Current Research in Egyptology 2021

Proceedings of the Twenty-First Annual Symposium, University of the Aegean, 9-16 May 2021

Edited by

Electra Apostola and Christos Kekes

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Archaeopress Publishing Ltd
Summertown Pavilion
18-24 Middle Way
Summertown
Oxford OX2 7LG
www.archaeopress.com

ISBN 978-1-80327-376-1
ISBN 978-1-80327-377-8 (e-Pdf)

Ceremonial shields featuring smiting scenes, TT40. Davies and Gardiner 1926: pl. 25.

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Contents

Foreword

Aegean Egyptology (AE): the cradle of Egyptological knowledge and research in Greek academia

By a fortunate circumstance the current proceedings of the Current Research in Egyptology 2021 international conference, which was organised by the Aegean Egyptology (AE) research team under the aegis of the Department of Mediterranean Studies (DMS) of the University of the Aegean in May 2021, coincide with the 20th anniversary of the formal establishment of Egyptology in Greece. It was back in 2002 and the bright vision of the members of the DMS Temporary Academic Committee, predominantly among them Professor Ioannis Seimenis (Head of DMS, 2001-2003) and Professor Socrates Katsikas (Vice Rector of the University of the Aegean, 2000-2003), that inaugurated Egyptology as an academic discipline in Greek academia. Upon my election as Lecturer in Egyptology in 2003, AE was officially formed and established the credentials for the rapid development of Egyptology along the lines of pioneering research and innovative teaching within the fruitful environment of DMS, an 'area-studies' Department which focuses diachronically on the south-eastern Mediterranean region.

AE comprises of postgraduate, doctorate/postdoctorate researchers and external collaborators under various research and funding schemes and aims at the promotion of Egyptology in Greece through the elaboration and implementation of pioneered international and interdisciplinary research projects, the organisation of scientific colloquia, conferences and specialised workshops, the development of specialised Egyptological courses on undergraduate and postgraduate levels, e-learning programmes and summer schools.[1] More recently, AE was implemented by the first postgraduate programme (Master of Arts) in Eastern Mediterranean Archaeology (2014 onwards) and the Laboratory for the Ancient World of the Eastern Mediterranean (2015 onwards).[2].

The current research projects of the AE are developed along four main axes:

- The cultural appropriation of certain ideas/symbols and the mobilisation of Egyptian motifs and personae in Greece with the multidimensional Aegyptiaca material from the archaic sanctuaries in the Aegean and mainland Greece as the main area of research (Aegyptiaca Project, in collaboration with Bonn University and the Ephorate of Antiquities of Dodecanese);[3]

- The AEgySca Project: the multiple implications of Egyptian and Egyptianizing scarabs in the Aegean, 8th-6th century BC (MIS 50049415).[4] Since scarabs are the largest category of

[1] For more information on the past and current AE research activities, see ‹http://aegeanegyptolgy.gr›.

[2] See ‹http://ema.aegean.gr› and ‹https://dms.aegean.gr/en/laboratories/laboratory-of-the-ancient-world-of-eastern-mediterranean/›.

[3] Recent project outcomes include Apostola E. and P. Kousoulis 2019a. Exotic offerings in the archaic Rhodian sanctuaries: a critical synthesis of the Egyptian and Egyptianizing votives. *Athens University Review in Archaeology* 2 (2019): 103-116; Apostola, E and P. Kousoulis 2019b. Aegyptiaca in archaic Greece: Preliminary remarks on scarabs and scaraboids from the Sanctuary of Ialysus (Rhodes). *Göttinger Miszellen* 258: 9-20; Barcat, D. and P. Kousoulis 2019. Les vases et figurines en faïence entre Rhodes et le Delta: contexte artistique et usages funéraires. *Revue Archéologique* 2.68: 321-39; For more information, see ‹http://aegyptiaca.gr› and ‹http://aegeanegyptology.gr/the-aegyptiaca-project-ecumene-and-economy-in-the-horizon-of-religion/›.

[4] Apostola, E., P. Kousoulis and Ch. Papadaki 2021. Egyptian and Egyptianizing scarabs in the Aegean (8th-6th BC): The Sanctuary of Hera Akraia-Limenia at Perachora as a case study. *Chronache di Archaelogia* 40: 61-102. This research is co-financed by Greece and the European Union (European Social Fund- ESF) through the Operational Programme 'Human Resources Development, Education and Lifelong Learning 2014-2020' in the context of the project 'Aegyptiaca as indicators of religious and cultural interaction in the Southeastern Mediterranean: The

Aegyptiaca in the Aegean, they can be used as a very representative sample for a thorough interpretation of the complete corpus, promoting future research in this field. Previous scholarship, based only on typology, states that a special category of scarabs, known in the bibliography as 'Lindos-Perachora' or 'Rhodes-Perachora' may also have been manufactured on the same island – from the latter half of the eighth century BC to the first quarter of the seventh century BC. The existence of many series of almost identical pieces is a crucial element requiring further investigation since it could indicate the existence of a workshop there or nearby. The project reinvestigates the typology and archaeological context of scarabs from Perachora, Heraion of Argos, Ialysos and Lindos.

- The publication of the funerary material from the Egyptian collection in the National Archaeological Museum with the 21st dynasty coffins as the focal point of research (in collaboration with the National Archaeological Museum, Athens)

- The semantics of the anti-god perception in the Egyptian belief system with the Apophian ontology, polymorphism, naming and their magico-ritual accentuation as the principal areas of research (part of the international and interdisciplinary Ancient Egyptian Demonology Project, University of California at Berkeley and Swansea University).[5]

- MAGIAM - Magical Interactivity in the Ancient Mediterranean: phenomenology, semantics, empiricism. Elements and aspects of magical interactivity and praxis in the ancient Mediterranean with a special focus on the designating criteria, problems of definition/perception and development along the lines of the 'official' cults, as well as phenomenological modes of familiarity and symbolism.[6]

Ongoing and recently completed doctorate research[7] is characterised by an exceptionally high standard of originality and focus on a variety of often unexplored fields in Egyptology, archaeology and the ancient world of the eastern Mediterranean, such as the iconographic semantics of the human body in Egyptian art,[8] the Aegyptiaca material from Archaic Greece,[9] the Egyptian diplomatic system and foreign relations with the Near Eastern kingdoms of the Late Bronze Age,[10] new approaches to the Egyptian and Aegean ritual gestures of the Bronze Age,[11] aspects of the foreign deities into the Egyptian

multiple implications of Egyptian and Egyptianizing scarabs in the Aegean (8th-6th century BC)' (MIS 50049415). For more information, see ‹http://aegeanegyptology.gr/aegysca-project/›.

[5] P. Kousoulis forthcoming. *Apep and the Anti-god Perception in the Egyptian Belief System* (Hans-Bonnet Studien zur Ägyptischen Religion) Berlin: Eb-Verlag. For more information, see ‹http://aegeanegyptology.gr/ancient-egyptian-daemonology-project/›.

[6] Papadaki, C. 2022. *Elements and Aspects of Magic in Minoan Civilization*, post-doctoral research, University of the Aegean (in Greek); Kousoulis, P. forthcoming. Language and performativity of the ancient Egyptian magical discourse., in a Festschrift.

[7] See ‹http://aegeanegyptology.gr/phd-research/›

[8] Antonatos, P. 2012, *Interpretation of Pharaonic Egyptian Figures: Contributing to the study of human attitudes and movements*. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of the Aegean, Rhodes (in Greek).

[9] Apostola, E. 2015, *Interaction of Ideas, Symbols and Cultures in the Southeastern Mediterranean from the 8th-6th c. BC: Hybrid and theriomorphic entities of Egyptian origin in the Aegean world*. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of the Aegean, Rhodes (in Greek).

[10] Kontopoulos, G. 2021. The Egyptian diplomatic system in the LBA beyond the terms of 'brotherhood' and 'equality': The Egyptian 'abandonment' of power and aspects of Pharaonic identity and Kingship. Unpublished PhD dissertation, University of the Aegean, Rhodes.

[11] Kekes, C. 2021a. *Speaking Bodies: An Approach to the Egyptian and Aegean Ritual Gestures of the Bronze Age.* Unpublished PhD dissertation, University of the Aegean, Rhodes (in Greek); Kekes, C. 2021b. Speaking Bodies: An Approach to the Egyptian and Aegean Ritual Gestures of the Bronze Age (Preliminary Remarks), in M. Arranz Cárcamo, R.

pantheon,[12] ritual sacrificial landscapes and politics in the prehistoric Aegean (M. Lambrakis, in progress), Egypt and the Eastern Mediterranean, the new solar theology in Egypt and the eastern Mediterranean during the Late Bronze Age and its survival during the transitional and early historical times (D. Garoufalis, in progress), study of the Fayum portraits of the National Archaeological Museum and the Benaki Museum (M. Katsigianni, in progress), and the development of a quite innovative and interactive Ancient Egyptian Learning Tool (AELT; D. Georgiou, in progress).[13]

AE is a modern research and educational body, which serves and promotes Egyptology in Greece, re-enhances the research profile of the DMS and places University of the Aegean in a predominant position within the vast and rich Egyptological community and tradition worldwide.

Panagiotis Kousoulis

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Sánchez Casado, A. Planelles Orozco, S. Alarcón Robledo, J. Ortiz García and P. Mora Riudavets (eds) *Current Research in Egyptology 2019. Proceedings of the Twentieth Annual Symposium, University of Alcalá, 17-21 June 2019*: 1-11. Oxford: Archaeopress; Kekes, C. 2018. Deities or Mortals? Reassessing the Aegean 'Outstretched Arm Holding Staff' Gesture'. *Creta Antica* 19: 155-72.

[12] Kalaitzaki, A. 2022. The introduction of foreign deities in Egypt during the Late Bronze Age. Unpublished PhD dissertation, University of the Aegean, Rhodes.

[13] See ‹http://hieroglyphs.gr›

Introduction

The Twenty-first international, postgraduate conference *Current Research in Egyptology* (CRE) was held online by the Department of Mediterranean Studies (DMS) of the University of the Aegean (Rhodes, Greece), from 9th to 16th May 2021. Although the Covid-19 crisis prevented the organisation of a live event, the first ever CRE virtual conference had two significant advantages. First, it gave the opportunity to participants to attend every presentation of the conference. Second, many people from all over the world, students, researchers, people who just have an interest in ancient Egypt without being specialists, had the chance to attend such a prestigious and globally recognised Egyptological conference. All these people who, in normal circumstances, would not have been able to travel to Greece to be physically present during the meeting.

Egyptology was established as a separate discipline almost twenty years ago in Greek academia and Aegean Egyptology Research Team (AE) was founded at the same time. A significant number of conferences and symposiums about Egyptology have been held since then in the University of the Aegean. Organising the 21st annual CRE, especially under so difficult circumstances, was both a challenge and a chance to bring together young and prominent scholars and researchers from all over the world, as well as to promote Egyptological and Papyrological research conducted by young scholars in the University of the Aegean and other Greek Universities.

The heart of every conference is its speakers. We would like to thank all the presenters who shared with us fresh knowledge from ongoing research on different topics of Egyptology and congratulate them on their research. For eight days we had the opportunity to attend 72 lectures and 18 poster presentations of the highest scientific quality, covering many aspects of the ancient Egyptian civilisation, from Predynastic times to the Byzantine period, and its interaction with other cultures of the ancient Mediterranean world. The presentations focused on ancient Egyptian architecture, various aspects of the ancient Egyptian religion, archaeology and the study of the archaeological material, language and texts, ancient Egyptian officials, kings, and priests, social stratification and matters of ancient Egyptian economy, ancient Egyptian interconnections, ancient Egyptian iconography and symbols, the human body and nature in ancient Egyptian perception, magic and medicine, the evolution of modern Egyptology and the implementation of new methods on field archaeology, Egyptology and the study of hieroglyphs and artefacts.

Special thanks are due to our colleagues – most of them conference participants - who chaired the sessions: José Manuel Alba Gómez, Clémentine Audouit, Martina Bardoňová, Marwa Bdr El Din, Mariano Bonanno, Linda Chapon, Wojciech Ejsmond, Ronaldo Gurgel Pereira, Taichi Kuronuma, Dimitra Makri, Uroš Matić, Vincent Oeters, Marie Peterková Hlouchová, Gyula Priskin, Mohamed Raafat Abbas, Hany Rashwan, Dimitrios Roumpekas, Raúl Sánchez Casado, Valeria Tappeti, Eleni Tsatsou and Justin Yoo.

We are particularly grateful to all the prominent scholars from Greece and abroad who kindly accepted our invitation to participate as keynote speakers in this conference: Prof. Joachim Friedrich Quack, Prof. Diamantis Panagiotopoulos, Prof. Panagiota Sarischouli, Asst. Prof. Myrto Malouta, Prof. Panagiotis Kousoulis, Prof. Ludwig Morenz, Prof. Panagiotis Pachis, Dr. Virginia Webb and Prof. Olaf Kaper. We are sure that all conference participants gained new insights from their expertise on various debate issues and valuable feedback from conversations with them.

This year's conference would not have been possible without the support of the University of the Aegean and the assistance of many individuals. We are very grateful to Prof. Panagiotis Kousoulis, Director of the Laboratory of the Ancient World of the Eastern Mediterranean and founder of the Aegean Egyptology Research Group, for his valuable assistance and continuous support throughout the organisation of this event and the editing of the volume. Many thanks should be given to the Rector of the University of the Aegean, Prof. Chrissi Vitsilaki, and the Vice Rector, Prof. Eleni Theodoropoulou, to the Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, Prof. Ioannis Seimenis, and to the Head of DMS, Prof. Aikaterini Frantzi, for making this Conference possible. Our special thanks go to Dr. Mina Vafiadou and Mr. Panagiotis Agouras for their technical support.

Last but not least, we would like to acknowledge the valuable assistance of the following individuals: the members of Aegean Egyptology Research Group, Dimitris Garoufalis, Grigorios Kontopoulos and Christina Papadaki; especially the members Dimitris Georgiou, Maria Antigoni Katsigianni, Emmanouil Lambrakis, Eirini Skaroglou and Katerina Sofianou for their significant contribution to the presentation of the sessions; Michalis Papantoniou for permission to use his photographs from Rhodes and Anastasia Michail for the beautiful logos/banners of the conference. We are truly thankful to Justin Yoo for his valuable advice about the organisation and his help in promoting the conference through the social media.

We are particularly grateful to Anna Kalaitzaki, co-head of CRE 2021 Organising Committee, for her vital contribution to the successful organisation of the conference, the peer review and the preparations for the editing of the volume. Special thanks go to Eirini Skaroglou for her help in the editing of the papers.

For the selection of the final papers we used an anonymous peer review system. Our sincere thanks go to our expert anonymous reviewers for their prompt and kind response to our call and their valuable comments on the first drafts of the papers.

The present volume includes fifteen Egyptological and Papyrological studies by young scholars, which investigate a great variety of topics, i.e. social, and religious aspects of life in ancient Egypt, ritual and magic, language and literature, ideology of death, demonology, iconographical issues and intercultural relations, from the Prehistoric to the Coptic period. The wide chronological and thematic range of the papers is representative of the multifaceted, interdisciplinary, and innovative character of modern Egyptology.

We would like to send our best wishes to the hosts of the next CRE conference to be held in Montpellier (Université Paul-Valéry Montpellier 3) in September 2022.

Electra Apostola and Christos Kekes

Editors of CRE 2021 Proceedings

List of paper presentations

Akmal M. Ahmed, Mona
Reared in prehistory: Uncovering the evidence of prehistoric children in Egypt

Alarcón Robledo, Sergio
New Perspectives on Ancient Egyptian Monumental Architecture

Alú, Cristina
Theorizing models of cultural interaction on the margins of ancient Egypt

Audouit, Clémentine
An Encyclopedia of the body in Ancient Egypt and Ancient Near East

Barcat, Dominique
From scarab seals to roman gems

Bardoňová, Martina
'Nothing that surrounds us is object, all is subject': Does a tomb has a biography? The case of QH 35n

Bělohoubková, Dana
Where have all the women gone? The so-called Royal Harem Suite in Malqata Palace

Blasco Torres, Ana Isabel
Lexical Fossilization of Old, Middle and Late Egyptian Terms in Graeco-Egyptian Anthroponymy (Graeco-Roman Period)

Bonanno, Mariano
Being annihilated or being satisfied in the Duat. About the dynamic of the sw.wt in the New Kingdom Books of the Underworld

Borges Pires, Guilherme
'And all large and small cattle' - Is there a 'zoogony' in the Religious Hymns of the New Kingdom (ca. 1539-1077 BC)?

Callegher, Silvia; Gottardo, Martino; Iannarilli, Francesca; Pancin, Federica
The Hellenistic shades of Napata

Calomino, Eva Amanda; Scaro, Agustina
Local special findings in domestic contexts of a frontier post in the Egyptian Delta. The small finds of Tell el-Ghaba (North Sinai, Egypt) between the 10th and 7th centuries BC

Channell, Zuleika
Ancient Hands: An Initial Palaeographic Analysis of Painted Decoration on Twelfth Dynasty Coffins from Asyut

Chapon, Linda
The decoration, function and location of niches in New Kingdom temples: A reappraisal

Hulková, Lucia
Changing Burial Customs in the Eastern Nile Delta during the Second Intermediate Period and early New Kingdom

Józefowicz, Ewa
Hatshepsut's Portico of Obelisks: Scenes Connections

Junge, Friederike
Light my fire – Notes on burning rituals in Early Dynastic burial contexts

Kapiec, Katarzyna
Oils Imported to Egypt – A New Insight to the Origins, Production, and Trade Routes

Kontopoulos, Grigorios
Patterns of exchange in LBA Egypt: Royal gifts in the Amarna Age

Kumar, Nisha
The Beginnings of a Consumer Society: Beer Production in Predynastic Egypt

Kuronuma, Taichi
Ceramic assemblage in the Predynastic cemeteries: Morphological combination and consideration on the usage in mortuary context in terms of ideological and social aspects

Landrino, Martina
An already well-known (?) administrative document from Deir el-Medina

Maikidou-Poutrino, Dafni
The Ploiaphesia in the Greek landscape: a local expression of a global festivity

Małecka-Drozd, Natalia
Was there an urban policy for the Nile Delta during 3rd millennium BC?

Marković, Nenad
The priesthood of the divine Apis bulls: a prosopography

Matić, Uroš
Pottery fragmentation and abrasion at third millennium BC Kom Ombo, Upper Egypt

Miller, Jordan
Red images in the Amduat of Thutmose III

Mosleth King, Maiken
Dining with the Dead: the Totenmahl in Roman Egypt

Muñoz Perez, Carmen
Bring me an Amulet for the Afterworld. The Use and Reuse of Egyptian Funerary Amulets in the Mediterranean Area

Noria-Serrano, Beatriz
Foreign servants in Middle Kingdom households

Oeters, Vincent
Not a curse 'of' but rather 'on' the mummy?! Frans Jonckheere, the alleged mummy of Butehamun, and the rise of the study of ancient Egyptian medicine in Belgium (1939-1956)

Orfanidis, Georgios
Alexander III of Macedon, the Founder of Alexandria: Reading behind the Obvious through Sources and Statues

Pancin, Federica
Late Bronze Age Hathoric and female-headed vessels: a formal and functional comparative study of some Eastern Mediterranean materials

Priskin, Gyula
Stars and objects in the Opening of the Mouth ceremony

Rashwan, Hany
Against literary genre as a theoretical colonisation of modernism: Arabic literariness in the Ancient Egyptian literature

Rocha da Silva, Thais
Experiencing Privacy in the Amarna Workmen's Village

Rogers, John
Diodorus Siculus' account of Saite Egypt: A house of mirrors?

Roumpekas, Dimitrios
Eggs in Greco-Roman Egypt: Food, Medicine, Ritual

Rózsa, Anett
Harpocrates vs. The Solar Child: The roles of the Egyptian child deities on a lotus / in a boat (in private, magical practices)

Sánchez Casado, Raúl
Regulations for the Old Kingdom mortuary cult

Schrauder, Julienne Nadêge
With one mind and one mouth? About the influence on and of Coptic hymns

Schutz, Manon Y.
Of beds and klinai...

Sidpura, Taneash
The Fly on the Wall: foreign intrusion or protective device?

Takács, Daniel Viktor
What is in between: Types of liminality in ancient Egypt?

Tappeti, Valeria
The transmission of themes and motifs between 'copy' and 'innovation': the decorative programmes of the late monumental tombs

List of poster presentations

Antoniadou, Christina
The militant aspect of Anubis in the literary sources

Belal, Hadeer
Water-Jar stands from the Coptic Museum

Cavillier, Giacomo
The 'Kay Project': The 'Cliff tombs' in Theban necropolis

Garzón Rodríguez, Judit
Archaeological-philological-ethno-historical study of fundamental aspects of the penis, its symbolism and meaning in Ancient Egypt

Georgiou, Dimitris
Ancient Egyptian Learning Tool (A.E.L.T.)

Iamarino, María Laura
Amarna, Memphis and Thebes landscapes: a comparison with a multiscale approach

Jiménez Meroño, Beatriz; Borrego Gallardo, Francisco L.
Iconographical and iconological study of the snake-footed Anubis in Alexandria: connections and new creations

Katsigianni, Maria Antigoni
Fayum portraits: a comparative study from the Egyptian Collection of the National Archaeological Museum of Athens and the British Museum

Kaźmierczak, Magdalena
Distribution of the pottery vessels within the graves at Tell el-Murra cemetery

Kučová, Stanislava; Musil, Jiří
ARSW and its Importance for Dating of Late Roman Contexts in the al-Hayz Oasis, Bahariya, Western Desert, Egypt

Lavador Novais, Raquel
The preservation and presentation of Self in Egypt and Mesopotamia in the 3rd millennium BC: Portrait aesthetics challenges

McGuiness, Kevin
Who's Been Sleeping in Sitre-In's Sarcophagus

Pessolano, Maria Linda
Egyptian and Egyptianizing Scarabs from the necropolis of Pontecagnano

Reggiani, Nicola; Bovo, Alessia
Unpublished Greek and Demotic Papyri from Graeco-Roman Tebtunis: A Research Project at the University of Parma

Reichart, Jayme Rudolf
A Typology of Formal Garden Scenes from Private Eighteenth Dynasty Theban Tombs Prior to the Amarna Period

Shahawy, Eman Mohsen
Workers and Workshops of mosaics in Egypt during Greco Roman period

Zaky, Reham
Social differentiation in Neolithic communities in the Middle Nile Region

List of keynote lectures

Kaper, Olaf
A Shrine to a Falcon God at Berenike

Kousoulis, Panagiotis
Aegean in Egypt: Current research projects of the Aegean Egyptology

Malouta, Myrto
Greek polis, Roman foundation: how Egyptian was Antinoopolis?

Morenz, Ludwig D.
The Sinaitic 'He'-tribe and the genesis of the alphabet 4000 years ago

Pachis, Panayotis
Social Space and Stratification of Power: Cultural Frames and Generic Space in the Isis-Sarapis Cult during the Graeco-Roman Age

Panagiotopoulos, Diamantis
A Minoan Heterotopia in Egypt (?). On the Toreador Frescoes at Tell el-Dab'a

Quack, Joachim Friedrich
Near Eastern deities in Egyptian magical texts of the New kingdom: Some methodological considerations and a case study on Anat and the servant of Hauron

Sarischouli, Panagiota
The Greco-Egyptian Iatromagical Formularies in Context

Webb, Virginia
Past and Future perspectives on Aigyptiaka in Iron Age Greece

Reared in prehistory: uncovering the evidence for children in ancient Egypt

Mona Akmal M. Ahmed

Abstract

The archaeology of childhood has witnessed a rising interest in the last few decades with new approaches being adopted for understanding the lives of children in ancient societies. Such progress is, however, not yet fully reflected in archaeological research and published works on ancient Egypt, especially in studies concerning the Prehistoric Period. The current paper aims to include sub-adults into archaeological research, based on the evidence from burials, which can provide the most reliant information on this specific age group, before the emergence of writing and development of the art. The methodology used for this research relies on a comparison of all documented evidence of sub-adults' burials during the Prehistoric and Predynastic periods. The 16 sites under examination are in Upper and Lower Egypt and dated between the Neolithic and the Predynastic periods. Identifying and comparing attributes from each burial in every site can provide new data about infants and children as a major demographic component in the structure of early Egyptian society, as well as about burial locations and mortuary practices associated with infants and children. The results obtained from a wide range of data contribute to understanding the lives of sub-adults, beyond the physical evidence obtained from burial practices. Thus, this paper attempts to uncover patterns of evolution and development of the ideology and belief systems of Egypt's early inhabitants.

Keywords

Archaeology of childhood; Predynastic Egypt; children; burials; mortuary practices; mortuary spaces; grave goods

Introduction

The Prehistoric Period in Egypt is characterised by rapid development in terms of social complexity, ideology and beliefs. Such development is not only reflected in the raw materials and the products of material culture, but mainly in the burial practices and in the way those ancient societies treated adults and sub-adults. The latter age group has, however, received less attention in excavation projects of prehistoric cemeteries and in their publications. This phenomenon is especially prominent when it comes to the skeletal remains of sub-adults from the Prehistoric Period. Several reasons have contributed to this tendency in archaeological research, i.e. low preservation of the skeletal remains of younger age groups, low visibility in the archaeological sites, lack of awareness about the importance of including all age groups in archaeological interpretation and absence of experts who specialised in osteology of infants and children. Another significant factor that prohibits evaluating the remains of sub-adults is the exclusion of infants and children from adult graveyards and their placement in different contexts or types of burials. These factors decrease the chances of uncovering sub-adult burials.

The role of children as active participants in social life is more visible in the historic times. In reliefs and paintings they are shown playing games or joining families in ceremonies and events. Children are represented as small adults or as innocent beings with the sidelock of youth and a finger in their mouth. Several statues show children alone or with their families. In addition, everyday practices of child rearing are evident in sculptures representing mothers breastfeeding and taking care of their children. Representations of children in religious triads are also common in the archaeological record. On the other hand, evidence suggests that ancient Egyptians recognised that new-born infants need special care, as they are threatened by real and supernatural dangers. This is well documented by various objects including medical papyri and amulets and by deities related to childbirth and new-born protection.

Considering that texts and illustrations were absent during the Prehistoric Period, the burials of children, with their content of skeletal remains and grave goods as well as the surviving evidence of body treatment, are a main source of information about prehistoric sub-adults in Egypt. All such parameters can, when combined, provide insights into how children were treated and considered during their life and death. Furthermore, given that most of the prehistoric sites were excavated in the early 19th century when prehistoric archaeology was still in its early formation and Prehistory was still not fully recognised by early excavators, deeper challenges concerning the knowledge about lives of young people in prehistoric Egypt are present (see Table 1). The use of various terminologies and lack of sufficient methodological approaches when dating, describing, and recording skeletal remains and material culture has resulted in a greatly disorganized and limited information about sub-adults in excavation sites that have, for the most part, ceased to exist and, therefore, have no further opportunity for investigation.

The current paper aims to convert existing limited sources of information about sub-adults into reliable data, as well as provide new insights into the social life of the prehistoric societies in Egypt. Moreover, the current research attempts to answer the following important questions: did mortuary spaces of sub-adults develop in the same manner as those of adults? How did mortuary practices of sub-adults differ than those of adults? What are the unique characteristics that set apart sub-adults' burials from those of adults? How can such data facilitate a reconstruction of the invisible part of the story about childhood in prehistoric Egypt?

Research Methodology

Surveying the published literature represented the major departure point for data collection, before going through the database establishment, data analysis and finally reaching conclusions. My initial survey made it clear that published works dealing with the archaeology of childhood as a science and an emerging field are limited in their temporal and spatial scope. This is the case because there has been a focus on more preserved areas and non-African locations, while there is a neglect in relevant studies of prehistoric sites (Armelagos 1998; Baker and Tocheri 2005; Baxter 2005; Bugrain 2005, Halcrow and Tayles 2008a; 2008b; Jansen 2013; Kamp 2001). On the other hand, general studies on archaeology of infants and children are prevalent, especially in the last three decades (Baxter 2005; Bugrain 2005; Keith 2005; Vlahos 2014).

Moreover, specific topics and approaches have received increasing interest overtime, including the application of osteological and bioarchaeological approaches when investigating sub-adults, their burials and their sex and age (Baker and Tocheri 2005; Dorelaitienė 2013; Franklin 2010; Mays *et al.* 2017;

Perry 2006; Scheuer and Black 2000; Shaaban 1982). In addition, investigations of pathological cases of sub-adults' skeletal remains reveal a wide range of information about the patterns of health in past populations, changes in mortality profiles, and the existence of specific diseases (Brickley and Ives 2008a; Castilla *et al.* 2014; Cook 2015; Kinaston *et al.* 2009; Lewis 2007; Mays *et al.* 2006; Ortner and Putschar 1981; Pinhasi and Bourbou 2008). However, these studies are applied to non-Egyptian contexts, while there is limited research in Egypt, as for example the paleopathological and paleoepidemological studies on predynastic sites of Adaima (Crubézy 2017) and Gebel Ramlah in Upper Egypt (Irish 2010). Other attempts have mostly relied on the textual evidence or on skeletal material from the Dynastic and Greco-Roman periods (Shaaban 1982; Veiga 2012).

Establishing a database for all the recorded evidence of child burials is a significant development in archaeology. An Excel table has been produced for each site, with every burial in each site described based on standard descriptive variables. Unifying the parameters to label each burial and creating a unified terminology is crucial in extracting comparable attributes from the same sites (see Tables 1 and 2).[1] Therefore, each burial is described by number,[2] type, the amount of buried sub-adults and adults,[3] the body position and head orientation, the types of grave goods, the use of wrappings, coverings or both, evidence of certain ceremonies, average depth derived from each burial, recorded evidence of pathological cases, and existing notes concerning preservation and overall conditions of each burial. Finally, the number of the buried sub-adults in each site is assessed together with the proportion each number represents in relation to the total number of burials in each site. However, such data are not consistently available among the target sites. Their availability depends on the accuracy and the degree of detailed recording in publications. This is indicated in the final table where all sites were compared and in the data analysis section (see Table 1).

It must be considered that the total number of the buried sub-adults represents the recorded interments rather than the number of burial places; 75 recorded burials from Adaima, for example, contained 81 sub-adults based on the published catalogue of skeletal remains (Crubézy *et al.* 2002). However, the amount '433' is added based on the following statement:

'In the fully excavated south sector of the east cemetery there were 281 child skeletons aged between 0 -12 years buried between 3300 and 3100 BC (Naqada IIC–Naqada IIIB). In the north sector there were 148 skeletons from the same age class and other subjects aged between 12-18 years, all buried after 3000 BC' (Crubézy 2017: 59).

[1] Given there is no space to discuss the data obtained from each site separately, the data analysis was conducted in a collective manner for all sites.
[2] This is described in the publication and modified in certain cases, for example where letters were added to distinguish certain chronological units in the same site, or to differentiate between burials recorded from settlements and cemeteries of the same site.
[3] In the event of double or multiple burials.

Table 1. The data compiled and compared between the sixteen sites included in the current study.

	Site	Chronology	Site use	Burial Context	Total No. of burials	No. of registered buried SA	Approx. %	Individual/ Multiple	Types of burials	Common Preservation condition	Age catgories Present	Common body orientation	Evidence of wrappings	Evidence of coverings	Common G.G	Less Common G.G	Avarege Depth	Pathological observ.	1st excavated
1	Merimde Beni Salama	Neolithic	S	S	350	186	53%	Single	Circular, oval, simple UD pits	Poor	Fetal , infant, neonates, child 1, child 2. adolescent	Contracted	A	A	None	None	NA	NA	1922
2	Minshat Abu Omar	Predynastic	S - C	C	204	48 37(1:114) +11	24%	Single "Clustering?"	Pot burials, rect simple pit, oval pits	Poor	Perinates, infant, child 1, child 2, adolescent	Mostly on right side, flexed	A	A	Pottery vessels	Shells, beads, slate palette (1)	0.6m:3.50m	A few cases of bone deformations	1966
3	Heliopolis	Predynastic	C	C	45	8	17%	Single	Simple pit burials	NA	Child 1, child 2	Contracted, right side, few on left side	P (2?)	A	Pottery vessels, sherds,	1 basalt vase, 1 necklace, animal bones (1), ochre and malachite (1)	60-90 cm	NA	1950
4	Maadi	Predynastic	S- C	S - C	471	56 S - 25 C (81)	17%	Single Clustering in C	Pot burials, circular, UD pits	Variable	Infants , Neonate, child1, child2, adolescent	Contracted right side, with expection	P (5)	A	Mostly void of G.G with few ones containing brown and black pots (4 cases)	Food remains?, fragments of bones?	15.145 cm	3 cases of cribria orbitalia, 1 case cranium deformation	1930
5	Wadi Degla	Predynastic	C	C	NA	14	NA	Single	Oval simple pits	Variable	Child 2, adolescent	Contracted right side, with expection	A (1)	P (1)	A few pottery vesses		NA	3 cases of cribera orbitalia	1930
6	El Omari	Neolithic	S	S	28	12	42% (?)	Single	Habitation pits, simple burial pits	Poor	NA	Half contracted, variables sides	P (4)	A	Mostly one pot near the face, a few empty ones	Ibex horn (1)	20-40 cm 3 surface	NA	1918
7	Gerzeh	Predynastic	C	C	289	51	18%	Single with a few double ones "Clustering"	Pot burials, simple pits	NA	NA		A	A	Spindle whorl, ivory pegs, rattles, fragments of palettes	Flint tools	NA	NA	1910
8	Mahasna	Predynastic	C	C	NA	17	NA	Single with 4 exceptions (3 female-child, 1 of 3 childern)	Circular, oval, rectangular simple pits	Poor	NA	Half constracted, left side	P (9)	A	Richly equiped with variable amount of pottery including black topped, polished and large pots. Beads of precious stones	Basket of grains, pendants, balls of decayed wood, , small palettes, copper bracelets	NA (Deflation)	NA	1908
9	Armant	Predynastic	S - C	C	NA	27		Single with 4 exceptions	NA	NA	3 cases child 2, rest NA	NA	P (10)	A	Mostly void of G.G except 6 cases, containing pieces of malachite	Ivory wand, gazelle skeleton	NA	NA	1930
10	Badari	Badarian - Predynastic	S - C	C	NA	46 (6 unregistered)	NA	Single	Oval, circular, and UD	Mostly undisturbed with few plundered ones	Infant, child 1, child 2, adolescent, NA	Contracted, semi contracted	P (26)	P	Pottery vessels, beads, shells, necklaces	Flint pendant, animal bones, flowers (1)	NA	NA	1920
11	Matmar	Badarian - Predynastic	S - C	S- C	NA	81 Badrain (21 R 80 UR) 49 Pre (36 R,13UR 130	NA	Single with a few exceptions	1 pot burial, Simple pit UD	Variable	Mostly Na, and Child 1, child 2, adolescent	NA	P (37R)	P	Pottery vessels (mostly bowls with variable amounts), shells, beads	Ivory spoons, flints, faunal remains, pebble, baskets, palettes	NA	NA	1929
12	Mosteggda	Badarian - Predynastic	S - C	S - C	300	85 registered C 33 unregistered 12 S (130)	43%	Single with a few double and multiple ones	Rounded and rectangular pit burials	Variable	Infants, child 1, child 2, adolescent	Contracted, left side	P (A) Mat, skin	P (A) Mat, skin, cloth	pottery , shells,beads, sticks, pillow, bangles	Feathers, flint "flakes", throw sticks, leather anklets, palettes, bags of graim, spoon, pebbles	NA	NA	1922-1925 1927-8
13	Adaima	Predynastic	S- C	S - C	NA	433 (4 S, 281EN,148ES 81 registered	NA	Single (S), with some double and a few multiple ones (W.C), mostly single (E.S)	Pot burials, basket burials, leather bags, simple pits, mud coffins	Variable	Fetuses, perinates, infants, neonates, child 1, child 2, adolescent	Contracted, left side	P	A?	Pottery, shell, beads	Pebbles, faunal remains, palettes, personal ornaments	NA	Epidemological modelof Tuberculosis	1908
14	Naqada	Predynastic	S - C	S- C	3000	12	S	NA	NA	Poor	NA	NA	P	P	Pottery vessels	Personal ornaments, flints faunal remains	NA	NA	1895
15	Naga ed-Deir	Predynastic	C	C	853	164	19%	Double and multiple with a few single ones	NA	Variable	Perinate, nenonate, infant, child 1, child 2, adolescent	Contracted, left side	P (49)	P	Pottery vessels (black topped pottery, jars, bowls, and basins), shell, beads, ornaments	Ivory bracelets, baskets, palettes, grains inside pots, leather bracelets, spearhead, fragments of malachite	NA	NA	1902
16	Gebel Ramlah E-01-2 / E-03-2/ E-09-02	Final Neolithic	C	C	NA	99 (39 infant cemetery, 16 recorded (C), rest 'mentioned')	NA	Single, with few exceptions, plus secondary burials	Oval, circular, and UD	Poor	Perinates, neonates (infant cemetery), infant, child 1, child 2, adolescent	Contracted, right side	A	A	Red ochre nodules, shells	Ivory bracelet	Infant cemetery (25cm:65cm)	Dental enamel hypoplasia for one case	2000

Table 2. The Age categories used in the current study (Lewis 2007; Scheuer and Black 2000).

	Age Categories - Age Ranges		
	Age Category	**Chronological Designation**	
Perinatal	Fetal	In Utero	
	Perinatal	Birth	
Post natal	Neonate	Birth : 1 month	Child /Subadult
	Infant	2 Month : 1 year	
	Child 1	1 year : 5 years	
	Child 2	6 years : 14 years	
	Adolesent	15 years : 17 years	

The 141 burials of sub-adults in Naga ed–Deir contained 164 interments, which is the number indicated in the table. Moreover, the age categories are assessed only for age ranges that were mentioned. Details about the sum of registered and unregistered interments are provided whenever possible for some sites. 'NA' stands for 'not available', while 'P' refers to 'present', and 'A' means absent. Letters 'S' and 'C' are used to refer to the burial site, where the former denotes 'Settlements' and the latter 'Cemeteries'. Grave goods are classified into more and less common types, where 'less common' signifies the classes present in less than 10% of recorded burials. Such data are provided briefly, due to the absence of sufficient space for further analysis. The age categories are described in Table 1 using the terms adopted in Table 2, however, the terms 'sub-adults' and 'infants and children' are used interchangeably through the paper as more general terms.

Data analysis

The earliest burial of a modern human child found in Egypt is close to Dendera temple at Taramsa Hill (Figure 1), which was first investigated in 1989. The undisturbed skeleton of the 8–10 years old child was discovered unintentionally in 1994. The child was found in a seated position resting on a sand bed. Morphology of the cranium classified the remains as modern human, and analysis of dentition determined the child's age. Based on the stratigraphic context of the burial, the late Pleistocene and Middle-Upper Palaeolithic period date was given to the site. Although the information about this burial remains insufficient, it is a unique case as the earliest known child burial of *Homo sapiens sapiens* in Egypt, and also provides evidence supporting the Nile corridor as a route in the out of Africa hypothesis (Van Peer *et al.* 2010: 215-216; Vermeersch 1998: 477). The 16 sites included in the current research fall between the Neolithic and Predynastic periods. Almost all skeletal remains are described with brief information about their exact location, sex, age, and few remarks on the preservation and condition or bone elements present during excavation. In many cases some burials were not included in the published catalogues of skeletal remains, while in others such catalogues were totally absent. This fact along with the bad preservation and/or presentation of skeletal remains makes the possibility of quantifying the total number of individuals and conducting a demographic study challenging; particularly since most of the skeletal remains of sub-adults are described as fragile, brittle, incomplete, fragmentary (Badawai *et al.* 2016: 1), or they are not even fully registered (Mond and Myer 1937: 9; Parsche 1991: 5; Petrie and Quibell 1895; Rizkana and Seeher 1991: 13). As Brunton states: 'The graves without objects are not registered' (Brunton 1928: 18). Furthermore, there were contradictions among

publications of the same sites, such as in the case of skeletal material from Naga ed–Deir, where body position, age of the occupants, and grave goods varied between Lythgoe (1965) and Savage (1995).

