꜣ nswt	King's son	Khaf-khufu I
sꜣb sš	Magistrate and Scribe	Ptahotep II
sꜣb sḥḏ sš	Magistrate and Inspector of Scribes	Nefer
sꜣb imy-r sš	Magistrate and Overseer of Scribes	Kagemni & Senedjemib-Mehi
sḥḏ sš	Inspector of Scribes	Sekhemka
sḥḏ sš ꜥ(w)nswt (sš) ꜥprw imy-r ḥm(w)-kꜣ	Inspector of Scribes of Royal Documents, Scribe of the Work-gangs & Overseer of Funerary Priests	Ty
imy-r ḥmw-kꜣ	Overseer of the funerary priests	Iymery, Khentkawes & Meresankh III
imy-r pr	Overseer of the house	See below*

*Fetekta, Hemetra, Idut, Iymery, Kagemni, Kairer, Kaniniswt, Kayemnofret, Khentkawes, Khenut, Mereruka (pl. 51), Meresankh lll (fig. 12), Meryib, Nebet, Niankhkhnum/Khnumhotep (pl. 13), Perneb, Rashepses, Seneb, Senedjemib-mehi, Seshathotep, Tjenti, and Ty (fig. 56 & pl. 128).

7.8.2 Family and Non-Family Relationships

Of the 38 tombs examined, twenty cases (not tombs) depict a **combination** of the family, which can include the following[906]:

- son/s presenting
- high official presenter followed by son/s
- other relatives 'viewing'

The family members identified consist of 6 cases of sons actually doing the presenting. However, there are numerous instances where other family members, e.g. wives, daughters, other sons, a brother and one instance of the tomb-owner's parents being present during the Taking Account ceremony. Since the active part of this motif entails presenting a document and taking account of it, the active and passive participants should be separated. There are 8 cases of sons presenting or sons following the presenter and 28 cases of relatives viewing passively in the 20 tombs[907]. There is no filial relationship depicted in the female tomb-owners (6) in this motif. While it is probably best to delineate the presenting act by the sons from other passive acts of the family, nevertheless the combination of family members in the Taking-Account motif yields both a historical and a comparative perspective. This in turn provides a key to the one of the central themes of this study, which examines social relationships to the dead and may tell us something about the business of living itself.

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[906] The combination consists of - Sons presenting: in the tombs of Khafkhufu I, Khafre-ankh, Nefer, Nesutnefer, Niankhkhnum/Khnumhotep, and Ptahhotep II. (Not included is the tombs of Khnumenti where it is uncertain whether the presenter is the son).
Sons following the presenter: in the tombs of Iymery, Kahif, and Khafre-ankh.
Viewing by tomb-owner and family members: in the tombs of Ankhmahor, Iymery, Iynefert, Kaninswt, Kayemnofret, Khafkhufu I, Meryib, Nefer & Kahay, Nesutnefer, Niankhkhnum/Khnumhotep, Rashepses, Sekhemka, Senedjemib-mehi, Seshathotep, Ty (pl. 128), and Whemka.

[907] In the tombs of: Ankhmahor, Iymery, Iynefert, Kahif, Kaninswt, Kayemnofret, Khafkhufu I, Khafre-ankh, Meryib, Nefer, Nefer & Kahay, Nesutnefer, Niankhkhnum/Khnumhotep, Ptahotep II, Rashepses, Sekhemka, Senedjemib-Mehi, Seshathotep, Ty, and Whemka.

The details of the type of relationships in the Taking-Account motif are shown below:

- Son[908]
- Wife[909]
- Daughter[910]
- Brother[911]
- Parents [912]

Chart 29 identifies all cases in which a son is present irrespective of his capacity and that of the other relatives. Their presence together, points to the importance of the formal occasion which would not be out of place in a motif which depicts material possessions. These were of-course once the property of the tomb-owner but now have been passed to the eldest son.

The details of their occurrence are given in chart 29 below:

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[908] 15 sons depicted presenting or following presenter and viewing Taking–Account with tomb-owner: In the tombs of Iymery (PV), Iynefert (V), Kahif (P), Ka-ni-nswt (V), Kaemnofret (V), Khafkhufu I (PV), Khafre-ankh (P), Meryib (V), Nefer (P), Nefer & Kahay (V), Nesutnefer (PV), Niankhkhnum/Khnumhotep (PV), Ptahotep II (P), Rashepses (V), Sekhemka (V), Seshathotep (V), Senedjemib.Mehi (V), Ty (pl. 128) (V), and Whemka (V) * P = Presenting , V = Viewing with other sons and relatives.

[909] 7 Wife present: in the tombs of: Iynefert, Kayemnofret, Nefer & Kahay, Nesutnefer, Seshathotep, Ty, and Whemka.

[910] 4 Daughter/s present: in the tombs of Khafkhufu I, Meryib, Senedjemib-mehi, and Whemka.

[911] 1 Brother present: in the tomb of Ankhmahor.

[912] 1 Set of Parents present in the tomb of Whemka.

Relationship Distribution
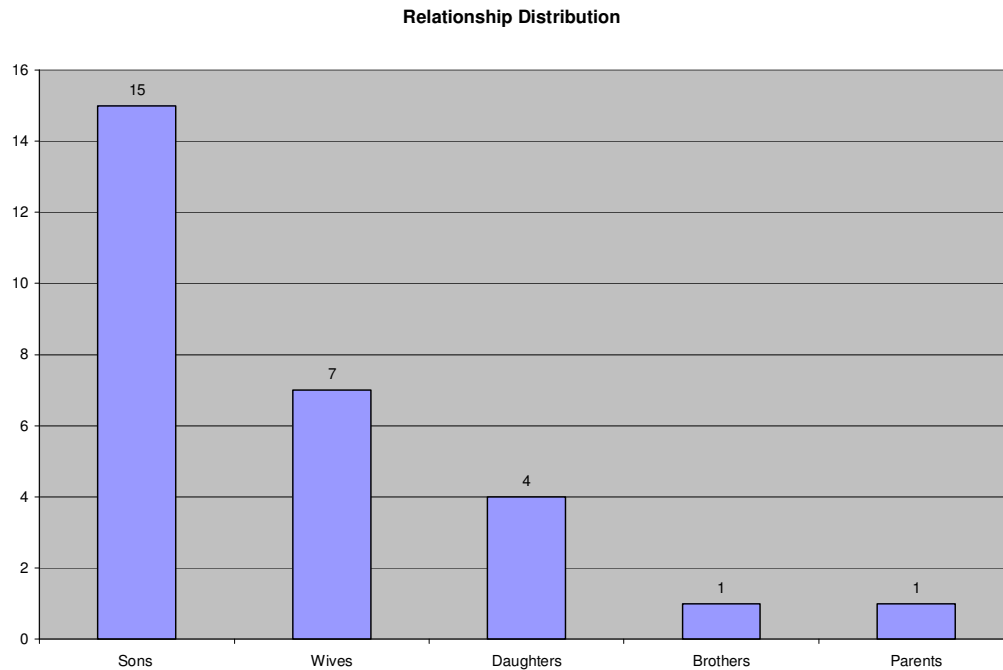
*The above numbers refer to the number of cases where sons and other relatives are present but NOT to their number NOR to the number of tombs. Duplication occurs in the sons' column because sons are involved in different capacities, e.g. presenting, following presenter, and viewing with other relatives.

Chart: 29 Relationship Distributions

The least that can be said is that the family members' roles such as acting as presenters and taking part in the proceedings (see section 7.8.1 - 76%); complement the status of the tomb-owner.

The titles and relationships found in the Taking-Account motif are especially telling of the fact that mutual gains were expected from long-term contact and interdependence. The high numbers of senior officials and close family members as well as other subordinates are probably present to witness the correctness of the taking account scene, and to affirm and accept this state of institutionalized communication and formalized display. This would support my initial hypothesis that the Taking-Account motif is a formal occasion. The focus here is on the interaction of the tomb-owner, a document, and another person within a specific social context, i.e. of Taking-Account. The presence of this motif in his tomb ensured the construction of his social memory

through inscribing practices which include depiction and writing. These practices reveal the way the tomb-owner controlled his material world during his lifetime and reflect his desire to be remembered after death. In the manner of its depiction, the motif represents both a tool used by the tomb-owner for his posthumous purpose, and manifests what was almost certainly constitutive of actual elite social life in the Old Kingdom.

The Taking-Account motif also provides case material for the study of cultural forms and processes: the analysis helps to differentiate the specific actions of the Old Kingdom tomb-owner and to understand the important role of culturally conditioned behaviour and thus the importance of the generics.

Further this motif among others (e.g. the banqueting motif) is a prime example of the evolving independent nature of the tomb-owner's identity. Whether he appears in a long striated "wig" or headband with buckle, standing or sitting in carved wooden chairs or carrying-chairs, ceremonially attired and wigged, or even inflicting punishment (the ultimate Taking-Account); the tendency is to validate his encroachment of power and show his grasp on authority. Finally the tomb-owners assent and deliberative response as regards the document evaluated in light of his own preferences results in mutual understanding, mutual trust, shared knowledge, the ideology of continuing order and the maintenance of institutional inequalities all of which point to the generics.

While initially this extension of powers consolidates the supremacy of the king, ultimately it is this very instrument of widening and intruding bureaucracy, which will result in the demise of the Old Kingdom because closed systems all have limitations. For now though, the seemingly ordered world of the elite as seen in the Taking-Account motif, is a secure sinecure.

Chapter 8

Mourning Motif

In all human societies, the death of people with whom one is familiar is a constant, and because we are human, we experience grief. The literature on death and grief is wide ranging and my interest in this chapter is limited to aspects of death as follows:

-To identify the immediate cultural responses to the problems that death creates.

-To get a perspective on how the ancient Egyptians tried to solve the problem of giving up the emotional and internal attachment to a love/object, e.g. like another human being.

-To analyze how mourning following death was depicted in elite Old Kingdom tombs.

At the moment of death, both the disintegration of the body and the cleavage of the social bonds that had existed, had to be reconciled with the customary views on mortality and immortality: the former by 'denying death' and the latter by religious rituals.

This chapter deals with one theme of an ancient society's response to death, i.e. mourning, because mourning is as much about the individual's and the community's past as it is about its future. Ethnographic studies show that there is "no society, in which the emotions[913] of bereavement are not shaped and controlled, for the sake of the deceased, the bereaved person, or others[914]". However, it is stressed that death, grief, and mourning are interconnected.

Additionally ancient ceremonies especially those surrounding elite funerals of which mourning must have been an integral part, must have had a powerful impression on those left behind. Because this is based on and perceived by the senses, one should integrate this into the theoretical foundations of the ideas about the culture of that period. This sensory perception then requires one to make use of other disciplines, e.g. psychology and biology which are outside mainstream Egyptology. Involving other disciplines may allow for more insights into the culture and society of the Old Kingdom, even though there are only three tombs representing members of the bureaucratic elite. All the three with mourning as a motif are from Dynasty 6 (Idu, Ankhmahor, and Mereruka – "the three tombs").

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[913] Cognitive processes give rise to emotions, see C. P. Ellsworth & K. R. Scherer, Handbook of Affective Sciences, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 572-595. Emotion refers to any turmoil in feeling and may manifest itself in facial and vocal expressions as a result of fear, anger, disgust, grief, joy, or surprise.

[914] P. Rosenblatt, "Grief in small societies," in *Death and Bereavement Across Cultures*, ed. C. Parkes, P. Laungani, and B. Young. (London: Routledge, 1997), 37.

