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More than people and pots: identity and regionalization in Ancient Egypt during the second intermediate period, ca. 1775-1550 BC

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More Than People and Pots

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More Than People and Pots

*Identity and Regionalization in Ancient Egypt During
the Second Intermediate Period, ca. 1775–1550 BC*

PROEFSCHRIFT

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de graad van doctor aan de Universiteit Leiden,
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Arianna Sacco
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Copromotor: Dr. Miriam Müller

Promotiecommissie: Prof.dr. Caroline Waerzeggers
Prof.dr. Peter M.M.G. Akkermans
Dr. Bettina Bader (Austrian Academy of Sciences)

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FOREWORD

This PhD dissertation is about the relationships between sites in Egypt during the Second Intermediate Period (ca. 1775 and 1550 BC). Back then, Egypt was politically and culturally divided, and it was characterized by the presence of groups from modern-day Syria-Palestine and Sudan that, as in the case of the Fifteenth Dynasty, managed to ascend to power. The late part of the Middle Kingdom (ca. 1850–1775 BC) has also been included in the analysis, for two reasons. Firstly, part of the features characterizing the Second Intermediate Period are already visible in the Late Middle Kingdom. Secondly, this allows us to better understand what changed between the Middle Kingdom, when Egypt was still politically united, and the Second Intermediate Period.

To study the relationships between the sites, the present author has analysed the material culture excavated from these sites through network analysis. This methodology is ideal to examine the relations, as well as the flow and circulation of objects, fashions, or knowledge, between different entities, based on what these entities have – or do not have – in common. The analysis is conducted through the use of digital tools to visualize the data through graphs, and to calculate mathematical measures.

Network analysis was born in the social sciences and has only recently been introduced into archaeology. While it has found applications in Mediterranean and European archaeology, its use in Egyptology is still limited. Only in a very few cases has network analysis been used to study particular documents or figures in Egyptian history; it has, until now, never been used to study Egyptian material culture. Hence, this PhD dissertation intends to introduce network analysis to Egyptian archaeology. The present dissertation hopefully demonstrates how useful network analysis can be, so that more people working in Egyptology and Egyptian archaeology will make use of it in the future. Lastly, given how recent the use of network analysis is in archaeology, methodological discussions about how to apply it to material culture are still ongoing; I hope that the present dissertation contributes to these discussions.

I am grateful to my promotor, Prof. Olaf Kaper, for all his good advice and helpful remarks. His kindness has been an inspiration, and he has always

brought out the best in me. I am especially thankful to my co-promotor, Dr Miriam Müller, for working so closely with me on this dissertation, and for the wealth of useful comments she has given me, for guiding me on this journey, and for always being there for me.

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Naturally, the views expressed in this work are entirely mine, and I take full responsibility for any mistakes and errors that may inadvertently remain in the text.

Last, but not the least, there are no words to express how thankful I am to my husband, Josho Brouwers, who has stood by me over the years, with unconditional love, patience, and dedication. He has been the light in my darkest moments, and I could have not seen this project through to the end if he had not been there. This work is dedicated to him.