Figure 1. Taramsa Hill child burial (Vermeersch 1998: 477).

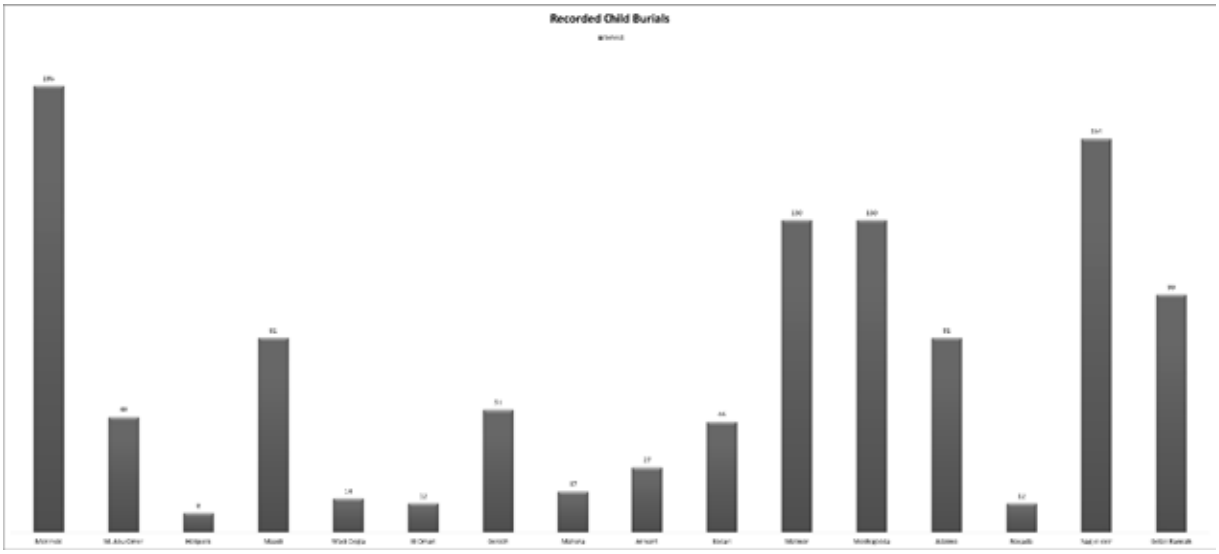

Figure 2. The unbalanced distribution of the recorded child burials among the 16 sites included in the current study.

Given the limitations of information provided by early excavators, the data in Figure 2 should be considered as a rough estimation of the buried sub-adults. Additionally, the number of buried individuals does not, in most cases, reflect the number of deaths in each society, because in some cases excavations did not include entire cemeteries, sites were poorly preserved, and there is a lack of relevant publications. Another factor that must be considered is that prehistoric archaeology developed at a slower pace than archaeological investigation of historic sites. During the early 19th century chronological sequence and recording methods were at a very preliminary stage. Most of the sites were excavated without considering the stratigraphic sequence in which the burials were located, with a few exceptions, such as in Merimde Beni Salama (Eiwanger 1988: 13; Rebecca 2012: 38; Shirai 2010: 14). This underlines the significance of testing reliability and validity of data before drawing conclusions.

Investigating age and sex of sub-adult remains

Diverse ways were used to describe the age of infants and children in the 16 sites (Table 1). In some cases, excavators used various terminologies to describe a single skeletal sample. There are no clear rules for valid comparisons, even when age categories, either those of socio-cultural or biological phases are used. This makes creating single term classifications an essential step prior to comparisons and assessments. The age categories used by (Lewis (2007) and Scheuer and Black (2000) were adopted in the current research to assign the age ranges, which were mentioned by the excavators, to clear age groups (see Table 2).

It was not possible to correlate the terms ‘immature’, ‘young person’, ‘half grown’, and ‘young child’ to the terms used in Table 2. For example, the description ‘young person’ was given for burial (H70) from Mahsna, and (1437) from Armant. Similarly, the term ‘child’ was used by some excavators due to lack of expertise for assigning an exact range, evident in Brunton’s description of age of sub-adults in burials in Matmar: ‘As the sex of immature bodies is very difficult to determine except for specialists, this is not given, and the letter C (child) is used. This indicates anything from an infant to an adolescent’ (Brunton 1948: 2).

In the case where the burial occupant was known to be sub-adult, it was counted among the total number of burials, even if we cannot assign it to a clear age category. On the other hand, some burials were totally excluded when the occupant is given an age range that cannot aid in discerning if they represent adults or sub-adults. Other problems arose when trying to place an age range like 0-6 into a category, since this range might fall under five age categories. For example, the age 0-6 was given for 69 of occupants in Merimde, while the age range 0-19 was allotted for the burials MB 81 S II 66 XI from the same site. Similar instances are recorded in Minshat Abu Omar, burials MAOI/698,and MAOI/666, which were given the ages 14-40 and 14-20 respectively, while other occupants were given the age 0-20 and 0-7. The criterion upon which the age was determined was clearly not mentioned by most authors. However, it seemed that dentition, the length of the long bones, and even the size of the burial, were all used as indicators of age. For example, dentition, unfused cranial elements, measurements of long bones, and the burial size were used in Gebel Ramlah (Czekaj-Zastawny *et al.* 2019: 379), while the degree of the joining of the epiphysis was used for finding the age of a 17 years old adolescent from Naga ed-Deir (burial 7329).

Figure 3. Burial 452 of a mother who died while giving birth from Adaima (Crubézy 2017: 60).

The variability related to the age categories present in each site in Table 1 are explained when considering aspects such as the site's context and preservation. Foetal age category was nearly absent, except for two cases from Adaima (Figure 3) and three cases from Merimde. Contrary to that are the age categories between perinatal, and child.2, which are more frequent, with the categories 'infants' and 'child.2' being the most frequent. Absence of the foetal age group can be explained as a result of high fragility and low mineralization of their skeletal material, which makes them less likely to survive. Low visibility of younger age groups might also happen due to their exclusion from main cemeteries, or because they are buried in settlements where bodies are less likely to maintain preservation, such as in the case of Heliopolis where the children younger than 4 years are totally missing from the graveyard (Debono and Mortensen 1988: 38). The health condition might also be one of the reasons behind underrepresentation of a certain age group. Furthermore burial placement was crucial in body preservation, analysed by Crubézy (2017: 13) in new-born burials in the Adaima western cemetery region where more burials might have been present if they had not been disturbed. Due to their placement, which was merely 10cm below to walking surface. High mortality rates were recorded for sub-adults between 5 and 9 years old in the southern sector of Adaima's eastern cemetery, as the group mostly affected by tuberculosis, according to Crubézy's paleopathological investigation (Crubézy 2017: 47).

This situation recalls the significance of considering the application of 'taphonomic approach', and its subfield 'funerary taphonomy' whenever the skeletal material is a matter of deeper study. This approach is useful to reconstruct the sequence of events leading to the current state of the archaeological record. Also, it is helpful to understand if the evidence refers to certain mortuary practices or it is a result of natural process such as erosion and weathering (Behrensmeyer and Kidwell 1985: 105; Knüsel and Robb 2016: 1; Nawrocki 1991: 1).

'Infant Taphonomy', which is a subfield of funerary taphonomy further emphasises the importance of spending more efforts to interpret sub-adults remains. This is given the special nature of children bones due to its fragility, disarticulated elements, and their quick response to physical and chemical disturbance, and degradation factors. Moreover, it provides clues for understanding the reasons behind the absence of infants and child burials from a certain location which might be linked to certain practices, traditions, and stress factors in given societies. Examples are abundant from several sites, such as the infant cemetery in Gebel Ramlah, where the excavators describe the preservation status of infant remains: 'It was fortunate that the site was found, because intensive wind erosion had already removed the uppermost parts of the grave pits, and in several more years, the cemetery and its contents would have essentially disappeared' (Kabaciński *et al.* 2018: 138).

Sex determination was lacking for almost all skeletal samples, even when adolescents were recorded and where sexual dimorphism was observed. For example, in Merimde, sex was not determined for about 66% of skeletal material, with 52% classified as sub-adults (Badawi *et al*. 2016: 95). Few adolescents were sexed in many sites, such as the cases in Badari, Gebel Ramlah, Naga ed-Deir, Wadi Digla, Merimde, Maadi, and Minshat Abu Omar.

Types and contexts of sub-adult burials

Burials are recognised spatially as either 'house burials' in settlement areas, such as in Merimde Beni Salama (Badawai *et al.* 2016; Junker 1930) and El Omari (Debono and Mortensen 1990), or in graveyards, such as in Heliopolis (Figure 4) (Debono and Mortensen 1988: 38), or in both, such as in Adaima, Gebel Ramlah, Badari, and Maadi (Figure 5) (Anderson 1992; Bard 1999: 548; Bohac 2013: 8 Crubézy *et al.* 2008: 293). Child burials are known from both spatial contexts since the Neolithic period, although they were more frequently associated with settlements (Stevenson 2009a: 1-2).

Figure 4. Burial.4 of 13 years old child, Heliopolis (Debono and Mortensen 1988: pl. 9).

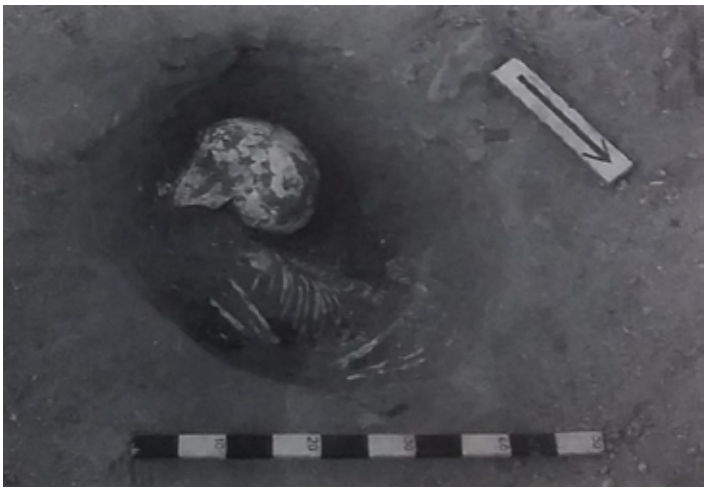

Figure 5. Burial MA.58 of 3–6 years old child from Maadi (Rizkana and Seeher 1990: pl. IV).

Within both contexts, infants and children were buried in different burial types such as waste pits (Burial MB 79 S I (35) in the pre-Neolithic stratum in Merimde and in the Final Neolithic infant cemetery of Gebel Ramlah (Kabaciński *et al.* 2018:133); also, in pot burials, such as Tell Ibrahim Awad, Kom el Khilgan, Adaima, Gerzeh, Maadi, Minshat Abu Omar (Bohac 2013; Crubézy 2017: 59; Crubézy *et al.* 2002; Kroeper and Wildung 1994: 8; Stevenson 2006: 145; Tassie and Wetering 2003: 500), and to a lesser extent in leather bags i.e. four infant burials, from six to nine months old, within the settlement of Adaima (Bohac 2013: 15,19). In addition, sub-adults were also buried in pit burials of defined shapes including oval, circular, and rectangular (Ayrton and Loat 1911: 4; Rizkana and Seeher 1990: 2; Stevenson 2006: 5; Tassie and Wetering 2000). Inside those pit burials, children might be found buried within rectangular hampers of sticks such as the case with some children from Mosteggeda, whose age was mainly over 3 years old (Brunton 1927: 5). Sub-adults were also buried inside other body containers including baskets, pots, and mud coffins, and in pit burials of undefined shapes. The latter type is recorded in all the sites included and is the most common.

Pot burials (Figure 6), which are among the distinct types, were associated mainly with sub-adults and with domestic contexts during the Predynastic Period. The sizes and exact types of such pot burials were not usually described in detail. However, few mentioned cases indicate that rough and rarely decorated jars of medium and relatively large sizes used for everyday and domestic activities, were also used for this purpose. Pot burials were dedicated to the sub-adults, from perinatal to 6 years old. The pots did not follow a certain orientation, except those from Minshat Abu Omar, where they were oriented towards north or east. In a few cases, grave goods, including smaller ceramic jars (Figure 6) and shells (Kroeper and Wildung 1994: 66, 67, 91), were found inside the pot burial, without any attention to a certain body orientation (Parsche 1991: 50). This unique burial type has received great attention from many scholars, who suggested several interpretations including the possible imitation of the mother's womb. However, it might be possible that pot burials offered a simple method of protecting the fragile remains of younger children, or at least keeping their easily disarticulated skeletal elements intact.

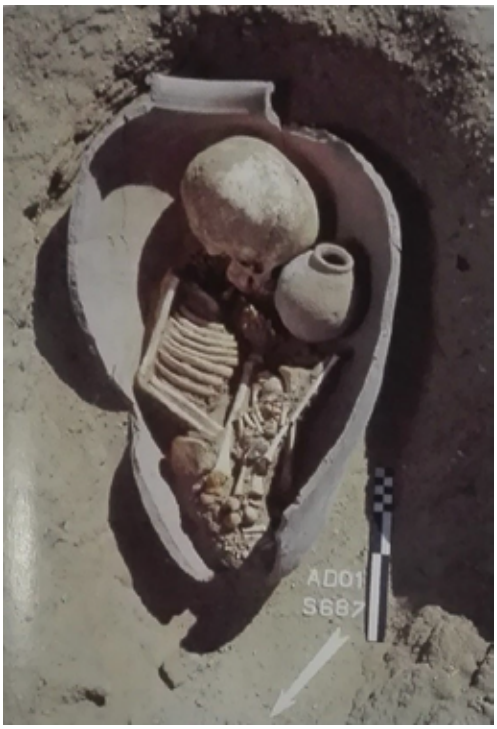

Figure 6. Burial S687 of an infant inside a pot burial (Crubézy 2017: 39).

Sub-adult mortuary spaces

It seems that burying infants and children with the least amount of effort has characterised the early phases of the Egyptian history. This can be explained as part of the heritage of hunters, gatherers, and nomadic tribes whose mobile lifestyle implied having a low emotional connection to specific places. Adaptive strategies appear to have determined where and how to bury the dead. However, such practice could have been associated with both adults and sub-adults especially during the earlier periods, while later with sub-adults age groups. This phase might be reflected in waste pits and the unrecorded evidence of burials before the Neolithic Period, apart from the sporadic recorded burials in the western desert and few upper Egyptian sites during the Upper Palaeolithic Period (Vermeersch 2002: 273; Wendorf and Schild 1986).

Those early inhabitants remained unconnected to specific places due to their high mobility and their frequent movement between diverse campsites searching for water sources and hunting game animals especially around the end of the Pleistocene and towards the onset of the Holocene. However, the relatively wetter conditions in Egypt during the Early Holocene 12k BC-8k BC allowed for a semi-sedentary life to emerge and for a pastoral lifestyle to develop. Yet, when sedentism became a necessity, particularly in response to aridity around 8k BC-5k BC (Zerboni 2013: 66), people started to interact differently with their nature, and change their ways of substance.

Their gradual adaptation to a more settled lifestyle probably started with the place where they do their daily activities of farming, hunting, and more importantly family and social gathering. This might explain why the early sites which witnessed this gradual transition mostly lacked the evidence of cemeteries. In this regard, the settlements must have played the role of being the core area that encompassed all members of the society including the active (living) and inactive ones (deceased).

Residential burials are recorded since the Neolithic Period onwards. Examples include Merimde Beni Salama, where such burials are recorded since phase I and continued through the subsequent phases. Simple pits with undefined shapes, pot burials, and waste pits are the most commonly found burial types within the settlement sites of Egypt during the Prehistoric Period. Neolithic child burials were also recorded in both settlements and cemeteries, as for example, in the Badarian sites and in Gebel Ramlah. In both sites, children were found to be buried alone or with adults in both contexts inside pots, in pits, and sometimes accompanied with a few grave goods (see Burial.2034 of 3 years old child, Brunton 1948: 5-8). It seems, though, that the inclusion of sub-adults inside the formal cemeteries was still the exception in this phase, as adults represented the majority of the occupants. The construction of graveyards reflects another gradual phase that coincided with the development of the belief in the afterlife and the importance of the burial as part of the mortuary system related to rebirth and afterlife.

The establishment of graveyards implied supporting the concept of territoriality, which developed rapidly after the onset of the Neolithic Period. Adults were the first to be placed within those newly established cemeteries. Infants and small children were kept around houses within domestic areas. This might be explained either as a result of considering infants and children as unrepresentative or incomplete members of the society due to their young age, or rather due to not realizing the importance of burials for their afterlife. It is also possible that this came as a result of the existence of high emotional connection with those young infants who were preferred to stay close to their families. The latter explanation might be more reliable given the obvious care shown through the grave goods and body treatment that were accorded to sub-adults buried within domestic areas. Even when settlements started to be larger and shifted horizontally overtime, as evident from some examples such as El Omari and Merimde, small children were still kept in those abandoned areas of the settlements (Figures 7-8). This can be considered as a step towards the development of sub-adult's mortuary spaces (Bard 2008: 717; Stevenson 2009b: 1).

Figure 7. Burial (B55) of a child buried by a habitation pit at El Omari (Debono and Mortensen 1990: pl. 44).

The beginning of the Predynastic Period marked an increase of social complexity, population density, and sedentary life, which resulted in establishing more settlements and separate cemeteries. More efforts were spent to dig burials and provide them with wealthy grave goods. However, small children were still buried within settlements during the early predynastic period, such as the case with four

infant burials from Adaima (Naqada I). The four infants and children were buried near storage pits, hearths, and postholes with limited amount of grave goods (Bohac 2013: 40). Maadi represents another example where only sub-adults are found inside the settlement. In Mostegedda sub-adults and a few adults were buried in the settlement in the ground to the north and northwest, up to the foot of the cliffs. Other interments lay near the granaries, especially to the south-west, with a few on the east. These may date from a time when the settlement was shrinking, but many of them are of children (Brunton 1937: 15).

Figure 8. Burial (B2) from Middle Merimde Phase of a 15–16 years old child (Badawi et al. 2016: pl. 1).

Towards Late Naqada I-Naqada II, infants and children started to be more visible within the main cemeteries. However, the distribution of their burials referred in some cases to the existence of clustering. Examples for this tradition are recorded from the cemeteries of Gerzeh and Minshat Abu Omar (Kroeper and Wildung 1994: 17), where clusters of child burials of certain age groups are recorded. Similar evidence of clustering is also observed from the Maadi Cemetery where the larger part of sub-adult remains are found near the western side of the cemetery (Figure 9). Another interesting example is the multiple burial (S55) of a female and four children from Adaima, which dates to Late Naqada I, and to the beginning of the Predynastic settlement. It's assumed that (S55) was the first burial to be dug in the western cemetery, as it was excavated in a unique place that imitated an island in the ancient floodplain that enjoyed a panoramic view. The importance of this burial encouraged further clustering of many other important burials around it through the subsequent phases, especially given the wealthy nature of such burials. These included burials of adults and sub-adults (Crubézy 2017: 13). The evidence of clustering in these examples might refer to a regional evolution of sub-adult mortuary practices and a new system for arranging the remains of sub-adults with those of adults in formal cemeteries. This coincided with a new phase of sub-adult mortuary spaces that indicates social inequality and the emergence of elite groups (see Naqada II) (Crubézy 2017).

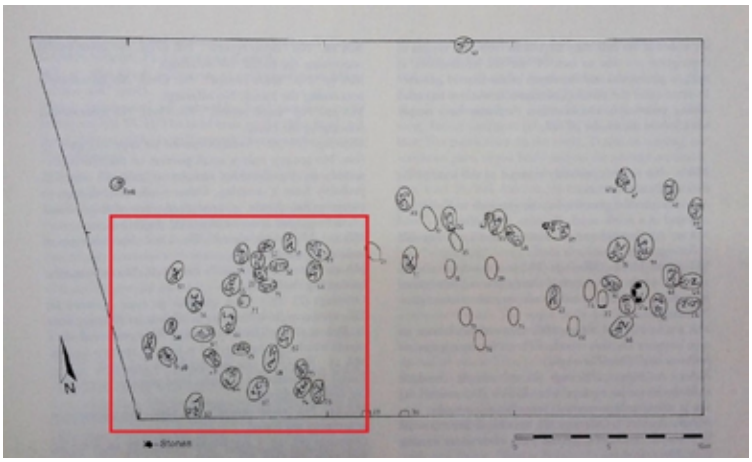

Figure 9. Plan of the cemetery at Maadi. The area marked with the square refers to the possible evidence of clustering child burials among the cemetery (Rizkana and Seeher 1990: 17).

Dedicating special cemeteries for children is considered as a unique phenomenon that reflects ideological transformation in belief systems and the importance placed on the remains of society's youngest members. However, the two examples recorded from the Prehistoric Period are those from the Adaima predynastic Eastern cemetery (4000BC-3200BC) and the 'infant cemetery' at Gebel Ramlah (A Final Neolithic cemetery 4500BC-4300BC) (Kabaciński *et al*. 2018: 132, 139; Kobusiewicz *et al*. 2009: 148; Zdziebłowski 2014). This means that, the 'infant cemetery' of Gebel Ramlah might be explained as an early example of dedicating special mortuary spaces for burying younger members of the society, and this could be true. However, when considering additional data, analysis may differ.

Six cemeteries from the final Neolithic were uncovered from Gebel Ramlah and children, mostly older than 2 years including adolescents, were recorded together with adults in these cemeteries (E-01-2, E-01-2, E-03-2). These lie to the south of the infant cemetery (Kobusiewicz *et al.* 2004, 2010a, 2010b). Perinates and neonates are the age categories present in the 'infant cemetery' in site (E-09-02) in Gebel Ramlah, which means that those young members died before or shortly after their birth. Red ochre and shells were placed with many neonates, except for one perinate who was given an ivory bracelet (Figure 10). The excavator mentioned also that at least two females were found within two of the recorded burials in this cemetery. Other burials of adults and older children lie nearby in the same site, which lies at the southwestern shore of the paleolake south to Gebel Ramlah. Out of the 42 burials uncovered in this cemetery, three appeared to belong to an earlier settlement stratum. In addition, two of the three double burials of females and infants (burial 2, 6) were identified as the oldest burials in the cemetery (Figure 11). These two burials enjoyed a stone superstructure unlike the rest. Moreover, the excavator recorded signs of burning on the skeletal remains inside the burials (3, 7, 12, 33). This was probably as the result of inserting the inhumation beside the hearth that was probably still warm at the time of the burial.

Figure 10. Burial (3) of a Neonate from the 'infant cemetery' at Gebel Ramlah, with a bracelet made of hippo ivory on the right arm (Czekaj-Zastawny et al. 2018: 399)

On the other hand, Gebel Ramlah society lived in this region since the Early Holocene (which corresponds to El Adam and El Ghorab Units), and later (Al Jerar Phase 6500–6000 BC), when the population density in the region reached its maximum. People practiced hunting and gathering, while pastoralism was practiced during the Saharan Neolithic period. The occupation sites appear to spread around the paleolake, which likely served as a safe water source during humid phases and more importantly after aridity started to increase again and the savannah like-environment started to vanish. This happened after the southward shift of the rainfall systems (TCZ) that used to feed the lands to the west of the Egyptian Nile valley, together with the retreatment of the rains coming from the east and west of the Alps, and toward the Mediterranean area. Such change happened gradually and in various areas in Egypt. The inhabitants of the well vegetated areas of the Sahara started to adapt to changes until green areas turned into sandy environments again. Those conditions resulted in shifting the use of areas in response to depleted water sources, pointing to both sedentary and semi- sedentary habitation in areas, seen by cemeteries in some areas and sporadic burials in others (Kuper and Kröpelin 2006: 805; Smith 2013: 9-10).

According to the available data, this cemetery might have represented a Saharan counterpart for the tradition that was followed in the Nile valley nearly at the same age, which is burying and clustering infant burials within the abandoned areas of the shifting settlements. Such area might have even gained more symbolic value as a result of digging the two 'obviously' important burials with stone superstructure (Figure 11) that marked the northern and southern margins of that abandoned settlement area. This assumption is also supported by three settlement burials that belonged to an earlier stratum in the same site (Czekaj-Zastawny *et al.* 2018: 397), the evidence of hearths that probably affected skeletal remains buried directly beside them and the presence of only perinates and neonates in this cemetery. This is unlike the Adaima Child cemetery where nearly all the age categories were present. This may provide evidence of an area dedicated solely for the burial of children in the southern part of the eastern cemetery.

If such an assumption is true, this cemetery, or rather residential burials, can be compared with counterparts in the Nile valley region, where this tradition was already adopted. However, differences between both examples must be considered too. The Predynastic societies of Adaima were mainly sedentary farmers and hunters, who followed a complex belief system and known traditions. Gebel Ramlah society represented mainly pastoralists whose lifestyle was characterised by being less sedentary, but with evidence of a developed belief system. Finally, this case remains a unique example, especially when considering the differences of this site with Adaima, in date, environment, and location. However, the model discussed here should be perceived as a hypothesis, which is built upon the current state of knowledge and might be updated or refined based on future excavations.

Figure 11. The 'infant cemetery' at Gebel Ramlah. The two squares mark the northern and southern borders of the cemetery or 'the cluster' with the two double burials, while the circle marks the earliest burials in the site with the burnt bones (After Czekaj-Zastawny et al. 2018: 398).

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Mortuary practices, body treatment and grave goods

Apart from the burial context, adults expressed their care towards sub-adults through additional practices, ceremonies, and body treatment. The evidence of such practices was clear through the investigated sites. Infants and children were found to be buried alone in most sites. In some instances, they were also buried in double and multiple burials together with other children or females who might

indicate a biological or symbolic mother. In few cases, children were buried with males or with both males and females. The contemporaneousness of the adults and sub-adults buried in the same place can be detected not only in intact burials, but also in disturbed burials. This is possible when adults and sub-adults are found wrapped together or when there is evidence of certain ceremonies that connect both adults and sub-adults. An example for this instance comes from burial S11 from Adaima, which provides more insights into the funerary practices and ceremonies related to burials, where the female representing the mother rested her fingers on the forehead of the child (Figure 12), whose head rested on her arm. The placement of the female and the child implies emotional aspects translated into actions by the people who witnessed the burial of these two individuals (Crubézy *et al.* 2008: 302). Also, in the undisturbed burial 4840 in Mostegedda, Brunton (1937: 6) mentions 'a very small child between her arms and knees', indicating that the female occupant embraces the child

Evidence refers also to possible cases of dismembering and re-joining body parts from Adaima, while secondary burials, and secondary practices are also very possible in other cases. For example, cut marks were recorded on the bones of some sub-adults (Crubézy *et al.* 2008: 295), while reinserting the teeth in the skull is recorded for two girls of 12-14 years old from Gebel Ramlah E-01-2 (Irish 2010: 189; Irish *et al.* 2005: 137), which reflects a tendency towards maintaining disturbed burials (Irish *et al.* 2003: 284; Irish *et al.* 2005: 136). Moreover, the body was cared for in additional ways, such as adding a pillow under the head, which was usually made of a heap of chaff (Brunton 1937: 6). In other cases (i.e. burial 408 in Mosteggeda) it is suggested that chaff was inserted into a case that might have been decayed Further aspects related to body treatment started to be investigated as part of the cultural specifications of each society, such as the case from Adaima, where the concept of 'view', and 'hide' is also suggested by Crubézy (2017). It is suggested that the burial ceremonies might have encompassed actions of reburying, watching the burial ceremony by family and peers, and following a specific sequence when depositing offerings, and maybe disarticulating and re-articulating bone elements.

Moving sub-adults from primary to secondary burials or reburying in same place was evident through examples from the cemeteries E-01-2 and E-03-2 in Gebel Ramlah (Irish 2010: 190-193). Flowers were recorded from an undisturbed child's burial in Badari (Burial.5701), which formed a rectangular burial lined with mats and reeds, reflecting some efforts made for the comfort of the occupant who is described as 'immature'. Body positions, head orientation, and direction were clearly variable with no specific rule especially regarding the side on which the child rested. However, a 'restricted' position was a common practice, with few semi-contracted and hypercontracted cases. Also, it seems that the right side was more frequently recorded in the Lower Egyptian sites as opposed to the left side which was more common in the upper Egyptian sites.

Mats were used for various purposes within the burials of sub-adults. Sometimes the body was laid over a mat or wrapped with it. In some cases coarser mats were used to cover the inside structure of the burial such as the case with hamper coffins[4] or even to cover the sides of the burials in fewer examples. Mats were mostly made of reeds and from papyrus in a few instances, such as the case from Naqada. In addition, several folds of coverings made of leather were observed below or over the body especially in upper Egyptian sites, while the body was covered in many cases with animal hides, which were mostly un-tanned, with the animal's hair oriented inwards. The hides were not assigned to certain faunal species, as excavators focused on describing the colour, orientation, and length of the hairs, however, gazelles and goats were the most frequently recorded types. Undefined cloth, linen, and rushes were also recorded less frequently as coverings. The wide use of wrappings and coverings in Upper Egypt

[4] Several instances especially from the Badarian sites provide examples of these burial arrangements.

might reflect better preservation conditions of the arid nature of the region compared to the lower Egyptian sites. Wrappings and coverings were also reported from Maadi in 5 cases and El Omari in 4 cases. Colouring the body or parts of it with mineral pigments such as red ochre and green malachite was recorded from Armant, Mostegedda, Naga ed-Deir, and Badari. Colouring the grave goods instead of the body was alo evident in some cases. Lumps of red ochre were also present in fewer cases such as the infant cemetery in Gebel Ramlah where red ochre was used in almost all the burials of perinates and neonates.

Figure 12. Burial S11 of a female and an infant from Adaima (Crubézy et al. 2002: 47).

Funerary goods were frequently recorded from sub-adults' burials, however, such goods varied considerably in terms of their quantity and quality. It must be considered that the material culture found in the burials of infants and children usually reflect the ideology and beliefs system of larger society. However, the ideology of children, and the objects produced by them is not recorded (Laneri 2007: 3). For example, in Merimde, Maadi, Wadi Degla, Gebel Ramlah, and Armant, the burials were void of any grave goods or included only few pots. The burials in other sites did not usually contain many grave goods, with few exceptions, such as MAOI/755 and MAOI/330 in Minshat Abu Omar, where the former contained 17 pottery vessels, while the latter, the burial of a 16–17 years old child, contained 16 pottery vessels with stone vases, beads and cosmetics. Also, the richest tomb in Gerzeh, probably of an adolescent (tomb. 67), was the largest and first to be dug in the site given its early date of Naqada IIC, contained a mace-head, copper harpoon, ivory vessel, fish-shaped palette, iron beads, as were burials (MA.43) of a 17–20 years old and a 10–14 years old child from Maadi and Wadi Degla respectively. The burials (H17, 41, 49, 85, 90) from Mahsna, that were 'double burials', were among the most elaborate examples, however, an age was not assigned to any of their occupants.

Burial size, the degree of body treatment, and the presence of prestigious goods such as mace-heads, ivory and copper tools and finely made palettes, or the high quantity and quality of goods, gives some indication of the social status of occupants. However, conducting correlations between the age and sex of the child with such parameters is not always possible due to the lack of information about sex and age in most cases. Examples of wealthy burials are also recorded for infants and child.1 age categories

especially in Upper Egypt. Therefore, social status and wealth might be proven from the presence of exotic or prestigious goods but cannot be invalidated from the other, correlating burials given the importance of considering the variability in assigning social roles to the different age groups by different societies, as well as the impact of ancient and modern disturbance, which undoubtedly contributes to interpretations of the evidence.

For most of the sites, pottery vessels, beads, and shells were among the more common classes of goods deposited with children. The types varied between few sherds, bowls, pots, cups, jars, with other distinct types such as the black topped pottery, black incised bowls, and rough ware. They were usually placed before the face or at the upper body with some exceptions, while ornaments were sometimes found to be worn by the child especially bracelets of beads and shells or were disturbed and scattered throughout the burial area. Carnelian, amazonite, shells (*Nerita, Ancilaria*), and ostrich eggshells are the most common raw materials used in producing beads, while gold is rarely recorded (Burial H17 Mahsna of a female and a child). Those categories were followed by necklaces, bracelets, pendants, and rings, which are made of varied materials. Symbolism, accessibility, and attractive shape are the factors that probably controlled the choice of bead materials (Bobrowski *et al.* 2011: 339).

Among the less frequently recorded goods are palettes of geometric shapes, rhomboid shape, fish-shaped palette, stone vessels, faunal remains, baskets of grains, ostrich eggshells, feathers, and stone tools. The latter three classes are more common in upper Egyptian sites. In the case of (burial.5754) from Badari, the feathers are of ostrich and were arranged to form a fan. Feathers were generally recorded over or under the head of the child, and the same applies to small flint flakes. In addition, funerary meals were sometimes detectable, while parts of animals especially gazelles and goats were also recorded.

Certain aspects distinguished the grave goods of children from those of adults. Certain categories of grave goods could be present or absent or the same category could be presented in different manner and quantity. For example, pottery, ornaments, shells, and beads, were all shared among adults and sub-adults, however, it can be observed in Gerzeh that wavy handled pottery were absent from the burials of sub-adults, while pottery was nearly absent from child burials in Armant (Mond and Myer 1937). On the other hand, common miniature forms are obvious, such as the miniature ceramics, sherds, miniature flint tools, and broken palettes, which might imply a correlation between the size of the grave good and the burial occupant referring to their small size, or rather refer to the possible practicing of the ritual breakage of objects as part of the ceremonies (Morrison and Park 2008: 208). On the other hand, other categories seemed to be more related to child burials such as rattles, spindle whorl, and ivory pegs (Stevenson 2006: 151).

Evaluating the general heath pattern and the possible stress factors that children faced during the Prehistoric Period in Egypt was not possible given the absence of sufficient publications in this regard. However, pathological cases were recorded from some sites. For example, *Cribra orbitalia* (26% of child remains), lytic lesions, bone enlargement, and trauma are recorded from Adaima. Also, three cases of *cribra orbitalia* are recorded from Maadi. Moreover, the skeletal remains of about 23 sub-adults from the eastern cemetery, and 4 cases (older children) from the western cemetery showed an evidence of tuberculosis lesions (Crubézy 2017: 64-66, 70). Fractures and displacement of skeletal elements which is recorded in many sites was mostly explained as a result of post-mortem disturbance. However, a good state of health might be assumed by the limited presence of pathological lesions on the skeletal remains of infants and children in most of the sites. Moreover, the near absence of recorded trauma victims among sub-adults may indicate the lack of violence or accidents and a level of care for these sub-adults.

It remains significant to consider that not all diseases leave an imprint on the skeleton, and that most of the skeletal samples were not a matter of paleopathological investigation.

The data analysed above are based mainly on the 16 sites included in the current research. Other sites provided the evidence of child burials during the Prehistoric Period. Those include Hierakonpolis, Tell el Farkha, Kafr Hassan Dawood, Tell Ibrahim Awad, Nag el Hagg Zeidan, Tell Daba'a, Tell el Samara, and certain A-Group cemeteries. Some of these sites are not yet fully excavated and/or published, and since even the total number of sub-adult burials in them were not accessible, they were not included in the data analysis. However, the incorporation of the data from all the predynastic sites remains a crucial objective for future research.

Conclusions

Infants and children in prehistoric Egypt were treated as a significant part of society. Infant and care of children were expressed through mortuary practices. The absence of textual and iconographic sources makes burials of infants and children the only surviving evidence about the lives of these age groups during the Prehistoric Period. Burial occupants, their contents and the context of sites were therefore used as three major parameters, to reconstruct the lives of sub-adults in prehistoric Egypt.

Irregular burials, residential ones in active and abandoned settlement areas, burials clustering in common graveyards, and dedicated spaces for burying children most likely represented subsequent phases of the evolution of sub-adults' mortuary spaces during the Prehistoric Period. Clear boundaries between such phases cannot be determined since there is no clear and complete evidence of the gradual development of funerary rituals of Egyptian prehistoric society. However, such phases coincide with major paradigm shifts in subsistence patterns, and human-nature interaction over a long-time span (Figure 13).

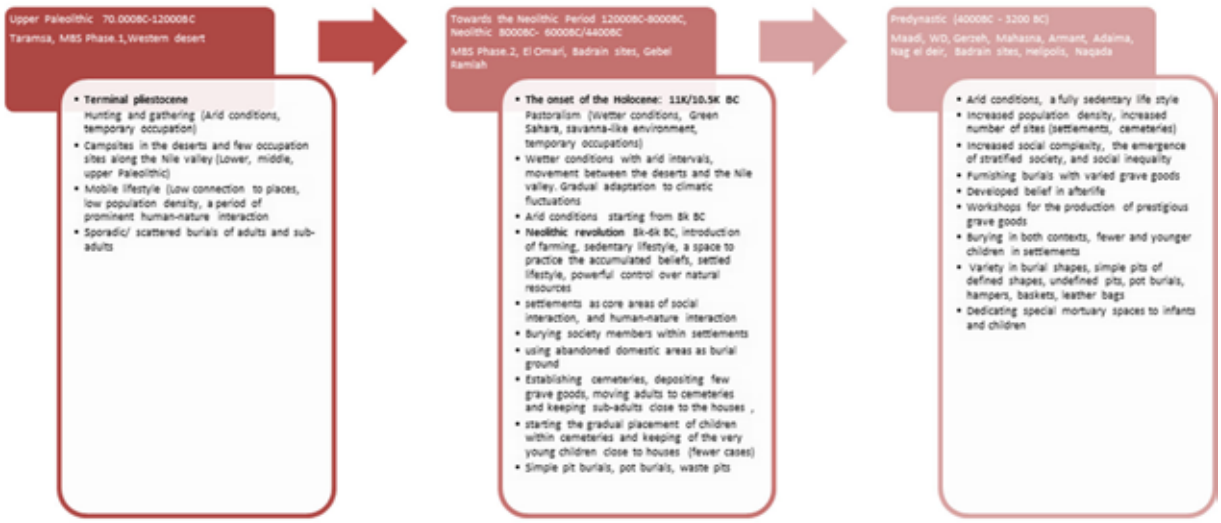

Figure 13. Summary of the proposed phases for the evolution of sub-adult mortuary spaces.

Heterogeneity is the main feature that characterised the burials of children compared to those of adults, evident in their body positions, orientation, the amount of grave goods available, the types of goods, and the broader context, shape, and type of burial. The data available on burial types, such as burial preparation, treatment of bodies, and grave goods were combined and analysed to make inferences about mortuary practices related to infants and children. Results show that children were buried inside simple pits consisting of defined and undefined shapes similar to that of adults. However, children's burial pits were usually narrower in size and shallower in depth. Pot burials, leather bags, and basket burials, were solely associated with children less than 6 years old, where the occupant enjoyed exterior and/or interior offerings without any specific type of body treatment. Children were mostly found in single interments as opposed to adults who were buried in double and multiple burials more frequently. However, females, males, and children's peers accompanied the buried child in some cases. The probable evidence of burial ceremonies is usually more observable in the case of female-child burials. Pre-burial rituals such as disarticulating bone elements, placing grave goods in certain sequence, funerary meals, and secondary burials are believed to have been present as suggested through given examples.

Grave goods included items of daily use, objects made for funerary use, and prestige goods. The grave good types were generally like those of adults, while some types were more related to children like miniature forms of objects, fragmentary parts of larger objects, or even in the absence of specific types of goods from the burials of infants and children such as those reflecting professions, and items of specific daily use. Moreover, the frequency and number of offerings were generally characterised by being less than those acquired by adults, except for a few wealthy child burials. Grave goods should not be always interpreted as a status indicator, since several taphonomic factors might largely contribute to altering the original evidence. The presence of prestigious and exotic goods, or many other common classes, together with the size and type of the burial may together, refer to some kind of inherited status.