8.1 Death, Grief, and Mourning

The mourning motif is partly based on previous work by Binford[915] as elaborated by Saxe[916] and Tainter[917] and draws on some of his conclusions, which are listed below, together with the implications for a mourning scene.

1) All humans die and the host society make some funeral arrangements.
2) The organization and nature of the host society relate with what funeral arrangements are allowed, and discard those which are forbidden.
3) The more prolific the funeral arrangements, the higher the status of the deceased.

It is outside the scope of this work to go into the debate between processual and postprocessual archaeology. However when analyzing the mourning motif I have chosen to rely mainly on a processual approach because this is one way of avoiding the pitfall of trying to allocate beliefs which can never be fully ascertained[918]. However, this does not mean that the postprocessual approach has been totally ignored.

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[915] Binford, "Mortuary practices: Their Study and Potential," 6-21. "Differentiation in burial practice bears a relationship to the "total" status of the deceased; the social persons, the sum of all the roles and statuses held by an individual in his/her lifetime, carrying rights, duties, and obligations; the differentiation in burial practice also reflects the composition and size of the social unit recognizing obligation to the deceased". I am aware that the Binford-Saxe hypothesis of mortuary process, has been subjected to various criticisms based on statistics, archaeological survivability of material deposited and reuse of burial facility, see Polz Excavation and Recording of a Theban Tomb: Some Remarks on Recording Methods (London: KPI, 1987), 119-140. Problems arise from the conflicting demand of reconstruction in archaeology and the tracing of cultural change in anthropology.
However two analytical principles survive these criticisms, namely: 1) The economic scale and political complexity of a society affects the scale and complexity of its mortuary ritual, 2) Any funeral involves an unavoidable amount of time, effort, and resources. Thus these principles' contribution to understanding certain aspects of social organization are undeniable, despite methodological shortfalls.

[916] Saxe, *Social dimensions of mortuary practices (Dissertation)* 4-7.

[917] J. A. Tainter, "Mortuary practices and the study of prehistoric social systems," in *Advances in Archaeological Method and Theory*, ed. M. B. Schiffer (New York: Academic Press, 1978), 105-41.

[918] The processualists (Binford, Saxe, Tainter, and O'Shea) believe that mortuary differentiation is patterned and these patterns can be linked to aspects of the sociocultural system. The postprocessualists (Hodder, Parker Pearson) argue that mortuary evidence may

Because three interconnected words, death, grief, and mourning are so interlinked I would like to clarify these at the outset.

8.2 Death

Death has been described in various ways in Egyptology. While this chapter is not only about death itself, yet its links with consequential actions following death, requires clarification about how death was conceived in the vast literature on this subject and indeed by the ancient Egyptians.

The ideas and the authors cited below, represent a wide cross section of ideas:

Sander-Hansen describes death in six ways, i.e.

(1) Destroyer of body and soul,

(2) Sleep weariness and night,

(3) Silence,

(4) Sickness and suffering,

(5) Thief and a prison,

(6) A journey[919].

Assmann has described death as the ultimate culture generator, which in regard to ancient Egypt, he then spells out in seven main ways[920] as follows, i.e. death as:

(1) Conflict

(2) Social isolation

(3) Enemy

(4) Disassociation

(5) Separation

(6) Coming home and a

(7) Secret.

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be distorted or misunderstood without an understanding of the concept of beliefs which is prior to the exhibited symbolic behaviour.

[919] C. E. Sander-Hansen, *Der Begriff des Todes bei den Ägyptern* (Copenhagen: Bianco Lunos Bogtrykkeri A/S, 1942) 9-18.

[920] Assmann, *Tod und Jenseits im Alten Ägypten* (Munich: 2001), 29-273.

Gardiner understood death as an ultimate solution[921]. He contrasted the fear of the dead with that of fear of death which though different, is not incompatible. While he concluded that the ancient Egyptians did not fear the former, they (the elite) did have a fear of not being able to live as they had done on earth, which in any event was "truly pathetic" as they knew with "certainty that these (their tombs) would soon fall a prey to the plunderer[922]".

Zandee provides a negative view of death based on the natural fear of death in humans. While the sentiments are no different to those described by Sander-Hansen /Assmann/Gardiner he also provides a useful compendium of annotated terms used by the Egyptians in dealing with death[923].

All these intricate ideas, point to the fact that "Das heiligste Weltgeheimnis ist der Tod".[924] The ancient Egyptians were also aware of death's vagaries and the refrain from a later period text "The Instructions of Any," correctly refers to this inviolable of all humankind's secret, the ultimate reality, it reads, "Do not say, "I am young to be taken," For you do not know your death. When death comes he steals the infant Who is in his mother's arms, Just like him who reached old age."[925]

The funeral was one of the most important elements in the life and death of the ancient Egyptian, yet in the Old Kingdom, the Egyptian attitude towards death, is rarely depicted. This is strange, when it is asserted that the funeral

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[921] A. H. Gardiner, *The Admonitions of an Egyptian Sage: From a Hieratic Papyrus in Leiden* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1909) 37. "Forsooth great and small <say>: I wish I might die. Little children say (??): he ought never to have caused me to live (??)".

[922] Gardiner, *The attitude of the ancient Egyptians to death and the dead* 34.

[923] Zandee, *Death as an enemy, according to ancient Egyptian conceptions* 1-44.

[924] J. Assmann and T. H. Macho, *Der Tod als Thema der Kulturtheorie: Todesbilder und Totenriten im alten Ägypten*, 1. Aufl., Erstausg. ed., *Erbschaft unserer Zeit Bd. 7* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2000) 47.

[925] Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature* vol. II, 138.

is well evidenced in both representations and texts from the earliest periods to the Late Period and that the funeral is composed of sixteen different ritual elements[926]. There are always parts of the funeral process that are left out, which brings us again to that age-old issue of fathoming intention from the archaeological record. If one accepts, that depictions no matter how scanty they might be are only a communicative aid to an understanding of the culture of that period, then one's task becomes the teasing out of these cultural values and the role these played in the society of that time. Gardiner in this connection sums up this problem when he writes that although there are reliefs depicting Old Kingdom burials on a papyrus:

> "these contain, apart from the inevitable posturing of grief, no hint whatsoever of the elaborate goings on revealed, in however a fragmentary form, by this unique papyrus" the substance of which is dated by him to the Third Dynasty[927].

In any event, representing death is a problem in all societies because philosophically speaking death cannot be adequately represented mentally because no society's members like to think of their own complete oblivion without contradictions and because one's own death does not allow total participatory observation[928].

What one sees are manifestations or instances of coming to terms with the concepts of continuation in the hereafter and mortality in the living world.

Two Old Kingdom texts: the "Instruction of Hardedef" and the "Instruction of "Merikare", are instructive about the Egyptian's thoughts on death; the preoccupation of both was to build a fitting and eternal resting place, which was the socially accepted recognition of having been an upright individual.

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[926] H. Altenmüller, "Bestattungsritual," in *Lexikon der Ägyptologie, vol. 1*, ed. W. Helck, E. Otto, and W. Westendorf (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrasowitz, 1975), 745-65.

[927] A. H. Gardiner, "A Unique Funerary Liturgy," *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, no. 41 (1955): 16-17. Helck goes back even further to Dynasties I & 2. W. Helck, "Papyrus Ramesseum E," *Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur (9)* (1981): 166.

[928] A. Hahn, "Unendliches Ende," in *Das Ende: Figuren einer Denkform*, ed. K. Stierle and R. Warning (München: Wilhelm Funk Verlag, 1996), 155-56. In this connection see V. Ions, *Egyptian mythology* (Rushden: Newnes Books, 1983) pl. 40., where a representation of how death was perceived albeit in the TIP, is shown.

"Equip your house in the necropolis and make excellent your place in the West". … "The house of death is for life". (Hardedef)

"Enrich your mansion of the West,

Embellish your dwelling of the necropolis

With uprightness and with the observance of Ma'at,

For in this (men's) hearts are confident"[929]. (Merikare)

These texts are based on two parameters which contain in them, the ideas of how both continuation in the hereafter and immortality in the living world, can be achieved. The tomb owner has died and as a result the private and the social structure of which the tomb-owner was a part, is affected because "when a man dies, society loses in him much more than a unit, it is stricken in the very principle of its life, in the faith it has in itself"[930]. The study of these anthropological aspects becomes the study of the symbolic and sociological contexts in relation to the corpse, which can provide an understanding of what life and death meant to a particular community and indeed is the underlying basis for many of the funerary compositions in the Old Kingdom.

From a religious standpoint, this meant an awareness that the time spent on this earth (*tp-t3*) is so miniscule compared to that which will be spent in the netherworld (*ẖrt-nṯr*) exemplified by the term (*ḏt*) meaning infinity and that one can only be remembered, if one has lived according to the principles of (*m3ꜥt*) without which life is worthless[931]. This theme runs like a golden thread through all funerary depictions. The worst that could happen to any Egyptian was that he would be forgotten, he would have no past worth remembering, the corollary being that the ideal man was one who had a past which would be remembered[932].

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[929] Simpson, ed., *The Literature of Ancient Egypt* 127, l. II, and 64, l. 25 Recent research on the Instructions of Merikare, indicate a FIP origin, Ibid: 152-153.

[930] R. Hertz, *Death and the Right Hand*, trans. R. & C. Needham (London: Cohen & West, 1960 (originally published in Annee sociologique, 10 [1907]) 78.

[931] Assmann, *Tod und Jenseits im Alten Ägypten* 477-83.

8.3 Grief and Mourning

The other two interconnected words (grief and mourning) if understood as internal states of the human being cannot be adequately depicted (yet they can be expressed by conventional gestures, e.g. the grimace of the face etc.) nor do we have any non-royal texts relating to these phenomena and so the psychological viewpoint must be called in to aid.

At first glance both these words might appear similar yet have distinct meanings.

For the purposes of this thesis, their meanings are as follows:

Grief

Grief means the emotions that are caused by death, and can include sorrow, mental distress, fear of being left alone, of being unable to have the needs satisfied that the deceased person had satisfied etc.

Types of Mourning

Mourning refers to specific 'ritual' behaviour by individuals or groups of persons who mourn the dead. The English verb 'to mourn' and its derivatives occasionally have uses outside of death contexts[933] but in the particular context of the mourning motif, I argue for a limited use of this term.[934] I do not extend it to include all behavior, such as reactions felt by humiliated persons, shamed armies who come back after a lost war, loss of a job or a home etc. This is a conscious choice limited by the material record available in the three Old Kingdom tombs.

Mourning is grief externalized. This is partly channeled and facilitated by custom, thus represents what is socially expected and significant, and

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[932] See in this connection the well-known text from the 12ᵗʰ Dynasty: *The Tale of the Eloquent Peasant* as commented (p. 54-63) and translated by R. B. Parkinson, *Reading Ancient Egyptian Poetry* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009) 309., lines 338-341

[933] S. Freud, *Mourning and Melancholia*, trans. J. Strachey, *Standard Edition 14* (London: Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1917) 214. Contrast his extensive use of the word 'mourning', he writes, "mourning is regularly the reaction to loss of a loved person, or to the loss of some abstraction which has taken the place of one, such as one's country, liberty, an ideal, and so on".

[934] *Webster's New Third International Dictionary: Unabridged,* 1478.

therefore is a culturally defined act. Emotional responses and culturally designated rituals have a mutually influential relationship[935] and "serve a variety of social purposes, including marking out social and hierarchical relationships at times, dissolving them at others, inviting or demanding specific social relationships, or marking/protesting the abrogation of social or moral contracts"[936]. Thus, mourning acts in two ways:

1. Reinforcing the pre-existing social relationships.
2. Allowing for change by the new relationship that is created by death because mourning the dead was never a solitary state of affairs, the ancient Egyptians were always with the dead.