Although infants and children shared some aspects of mortuary practices with adults, and the burial context, the data analysis refers mainly to the fact that a certain set of such practices were associated solely with sub-adults, while also pointing to the fact the mortuary spaces associated with sub-adults, developed as a separate phenomenon than that of adults, and over a longer time span. The ideology, belief system, and social structure of the prehistoric societies evolved in response to the developing and changing climatic and environmental conditions that Egypt witnessed during the different phases of the Holocene epoch and were clearly reflected in the performed mortuary practices and also in the way by which mortuary spaces developed during the Prehistoric/Predynastic Period. The relative complexity of the evolution process of the mortuary spaces and practices related to sub-adults, could therefore be correlated with the evolving care.

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The ‘commander of the ruler’s crew’: some remarks about a high military title in the Second Intermediate Period and the Egyptian army in the 17th dynasty

Francesco De Gaetano

Abstract

It is difficult to gain a clear view of Egyptian military organisation and warfare in the first half of the 2nd millennium BC, due to the absence of clear and telling evidence in archaeological and literary record. However, it is possible to produce an overall picture by evaluating the number of records for military-ranked men and their effect on Egypt’s social and political history. Among the more recorded military titles in the Second Intermediate Period, the ‘commander of the ruler’s crew’ *(ꜣtw n ṯt ḥqꜣ)*, which probably refers to the command of naval forces, becomes more relevant amongst the high military officers, and more important at the Royal Court and the leadership of the Egyptian troops. While the 13th dynasty records show close familial and political ties within the echelons of the Late Middle Kingdom administration, these military officers could be considered the core officers of the Egyptian army by the 17th dynasty, who oversaw the defence of the Theban Kingdom. In this period, they seem to be, far more than just naval officers, more evidently the ‘senior officers’ of the 17th dynasty army. This paper describes and explains the role of the ‘commander of the ruler’s crew’, and considers the emergence and characteristics of the title, his records, and military tasks, until the sudden disappearance of the role at the beginning of the New Kingdom.

Keywords

Army; Egyptian warfare; Military organisation; Middle Kingdom; Second Intermediate Period

The ‘commander of the ruler’s crew’: Translations and writings and of the title

It remains difficult to gain an overview of the Egyptian military system in the Middle Kingdom and the Second Intermediate Period, despite the considerable number of sources. The nature of the records and the events they involve often obscure a full comprehension of the meaning and relevance of a military title, as well as the clear hierarchy of the offices. Egyptian warfare could be difficult to understand, and even misleading, without knowledge of the ancient titles. It is necessary to make a wide use of many types of archaeological data (funerary stelae, seals, rock, and funerary inscription) to study administration and society of this period. Previous prosopographies of the known officers of the Middle Kingdom and the Second Intermediate Period are also needed. In addition to the fundamental *Personendaten* with hundreds of dossiers concerning recorded individuals of the Middle Kingdom (Franke 1984a) and a later integration (Grajetzki and Stefanović 2012), there are two prosopographical studies on the army and the naval officers in this period (Chevereau 1991; 1992), and a more recent compendium of the holders of military titles (Stefanović 2006). For the translation of the military titles, Ward’s work (Ward 1982) on Middle Kingdom titles and epithets is useful. With the use of data of the prosopographies for the study of military titles, it is now possible to trace one of the most important

military titles of the Middle Kingdom and the Second Intermediate Period, along with the history of its translation and interpretation.

What was then an ꜣṯw n ṯt ḥqꜣ? A brief history of interpretations and translations

The frequency of mentions of the officials *ꜣṯw n ṯt ḥqꜣ* seems to have drawn an earlier interest. In 1905 a contribution by R. Weill shows this interest, highlighting two basic points: first, the connection between an official title and the 'royal table' as expressed in hieroglyphics (the *ṯt ḥqꜣ* which will be interpreted shortly); and secondly, the presence of a different kind of official related to this 'royal table' called *ꜥnḫw* (Weill 1905). Still, the meaning of the title *ꜣṯw n ṯt ḥqꜣ* has for decades remained partly misunderstood. The first part of the title, the leg-Gardiner sign D56, has long kept a reading *wꜥrtw*, due to the near homograph word *wꜥrt* 'region, part' (Spiegelberg 1896: 55-56; Erman and Grapow 1926-1931, Vol. I: 287-288) and the following *ṯt ḥqꜣ* had a literal meaning, as a royal institution in charge of provisioning a class of officers, the *ꜥnḫw.w*. The reading of *wꜥrtw n ṯt ḥqꜣ* has for a long time been accepted by scholars and translated as 'district commandant' (Breasted 1906: 696), 'overseer of the ruler's table' (Erman and Grapow 1926-1931, Vol. I: 288.13), 'attendant of the ruler's table' (Ward 1982: 7 [13]). According to G. Posener, a new reading of the leg-sign D56 showed a connection between the former *wꜥrtw* title and the verbal root *ꜣṯ*, with the meaning 'raise' or 'instruct', mainly applying to the young people, as the related word *ꜣṯyt* 'nurse' clearly demonstrates (Erman and Grapow 1926-1931, Vol. I: 23.10). This argument revealed a link between the officials of the Middle Kingdom and the older *ꜣṯw.w* officers of the Old Kingdom and the First Intermediate Period, who were identified as tutors of a kind, or regional administrators (Jones 2000: 3-4 [14]; Posener 1963). The reading of *ꜣṯw* instead of *wꜥrtw* was then accepted (Franke 1984b: 115).

The second part of the title, the 'royal table', has revealed an even more complex meaning than that previously considered. Evaluating the number of uses of the word *ṯt* and combining this with differences in writings, it seems reasonable to consider three different meanings:

- Written with the hobble sign V13 as the first consonant: building wood for a ship, such as the wood needed for the ship of Amun in the Report of Wenamun (Erman and Grapow 1926-1931, Vol. V: 339.13; Goedicke 1975).
- Written likewise: a meal table or offering table, comparable to the word *wdḥw* (Erman and Grapow 1926-1931, Vol. V: 338.9-339.11).
- With the determinative sign A1 and plural strokes: staff or gang of people (Erman and Grapow 1926-1931, Vol. V: 338.1-6). In later sources, written sometimes with the sign Y1, it describes a staff of scribes in a religious institution (Gardiner 1938).

Alan H. Gardiner (1938: 171) considered the various translations of *ṯt* and the transition of meaning from 'wooden board' to 'table', 'tablemate' and then 'staff'. It has been pointed out that the *ꜣṯw*-titles describe a class of officers related to military tasks, and that the *ꜥnḫw* are their subordinates (Berlev 1967; 1971). The records used by Berlev to determine this part of the Middle Kingdom military organisation led to the *ṯt ḥqꜣ* being defined as a squad of soldiers, or more precisely a crew of 'marines'. When evaluating those records, after the Early Middle Kingdom, the collective word *ṯt* appears connected to the definition of staff: a staff of workers in a household in the 'Heqanakhte Papers' (James 1962: II.43 – XIV.11), in a construction project in the tomb of the nomarch Djehutihotep in Deir el-Bersheh (Newberry 1895: pl. XV) or involved in shipbuilding and transport by river in the P. Reisner I and II

(Simpson 1963: J.2-10-11-17-18, K.9; 1965: D.9-E.6). More importantly, an inscription by a mining expedition found in Wadi Hammamat and dated to the reign of Senwosret I counts in the list of the escorting *ꜥḥꜣwtj.w*-soldiers three hundred *ꜥnḫw.w n ṯt ḥqꜣ* (Farout 1994: 143-172). According to Berlev, these 'soldiers of the ruler's crew' must be the subordinates of the *ꜣṯw.w n ṯt ḥqꜣ* and their involvement in warfare operations on the Nile cannot be ruled out indefinitely. Those military units were probably organised as if they are maritime units, and maritime expressions could have influenced the military terms. Berlev's theory on 'amphibious warfare' in the Middle Kingdom and the military titles concerned, was a milestone in our understanding of the title *ꜣṯw n ṯt ḥqꜣ*. The meaning of this title is rendered as 'chief of the military sailors' (Chevereau 1992: 23), 'commander of the crew of the ruler' (Stefanović 2006: 72-94), 'commander of the ruler's crew' (Quirke 2004a: 99), '*ꜣṯw*-official of the staff/table of the ruler' (Hannig 2006: 49-50) and has been accepted as a military title at present.

Some remarks about the writings of the title ꜣṯw n ṯt ḥqꜣ

The nearly two hundred records of *ꜣṯw n ṯt ḥqꜣ* of the Middle Kingdom and the Second Intermediate Period were found in different types of writing media, but mostly in the epigraphy of hieroglyph writing system. It is important, however, to remember the presence of the hieratic P. Boulaq 18, the famous 13th Dynasty administrative account of the Theban palace, which mentions four *ꜣṯw.w n ṯt ḥqꜣ* officials (Allam 2019; Mariette 1872; Quirke 1990: 9-121; Scharf 1922). Three hieroglyphic forms of the title are known from records:

- Gardiner D56 + X1 + G43 (*ꜣṯw*) + N35 (*n*)+ S38 + N29 (*ḥqꜣ*) + R3 + X1 + Z1 (*ṯt*)
- Gardiner D56 + X1 + G43 (*ꜣṯw*) + N35 (*n*)+ S38 + N29 (*ḥqꜣ*) + T36A + X1 + Z1 (*ṯt*)
- Gardiner D56 + X1 + G43 (*ꜣṯw*) + N35 (*n*)+ S38 + N29 (*ḥqꜣ*) + R1 + X1 + Z1 (*ṯt*)

All three forms present the honorific transposition of the word *ḥqꜣ* (Ruler) before the word *ṯt* (crew), with almost all records written in the first type of title. There are also many variants: the complete spelling of *ṯt* and *ḥqꜣ* with phonetic complements on the stela CG 20709 (Lange and Schäfer 1908: 335), the word *ṯt* with the determinative Gardiner A1 and the plural strokes in the stela CG 20294 (Lange and Schäfer 1902: 307-308), and the writing of *ꜣṯw* with the combined sign Gardiner V15, the hobble and walking legs sign, on the offering table MFA 01.7303 (Randall-McIver and Mace 1902: pl. XXXIV.4), just to name the more notable. The absence of phonetic complements in the words *ꜣṯw* and *ṯt* is also common.

An overview of the records of the 'commander of the ruler's crew'

Table 1. Records of the 'commander of the ruler's crew' in the Middle Kingdom and the Second Intermediate Period. Sources: Chevereau 1992; Franke 1984; Grajetzki and Stefanović 2012; Ilin-Tomich 2021; Stefanović 2006.

Period	Stela – Offering Table	Seal	Tomb Inscription	Other (statue, funerary equipment etc.)	Total
Middle Kingdom	37	27	X	17	81
Second Intermediate Period	37	X	15	7	59

The 'commander of the ruler's crew' in the Late Middle Kingdom

While references to a *ṯt ḥqꜣ* are related to nautical activities in the Early Middle Kingdom, it is in the Late Middle Kingdom that the title acquires new and paramount importance. It is now commonly agreed by scholars that the reign of Senwosret III (*c.* 1878-1839 BC) was distinguished, beyond intense military activity, by administrative reforms changing the existence and the relevance of some titles and causing the disappearance of others (Grajetzki 2009: 51-58; 2020: 147-149; Quirke 2004a: 7-9). The archaeological documentation of this period makes the existence and spread of the holders of the title *ꜣṯw n ṯt ḥqꜣ* tangible. One of the earlier and most famous examples is the commander Khusobek, who was known from his funerary stela Manchester Museum 3306 for his brilliant military career and was recorded in a rock inscription near the Nubian fortress of Semna. He was probably at the highest point of his *cursus honorum*, as 'commander of the ruler's crew' (Baines 1987; Hintze and Reineke 1989: 155-156 [520]). He was promoted to this task after having served as *šmsw n ḥqꜣ* 'follower of the ruler', *sḫḏ šmsw.w* 'controller of guards' and *ꜣṯw ꜥꜣ n njwt* 'commander of citizen troops': this should indicate a rank of the 'commander of the ruler's crew' higher than the previous titles. This theory seems confirmed by the pieces of evidence in the following 13th dynasty. The Egyptian army seems to have been an organisation divided in militia forces, led by the aforementioned 'commander of citizen troops' and with the *ꜥnḫw.w n njwt* as citizen soldiers or perhaps low-ranking officers and the chosen troops of *šmsw.w,* i.e., retainers. In this outline, as Quirke correctly remarks, the 'commanders of the ruler's crew' could have been the leaders of the armed Egyptian forces, rather than marine troops. They were the upper echelons of military administration, inferior only to the *mr mšꜥ wr* 'the chief overseer of the army' (Quirke 1990: 82-83). Their subordinates were clearly the *ꜥnḫw.w n ṯt ḥqꜣ*, soldiers or officers of the ruler's crew. The abundance of sources for the Late Middle Kingdom administration allows us to imagine the key role and status of the 'commander of the ruler's crew'. Four *ꜣṯw.w n ṯt ḥqꜣ* are listed in P. Boulaq 18, between the administrative and military officers of 'the Outer Palace' who take advantage of the Court provisions (Quirke 1990: 73-75). They possibly had family ties with the royal dynasty and given the troubled political history of the period they might have aimed to take the crown. In the stela Cairo CG 20394 the 'commander of the ruler's crew' Nedjesankh-Jw is shown with his wife, the 'king's daughter' Hatshepsut, daughter of queen Nofret and perhaps Pharaoh Ameny Qemau (Joseph 2019; Lange and Schäfer 1902: 390-391; Ryholt 1997: 246). It is tempting, although not at all confirmed, to recognise the recorded 'commander of the ruler's crew' Sobekhotep as the 13th dynasty King

Sobekhotep III. He is known from twenty-one seals in which he appears with his name and title, together with his father Mentuhotep, who is also a 'commander of the ruler's crew' too (Franke 1984a: 345 [577]; Martin 1971: pl. XXIII; Ryholt 1997: 222).

The Second Intermediate Period in Egypt: an outline of military situation

The end of the Late Middle Kingdom and the beginning of the Second Intermediate Period are nowadays generally considered to be marked out by three major events: the end of the sovereignty based in Itj-Tawy, the capital of the 12th and 13th dynasty Egyptian rulers, the establishment of a lineage of foreign rulers known as Hyksos governing the Delta from Avaris and the constitution of a regional type of 'indigenous' state in the southern part of Egypt (Polz 2018). The progressive loss of control of northern Nubia by the Egyptian rulers allowed the expansion of the Nubian kingdom of Kerma, at least as far as the town of Elephantine. This is a general historical outline of the period, which involves many doubts and problems (Grajetzki 2020: 648-651; Morenz and Popko 2010: 102-108; Ryholt 1997: 301-310). It is nevertheless important to focus on the military history of Egypt at that period. According to Ryholt's reconstruction, the new Hyksos state could have been an aggressive military power advancing southwards with a serious threat to the southern Egyptian rulers. The so-called Abydos dynasty and the 16th/17th dynasties based in Thebes would also have had to face attacks by the Kerma people from Nubia (Davies 2003; Ryholt 1997: 118-166). The available sources, however, do not allow the establishment of either the modes and times of this regional warfare, nor the presence of conflicts between local rulers in southern Egypt. It is possible to make a summary starting from an analysis of the records, which are substantial in providing data on military titles, and, consequently, on military organisation. It is noteworthy that the Hyksos kingdom seems to have partially adopted the Late Middle Kingdom titles administration, perhaps adapting them to their homeland customs; this could also have happened for the military titles. The record of a 'commander of the ruler's crew' named Achtuan, dated to the Hyksos period, could be taken as evidence (Schneider 2003: 328-333; Shirley 2013: 523-539). One *ꜥnḫw n njwt*, one *ꜥnḫw n ṯt ḥqꜣ* and one *jry pḏt* 'keeper of bow' have also been identified from the owners of scarab seals related to the 14th and 15th dynasties (Quirke 2004b: 190).

Archaeological evidence for the Nubian Kingdom reveals that the Egyptian communities in and near the Middle Kingdom fortresses, descendants of the military garrisons, had served the 'rulers of Kush'. The funerary stela Philadelphia I0984 of Sepedher shows that his officer was a *ṯsw n bhn*, 'a commander of Buhen' serving the ruler of Kerma (Kubisch 2010: 323-325; Säve-Söderbergh 1949: 54-56). Grave 1 of the cemetery H in Buhen contains another stela of a military officer dated from the Second Intermediate Period, the 'commander of the ruler's crew' Idu-Aam (Smith 1976: 42-43). Little can be said about the Abydos dynasty officers, even if such an independent lineage of rulers, perhaps a local military family, could have reigned for some time (Wegner and Cahail 2021: 6).

Meanwhile, the Theban Kingdom seems to have known a peculiar evolution in its administrative and military system. Some of the Late Middle Kingdom titles seem to have disappeared, including the middle-lower ranking titles, and there is a notable increase in policing and military titles. This change could have arisen from a regional organisation of the Theban élites becoming a state, before the end of 13th dynasty, rather than an adaptation of the Egyptian establishment, fleeing from the north occupied by the Hyksos (Ilin-Tomich 2014). The rise of military titles recorded for the 16th and 17th dynasties suggests a need to strengthen the army organisation, which was more likely to have faced military threats from the northern and the southern border, as well as probable internal upheavals. This explanation seems confirmed by the allusions to conflicts on royal stelae and the rising cult of *nḫtt wꜣst*,

the 'powerful Thebes' (Ilin-Tomich 2014: 162-166; Vernus 1989). The data from this period suggests the importance of towns like Abydos, Koptos, Edfu and Nekheb as local strongholds for the defence of the Theban kingdom, with garrisons and military commanders cooperating with local governors. At Abydos a local governor and overseer of a temple called Kumes, living under the king Rahotep, is recorded in the stela Louvre C287 as *ṯsw jwʿjj n ꜣbḏw* 'commander of the garrison of Abydos' (Franke 1985). Also, from Abydos comes the stela OIM E7176 with a depiction of the *sꜣ nswt* Nakht, and a military title never attested before, *ḥry pḏt* 'troop commander' (Polz 2007: 225). The *ṯsw n gbtjw*, 'commander of Koptos', Qinen is recorded by stela Cairo JE 30770 bis from the time of king Nubkheperra Antef (Polz 2007: 331-333). The military function of these three officers could be explained by their sharing the high title *sꜣ nswt* 'king's son', which will be mentioned shortly. The considerable number of recorded titles, like *ʿnḫ n njwt*, *jrj pḏt* and clearly *ꜣṯw n ṯt ḥqꜣ* seems to confirm a 'militarisation' of the Theban Kingdom (Ilin-Tomich 2014: 173-181). Unfortunately for the historical reconstruction, this increase in military titles is not enough to prove the situation of continuous warfare, which was hypothesised for the Second Intermediate Period.

The role of *ꜣṯw n ṯt ḥqꜣ* in the Theban Kingdom in the Second Intermediate Period

The transformation of the political and military organisation of the Theban Kingdom in the Second Intermediate Period is clearly demonstrated by the spread of the title *sꜣ nswt* 'king's son', the use of which can be traced back to the late 13th dynasty but is recorded mainly in this period. The title, despite its appearance, does not seem to name royal-born high officers, charged with high administrative and military tasks by the Theban rulers in crucial places of their kingdom (Miniaci 2010; Schmitz 1976). At least four 'commanders of the ruler's crew' were also appointed as 'king's son', highlighting its basic military role. Only one of those commanders seems to have been a true royal-born prince: Imeny, who is known from the two fragments of his stela Moscow Pushkin Museum I.1.б.32+ London UC 14326, found in Koptos. He was born to the 'king's wife' Haankhes. According to the current hypotheses, Imeny could have been the son of King Rahotep or King Sobekemsaf I (Polz 2007: 52-55; Schmitz 1976: 226-227). The involvement of an heir to the throne in military tasks could indicate the beginning of a well-known custom in the following New Kingdom when royal princes were allowed to serve in the higher ranks of the army.

A later source suggests that the 'commanders of the ruler's crew' held a crucial position for the management of the Theban army. 'The Duties of the Vizier' from the tomb of Rekhmira, vizier under Tuthmosis III, lists the essential tasks of the most important functionary of the Egyptian administration, praising his position. Although an early 18th dynasty date has long been proposed (Boorn 1988), the records of some Middle Kingdom titles that later disappeared suggest a *terminus ante quem* in the Second Intermediate Period, thus an earlier date can be stated (Quirke 2004a: 18). A passage of the text, concerning the role of the vizier in the organisation of military expeditions, clearly mentions the 'commanders of the ruler's crew' (Boorn 1988: 218):

R23) *ntf jrr dmḏ n mšʿ mnmn ḫr šms nb m [ḫd] m ḫnt ntf jrr ḫr ʿ wnn m njwt rst m ḫnw ḫft ḏdt m pr nswt jnn.t(w) n=f ꜣṯw {ḥtp?} n ḥqꜣ [r] ḫ=f ḥnʿ* , R24) *ḏꜣḏꜣt nt mšʿ r rdjt n=sn tp rd n mšʿ*

R23) 'It is he who assembles the army contingent that escorts the Lord when [sailing downstream] and upstream. It is he who organises the remainder (of the army) that stays behind in the Southern City and in the Residence according to what has been said in the palace. It is to him, [to] his office, that the

commander of the Ruler's crew and R 24) the army staff must be brought, in order to be given the instructions of the army'.

If the interpretation of the text is correct, the *ꜣṯw.w n ṯt ḥqꜣ* were not only summoned alongside with the *ḏꜣḏꜣt nt mšᶜ*, a sort of general staff of the army, but were also called by the chief of state administration to receive the most important military orders. Even if the 'Duties of the Vizier' must not be considered an essay about the Egyptian administration, this quote appears meaningful in connection with the subject considered.

Archaeological evidence of the 'commanders of the ruler's crew'

A brief account of the related archaeological records contemporary with the Theban dynasties of the Second Intermediate Period could help us understand the role of the 'commanders of the ruler's crew' in the Theban Kingdom. The distribution of evidence seems to correspond to the geographic borders of the Theban kingdom, from Abydos in the north to Edfu in the South.

- *Abydos.* The importance of Abydos as a place for funerary monuments belonging to military officers continued in the Second Intermediate Period. The funerary shaft D78 was found with the funerary stela of the 'commander of the ruler's crew' Sobekhotep, and an *apotropaion* (an ivory or wood stick graved with magical figures) bearing the name of King Senebkay, an alleged king of the Abydos dynasty, in the northern part of the Abydos cemetery, called Cemetery D in the A. Mace's excavation. Cemetery D was a funerary site also related to the 13th dynasty, but given the objects found and the evidence of King Senebkay's activities in this area, a connection between this ruler and the officer Sobekhotep seems credible (Cahail 2015: 118-120; Randall-MacIver and Mace 1902: pl.43; Wegner and Cahail 2021: 346-351). The niche fragments Bruxelles E.5263 + Liverpool GM E.40-42, related to the 'commander of the ruler's crew' and 'king's son' Hor-Irief and dated to the late 17th dynasty, also come from Abydos (Marée 2010: 246; Miniaci 2010:117).

- *Thebes.* In western Thebes, the site of Dra Abu el-Naga was broadly used as the burial place of high-ranking men since the late 13th dynasty. The kings of 17th dynasty who ruled in Thebes were also buried here. From Dra Abu el-Naga comes the *rishi* coffin Cairo TN 19.11.27.5 of the 'commander of the ruler's crew' Teti. Stylistic features place this coffin in the late 17th dynasty, perhaps near the reign of Nubkheperra Antef (Miniaci 2011: 230-231).

- *Mo'alla.* A stele belonging to the 'commander of the ruler's crew' Khuenes comes from this site. Here, it is not this officer, but his son Iuenef who has the position of 'king's son' (Ball 1899: 76-77).

- *El-Kab.* The rock tombs of El-Kab, near the ancient city of Nekheb, have provided essential information about the history of southern Egypt in the Second Intermediate Period. A family of governors who held important religious, administrative and military offices between the late 13th dynasty and the 17th dynasty, with ties to the royal families of the Late Middle Kingdom, are recorded here (Davies 2010a; 2010b; Kubisch 2008: 274-293; Tylor 1896). It is known from the stela Cairo JE 52453, the so-called 'Juridical Stela', that the *ꜣṯw n ṯt ḥqꜣ* Kebsi, also mayor of Nekheb, sold his office of governor to Sobeknakht, probably the owner of the Rock Tomb no. 73 (Ganley 2004). It was his son, the second governor of El-Kab named Sobeknakht, who faced what was probably a massive raid by the Nubian forces of Kerma from

the south. The biographical inscription of Sobeknakht in the Rock Tomb no. 66 reveals that the governor was able to repel the invasion (Davies 2003). The importance of the region of Nekheb as a boundary zone, and the crucial military role of officials located here, could be confirmed by the depiction of no less than twelve *ꜣṯw.w n ṯt ḥqꜣ* on the walls of Sobeknakht II's tomb (Tylor 1896: pls 3-9). Near the tomb of Sobeknakht, the Rock Tomb no. 56 and no. 64 have been identified as the burial places of the 'commander of the ruler's crew' Bebi and Renseneb, probably related to the same family of governors and dated to the Second Intermediate Period (Davies 2010b: 227; Lepsius 1849-1859: 52-54).

- *Edfu.* Archaeological excavations in the last century brought to light several funerary stelae and offering tables from the ancient *tell* of Edfu, the burial site of the Late Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period, especially near and inside the mastaba of the Old Kingdom governor Isi, later venerated as a local saint (Alliot 1935). The 'commander of the ruler's crew' Ibiau and Senebu are two examples of local officers known from funerary stelae (Engelbach 1922: 119-122). A family of officers in Edfu from the same period seem to have shared the important task of *ꜣṯw n ṯt ḥqꜣ* and *sꜣ nswt*: the 'king's son' Hor-her-khwtef with his son Ra-mesu, also titled 'commander of the ruler's crew', and the nephew Herj was finally also an *ꜣṯw n ṯt ḥqꜣ*. They are recorded thanks to the stela Cairo JE 48229 and another stela of unknown location (Marée 2009: 59-62; Miniaci 2010:122). The existence of several military titles in the same family or household is a well-known feature of the Second Intermediate Period.

The disappearance of the military title *ꜣṯw n ṯt ḥqꜣ*

The disappearance of the title 'commander of the ruler's crew' from the archaeological records is neither clear nor easily explicable. It is undeniable that many Middle Kingdom titles disappeared at the end of the 17th dynasty. This phenomenon could be explained by a deep reform of the administration, and, consequently, of the military system used by the last kings of the Second Intermediate Period. This reform was probably the prelude to the wars led against the Hyksos by the Theban kings, and the Pharaoh Seqenenra Tao and his sons Ahmose and Kamose (Ryholt 1997: 171-183; Vandersleyen 1971), although the warfare accounts are silent about the presence of 'commanders of the ruler's crew' in Theban armies. They are not mentioned in the second stela of Kamose (Habachi 1972). The main source of Ahmose's wars is the biographic inscription in the rock tomb of the officer Ahmose, son of Ebana, in Elkab. Ahmose served as marine soldier and as *ḥrj ḫnjt* 'commander of ship's contingent', a title that would be widespread in the New Kingdom in connection with the Egyptian navy (Sethe 1906: 1). A change in military titles might have taken place at the end of the 17th dynasty. The last known record of a 'commander of the ruler's crew' comes from the stela Ashmolean Museum AN1971.5, belonging to an officer called Tjaw who probably lived under Kamose. The geographical references in the stela could be linked with the campaigns of the pharaoh in northern Egypt and in Nubia:

(X+4) *jrr mḥtj=f r ḥwt-wᶜrt rsj=f r Kšj m ḥswt ḥr bḥdtj* (X+5) *ꜣṯw n ṯt ḥqꜣ ṯꜣw wḥm ᶜnḫ jrj.n wᶜb ḥr-ꜣw-jb*

'One who made his north in Avaris and his south in Kush, in the favor of Horus of Edfu, the commander of the ruler's crew Tjaw, begotten by the wab-priest Her-aw-jb' (Gardiner 1916: 100; Kubisch 2008: 232-234).

At the beginning of the New Kingdom, a new type of warfare, which was based on chariots and not on the older 'amphibious warfare', caused the rise of a new military organisation (Berlev 1967: 20; Spalinger 2005: 1-24; 2013). The office of 'commander of the ruler's crew' was then no longer needed.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank the proof-readers of the ProofreadingServices.com and Dr Gary Perry for their precious work and advice concerning the language revision of this article.

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Spectacle of imperial splendour: the presentation of gifts and tributes ceremony in the 18th dynasty

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Abstract

Even though the inter-state exchange of goods during the Late Bronze Age has received much scholarly attention, the ceremonial and performative aspect of it is worthy of further investigation. The goal of this paper is to examine the development of the presentation of gifts and tributes ceremony (*ms jnw*) as a political performance during the 18th Dynasty. This paper is comprised of three main parts. The first part lays out the historical background and provides a brief overview of Egypt's participation in the diplomatic gift- and tribute- giving system during its empire-building process in the 18th dynasty. The next section will examine how, over the course of the 18th dynasty, these two kinds of transactions of drastically different nature became ceremonialised and conflated through the presentation of gifts and tributes ceremony. The last section seeks to reconstruct the Egyptian interpretive framework for international gift exchange and tribute collection. Furthermore, it will probe into how the Egyptians choreographed the ceremony to turn it into a spectacle of imperial splendour. Lastly, it will analyse the ceremony from the perspective of its foreign participants and look into how they would have perceived and reacted to it.

Keywords

New Kingdom; international relations; diplomatic gift exchange; tribute; ceremony; political performance

Introduction

The study of diplomatic gift exchange in Late Bronze Age diplomacy has generated a large body of scholarship that approaches the subject from a variety of perspectives: types of goods exchanged (Podany 2010: 243-264), exchange pattern (Liverani 2001: 141-50), principles of exchange (Avruch 2000), bargaining strategies (Zaccagnini 2000), social-psychological analysis (Druckman and Güner 2000), the ideological framework of exchange (Bleiberg 1996: 90-114; Liverani 2001: 160-165), analysis of archaeological comparanda described in textual evidence (Aruz *et al.* 2008; Cochavi-Rainey and Lilyquist 1999; Feldman 2006). However, few studies have approached the subject from the perspective of the performative aspect of the inter-state exchange of goods. Furthermore, as Feldman (2006: 90) keenly observes, the methodologies of these past studies are generally biased: on the one hand, art historical studies place undue emphasis on formal and stylistic features in order to search for cultural origins and hence tend to ignore social and historical considerations; on the other hand, studies that focus on the socio-political dynamics of Late Bronze Age international relations prioritise the use of historical and textual sources, often failing to combine pictorial and artefactual evidence. Hence, there is always room for more studies on this heavily researched topic as long as one can identify a new perspective and employ an improved methodology. Having established that, this paper will examine the theatrical

aspect of Egypt's involvement in the exchange of gifts and tributes during the 18th Dynasty. It will investigate how such exchanges became ceremonialised and morphed into a state ceremony that epitomized the power and opulence of the Egyptian empire. Although this study is inevitably heavily reliant on pictorial evidence from 18th dynasty elite tombs, it will try to mitigate the Egyptian bias by judiciously employing textual evidence from diplomatic archives whenever necessary.

In ancient and modern societies, regardless of their size and organisation, ceremonies and rituals are significant social practices, especially those organised by the state and institutions; performances, as dramatised forms of social interactions, constitute an important means of social organisation, integration, communication, and expression (Coben and Inomata 2006: 3–7). Public performances, in particular, occupy a central position in communal life and political processes. Since the dawn of Egyptian civilisation, ceremonies and public performances, e.g. the *Sed*-Festival (Gohary 1991, Lange 2009, Larcher 2011, LeBlanc 2011, Nuzzolo 2015; The Epigraphic Survey 1994) and the *Opet*-Festival (Accetta 2013; Leprohon 2007), have been deeply embedded in the political and religious life and have left much evidence in the archaeological record. Among these spectacles, the presentation of gifts and tributes ceremony derived its uniqueness from bearing the strong imprint of its historical background and could be appropriately referred to as a spectacle of imperial splendour.

Diplomatic gift exchange and tribute collection: historical background

Enticed by the revenues, glory, and recognition gained from military conquests, the early 18th dynasty kings acquired and consolidated an unprecedently large Levantine empire (Morris 2018: 117-140). Egypt's expansion into the Levant brought it into official contacts with other Ancient Near Eastern great powers like Mittani, Hatti, Babylonia, Assyria, and Alašiya (Liverani 2000: 15-27). As none of them ever possessed the military strength to dominate all others, diplomacy, as the art and practice of conducting negotiations between nations, became the preferred means of managing relations between the great powers (Zaccagnini 2000: 141-153). Indeed, a constant exchange of diplomatic correspondence and gifts indicates a robust and healthy relationship between two countries in Late Bronze Age diplomacy.[1]

For kings of shaky legitimacy or those who could not boost their legitimacy through leading troops in battle (e.g. Hatshepsut and Tutankhamun), engaging in the diplomatic gift exchange represented an alternative means for shoring up their position through peer recognition.[2] Morris' observation that the 'control over the production, exchange, and consumption of exotica and luxury goods constituted one of the earliest and most important sources of power in pharaonic Egypt' is, in fact, applicable to almost any monarchical society (Morris 2018: 126). In the Ancient Near East numerous artworks and monuments (e.g. the Black Obelisk, the tribute of nations reliefs on the Apadana at Persepolis) have

[1] The episode of the missing solid gold statues, which dragged on in several Mittani letters, nicely illustrates this point. At that juncture of history, external threats were piling up for the Mittani empire (Bryce 2005: 184-185). As the value of Mittani as a political ally continued to diminish, Akhenaten might have deemed it unnecessary to send the solid gold statues promised by his father Amenhotep III in order to sustain the cordial relations between the two countries (see EA 26, 27, 29: Moran 2000: 84-85, 86-89, 92-98).

[2] Hattušili III was frustrated by Adad-nirari I's failure to send him coronation gifts: 'It is the custom that when kings assume kingship, the kings, his equals in rank, send him appropriate (gifts of greeting), clothing befitting kingship, and fine (oil) for his anointing. But you did not do this today'. Considering the unusual circumstances in which Hattušili III rose to power, Adad-nirari I's inactivity at this sensitive time could have signalled a refusal to recognize his legitimacy (Beckman 1996: 140).

been commissioned to commemorate the collection of gifts and tributes (Reade 2014; Schmidt 1953: 82-106).

Besides exchanging diplomatic gifts with other great kings, the Egyptian kings also engaged in another type of inter-state economic transaction with their Nubian and Levantine vassals, i.e. the collection of tributes (Morris 2018: 127-131). The payment of tributes represented a material expression of a tributary relationship and periodic deliveries of tributes allowed the vassals to re-affirm their loyalty to the pharaoh. In one of his Plague Prayers (CTH 376.A: Laroche 1971: 66) Muršili II bemoaned that many neighbouring polities and peoples turned hostile against Hatti and severed their tributary relationships with it (Singer 2002: 52–53). In the aftermath of a military defeat (e.g. the Battle of Megiddo), the payment of tribute signified an acknowledgment of the hegemonic power of the victor and often a request to enter a tributary relationship.[3] Just as the value of diplomatic gifts measured the strength of friendship between great kings, the quantity and quality of tribute goods reflected the loyalty and devotion of a vassal to his overlord. With growing doubts about the Hittite king's ability to protect him, Ibiranu of Ugarit neglected his vassal duty to visit the Hittite great king in his capital and sent only paltry gifts to the Hittite nobles. Unsurprisingly, the Hittite viceroy promptly sent him a strongly worded letter of reprimand concerning his dubious behaviours (Hoffner 2009: 216).

Presentation of gifts and tributes ceremony: historical development

Diplomacy is a game of power and prestige. While most diplomatic exchanges, conducted verbally, involved only a small group of kings, high officials, and scribes due to considerations of efficiency and confidentiality, some of their aspects were prone to ceremonialisation for royal propaganda. In fact, the pomp and circumstance of diplomacy could disclose the substance of diplomatic processes because the development of diplomatic norms has been deeply intertwined with those of rituals and ceremonies. Pictorial evidence from 18th dynasty elite tombs provides definitive proof that the Egyptian kings acted swiftly to exploit the propagandistic value of diplomatic gift exchange for their political agenda (Table 1). They did so by presiding over elaborate public ceremonies during which vassal rulers and foreign ambassadors alike presented their tributes or diplomatic gifts to the Egyptian king, conjuring up the image of an Egyptocentric tributary system.

The ancient Egyptians referred to this ceremony as *ms jnw* 'presentation of *jnw*' (Bleiberg 1996: 103–106, 111). *Jnw* is the passive participle of the verb *jnj* 'to bring,' and it means 'that which was brought'. It has been translated into English as either as 'gift' or 'tribute' based on different scholarly interpretations;[4] the former implied a degree of voluntarism and equal social status, whereas the latter suggested coercion and an overlord-vassal affiliation. In the context of the ceremony, it is most appropriate to use both terms because its participants included delegates of both pharaoh's equals and subjects. Hence, this article has rendered *ms jnw* into English with a rather clumsy translation of 'the presentation of gifts and tributes ceremony'.

[3] This symbolic value of tribute payment was not forgotten during the Nubian period of Egyptian history (the 25th Dynasty, 747-656 BCE). As Piye's troops swept across Egypt, defeated local rulers threw themselves on their bellies and presented lavish tribute goods to this Kushite ruler to appease him and recognise his suzerainty (Lichtheim 2006c: 72–73).

[4] For a representative listing of translations of *jnw* in English, French, and German, see Bleiberg 1996: 127–129.

Table 1. Elite tombs featuring the presentation of gifts and tributes ceremony. QI: Qasr Ibrim, AT: Amarna tomb, MTH: Memphite tomb of Horemheb

Development Stage	Reign	Tomb
Ahmose to Amenhotep II		
Hatshepsut to Amenhotep III	Thutmose III	TT84, TT86, QI4, TT42, TT85
	Amenhotep II	TT256, QI1
	Thutmose IV	TT78, TT63, TT90, TT91
	Amenhotep III	TT89
	Unknown	TT143, TT239
Akhenaten to Horemheb	Akhenaten	AT1, AT2
	Tutankhamun	TT40, MTH

Extant evidence for this ceremony comprised almost exclusively of iconographical representations from the tombs of officials[5] who were involved in the collection, delivery, and presentation of diplomatic gifts and tributes, as well as those who took pride in participating in the ceremony (Table 1). The depictions of the administrative processing of foreign gifts and tributes by Egyptian officials and the presentation of gifts and tributes ceremony are highly similar; both categories of scenes are normally (1) organised into multiple parallel registers, (2) showing lines of gift- and tribute-bearers heading abreast in one direction towards Egyptian officials or the king, (3) with their leaders in front doing obeisance and (4) a display of selected gifts and tribute goods (Davies 1923: 33–34). Nevertheless, there are several useful criteria for distinguishing the two types of scenes: the administrative scenes normally feature a dominant figure of the official in charge, scribal activities, and the weighing of goods; while the ceremony scenes have the royal figure as their focal point and occasionally include various forms of entertainment. Anthony (2017: 17) points out that these gifts and tributes presentation scenes are usually placed on the back walls of the transverse hall (also known as the focal walls as they capture the attention of visitors as soon as they enter the tomb), a prominent and symbolically charged location within the early 18th dynasty Theban tombs. Furthermore, the depiction of the *ms jnw* ceremony closely parallels that of the presentation of New Year's gifts to the king. The latter is a yearly inspection of the administration of high officials and is commonly depicted in their tombs: e.g. the tomb of Tjenuna (TT76, see Hartwig 2004: fig. 21; Porter and Moss 1994: 150) and the tomb of Amenemhet called Surero (TT48, Säve-Söderbergh 1957: pls. 30–39).

Such scenes have been studied intensively by numerous scholars from a variety of perspectives. Wachsmann's *Aegeans in the Theban Tombs* (1987) closely examines Egyptian representations of Aegean gift bearers in early 18th Dynasty Theban tombs and proposed three Egyptian artistic conventions that affected their historical accuracy: hybridism, transference, and pattern books. He also tackles the problem of the geographical identification of Keftiu and gives a useful summary of Egyptian-Aegean contacts during the 18th Dynasty. Shaheen (1988) treats the scenes involving Asiatics and Nubians in

[5] The relationship between the relevant scenes and the owner of the tombs in which they were depicted, see Shaheen 1988: 211-270.

the 18th dynasty Theban tombs and attempts to reveal their historical significance by identifying their interrelation with royal textual sources, e.g. the Annals of Thutmose III and the Amarna Letters. Hallmann's *Die Tributszenen des Neuen Reiches* (2006) presents a comprehensive survey of the so-called 'tribute scenes' (i.e. scenes depicting the reception of *jnw*) and their accompanying inscriptions found on the walls of New Kingdom elite tombs and royal monuments. After a critical analysis of both textual and pictorial evidence, Hallmann concludes that one should refrain from labelling such scenes as 'tribute scenes' since it oversimplifies and sometimes distorts the true relationship between Egypt and its exchange partners. Furthermore, the bringing of *jnw* does not imply political dependence. Following the example of Wachsmann (1987) and Hallmann (2006), most existing scholarship is dedicated to the analysis of the degree to which these scenes adhere to historical truth or the Egyptian artistic canon and the prevailing scholarly view questions their value as reliable historical sources. However, scholars like Shaheen (1988) and Panagiotopoulos (2001: 263–283; 2006: 370–412) recognise them as relatively objective testimonies to historical events and put forward a method of contextualised reading. As Anthony (2017: 85) points out, these scenes have a historical kernel even if they have been to some extent distorted by Egyptian ideology and artistic canon. This historical approach, if judiciously employed, can be used to reconstruct the development of the foreign gift- and tribute-giving system and its epitome, i.e. the presentation of gifts and tributes ceremony, thereby supplementing our knowledge of Egypt's foreign relations and imperial administration during the 18th dynasty.

The development of this ceremony during the 18th dynasty could be divided into three periods, which are discussed below.

Early stage: Ahmose to Amenhotep II

A paucity of evidence renders it challenging to reconstruct the genesis and initial development of the ceremony during this period. Only meagre information can be gleaned from self-laudatory royal inscriptions on Egypt's frontiers. No relevant material could be attributed to the reign of Ahmose. As for his successor, Amenhotep I, his year 8 stela found at Aniba commemorates the delivery of gold and products to the king by the Bowmen and the Eastern Desert inhabitants (Bryan 2000: 214). Thutmose I's year 2 inscription at Tombos celebrates the coming of tribute-bearing Southerners and Northerners, as well as the Sand-dwellers to the king (Breasted 1906a: 29-31) as a prelude to accounts of his Nubian victory. The biography of Ineni (who served under Thutmose I as the Treasurer and overseer of grain of the Karnak temple), clearly modelled upon royal texts, records the transfer of foreign tribute to the treasury of Amun by the king each year (Breasted 1906a: 42). Thutmose II's Aswan inscription, which celebrates the king's coronation, also mentions the delivery of tribute by Nubians and Asiatics (Breasted 1906a: 49); this seems to imply that the contribution of gifts and tributes by the foreigners was congratulatory. Considering its apparent parallels with that of Thutmose I's Tombos inscription, this statement is probably a declaration of royal privilege rather than a historical record. Another source of more historical value, a much-corrupted inscription from Deir el-Bahari, preserves an account of the reception of foreign gifts by Thutmose II during his Syrian campaign (Breasted 1906a: 51). These textual records give the impression that the collection of foreign gifts and tributes was inextricably associated with the military exploits of the king. Whether a ceremony took place during this period remains elusive. This general picture accords with the political circumstances of the early 18th Dynasty when the kings were occupied with consolidating their domestic power base and subjugating their immediate neighbours (Bryan 2000: 207-264). Other Near Eastern great powers were conspicuously absent in these official records because official contact was yet to be established with them.

Golden age: Hatshepsut to Amenhotep III

The period between the reigns of Hatshepsut and Amenhotep III witnessed a proliferation of evidence, both textual and pictorial, on the subject matter. Hatshepsut may or may not be the first pharaoh of the 18th dynasty to stage a ceremonial presentation of exotic goods to enhance her power and prestige; however, she set a precedent for commemorating the procurement of exotica from a faraway and mythical land on monumental architecture (i.e. her mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahari) (Naville 1897: pls. 69-81).

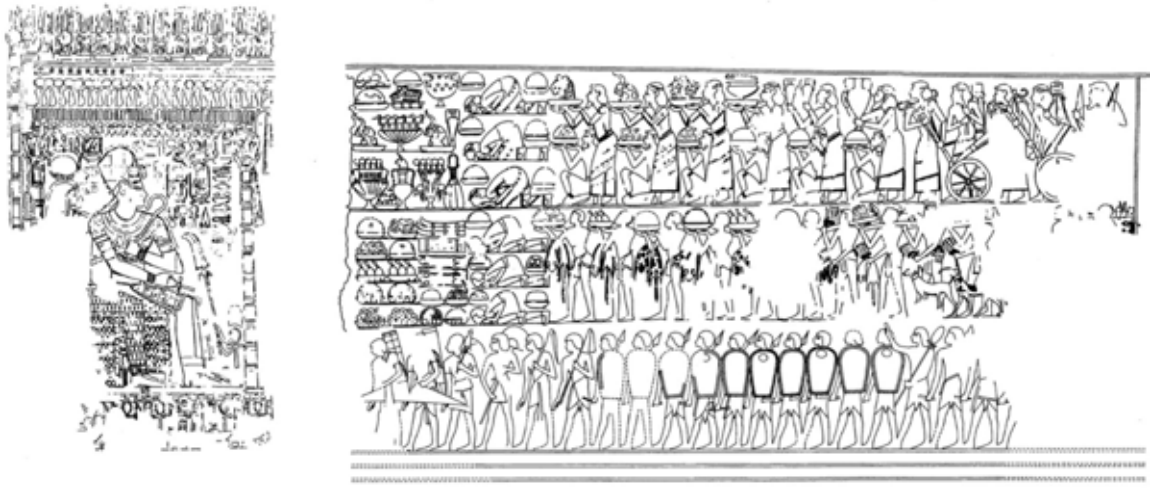

Figure 1. Thutmose IV presiding over the presentation of gifts and tributes ceremony, with Hathor holding menat and two fan-bearers before him, TT91. After Hartwig 2004: fig. 32

The Annals of Thutmose III provide concrete evidence for the institutionalisation of the tribute system, listing the yearly impost of Nubia and the Levantine vassal states (Breasted 1906a: 163-218; Davies 1995: 1-6). At Qasr Ibrim, his Viceroys of Kush established a tradition of commemorating their successful exaction and delivery of Nubian tributes to the king on his great throne in Thebes (Breasted 1906b: 38-39; Säve-Söderbergh 1941: 207). The Annals also document the establishment of official contacts with other Near Eastern polities, e.g., Babylonia, Hatti, Mittani, and Assyria, symbolised by the sending of diplomatic gifts (Breasted 1906a: 163-218; Redford 2003: 250-254). This political economy of gift exchange and tribute collection formed the material base for the presentation of gifts and tributes ceremony, which was placed in prominent positions in the tombs of Egyptian elites who had the privilege to participate in or witness it (see Table 1).

The ceremony seemed to be an annual event held at a palace (for which little iconographical or archaeological evidence survived) of the royal residence city, e.g., Thebes, Memphis, and Amarna (Caminos 1968: 65). Indeed, the tomb inscriptions of Amenedjeh (TT84) stated explicitly that its venue was the 'Palace of Heliopolis of Upper Egypt'; the word referring to the precise setting has been translated as 'Royal Audience Hall' (Davies and Davies 1941: 96). The annual rhythm presumably corresponded to the yearly exaction of Nubian and Levantine tribute, which was delivered to the king at the appointed time (Gebal Barkal Stela, see Davies 1995: 1-6). In more than one instance, the ceremony was known to have been celebrated at the beginning of the year: 'they (the Kushites) enter into Thy

Majesty with their tribute of the beginning of the year' (inscriptions from TT84, Davies 1942: 52). This might be due to the collective celebration of the reception of foreign gifts and tributes and other festivals (e.g. the New Year's Festival), as recorded in the tomb of Menkheperraseneb (TT86, Davies 1933: 2-4). Nevertheless, these inscriptions may have reflected an ideal scenario; in reality, the venue of this ceremony and the frequency with which it was celebrated likely varied from reign to reign. Anthony (2017: 89) finds it hard to imagine the logistics involved in organising such a ceremony and the administrative efforts necessary to coordinate the arrival of foreign delegations. However, the Egyptians could guarantee the presence of foreign envoys through proactive planning (i.e. sending out invitations or orders) and the deliberate detention of messengers. Indeed, the Egyptian kings were constantly accused by fellow great kings and Egyptian vassals of detaining their messengers for an extended period of time (EA3, 13-22: Moran 2000: 7).

During this period, the ceremony was characterised by an expanding profile of foreign participants. The Hittites made their appearance in the Annals during the year 33 of Thutmose III (Redford 2003: 75); their debut in the iconographical evidence (TT86) dated to the same reign (Davies 1933: pl. 4; Porter and Moss 1994: 175-178). The same pattern was applicable to the Mittanians, who first emerged in textual sources under Thutmose III. They reappeared simultaneously in a ceremony scene (TT91) during the reign of Thutmose IV (Porter and Moss 1994: 185-187; Wreszinski 1923: 290-293). Interestingly, no envoys from two other Near Eastern great powers, Babylonia, and Assyria, can be identified in the iconographical evidence. There are only two attestations of Keftiu participation in the ceremony (TT86, TT85), both dating to the reign of Thutmose III (Porter and Moss 1994: 170-175, 175-178). Unfortunately, no iconographical evidence was available to shed light on the involvement of Alašiya in the ceremony. This development indicates Egypt's deepening involvement in the international exchange system and a consolidation of its control over Nubia and the Levant (Morris 2018: 117–164). But the situation was about to change during the last period of the 18th Dynasty, heralded by the reign of Akhenaten.

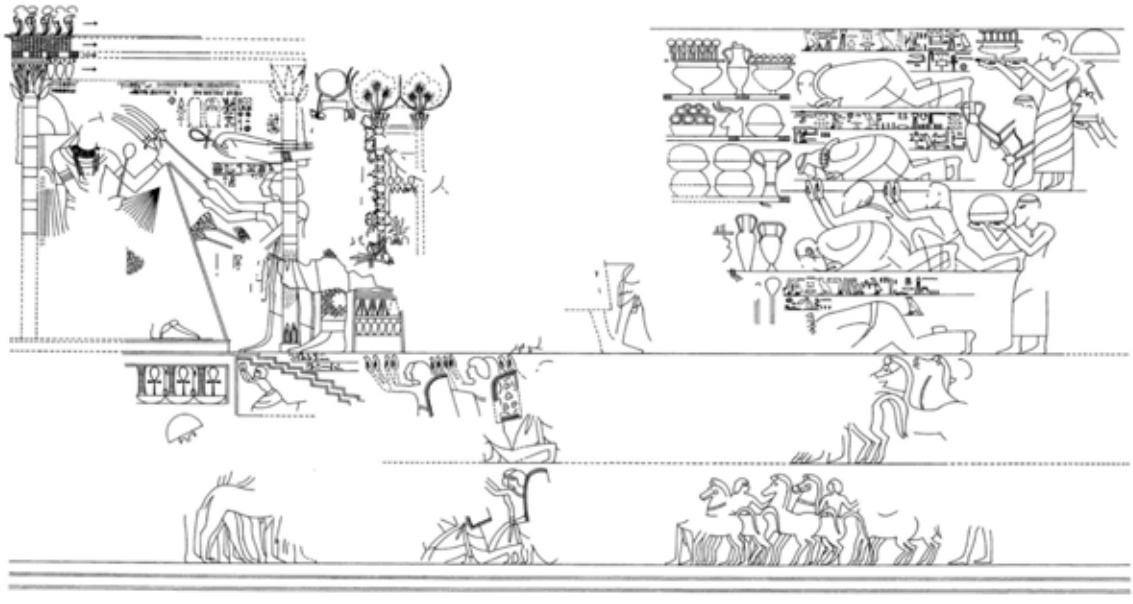

Figure 2. Amenhotep III and Hathor overseeing the presentation of gifts and tributes ceremony, tomb of Amenmose (TT89). After Hartwig 2004: fig. 28.

Waning years: Akhenaten to Horemheb

Evidence dating to this period was less abundant but nonetheless historically valuable. The ceremony has become so integrated with Egypt's political culture that it continued to be celebrated during the reign of Akhenaten despite this king's preoccupation with his religious reforms (Van Dijk 2000). Two sets of unique scenes from the Amarna tombs of Huya (AT1) and Meryra II (AT2) commemorate the celebration of this ceremony in the 12th regnal year of Akhenaten (Davies 1905a: pl. 37; Davies 1905b: pls. 13, 14). Representatives of Egypt's imperial subjects (Nubians and Syrians) and envoys from other foreign countries (Puntites, Libyans, Hittites or Aegeans) can be identified in the scenes (Figure 3).

Following the illustrious example of his predecessors, Tutankhamun celebrated this ceremony, which was depicted with remarkable details in the tomb of his Viceroy of Kush Amenhotep (called Huy, TT40, Davies and Gardiner 1926: pls. 19-31). Another depiction of this ceremony (not necessarily the same event depicted in the tomb of Huy) in the Memphite tomb of Horemheb seems to suggest that in the aftermath of the Amarna period, the reception of foreign gifts and tribute was strongly associated with and perhaps had to be guaranteed by military campaigns (Martin 1989: 80-81). The accompanying inscriptions record Horemheb's military exploits in the Near East and the subsequent presentation of tributes to Tutankhamun: 'He was sent as King's envoy as far as the limit of the rising of the sun disk, returning when he had triumphed ... His name was renowned in the land of the Hittites when he travelled northwards. And lo, his Majesty rose upon the throne of the bringing of tribute, and there was brought to him the tribute of the north and south.' (Martin 1989: 80-81). The employment of coercive means indicated the necessity to consolidate Egyptian rule and hegemony in the aftermath of the Amarna period.

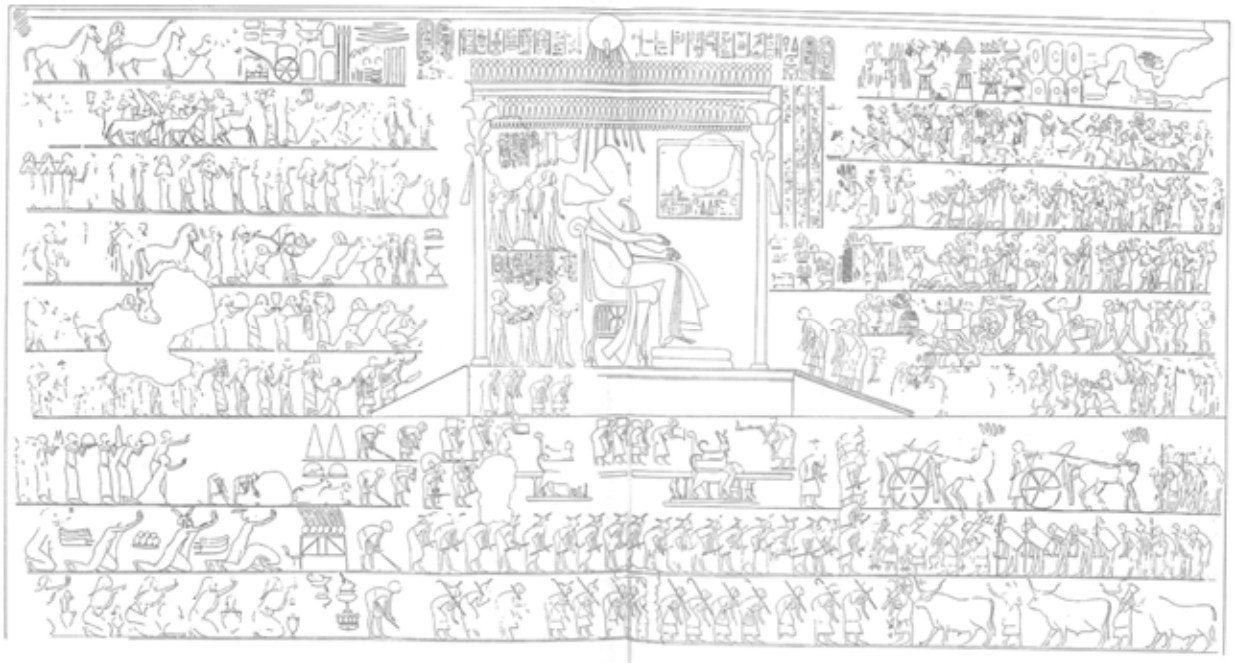

Figure 3. The presentation of gifts and tributes ceremony, celebrated in the 12th regnal year of Akhenaten. Davies 1905a: pl. 37.

The Egyptian perspective

In the words of Feldman (2006: 8), in Late Bronze Age diplomacy, 'kings of culturally disparate states interacted with one another in an idealized rhetorical mode of parity and reciprocity'. This was largely borne out by the cuneiform evidence (e.g. the Amarna Letters and the Ramesside correspondence between the Egyptian and the Hittite courts), even though undercurrents of jealousy, discontent, and self-interest existed and constantly threatened to disrupt this system of exchange.

The Egyptian pictorial and textual evidence, due to its inherent biases, tend to portray an oversimplified and sometimes distorted picture of Egypt's role in the international exchange of gifts and tributes, projecting Egypt as the centre of a hierarchical and concentric world system, being politically dominant and culturally superior. At first glance, these scenes preserve rich information; however, they are not, nor do they claim to be, faithful documentations of the ceremony. They are artistic reproductions compiled from carefully chosen snapshots intended for the consumption of their commissioners (the tomb owners) and prospective visitors. Therefore, they tend to give their commissioners unjustified prominence (e.g. portraying his figure in larger dimensions than others, capturing the moment when he was playing the dominant role, or identifying him with captions) (Davies 1905b: pl. 15), and leave out 'trivial' details (e.g. date, venue, and list of participants) instrumental for the understanding and interpretation of the ceremony by modern scholars. Furthermore, the inscriptions that accompany representations of this ceremony revealed an interpretive framework for the ceremony which treated all foreign envoys (regardless of the political status of their senders) as tribute contributors who sought nothing in return but the 'breath of life' (Egyptian *t3w ʿnḫ*) from the pharaoh, who claimed universal dominion with divine sanction (see Diagram 1). The concept of 'breath of life' can be traced back to the beginning of Egyptian history. Old Kingdom religious texts made it abundantly clear that the ancient Egyptians were acutely aware of the correlation between the act of breathing and the state of living. Spells in the Pyramid Texts express the deceased's keen wish to receive the breath of his life (*t3[w]=f n ʿnḫ*), 'breathe joy', and partake in an abundance of god's sacrifices (e.g. PT511, Faulkner 1969: 187-188). The significance of breath for revitalising the dead continued to be reflected in funerary texts (Spell 168 in P. Ani, Faulkner 1985: 162-163) dating to later periods. Over time (especially with the advent of the New Kingdom), the semantic range of the 'breath of life' expanded, and this term was employed to designate something which the king says (Lorton 1974: 137-138). In the context of peaceful exchanges between the pharaoh and foreign vassals or envoys, it seems to designate something granted by the former to the latter. Lorton (1974: 138-143) discusses this concept as a juridical term in the context of international relations; he proposes that the 'breath' refers to an agreement to enter into a treaty relationship and that the *ʿnḫ* 'life' may be a pun for *ʿnḫ* 'oath'. If one follows this interpretation, then the foreigners begging for the 'breath of life' in Egyptian pictorial evidence must be requesting that an oath of loyalty be administered to them or renewed. In a military context, the defeated foreign enemies were often depicted as prostrating before the pharaoh and pleading for the 'breath of life,' which could mean a royal pardon to spare their lives (Israeli 1998: 271–283). Liverani (2001: 160–165) proposes that the Egyptians developed this ideology of life to homogenise various types of transactions between Egypt and its periphery in a continuum of situations. This Egyptocentric interpretive framework was undoubtedly divorced from reality and betrayed a patronising attitude. There is hardly any Egyptian evidence for the pharaoh's largess towards his foreign subjects or diplomatic partners, even though cuneiform evidence confirms that he engaged in the diplomatic gift exchange and occasionally compensated his vassals for their delivery of goods (EA369, 1-23: Moran 2000: 366). When references to the delivery of goods to foreigners were unavoidable, they were tactically masked as acts of piety. Thus, Hatshepsut's payment to the Puntites for their goods was represented as a donation made to the Puntite goddess, whom the Egyptians identified with Hathor (Morris 2015: 167-168). The fictionality of the

Egyptian ideology was thrown into relief in the Story of Wenamun (Lichtheim 2006b: 226-227), in which the ruler of Byblos insisted on getting paid with goods instead of the 'breath of life' for the requested timber (Morris 2015: 168-169).

Diagram 1. The Egyptian interpretive framework of international gift exchange and tribute collection.

Various aspects of the presentation of gifts and tributes ceremony betray an Egyptocentric worldview that has characterised the Egyptians' understanding of the external world and shaped their dealings with foreigners since the dawn of Egyptian civilisation.[6] The foreign participants of the ceremony were often associated with the four cardinal points (Nubians with the South, Asiatics with the North, Libyans or the Aegean people with the West, and Puntites with the East) so that the pharaoh could proudly claim universal dominion (Davies 1905a: pl. 37). This symbolic orientation of the ceremony scenes usually aligns with their placement on the funerary monuments (Anthony 2017: 56). In the tomb of Tutankhamun's Viceroy of Kush (TT40), the Nubians tribute-bearers were depicted on the south wall and their Syrian counterparts on the north wall (Davies and Gardiner 1926: pls. 19, 23). The grouping of foreigners according to the geographical location of their home countries instead of their political status served to enhance the pharaoh's own prestige and accentuate his elevated status above all foreign rulers. For example, in one scene from the tomb of Menkheperraseneb (TT86), the representatives from Hatti, Keftiu, and Tunip stood alongside each other, despite the different status of their home countries and their political affiliation with Egypt (Davies 1933: pls. 3, 5, 7). This geographic correlation was not simply an artistic device invented by Egyptian craftsmen. The fact that the Egyptians did juxtapose the delegations of other great kings and their vassals was confirmed by a letter from Kadašman-Enlil I, in which the Babylonian king bitterly complained that Amenhotep III did not review his chariots separately from those of the mayors, which apparently constituted a serious insult (EA1, 88-98: Moran 2000: 2).

While the hierarchical difference between the foreign envoys was purposefully blurred, that between them and the pharaoh was constantly emphasised. The contrast between motion and stasis was manipulated to highlight the asymmetrical power relationship. Whereas the foreign envoys approached the pharaoh from all directions in an orderly fashion to perform the rituals of obeisance, the latter remained motionless on his throne and was seated in a stiff position like a divine statue (see Figures 1-3). The unilateral and centripetal movement of the foreigners symbolised voluntariness, i.e. they took the initiative to pay homage to the pharaoh due to his renown and preeminent power.

As the focal point of the ceremony, the king was usually enthroned in a kiosk on a raised platform, which physically elevated him above the foreign envoys even though he was seated (Caminos 1968: pl. 28; Dziobek and Raziq 1990: pl. 33). The foreigners, being forced to look up to (in a literal sense) the king, was constantly reminded of his superior status. In a similar vein, the venue of the ceremony, which was

[6] Foreigners were viewed as agents of chaos who needed to be subjugated and kept at bay by the pharaoh (Anthony 2017: 57–58). The motifs of the pharaoh smiting or trampling foreign enemies appeared on the pharaoh's paraphernalia and monumental buildings throughout the pharaonic period (Hall 1986).

usually a palatial setting, served to impress and intimidate the envoys (e.g. with ubiquitous motifs of bound captives or Nine Bows). Such motifs would appear in 'lowly' positions, e.g., the base of royal kiosks and palatial pavements, allowing the pharaoh to dominate his enemies whether he was static or in motion.[7] Indeed, the ubiquitous motif of bound captives in the palatial setting and on pharaoh's regalia undoubtedly sent shivers down the spines of some Egyptian subjects of dubious loyalty. For the Nubian vassals, a failure to deliver tribute goods of satisfactory quantity and quality could have grave consequences. This was abundantly illustrated by the thinly veiled threats in a Ramesside letter from a Viceroy of Kush named Paser: 'Increase your contribution every year. Have a care for your head, having checked yourself in your slackness. You are old. Look to yourself carefully and beware! Remember the day of bringing the tribute, when you pass into the Presence beneath the Window, the nobles in two rows in the presence of His Majesty (l.p.h.), the chiefs and envoys of every foreign land standing dazzled at seeing the tribute. You are afraid and shrink back, your hand grows weak, and you know not whether it be death or life that lies before you. You are profuse in prayers to your gods: "Rescue me and keep me safe this one time!"' (Caminos 1954: 438-439).

The elevated status of the pharaoh was highlighted not only by the spatial organisation but also by the hierarchical structure of communication. For instance, evidence suggests that communication between the Egyptian king and foreign envoys was mediated by Egyptian officials or envoys (see Figures 1-3).[8] Limiting direct access to the pharaoh increased the social distance between him and the foreign envoys, which further accentuated his unique status. To a certain extent, this communicative pattern is reminiscent of the interaction between the divine and Egypt's populace which was mediated by the pharaoh. Indeed, the occasional presence of an elongated *pt*-symbol under the royal canopy and deities (see Figures 1 and 2) behind the pharaoh suggests that he was perceived as an intermediary between the divine realm and the mundane world during this ceremony (Caminos 1968: pls. 10, 28). The presence of deities, who were presumably invisible spectators of the ceremony, indicates divine sanction of the pharaoh's reception of foreign gifts and tributes and the implied universal dominion of this action. It is unlikely a coincidence that Hathor, the goddess of foreign lands, was usually depicted overseeing the presentation of goods alongside the king or presenting them to the king. She was worshipped at Levantine sites where Egyptian presence was strong during the New Kingdom and was even identified with foreign deities like the Mistress of Byblos (Hollis 2021: 51-53). Just as the Egyptians disguised their commercial transaction with the Puntites as a pious act (Morris 2015: 167-168), it was perhaps also their intention to portray the delivery of *jnw* by foreigners to the pharaoh as ultimately an offering to the goddess Hathor.

The ceremony represented a spectacle of imperial splendour, which strived to advertise the awe-inspiring opulence of the empire and entice its foreign participants. As a festive occasion, it was accompanied by various forms of entertainment: e.g. wrestling, dancing, and music performance (see Figure 3). Its participants simultaneously played the roles of actors and spectators. The king, his regalia (e.g. the ceremonial blue crown, the crook and flail) and paraphernalia (e.g. the royal palanquins and chariots) were constantly in the spotlight. The distinctive physical appearances, costumes (e.g. the

[7] A pavement decorated with bound captives was found in the Throne Room Complex of the Northern Harim in the north-eastern section of the Great Palace at Amarna (Weatherhead 2007: fig. 12). It allowed Akhenaten to ritually trample Egypt's foes and repelled the cosmic chaos they embodied with every step he took within the walled compound of the Great Palace, in a comfortable and safe setting. In addition, whoever approached the king to receive a royal audience unavoidably trod on the bound captives.

[8] For other examples, see TT78 (Brack and Brack 1980: pl. 6d), TT63 (Dziobek and Raziq 1990: pl. 33), QI1 and QI4 (Caminos 1968: pls. 10, 28), TT42 (Davies 1933: pl. 33), TT40 (Davies and Gardiner 1926: pl. 19).

tiered dress of the Syrians), and customs of the foreign participants all constituted ingredients of this multi-cultural visual festival (see Figures 1-3). The gifts and tribute goods were carefully arranged for dramatic effect, e.g. being grouped into a composite piece or placed on exquisite stands decorated with royal iconographies for display (Davies and Gardiner 1926: pls. 19, 23). One can imagine how the foreign envoys marvelled at the sight of the awe-inspiring image of the king, the monumental setting, the diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds of other foreign envoys, and the dazzling array of exotic gifts and tributes. As a staged political performance, it was intended to serve multiple purposes: awing the pharaoh's Egyptian and foreign subjects, enhancing his reputation in the international community, and promoting an Egyptocentric ideology, which was often at odds with reality. These were achieved through the visual, auditory, and olfactory aspects of the ceremony, which would have inspired strong emotions like joy, pride, awe, fear, or discontent in the audience.

The perspective of foreign participants

It must be emphasised that other great kings did not object to the public display of diplomatic gifts and the ceremonialisation of their presentation to the Egyptian king. Quite the contrary, they themselves embraced this practice because official contacts among ancient Near Eastern countries had a strong social aspect; in addition to their intrinsic value, diplomatic gifts possessed added value deriving from the power and prestige of their sender (Zaccagnini 2000: 151–152). Their public exhibition before domestic audiences and foreign guests constituted a public demonstration of how well-connected and widely acclaimed the recipient king was. Therefore, Tušratta of Mittani urged the pharaoh to send him abundant gifts so that he might be greatly glorified before his own subjects and foreign guests (EA20, 46-59: Moran 2000: 48). To the dismay of Tušratta, the quality of gifts he received from his Egyptian brother did not meet his expectations, and the public ceremony turned out to be a humiliating experience (Moran 2000: 48).

Furthermore, Zaccagnini (2000: 152) points out that the sender of diplomatic gifts would stand to benefit from a ceremonial display because of the reciprocal fame and prestige that redounded to him. This may partly account for the enthusiasm with which Tušratta encouraged the pharaoh to assemble the entire land for a public display of the lavish dowry of his daughter: 'And the entire land may my brother assemble and may all other lands and the nobles (and) all envoys be present. And they may show his dowry to my brother, and they may spread out everything in the view of my brother ... And may my brother take all the nobles and all the envoys and all other lands and the war charioteers whom my brother desires, and may my brother go. And may he spread out the dowry and may it be pleasing' (EA24, 24-34: Moran 2000: 67).

However, other great kings would probably not be pleased when the pharaoh distorted the nature of diplomatic gift exchange and disguised it as the reception of tributes through the *ms jnw* ceremony. In fact, they frowned upon any act that might undermine their honour and prestige.[9] The above-mentioned chariot-viewing incident (EA1, 88-98: Moran 2000: 2) demonstrates that while other great kings recognised Egypt's sovereignty over its subjects, they objected to the indiscriminate treatment of their envoys and Egyptian subjects. Despite the Babylonian messengers' disgruntlement about being humiliated, the formal occasion of a royal audience might have suppressed their expression of

[9] When Aššur-uballit I of Assyria sought to establish diplomatic contact with the Egyptian king as an equal, Burna-Buriaš II of Babylonia urged the pharaoh to turn away the Assyrian envoys empty-handed because he considered the Assyrians his vassals (EA9, 19-38: Moran 2000: 18).

displeasure on the spot. If so, these emotions of resentment may be temporarily masked by bodily enactment, which implied consent.

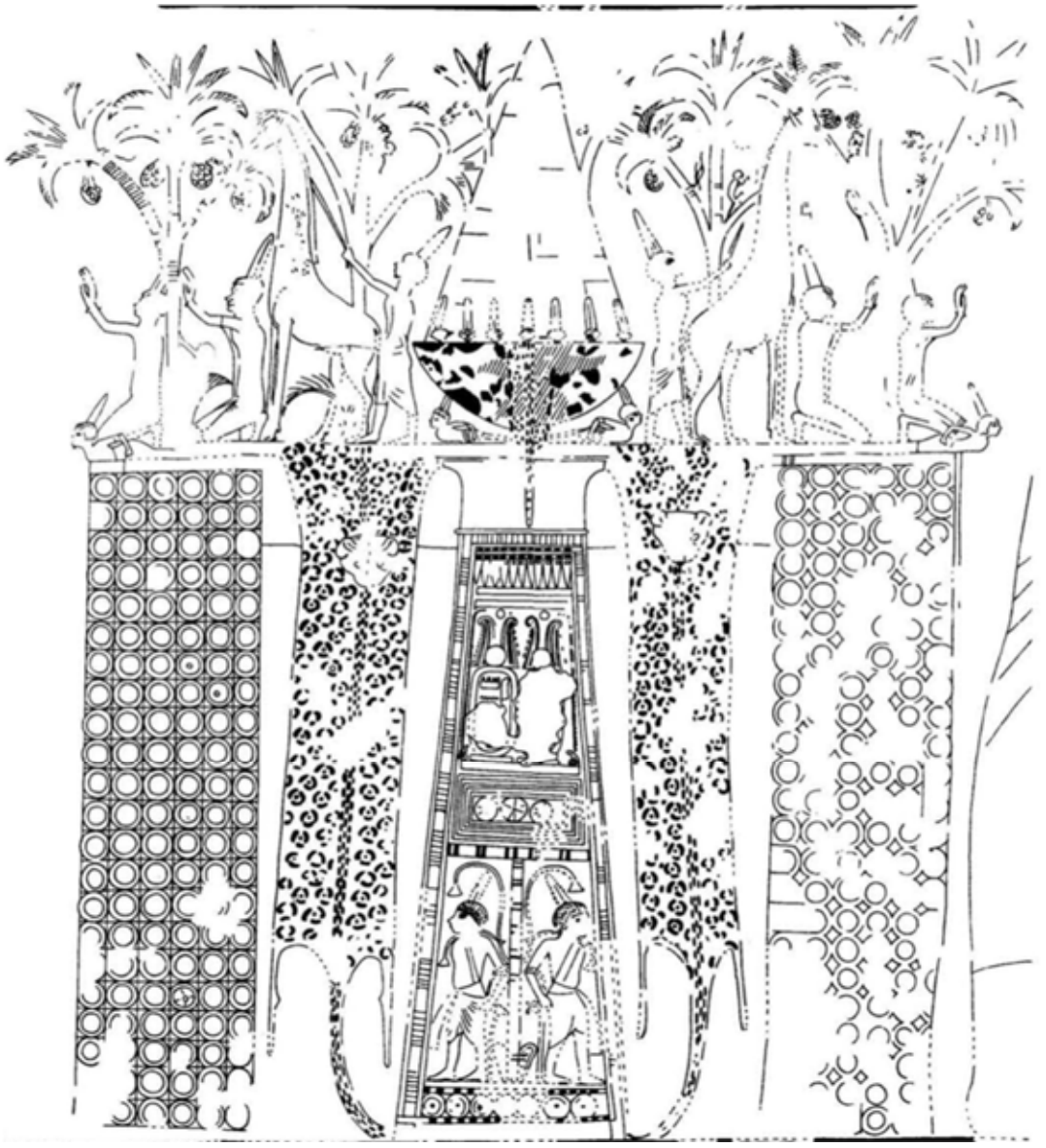

Figure 4. Gold set piece from Nubia, in the tomb of Amenhotep called Huy (TT40). Davies and Gardiner 1926: pl. 26.

As for the Nubian and Syrian participants, although the Egyptian state siphoned their wealth through the tribute system, participation in this ceremony may prove somewhat enticing. Such an opportunity allowed them a glimpse of the glamour of the Egyptian empire; furthermore, they could be incorporated into the pharaoh's extensive network of exchange through their interactions with Egypt. Personal visits enabled them to experience the high culture at the cosmopolitan Egyptian court, which might inspire imitation at a less grandiose level and promote their subscription to Egyptian culture and rule. Perhaps also aspiring to be surrounded by a multi-ethnic entourage, Niqmaddu II of Ugaritic requested Nubian

palace attendants from the pharaoh (EA49, 17-26: Moran 2000: 120). The best example of the acculturating effect of the Egyptian elite culture was furnished by the case of the Nubian prince Hekanefer. In the tomb of Amenhotep (TT40), he was shown participating in the ceremony clad in his ethnic costume (Davies and Gardiner 1926: 23); nevertheless, in his own tomb at Toshka, which is modelled upon that of Amenhotep, he was portrayed as an Egyptian elite (Kemp 2006: 37; Smith 2003: xv). This divergence was telling of his sense of identity and high regard for the Egyptian culture.

Although the Egyptians orchestrated the ceremony, it did not deny its foreign participants an opportunity to express their emotions, provided that their sentiments accorded with the Egyptian royal ideology. One of the most intriguing items among the tribute goods was a gold set-piece, which was depicted in the tomb of Tutankhamun's Viceroy of Kush (see Figure 4). It featured designs of a steep pyramidion on a bowl-shaped object placed upon a plate or a wide yoke. Surrounding the central structure were fruit-bearing date palms, miniature figures of prostrating or kneeling Nubians, and leashed giraffes. The figure of a prostrate and bound Nubian (with only the head and torso) protrudes from both sides of the plate (or yoke).[10] Panther skins, animal tails, and colourful cloth with ornaments that look like interlocking gold rings drape from the edge of the plate, which rests on an elaborate pylon-shaped stand. Unlike normal utilitarian stands with simple designs, this pylon-shaped stand features double royal cartouches of Tutankhamun, which surmount a Sema-tawy symbol (signifying the unification of Egypt) with two bound Nubians (Davies and Gardiner 1926: 22-23). It is noteworthy that this motif usually depicts a Nubian and a Syrian, representing Egypt's traditional enemies from the South and the North; however, it was modified on the pylon-shaped stand in accordance with the identity of the sender of this set-piece. Through an amalgamation of highly symbolic artistic motifs, this set-piece exalted Egyptian dominance over the land of Nubia along with its people and produce (Davies and Gardiner 1926: 22-23). It was probably commissioned by the Nubian vassals or Egyptian officials in Nubia for this occasion. By presenting this piece to the pharaoh, the Nubian chiefs symbolically exalted Egyptian rule over Nubia and confirmed their allegiance to him. Variations of this gold set-piece were depicted in the same tomb (Davies and Gardiner 1926: pl. 26), the tomb of Meryra II (see Figure 3), and the Beit el-Wali temple of Ramesses II (Ricke *et al.* 1967: pl. 9).

Self-debasement was likewise manifest on two ceremonial shields depicted in the same scene among the Nubian tribute goods; one bears the image of Tutankhamun spearing a supplicating Nubian kneeling on top of a hill country, while the other features a ram-headed sphinx (an avatar of Tutankhamun) trampling fallen Nubians (Figure 5). Remarkably, four ceremonial shields bearing similar scenes (Nibb 2006) have been found in the tomb of Tutankhamun, providing perfect archaeological comparanda for the pair depicted in the tomb of Amenhotep. Nibb (2006: 71) proposes that these ceremonial shields were designed for use as standards; indeed, they sent a strong visual message to the Egyptian populace that the pharaoh was 'shielding' them from aggressive foreign enemies.

For an envoy from Egypt's Levantine vassals, a royal audience with the Egyptian king could prove to be a bewildering and exhilarating experience. The Middle Kingdom Tale of Sinuhe preserved a detailed account of the protagonist's audience with the pharaoh, which provides some hints on what a vassal king might have experienced at the Egyptian court since Sinuhe had essentially established a living abroad as a nomadic chief and was treated like one at the Egyptian court before he was purified and hence Egyptianised again: 'When it dawned, very early, they came to summon me. Ten men came and

[10] Four similar figures of foreigners protrude from the base of a cosmetic jar of Tutankhamun. A recumbent lion (undoubtedly to be identified with Tutankhamun) rests on the lid. The body of the jar features a vibrant hunting scene. The artistic program of this jar represents the pharaoh's dominance over Egypt's enemies who are agents of chaos (Feldman 2006: fig. 3).

ten men went to usher me into the palace. My forehead touched the ground between the sphinxes, and the royal children stood in the gateway to meet me. The courtiers who ushered me through the forecourt set me on the way to the audience-hall. I found his majesty on the great throne in a kiosk of gold. Stretched out on my belly, I did not know myself before him, while this god greeted me pleasantly. I was like a man seized by darkness' (Lichtheim 2006a: 231).