These may be over-neat classifications but are helpful if one accepts that grief is a noun which includes the gamut of negative emotions; whereas to mourn generally is an emotional aspect of grief which is influenced by culture. This distinction is made clear when one realizes that personal loss produces grief (emotions of various sorts) and this grief has to be mourned (acted out in some socially acceptable way to both simultaneously forget and remember). A way one can share in the experience of death is by mourning. As already indicated, mourning is not to be confused with grief. Grief is an emotion common to humans and some non-human primates and it generally concerns the closest blood relatives. Mourning is the expression of grief, and is a social activity which can include persons other than blood relatives, and is only practiced by humans. By this rationalization mourning then is commonplace experienced by everyone at some time, whenever we encounter a serious problem in our lives involving loss of someone whoever he/she may be. In the majority of known societies and ancient Egypt was no different, bereavement (the objective state of having lost someone) resulted in grief and mourning,

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[935] R. Huntington and P Metcalf, *Celebrations of death: the anthropology of mortuary ritual* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979) 2-5. For the cross-cultural basis of their studies see p. 33-37, 79-107.

[936] G. L. Ebersole, "The Function of Ritual Weeping Revisited: Affective Expression and Moral Discourse," in *History of Religions, 39* (New York: 2000), 214.

which would have affected a whole range of circumstances concerning the individual such as inheritance, and shifting social status, all of which were part of that cultural milieu.

8.4 Social Dynamics of Death, Grief, and Mourning

Following death, the deceased is a corpse going through the process of putrefaction and this raises three related issues, which in the manner they are addressed, are pointers to the social dynamics of a particular society. In ancient Egypt they may have been as follows:

1. How does one depict the appearance at death?
2. How does one relate visual biological change to the supposed permanent transformation in the hereafter?
3. How does one understand the symbolisms used by the living relatives, friends, and society in general, to show the generated feelings?

While the first two are incidental to mourning, it is the third question which I shall consider in detail.

8.4.1 Death's Depiction

The moment of death is never depicted in the Old Kingdom. The strong belief in the hereafter made it impossible to depict sorrow and pain which happen to be the very aspects of death that the Old Kingdom Egyptians, did not eulogize. Aspects which become predominant in the New Kingdom, especially in the post-Amarna period and which question the value of preparation for death, and the sureness of life after death[937]. Death and representations of dead persons as inert bodies are therefore rare[938]. It would also seem that the Egyptians had a loathing for depicting emotions artistically; neither does one find scenes depicting sickness, stupidity, anger, nor injustice –

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[937] Simpson, ed., *The Literature of Ancient Egypt* v. 3, 279-80 & 332-33.

[938] C. Vandersleyen and H. Altenmüller, *Das alte Ägypten* (Berlin: Propyläen Verlag, 1975) pl. 266. Illustrates the idealized appearance of the mummified dead (Tomb of Djar, no. 366 at Deir-el-Bahari, Dynasty 11).

"Ästetische Gesichtspunkte bleiben bei seiner Entstehung völlig aus dem Spiel"[939].

8.4.2 Visualizing Biological Change

Egyptians countered the appearance of decomposition by means of the use initially by wrapping the body in linen soaked in resin and finally by specific mummification techniques[940].

The cadaver has always been a symbol of mortality. The embalming of the body had as its prime object, the preservation of this symbol of mortality. By 'preventing' the physical corruption of the body, it followed that self-identity was not lost. In Egypt this meant accepting as a fact that the individual although biologically dead, was socially alive. Socially alive meant that he had to be transformed into a state that would enable him to live among those who like him, had made a 'home in the West'.

Transformation of the dead individual into someone, who could exist in the hereafter, was the sphere of the religious ritual, the essence of which was his transformation to a state of becoming an *ꜥkh*, "The man shall be transformed into any god the man may wish to be transformed to[941]". This transformation ensured that the deceased was both in a state in which he could communicate with the living (although he was outside the society of the living), as well as secure his existence in the hereafter.

Mortality however was socially stratified. The elite, although excluded from direct immortality like the king, could through mummification and transformation rituals, achieve a kind of immortality. We have no knowledge of how the unknown others looked on the period of their afterlives. It is

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[939] M. Müller, "Studien zur Ägyptischen Kunstgeschichte," in *Hildesheimer Ägyptologische Beiträge (29)*, ed. M. Eaton-Krauss and E. Graefe (1990), 39-56, esp. 43.

[940] J. Jones, "Towards mummification: new evidence for early developments," *Egyptian Archaeology* 21 (2002): 5-7. See also Nicholson and Shaw, *Ancient Egyptian Materials and Technology* 372-85.

[941] Faulkner, *The Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts* vol. 1, Spell 290. Transformation rituals are common in the Pyramid Texts, e.g. (§ 1011-1019) where of-course the reference to a resurrection is that of the king.

incredulous to surmise that these others had no hope for some sort of after-life, just because we do not find adequate evidence in the material records.

8.4.3 Survivors' Symbolic Reactions to and Relationship with the Dead

Survivors' Symbolic Reactions

The emotions generated following death, are hinted at by artistic representation in the way they depict certain aspects of mourning behaviour such as tearing their garments, tearing their hair, weeping, sitting on the ground with their heads upon their knees and lying on the ground. While the Egyptian attitude towards death in general, ranges across the negative and positive spectrum as already described (p. 359), where it does appear as in the mortuary texts, it deals with standard practical consequences of death and is of little help in understanding how the Egyptian understood mourning. Death is associated with a wide variety of emotions and this presents a problem because the inner feelings of individuals are like intention, not prone to objective analysis. Accordingly the mourning emotions that are depicted in this motif are only useful to the extent that they refer to collective negative emotions for public display. Separation of the internal personal and the collective public emotion is useful because it separates private emotions from general expressions of emotion, which can be analyzed. In addition bonds linking individuals and groups are thereby affirmed, re-negotiated, or terminated by the show of collective emotions in the mourning context. Also the time frame and consequences over which the collective emotion is enacted/felt, means that it is liable to be culturally transmitted and of being maintained over a longer time frame, eventually to become a part of the collective memory, e.g. the death of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, Martin Luther King, etc. Radcliffe-Brown has asserted that collective participation strengthens the social bonds in a community[942]. While generally true, the

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[942] A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, *The Andaman Islanders* (Cambridge University Press, 1948) 240. Radcliffe-Brown was heavily influenced by Durkheim who investigated the nature of collectively held beliefs and how these affect social bonds, even when the protagonists have

universal and automatic translation of collective expression into collective solidarity is questionable because there are instances in society when this is not realized, e.g. the collective barracking for a particular football club or behaviour during a pop-concert.

However, in the context of a funeral of prominent individuals it seems to have validity. Social pressures evoke behaviour which is in harmony with that of other members of society, even if one does not directly feel the sorrow and that is why there is extremely limited behavioral individuality. Consider the modern day custom of bringing flowers for shared display, as evident at the death of the Princess of Wales, Michael Jackson, and the more recent one of the President of Poland (Lech Kaczynski-killed in an air-crash on 10th April 2010). This act is nothing other than the expression of social intention – the joining in is part of affirming the common bonds that exists in the identity of being an Englishman, American, and Pole. To the extent that this sorrow is demonstrably felt by other nationalities, this may demonstrate a particular biological aspect of universal sorrow, as being part of the human race. There are no instances where loss is greeted with emotional indifference, i.e. "grief is universal… but its manifestations in different cultures are extremely varied[943]". The depiction of collective mourning then goes beyond that of an expressed personal act and becomes a symbol, whose meaning can be discovered in the social context of the corpse. While this statement is generally true it does not mean that in all cultures sentiments of loss always result in a feeling of collective social bonding.

The phenomenon of the changed situation (loss) appears in scanty form in the Old Kingdom judging by the appearance of the mourning motif in only

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separate identities. However, unlike Durkheim, he was not careful to separate between joyous rituals and funerary rites that are exemplified by feelings of pain.

[943] W. Stroebe and M. Stroebe, *Bereavement and Health* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987) 54. In contrast Bowlby (Ibid. 60) and in his trilogy *"Attachment and Loss"* (Hogarth Press, 1971. 1975, 1981) emphasizes the biological rather than the psychological function. Mourning by seeking reunion with the deceased, is nature's way of enhancing the individual's chances of surviving depression and distress because of the loss of a loved one. This would then view mourning as a way of enhancing survival – a product of natural selection.

three tombs. However, where it appears, the Egyptians made sure through the visual depiction of mourning that it also became an enabling method for all who wished to understand and remember (this assertion is based on the few motifs in the Old Kingdom and the many such which are continued into the Middle and New Kingdoms). In the context of the Old Kingdom this means that mourning, when depicted, becomes vital to the reproduction and transformation of social memory for the living as well as the dead. The changed situation demands that the mourners (assuming that the majority were family and members of his household) have to rethink the ideas about their identity. The concept of identity is only intelligible with reference to a definite layer of categories; if one is no longer a wife, no longer a mother, no longer has a lord etc. then the mourners identity has to be reworked and adapted to the new situation. Unfortunately while loss is implicit, the working of a new identity can only be conjectured, since this is not depicted in any way in the mourning motif. All one can say is that the way the mourners are depicted, shows how their communities handle separation, and conceptualize institutional and personal sorrow in the cultural sphere.

As regards the tomb-owner the depiction of emotions on the part of the mourners points to the social identity and the tomb-owner's position in the group when alive, and also affirms and maintains the new identity of the dead tomb-owner once all the rituals had been performed. More importantly, this affirmation of social identity reflects communal beliefs about death as a separation with respect to the people left behind, the way this separation had to be externalized and the value system of that society in the way in which cultural memory is processed (remembered).

The proof for this is in the visual arts, the process of mummification, and the textual evidence of celebrating the dead on festival days which have been used from the earliest times to provide a kind of *memento mori* to sustain the memory of the deceased.

In his discussion on the rites of passage, Van Gennep advocates a tripartite division of separation, transformation, and reincorporation into a new status,

as frequently appearing during the lifetime and death of the individual[944]. In the context of death ceremonies, they are particularly relevant in ancient Egypt, where the funeral process can be seen as divided into various stages - which include an initial separation, a liminal period, and the incorporation into a new status and role. However, before the dead can become "ritually" dead, they continue to "constitute a special group between the world of the living and the world of the dead"[945], and thus must be mourned. By emphasizing the concepts of loss (separation), change (transformation), and progression (reincorporation) he points a way of understanding funeral symbolism, which ultimately results in remembrance.

The issue as to what kinds of memories were given a permanent material form (became understood and accepted symbols) and indeed why a particular version had precedence is open-ended. Another open issue is why only parts of the funerary process are depicted.

One answer to this issue is that the depiction of a particular part of the funerary process was a way of stressing just one single aspect/function, e.g. aesthetic, instructional, individuality etc. This answer would ignore issues that may be an amalgam of those just mentioned and lead to imbalanced, incomplete answers and in any case, would be trying to conjecture about intention.

Relationship to the Dead

In so far mourners identify themselves in some manner with the dead[946] mourning acquires a communicative dimension in addition to the purely private emotional dimension of the next of kin. In the three Old Kingdom tombs:

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[944] A. van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, trans. M. Vicedom and S. Kimball. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960) fig. 1. While his model does enhance our understanding it must be stressed that the model must be continually subject to modification in the light of any new data concerning population and their societies that become available.

[945] Ibid. 148.

[946] Hertz, *Death and the Right Hand* 81. "...the image of the recently deceased is still part of the system of things of this world..."

1. the mourner is separated visually which then acts to broadcast the special status of the mourner and

2. becomes a collective symbol of mourning for the community.