Figure 5. Ceremonial shields featuring smiting scenes, TT40. Davies and Gardiner 1926: pl. 25.

During the royal audience, the foreign envoys might be expected to perform highly ritualistic acts, e.g. prostration before the pharaoh or even kissing the dirt beneath his feet, to demonstrate their loyalty to the pharaoh.[11] Such obsequiousness was expressed in written forms, i.e. highly elaborate prostration formulas, in the Amarna Letters.[12] In these prostration formulas, pharaoh's vassals humbly referred to themselves as the dirt under the feet or sandal of the king, or the footstool for his feet (e.g. EA147: 1-8,

[11] According to the Stela of Piye, this manner of doing obeisance to the king survived into the Nubian period (Lichtheim 2006c: 80).
[12] For a discussion of the varying levels of obsequiousness in the prostration formula, see Morris 2006.

EA151: 4-11, EA241: 1-8, EA255: 1-7, EA292: 1-7; Moran 2000: 233, 238, 296, 308, 335).[13] One wonders whether these expressions had originally been inspired by the eye-witness accounts of their envoys or their own experience during their visits to Egypt. Evidence from the Amarna archive indicates that the Levantine vassals sometimes received direct orders from the pharaoh to enter into his presence. Šuwardata of Gath received such an instruction to appear before the king: 'The king, my lord, has written me "Enter and pay me homage". Into the presence of the king, my lord! Would that it were possible to enter into the presence of the king, my lord, to receive the ... and the ... of the king, my lord' (EA283, 7-13: Moran 2000: 323). Another intriguing question is how closely these verbally performed prostrations mimicked the rituals of obeisance carried out during an in-person audience. Pictorial evidence shows all foreigners doing obeisance to the pharaoh in a similar manner (which represented an idealised, Egyptocentric worldview); however, the messengers of great kings were probably exempt from performing the more demeaning ways of paying homage.

Compared to the great kings, Egypt's Levantine vassals were more susceptible to the influence of Egyptian ideology and propaganda (Liverani 2001: 163-164). Some of them embraced the Egyptocentric ideology on their own initiative and skilfully employed its associated terminology (e.g. the 'breath of life') in diplomatic correspondence to further their own interests. A prime example is how Abi-Milku of Tyre likened a letter (or an oral message) from the pharaoh to life-sustaining breath in order to solicit a timelier reply from him: 'What is the life of a palace attendant when breath (Akkadian *šāru*) does not come forth from the mouth of the king, his lord?' (EA149, 21-27: Moran 2000: 236). This conscious adoption and reinterpretation of Egyptian terms seemed to be a calculated strategy to curry favour from the pharaoh. Considering the reluctance of the Egyptian authority to intervene in local issues that did not pose any threat to Egyptian rule in the Levant, an efficient way to get the pharaoh's ears and secure a reply would be to employ expressions that resonated with the Egyptians.[14]

The use of 'breath' as a metaphor for the royal message is paralleled by the use of 'life' (Akkadian *balāṭu*, written logographically as TIL.LA) as a synonym for material sustenance and military support in the vassal letters. The metaphor of 'life' served to emphasise that the timely delivery of provisions and military assistance constituted a matter of life or death for them. Arašša of Kumidu diplomatically phrased his request for provisions as a supplication for 'life': 'May the king, my lord, accept (me) and give me life, for I have neither horse nor chariot. May it please the king, my lord, to give life to his servant. Truly, I send my own son to the king, my lord, and may the king, my lord, give me life' (EA198, 17-31: Moran 2000: 276). This passage would make an excellent footnote to a scene in the tomb of Menkheperraseneb (TT86), which depicts the ruler of Tunip presenting a small nude boy (undoubtedly his son and heir) to the pharaoh in exchange for the 'breath of life' (Davies 1933: pl. 4).

Since both 'breath' and 'life' emanated from the pharaoh, he was most appropriately addressed as 'the breath of my life' by his vassals including Ammunira of Beirut (EA141, 2; EA142, 1; EA143, 1-2), Zimredda of Sidon (EA144, 2), and Šuwardata (EA281, 3) (Moran 2000: 227, 228, 229, 230, 322). This privileged epithet performed a double duty: on the one hand, it recognised the Egyptian king's unique status as it was never employed to address other great kings; on the other hand, it served as a gentle reminder of his protective duty towards his vassals. The above-cited examples nicely illustrate how the creative use of the term 'breath of life,' which was clearly of Egyptian origin and imbued with an Egyptocentric ideology, literarily breathed life into the diplomatic letters. Additionally, they reflected the Egyptian

[13] Numerous royal paraphernalia with the bound captive's motif, including sandals, thrones, and footstools, were found in pristine condition in the tomb of Tutankhamun. See: Eaton-Krauss 2008; Hawass 2008; Veldmeijer 2011.
[14] For studies on Egyptian influence in diplomatic texts, see: Cochavi-Rainey 1990; 1997; Mandell 2015.

vassals' compliant attitude towards being exploited for the promulgation of the Egyptocentric ideology as long as they themselves also benefited from it.

As Liverani (2001: 164-165) points out, there is a discrepancy between the different understandings of the ideology of life, which was revealed by the Amarna letters of Egyptian origin and those from the vassals. From the Egyptian perspective, 'life' was an ideological item and implied a unilateral flow of goods (i.e. a one-sided political relationship). However, the Levantine vassals who employed this ideologically charged phraseology viewed their relationship with the pharaoh as reciprocal, i.e. the latter had an obligation to keep them alive by sending back sustenance in times of need. For them, the ideology of life had both political and economic implications, which were related to the pharaoh's power to grant political patronage and material supplies.

Conclusion

The chronological development of the presentation of gifts and tributes ceremony (*ms jnw*) during the 18th dynasty could be divided into three phases: an early stage (Ahmose to Amenhotep II) during which no conclusive evidence exists for the celebration of the ceremony, a golden age (Hatshepsut to Amenhotep III) characterised by an abundance of evidence and more diverse participants, and a waning period (Akhenaten to Horemheb) during which the number of attestations of the ceremony decreased while its ceremoniality increased.

From the Egyptian perspective, the presentation of gifts and tributes ceremony could be understood as a political performance contrived to legitimise the king by publicising his ability to fulfill the essential royal duty of subjugating foreign enemies through peaceful means. In contrast, military parades and ceremonial execution of enemies (e.g. as depicted on the Narmer Palette, see O'Connor 2011) celebrate the pharaoh's ability to contain such threats through the use of violence. As a political performance, the *ms jnw* ceremony could be utilised to reconstruct, reaffirm, and subvert complex power relations between Egypt and other foreign polities (whether they were politically dependent on Egypt or not). The Egyptians, through this carefully choreographed political ceremony, sought to present to the domestic and international audience a spectacle of imperial splendour to enhance the prestige of the pharaoh and promulgate an Egyptocentric ideology. It is worth noting that the Egyptian political ideology of life, which posits an oversimplified exchange of the 'breath of life' for foreign goods, exerted a profound influence on how the Egyptians and foreigners interacted on an ideological level and in reality. Unsurprisingly, the Egyptians' self-serving acts received pushback from other Ancient Near Eastern kings who were not subjects of the pharaoh. On the other hand, some Egyptian vassals chose to embrace this Egyptocentric ideology and its associated terminology to use them for their own gains.

Although the ceremony was essentially an exclusive and prestigious ceremony for the Egyptian elites, its influence would be able to reach far beyond their small circle. As demonstrated by an inscription in the rock shrine of Usersatet (QI4), the collection, delivery, and administration of the foreign goods would have involved a lot of middle or lower-level officials (Caminos 1968: 67). Depictions of opulent scenes of the ceremony in elite tombs would have given ordinary Egyptians who had never ventured abroad a glimpse of the glamour of the Egyptian empire, which might kindle in them a sense of pride and motivate them to participate in the enterprise of empire-building.

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Festivals and duties: aspects of religious life found in ancient Egyptian personal correspondence

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Abstract

Over the years private letters have been an important additional source of social and historical information. The personal correspondence from ancient Egypt exemplifies the extra insight such letters are able to provide. This paper will look at a selection of personal correspondence, from different periods in ancient Egyptian history, which provide insight into religious festival observance and the related priestly duties. In this context a letter will be discussed which is concerned with the festival of the goddess Anat at Gaza. The content evidences her transition from the Near East together with the ancient Egyptian presence in Palestine. It will also discuss the personal invocation of a deity by people, who are not part of the religious community. A further focus will be on letters detailing not only the priestly duties related to religious requirements, but also the other varied duties they had to undertake.

The personalities and relationships of the senders and recipients, the background of other people mentioned in the letter and their relationship to the sender and/or recipient, societal status, historical context, will also be discussed. From the religious aspect visual representations on tomb and temple walls and individual stelae have provided considerable knowledge. This information is augmented by the important primary source of personal correspondence, as evidenced in this case by the insight into the religious aspects of festival requirements, the people concerned and their duties.

Keywords

Religious festivals; religious duties; personal invocation/deity transition

Introduction

Prompted by a person's need to communicate in writing to a recipient at a distance, over the years private letters have been an important additional source of social and historical information. The personal correspondence from ancient Egypt exemplifies the extra insight such letters are able to provide. As a result, there has been considerable interest in this genre reflected in works such as those concerning letters discovered amongst a collection (Allen 2002), those from a certain single period (Wente 1967), those related to a specific grouping, such as a particular topic (Glanville 1928: 294-312) and those analyzing structure and wording (Sweeney 2003: 99-139). This paper will look firstly at correspondence from the New Kingdom. These letters have been chosen because of their insight from the perspective of religious festivals, religious issues, incidents related to religious life and custom, the priestly duties related to these aspects together with the other varied additional duties they had to undertake – as opposed to other letters not so specifically focused including letters to the dead and formal oracle petitions. Also discussed will be the senders and recipients themselves and the historical context. Secondly are letters from the 21st dynasty which are part of a corpus of correspondence which evidences the belief in a somewhat mysterious local deity named 'Horus of the Camp'.

Letters from the 18th dynasty

Looking firstly at the 18th dynasty, the following letter is dated to the time of Hatshepsut. It is from Tet to his lord Djehuty regarding Djehuty's interference with one Ptahsokar in the matter of the personnel of Heliopolis:

'Tet communicates to his lord Djehuty, l.p.h., in the favour of Amun-Re. This is a letter to inform my lord of a matter regarding Ptahsokar, inasmuch as it is you who interfered with him in connection with the personnel of Heliopolis. Speak with the herald Geregmennefer then both of you send a letter about him to the Chief of Seers' (Hayes 1957: 81, fig. 81; Wente 1990: 90, Letter 111).[1]

Excavations by the Theban expedition, under the directorship of Herbert E. Winlock and Ambrose Lansing on behalf of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, discovered this papyrus, folded into a rectangular packet, in rubbish deposited in the forecourt of Hatshepsut's temple at Deir el-Bahri. For a full description of the papyrus see Hayes (1957: 89).

This letter provokes thought and research into the protagonists and their connection with the religious sector. The recipient Djehuty's tomb was discovered in the Theban necropolis, and his status as Hatshepsut's treasurer and architect is attested by the extensive list of titles inscribed there which include 'Superintendent of the two silver-houses, the Superintendent of the two houses of gold...' and 'the Hereditary Mayor, the Treasurer and Superintendent of all the works of the King'. Other inscriptions tell how he 'guided the workmen to execute (their work) according to the works' and describe his building achievements in the temples of Deir el-Bahri and Karnak together with his involvement in overseeing the measuring of the tribute of Punt. He is shown in this capacity in the Deir el-Bahri Punt reliefs. He can thus be seen as a high authority in the funding and overseeing of major construction projects. Additionally, although only a short letter of complaint, from the religious aspect this letter is an insight into a problem associated with temple building – a direct request to investigate the unsatisfactory situation of interference with the workforce.

The identity and actual status of the sender Tet is not given. The only name so far associated with *tt* in the New Kingdom has been a woman (Hayes 1957: 89; Ranke 1935: 383). While he addresses his recipient Djehuty as *nb.f* / 'his Lord', as part of his form of address, his direct emphasis on Djehuty's action does not reflect a considerable difference in status. Geregmennefer's two alabaster canopic jars bear the title of 'Chief/First Royal Herald' (Williams 1918: 278). As the actual location of the people from Heliopolis is not stated it is not clear whether Djehuty's interference has taken place at Deir el-Bahri or Heliopolis. The fact that Djehuty has to send a letter to the Chief of Seers, that is the high priest of Heliopolis, would make the latter location more likely. The tone of the letter, together with the request that Djehuty confer with Geregmennefer *kꜣ ḥꜣb.tn šꜥt ḫr.f n wr* / 'then you write a letter about it to the Great Seer,' suggests the seriousness of his action and the need to explain what actually occurred, in a communication from both of them, to the Heliopolitan High Priest in order to restore the situation.

Ptahsokar's role is not defined but the interference from Djehuty would indicate that Djehuty saw himself as his superior. He therefore perhaps had countermanded Ptahsokar's orders or tried to tell him how he should instruct the people from Heliopolis in his charge to undertake their work. This has provoked the letter from Tet, who perhaps was working alongside Djehuty and sharing the overall responsibility for whatever project was underway. From the religious perspective the letter not only gives information about the bureaucratic hierarchy, the levels of responsibility involved in in carrying out the important work of temple building but also by its focus on a specific incident regarding temple

[1] Primary and secondary source references.

building gives insight into a problem in administration of the workforce and the people involved. It evidences the kind of personal problem that could occur in this area and the background of the people whose job it was to resolve it.

Dated also to the 18th dynasty, in the reign of Thutmose III, is a short note written on an ostracon, which was discovered at the site of the settlement at Deir el-Medina:

'You are to tell the scribe Amenemone [...] to send me the statue. [...] the summary of apportionment. Now as for the divine offerings, hand them over to the *wᶜb* priest who is in Djeser-Akhet, while the builder's workmen should remain at work' (Černý 1930-45; Wente 1990: 94, Letter 122).[2]

No names for the sender or recipient are recorded. In the abrupt beginning the only name mentioned is that of the scribe Amenemone who is told to send the statue to the sender of the note. There is no information regarding the apportionment to be given. The temple *ḏsr-ꜣḫt* was located at Deir el-Bahri which is where the divine offerings are to be handed over to the *wᶜb* priests of the temple. The comment that the builder's workmen should remain at work implies that they are located at the site.

The brevity of the style is consistent with a piece of official communication written on an ostracon. It is possible that no sender or recipient needed to be named, that the people involved were well-known to each other, and that this was part of an on-going correspondence in which the recipient would know who the writer was. The reference to *ḏsr-ꜣḫt* is discernible as his location. Haeny (1997: 96) notes it as belonging to Thutmose III and that the *ḏsr-ꜣḫt* / 'Sacred Horizon' temple was 'erected late in Thutmose's reign above and between the temples of Nebhepetre Mentuhotep and Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahri...' suggesting a dating of the letter to the to the reign of Thutmose III (Valbelle 1985: 22). While this is only a brief text with its reference to divine offerings and the naming of the temple it is again a source of specific information related to the religious environment. Given its provenance, the directive in the letter that 'the builder's workmen should remain at work' is an indication of their location at Deir el-Medina. Valbelle (1985: 22) notes that ostraca discovered at other excavations have, in most cases, attributed the workers to Deir el-Bahri.

Letters from the 19th dynasty

The first of three letters regarding religious festivals and dated to the 19th dynasty is a communication from the wab priest, Minmose to the wab priest Sobekhotep:

'It is Minmose, the *wᶜb* priest of Ptah-Sokar in the temple of Nebmare on the west of Thebes, who addresses the *wᶜb* priest of Sakhmet, Sobekhotep, son of Aamon. Please be attentive in observing the festivals of the gods and also in making their divine [offerings] in the chapel of each god who resides within the Temple of Nebmare, given [life....] them to the one of his sunlight, Amun, who is in his solar disk, to Nefertum-Horus the Exultant, to Sakhmet the Great who is in this temple. To Wepwawet of Upper Egypt and to Wepwawet of Lower Egypt, the gods of Amun Kamutef, and to every god and every goddess. Please make their offerings. Do not ignore my words. Be mindful of the gods you are serving [that they may give life]. A further communication, please send a message also to your cultivator who is in the fields having control over the grain. Tell him of the harvest assessment in barley and emmer which is [...] the granary. Do not allow the granary to be lacking in barley and emmer. For it is upon its granary that a house stands firm. You shall see to the cattle stable. Attention, be mindful! Have them

[2] Primary and secondary source references.

properly cared for. Do not turn your back. It is good if you note' (Černý and Gardiner 1957: pl. 90; Wente 1990: 126, Letter 148).[3]

Apart from their occupation as *wᶜb* priests no personal background is available for the sender and his recipient, except for the fact that Sobekhotep is the son of *ỉᶜ- jmn* /Aamon. As Bakir notes (1970: 48) the style of greeting that Minmose uses has been shortened to the form sender *r-ḏd n* / 'says to' (Bakir 1970: 65) and is without any elaborate complimentary preamble. The final words *nfr sḏm.k* / 'It is good if you note' is seen to be appropriate between persons of equal rank (Bakir 1970: 65), as shown in this piece of correspondence between two wab priests.

The location of the sender and his recipient, the Temple of Nebmare west of Thebes, was established originally as the funerary temple of Amenophis III. Sokar was the ancient falcon god of Memphis who became linked with the Memphite god Ptah. Sekhmet was looked upon as the consort of Ptah and in Memphis Nefertem was viewed as their child. Inscriptions found on fragments from the temple site show the name of Amun in conjunction with that of Ptah-Sokar, suggesting a division of the temple site between the two. Additionally, titles of attendants at the temple are designated as both belonging to the temple of Nebmare, as well that of Ptah-Sokar (Haeny 1997: 101-102).

The titles of the *wᶜb* priests who are sender and recipient of this letter, and the gods invoked, reflect a continuation of this division and the focus that Amenophis III had on Memphis and its related cults. For a full discussion of the temples see (Ullmann 2002). Amun-Kamutef – literally *jmn kȝ mwt.f* / 'Amun-Bull-of-his mother' – was a designation of strength and fertility. The reference here could reflect the Theban festival of Amun-Min-Kamutef which has been referred to as 'the second most important annual celebration after the *Opet* festival' (Bell 1997: 178). The reference to Min could be omitted (Wilkinson 2003: 115). Scenes depicting this festival have been found at Luxor in the temple and on the pylon of Ramesses II (Bell 1997: 178). This piece of correspondence attests the renewal of the temple of Amenophis III in Ramesside times after the hiatus of the Amarna period (Känel 1984: 29-30).

Additional duties that a *wᶜb* priest was expected to carry out are shown by the second request that Minmose makes to Sobekhotep concerning the adequate supply of barley and emmer. There is also the instruction to see to the cattle and their stable. So, in addition to his specific religious duties Sobekhotep also has to fulfil those requirements concerned with provisions and livestock. This evidences the importance of provisioning the establishment through the work of the priests themselves.

As noted, there is no additional personal background available for the sender and his recipient. In terms of information about religious practices this piece of correspondence has provided knowledge of the re-establishment of Amenophis III's temple with its on-going festivals, and the importance of priestly responsibility in observing their requirement. It has also shown an additional aspect of the priestly role in provisioning the establishment by attending to the supplies and livestock, giving insight into the responsibilities of these 'pure priests' in addition to their religious duties related to rituals and the carrying of the sacred barque in processions.

A second letter from the 19th dynasty involves the Opet Festival, a key celebration in the New Kingdom calendar, focused on the affirmation of the king's divine status as evidenced by the interpretation of the extensive representations at the Luxor Temple. These reflect the splendour of the procession. In the time of Ramesses II his subjects were able to view him and his barque as it proceeded through the peristyle court. They also show, in a scene in the First Courtyard, detail of the offerings and images of the leading of sacrificial cattle, depicted as the long-horned Nubian variety. For an in-depth study of

[3] Primary and secondary source references

the temple and the festival see Bell (1997: 637-639). In contrast to these idealised visual images this letter, dated to the time of Ramesses II, deals with an actual problem in fulfilling the festival requirements – the non-arrival of cattle and provisions for the offerings – and the people involved in resolving the issue.

Written from the scribe Ramose to the royal scribe and overseer of cattle, Hatia, it addresses a problem in the delivery of provisions and cattle for the Feast of Opet:

'The scribe Ramose communicates to his [...], the royal scribe and overseer of cattle Hatia [...]. [...] my lord to the effect that the Feast of Opet has approached to within [...] from today, but the fleet of the Estate of Amun has not come to us [...of days] for the Feast of Opet as well as the cattle for the offerings to all the gods as well as the provisions. [...] my lord [...] his good plans in order that Pharaoh's demands may be carried out, saying 'Let every scow of the fleet of the Estate of Amun [be loaded]. Load fifty barges at the [...] for the Feast of Opet as well as its cattle' because passed the day yesterday while [...] see its fellows transport 10 today, they should depart now. Now see, the fan-bearer on the king's right, the viceroy of Kush, overseer of the southern lands, Paser [...] at the fortress of Bigga [...] by way of saying 'As soon as my letter reaches you, you shall summon together the men of the dockyard together with [...] and have 20 barges made ready at the dockyard.' Now see I have loaded for you [...]to you. Send your scribe to meet up with [them. I have sent a] letter to the mayor of Elephantine, Nebseny saying [...] the surpluses as well as whatever you are lacking in [...]. Now the granary is under your control. As for the one whose prow is filled with goods [...]. It is because I am exceedingly impoverished that I have written to you, for a troublemaker [...took the men of the] dockyard whom I used to have here with me hewing...' (the remainder of the text is lost) (Ćerný and Gardiner 1957: pl. 107; Kitchen 1969-1979, vol. II: 637-639; Wente 1990: 119, Letter 142).[4]

While the sender identifies himself as just 'the scribe Ramose', his recipient Hatia, 'the royal scribe and overseer of cattle' is possibly the person mentioned in one of the inscriptions from the reign of Ramesses II at Amara West (Kitchen 1969-1979, vol. II: 117-119) as being the deputy of the Master of the Two Lands. Ramose's concern that the boats are overdue with the requirements for the festival prompts him to tell Hatia to *br nb n pȝ qȝwt n pr-jmn* / 'every scow of the fleet of the Temple of Amun [to be loaded]'. He orders that *50 wsḫt* / fifty barges need to be loaded with *nkt mjtt nȝy.f kȝ* / 'provisions as well as its cattle'. He emphasises the urgency by pointing out that *ḫpr pȝ sw n sf* / 'passed the day yesterday', urging *ptr ȝtp nȝy-f jryw nty r ᶜqȝ 10 pȝ hrw st wḏ ḥr* / 'Look, load its fellows[5] who should transport 10 today, they should depart now'. This use of different terms by the scribal sender suggests a variance in design and load capacity appropriate to the cargo transported. The boats of the temple of Amun are described as *br nb*/ 'every scow'. The term *wsḫt* used for the 50 boats to be loaded denotes a cargo boat or barge (Jones 1988: 136, 140).

The primary focus of Ramose's letter is this demand for provisions and cattle for the current Feast of Opet, but he is also concerned with other transportation issues. He continues to write that he has received a letter from Paser, who was Viceroy of Kush under Ramesses II, the details of which he passes on to Hatia. Some missing text prevents a definitive interpretation, but seemingly Paser has told him on receipt of his letter that - *rk jw.k tḫn[ ] nȝ wḫrt* / 'you now summon together ...of the shipyard', and have *20 wsḫt ḥr wḫrt* / '20 barges made ready at the dockyard'. Ramose then refers to having loaded and sent [details missing due to the *lacunae*] to Hatia. He writes he should 'Send your scribe to meet up with them'. Given Paser's title it is possible the reason could be related to the authorisation for

[4] Primary and secondary source references.
[5] Wente renders as 'crewmen'.

transportation, among other goods, of more cattle of the Nubian breed, as depicted in the visual representation.

The urgency in Ramose's words, the directness with which he addresses his recipient, have confirmed and emphasised the festival's importance. The letter has shown that a person with the status of royal scribe and overseer of cattle at Thebes, such as Hatia, was in charge of organising the provisioning of the festival and despatching all the requirements to Luxor. It was the responsibility of Ramose, a person of scribal status, to ensure their receipt and timely arrival there. It has evidenced the requirements of cattle and provisions for the offerings together with the means of transportation. In contrast to the knowledge from the visual representations on the temple walls and colonnade, the reason for writing provides that extra personal dimension – giving insight into an actual problem in the management and organisation of the Opet Festival together with the people involved who needed to resolve it.

This third letter from the 19th dynasty is from a garrison scribe Ipuy to a standard-bearer named Bakenamon. The importance of this letter lies in its being the first reference to a festival of the goddess Anat at Gaza (Grdseloff 1942: 37):

'The garrison scribe Ipuy [...] the standard-bearer of the garrison Bakenamon. In life, prosperity, health. This is a missive [...] as follows, that the towns of Pharaoh, l.p.h., situated in each district are prosperous [...] of Pharaoh (l.p.h.) who are in them are prospering and in health, calling upon [...] all the goddesses who are in the region of the land of Khor. [...] Pharaoh, l.p.h., <my> good lord, l.p.h., with every land cast down beneath his sandals [...] my lord [...] in his favour. A further communication to my [...]. [The offerings you sent for] the festival of Anath of Gaza have all [...] and I received [...] for the goddess. A scout [...] Kar, the ship [...]. See (the remainder is lost)' (Goedicke and Wente 1962: pl. XCIII; Grdseloff 1942: pl. 7; Wente 1990: 127, Letter 150).[6]

The *lacunae* in the opening address make it unclear how Ipuy addresses Bakenamon or Bakenamon's status, although the title 'standard bearer' has been suggested (Grdseloff 1941: 37; Wente 1990: 127). Presumably Ipuy is at a garrison in or near Gaza, but Bakenamon's location is unclear. The garrison where he is stationed could be in the same region as Ipuy, or possibly in Lower Egypt or Thebes. The correspondence confirms the ancient Egyptian presence in Palestine – the land of *ḫꜣr* / Khor – whose Shasu tribal chiefs Seti I recorded at Karnak as being 'united in one place, stationed on the mountain ridges of Khor' that he caused 'the chiefs of Khor to go back on all the boasting of their mouths....' (Kitchen 1993: 12:5, 10).

After his initial greeting and the reference to the land of Khor and that the Pharoah has 'every land cast down beneath his sandals', it is Ipuy's *ky swḏꜣ-jb* / 'further communication' which relates to the *wpw n ʿnt gꜣḏꜣ* / 'the festival of Anat of Gaza'. Some missing text appears to refer to the arrival of offerings, as in the following words Ipuy writes *r-ḏrw [...] j ḥr šsp pꜣy [...] n nṯrt* / 'all [arrived] I have received your [...] for the goddess'.

In the context of knowledge of a religious festival the importance of this letter lies in its reference to 'the festival of Anat of Gaza' and the occupation of the correspondents. As a goddess of the near Eastern region, Anat had a major presence in the region of Ugarit but, along with other deities, over time was introduced into Egypt. This is so far the first reference to a festival of the goddess at Gaza (Grdseloff 1942: 36) and given the proximity of Gaza to the Egyptian border could be a sign of her transition from the near East to the Delta region. She is represented as primarily a martial figure holding a shield, a spear and a battle-axe. A war hound of Ramesses II was named 'Anat in Strength'. It has been suggested

[6] Primary and secondary source references.

that the *lacunae* after the words 'A further communication' which precede the reference to the festival, would have read 'The offerings that you sent for...' as in the further broken text of the remaining extant part of the letter appear the words *nt*ỉ *nṯrt* / 'for the goddess'.

This letter although incomplete has provided confirmation of the ancient Egyptian military presence in Palestine and the existence of the cult of Anat in the area, specifically Gaza, where Egypt had a presence. It has evidenced her transition into their pantheon of goddesses together with the celebration of a deity as part of a religious festival. It has also shown the that a garrison commander could also have, over and above military duties, religious responsibilities in overseeing such a festival and its offering requirements.

Letters from the 20th dynasty

An issue regarding a divine offering is the subject of a letter, dated to the 20th dynasty, from Khay to the mayor of Elephantine Montuhi[khopeshef] about a jar of honey:

'The [...] of the chapel of Harakhti, Khay greets the[mayor] of Elephantine Montuhi[khopeshef in life prosperity] and health and in the favour of Amun-Re, King of the Gods. I am calling upon Amun-Re Harakhti when he rises and sets, and upon Harakhti and his ennead to keep you healthy, to keep you alive and to keep you in the favour of Harakhti, your lord who looks after you. And further: I have opened the jar of honey which you had obtained for the god and have taken out 10 hins of honey from it for the divine offering. I have found that it was entirely full of lumps of ointment, and I resealed it and sent it back south to you. If it is another man gave it to you, let him inspect it. See if you find a good one and let it be brought to me. Now may Re keep you healthy. But if there is none let the menet-jar of incense be sent by the hand of the *wꜥb* priest Netjermose until you find honey. And you shall send me the dry sycamore wood.... Then shall Amun keep you healthy, and Harakhti shall let you achieve a long lifetime. May you fare well in the presence of Harakhti.' (Posener-Kriéger 1978: pl. XIV/XIVA; Wente 1990: 128, Letter 153).[7]

The letter was among fragments of letters discovered by Clédat during his excavations at Elephantine in 1907. It was one that 'could be put together easily' and was copied by Černý. It became part of the Louvre collection in 1975 (Posener-Kriéger 1978: 84). The honey has been sent by the mayor for use in the divine offering, but when Khay opens the jar he discovers it is full of solid lumps of *gs,* an ointment used for anointing purposes, so he has resealed it and sent it back. Khay's title is lost but he is 'of the house of Harakhti which is a possible reference to the solar chapel on the roof of the temple of Amun at Karnak (Posener-Kriéger 1978: 85, n. 8).

The name of the mayor of Elephantine is incomplete but has been read as Montuhikhopeshef / Mentuherkhepeshef (Posener-Kriéger 1978: 87 n.o.; Wente 1990: 128). In the Turin Indictment Papyrus *P.1887* from the reigns of Ramesses IV and Ramesses V (Gardiner 1948: xxiii) this name is also cited as belonging to the Scribe of the Treasury who was then acting as Mayor of Elephantine. According to this text thieves had stolen garments from the temple of Anket. The acting Mayor confirmed their guilt and that they had sold the garments to a workman at the Place of Truth. However, as acting Mayor he accepted a bribe from the thieves and let them go (Gardiner 1948: 78). Given the dating of this letter to a similar period it is possible that the recipient of this letter is the same Montuhikhopeshef, and that

[7] Primary and secondary source references.

the delivery of *gs* ointment instead of honey was not a mistake but the action of this same corrupt official.

The letter notes the jar of honey at the centre of this complaint as being required for divine offerings, showing the importance of the product as part of temple ritual, confirming other sources. For example the Eighteenth tomb of Rekh-mi-Re at Thebes where there is a representation of the hives and the smoking out of the bees as well as the extraction of the honeycomb. A head of the bee-keepers of Amun is on the list of temple officials at Karnak (Lefebvre 1929: 46). Jar inscriptions from the City of Akhenaten refer to two different varieties of honey *stf* and *gmgm* (Pendlebury 1951: 175). A large number (1065) of *menet*-jars have been noted in *P. Harris 1* for delivery to the temple of Amun for the ordinary service (Posener-Kriéger 1978: 85-86).

The whole tone of his letter is very restrained and polite. While his initial greeting does not follow the rule of precedence by putting his recipient's name first, in keeping with the polite wording of his complaint a full complimentary preamble shows his respect for a superior recipient. There are no demands to know 'why' or 'how' this has happened. When he explains that the at *ỉ^{cc}w n bjt j.jnj.k n pỉ nṯr* / 'jars of honey you had obtained for the god', turned out to be full of *gs dbwt* / 'lumps of gs', anointing oil, he is very careful not to attach blame to his recipient. His suggested solution to the problem is just a straightforward request to replace the honey or to send some incense instead. In asking for the replacement he uses the tactic of introducing a third party as the one to blame by adding *jw nn m ky rdj.s sw n. k jmj ptr.f sw* / 'if it is another man gave it to you let him inspect it'. He gives his recipient the benefit of the doubt as being the person who made the error, perhaps not wanting to antagonise a person in higher authority. His tone is one of a calm response to an administrative mistake. The request for a *mnt n snṯr* / 'menet-jar of incense' as a replacement would be due to its comparable value to the 10 hins of honey (Janssen 1975: 352-353, 445-446). The reason for his concluding request to send *ḫt n nh šw* / 'dry sycamore wood' is unclear. Janssen (1975: 370) notes its use for statues and corn measures.

The letter's content gives that extra dimension to the visual images and the formal information of the official texts regarding honey. As an insight from a religious aspect into customs, daily problems and personalities this letter has provided further evidence of the importance of honey as a product for divine offerings in the religious ritual. The fact that Khay had to source his honey from Elephantine rather than from the Theban area is a possible indication of demand exhausting supply Additionally, while Khay has been careful not to apportion blame it has also provoked thoughts as to whether this was an accidental bureaucratic mistake in supply, or a purposeful replacement of the correct goods by a fraudulent official. It has provided insight into the irregularities, whether intentional or not, that could occur in the religious sector – the personal touch.

An aspect of religious life in a non-priestly context is reflected by the senders of the following letter who mention being in the presence of 'Hathor, lady of Dendera' and 'Setsankh'. The senders of this 20th dynasty letter during the reign of Ramesses IX, are a stablemaster Pahen and a chief of police Sahnufe:

'[...] Amun from the stable master Pahen and chief of police Sahnufe. [This is a missive to] inform our lord. A further communication to our lord to the effect that every single day we are [calling upon...] and upon all the [gods] of heaven and earth to give you life, prosperity, health, a long lifetime, a ripe old age. [....] about which you have written to us. (As for) what you wrote (regarding) the matter of this [...] 'Search for him' as you said (in) writing to us. The retainers came. They [...]. We have stopped <to> visit Hathor, lady of Dendera, your mistress, [...] as we sail northward pursuing the mission you wrote to us about. We have not stood still at all. Now we sent men to Setsankh, [the prophet of Seth, lord] of the

town of Sheneset. Now we submitted the matter in the presence [...] who said, 'he is [...] to the south of you and will be found,' so he said. We shall [...]. We shall not be slack either if he attacks us' (Gardiner 1950: 132-133; Kitchen 1969-1979, vol. II: 371-372; Wente 1990: 130, Letter 155).[8]

From the time of Ramesses XI this is the second piece of correspondence from the collection of the Duc de Valençay, originally obtained for Sir Alan Gardiner by Jacques Vandier and Georges Posener for his translation and editing. The right-hand side of the papyrus is missing so the recipient is unknown. The senders have clearly stated their occupation and status as *ḥry-jḫw* / 'chief stablemaster' and *ḥry-mḏꜣj* / 'chief of police'. Gardiner notes that a chief of police named Sahnufe is also mentioned in P. Turin 93 (Gardiner 1950: 125). Only one other example of the name is attested (Ranke 1935: 299 [24]) so it is possible this is the same person. The role of a chief of police in a search of this kind is appropriate, but it is not obvious why a stablemaster is involved. (Schulman 1964: 51-53) notes the many references which attest to the varied duties a stablemaster actually undertook. Perhaps known to the sender of the original letter he had some sort of responsibility for the actions of the person for whom they had to look.

In referring to the previous communication they had received, in which they were asked to *wḫꜣ sw* / 'search for him', the fact that the *šmsw jw* / 'the retainers have come', suggests that Pahen and Sahnufe were not alone in the search. The subsequent *lacunae* make understanding unclear, but they state *[jw].tn ꜥḥꜥ.tj ptr tꜣy.k ḥnwt* / 'you stand beholding your mistress' and they identify her as *ḥt-ḥr nbt n Jwnt* / 'Hathor, lady of Dendera.' The 'you' in 'you stand beholding' is *tn* plural, whereas 'your' in 'your mistress' is *tꜣy.k* singular (Gardiner 1950:126). This implies that the recipient had a role connected with her temple, but whom the 'you' refers to as beholding Hathor is unclear.[9] They are quick to add they have *[bwpw].n ꜥḥꜥ m ꜥḥꜥ nb* / 'not stood still at all (delayed)'. Following is a specific reference to *stḫꜥnḫ* / 'Setsankh' who was '[the prophet of Seth, lord of] the town of Sheneset' (Gardiner 1947: 31 [344]; 1950: 126c). The senders of the letter write *ḫr wꜣḥ.n tꜣ mdt m-bꜣḥ [pꜣ nṯr]* / 'we submitted the matter in the presence of the god', to explain that they consulted the god to get guidance in their search. They write that they receive the answer he is to the south of them *ḫr jw.tw (r) gmt.f jn.f* / 'he will be found, so he said'. These words can be interpreted as coming from the god as the determinative of the falcon of Horus is used for the pronoun 'he' in the words *jn.f* / 'so he said'. Pahen and Sahnufe conclude with the words *bn jw.n (r) nnj n mjtt jw.f (r) pḥ r.n* / 'we will not be slack either if he attacks us'.

The letter gives insight into an occurrence in the lives of a Chief of Police and a Stablemaster, although the full background of the problem they face, the reason for this imperative demand *wḫꜣ sw* / 'search for him', is uncertain. There is the implication that he may be a criminal or perhaps a foreign fugitive who has evaded capture. He could be dangerous given their comment about his attacking them. The senders convey a certain sense of alarm, the need to reassure their recipient they are following instructions to the best of their ability. The fact that Pahen and Sahnufe invoke divine help shows the importance they give to seeking the influence and power of a god in their search, the ongoing belief in the ability of ordinary people such as themselves to interact with them.

Letters from the 21st dynasty

The following letters from the 21st dynasty also confirm this ongoing belief that people outside the religious community are able to directly seek divine help. They form part of an extensive archive of

[8] Primary and secondary source references.
[9] Wente in his translation has rendered as 'we'.

papyri spread across nine collections in several countries and continents (for full details see Müller 2009: 255, n. 42). The early years of this dynasty saw a divided structure of power develop. Smendes I, situated in Lower Egypt at Tanis, was recognised as pharaoh of all Egypt. This recognition was based on an understanding that he in turn recognised the authority of the line of the Theban priesthood in Upper Egypt in their role as High Priest of Amun and military commander of Upper Egypt. It was a reciprocal arrangement in which 'one half of Egypt (Tanis) ruled the whole realm only by kind permission of the other half (Thebes)' (Kitchen 1986: 256, n. 214). The boundary point between the two and the northern base of Theban rule was at el-Hibeh. Situated at a strategic point on the Nile some 20 miles south of Heracleopolis, it became a fortress that could stand guard over southward moving river traffic. It has been seen as the possible provenance of this archive of letters based on references to the location of the correspondents and incidents as being at *dhn.t* / 'the Promontory', a description compatible with the geography of el-Hibeh. Müller presents his argument for a location at el-Ahaiwah as an alternative. Although his reasons are viable they are not conclusive, so for the purposes of this paper I have chosen to still reference el-Hibeh as the original location (Müller 2009: 256-269). The priestly officials who are among the writers of these letters,[10] give themselves the title 'god's father priest and temple scribe of He of the Camp.' The 'He' of this association has been attested as Horus. Herihor, the chief priest of Amun, who also assumed the title Army-leader and Viceroy of Nubia (Kitchen 1986: 248), is depicted in a relief at Karnak in the temple of Khonsu making an offering to a god named as 'Horus of the Camp' (Epigraphic Survey 1 1994: pl. 14), indicating that he was regarded as a deity of high-ranking status. In the Book of the Dead there is a reference to Horus as being 'Lord of the Promontory' / *ḥrw nb t3-dhnt* (Faulkner 2010: 162). Two Oracle petitions found at Nag el-Deir are specifically addressed to 'Horus of the Camp' (Ryholt 1993: 189-198). So far, no evidence has been found of a temple specifically dedicated to 'Horus of the Camp'. Overall, the background and history of 'Horus of the Camp' so far remain obscure.

Letters from the 'god's father priest and temple scribe' – those priestly officials of 'He of the Camp' – are concerned primarily with practical rather than specifically religious issues. The reasons for writing include a need to apprehend runaway slaves, organise the arrival of horses, to send a watch onto the ramparts, make an eviction from a house, send back trustworthy men after following a fowler downstream. However, there are two letters addressed specifically to the deity himself 'He of the Camp'. The people involved are Masaharta and Menkheperre, High Priests of Amun during this dynasty. Analysis of the texts indicates the writer as Menkheperre and that he is directly addressing this local deity 'He of the Camp'.

The beginning of this letter is missing but allows the name of Masaharta to be discerned, with the attribution 'the servant of 'He of the Camp':

'[...] 'He of the Camp', [...] ill saying 'Preserve him, make him well, remove all illness that is in him completely in the presence of "He of the Camp", my lord, through his preserving Masaharta, making him well, granting him life, prosperity, health, a long lifetime and a ripe old age, and listening to the plea of Masaharta, his son and his ward.' May he preserve my brother this servant of his, make him well, give him back to me by my petition just like every good [turn]that my lord has done' (Jansen-Winkeln 2007: 205-206; Spiegelberg 1917: 13-14; Müller 2006: 339; Wente 1990: 208, Letter 337).[11]

[10] See report from Carol Redmount, on the U.C Berkeley Excavations at el-Hibeh : http://neareastern.berkeley.edu/hibeh/03_report_observations.htm

[11] Primary and secondary source references.

The beginning of this letter is missing but allows the name of Masaharta to be discerned, with the attribution *bꜣk n pn-pꜣ-jhꜣy* / 'the servant of "He of the Camp"'. The letter is an appeal from the sender to 'He of the Camp' to cure Masaharta of an illness and listen to the latter's plea. The chronology for the early Twenty-first Dynasty indicates Masaharta as High Priest of Amun in Thebes, the son of Pinudjem I (Kitchen 1986: 4-5) and the brother of Menkheperre. The sender notes Masaharta is *m-bꜣḥ pn-pꜣ-jhꜣy pꜣy.j nb* / 'in the presence of "He of the Camp", my good lord'. He uses the Horus determinative to indicate that it is a divine presence, with this same Horus determinative for his 'good Lord'. He refers to Masaharta as *pꜣy.f šrj pꜣy.f sḫpr* /'*his* son and *his* ward' and asks *mtw.f šd sn pꜣy.bꜣk swt mtw.f* / 'that he may preserve [my] brother, this servant of his'. In each case the possessive pronoun again has the Horus determinative to signify a divine attribution, and the letter's interest lies both in the fact that it is addressed to a local deity and that it does not refer to him directly but in the third person. This suggests a certain deference, and the letter's address line reads to 'the majesty of this noble god He of the Camp, the great god residing in...' (the final words are missing), commensurate with a local god of a prestigious nature.

I would argue the reference to 'brother' indicates the sender was in fact Masaharta's brother Menkheperre, who was to become High Priest after the former's death (Kitchen 1986: 4). The appeal to the local god 'He of the Camp' indicates his presence there as well as being the place where Masaharta has been taken ill, reflecting a location for a High Priest of Amun in addition to Thebes. The appeal to 'He of the Camp' indicates an on-going presence. From the historical perspective it has been suggested that Masaharta may not have survived the illness referred to in the correspondence, which precipitated a 'hiatus period' (Kitchen 1986: 259-260) resulting in Menkheperre's succession.

The second letter from Menkheperre is fragmentary – only some of the greeting remains and a few broken lines of the content:

'[...] Camp', the great god residing in [the Camp from his [...] son, the high priest of Amun-Re, King of the Gods, the generalissimo of Upper and Lower Egypt, leader Menkheperre, head of the great armies of all Egypt. I have taken note of the account of the good decisions [...] great [...] which he has proclaimed regarding me and I [....]' (Jansen-Winkeln 2007: 205-206; Posener 1982: 134-135; Wente 1990: 208, Letter 338).[12]

While the initial greeting is incomplete, it has been construed as being the same wording as the address line of the previous letter (Posener-Kriéger 1982: 136; Wente 1990: 208). The reason for his writing appears to be a confirmation that he has 'taken note of the good decisions...which he has proclaimed as apt for me'. The 'He' again has the Horus determinative indicating the sender is directly addressing the deity 'He of the Camp'. The style of greeting is that of the basic sender/ recipient, but in this case the formula is inverted to recipient/sender. This has been noted as being a rare occurrence and an 'abbreviated variant' of the form used in addressing superiors (Bakir 1970: 45, 51). Menkheperre gives himself the titles of '[beloved] son, the high priest of [Amun]-Re King of the Gods, the *jmj-r-mšᶜ smsw* / 'general-in-chief' of Upper and Lower Egypt, who is *ḥꜣ(w)ty* /'leader' of the great armies of all Egypt. As noted by Posener (1982: 136) references to the military title of other High Priests of Amun have mentioned only a command of the army of Upper Egypt not of the whole of the country. Given the additional titles that Menkheperre attributes to himself, his use of the recipient/sender style of address shows that he considered his recipient to have an even higher status. This respect would be commensurate with his letter being directed to the local deity personally and would be in line with the

[12] Primary and secondary source references.

indication that the previous letter was also written by Menkheperre. On this point I agree with Posener's argument, his 'idee pour le moins audacieuse' (Posener 1982: 137-138).

It has been noted that Pinudjem I, father to Masaharta and Menkheperre, had his seat for a time at el-Hibeh, and that Menkheperre would have done likewise (Lull 2009). Masaharta's presence at the fortress was suggested by the previous letter and building activity by Menkheperre indicates his presence there. Bricks stamped with his name show he was instrumental in the building of its massive town wall (Černý 1970: 652; Kitchen 1986: 269-270). The words of the 'Banishment Stela' state how Menkheperre was 'summoned to Thebes by Amun himself to "come South in valour and victory to pacify the land...."' (Kitchen 1986: 260, no. 93). This need could have been prompted by the death of Masaharta from the illness, which was the subject of the previous letter, and confirms that Menkheperre was at a location in the North. If, as seems the case, he was stationed at el-Hibeh, then this can be seen to substantiate the conclusion he was petitioning his local deity, 'He of the Camp', regarding Masaharta and himself.

Although these two letters are incomplete due to the *lacunae* in each, an analysis of the content has provided an insight into the lives of these two high priests of Amun, as well as adding credence to current historical knowledge of this period. The first request involving a cure for Masaharta's ill-health provides personal information regarding this high official not found elsewhere. They have shown that the sender, a High priest of Amun and General-in-chief of Upper and Lower Egypt and leader of the great armies of Egypt, gives higher status to a local deity. They have evidenced the continuing belief that a god could be addressed in this way – the ongoing custom of appealing to a god to alleviate adverse circumstances, providing information regarding the existence and high status of a local deity about whom knowledge is scarce.

Conclusions

The letters from the New Kingdom provided insight into religious matters and the people concerned with them, those from dynasty 21 provided evidence of the presence of a local deity of high status. One aspect of the letters selected for this study has been that there is no overt 'self-presentation'. The initiators and recipients do not provide any specific detail of personal background or achievements in the context of historical or social events, either as information additional to the reason for writing, or as a possible record for posterity. Within the context of religious duties, their emphasis is primarily on the practical matters that have arisen – insight into an issue of provisioning a major religious festival, a problem with a divine offering, the belief in the ability to invoke a deity for assistance, the organising of a festival for the goddess Anat at Gaza. Their distinctiveness lies in their information regarding these actual events and issues –insight at a personal level evidencing the extra dimension that the primary source of individual personal letters from across several periods can provide, augmenting the knowledge from visual representations and bureaucratic texts.

This study has shown how personal correspondence can be an important primary source for ancient Egyptian life and the people themselves –in this case from the perspective of religious life, duties and responsibilities –the personal touch.

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Sun, moon, and myth: the function and symbolism of fish in water features of ancient Egyptian formal gardens

Jayme Reichart

Abstract

More than 42 native and foreign floral and 11 faunal species were identified as being raised in the early to mid-late 18th dynasty formal gardens constructed in proximity to the private élite homes, non-royal tombs, memorial and cult temples, palatial residences, god's domains, shrines, and/or cenotaphs at Thebes (modern-day Luxor) and its hinterlands (See Reichart 2021; Reichart forthcoming).

This article highlights the function and symbolism of five fish species propagated in the water features of these formal gardens' landscape designs: carp (*Labeo* spp.); elephantfish (*Petrocephalus*/*Marcusenius* spp.); Egyptian trunkfish (*Mormyrus* spp.); catfish (*Synodontis* spp.); and tilapia (*Tilapia* spp.) and redbelly tilapia (*T. zillii* Gervais). In terms of function, the fish species were raised as seasonal, surplus produce for the institutions to which they were connected. The natural habits and habitats of these fish species in the wild reveal that they would have inherently kept the water features clean and pest-free after domestication. In terms of symbolism, the fish beautified the pools, ponds, or lakes and embodied beliefs concerning specific gods associated with the sun, the moon, and/or with the Old Kingdom-age funerary belief in fish shepherds (psychopomps) who guided the recently deceased for a time on their journey towards the hereafter in the West (*jmntt*).

Keywords

Formal gardens; gardens in ancient Egypt; garden history and landscape design; pisciculture; fish propagation; lunar and solar symbolism; sun and moon religion; *Hirtenliedes*; shepherd's songs; psychopomp; funerary beliefs

Introduction

More than 42 native and foreign floral and 11 faunal species were cultivated in the early to mid-late 18th dynasty formal gardens that were established in proximity to the private élite homes, non-royal tombs, non-royal and royal memorial temples, cult temples, palatial residences, god's domains, shrines, or cenotaph shrines at Thebes (modern-day Luxor) and in its hinterlands (Reichart 2021: 2-3; Reichart forthcoming).

Five fish species were propagated in the water features of these formal gardens' landscape designs: carp (*Labeo* spp.); elephantfish (*Petrocephalus*/*Marcusenius* spp.); Egyptian trunkfish (*Mormyrus* spp.), catfish (*Synodontis* spp.); and tilapia (*Tilapia* spp.) and redbelly tilapia (*T. zillii* Gervais). This article emphasises the function and symbolism of these five fish species in ancient Egyptian formal garden design.

Formal gardens in early to mid-late 18th dynasty Thebes

Various types of gardens existed in ancient Egypt from the early dynastic period onwards (Hugonot 1989: 3-19; Tietze *et al.* 2011: 90; Wilkinson 1998: 42). The everyday term 'garden' known scholastically as an 'informal garden' in garden history, is any natural grouping of trees, plants, flowers, or scrubs (Blake 2015: 49; Sanders 1952: ix, 14-15; Synge 1969: 160). While a 'formal garden' has an ordered and patterned design, is constructed on a symmetrical or asymmetrical plane, and comprises water and architectural features, as well as diverse flora and fauna (Blake 2015: 47-48, esp. 49; Tenenbaum 1997: 127).

Current archaeological, textual, and pictorial evidence from this period indicates that different types of formal gardens were constructed in the Theban landscape during the early to mid-late 18th dynasty (Hugonot 1989: 158-159; Schröter-Gothein 1966: 8-10; Tietze *et al.* 2011: 90; Wilkinson 1998: 8-9), including: the *š*, the *ḫnty-š*, the *sš*, the *kꜣmw*, the *ꜥt-nt-ḫt*, and the *ḥrrt-š* (Reichart 2021: 2-3, 32-39, 56-91; Reichart forthcoming). For example, notable depictions of both royal and private formal gardens with water features exist in the Theban tombs of the Thutmoside élite, as they played important rôles in both the work life and the social life of these individuals (Baines 2013: 76-82; Reichart 2021: 32-39, 56-91, 109-121; Reichart forthcoming) such as: **Nebamun** (TT E2) (Parkinson 2008: 52, 94, 134-137, fig. 102), **Puimre** (TT 39) (Davies 1922: 5-7, 20, 55-56, pls. XXI.2-XXI.7, VIII, XLVI-LXVII; Kampp 1996: 230-233; Louant 2000: 38, 42-43; Porter and Moss 1970: 71-75), **Sobekhotep** (TT 63) (Dziobek and Abd el-Raziq 1990: 22, 33, 66, 71-73, Texts 19a-19b, Tables 13, 27, 39-40; Gardiner and Weigall 1913: 22; Kampp 1996: 280-283; Porter and Moss 1970: 280-283), **Djehutynefer** (TT 80) (Kampp 1996: 320-323; Porter and Moss 1970: 157-159; Shedid 1988: 126, 134, 145-147, 150, 162-163, Texts 80.5-80.8, 104.23, Scenes 2.4-2.5), **Ineni** (TT 81) (Boussac 1896: pl. XI; Dziobek 1992: 41, 54-55, 63, 67; 123; Texts 2a, 4b, 6c-6c, 17c-17d, 18c, 21h, 22a; Kampp 1996: 326-330; Porter and Moss 1970: 159-160; Sethe 1961: 67I.9-67I.15. 73.1-73.20), **Amenemhab called Mahu** (TT 85) (Kampp 1996: 336-338; Porter and Moss 1970: 175; Sethe 1961: nos. 918.1-918.6; Vleeming *et al.* 2008-2010: Schott photographs nos. 3993-3394; 4131-4132; 7008-7014; 8940-8943; Virey 1891: 269-271; 279-280, figs. 11-13), **Minnakht** (TT 87) (Geßler-Löhr 1991: 162-196; Guksch 1995: 64, Text 21.2, Tables 11-12; Kampp 1996: 340-341; Porter and Moss 1970: 178-179; Sethe 1961: nos. 1177-1178; Virey 1891: 316-318, fig. 1), **Nebamun** (TT 90) (Davies 1923: 30-33, pls. XXX, XXXI, XXXIII; Gardiner and Weigall 1913: 24; Hartwig 2004: fig. 30; Helck 1961b: nos. 1624-1625; Kampp 1996: 348-349; Porter and Moss 1970: 183-184; Sethe 1961: nos. 1618, 1621, pls. XXVI, XXX, XXXIII; Vleeming *et al.* 2008-2010: Schott photographs 6824-6836), **Qenamun** (TT 93) (Davies 1930: 45-46, 52, pls. LXI-LXII, XLVa-XLVb-XLVII, LXX; Helck 1961a: no. 1397; Kampp 1996: 353-356; Porter and Moss 1970: 190-192; Wreszinski 1988: Table 298), **Sennefer** (TT 96A) (Helck 1961b: nos. 1417-1418; Kampp 1996: 360-364; Porter and Moss 1970: 198; Rosellini 1834: pl. LXIX), **Rekhmire** (TT 100) (Davies 1935: 12, 70-73, 88, pls. LVIII, LXXVI, LXXIX, LXXXVII, CX; Kampp 1996: 370-372; Porter and Moss 1970: 206-208; Sethe 1961: nos. 1158, 1165, 1167, 1171-1172; Virey 1891: 156-160), **Min** (TT 109) (Kampp 1996: 389-390; Porter and Moss 1970: 226-227; Vleeming *et al.* 2008-2010: Schott photographs nos. 5764-5769, 5577-5588, 8585; Virey 1891: 363-370, figs. 1-3), **Nakht** (TT 161) (Hugonot 1989: 15, 228-229; Kampp 1996: 451-452; Manniche 1986: 58-60, pls. 1-2, 14, 22, 34; Porter and Moss 1970: 274-275; Vleeming *et al.* 2008-2010: Schott photograph 3726; Werbrouck and Van de Walle 1929: 8-9), and an **unknown individual** (TT 334) (Davies 1929: 240, 248, fig. 9; Engelbach 1924: 26-27; Kampp 1996: 579; Porter and Moss 1970: 401).

Formal gardens were built by the Thutmoside pharaohs and élite in vicinity to homes, palatial residences, cult temples, god's domains, non-royal tombs, royal and non-royal memorial temples, and/or royal cenotaph shrines (Reichart 2021: 32-39, 56-91, 109-121; Reichart forthcoming). These formal gardens were aesthetic landscapes used by the living, dead, or the divine for pleasure, festivities,

forms of entertainment, as well as to provide surplus produce (*rnpwt*) (Reichart 2021: 32-39, 56-91, 156-228; Reichart forthcoming). Fresh, surplus produce (*rnpwt*) included the many types of flowers, herbs, fruits, vegetables, seeds, oils, resins, and/or woods raised in the formal gardens (Keimer and Germer 1961: *passim*; Germer 1985: *passim*; Germer 2008: *passim*; Hepper 2009: *passim*; Manniche 2006: *passim*; Reichart 2021: 156-213; Reichart forthcoming). In terms of fauna, water features were stocked full of fish and fowl, such as: red-breasted geese (*Branta ruficollis* Pallas), mallards (*Anas platyrhynchos* L.), pintails (*Anas acuta* L.), and *ḫtꜥ*-ducks. Aviaries for birds such as the *ḫt-ꜥ*-aviary () that housed Egyptian turtle doves (*Streptopelia turtur rufescens* Brehm), and apiaries for the Egyptian honey bee (*Apis mellifera lamarkii* Cockerell) could be featured in a formal garden's landscape design, too (Reichart 2021: 78, 94, 214-230; Reichart forthcoming).

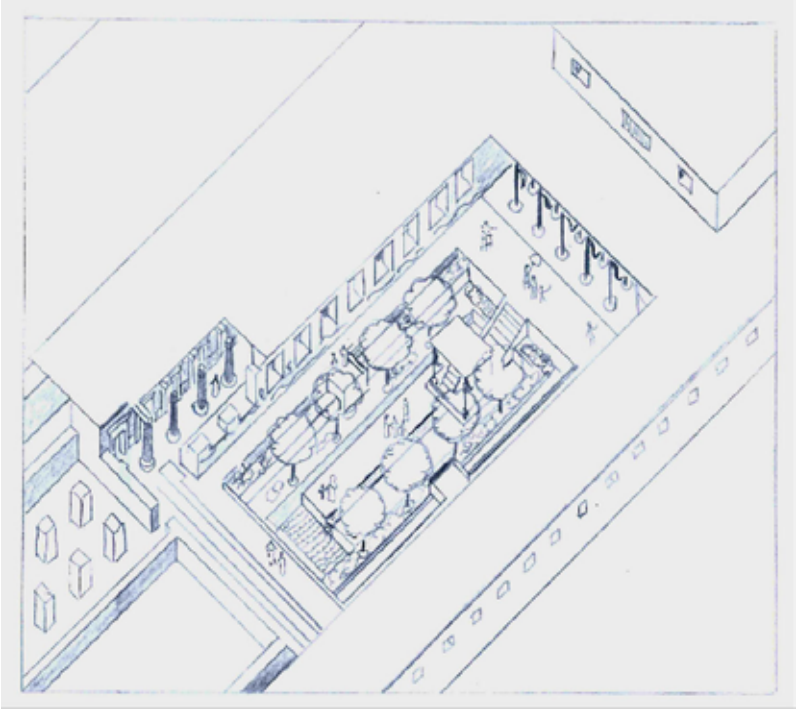


Figure 1: The northern harem's sunken formal garden with a long conical fountain that terminates with a small waterfall that flows into a rectangular pool within a peristyle court with frescoes of flora and fauna. Akhenaten's Central palace at Akhetaten (Amarna) dated to the late 18th Dynasty. Drawing by Jayme Reichart © 2021, after Plate XV in Pendlebury (1951).

Water features in ancient Egyptian formal gardens

Water features were an important component of many types of formal gardens in antiquity. Pools, lakes, ponds, and fountains in various forms, sizes, and shapes were incorporated as water features into ancient Egyptian formal garden design from the Old Kingdom onwards (Eyre 1994: 64-65; Hugonot 1989: 158-159; Reichart 2021: 32-39, 56-91, 109-228; Reichart forthcoming; Wilkinson 1994: 1-17). Currently, the earliest evidence of sunken fountains with long, narrow, stone-lined channels that allow water to flow down onto one or a series of small tiered waterfalls[1] derives from the formal gardens located in the

[1] This type of water feature was prominent in later Islamic-Persian formal 'paradise' gardens termed *el-andalus* (الأَنْدَلُس) or 'Andalusian-style' of the 7th to 14th centuries AD. Islamic Andalusian-style formal gardens with stone-lined, channelled, and tiered water features are still a popular design choice in the Middle East today.

centre of the peristyle courtyard of the northern harem of Akhenaten's Central palace at Akhetaten (Amarna) (Petrie 1894: 7, 9, 14; Pendlebury 1936: 196-197; Pendlebury 1951: pl. III, 38, 44-45, pls. XIII-XIV, XVII, XXIV) (Figure 1).

Staired water features were commonplace (for their symbolism, see Ezzat 2016: 59-73), allowing individuals to access their shallower waters, such as in Qenamun's and Amenhotep, son of Hapu's *š*-formal gardens at Thebes-West (Figures 2 and 3). The living and dead desired to stroll beside or drink from their waters, as evident from Menkheperreseneb II's tomb (TT 112):

'Going into and out of my tomb to refresh myself in its shadow, to drink water from my pond daily, that all my limbs may flourish. May Hapi supply me with nourishment and offerings, and vegetables in their season. May I stroll at the edge of my pond daily, without cease, may my ba alight on the branches of the trees I have planted, may I refresh myself under the branches of my sycamores and eat the bread that they give' (Guksch 1995: 152).

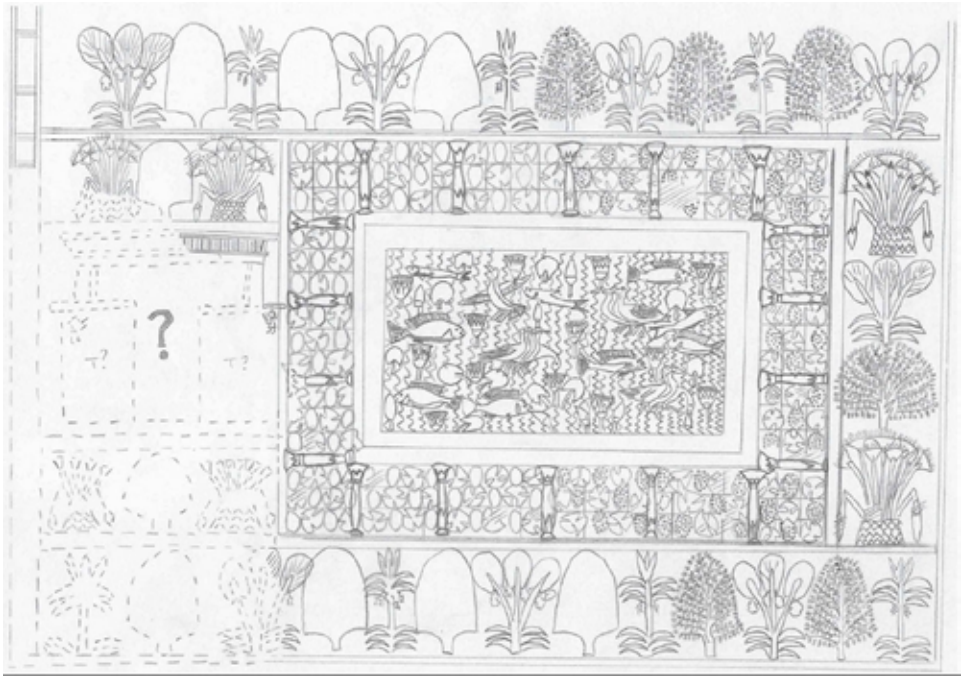


Figure 2: The water feature in one of Qenamun's š-formal gardens (TT 93) surrounded by a columned and trellised pergola with grapevines (V. vinifera L.) and stocked with waterlilies, red-breasted geese, tilapia, catfish, and elephantfish. Drawing by Jayme Reichart © 2020, after pl. XLVII in Davies (1930).

Examples include those in the formal gardens of The American University in Cairo's New Cairo campus or those in El-Azhar park located in the El-Darb el-Ahmar district of downtown Cairo. For more information on the symbolism of these types of water features in Islamic formal gardens, see Abdul Latiff *et al.* 2016: 64.

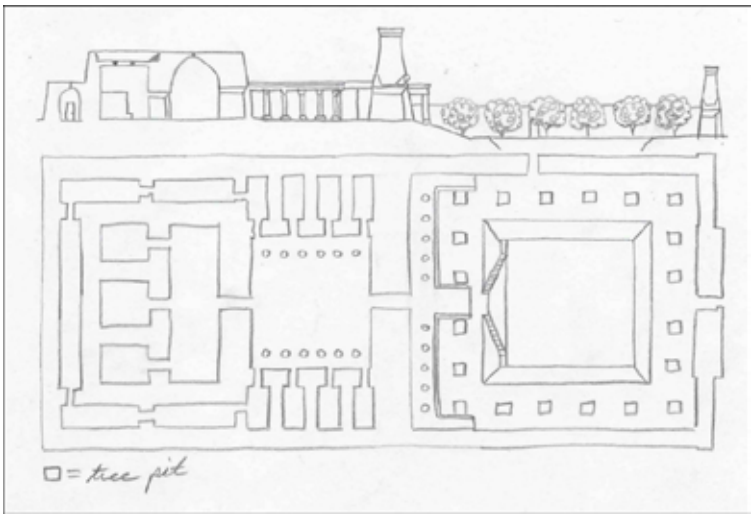


Figure 3: Reconstruction of Amenhotep, son of Hapu's memorial temple with its š-formal garden at Thebes-West. Drawing by Jayme Reichart © 2019, after pl. XI in Robichon and Varille (1938).

Water features could have water gardens and gridded *ḥsp*-plots () planted around their perimetre with a variety of flora, such as common reed, grapevine (*Vitis vinifera* L.), low cornflower (*Centaurea depressa* Bieb.), mandrake (*Mandragora autumnalis* Bertol.), opium poppy (*Papaver somniferum* L.), and scented mayweed (*Anthemis* or *Matricaria* spp.), such as that in Nebamun's *š*-formal garden (TT E2) (Figure 4). Oftentimes, the water features were further shaded by avenues (also known as allées) of trees or palms, such as: *argun*-palm (*Medemia argun* Württemb. ex Mart.), *atil*-tree (M*ærua crassifolia* Forssk.), carob tree (*Ceratonia siliqua* L.), Christ's thorn tree (*Ziziphus spina Christi* L. Desf.), common fig tree (*Ficus carica* L.), date palm (*Phœnix dactylifera* L.), desert date tree (*Balanites ægyptiaca* L. Delile), *doum*-palm (*Hyphæne thebaica* L. Mart), Egyptian riverhemp tree (*Sesbania sesban* L. Merrill), Egyptian willow tree (*Salix mucronata* Thunb.), frankincense and myrrh trees (*Commiphora erythræa* var. *glabrescens* Engler and *Boswellia frereana* Birdw.), *ksbt*-tree identified as the umbrella-thorn acacia (*Vachellia tortillis* (Forssk.) Galasso and Banfi) (see Baum 1988: 154-161), Mediterranean cypress (*Cupressus sempervirens* L.), morgina tree (*Moringa peregrina* (Forssk.) Fiori), persea tree (*Mimusops laurifolia* (Forssk.) Friis), pomegranate tree (*Punica granatum* L.), sycamore fig (*Ficus sycomorus* L.), and/or tamarisks (*Tamarix* spp.).

For the fish cultures to properly establish themselves and provide offspring, water features had to be (i) designed and planned by garden architects; (ii) dug, fitted, and lined with stone, mudbrick and/or plaster; (iii) properly irrigated by the workmen and filled seasonally by ground water (Eyre 1994: 64-65); and (iv) maintained by gardeners and pisiculturists therein (Reichart 2021: 41; Reichart forthcoming). The process of constructing a formal garden with a water feature, for example, is elaborated upon an Ahmose I stela (JE 32008) that details the king's gift of a *š*-formal garden at an Abydene pyramid-cenotaph shrine of his grandmother, the dowager queen Tetisheri (Harvey 2004: 4-6; Lacau 1906: 6):

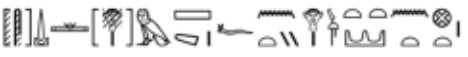
'...Its *š*-formal garden will be dug, its trees will be planted, its offerings will be founded, equipped with people, endowed with fields, presented with herds, *kꜣ*-priests, and ritual priests...' (Updated translation by author based on Breasted 1906: 15-16, §36-37; Harvey 1998: 107-108; Reichart 2021: 35; Sethe 1961: no. 6).

Figure 4: The pool in Nebamun's š-formal garden surrounded by a water garden planted with papyrus, scented mayweed, opium poppy, and low cornflower. The pool hosts red-breasted geese, mallard, pintail duck, as well as tilapia and redbelly tilapia. Drawing by Jayme Reichart © 2020, after Figure 102 (BM EA 37983) in Parkinson (2008).

Fish in ancient Egyptian water features

Fish in water features enhanced and beautified an ancient Egyptian formal garden's landscape design. Fish, in fact, became a major source of fresh food on an ancient Egyptian's table during the New Kingdom (Brewer and Freidman 1990: 16-17; Mehdawy and Hussein 2010: 73-76; for the remains of *Synodontis* and *Tilapia* spp. discovered in the kitchens of the priests' residences within the Amun precinct at Karnak, see Von den Driesch 1983: 87-100, Table 2). Studies on fish and fishing in Egyptian art and archaeology (Boulenger and Loat 1907: *passim*; Brewer and Friedman 1990: *passim*; Evans 2010: 48-49; Gamer-Wallert 1970: *passim*; Sahrhage 1997: *passim*; Schäfer and Baines 2002: 247-250) were vital to identify the species propagated in early to mid-late 18th dynasty formal gardens. Five species were identifed from the archaeological, textual, and pictorial evidence of formal gardens from this period, including: catfish (*Synodontis* spp.); carp (*Labeo* spp.); elephantfish (*Petrocephalus*/*Marcusenius* spp.); tilapia (*Tilapia* spp.) and redbelly tilapia (*T. zillii* Gervais); and Egyptian trunkfish (*Mormyrus* spp.).

The upper classes enjoyed fishing (or angling) in their formal gardens for pleasure and sustenance. One of the formal garden scenes in Qenamun's (TT 93) tomb, for example, depicts the nobleman and his wife fishing together beside their *š*-formal garden's pool full of curled pondweed, waterlilies, carp, catfish, and elephantfish (Figure 5):

 (Helck 1961b: no. 1397)

[s]ḏ m-[ḥr] š.f nty ḥr jmnt nt njwt

Having fun in his *š*-formal garden that is on the city's west bank (Thebes)

Figure 5: Qenamun and his wife (TT 93) fish for pleasure in their second š-formal garden located on the West Bank of Thebes (see text) that had water feature stocked with curled pondweed, waterlilies, carp, catfish, and elephantfish. Drawing by Jayme Reichart © 2020, after pl. XLVa in Davies (1930).

Taxonomy and symbolism of the fish in the water features

Carp spp.

Four species of freshwater carp are native to Egypt and widespread throughout the Nile Basin: African carp (*Labeo coubie* L.) (Figure 6), Aswan carp (*Labeo horie* Herkel) (Figure 7), Nile carp (*Labeo niloticus* L.) and Nile lip barbie (*Labeo forskalii* Rüppell) (Figure 8). Carp grows up to 50 centimetres-long, have large lips with barbels, medium sized eyes, large caudal fins, small dorsal and pelvic fins, and silver to grey scalloped scales (Brewer and Friedman 1990: 57-58; Boulenger and Loat 1907: vii, pls. XXVII-XXX, XXXI: figs. 1-3). Carp's symbolism is uncertain, but they would have kept water features clean and pest-free due to their natural habits: they love calm inshore waters and are 'herbivorous bottom feeders – known to swallow great quantities of mud from which they digest the diatoms – leaves, grasses, algae, detritus, and insects' (Brewer and Friedman 1990: 58).

Elephantfish spp.

Elephantfish are shown naturalistic like Gardiner sign K2 () and K3 (). Fourteen species of elephantfish are native to the Nile Basin, range in size from 15 centimetres to one metre, have elephant-like nostrils, small inferior mouths and eyes, and are easily distinguishable from their identical dorsal and anal fins (Figure 9) (Brewer and Friedman 1990: 48; Boulenger and Loat 1907: iii, pl. VI, fig. 1; Gamer-Wallert 1970: 122; Ikram 1995: 36). Elephantfish, like catfish and trunkfish, were psychopomps[2] for the recently dead to the hereafter in the West (*jmntt*), evident from *PT* 359, *BD* 99 and 153 (Priskin 2019: 10), and *CT* 35 (variation B2L) in the *Book of the moon*: 'The fish that are in the water protected me (from

[2] A psychopomp (ὁ ψυχοπομπός) is a journeyman or shepherd/guide of the recently dead into the hereafter. A psychopomp can appear in animal form or as a god, daemon, djinni, angel, or spirit. They exclusively shepherd the dead and do not participate in their judgement (Long 2005: 9451-9452; Siikala and De Velasco: 2295).

the…people who are in the watercourses), the fish that are in the watercourses cleanse me…' (Gamer-Wallert 1970: 123).

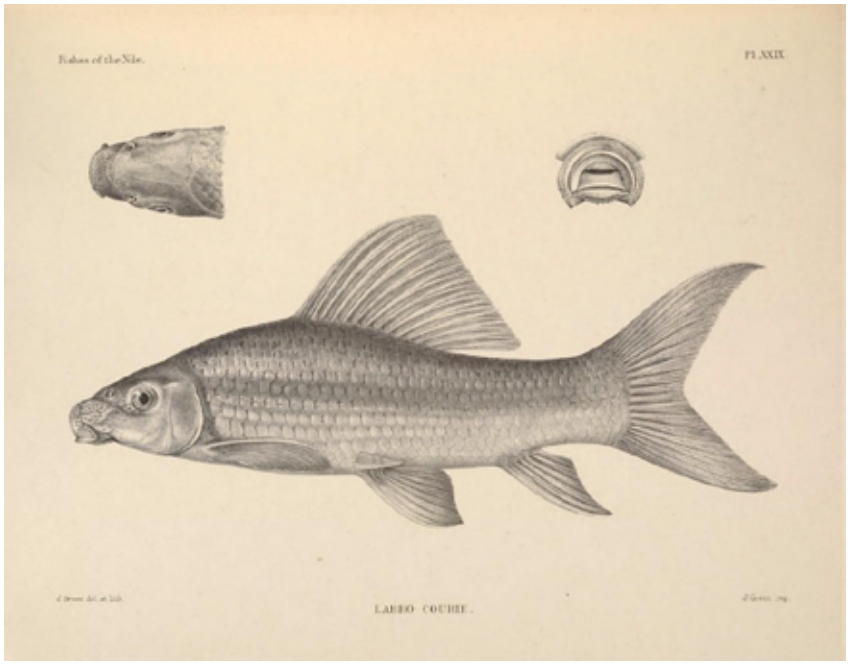


Figure 6: An African carp (Labeo coubie L.) drawn in Abu Hor, Sudan. Pl. XXIX by Boulenger and Loat (1907). Public domain.

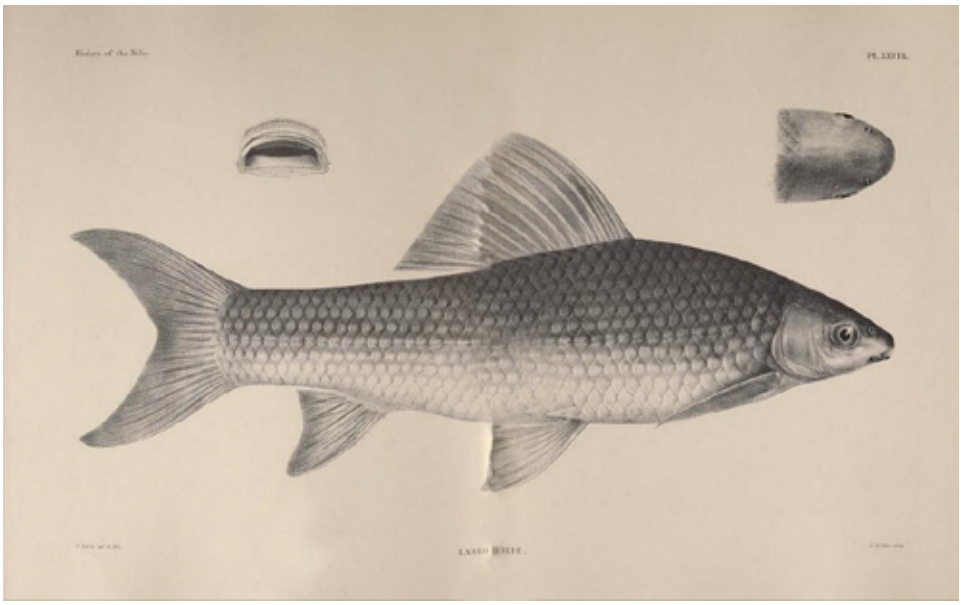


Figure 7: An Aswan carp (L. horie Herkel) drawn on the Qasr Ibrim island in Lower Nubia, Sudan. Pl. XXVIII by Boulenger and Loat (1907). Public domain.

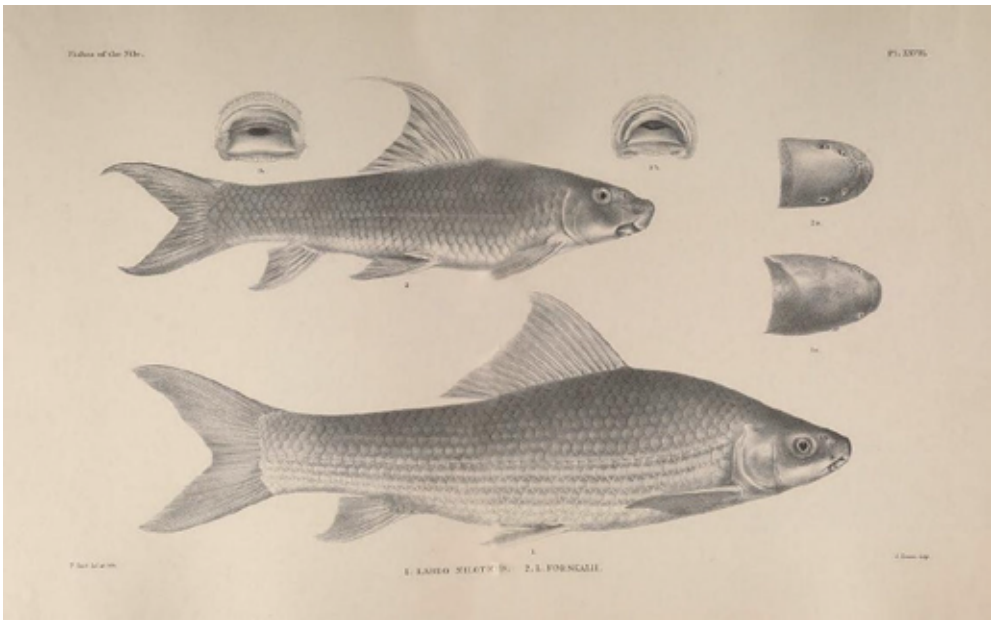


Figure 8: A Nile carp (L. niloticus L.) drawn in Sebennytos (Samannud), and a Nile lip barbie (L. forskalii Rüppell) drawn in Korosko, Sudan. Pl. XXVII in Boulenger and Loat (1907). Public domain.