The nature of both of these developments cannot be extracted from the depictions. What one observes from the depictions are actions which are the result of the disruption of existing social relationships, which now must be reworked[947]. Though one cannot be sure, it is possible that the symbolic link between the acts of showing respect for the dead through mourning was intended to establish new, mutually beneficial relationships between the mourner and the dead as is seen in the letters to the dead in Old Kingdom Egypt[948]. It is therefore best to relate this to some motivation, which is ultimately internal to the executants but which one can perceive (but not fully comprehend) if exhibited collectively because it is an outcome of normal, regularly occurring human senses, which as humans, one knows in the context of culturally expected modes of behaviour in specific circumstances.

8.5 Mourning as a Psychological Process and a Contradiction

Psychological Process

From a psychological viewpoint, my main analysis of grief and mourning will be based on the works of Sigmund Freud. His approach to grief arose from a psychoanalytical framework for grief before the time when empirical evidence was available and was too extended a definition (being also applicable to objects). Freud saw grief as something which would free the ego from attachment to the deceased and in so doing, allow new attachments to be formed. In his view this was an effective way of resolving the psychological

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[947] V. W. Turner, *The forest of symbols: aspects of Ndembu ritual* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1967) 8-9. "In all life-crisis rituals changes take place in the relationships of all those people connected with the subject of the ritual. When a person dies, all these ties are snapped, as it were …Now a new pattern of social relationships must be established …and everyone who stood in a particular relationship with him must know where they stand…"

[948] Wente and Meltzer, *Letters from ancient Egypt* 54-68.

dilemma due to death. In other words mourning is of great assistance in surviving psychologically. Specifically he said:

> "Each one of the memories and situations of expectancy which demonstrate the libido's attachment to the lost object is met by a verdict of reality that the object no longer exists. The ego is persuaded by the sum total of narcissistic satisfactions it derives from being alive to sever its attachment to the object." [949]

Freud's views have been the subject of critique. However it would seem that we have to approach Freud using his language games, i.e. 'reality' and 'loss' in his language of psychoanalysis, will mean something different from what is generally understood. Therefore in my opinion the criticism in this context, is somewhat unjustified if mourning is only understood as a way of forgetting and getting on with life.

It has now to be read in the light of empirical studies notably that of Bowlby who introduced the concept of the four stages of grief (Disbelief, Searching, Despair, Reorganization, these phases are not clear cut and an individual may move back and forth between any two of them[950]). Nevertheless, even this can take us only part of the way because mourning involves a rich array of thoughts and feelings which it is impossible to work out fully.

The ancient Egyptians were humans like us and in this context Van Walsem writes:

> "*nowhere* does there exist a *fundamental* difference between the Egyptian way of thinking and ours"[951].

If the ancient Egyptian's mindset is considered similar to our own, then their behaviour etc. can be analyzed using the same scientific principles (e.g. from modern psychoanalysis) that are applied to study mourning in modern humans and could therefore extend our knowledge of their culture.

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[949] Freud, *Mourning and Melancholia* 255.

[950] J. Bowlby, *Attachment and Loss* (London: The Hogarth Press and Institute of Psychoanalysis, 1980) Vol. 3, 85.

[951] Walsem, "The Struggle Against Chaos as a "Strange Attractor" in Ancient Egyptian Culture," 322-23.

Contradiction

As already stated mourning as used in this thesis has a restricted meaning being applied to human loss only because while experiences with "things" change when we are alive, no experience is as definitive and unchanging as death of a loved/valued "person". Cultures have ways of sharing in the experience of death and I propose to view mourning as the initial stage of an adaptive solution to the dilemma of at one and the same time retaining and ending a relationship with the deceased and mitigating the suffering of those left behind. In this way the successful completion of the mourning process, results in a memorial of the ideas of the cultural generic which were embedded in the mourning process. The permanent absence of the deceased from community life coexists with the permanent presence of the deceased but now in the hereafter, part of him has vanished to another world and another part exists in this world of our memory, the "consciousness of the survivors[952]". Mourning is thus a part of both loss and memory. It is "the painful experience of collective loss, mourning, or the healing response to the pain of that loss; and the building of monuments or the construction of cultural symbols to re-present the loss over time and render it memorable, meaningful, and thereby bearable"[953]. Because it involves a contradiction which must be reconciled it results in cultural input of some sort. It may be that the ancient Egyptians were aware of this contradiction and resolved it through the institution of the depiction of mourning in their tombs which impliedly indicates the phases advocated by Bowlby (see page 372).

Thus the psychological element of the mourning motifs aids in the understanding of the social significance it had for the Egyptians.

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[952] Hertz, *Death and the Right Hand* 82.

[953] Peter Homans, *Symbolic loss: the ambiguity of mourning and memory at century's end* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000) preface (IX).

8.6 Mourning Distinguished as a Ritual from a Collective Physiological Act

This thesis is only concerned with the social significance of mourning because the religious significance would lead to a concentration on ritual transformative processes of aiding progress to the deceased through appropriate acts and ceremonies, which are outside the scope of this study. However for completeness's sake and because there is a difference between the act of mourning as part of a ritual and the collective physiological act of mourning by those left behind, a brief discussion is necessary.

The mythical story of Isis and Nephthys mourning the death of their brother Osiris[954] is paralleled in the mourning for the deceased, which became an integral part of the rituals associated with the funerary processes. Women referred to as drt 'kites' are routinely depicted playing the part of these two goddesses[955]. However this is not to be confused with the socio-physical process of mourning by the relatives and friends of the deceased. This act of mourning is at one level the product of what society expects, has little if anything to do with the myth of Isis or with what religion expects and is depicted in only three Old Kingdom tombs[956]. Assmann explains the original idea clearly such that any further attempts, would add little to his explanation.

> "Die Totenklage gehört ganz entschieden zum Isis-Aspekt der Totenbelebung, also zur leiblichen Seite der Bemühungen um die Wiederherstellung des Lebens und der Person. Horus klagt nicht, seine Rede handelt von der wiederhergestellten Ehre, von der Bestrafung des Feindes, von der Aufrichtung und Inthronisation des Osiris, aber

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[954] M. Münster, *Untersuchungen zur Göttin Isis; vom Alten Reich bis zum Ende des Neuen Reiches. Mit hieroglyphischem Textanhang, Münchener ägyptologische Studien 11,* (Berlin,: B. Hessling, 1968) 23.

[955] A. Kucharek, "Isis und Nephthys als drt - Vögel," *Göttinger Miszellen*, no. 218 (2008): 57-61. She points to the fact that terminology tends to link Isis and Nephthys with mourning. In the actual Pyramid Texts however these women are simply stated to be present at either side of the dead Osiris whom they have found (§ 1255).

[956] Idu, Ankhmahor, and Mereruka.

nie von Sehnsucht, Liebe und Trauer. Die Klage findet im intimen Raum der körperbezogenen Gattenkonstellation statt, aber nicht im Sozialraum der Ehre, Herrschaft und Rechtfertigung, für die der Sohn zuständig ist. Die Sprache der Gefühle, die Lyrik, ist eine körpernahe und eine weibliche Sprache, und ihren frühesten Ausdruck findet sie – jedenfalls in Rahmen des uns erhaltenen Schrifttums – in den Totenklagen der Isis und Nephthys. In der Organisation der belebenden, beseelenden und erneuernden Handlungen, in denen der Ritus es unternimmt, den Tod zu behandeln und zu heilen, herrscht eine strikte Differenzierung der Geschlechter. Auch eine weibliche Verstorbene spielt die Rolle des Osiris, und auch für sie treten im Ritus Isis und Nephthys und Horus in Aktion. Trauer, und zwar weibliche Trauer, ist eine unabdingbare Form der belebenden Todesbehandlung. Nur die beiden Frauen, die beiden <<Klagevögel>>, wie sie genannt werden, können auf diese toten-erweckende Weise klagen[957]*".*

The mourning by these goddesses was vital to the reawakening of the deceased Osiris in the afterlife but played a different role than the personal sorrow of the son, Horus. Isis and Nephthys mourned for their lost brother and husband as far as Isis is concerned; their sorrow brought life to the dead god. This display of sorrow took on a distinctly ritualistic character with the presence of the two "kites" within the funeral process. Depictions of the kites as two women at the head and the feet of the coffin show them accompanying the body to the tomb, but they do not display actions associated with mourning by family and the collective. They just stand or sit silently by the body and mourn the dead in form and ritual only. They are characteristically each dressed in a long sheath dress. Their headdress is known as a *khat* and resembles a tight fitting cap of white cloth, around which is a filet. This sort of headdress is generally seen in goddesses.

The suggestion has been made that the depiction of kites with this headdress could be an indication of a shifting of the woman's role from a secular to a

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[957] Assmann, *Tod und Jenseits im Alten Ägypten* 188-89.

religious identity[958], in the same way when the tomb-owner's identity shifts from that of addressee to that of the venerated one in the tomb chapel. However it seems to me that this suggestion is misguided because the social construction of identity cannot be merely based on a relationship to past mythical entities.

Trigger in connection with the problem of shifting social identity is correct when he writes, "such efforts are similar in that they treat society as "social culture" rather than a system of social relations". By linking the various criteria, e.g. artifact type, social organization, language etc., one can examine these "on their own terms rather than within a rigid framework of "arbitrarily defined culture"[959]. Accordingly all human identities should not be examined in isolation but be viewed within the framework of a social system because they are the product of multiple influences[960].

The rituals associated with death, the Old Kingdom depiction of mourners as exemplified in the three tombs to be discussed, can be classified as "Trauerriten", i.e. mourning concerned with the bereaved which would place them outside of the official rituals for the dead. These can be contrasted with the "Totenriten", in which mourning by the kites is concerned with the transformation of the dead himself[961]. An instructive insight is provided by Podella[962] who writes:

"Totenriten und Trauerrituale reagieren in jeweils spezifischer Weise aud den eintretenden und eingetretenen Tod. Totenriten beziehen sich auf den Verstorbenen selbst: sie umfassen die Bestattung und ihre Vorbreitung.

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[958] Robins, "Hair and the Construction of Identity in Ancient Egypt ": 67-68.

[959] B. G. Trigger, *Beyond history: the methods of prehistory* (New York: Holt, 1968) 18-23.

[960] Díaz-Andreu et al., *The Archaeology of Identity: approaches to gender, age, status, ethnicity and religion* 2.

[961] Assmann and Macho, *Der Tod als Thema der Kulturtheorie: Todesbilder und Totenriten im alten Ägypten* 19. *"Was dieses Behandeln des Todes angeht, unterscheidet man Trauerriten und Totenriten. Die einen konzentrieren sich auf die Hinterbliebenen, die anderen auf den Toten oder die Tote selbst".*

[962] T. Podella, "Totenrituale und Jenseitsbeschreibungen," in *Tod, Jenseits und Identität*, ed. J. Assmann and R.Trauzettel (München: K. Alber, 2002), 532-33.

Trauerrituale thematisieren den Verstorbenen ... als Verlust ... der sozialen Gestalt der Hinterbliebenen. Obgleich Totenriten und Trauer ... ineinander übergehen, ... empfielt sich hier eine differenzierende Darstellung."

It appears therefore that private scenes of mourning did not serve a ritual function within the funeral process itself. They are an expression of on the one hand, the personal private and very real emotions of the members of the household, and on the other hand, the collective grief felt by members of his community, left behind by the death of the tomb-owner.

Sorrow when displayed collectively, becomes a culturally embedded process which maintains/re-negotiates social bonds and denies death's finality by using mourning for both remembering (changing death's remembrance into a cult) and forgetting (celebrating the spirit of the deceased).

Both of the above beliefs were very much a part of Egyptian culture of that time[963], the Old Kingdom was in many ways an elaboration on early Dynastic cultural themes, and the issue why mourning then does not appear explicitly in many more Old Kingdom tomb representations becomes relevant. If the texts and the representations are our only source, then it would follow that until Dynasty 4, personal private mourning was not a motif in the repertoire of elite tomb decoration and when it first appears as in the tomb of Debehen, it is not too explicit[964]. However in the three tombs, it appears as a fully developed personal mourning motif.

Possible explanations for this scarce depiction of mourning might be as follows:

- Mourning motifs were too realistic, too painful for most 'tomb-owners' and thus did not fit within the ideological framework of that time, which was to present the deceased in as favourable a situation as possible[965].

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[963] Taylor, *Death and the afterlife in Ancient Egypt* 41-45.

[964] Hassan, *Excavations at Gîza 1932-1933* vol. IV, fig. 122.

[965] Simpson, ed., *The Literature of Ancient Egypt* 128. In the Instruction of Hardedef (First Part), it reads, "Accept for death is bitter for us. Accept for life is exalted for us".

- Unfavourable views on death might cause evil influences to be directed at the individual from the iconography, and it was best to describe only those circumstances, which would be favourable to the deceased[966]. The Egyptian generally chose (at least in the Old Kingdom) to depict only those aspects, which had favourable connotations of life in the hereafter. Mourning as meaning dismal death, was therefore virtually outside of what was acceptable, as belonging within the official genre of tomb decoration (although this might have been the case in the early part of the Old Kingdom; from the FIP, onwards mourning scenes reappear and continue right through the pharaonic period).

- The idea that the idiom of decorum does not belong to the hereafter, which is the realm of *M3ᶜt* ensuring eternity and plentitude but to the earthly and the now with all its problems.

- Concepts of transition and reincorporation were far more relevant to a successful afterlife in ancient Egypt, than mere mourning. As Van Gennep observes "On first considering funeral ceremonies, one expects rites of separation to be the most prominent component, in contrast to rites of transition and rites of incorporation, which should be only slightly elaborated. A study of the data, however, reveals that the rites of separation are few in number and very simple, while the transition rites have a duration and complexity sometimes so great that they must be granted a sort of autonomy"[967].

- These three tomb-owners were expressing their individuality in being among the first known elite to depict the mourning motif.

One would expect the idea of mourning to be depicted widely in the Old Kingdom tombs. Precisely because it does not appear generally in the Old Kingdom, it takes on added significance and calls for an explanation (especially when there are 108 registers depicting the funerary processes in

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[966] Zandee, *Death as an enemy, according to ancient Egyptian conceptions* 5.

[967] Gennep, *The Rites of Passage* 146.

35 tombs (main theme "funeral") and 53 registers of a sub-theme, "dragging the statue" appearing in 28 tombs).[968]

Periods of mourning for the elite were most likely public events with family members loudly expressing their grief outside the private confines of the home and this is even seen in present day Egypt. Generally the women are seen in utter despair watching the funeral procession as it leaves; they can only show their loss and leave it to the observer as to what it entailed, sociologically speaking. The issue is not primarily what we, as moderns, understand by mourning but more to the point, what did the ancient Egyptians understand of and how did they experience mourning. In order to do so, one has to observe the motif not as an outsider but imagine oneself as a participant, because certain occurrences, e.g. mourning resist linguistic appropriation and are better understood in a visual way.

Let us follow this argument by considering an elite Old Kingdom funeral in the tomb of Ankhmahor.

For the sake of argument, let us consider another scene, which is part of a funeral scene but relates to the acts done by others (excluding offering bearers) following death.

> On the Northern and Southern entrance thicknesses (pls. 52 & 53 going from room III to V), identified and named funerary priests (only on pl. 53 reg. 1 & 2), each wearing the short kilt and the short curled "wig", are depicted carrying: seven different types of oils, cloth, bags, vases, collars, pendants and straps[969]. They carry these as if in a ceremonial procession in a dignified manner and one can well imagine the scene with all its pomp and pageantry being played out.

Now let us add to these two scenes the mourning scene on pl. 56 and imagine this procession of dignified carriers of personal/funeral goods being led by mourners with its train of people tearing their hair, swooning and wailing women, cacophony of music and dancing, clouds of incense and you

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[968] Data from Leiden University's LMP Mastabase.

[969] Kanawati, *The Teti Cemetery at Saqqara: the Tomb of Ankhmahor* vol. II, 47-48, pl. 52-53 & 56.

have what I would call an intense experience. It would be impossible to imagine otherwise.

Mourning can therefore be used as a metonym for a theoretical understanding of mourning as a composite emotion, which includes physical and emotional aspects of mourning, just as much as hard cold logic, i.e. the necessity of appropriate provisions required for the dead.

These expressions of emotions become important particularly when one investigates general issues about the psychological nature of physiological actions, such as the pain and suffering of separation. One is then forced to concede that these are some of the areas, which cannot be fully comprehended only by the application of purely hard cold logic, i.e. the scenes with carriers of grave goods and nothing else would not do justice to the underlying emotion of the scene.

All humans eventually die. The physical nature of emotional reactions following death (mourning) is common to all societies, where verification is possible. There is no reason why the Old Kingdom Egyptians should have a different psychology towards mourning, despite the lack of archaeological evidence. This is based on a series of ethnographic studies, which show that there is enough similarity in emotionality across cultures, that in virtually any society, death typically produces emotional distress and all societies have 'rules' on how the emotion of grief is to be displayed[970]. My interest is to tease out any extended entrenched meaning, which may lie hidden behind this physical action, which is not amenable to be recovered from the archaeological record, either because it is scant or just does not exist. Therefore there is justification in using such disciplines as modern psychology, to make statements about the virtual certainty of these Egyptians' emotions and the social significance of their mourning.

We use our senses just as much as our ability to reason logically in any analysis, albeit with different degrees of priority. So why not give the sensual part more priority when, as is the case with mourning motifs in the Old

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[970] D. J. Davies, *Death, Ritual, and Belief: the rhetoric of funerary rites* (London: Cassell, 1997) 44-48.

Kingdom, no other avenue is available, particularly when emotional reactions to loss and death are so universal. It is important to emphasize that the mourning motif is a depiction of mourning in only three tombs. I am also aware that dependency on depiction means that one cannot access actual practice in a direct way, e.g. through descriptive texts. The depictions can and this applies throughout Egyptian art, reflects idealization or hyperbole, and could have served a mix of different ideological aims of the tomb-owner. Nonetheless because depictions in funerary art are not generated in a vacuum, it seems reasonable in light of the cross-cultural research (see page 400) that they suggest something about mourning as it was practiced then.

This thesis follows the hypothesis that both practical and theoretical reasoning are different but related activities[971]. Purely personal actions and choices are the result of biological and psychological impulses, whereas behaviour is the result of a mixture of personal desires and demands imposed by society and its analysis thus calls for a combination of approaches. Collective mourning is exactly such an instant of human behaviour, which can benefit from the inclusion of some non-objective analysis. Being immediate in its effects, the individual participants feel the intense power of involvement (active or passive) in the mourning experience and not as something abstract and normative but something which they can retain, carry forward and broadcast socially. In so doing, they in time unwittingly become a part of the method by which symbolic systems are transmitted and culture maintained. It is difficult to establish the difference related to categories such as collective mourning and religious rituals. The transmission of culture cannot be explained in terms of a single determining factor and motivation may come from several directions. An explanation of the mechanism of how physiological action, (i.e. mourning) can produce a change in culture (abstract action) has been given by Turner and is a helpful starting point although he does not expand on why change takes place[972].

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[971] J. D. Velleman, *Practical Reflection* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989) 15.

[972] V. Turner, "Encounter with Freud: The making of a comparative symbologist," in *The making of psychological anthropology*, ed. G. D. Spindler and J. W. M. Whiting (Berkeley:

8.7 Fundamentals of the Mourning Motif

As the mourning motif appears in only three Old Kingdom tombs, these should be considered individualistic and a new type of representation although death and related loss and sorrow, is a known universal in all societies. Schäfer rightly observes[973] when discussing the mourning gestures in the tombs of Ankhmahor and Mereruka, that mourning as depicted there should be understood as a composite picture, with deeply grieving participants. The Mourning motif has three well-defined fundamentals as follows:

1. It is related to a time frame, not part of the tomb ritual. The mourners who are depicted convey a sense of communal ceremonial undertaking prior to burial and can be related partly to research assumption 2 (see chapter 1.2), that the higher the status of the tomb-owner the more prolific the funeral treatment. Even if we accept Strudwick's caveat that not all individuals of equal means placed equal emphasis on mortuary expenditure,[974] we must accept the fact that expenditure connected with artistic depiction must have had some links to the amount of depiction, which in turn would depend upon space, meaning a bigger mastaba and consequently more expenditure. Bigger space alone can be used as one indicator of social rank and higher status and the mourning motifs therein are implicit indicators of the culturally acceptable ways of showing grief as far as society is concerned.

University of California Press, 1978), 574-76. Turner describes two "clusters" of cultural symbols, which he terms the "physiological" and the "normative", each being at the opposite ends of the spectrum. The physiological cluster produces an immediate effect; and culture is created and sustained when this effect, later becomes part of the normative cluster. This seems to me an apt way of coming to grips with the cultural effects of mourning or indeed any physiological action, which can only be felt or perceived by the senses.

[973] H. Schäfer, "Eine unerkannte Trauergebärde und ein angeblicher "Plötzlicher Tod" in Reliefs des Alten Reiches," *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde* 73 (1937): 106.

[974] Strudwick, *The Administration of Egypt in the Old Kingdom. The Highest Titles and their Holders.* 5.

2. This is the only motif in which the tomb-owner does not play a dominant role (contrasting with the previously discussed case of the Carrying-Chair and the Taking Account motifs in which this is physically the case). The difference lies in the emphasis on the functions; because mourning has as a prime purpose, the mitigation of the suffering of those left behind, whereas the prime purpose of a funeral as a whole is to pay respects to the deceased, thus emphasizing the tomb-owner. Although it is highly likely that he may have given instructions on how his funeral was to be carried out, nevertheless the actual performance of it, is left to his progeny. His influence now is not that of an authoritative patriarch but that of an apprehensive supplicant, desiring certain rituals to be executed in order to live an equally 'rich' life in the hereafter, the fulfillment of which wish becomes one indication of the esteem in which he was held.

3. Because of its emotional content it is one motif that is amenable to some serious psychological/biological explanations in the course of which one can get as close as possible to the ancient Egyptian's intention.

The mourning motif however, does not distinguish clearly between institutional mourning – that of a compulsory nature, culturally imposed on the deceased's kin group to deal with the loss to the community as a whole and that of mourning as an example of the grief felt by the participating individuals. It is highly likely that both types of mourning (that by the individual as part of the collective and that experienced by the individual himself) were part of the socio-cultural system and in so far as they relate to the existence and maintenance of prior social bonds, they can be considered identical in effect. Both types of mourning may be read in the three Old Kingdom depictions to be discussed but my main interest is in the analysis of that type of (collective) mourning, which alone is suggestive of collective social meaning.

In the Memphite region, the three Old Kingdom tombs of Idu, Ankhmahor, and Mereruka all dated to Dynasty 6, are the only one's that have a collective mourning motif. While these may be considered as isolated examples, the mourning genre is continued albeit in changed form in the FIP, Middle, and the New Kingdoms[975]. The result being that when change impinges on activities considered useful and desirable, e.g. mourning which among other things was fundamental to the integration of the deceased into the survivor's ongoing life, there is inevitably the high probability that these changes will become part of the blend and continue into other times. Change is mirrored in the methods and approaches as seen in the latter period representations which although they vary considerably in detail, are not unique because the problem of alleviating loss through death remains.