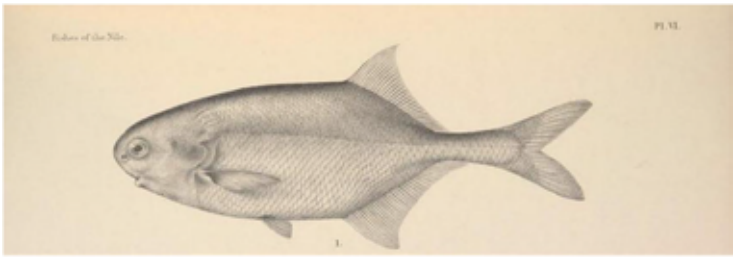


Figure 9: An elephantfish (P. bane Lacépède) drawn in proximity to Cairo. Pl. VI in Boulenger and Loat (1907). Public domain.

Egyptian trunkfish spp.

Egyptian trunkfish are known as *boueza*-fish in Egyptian Arabic and appear in the pool of the Theban *ḥrrt-š*-formal garden depicted in Nakht's tomb (TT 161) (Figure 10). Elephantfish are shown naturalistic like Gardiner sign K4 () from the 5th dynasty onwards, are a member of the same family as elephantfish called Mormyridae, and are native to the Nile Basin, the White Nile, and especially Lake Albert in the Eastern Delta (Brewer and Friedman 1990: 5; Boulenger and Loat 1907: iv, pl. IV: fig. 2). Trunkfish spp. are most recognizable from their elongated snout, tiny eyes, and small silver pectoral fins and long dorsal fins (Figure 11) (Brewer and Friedman 1990: 51; Boulenger and Loat 1907: iv, pl. IV, fig. 2). Trunkfish, like the white lotus, were associated with the moon – the night-time Osirian aspect of Re due to their active nature at night and inactive nature at the bottom of water during the day (Brewer and Friedman 1990: 51). This is evident from the Old Kingdom shepherd's songs (*Hirtenliedes*) in the mastaba-tombs of Ti, Mereruka, and Sekhemankhptah, dating from the 5th to 6th dynasties:

'...The shepherd is in the water among the fishes, so he talks to the Mormyrus: 'Oh, our shepherd, Oh Westerner!' He talks to the catfish: 'West! Where is the shepherd? The shepherd went west' (Gamer-Wallert 1970: 122; Goedicke 1957: 47).

Figure 10: Tilapia, carp, catfish, and Egyptian trunkfish species floating and eating at white waterlilies in the water feature of the Theban ḥrrt-š-formal garden in the Domain of Amun depicted in Nakht (TT 161). Photograph of the Brussels facsimile by author © 2014.

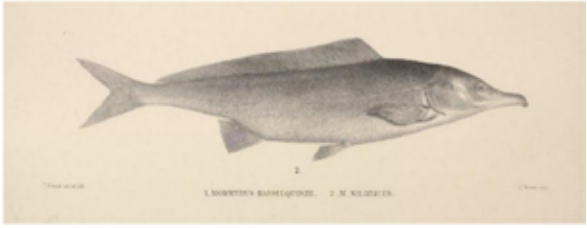


Figure 11: An Egyptian trunkfish (M. niloticus Block and Schneider) drawn in proximity to Beni Suef and Biba. Pl. XI in Boulenger and Loat (1907). Public domain.

Catfish spp.

Catfish are depicted naturalistically like Gardiner sign K4A (). Thirteen freshwater species of the catfish family Mochokidae are native to Egypt, the Nile Basin, and tropical Africa, varying in size from small to large (5 to 120 centimetres) (Brewer and Friedman 1970: 67; Boulenger and Loat 1907: xiii, pl. LXIV, fig. 1; Ikram 1995: 10; Sahrhage 1997: 70). These types of catfish have medium-sized eyes, strong cephalon-nuchal bumps, serrated spines, spotted brownish, black, or silver scales, and cat-like barbels around their mouths (Figure 12) (Brewer and Friedman 1970: 67; Ikram 1995: 10; Sahrhage 1997: 70).

Catfish were ideal for water features since like carp they are bottom feeders who love to burrow into shallow muddy ponds, lakes, and pools and eat insect larvae, small fish, algae, and detritus (Brewer and Friedman 1970: 67; Ikram 1995: 10; Sahrhage 1997: 70). The ancient Egyptians were aware of the catfish's predilection for this habitat, evident from the Late Period sarcophagus of the dwarf Djedher (CG 29302): 'O catfish whose secret forms are within the earth' (Manassa 2007: 50). Wahrindi (*Synodontis schall* Bloch and Schneider) remains, for example, were discovered in the pool of the *š*-formal garden of the Amenhotep, son of Hapu's memorial temple at Thebes-West (Figures 3 and 12) (Hugonot 1989: 75, figs. 56-57; Robichon and Varille 1938: 99-102).

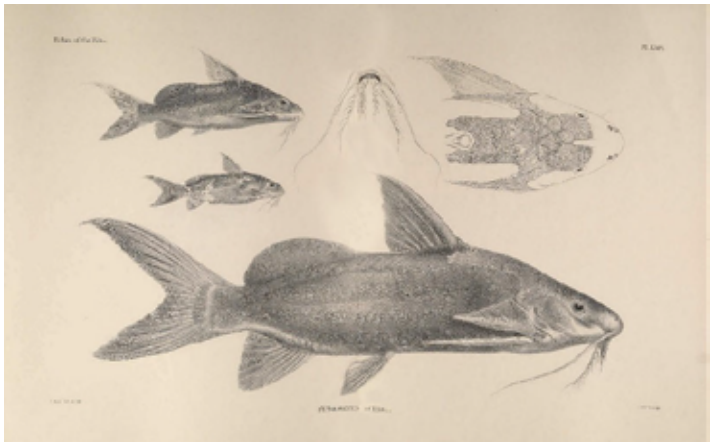


Figure 12: A Wahrindi (S. schall Block and Schneider) drawn in Rosetta (Rashid). Pl. LXIV in Boulenger and Loat (1907). Public domain.

Catfish, like the Egyptian trunkfish, were related to the moon: Re-Osiris's night-time aspect (Faulkner 1980: 66; Gamer-Wallert 1970: 117; Gamer-Wallert 1975: 1210), and assisted in the deceased's rebirth and resurrection, as they were journeyman (psychopomps) to the West in Old Kingdom shepherd's songs. In the *Book of caverns*, for example, 11 catfish daemons guarded the entrance to the horizon so that Re could make his morning rise (Gamer-Wallert 1970: 118) and guide the glorified dead (*bꜣw*) into the West:

'...O Catfish, lords of provisions, manifesting ones, who become / come from Osiris! O those who exist as Mekhentyenirty gods who become / come from Horus, lords of the provisions in the forepart of the Duat, powerful upon their corpses. O those in the following of the one foremost of the Duat, Catfish, great of provisions! O these great gods within their sarcophagi, Behold, I call to you, with the result that your bas might be powerful in the west...' (Manassa 2007: 334).

Perhaps this is the reason the Wahrindi was called *wḥᶜ(w)* () in Egyptian (Gamer-Wallert 1970: 32), as the term is related to the verb *wḥᶜ* () or 'to fish and fowl' (Erman and Grapow 1926-1961, vol. I: 350 [7]), and the nouns: *wḥᶜ(w)* () or 'fishers and fowlers' (Erman and Grapow 1926-1961, vol. I: 350[1]-350[6]) and *wḥᶜ* () or 'fisherman's boat' (Erman and Grapow 1926-196, vol. I: 348 [2]). Their protective power in the formal gardens constructed in tomb, cenotaph, and/or memorial temple contexts is evident from *CT* 312 in which the deceased condemns Seth, a god associated with chaos *(jsft)*:

'...To be recited over a waxen representation of an enemy, inscribed with the name of that enemy on its breast, with the bone of a *wḥᶜ*-fish (*Synodontis* spp.); put it in the earth at the place of Osiris: ...Behold that enemy of mine among men, in the netherworld, and among all creatures, he has allied himself with Seth... May you ruin him and bring him to collapse...' (Assmann 2005: 159)

Moon and sun, light and dark, creator and destroyer, aggressor and pacifier are dichotomies associated with catfish. Although catfish were fierce guardians of Re-Osiris and the dead, they likewise had a pleasant and gentle side. Classical sources, for example, speak of the catfish in the sacred lake of the feline-goddess Bastet's temple complex in the Eastern Delta at Bubastis (Tell el-Basta):

'In Bubastis, Egypt, there is an artificial pool with many tamed catfish; wherein they throw pieces of bread and they competitively leap for them as nourishment...' (The author's own updated translation. See the classical Latin original in Ælianus *et al.* 1864: 181).

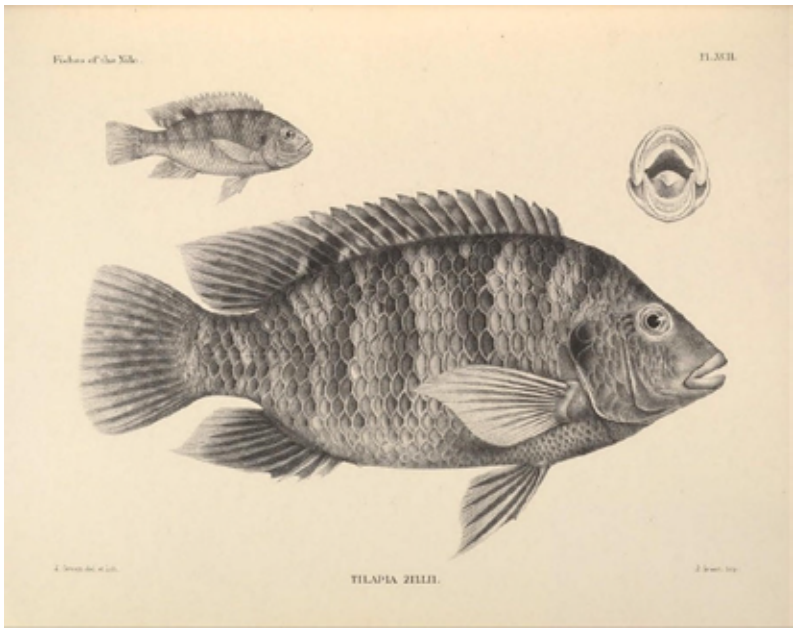


Figure 13: An adult and juvenile redbelly tilapia (T. zillii Gervais) drawn at Lake Manzala close to the Mediterranean mouth of the Suez Canal. Pl. XCII in Boulenger and Loat (1907). Public domain.

Tilapia spp.

More than 70 species of tilapia exist in the Nile Basin, range in size from small to large, love shallow inshore waters, have triangular mouths, small eyes, and distinct elongated silver blue dorsal fins that nearly reach their squarish caudal fins (Figures 13 and 14) (Brewer and Friedman 1990: 77, 79; Boulenger and Loat 1907: xvii-xviii, pls. XCII-XCIV; Gamer-Wallert 1970: 13-14). Tilapia are shown naturalistic like Gardiner sign K1 () but their specific taxon might not always be recognisable in Egyptian art. The redbelly tilapia (*T. zillii* Gervais = *Coptodon zillii* Gervais) is sometimes apparent due to its distinct red belly, as in the *š*-formal garden scene in Nebamun's tomb (TT E2) (Figures 4 and 13).

Figure 14: A Nile tilapia (N. nilotica L.) drawn in Cairo. Plate XCIII in Boulenger and Loat (1907). Public domain.

Tilapia have been a preference in water features for centuries because they keep them clean and love algae and rooted aquatic flora unlike the Nile tilapia (*T. nilotica* L.) or the mango tilapia (*T. galilæa* L.) (Brewer and Friedman 1990: 79; Gamer-Wallert 1970: 128; Robins 1993: 188). Tilapia were protectors of Re's solar barque on its journey to the morning horizon, evident from a 'Hymn to the sun' in *BD* spell 15:

'You see the tilapia in its [true] form at the turquoise pool, and I behold the tilapia in its [true] nature guiding the speedy boat in its waters' (Robins 1993: 188).

Because tilapia are mouthbrooders, the ancient Egyptians associated the species with the sun instead of the moon, the bovine-goddess Hathor's motherly aspect, and rebirth cycle. When tilapia eggs hatch, for example, the female places the offspring into the back her mouth to nurture them, only releasing the fry (babies) once they have hatched (Brewer and Friedman 1970: 79). Tilapia, in fact, in Egyptian is *wꜣḏ* () (Erman and Grapow 1926-1961 , vol. I: 268, 399[7]-399[8]; Gamer-Wallert 1970: 25-26), which as with the term for papyrus, plays on the verb *wꜣḏ* () or 'to flourish, to be green (fertile)' (Erman and Grapow 1926-1961: 264[12]-266[9]).

Growth cycle in the water features

These fish species frequently eaten by the ancient Egyptians are those that spawn in the springtime and grow from fry to juvenile or adult by the summertime. Allotted below are the five species identified in the water features of the formal gardens and their growth and development cycles throughout the year (Table 1).

The ancient Egyptians would have gathered surplus fish from the water features of their formal gardens at certain times of the year. The carp spawns from spring to early summer from March to June and grows from fry to juvenile or adult after six months. Elephantfish, Egyptian trunkfish, and catfish would spawn in the water features during the summer months from June to September and grow from fry to juvenile or adult after six months. While tilapia would spawn in the water features in autumn to spring

from November to April and become mature after six months. The fish may not have produced offspring year-round but would have kept the water features clean and pest-free, as the majority are bottom-feeders and predominantly eat waterborne insects, invasive aquatic vegetation, grasses, algae, and/or detritus.

Table 1: Patterns of fauna in the water features of ancient Egyptian formal gardens.

Pisciculture			
Fish	*Spawning season*[3]	*Months*	*Growth to juvenile and/or adult*
Carp spp.	Spring-early summer	March-June	± Six months
Elephantfish spp.	Summer	June-September	± Six months
Trunkfish spp.	Summer	June-September	± Six months
Catfish spp.	Summer	June-September	± Six months
Tilapia spp.	Autumn-spring	November-April	± Six months

Conclusions

The function and symbolism of carp, elephantfish, catfish, Egyptian trunkfish, and tilapia species propagated in the water features of ancient Egyptian formal gardens were multifaceted. The five fish species were raised in various types of water features incorporated into a formal garden's landscape design and were raised as seasonal, surplus produce for the institutions to which they were connected. The natural habits and habitats of these fish species in the wild revealed they would have inherently kept the water features clean and pest-free after domestication. In terms of symbolism, the fish beautified the pools, ponds, fountains, or lakes of formal gardens and embodied beliefs concerning specific gods associated with the sun, the moon, and/or with the Old Kingdom-age funerary belief in fish shepherds (psychopomps) who guided the recently dead for a time on their journey towards the hereafter in the West (*jmntt*).

Acknowledgments

Thank you to the committee of the Current Research in Egyptology 2020/2021, Rhodes, for the organising of the conference on Zoom in May 2021 amid the COVID-19 pandemic. A deep thanks is owed to my master's thesis committee: Drs Lisa Sabbahy, Salima Ikram, and Mariam Ayad. Much thanks to my friends and colleagues during my time as a master's student at The American University in Cairo, as well as to Dr Hourig Sourouzian and the entire team at The Colossi of Memnon and Amenhotep III

[3] 'The typical fishing substance pattern along the Nile is believed to have two peaks with the year, at the beginning of the floods (Akhet) when fish spawn in shallow water, and at the end of the flood season, when the Nile recedes and fish can be harvested from residual pools...the average length of the fish from residual ponds is smaller than those collected from the Nile spawning places' (See Vermeersch 2000: 154, 194; Wendorf 1999: 874).

Temple Conservation Project at Kom el-Hettan. I also send so much love to my entire family, friends, and cats, who have supported me manifold over the past decades.

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Being annihilated or being satisfied in the Duat. About the dynamic of the *sw.wt* in the New Kingdom Books of the Underworld

Mariano Bonanno

Abstract

Amongst the components of the Egyptian funerary personality, the shadow is probably the most elusive. In fact, as one of the elements with greater mobility, the shadow is a first-order component to preserve the integrity of the deceased. That is why a deceased (or a god) with a 'powerful shadow' or who can keep it in the Hereafter guarantees to join the crew of the disk and therefore regenerate. On the contrary, with the annihilation of the shadow, the condemned are executed and included among those that do not exist. This article proposes a study of the course of the shadows in the context of the Duat in the funerary literature of the New Kingdom. Consequently, an analysis of the mobility acquired by the elements of the funerary personality in the Duat in this period is presented.

Keywords

Shadow; term and perception of personality; underworld; Amduat; funerary journey

About the dynamic in the Duat

The corpus we will use in this article (the so-called *Book of Amduat*, *Book of Gates*, *Book of Caverns*, and *Book of the Earth*) analyses the decrease of Re's abilities and his relationship with another god, Osiris. This interaction creates a temporary relationship of transference and regeneration. In the funerary context, a diminished Re 'adopts' an Osirian existence while resting but, simultaneously, undergoes a transformation. At the same time, his presence allows Osiris to overcome his putrefaction and regenerate himself. Thus, the nocturnal journey of the sun through the Duat and his union with Osiris and Re are the focal points of the new Kingdom Books of the Underworld (Zago 2019: 225-229).

In the New Kingdom Books of the Underworld, the cyclical journey of the deceased seems to unify in a single space, *dwꜣt*, which, although it does not elude the transience for the solar passage, it does lead to a variable stay in which the deceased finds himself in an organised counterworld where he can move safely as long as he avoids certain dangers (Hornung 2006: 31).

In this way, the *dwꜣt* appears as a space formed at the behest of the movements of a ubiquitous entity, Re, that progressively outlines the different landscapes that comprise it and, at the same time, the deceased experiences the fluctuating effects of the renewal or in the case of the condemned, of annihilation.

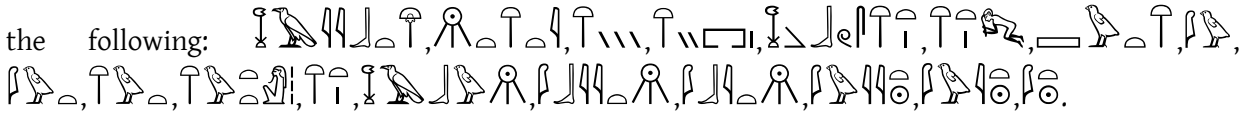
This dynamic is the result of the preeminence of time in the Duat based on Re's abilities: everything that is unmoving moves when the sun is present, but remains still when it disappears. Expressions such as *kkw m-ḫt ᶜᶜp=f ḥr=sn* 'the darkness envelops them after when Re passed near them' (*Book of*

Caverns/sixth division/first register/first scene) (the hieroglyphic sources for the *Book of Caverns* have been taken from Piankoff (1942; 1944; 1945) and Werning (2011)) or *ᶜmḫr=sn tp.w=sn zf.w=sn m-ḫt ᶜpp nṯr pn ḥr=sn* 'then they swallow their heads and their knives (again) after this god has passed by them' (*Book of Amduat*/eighth hour/second register) (the hieroglyphic sources for the *Book of Amduat* have been taken from Hornung (1963; 1987-1994)), illustrate the relationship between the wait (stillness), the presence of the disk (materialisation) and the distancing (previous state).

In the New Kingdom Books of the Underworld, the influence of the Duat is stretched out and its original and exclusive transitional feature is reconsidered. The coexistence of the old tetralogy, *nwt*, *nwn*, *ꜣḫt*, *dwꜣt*, is not destroyed but resized based on the processes of repopulation, transfiguration and punishment. The Duat concentrates and monopolizes the activity previously described proof of a very different transfiguration setting. In other words, the original state of the dead pharaoh, for whom the transfiguration in the *ꜣḫt* was an essential condition to reach the Duat, loses its importance due to the new resizing of the funerary space and overpopulation.

Definitions and antecedents

Paradoxically, *šwt*, *ḥᶜbjt*, or *šwbyt*, the shadow is probably the most elusive aspect of the Egyptian personality but, at the same time, the feature most clearly defined in the texts. It is represented as a parasol or an ostrich feather parasol,  S35 or S36  , and it usually portrays the individual's shadow double (Rößler-Köhler 1980: 254), similar to a moving and silent body projection that is part of a man's psychic integrity (Figure 1).

Taking this information and the varying spellings into account, the most common ways of writing are the following:  .

Although the shadow does not have a real, concrete entity (Lang 1925: 62), it is an important part of the funerary personality and the qualities that shape all individuals.

The shadow is characterised by its flexibility (Von George 1970: 20), which allows it to move freely (Lang 2006: 3) and grants it certain autonomy, and together with the *bꜣ* and the *kꜣ* constitutes the main vital forces of the person.

As part of the personality, the shadow, *šwt*, appears for the first time in the *Cannibal Hymn* from the *Pyramid Texts*. In those lines, between the pharaoh's ritual appropriation of vitality, strength and several organs, the shadows and the *bꜣ.w* are part of the king's belongings: *skbꜣ=sn ḫr wnjs šw.wt=sn m-ᶜ jrj.w=sn*, 'Now their *bꜣ* is with N, their shadows are with the creator' (*PT* 274, Pyr. 413c: see Sethe 1908: 216).

The Coffin Texts refer to it in the specifically context of the funerary personality in *CT* I 8c: *rdjt=ṯn bꜣ=ṯ jmj tꜣ šwt štꜣ.w*, '...that you be given your *bꜣ* which is in earth and your shade which is in the hidden (places)'. Then, the 488-500 Serie, very important for the ontological dissociation in the funerary context, focuses on the *bꜣ*'s freedom of movement and inevitably alludes to the shadow, *šwt* (Bonanno 2018: 275-300). Thus, the shadow appears with other elements of the personality that are part of it and allow the dead to undergo his regeneration and live with Re and Osiris.

CT VI 67 [Spell 488]: *bꜣ=j ꜣḫ=j šwt=j wn=k ptr m snw ꜣḫt sḫm=k rdwy=k mj bꜣ ꜥnḫ šfšft mm nṯr m wsjr*

'O my soul, O my spirit, O my shade, open the shutters of the sky-windows within (?) the horizon; may you have power over your legs as a living soul, *bꜣ ꜥnḫ*, a possessor of majesty among the gods like Osiris'.

CT VI 69 – *CT* VI 71 [Spell 491]: *wn swt n bꜣ=j ꜣḫ=j ḥkꜣ=j šwt=j ꜥk=f ḥr rᶜ m nkꜣr=f*

'A path is opened for my soul, my spirit, my magic, and my shade, and it will enter to Re within his shrine, it will see the great god in this true shape'.

CT VI 76 – *CT* VI 77 [Spell 495]: *jw bꜣ=j n ḏt=j šwt=j nᶜs*

'My soul belongs to my body, my shade is at its side'.

Figure 1. Anthropomorphic representation (like black double) of the shadow in the tomb of Irynefer -TT290 (Richter 2016:198).

In the later *Book of the Dead*, in Spell 24 for example, the god Shu is replaced by *šwt* (Scalf 2017: 47). The replacement of *šw* for *šwt* is probably due to the decreasing of light in the nocturnal setting of the Duat. Spell 92 starts with *n wn jḥn sybꜣ n šwt prt m ḫrw r sḫm m rdwy=f* 'Spell for opening the tomb to N´s *bꜣ* and shadow so that he may go out into the day and have power in his legs'. According to Von George, in these lines, the shadow replaces the body (Von George 1970: 79). Finally, a suggestive figure is cited in Spell 191 in which an inhabitant of the Underworld bears the name 'cutter darkness' (Wüthrich and Stöhr 2013: 39-44).

It is also worth noting that with *šwt* Egyptians assumed the role of a human double in life and death, so the shadow needed the support of the body or the *bꜣ* to survive in the funerary context. The shadow could be found next to the body of the dead, whose shape and surface it reproduces (Meyer-Dietrich 2006: 195). This does not mean shadow and body share the same fate in the Beyond, for it did not follow the *bꜣ* to heaven (Assmann 2001: 155). The shadow, as well as the mummy, belongs to the physical sphere; the name instead belongs to the social sphere (Assmann 2005: 312).

According to Traunecker, its role is not clear, but it was associated with certain independence and sexual activity (1992: 24). Žabkar (1968: 104) shares this idea while Daumas (1965: 255) relates sexual power with the color black, color of the earth which makes the seed grow, color of the night which in the darkness gives life to the new sun, color of Osiris in his second birth, though the association is not as clear.

The *kꜣ* and the *bꜣ* together with the shadow were part of the funerary offerings in the tomb, a space that represented a meeting point between the dead and the living, and also between the individual shapes the deceased assumed to exist once again: *Ka* and Name, *Ba* and Mummy, shadow, statue-stela and table offerings (Assmann 2005: 323).

The shadow and the *kꜣ* belong to the visible world and as such, it 'cannot be detached from the object, so, too, the *Ka* or Double is the reflection of the object as it is conceived in the mind' (Bolshakov 1997: 126).

In this context, we can see the shadow projects itself over the body of the deceased, it does not disappear or lose its strength, and cannot be separated from the body (Bonnet 2000: 675), except in the case of the condemned, which we will analyse next.

According to Allen (2000: 179), the shadow is an essential adjunct to the corpse, since every corpse casts one. But he also refers to the shadows of the gods and states that, because the shadows derive from the body, the Egyptian believed it had something of the body –and therefore, of the body's owner– in it. The representations of gods are sometimes called their 'shadows' for the same reason.

Other features of the shadow link it with the focus of the creative powers (David 1998: 140), and in possession of physical vitality, same as the *bꜣ*, the *kꜣ* and the *ꜣḫ*. The shadow can function autonomously but it also maintains a relationship with other funerary 'substances' (table 1). It can act as a complement or ontological link to the body too. In this sense, for example, in funerary literature, the shadow is referred to as the apparition or form, *ḫpr.w*, of the person (Schenkel 1984: 536).

Table 1. Interrelationships between funerary substances.

shadow (*šw.t*)	⟶	ontological relationship	⟵	ba (*bꜣ*)
shadow (*šw.t*)	⟶	ontological association	⟵	ka (*kꜣ*)
shadow (*šw.t*)	⟶	ontological relationship	⟵	form (*jr(w)-ḫpr(w)*)
shadow (*šw.t*)	⟶	support	⟵	corpse (*ḫꜣt-ḏt*)

A less known fact of shadows is their ability to hurt other deceased. It was believed certain illnesses were born from the shadow of an 'unfortunate person' possessing a living person (Hasenfratz 1990: 205).

Shadow (*šwt*), corpse (*ḏt*, *ḫꜣt*, *ḫt*) and *bꜣ*

In the funerary literature from the New Kingdom, the 'human personality' becomes more complex because of the gradual quick emergence of new processes, but also because of the ontological alternation between the *bꜣ* and the shadow. The shadow and the body (*ḫꜣt*) are essential elements of the personality (Zandee 1960: 173), therefore, the concept of ontological dissociation is a central point in the relationship between the elements of the funerary personality. The deceased is the protagonist of a circular reanimation that, starting from immobility, reaches a climax at the moment in which the effects of the ritual produce the separation of the *bꜣ* from the body.

The permanence of the body is in direct contrast to the mobility of the *bꜣ* and the shadows, *šw.wt*. The body (*ḏt*, *ḥꜣt*, *ḫt*) is related to permanence, stillness, and the need to avoid disintegration given its connection to other elements of the funerary personality. It is the essential element that, by complimenting the rest of the elements, *ḫpr(w)*, *jr(w)*, *twt*, *šwt*, *sšm.w*, *ꜣḫ*, creates the 'ontological dissociation' (Cfr. Žabkar 1968: 106-114) in the Duat.

This ontological dissociation is also accompanied by a spatial separation intimately connected to the sphere of influence of each substance and its ability to move: *bꜣ=k n pt ḫnty ꜣḫt šwt=k ꜥpp štꜣt ḥꜣt=k n tꜣ* 'Your (Re) *bꜣ* belongs to heaven, lord of the horizon, your shadow having entered in the secret (chamber), your corpse belongs to the earth' (*Book of Gates*/sixth division/second register) (the hieroglyphic sources for the *Book of Gates* have been taken from Hornung (1979-1980) and Maystre-Piankoff (1939-1962)).

The 'physical' permanence of the bodies in the Duat is a consequence of their immanent receptive capacity related to the unfolding caused by the solar presence. When the sun appears, the *bꜣ.w* leaves the body behind to follow it. Once the sun is gone, the *bꜣ.w* or the shadow returns or not to the body. For this reason, the union of the shadow and the body, commonly expressed as the union of the *bꜣ* and the corpse, is the warranty to survive in the Underworld (Manassa 2007: 78, 113).

The *bꜣ* is free to move and separate itself from the body, which is resting unmoving, and freely moves as a shadow. Similarly, it is possible to define the *bꜣ* and the *šwt* as an animating force (Von George 1983: 92ff.) and, according to Von George, the shadow of the deceased can often play a similar role to that of the *bꜣ* and we would not be able to tell them apart (Von George 1983: 133).

The close relationship between the shadow and the body is tied to the ambivalence characteristic of the funerary literature: the shadow can function as a complement: *pt n bꜣ=k tꜣ n ḥꜣt=k* 'The sky belongs to your *bꜣ*, the earth to your corpse' (*Book of Amduat*/third hour/third register); *m ꜣḫ jqr sḫm šwt* 'perfect *ꜣḫ* which dispose of a shadow' (*Book of Gates*/eighth division/third register), or be annihilated: *ḫmm bꜣ.w ḥtm šw.wt n sḏm ḫrw jꜥrwt* 'the *bꜣ.w* are driven back and their shadows are annihilated when the voice of the Uraeus is heard' (*Book of Gates*/fourth division/first register).

As an element tied to the darkness of death, the dead and the body (Meyer-Dietrich 2006: 197), the shadow becomes a component of the first order when we refer to preserving the deceased's integrity. For this reason, certain expressions, such as *ꜥḥꜥw jrṯn m ḫmw dwn jr=tn m wrḏw ḫpr n bꜣw=tn ḥtp n šw.wt=ṯn dwn n rdwy=ṯn mꜣꜥ n mꜣs.wt=tn ḥtp=ṯn n r=tn m jwf=ṯn m mrw wt.w=ṯn* 'Stand up indeed. Yield not- Stretch out and be not weary. May your *bꜣ* emerge, and may your shadow rest. Stretching for your feet, and straightness for your knees. May you indeed rest in your flesh, unbound are your wrappings' (*Book of Amduat*/sixth hour/third register), become the regenerating complement in the Duat, as we will analyse next.

The shadow (*šwt*) in the dynamic of the Duat

The body is the starting point for the alternation characteristic of the New Kingdom's funerary texts, given it stays in a specific place and it also separates itself from its immaterial components when the solar presence activates them.

The shadow is synonymous with movement and, similarly to the *bꜣ*, it is free to roam the upper world among the sun god's followers. Regarding the question of where the shadow is, Hasenfratz states that

it apparently inhabits the Underworld but, at the same time, similarly to the *bꜣ*, it roams the upper world (Hasenfratz 1990: 204).

Regarding the movement of the *šw.wt*, Von George (1970: 85) claims some verbs of movement, such as 'go', 'walk' (*šm*), 'fly' (*ꜥḫm*), 'let down' (*sḫn*) and 'pass' (*sḫs*), 'be quick' (*ḫꜣḫ*), are attributes of the shadow, similarly to *šḫnjt* and *ḥtp* 'rest or be satisfied', verbs that appear several times in the Books of the Afterlife of the New Kingdom. But there are also verbs associated with its destruction, 'swallow' (*sḫb*), 'trampling down', (*hbjt*), 'cut-down' (*šꜥ*), 'igniting' (*stjt*), 'annihilated' (*sḥtm*).

Both the *šw.wt* and the *bꜣ.w* could be annihilated (Figure 2), meaning there are several mentions of their destruction and/or confinement. In this regard, there are quite a number of examples in different sources of many stages the shadows go through.

- They are erased.

j ḫfty.w nn ḫfty.w sḫdt nty.w šwt=sn 'Oh enemies, Oh these enemies upside down, they have no shadows' (*Book of Caverns*/third division/third register/second scene).

- They are bound.

ntṯ ḫfty.w n wsjr dr šwt=tn tm ḫpr=tn 'They are the enemies of Osiris, so their shadows are haunted (tied), their shapes, cease to exist' (*Book of Caverns*/Precedent text sixth division/fifth register/second scene).

- They are burnt.

sḏt=f m jmty.w ꜥwj=fj n jky=f tp.w nsr=f šw.wt ḫꜣ.wt bꜣ.w snṯ.w jmy.wt=sn 'His flame (one of the gods present in the scene) being between his two hands, punishes the heads, burns the shadows, the bodies, the *bꜣ.w*, and the limbs which is among them' (*Book of the Earth*/Section D/first register/first scene) (the hieroglyphic sources for the *Book of the Earth* have been taken from Piankoff (1953)).

- They are covered in blood.

šw.wt=snm snfj 'Their shadows are bloodstained' (*Book of Caverns*/sixth division/third register/first scene).

- They cannot rest.

wnn nn m sḫr pn nty.w mꜣꜣ=sn wbn rꜥ nty.w sḏm=sn md.w=f wnn=sn m kkw n ꜥk bꜣ=sn m tꜣ nty.w tp šw.wt=sn ḥr ḫꜣ.wt 'They are like this, those who don't see the rays of Re and those who don't hear his words which are in the darkness, whose *bꜣ.w* don't come to earth, and whose shadows doesn't rest in its corpses' (*Book of Caverns*/third division/third register/first scene).

- They are destroyed.

mꜥ=ṯn wd=ṯn n ntt.w spj=j ṯn sꜣ ꜣwt ꜥꜣ=n gr dt sštꜣ nty.w prrt m sꜣ=s bḥn nty ḥtmyt sḥtm bꜣ.w=tn šw.wt=ṯn 'Behold, I put them in chains, I assign them to those who keep them who are under the hand of the Mysterious, from which there is no escape, being slaughtered in the place of destruction, you whose *bꜣ.w* and *šw.wt* are annihilated (*Book of Caverns*/Precedent text sixth division/third register).

- They are cut into pieces.

tkꜣ n ḥr.w=ṯn spd n zfw.w=tn ꜣm=ṯn ḫfty.w ḫprj ḏs=ṯn šw.wt=ṯn nt=ṯn jry.w ḥꜥw šṯꜣ jrj n nww šw.wt=sn 'May your faces burn, and may your knives be sharp, that you may consume the enemies of Khepri and cut, *ds*, their shadows! You are those attached to the mysterious body, whose places Nut has made (Book of Amduat, sixth hour, third register); *nḏ ḫfty.w sḥtm=ṯn mty.w šꜥ=ṯn šw.wt ḥtmy.w* 'Grind the enemies, that you annihilate the damned and cut down, *šꜥ*, the shadows of the annihilated' (*Book of Amduat*/fifth hour/first register).

- They are trampled down.

njk n ḫꜣ.wt=ṯn m njkyt ḥtm n bꜣ.w=ṯn hbjt n šw.wt=ṯn 'Punishment for your corpses by the punisher, annihilations for your *bꜣ.w*, trampling down, *-ḥbjt-*, for the shadows' (*Book of Amduat*/eleventh hour/third register).

- They scream.

ꜥnḫ=sn m ḫrw ḫfty.w m sbḥ n bꜣw šw.wt 'They (the punishers of the register) live on the voice of the enemies, on the screaming of the *bꜣ* and the shadows' (*Book of Amduat*/eleventh hour/third register).

- They are imprisoned.

jrjt m ꜥq šꜥj bꜣ.w ḫnr šw.wt rdjt tm.w jwty.w 'Doing the roasting and cutting the *bꜣ.w*, imprisoning the shadows and putting an end to those who do not exist' (*Book of Amduat*/third hour/third register).

- They are swallowed.

To the swallowers of the register: *jrrt=f pw m dwꜣt sḫb šw.wt ꜥḫm jr.w ḫfty.w* 'What he has to do in the Duat: to swallow the shadows and to wipe out the figures of the enemies...' (*Book of Amduat*/sixth hour/third register).

The Egyptians had an ample variety of punishments, some were temporary, others were definitive (for example, the absolute disintegration of the second death caused by the annihilation of the shadow). In the *Book of Caverns*, there is a category for special dead humans that implied an intermediate punishment. Their bodies were intact, their *bꜣ.w* remained still and their *šw.wt* could not rest in the bodies, so they remained unafraid and unable to absorb the benefits of being close to the solar disk, so completing the union was not possible (Meeks and Favard-Meeks 1997: 157).

The destruction or punishment of the shadows includes:

1) those which, similarly to the other elements, sometimes seem to function independently *pars pro toto*: *j ḫfty.w nn ḫfty.w sḫd.wt jwty.w sḫd.w bꜣ.w ꜥnḫ jrw=sn m sw.wt=sn* 'Oh enemies, these enemies, who are not, who walk upside down, who have no shadow and for whom the living *bꜣ.w* act as their shadows' (*Book of Caverns*/third hour/third register/second scene).

The last part of the quote, 'the living *bꜣ.w* act as their shadow', shows a comparison between two independent yet intimately connected funerary components. Here, the shadow has a negative connotation due to the general context of the quote and its relation to the *bꜣ.w*. Therefore, a question arises: how does the shadow affect the deceased's *bꜣ.w*, especially knowing the shadow in the Duat is ambivalent and, according to the same quote, the enemies seem to have no shadow?

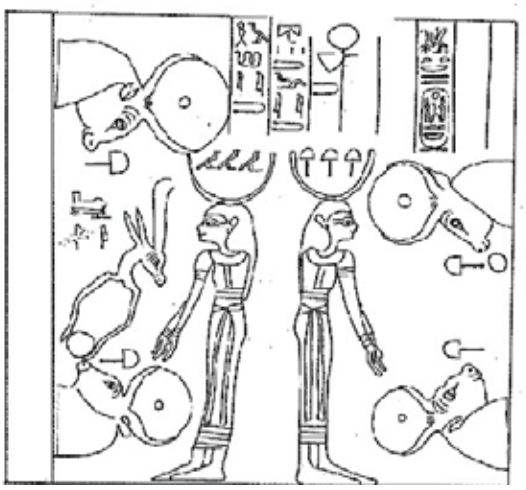


Figure 2. Annihilation of the shadows in the Third Register, Introductory Scene of the Enigmatic Composition on the Ceiling of Corridor G in the Tomb of Ramesses VI, Main Section (Darnell 2004: pl. 17).

Probably, the previous mention of these enemies walking upside down without a shadow is what gives them a negative connotation; firstly, because it goes against the need to 'be whole' in the Duat in order to complete the regeneration and, secondly, due to the possibility of the shadow acting against an active *bꜣ* in a context of punishment, which would annihilate it completely.

2) Those that, independently from their level of connection to the *bꜣ.w*, alter their original composition, *nt=tm ḥfty.w n wsjr dr šwt n tm m ḫpr* 'because you are the enemies of Osiris, their shadows are dismissed, their forms have ceased to exist' (*Book of Caverns*/Preceded text sixth division/fifth register/second scene).

Finally 3), shadows that threaten the completeness needed to inhabit the Duat; *nḏ ḥfty.w sḥtm=ṯn mty.w šᶜ=ṯn šw.wt ḥtmy.w* 'grind the enemies, that you (butchers) annihilate the damned and cut down the shadows of the annihilated' (*Book of Amduat*/fifth hour/first register).

In general, and even though it varies from text to text, it is noteworthy that the allusions to the destruction of the shadows are much greater when compared to the allusions of their prevalence and/or reconversion.

Conversely, in a context of harmonious relationship between *šw.wt* and *bꜣ.w*, and given that their continuing existence was possible because of 'their relationship with the sun' (Meyer-Dietrich 2006: 195), in a context of general justification, the articulation implied complementarity: *prwj n=j jmnw ḥᶜy n=j štꜣ.w ᶜ ᶜnḫ n bꜣ.w=ṯn sḫn=sn ḥr šw.wt=ṯn nttn zšw jmnt rdwj sšm.w r bw=f ḏsr* 'Come forth to me, hidden ones. Shine for me, you with secret arm. Life to your *bꜣ.w*, that they alight upon your shadows, *šw.wt*, You are those who reveal what is hidden, and put the image, *sšm.w*, to its forbidden place' (*Book of Amduat*/eleventh hour/first register).