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[975] J. Settgast, *Untersuchungen zu Altägyptischen Bestattungsdarstellungen* (Hamburg: 1963) 112-14. See also L. Lüddeckens, "Untersuchungen über religiösen Gehalt, Sprache und Form der Ägyptischen Totenklagen," *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Instituts für Ägyptische Altertumskunde in Kairo* 11 (1943).

8.8 Developmental Evidence of the Mourning Motif in the Old Kingdom

Funerary scenes were introduced as a topic during Dynasty 4 at Giza, yet in the first documented attempt in the tomb of Debehen, mourning and ritual are so intertwined that it is not possible to separate the two[976]. Indeed if one compares the scene in Debehen to the gestures in the three Old Kingdom scenes it will be apparent that there is a complete absence of any form of mourning gestures and one is left to search for mourning in an apparent funeral scene!

A textual description from the stela of *ḏ3g*[977] dated to between the FIP and the Middle Kingdom, is more informative and reads

> "It was with the beautiful burial equipment that I had acquired with my own strong arms, (and while) my house was *weeping* and my city (*following after me*) (in the funerary procession) (and my) children were *greeting* for me" (my italics). (*pr.n.(i) m. pr.(i) h3.n.(i) r is.(i) m ḳrst nfrt irt.n.(i) m ḫpšwii.(i) pr.(i) ḥr rmt niwt.(i) m-s3.(i) mswt.(i) ḥr nini m-s3.(i) nn nḥ.s*).

It starts with the usual words that he came forth from his house and then went down to his tomb in the necropolis.

Unfortunately only one of the Old Kingdom mourning motifs has any captions describing the real visible act of mourning[978] and assistance must be sought from other funerary texts, which are either royal in nature or are from a different period.

The hieroglyphic words which accompany the mourning motif describe and identify mourners and acts/gestures of farewell. Only one tomb (Idu) refers to

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[976] J. A. Wilson, "Funeral Services of the Egyptian Old Kingdom," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 3 (1944): pl. 18. This is also the case in the literature where mourning seems to have been discussed as an afterthought, whereas in my judgement it is one of the richest sources for understanding social organization because it is a well-experienced situation.

[977] Lange and Schäfer, *Grab-und Denksteine des Mittleren Reichs* vol. 1, pl. 20007, 6. In this connection see also Settgast, *Untersuchungen zu Altägyptischen Bestattungsdarstellungen* 7, (footnote 5). "Meine Stadt war hinter mir, meine Kinder machten *nini* hinter mir, es fehlte nicht eines".

[978] In the tomb of Idu, the caption reads *prt in mrt=f ḥr rmt* (coming forth by his meret-serfs weeping).

the actual act of mourning, e.g. weeping. Accordingly the texts are of little help. Although one is restricted to three tombs, parallels with similar motifs in other periods may eventually assist in supporting the fact that all collective mourning scenes have similar cultural components.

The hieroglyphs for mourners, mourning, wailing, lamenting, and grief are well documented[979].

However, what strikes one in these texts, are the different words for determining grief, which appear during the Dynastic periods. While the words themselves are different (as one would expect of developing nuances in a language), it is the determinatives because these represent gestures[980] that are more revealing in the context of their usage. These would also point to the fact that the Egyptians had an extensive vocabulary and that they tried to use appropriate words and scenes to show what they really wanted to depict, i.e. linguistic development and attendant refinements proceed in parallel to cultural development and go through the process of rejuvenation through decay as per table below.

8.8.1 Words meaning "Mourning"

The following is a review of hieroglyphic words and determinatives, which refer to negative emotions, which are useful in describing mourning.

While they mainly appear in the Coffin Texts, the determinatives are very similar to the hand gestures seen in the Old Kingdom mourning motif and therefore are instructive. These hand gestures continue as a symbol of mourning and form an important part of the funerary scenes in both the Middle and New Kingdoms[981]. Hands and the way they are used and depicted

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[979] Lüddeckens, "Untersuchungen über religiösen Gehalt, Sprache und Form der Ägyptischen Totenklagen," 16-28. See also table 7 in this thesis.

[980] Gesture means a conscious or sub-conscious movement of the body, especially the hands and arms, which can convey a state of mind. Since this definition cannot apply with certainty to all movements, my discussion is restricted to those that are actually depicted in the Old Kingdom mourning motif.

[981] In this respect see M. Werbrouck, *Les Pleureuses dans l'Égypte ancienne* (Bruxelles: Fondation Reine Élisabeth, 1938). See also A. Radwan, "Der Trauergestus als Datierungsmittel," *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Abteilung Kairo* 30

are therefore an important part of the mourning scene as will be observed from the hieroglyphic words and determinatives below:

Table 7 <u>**Hieroglyphic Meanings & Determinatives**</u>

Word	Meaning	Determinative	Reference
i3kb	Beklagen	Mourning man is shown with: one hand in front of his face, the other hangs on the side.	Hannig, Ägyptisches Wörterbuch I: 33
iww	Wehwgeschrei	Mourning man/woman is shown with: one upturned hand held in front of his/her face, the other arm rests by his/her side.	Hannig, Ägyptisches Wörterbuch I: 50
imw & *irty.w*	Weheklagen & Jammern	Mourning man is shown with: one upturned hand against his face, the other arm hangs at the side.	Hannig, Ägyptisches Wörterbuch I: 70 & 198 resp.
ik (transitive verb)	Beklagen	Mourning man is shown with: one hand outstretched in front of his face, the other arm is by his side (Gardiner list number D77).	Hannig, Ägyptisches Wörterbuch I: 226
h3(i)	Klagen, Beklagen, Beweienen	Mourning man is shown with both arms raised above his head (It can also mean joy; therefore context is crucial in determining meaning).	Hannig, Ägyptisches Wörterbuch II: 754
h3y.t	Trauer	Sparrow is shown with a rounded tail indicating something bad.	Hannig, Ägyptisches Wörterbuch II: 1503

<u>8.8.2 Texts describing "Mourning"</u>

- There are not many texts available and the oldest continuous texts from the Old Kingdom are those relating to the king. These frequently describe mourning as the lamentation of Isis and Nephthys at the destruction of Osiris.

(1974). While both are helpful in tracing the continuity and development of mourning gestures especially in the New Kingdom they do not distinguish between institutionalized and private mourning and thus are of limited assistance to this thesis.

- In a Pyramid text[982] mourning is described as, Isis sitting with her hands on her head, Nephthys clutching her breast and both of them weeping for their brother.

- In another similar royal text describing how mourning was performed for a dead king[983], the souls of Pe are said to "smite their flesh for you (probably refers to smiting the chest), they clap their hands for you, they tug their side-locks for you", (probably means pull out their hair).

- In the tomb of Idu, the caption reads *prt in mrt=f ḥr rmt* (coming forth by his meret-serfs weeping).

- In the Middle Kingdom tale of Sinuhe, one reads that the people mourn for their dead king, by holding their heads down on to their legs drawn up to their chest[984].

- In "The Tale of the Two Brothers" from the New Kingdom, it is said: "He wept when (he) saw (his) young brother lying in death…[985]".

8.8.3 Mourning Gestures Depicted in the three Old Kingdom Tombs

Reference to hand gestures seems to be the common denominator as a permanent fixture of the mourning process and is also present in the three Old Kingdom motifs under reference. The variety of gestures indicate different shades of meaning and as already observed, there is no one word with a definite meaning but a sort of fluid continuum reflecting both the degeneration and development of understanding, which is the consequence of the impact of individuality and continuing change.

These gestures from the depictions in the three tombs under reference give an idea of their extensive range associated with a collective display of public grief. Because of the different gestures, one may conclude that these are not related to an isolated identity but may be the result of variations in the drama

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[982] Faulkner, *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts* § 1281f.

[983] Ibid. § 1005.

[984] Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature* vol. I, 224.

[985] Simpson, ed., *The Literature of Ancient Egypt* 87, l. 13.4.

of mourning, which the Egyptians applied as they saw fit. Therefore it is possible that mourning as a social practice, which while drawing on pre-established norms, also permitted some improvisations which were produced in order to create certain effects, reflecting in the words of Giddens the dialectic between agency and action[986] in other words a pointer to innovation and change.

Gestures are crucial for an understanding of the mourning motif because they are visible and structured parts of all human communication. However, this is not a mechanical automatic understanding because even similar gestures can have a wide variety of hierarchical meaning, depending on the context of their usage, as in the case of the practice of bowing in Japan.

Part of the problem with regard to the mourning motifs, lies as already averred to, in the scant nature of the captions, such that some gestures depicted, e.g. both arms raised above the head, could mean jubilation or sorrow depending on the context of usage.

A crucial problem raised by Van Walsem in his review of a dissertation on gestures, clearly exposes the issue in Egyptian Art. He writes,

> "Here we touch upon the central problem for an artist who has to make a fixed two-dimensional representation of a two/three-dimensional movement in a specific situation ... Which gesture, or rather which *phase* in gesture should be chosen for its unequivocal interpretation by an observer?[987]

Because of the sample number of tombs, the gestures are not to be considered as being a typology. However, it is of interest to note that nearly all the gestures that appear in the three tombs are also mentioned in countless biblical passages[988] such as weeping and lamentation, following the

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[986] Giddens, *The constitution of society: outline of the theory of structuration*.

[987] R. Van Walsem, "Boekbesprekingen - Faraonisch Egypte," *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 55 (1998): 125.

[988] *The Holy Bible*, 21st Century King James Version ed. (Deuel Enterprises Inc., 1994) 2 Sam. 13:19, 15:30, & 3 Sam. 31-37.

coffin in procession, hand on head as a mourning gesture, putting ashes/dust on head, tearing a garment/hair etc.

Keeping in mind the problems posed by Van Walsem, gestures are best understood as symbols which the ancient Egyptians understood to convey emotions and because they appear associated within a funerary setting at death, these refer to emotions connected with mourning. A coherent understanding of some aspects of these symbols can be achieved by the use of the various levels of the covering language game of mourning in funerals. These may be any of the following:

Table 8	Language Games
Religious	Relating to the course of one's eternal destiny and in the formal/informal religious rites of remembrance.
Psychological	How to confront loss (the past is dead) and simultaneously continue an on-going engagement with loss and its remains, whereby the past remains alive in the present.
Biological	Severance of biologically significant social connections results in grief and is evidenced in behaviour, seeking to regain attachment to the departed person. Grief being a universal feature of being human.
Individual	The deceased and the mourner join in a symbolic way to become the writers of the very last episode: that of accepting loss and creating subsequent memory.

The details of the gestures in the three tombs of Ankhmahor, Idu, and Mereruka given below do not need illustrating, because this is not a dissertation on gestures as such which can be found in other studies[989].

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[989] For a general approach detailing gestures see B. Dominicus, *Gesten und Gebärden in Darstellungen des Alten und Mittleren Reiches*, *Studien zur Archäologie und Geschichte Altägyptens* (Heidelberg: Heidelberger Orientverlag, 1994) 58-75.

Gestures which appear in the three Old Kingdom tombs are detailed in table 9 below:

Table 9	Mourning Gestures	Ankhmahor		Idu		Mereruka		Total	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1	Single hand with palm facing inward held in front of face with free arm hanging on side		✓						1
2	Single hand with palm facing inward held in front of face with free arm held across body				✓				1
3	Single hand with palm facing outward held in front of face with free arm hanging on side				✓				1
4	Single hand with balled fist held in front of face or side with other arm hanging to side			✓				1	
5	Single arm held aloft over head with palm facing inwards, the other arm hanging by side				✓				1
6	Single arm aloft over head with palm facing outward, the other held in front of face with palm facing inwards	✓						1	
7	Single arm held aloft over head, the other held above knee with palms facing outward		✓						1
8	Both hands held aloft on side of body		✓		✓				2
9	Both hands held in front of face with palms facing outwards	✓			✓		✓	1	2
10	Both hands held in front of face with palm facing inward	✓	✓					1	1
11	Both hands held on head forming an equilateral parallelogram	✓						1	
12	Both hands and arms of mourners entwined		✓	✓				1	1
13	One arm around waist of another mourner	✓			✓		✓	1	2
14	One arm around shoulder of another mourner				✓				1
15	Head upon drawn up knees	✓						1	
16	Hands tearing hair			✓				1	
17	Hands clutching breast				✓				1
18	Hands tearing clothes		✓				✓		2
19	Smearing dirt on hair and clothes						✓		1
20	Prostate mourner on ground	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	3	3
21	Lifting mourner from ground	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	3	3
Total Gestures		8	8	5	10	2	6	15	24

It is admitted, that certainty of unambiguous interpretation is problematic in the absence of texts. However, in the context of a particular motif, bearing in mind universal psychological primate reactions, one can relate gestures with motifs in order to gain a better understanding.

In the 21 gestures enumerated above, the emphasis in them demonstrates a show of "support" by both genders in the grieving process, and a commitment to the tomb-owner and the members of his family and the community, which is paralleled in the emotions which the depicted gestures evoke. Additionally it reinforces the individuality of these three tomb owners because in each of their tombs the total ratio of male to female mourners is 1:1, 1:2, and 1:3.

I shall now describe the mourning motif in each individual tomb and then refer to their commonalities.

8.9 Tomb of Idu[990]

Mourning motif's Location

The mourning motif is on the North wall at the sides of the entrance (the eastern part) is a group of six registers of which four depict the mourning scene. It is not certain whether this is taking just outside Idu's home as there are no identifying texts in contrast to the text in the tomb of Ankhmahor where the entrance is defined as pr n Dt.

Mourners

Two groups are shown with the females below the males; this scheme is seen in all the three tombs under discussion.

There are alternative ways of reading this motif. One can start from the bottom register, if one accepts that the door from which the women have exited is indeed the deceased's house. However, if one relies on the tradition in ancient Egypt of male dominance as well as the way papyri are read, then one can equally start from the top and work downwards.

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[990] Simpson, *The Mastabas of Qar and Idu* pl. 35.

Females:

In the next register we have the first group of six females, who are each identically dressed in a long sheath dress with two straps. This type of dress being common from the Old Kingdom to the New Kingdom is seen in all the three mourning motifs. Because the tight fitting, ankle length dress depicted is very difficult to walk in, it may have something to do with emphasizing the female body[991].

The usual headdress is that of a tripartite "wig" but there are exceptions. In the tomb of Idu all except two, wear a tripartite "wig". One of the women with a tripartite "wig" is also seen with a shaved forehead, a depiction which is mainly seen among royal mourners[992]. The others are shown wearing a short "wig" but this may be due to the artist not wishing to hide the prostrate nature of one and the bowing nature of the arm of the other. No adornments are worn.

The mourning is shown by one woman tearing her hair, two being helped off the ground, where they are sitting prostrate and in the consoling nature of the embraces by the others.

The caption reads *prt in mrt=f ḥr rmt* (coming forth by his meret-serfs weeping), one of the tomb-owner's titles was overseer of the meret-serfs (*imy-r sš mrt*). This is the only actual "description" of what constitutes mourning from an Old Kingdom tomb. In no other Old Kingdom mourning motif is the act of mourning described (admittedly we have only two such other motifs).

In the next register, a group of five women is shown; two with a hand on their head and the other three are trying to console each other. The caption reads, *i. nb=i n mrwt* (oh my beloved lord) an exhortation, which in the context of mourning could refer to the feeling of loss and sadness resulting

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[991] Brewer and Teeter, *Egypt and the Egyptians* 116.

[992] P. Kaplony, *Kleine Beiträge zu den Inschriften der ägyptischen Frühzeit, Ägyptologische Abhandlungen (15)* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1966) 68. Shaving the forehead is attested since Dynasty 3, for illustration see Smith, *A History of Egyptian Sculpture and Painting in the Old Kingdom* fig. 48. Another illustration from Dynasty 4 is to be seen in Junker, *Giza* Vol. 12, fig. 11. The line drawings in Simpson and Kanawati do not depict this and reliance is on the line drawing in Werbrouck, *Les Pleureuses dans l'Égypte ancienne* (Bruxelles: 1938), fig.1.

from the departure of their lord. The hieroglyph for the interjection "*i*" never appears in any other part of the funeral processes, its appearance in the mourning motif thus is to be construed as a symbol of expressing pain. Similar to the register below, they all wear a sheath dress with two straps and shoulder length "wigs" (only one wears a short wig) and no adornments of any kind.

Males:

The next register shows a group of 5 males. One of them is on the ground tearing his hair and is shown being helped off the ground. Another two are consoling each other by friendly gestures of arm entwining and the holding of hands. Another holds his clenched hand in front of his face. They all wear a short kilt and a short "wig" with no adornments. The caption reads, *i nb=i it n=k w(i)* (Oh my lord take me to you).

The fifth register following shows a group of five males. Three are standing and two are in a bent position. They are all tearing their hair.

Again they are all similarly dressed in short kilts as in the previous register wearing "wigs" with no adornments with the exception of 2 men who have long hair The caption read, *i it=[i] n mrwt* (Oh my beloved father). There are no titles describing any of these five men.

The last (sixth) register shows the entrance to "the embalming place/ mortuary workshop" but this is only a tentative interpretation, as it could equally be the other gate of the house[993].

8.10 Tomb of Ankhmahor[994]

The caption on the eastern part just above the doorway, reads 'going forth from the estate to the beautiful west' (*prt m pr n dt r imnt nfrt*) and it would seem that the mourners are part of the funeral procession. The mourners are divided into two main groups, one composed of 15 females and another with 11 males. Each group will be described separately.

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[993] Wilson, "Funeral Services of the Egyptian Old Kingdom," 202.

[994] Kanawati, *The Teti Cemetery at Saqqara: the Tomb of Ankhmahor* pl. 56.

Females:

The females are shown in small groups (three groups of three each and two groups of two). There are no titles shown in the female group and the only indication of any close relationship is the inscription above two women who mourn: *i it=(i) nb=(i) imȝii* (O my father, (O) my lord, the kind one).

Following this is the depiction of two women, who appear to have been overpowered by their emotions and are depicted sitting with knees drawn up and being helped off the ground. Another woman is shown tearing her dress (also seen in the tomb of Mereruka pls. 130-131). The next group is shown helping to lift a fellow mourner off the ground (who may have fainted). The foremost group is seen with their arms entwined around each others' waists, probably a way of showing physical support, should it be needed. There are two females who appear pregnant, (the eighth from the left and the second from the right) but this could easily be depicting fatness, similar to the male figure who is being helped off the ground and who appears to have a sagging belly in the register above.

The hand gestures are varied but where they are depicted they show one hand either lifted up in front of or to the side of their faces, a hand placed on top of the head, both hands raised as if in despair or both hands in front of their face.

They all wear exactly the same type of long sheath dress with two straps and the same type of tripartite "wig" but are shown with no other adornments. The focus is on their gestures and their faces. If one considers the latter, one cannot but notice from the different facial expressions, the solemnity of the occasion.

Males:

In the male group, two persons are identified and described 1) inspector of the seal bearers named Ptahshepses (*sḥḏ sḏȝwt[yw] Ptḥšpss*) and the person

behind him as 2) funerary priest named Senbeshi (*ḥm kꜣ snbši*)[995]. It has been suggested by Wilson that the seal bearer had special significance, because he was one who was responsible for official travel by boat basing it on the determinative of a boat after the title[996]. The boat can be understood as either "in" or "of" the boat and my preference based on the fact that sometimes two boats are shown is for the "of" meaning (because you cannot be in two boats at the same time, the determinative probably relates to some type of authority, like a modern day harbour master). Since the funeral procession had to cross the Nile, the inspector of seal bearers being shown mourning can be considered a special indicator of status in the funerary procession of an elite individual.

Like their female counterparts, they do not have any adornments, their head is covered by a short curly "wig", and they all wear a short kilt.

The gestures of mourning are equally vivid, with the most poignant being the person being supported off the ground and that of the person with his head upon his knees. The consoling nature of a supportive arm around the waist is also depicted. Other gestures include both hands on top of head, both hands in front of face, both hands outstretched as in gesture of 'praise', one hand held high above the face and one hand in front of the face.

These are all supportive of the connectivity and solidarity that must have existed generally among the mourners.

The importance of this scene is emphasized in conjunction with the preceding group consisting of the overseer of the seal bearer of the gods, an embalming priest of 'Anubis' and a lector priest preceded by a kite, plus a caption giving the name of the tomb-owner (Ankhmahor whose beautiful name is *ssi*).

All the priests are shown in their official uniforms with full regalia: (shoulder length "wigs" and 'false' beards for the lector priest and the embalming priest, who are led by the overseer of the seal bearer of the gods, carrying a sceptre and staff).

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[995] Wilson, "Funeral Services of the Egyptian Old Kingdom," 204.

[996] Ibid.: 205. See also Junker, *Giza* vol. 2, 132. See further D. Jones, *A glossary of Ancient Egyptian Nautical Titles and Terms* (London Kegan Paul International 1988) 104-05.

The caption on the mourning motif, describes the nature of the journey about to be undertaken, i.e. going forth from the goodly estate to the beautiful West (*pr m pr n ḏt r imntt nfrt*) and some of the people, but surprisingly does not describe the mourning as such.

8.11 Tomb of Mereruka[997]

The mourning motif is only partly preserved and again there are two groups of figures- the males at the top and the females at the bottom. Unfortunately we can only describe the female as the male group apart from the legs of one man and a part of a figure on the ground is much damaged. Nevertheless based on the parallels in Idu and Akhmahor we can suppose that these too would have been quite similar and depict a prostate mourner being helped off the ground by another person.

The female group is composed of a group of 13 women. The whole group gives one an impression of sadness and mourning. There is a woman shown tearing her hair, another "whispers" words of "commiseration", a small group of five and another group of three women have their arms entwined with each other as a way of giving each other comfort, while one female who may have fainted, is supported by another woman. The women all wear similar clothes, which we see in both Idu and Ankhmahor, consisting of a long sheath dress with two straps and have no adornments. While they all wear "wigs", three of them have the tripartite "wig", while the rest have a short "wig". The caption above them reads- *i.mry nb =(i) imȝḫw…* (Oh Mery, (my) revered lord…).

8.12 Commonality between the Old Kingdom Mourning Motifs

1. Are all dated to Dynasty 6.
2. They only appear on the North or South walls[998] (A minor observation is that an ornamental element, the kheker freeze, is present in the

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[997] Duell, *The Mastaba of Mereruka* Vol. 2, pl. 130.

tomb of Idu which continues to be used in the Theban tombs of the New Kingdom - and might have a meaning of a sacred place).

3. The ancient Egyptians spent much of their time in preparing for that time, when they would be dead and this importance of the afterlife is reflected in the elaborate iconography of the elite tombs one such motif being mourning[999].

4. The males appear on the top part of the motif with the females occupying the bottom in all the three tombs.

5. All the mourned tomb-owners titles[1000], indicate very high officials. Important titles include:

   imy-r sšw mrt (overseer of scribes of the meret serfs)

    sš nswt ḫft ḥr (king's scribe in the presence) frequently used by Idu

   ṯзy sзb ṯзti (he of the curtain, judge and vizier) used by Akhmahor,

   and Mereruka who as *ṯзti* (vizier) and the son-in-law of king Teti needs no further elaboration.

6. Their collective negative emotions acts/gestures (e.g. weeping, hurting one self and one's belongings) relate to the expected social behaviour at a specific period and thus are culturally significant.

7. These collective acts/gestures are restricted to the loss of a prominent individual, whose rank and reputation is well known through his belonging to a specific group of higher-class individuals. Mourning over poor individuals is not documented but it is assumed that the social dynamics of each are similar because death always creates expected emotional responses in individuals, irrespective of status.

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[998] The mourning motifs in the tombs of Ankhmahor and Idu, appear on the Southern Wall, while that in Mereruka, is found on the Northern Wall.

[999] L. Meskell, "The Egyptian Ways of Death," in *Social Memory: Identity and Death: Anthropological Perspectives on Mortuary Rituals* ed. M. S. Chesson (New Haven: 2001), 32.

[1000] For the various titles see Kanawati, *The Teti Cemetery at Saqqara: the Tomb of Ankhmahor* 11-12. See Simpson, *The Mastabas of Qar and Idu* 30-31. See Duell, *The Mastaba of Mereruka* Vol. 2, pl. 130.

8. Mourning participants are not restricted to kin and include other members of society, who may not have had any intimate connection with the deceased. This is based on the assumption that the number of mourners depicted is only a part of the close-knit circle of the tomb-owner, rather than the actual number of mourners that would have been present. The development of a 'social persona' (bundle of identities) of the tomb-owner can only be explained by this assumption.

9. The interjections of grief referred to on pages 385-388, are very similar in their show of respect towards the departed and their sense of loss. The only difference is the fact that in the tomb of Idu, these are made by both male and female mourners, whereas in the other two tombs of Ankhmahor and Mereruka, they are restricted to the females (Admittedly the depiction of the male mourners of Mereruka is fragmentary). In this respect two passages are enlightening which show the cross-cultural universality of pain but also reflect what we read in the captions in the three Egyptian mourning motifs. Time seems stationary and the grief is virtually identical to the captions, when expressed in the following cross-cultural words of mourning:

> "O my dear husband…separated us!
>
> O, dear what will become of me?[1001]" (By a South American tribe)

> "I have remained alone in the lonely plain…
>
> Where did you go?
>
> You have left me…O my mother! O my mother!
>
> You have left me, where did you go?"[1002] (By a South African tribe)

[1001] R. Karsten, *The head-hunters of Western Amazonas: the life and culture of the Jibaro Indians of eastern Ecuador and Peru*, 1st AMS ed. (New York: AMS Press, 1979) 457.

[1002] H. A. Junod, *The life of a South African tribe* (London: Macmillan, 1927) Vol. 1, 143.

The above cross-cultural ethnographic studies show how the similarities in emotional responses which exist across time, are indicative of a type of similarity throughout the world, although there are wide variations in the nature, extent and duration of emotional reactions in different cultures[1003]. These are related to the differences in cultural beliefs about life and death, and about the expression of emotions.

10. No adornments of any kind are shown on either gender.

11. Clothes are a vehicle for the public display of wealth and status and can be used on special occasions, e.g. birth, marriage, and death to assist in the deeply rooted need for a proper burial[1004]. In the Old Kingdom the above statement is partly true because of the repetitive nature of certain types of attire, which are not limited to ritual functions only. As we do not have any written evidence for the reasons behind wearing a particular type of attire and therefore are entirely dependent upon the iconography, one cannot be categorical about the connection between rank, wealth, and attire in the mourning motif. What is striking in the mourning motif are the similarities in the colour (white seems to be the preferred colour) and style of the dress (for females the sheath dress with straps and for males the short kilt). A modern day analogy would be a parallel with modern day conventions of black skirt and tie at funerals in the European cultural tradition.

While the captions indicated on p. 388 are of limited help, they do indicate that from at least Dynasty 6, maybe sorrow was not a taboo that could be depicted or that these tomb-owners' were individualist taboo breakers! The

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[1003] J. Assmann, in *Der Abschied von den Toten: Trauerrituale im Kulturvergleich*, ed. J. Assmann, F. Maciejewski, and A. Michaels (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2005). This useful work describes cross-cultural mourning in Asia (p. 37-181), in Europe and the USA (p.235-294) and in Ancient Egypt (p. 307-359).

[1004] L. Taylor, *Mourning dress: a costume and social history* (London Allen and Unwin, 1983) 19. While this survey in her book is restricted to the period 1600 to 1900 AD and to European custom only, her examples are quite revealing as to the reason behind the wearing of particular types of dress. This may have been different in ancient Egypt and no automatic inference is suggested.

mourner's social position is only indicated in the tomb of Ankhmahor; where these are identified as "Inspector of the seal-bearers, Ptahshepses" and the "funerary priest Senbeshi", i.e. not low class individuals. However, just because Idu's and Mereruka's tombs do not have identified people in the mourning motif, does not imply that they had no higher officials present. The social custom of those times was the participation of mourners in the farewell of the departed and while the gravity of the ceremony may differ, one can suppose that this type of emotional reaction was indeed the case across all classes.

8.13 Mourning Motifs' Differences

The differences are minor indeed because of the conventions of decorum. However, one would expect more differences because when people are experimenting initial wide variation is an essential creative step before becoming standardized over time but maybe this is a modern gloss[1005]. If differences are to be seen, these are indicated by the immediately preceding and following persons. Admittedly the influence of non-mourners is an indirect inference.

I have omitted until now, the other persons who precede/follow the mourners because strictly speaking they do not form part of the mourning motif. However they are important because they are an essential element of the approaching funerary rituals, their presence points to the nature of the social hierarchy and its demands of show and splendour precisely at a moment of loss, as a way of reinforcing the memory of someone about to become an 'absent one'. Finally, because they point to subtle differences in composition, differences that expand on the cultural significance of the mourning motif, they assist in more understanding.

I shall consider their presence in each of the three motifs briefly.

In the tomb of Mereruka the thirteen mourning women are preceded by a lector priest (*ẖry-ḥbt*) who is holding a roll and wears a pointed kilt. The lector priest is usually depicted with a scroll in one hand, a sash across his chest

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[1005] Only holds true if these were indeed the only three tombs to depict the mournng motif.

and wearing a pointed kilt but due to the damaged nature of the representation this is not visible here. His task was the performance of the beatification rituals. The earliest holders of the title of lector priest $ẖry-ḥbt$ were members of the royal family[1006].

An embalming priest[1007] (wt) is also present, carrying a rod and a scepter and wearing only a short kilt with probably a scarf thrown on his left shoulder but again this is not visible. A woman described as $ḏrt$ 'kite' in a long sheath dress.

In front of her are three men, all in pointed kilts and holding on to the extended pole of the coffin. Six men in short kilts are probably the coffin bearers. Preceding them is another group of 3 men, all in pointed kilts. From their attire we can say that they are important officials of a higher social order than the pallbearers. The fact that they are holding only the extended pole would suggest a function other than carrying and it has already been suggested that these were honorary pallbearers[1008].

The motifs of Ankhmahor and Idu differ from the motif in Mereruka because they do not depict honorary pallbearers in their pointed kilts. Admittedly in the tomb of Ankhmahor, there are three persons shown holding the extended arm of the coffin but they are dressed in the same manner as the coffin carriers - all in short kilts! Considering that the embalming priest is always shown in a short kilt, perhaps one should not read too much into this minor difference. Further while all scenes have the usual depiction of funerary goods, these are shown already deposited[1009] in the tombs of Mereruka, and Idu but are being carried ceremoniously[1010] in the tomb of Ankhmahor.

[1006] Doxey, "Priesthood," Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt, Vol. 3, 69.

[1007] The word 'wt' means to wrap (*Wörterbuch*. I, 379:13). It is a usual title but its significance lies in the fact that the embalming priest was given free access to temples and was an associate of the priests. His role in the performance of a sacerdotal function meant that he was not tainted with ritual impurity, unlike those whose job it was to perform incisions.

[1008] Wilson, "Funeral Services of the Egyptian Old Kingdom," 203.

[1009] Duell, *The Mastaba of Mereruka* Vol. 2, pl. 130. Also Simpson, *The Mastabas of Qar and Idu* pl. 35.

In the tomb of Idu there is a complete absence of the accompanying lector and embalming priests, who precede and follow the coffin. Only the kite is depicted on the journey across the river. The lector priest is NOT shown at the entrance to the tomb, following the coffin being dragged by a pair of oxen, ready to perform the opening of the mouth ritual, as one would expect. Indeed there is no evidence of any tomb having palm type pillars!

The above differences are small because increasing number of lector and embalming priests by itself, would have little significance as they could be just an indication of individuality or boastfulness but seen in the context of mourning points to elements of wealth and rank and thus to the generics. Both the lector and the embalming priests are seen in their full regalia in the funeral procession and the very fact that they are there, stresses the rank of the tomb-owner as well as the manifestation of the ideology of the social order. Not only is the tomb-owner being mourned but his departure entails the performance and depiction of certain traditional ways, which were thought to be symptomatic of an ordered society.

Because mourners are seldom described and/or identified, one has to assume that these would be part of the household or extended kin and that the kite is the ritual representation of sorrow but she should not be confused with the wife of the tomb-owner. Neither the wife nor the children are ever shown in these three Old Kingdom mourning scenes. In view of the fact that these persons would be involved in the immediate aftermath of death this lacunae is even more surprising. In both the tombs of Idu and Ankhmahor, the kite is shown wearing a headband with a single filet and is never in the presence of the other mourners but is always accompanied by priests (While the scene in Mereruka is damaged, a parallelism might be accepted).

These again are minor differences; what is important is that in time they become part of a constant repertoire of funerary scenes which proceed right up to the end of the New Kingdom[1011].

[1010] Kanawati, *The Teti Cemetery at Saqqara: the Tomb of Ankhmahor* pls. 53 & 54.

[1011] Settgast, *Untersuchungen zu Altägyptischen Bestattungsdarstellungen* 114. "Man macht dir die Prozession wie den Vorfahren".

The show of sorrow in the mourning motifs, by means of visible practices such as tearing garments, tearing hair, and sitting on the ground, lying on the ground or smearing the head with dust/ashes, is made even more real by the participation of the various members of society. The aspect of social connectivity to the departed is complemented by the gestures of support shown by the mourners to each other and results in the formation of a new social association of those left behind. At the same time the bundle of social identities of the tomb-owner is enhanced by the public display of mourning, which because it appears prolific also serves to reinforce accepted hierarchical society, through which means the 'others' are made to understand and see the image of the ideal elite.

After the funeral, the tomb-owner goes on to 'live' a venerated life in the company of his fellow peers, $m3^ct$ is reinforced and maintained, order rules once more and the tomb-owner is relegated to posterity.

Perhaps it is opportune to end with a modern quotation from Shakespeare's *Macbeth*[1012] which sums up the complexity and continuity of this most intricate of emotions. Malcolm tells Mac duff, whose wife and children have been killed by Macbeth that he should mourn so that he can overcome his loss:

> "Give sorrow words: the grief that does not speak
>
> Whispers the o'er-fraught heart, and bids it break."

[1012] W. Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, ed. A. W. Verity (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1925) 1623a, IV, iii, 209.