The shadow can be linked to the image, but also the body and the flesh: *wnn=sn m sḫr pm m dwꜣt m jwf=sn ḏt=sn ḏs=sn mdw bꜣ.w=sn ḥr=sn ḥtp šw.wt=sn ḥr=sn m-ḫtḏwj n=sn nṯr pn ᶜꜣjw=sn mdw=sn n=f dwꜣ=sn sw jꜣkb=sn n=f m-ḫt ᶜpp=f ḥr=sn* 'They are like this in the Netherworld in the flesh of their own bodies: their *bꜣ.w* speak on them, their shadows rest on them. After this god has called them. They speak

to him, they adore to him, and they wail when he has passed them' (*Book of Amduat*/third hour/first register).

The 'shadows resting' is a reference repeated in several texts and that is part of the necessary homogeneous configuration of those illuminated by Re, because the shadow is assigned in the darkness of the Duat and in the affirmation the shadow is the image of the body (Meyer-Dietrich 2006: 197): *Jwty mȝȝ sw nṯr pn ꜥȝ srq nn sšm.w jmy.w qȝbw=f sḏm=sn ḫrw nṯr pn ꜥȝ rꜥw nb jrrt=f pw m dwȝt sḫb šw.wt ꜥḫm jr.w ḫfty.w sḫr.w m dwȝt* 'Whom this great god does not see. This images in his coils breathe, when they hear the voice of this great god, day after day. What he has to do in the Duat: To swallow the shadows and to wipe out the shapes of the foes, those overthrown in the Duat' (*Book of Amduat*/sixth hour/third register).

This process links the image to the darkness and the resulting objectification to Re's presence: swallowing shapes and shadows is part of the logic proposed by Re and Osiris in the Duat.

It is important to explore the difference that exists between Re and Osiris' shadows and the other deads' shadows. In Re's case, different texts state his disk is 'Great of shadow', *ꜥȝ šwt* (Figure 3) (*Book of the Earth*/Section A/third register/third scene), so in this interpretation, the shadow represents not only how the god manifests himself but also a state of transition and is linked to the moving aspect of the funerary reality Osiris was in charge of. Darnell associates Re's epithet with the relationship between solar light and darkness. According to Darnell (2004: 137), 'The sun is great of shadow because of the clothing aspects of its light in the Netherworld. According to Roberson, (2012: 227) *ꜥȝ*, 'great', could be a designation of quantity rather than size.

The *Book of Caverns* (Figure 4) is very clear regarding the protection assigned to the Regent of the Western (Osiris) when the solar rays scatter the darkness. In this way, there is a difference between the corruption linked to total darkness that inevitably leads to absolute dissolution and the corruption restructured by solar light and heat that leads to a cyclic and organic state.

jr n=j r=j wꜥj kw šȝj n=j ḏs=j stp=ṯn mḫt=j stp=j mḫt=ṯn m rn=ṯn nj stp.yw jmjw ḫt ḥqȝ jmntt ḥtp.w ḫntjw jȝ.wt=sn wȝštj.w ꜥnḫ.w bȝ.w sḫmy.w m šw.wt=sn 'I have done this, being alone. I decided that you can choose after me, when I chose after you, in your name of the chosen, (of) among those who are in the entourage of the Regent of the West, (of) among those who are at peace, chiefs of their mounds, the glorified ones of the living *bȝ.w*, who have their shadows' (*Book of Caverns*/fourth hour/Int.).

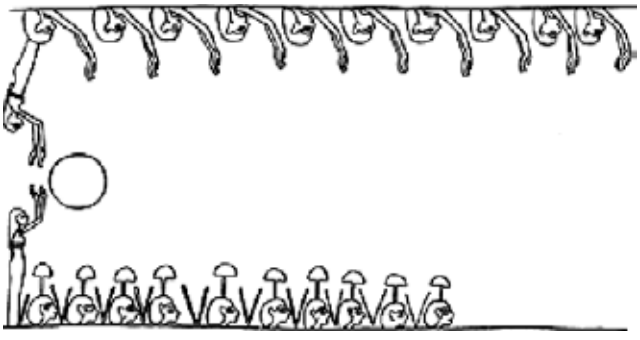


Figure 3. The Great of Shadow between the hidden corpses -Book of the Earth- (Piankoff 1953: pl. XCIX).

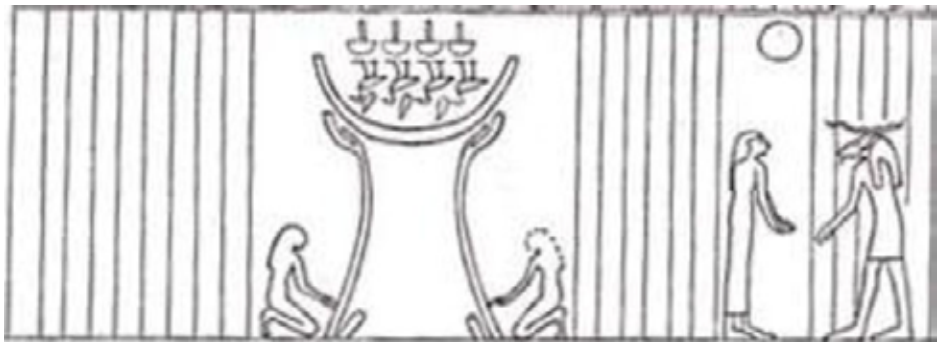


Figure 4. Book of Caverns, fifth division, fifth register (Piankoff 1944: pl. LI).

Undoubtedly, the vast number of *šw.wt* that inhabited the Duat was part of the dialectics that started with the solar objectification and ended with regeneration (the ontological complementarity necessary to receive Re's power) or annihilation (lack of existence, *n wn* or *n ḫpr*).

The regeneration aspect can be traced back to the *Book of Gates*, tenth hour, second register, where the god is dragged towards his shadow.

jj nṯr n ḫ3t=f st3 nṯr n šwt=f ḥtp=k ḏt=k st3.w=n kw wḏ3 m št3.w=f jj rᶜw ḥtp=k ḏt=k nḏ ṯw ḥrwj ᶜmᶜw=sn 'The god has come to his body the god has moved to his shadow. You take your body in, and you're pulled (you) salvation is in his mysterium. Re has come to take your body. You are protected by those who control their throwing nets'; is what the tows tugs on Re's boat say to him. The solar mutation is revealed. In this context, having a shadow or moving towards it is seen as a similar reality.

In the funerary texts of the New Kingdom, it is normal to find *b3.w* over ovals as a sign of their waiting for Re's life-giving rays. The two *b3.w* with the shadow sign, *šwt*, represent their condition of images waiting to be objectified by Re.

The gods are in the Duat in the flesh of their own bodies and rest in their images or shadows. This play between image, shadow and shape is repeated throughout the solar path because only Re's closeness allowed the inhabitants of the world of the dead to be whole.

In the third register of the sixth hour of the *Book of Amduat*, the appearance of *b3.w* and the rest or permanence of the shadows (in the dead body) are mentioned, which is related to their mobility: *jw=sn sḏm=sn md.w rᶜw rᶜw nb srq=sn m ḫrw=f jrrt=sn pw m dw3t zbjt b3.w sḫnjt šw.wt jrjt ḫrjt 3ḫ.w mw* 'They hear the words of Re, day after day, and they breathe through his voice. What they have to do in the Underworld: to conduct the *b3.w* and let the shadows alight, and to secure the water supply of the *3ḫ.w*'.

In the same sense, in the *Book of Gates*, eighth hour, third register, Re speaks to a group of gods: *jhy 3ḫ.w jhy dw3tj.w wn n ḥrw=ṯn kfjt n kkw=ṯn 3ḫ.w m b3.w=ṯn mnḫ.w n šw.wt=tn jrḥ n rᶜ=tn* 'Oh *3ḫ.w*! Oh inhabitants of the Duat! May your eyes be clear, I've removed the darkness! May your *b3.w* be happy, may your shadows be perfect, may your words be wise...'.

The shadow's versatility is only shared with the *b3* or the *3ḫ*. In this way, as a mobile element, the difficulties related to its fluctuation transform it into one of the most fluid, dynamic and omnipresent elements in the Duat.

Conclusions

The shadow, as well as the other elements of the funerary personality, is subjected to the eternal movement born from the relationship between Re and Osiris. If it is justified, the shadow undergoes movement, but if it is damned, it is destroyed.

From this reconstitutive bond, there are many elements to take into account regarding the specificities and restrictions funerary entities were tied to:

-the general context of regeneration,

-how each element appears (their connection with other elements, their particular context, their relationship with Re and/or Osiris, among others),

-the dichotomy of their manifestations (nutrition ≠ destruction, breath ≠ annihilation),

-the relationship between elements and the other 'substances'.

Nutrition, destruction, rest, breath, food, and permanence are some of the many activities that represent previous behaviours and their relationship with *mꜣꜥt* on earth. In this way, the regenerating and vindictive aspect of the Duat is made explicit. The gods' importance in these processes was activated by Re's prominence (who triggered movements and exchanges); Osiris instead contributed his generating properties.

Re releases the sequence that objectifies the functionalities that support the dynamic in the Duat, which are anchored on the fact that blessed and damned souls constitute the totality of human beings (Hornung 2006: 25).

Having a shadow and/or lacking one is an ontological condition and the consequence of freedom of movement or enmity with Re or Osiris. In this sense, the shadow as a moving substance, linked to the body and at risk of being destroyed, becomes an entity with enough autonomy to dissociate itself from the body and have a post-mortem experience.

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‘And all large and small cattle’ - Is there a ‘zoogony’ in the Religious Hymns of the New Kingdom (*c.* 1539-1077 BC)?

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Abstract

The present paper consists of a brief discussion of excerpts from six New Kingdom hymns (Cairo CG 58038, the Great Hymn to the Aten, Hymn of Tura, BM EA 9901.1, BM EA 10684, and Leiden I 344 verso) centred around the creation of animals. It will be argued that one can refer to ‘zoogony’ in the religious hymns of the New Kingdom, considering the different textual strategies and devices attested in the aforementioned sources. The main goal is to ponder on the possible meanings and interpretations that arise from the references to this creative outcome in this set of texts. By evaluating the place of animals in said textual sources, it will be shown how members of the animal kingdom partake in the cosmogonical activity performed by the Creator, being listed among the various beings and entities the deity brings into existence, alongside both deities and humans. Particular attention will be paid to: i) the employed vocabulary to point to different animal species/groupings; ii) the phraseological contexts in which they occur as well as the different textual ways to allude to it; iii) the distinct fashions through which animals are said to come into existence; iv) and their ontological position in the hierarchy of living beings conveyed by these sources. Related sources will be mentioned throughout the paper, and a few quantitative remarks will be presented in its final section.

Keywords

New Kingdom; religious hymns; cosmogony; Creator deity; zoogony; animals

Introduction

Animals, alongside other beings, and entities (such as deities and humans) are part of the Creator deity’s demiurgical activity (Houlihan 1997: 9; Vernus 2005: 20). This feature is explicitly mentioned in a few religious hymns composed in the New Kingdom (*c.* 1539-1077 BC),[2] with greater or lesser details given. These constitute the *corpus*[3] of my ongoing PhD research, which aims to inventory and consider the phraseology attested in the religious hymns of the New Kingdom, which refers explicitly to Creator and/or creation. I navigate through three short core questions: 1) Who creates? (The identity of the Creator); 2) What is created? (The creation’s outcomes); and 3) How is it created? (The processes, mechanisms, and devices used by the Creator to achieve the creative task). Thus, the present paper focuses on one of the features of the second analytical axis, offering a concise and preliminary overview of different textual and lexical strategies employed to allude to zoogony, i.e., the creation of animals in this textual *ensemble,* taking six hymnic compositions as case studies.

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[2] All dates in this paper are according to Hornung, Krauss, and Warburton 2006: 490-495.

[3] Previous collations of this *corpus*, comprising translations and a global assessment of the sources, include but are not limited to: Assmann 1983; 1999; Barucq and Daumas 1980; Foster 1995; Lichtheim 2006.

The creation of animals can be mentioned alone (e.g. Hymn of Tura, 22), together with anthropogeny - that is, the creation of humans (for instance, in Cairo CG 58038, VIII.2) - or even in the context of the so-called 'catalogue of creatures', where their creation is presented alongside both humans and deities (such as in BM EA 10684 recto, VII.5-6). *Mnmn.t* and *ꜥw.t*, often translated as 'big' and 'small' 'cattle/herds/flocks' (see Mastropaolo 2013: 61), respectively, are the most common lexemes in reference to this phenomenon. Nonetheless, as it shall be further detailed, these words might be subjected to further precision and clarification regarding species identification, impacting translational options. Even if animal categorisation is not the focal point of the present article, some comments will be provided on this issue. The translation, lexicography, and classification of these and other animal-related terminology have been challenged and debated by several scholars, namely, Mastropaolo (2013); McDonald (2002); Meeks (2012); Thuault (2017); and Wassell (1991), among many others. Moreover, one may also find mentions to other elements of the animal kingdom, such as fish (*rm.w*), birds (*ỉpd.w; qy.w*), mice (*pn.w*) and various reptiles and insects, which translation is often tricky to precise, such as *ꜥpnn.t, ḫnws, ḏdf.t, pwy*, among others. Likewise, every rendering of these faunal lexemes in modern languages remains tentative, as it is hindered by constraints in identifying the different animal species. However, approximate translations have been proposed, for instance, in the reference work on animals in ancient Egypt authored by Vernus and Yoyotte (2005) and in further scholarship, namely the work of Meeks (2012). Furthermore, the references to this process in this textual *ensemble* range from a simple mention to more in-depth accounts with stronger naturalistic and faunal concerns (see, for instance, Great Hymn to the Aten, 6-10; Berlin ÄM 6910, 8-9; TT 158(5), 3-4), not necessarily contemplating creative references *per se*.

Out of the roughly 150 hymns compiled so far for my current doctoral research, 16 include mentions of the creation of animals, adding up to a total of 21 textual references, as some laudatory texts contain more than one zoogonical instance.[4] The present paper intends to perform a brief survey of six textual instances pertaining to this *corpus* that may shed light on this topic, taking a closer look at a few selected excerpts that explicitly mention the creation of animals. Thus, the undertaken analysis will be centred around the following texts:

1) Cairo CG 58038 - a hieratic papyrus dated most probably to the reign of Amenhotep II (*c.* 1425-1400 BC) and which provenance remains unknown (textual editions: Grébaut 1874; Luiselli 2004;[5] Mariette 1872: II, 11-13; further references: Assmann 1995, 120-128; 1999: no. 87 [A-G]; Barucq and Daumas 1980: no. 98; Erman 1923: 350-358; Foster 1995: 58-65; Roeder 1959-1961: 4-8; Römer 1987: 405-428; Scharff 1922: 47-54; Wilson 1950: 365-367).

2) Great Hymn to the Aten – a hieroglyphic composition engraved on the western wall of the tomb of Ay (Tomb Amarna 25, *c.* 1353-1336 BC; textual editions: Davies 1908: 29-31, pl. XXVII, XLI; Grandet 1995: 97-152; Sandman 1938: 93-96; further references: Assmann 1999: no. 92; Foster 1995: 102-107; Hoffmeier 2015: 218-220; Lichtheim 2006: 96-100; Murnane 1995: 113-116; Wilson 1950: 369-371).

[4] The full list goes as follows: 1-2) Cairo CG 58038, I.6, VIII.2 (Amenhotep II); 3) TT 11, Cryptographic Hymn, 1 (Hatshepsut/Thutmose III); 4-5) Short Hymn to Aten, 3, 20 (Akhenaten); 6) Great Hymn to the Aten, 8 (Akhenaten); 7) IFAO 1224 = 2009, 7 (18th dynasty); 8) IFAO 1225 = 2282 = 1075, 2-3 (18th dynasty); 9-10) Hymn of Tura, 16, 22 (late 18th dynasty); 11) BM EA 9901.1, 9-10 (Seti I?); 12) TT 387 (1), 5 (Rameses II); 13) TT 23(3), 3 (Merenptah); 14) TT 163, 4 (19th dynasty); 15) BM EA 10684, 5-7 (19th dynasty); 16-18) Leiden I 344 verso, II.1-2, II.4, IX.3 (Ramesside); 19) 158 (5.1), 3 (Rameses III); 20) TT 158 (17) (Rameses III); 21) TT 373 (1), 8 (Ramesside).

[5] Notwithstanding the importance of Luiselli's work, as the most comprehensive and latest edition of Papyrus Cairo CG 58038, it shall be noted that the reviews offered by Quack (2005: 126-128), and Werning (2006: 276-283) have provided significant clarifications, thus improving the current understanding of said text.

3) Hymn of Tura - a late 18th dynasty[6] hieratic graffito written in a niche originally equipped with folding wooden doors (Bakir 1943: 83) at the Tura quarry, near Heliopolis (text: Bakir 1943: 83-91; further references: Assmann 1995: 161-163; 1999: no. 88; Barucq and Daumas 1980: no. 74; Kessler 1998: 161-188; 1999: 173-221; Oswald 1968: 51-57).

4) BM EA 9901.1 - Book of the Dead of Hunefer, overseer of the cattle of the Lord of the Two Lands and royal scribe, written in linear hieroglyphs in the early 19th dynasty, possibly during the reign of Seti I (*c.* 1290-1279 BC; text: Budge 1898: 8-10; Naville 1886: I, pl. XVI; https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/Y_EA9901-1; further references: Assmann 1999: no. 42 [A-B]; Barucq and Daumas 1980: no. 65; Foster 1995: 85-87; Quirke 2013: 37-38; Roeder 1923: 232-233).

5) BM EA 10684 recto – commonly referred to as 'Papyrus Chester Beatty IV', written in hieratic, dated most probably to the 19th dynasty (*c.* 1292-1191 BC); almost certainly from Deir el-Medina (text: Gardiner 1935: I.28-37; II pls 13-17; https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/Y_EA10684-3; further references: Assmann 1999: no. 195; Barucq and Daumas 1980: no. 76; Oswalt 1968: 110-113, 224-229; Wilson 1950: 371-372).

6) Leiden I 344 verso - a Ramesside hieratic papyrus (textual edition: Zandee 1992).

The above-mentioned texts differ in chronology, provenance, materiality, script, as well as content-wise, including in what zoogony is concerned. Each of them introduces different means in alluding to zoogony in this *corpus,* attesting to the diversity and heterogeneity that permeates this textual *ensemble*, so they shall be taken as case studies to address this topic. Every textual passage will be considered regarding the lexical/phraseological strategies employed therein in order to ponder the possible meanings and interpretations that arise from the references to zoogonic outcome. More precisely, the vocabulary to indicate different animal collectives as well as the distinct creative devices/procedures

[6] Relying on Černý's work, Bakir (1943: 85) dates the text between the late 18th and early 19th dynasty, based on its epigraphy, content, and stylistic features. This dating was later reassessed by Assmann (1995: 161), who claimed that 'The hymn obviously dates from Amarna', asserting that it has a Theban origin, on the grounds of a parallel text, found in TT 50, a Theban tomb belonging to Neferhotep and dated from the reign of Horemheb (TT 50(7/8); see Assmann 1983: 62d and Porter and Moss 1994: 96.7-8). According to Assmann (1995: 161), this hymn would have been registered in a 'remote place' in view of the proscription of the Amun-Ra cult under Akhenaten; the scholar even entertains the possibility of 'secret' cultic manifestations to Amun taking place in the area. This hymnic composition would thus constitute an instance of 'dissident literature' ('Dissidentenliteratur'), a concept that was afterwards questioned by Kessler (1998: 173-121; 1999: 172-221) in reference to the Tura graffito and a roughly contemporary one engraved in TT 139. Kessler (1998: 171-173) offers an alternative interpretation of said text, highlighting the improbability of a 'dissenting copy' being transmitted within the context of state sponsored expeditions in Tura; in Kessler's view, the hymn would have been used by the individual(s) who copied it as a spatial reference point as well as a memory aid in their (daily) prayers. What is more, Kessler (1998: 173-174) notes that the fact that Tura hymn was engraved in a niche furnished with wooden doors does not necessarily imply that it was meant to be a hideout from Akhenaten's authority; instead, such location and setting could have been chosen to physically and spatially contextualise the dialectics surrounding 'light' and 'darkness', a recurrent theme in Amun's hymnology. Moreover, there seems to be no categorical evidence to date the expedition on which the Tura hymn was recorded from the times of Akhenaten; in fact, said expedition could have taken place during Amenhotep III's or one of Akhenaten's successors' reigns (Kessler 1998: 173), making the adjective 'dissident' less adequate to label this text. Therefore, whether it seems sufficiently plain (based on epigraphic evidence, content, and parallels) that the Tura hymn dates to the late 18th dynasty, ascertaining it to a specific reign remains tentative.

through which they are said to come into existence in the aforementioned set of texts shall also be taken into account. By evaluating the place of animals in these texts, and hence their ontological position within the hierarchy of beings,[7] this paper navigates through two core questions: can one refer to 'zoogony' in the religious hymns of the New Kingdom (as it is often done with 'theogony' and/or 'anthropogeny'?) And if yes, how?

Cairo CG 58038

Identically to what occurs concerning the mentioning of other beings/entities' creation in this *corpus*, a few textual instances point to the coming into existence of animals employing a creative vocabulary that alludes to creation with no precise clarification on the procedures and mechanics of that act. One of such lexemes that indicates a rather generic and non-specific creative meaning is *qm3*, which can be translated as 'to produce', 'to devise' and/or 'to create' (Erman and Grapow 1925-1963, Vol. 5: 34.3-36.5; Meeks 1998: 77.4394-4395, 78.4283, 79.3127-3128). Rather than detailing the intricacies of some being/entity coming into existence, *qm3* seems to convey the mere idea that something was created without providing any further details. As for what concerns the creation of animals, this lexeme is used since the first New Kingdom stages, as attested in Cairo CG 58038, written in hieratic, also known as 'Papyrus Boulaq 17':

wr n p.t smsw n t3

[7]In his seminal article, Meeks (2012) analyses the issue of the living beings' hierarchical perception/classification in ancient Egypt ('hiérarchie des êtres vivants'), having the 'catalogues of creatures' as the main source. These consist of lists of various lengths that enumerate diverse living beings. According to Meeks, their degree of ontological importance would be given by the placement each occupies in those enumerations, the first listed ones bearing a hierarchical superiority over the others mentioned after. The ordering of the diverse beings/entities in such texts would correspond to their existential position within the Cosmos' structure. Whereas there is certainly some overlap between this sort of lists and texts that mention animal genesis, other mentions to animal creation in this *corpus* do not occur in a being-list phraseological context. These 'catalogues' tend to emphasise the Creator's overwhelming ability to act perpetually as a provider for the entire creation, including animals, rather than explicitly refer to the creation of the different beings and entities *per se*. In the double statue of Amenemope and his wife, dating from the reign of Seti I, for instance, one reads: *wbn=f ꜥnḫ rḫy.t ꜥnḫ jb=sn m33=sn rdjw ṯ3w n nt(y) m swḥ.t sꜥnḫ rmṯ.w/rm.w 3pd.w jr ḫr.t pn.w m b3b3=sn ḏdf.t pwy.w mjtt jry,* 'When he rises/shines, the *rḫy.t*-people live! Their hearts live when they see (him)! (The one) who gives the air to what is inside the egg, who makes the humans/fish and birds live! (The one) who provides the mice with what they need in their holes, as well as the snake/worm (?) and the fleas!' (Berlin ÄM 6910, 8-9; text: Kitchen 1969-1990, vol. I: 387-388; Roeder 1924: 70-71; further references: Assmann 1983: 206; 1999: no. 169; Barucq and Daumas 1980: no. 70; Kitchen 1993: 316-320; Porter and Moss 1994: 346; http://www.smb-digital.de/eMuseumPlus?service=ExternalInterface&module=collection&objectId=606549&viewType=detailVie). Other examples of New Kingdom 'catalogues of creatures' include the ones attested in Cairo CG 58038 and TT 218 (8) (temp. Ramesside). Furthermore, animals and their features can also be referred to in other New Kingdom textual compositions to serve specific purposes; for instance, Papyrus Berlin 3027 dated from the 18th dynasty, bears a description of the making of an amulet within a mythological setting (A I, 1-4), in which fish scales and birds feathers are convened in connection to colour (see Donnat 2009: 189-206; Erman 1901: 8-10; Grapow 1924: 95; Quirke 2001: 188-189; Yamazaki 2003: 10-11).

nb nty mn(.w) ḫ.t {mn.(w) ḫ.t} nb.t[8]
wᶜ ḥr ḫw=f mj m-m nṯr.w
kꜣ nfr n psḏ.t
ḥry-tp nṯr.w nb.w
nb Mꜣᶜ.t[9] *jt nṯr.w*
jrj rmṯ.w qmꜣ ᶜw.t
nb nty qmꜣ ḫ.t-n-ᶜnḫ
jrj smw sᶜnḫ mnmn.t
sḫm nfr jrj.n Ptḥ[10]
ḥwn nfr n mrw.t
dd.n=f nṯr.w jꜣ.w
jrj ḫry.w ḥry.w sḥḏ=f tꜣ.wy[11]
ḏꜣy ḥr.t m ḥtp

The great one of the sky, the eldest of the earth
Lord of everything that exists, firm in everything {firm in everything}
The only one of his kind among the gods
The beautiful bull of the Ennead
Chief of all gods
Lord of Maat, father of the gods
Who made Humanity and created the (small) cattle,
Lord of everything that exists, who created the 'tree-of-life'
Who made the pastures to nourish the **herd,**
Beautiful power that Ptah made
The young one, beautiful in love
To whom the gods give praise!
Who creates those below and those above when he illuminates the two countries!

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[8] The second *mn(.w) ḫ.t* must be a dictogram, according to Luiselli (2004: 5). This epithet was also employed in later times, even if with a slightly different phraseology, for instance, *twt Jmn mn(.w) ḫ.t nb.t* in papyrus Berlim 3055, VI.5 (see Assmann 1995: 127; Moret 1902: 67-68).

[9] For the theological meaning of this epithet, see Assmann 1995: 120-127, particularly n. 108. Hymns and prayers from the so-called 'personal piety' sphere (e.g., BM EA 589 in Assmann 1999: no. 150) clearly show that this epithet could be related to any deity. An example of an elegy of Amun-Ra where a link between the upmost deity of the New Kingdom and Maat is observed in the stela of Antef, owner of TT 164 (Chicago OIM 14053, 14-15; see Assmann 1999: no. 75). For a post-New Kingdom textual composition exploring the connection between Amun-Ra and Maat, within the context of the offering of Maat ritual performed by the king/priest, see pBerlin 3055, XX.9-XXV.5 (Moret 1902: 139-144).

[10] There seems to have been some intertextuality with BM EA 551, 12 found in the tomb of Horemheb in Saqqara (temp. Tutankhamun/Ay), where *sḫm* is replaced by *ḥwn* 'young man', a lexeme which also bears a solar connotation. In fact, the expression *ḥwn nfr* is attested in the immediate subsequent verse of the except here concerned.

[11] This expression refers to Amun-Ra's constant renewal of Creation as a sun deity via his daily course over the earth (during the day) and the underworld (at night). The interpretation and significance of *ḫry.w ḥry.w* is still a subject of debate; whereas Barucq and Daumas (1980: no. 13, n. i) translate as 'Haut et Bas', clarifying that it means 'sky and earth', it remains possible that the expression refers to the beings that inhabit those cosmic levels, that is, the deities and the humans. Following that train of thought, *jrj ḫry.w ḥry.w* would express the structure 'theogony+anthropogeny', using a distinct phraseology and terminology other than *nṯr.w* and *rmṯ.w,* respectively.

Who crosses the distant sky in peace!
(Cairo CG 58038, I.4-II.1)

After a series of epithets that praise Amun-Ra as the supreme deity and point to his ontological oneness, uniqueness, superiority, and anteriority within the existential structure of the Cosmos, copiously attested throughout the whole *ensemble* of New Kingdom laudatory texts, the hymn goes on to allude to both anthropogeny and zoogony, in this order. It shall be noted that both cosmogonical realities are referred to as a coming into existence of collective groups (*rmṯ.w* + *ꜥw.t*), rather than the presentation of individual human social/geographic categories (such as *rḫy.t, ḥnmm.t*, among others) or animal species. While *rmṯ.w* appears to be the most common and generic word to designate 'people' in the Egyptian lexicon - even if its use seems to be restricted to Egyptians and Nubians, which might imply ethnocentric and anthropological conceptions of what being a 'person/human' is, in terms of ethnicity and geographical provenance (Erman and Grapow 1925-1963, Vol. 2: 421.9–424.14; see Griffin 2018: 37; and Meeks 2012: 519) - *ꜥw.t* is usually translated as 'cattle' or 'small cattle' when it is written concurrently with *mnmn.t.* The dictionaries propose modern language words such as 'Kleinvieh', 'Herde', 'herds (gen.)', 'flocks', among others, to translate this lexeme (Erman and Grapow 1925-1963, vol. 1: 170.7-171; Faulkner 1986: 39). However, it is important to bear in mind that these are normalised and overall admitted renderings of the word, which could convey distinct animal groupings in different chronologies. In this regard, *ꜥw.t* could have indicated different animal ensembles in various times of ancient Egyptian history (see Mastropaolo 2013: 40-44; for an example of a study of this lexeme in the Old Kingdom, paying particular attention to its different writings and classifiers see Thuault 2017: 324-325).

Moreover, the detailed understanding of this and other animal-related words – which is not the primary purpose of this paper - should be nuanced and contextually envisaged, so a thorough scrutiny of its various meanings and implications would require a significant amount of both diachronic and synchronic textual sources. Regardless of the polysemy of this word, it seems that *ꜥw.t* has retained the global meaning of 'quadrupeds' as a whole, perhaps more precisely, the domestic cattle, that is, cattle that inhabits within a confined space (Meeks 2012: 526; the classifiers of this word tend to be the ram and the goat). This notion is corroborated by *ꜥw.t*'s etymology, as the lexeme also refers to a crook or a sceptre used by a shepherd (Erman and Grapow 1925-1963, Vol. 1: 170.6; Faulkner 1986: 39). Given that this tool seems to pertain almost exclusively to religious and funerary contexts (Meeks 2012: 526), it makes sense for *ꜥw.t* to be the selected lexeme when referring to the creation of animals in a laudatory text alone (that is, without any other animal-related lemma), intrinsically religious. Thus, one might even ponder the possibility that this lexeme is here to be understood as the overall category of 'animals' rather than to sub-group 'quadrupeds' within it, notwithstanding that the word preserves its general meaning throughout Egyptian history, even if that remains speculative.

Furthermore, it is interesting to observe that both humans and animals are the outcomes of the same Creator deity's activity. In that sense, they share what Vernus (2005: 22) has labelled an 'ontological solidarity' ('solidarité ontologique'). However, they are still said to have been created by two different acts/verbs – *jr(j)* and *qmȝ*, respectively. Just like *qmȝ, jr(j)* indicates a non-specific creational process – 'to do', 'to make', 'to act as' (Erman and Grapow 1925-1963, Vol. 1: 108.5-112.11; Meeks 1998: 77.0383, 78.0416, 79.0288) – that might be used to cover generic expressions of a whole-creative deity, stating the deity has 'all' created, without any further detail on how that creation was achieved. A small early New Kingdom statue provides a telling example:

sš Jmn-ḥtp ḏd=f j nb=j nb nṯr.w Jmn nb nswt tȝ.wy ḥr-ȝḫ.ty nṯr wr jr(w) jry.wt wꜥ nn ḥr ḫw=f,

The scribe Amenhotep, he says: 'O my Lord, lord of the gods, Amun, lord of the throne of the Two Lands, Horakhty, the great god, creator of what is created, unique, there is no one of his kind!'

(Chicago NHM 88906, 1-3; temp. early 18th dynasty; text: Vandier 1958: 159, fig. 4; further references: Assmann 1995: 116; 1999: no. 116)

Given their inclusive and non-specific character, there seems to be certain interchangeability between *jr(j)* and *qmȝ* and the phraseological structure '*jr(j)* X *qmȝ* Y' is relatively common in this *corpus.* Indeed, the two verbs might be written together to emphasise the Creator's holistic intervention. In fact, in the same Cairo CG 58038, one reads *jrj n.ty qmȝ wnn.t*, 'The one who made what it is and created what exists' (VII.7). This phraseology is elsewhere attested in this corpus, namely in TT 49(3), south, 3 and Berlin ÄM 7317, 1-3. Thus, *jr(j)* and *qmȝ* seem to be equivalent lexemes that would establish a relation of (quasi-)synonymy with each other. Whereas it is possible to translate the former as 'to make' and the latter as 'to produce' it should be noted that both might simply be rendered as 'to create'. This somehow reflects on the ways scholars have been translating these expressions. These tend to choose two different modern-languages verbs to mark a vocabulary differentiation intended in the sources. Whether this was based on distinct religious conceptions and beliefs seems unlikely, albeit still unclear. Most probably, the interchangeability between *jr(j)* and *qmȝ* aimed at stylistic preferences or at the service of specific purposes on the hymn's phraseological repertoire that is currently challenging to ascertain. But one might ask why would the author of this hymn present anthropogeny via an *jr(j)*-action and zoogony through a *qmȝ* one? Far from presenting it as a categorical and definite answer, a tentative explanation is essayed here.

Anthropogeny is presented as an outcome of the Demiurge's ocular activity since the *Coffin Texts* (namely *CT* 80 and *CT* 1130). There, the creation of Humankind is rendered as the result of god's tears, entailing a phonetic relationship between *rmṯ.w* and *rm.wt.* In the religious hymns of the New Kingdom, however, this identification occurs in a less specific fashion, merely claiming that humans are the fruit of the god's eye(s). For instance, in a text written in TT 158, dated to the reign of Rameses III:

ḫpr rmṯ(.w) m jr.ty[=f(y)],

Humans came into existence from/in his eyes!

(TT 158(17); temp. Ramesses III; text: Seele 1959: pl. 31; further references: Assmann 1983: 159; 1995: 167)

Nonetheless, it shall be noted that the tear-motif is not absent from this *corpus,* as shown by a Late Ramesside ostracon:

qd=f rmṯ.w m rm(j).wt jr.t=f sbṯ=f ḫpr nṯr.w

He built the people out of the tears of his eye, /He laughed (and) the deities came into being'

(Cairo CG 25207; Text: Daressy 1901: 41, pl. XXXIV; Erman 1900: 23-25; see also Quack 2013: 559-560).

Given this cosmogonical affinity between the eye/tears and the creation of humans, one might wonder whether the choice of the verb *jrj,* written with an eye-sign (D4 in the Gardiner's list) to allude to anthropogeny was not intended to entail some connection between writing and visuality/materiality. The sign would thus act as a phonogram with visual semantic connotations, provided that human beings can also be referred to as 'eye(s)' in this *corpus*. For example:

ntk mw.t jt n jr.t nb(.t)

You are the mother and the father of every eye [= every person/everyone]

(TT 387(1), 6; temp. Rameses II; text: Assmann 1983: 225; see also Assmann 1999: no. 98)

The use of the sign D4 and consequently of the writing of the verb *jrj* could be understood as a textual/lexical strategy employed to somehow state that the human origins were to be located in the god's eye, even when that specific divine organ is not being explicitly mentioned, as it is the case in the above-quoted excerpt. The same can be at hand when the Creator's eye is explicitly mentioned, such as in the following Ramesside text:

nb nṯr.w jr rmṯ.w pr.n=w r-ꜣw m jr.t=f nn why nb hr-sꜣ jr=f

Lord of the gods, the creator (*jr*) of the people. They came forth in totality from his eye (*jr.t*) and do not escape (from him?) after he has created (*jr=f*) (them)!

(TT 296(1), 8-9; text: Assmann 1983: 232; Feucht 1985: tf.6; further references: Assmann 1995: 167; 1999: no. 103)

Following this train of thought, the above-quoted excerpt would act on a semantic/phraseological level as well as on a visual/pictorial one, introducing humans as the outcome of the god's eye, while simultaneously alluding to the Creator as the author of Humankind through a lexeme written with an eye-sign.

As for *qmꜣ,* not only is the word oftentimes written with a sign which depicts an object used in contexts and activities where animals would inevitably be present, such as hunting or butchery (T14 in Gardiner's sign list – a throwing stick, or a club used by foreign people; as a logogram, the sign could indicate *ꜥꜣm* ['Asiatic'] or *nḥsy* [Southern Nubian] [http://thotsignlist.org/mysign?id=5844]), but the lexeme itself can be used in reference to 'throwing acts', particularly in connection to fowling, from the New Kingdom onwards (Erman and Grapow 1925-1963, vol. 5: 33.8, 34.18; Van Walsem 2005: 74). Moreover, although infrequently attested, a homonymous lexeme existed to refer to a bovine mammal, such as an ox, cow, bull and/or calf (Erman and Grapow 1925-1963, Vol. 5: 38.1; Lesko 2004: I.151). Therefore, this lexeme would be semantically convenient to introduce a zoogenic mention. Pairing *qmꜣ* with *ꜥw.t* would enable zoogony to be conveyed by two words that could pertain to the same semantic field. The randomness with which one might initially perceive generic verbs such as the binomial *jr(j)/qmꜣ* can gradually dissolve as one takes a closer look at their phraseological contexts and the goals they might fulfil in individual textual instances. It is worth noticing that the same anthropogenic/zoogenic phraseology is attested later in the same text (VII.2), as well as in two other 18th dynasty ostraca, which seem to have been copies of fragments of the Cairo CG 58038 hymn (IFAO 1224 = 2009, 7; and IFAO 1225 = 2282 = 1075, 2-3).

Preceded by a repetition of the expression *nb nty*, there is a mention of the 'tree of life'[12] as well as to the 'pastures' (*smw)* that were also brought into existence by the Creator in order to sustain the *mnmn.t.* This word seems to be only attested from the Middle Kingdom onwards, being most probably a noun form stemming from the duplicative lexeme *mnmn,* 'to move, to advance' (Erman and Grapow 1925-1963, vol. 2: 81.17-23; Mastropaolo 2013: 61-62). Following this etymological link, the lexeme plausibly comprised the herds that would move in an itinerant manner, in several steps, as the pastures were getting depleted (Meeks 2012: 527-528; Peust 1999: 135; Van de Walle 1955: 376, n. 7-8). Literally, the lexeme could be translated as 'the moving/roaming ones' (Goldwasser 2002: 72-73), and dictionaries propose modern language words such 'Herde', 'Vieh', 'herd' or 'cattle' to render it (Erman and Grapow 1925-1963, vol. 2: 81.17-23; Faulkner 1986: 109), thus pointing to overlapping on the translations of *ꜥw.t*

[12] *ḫ.t-n-ꜥnḫ* would probably refer to fruit trees and/or cereals and grains, that is, organic matter that would nourish living beings (Erman and Grapow 1925-1963, Vol. 3: 342.2-4; Faulkner 1986: 198; Wilson 1997: 754).

and *mnmn.t.* Moreover, the latter could also designate every kind of 'herd' (i.e., 'animal group'), namely, in the context of food stocks management and/or ordinance, such as in the Abydos decree of Seti I at Nauri, where the expression *t3 mnmn.t* is repeatedly used in a sequence to introduce different kinds of animals:

m mjtt jw wḏ.n ḥm=f rdj.t ḥny.wt t3 mnmn.t jḥw t3 mnmn.t ꜥnḫw t3 mnmn.t ꜥ3w t3 mnmn.t šꜥw t3 mnmn.t 3pd.w t3 mnmn.t j3w.t n t3 ḥw.t (Mn-m3t-rꜥ)| jb hrw m 3bḏw mw ḥr t3

Likewise, His Majesty has decreed that regulations be made (for) the stock of oxen/herds, the stock of goats (?), the stock of donkeys/asses, the stock of pigs, the stock of fowl, the stock of cattle belonging to the temple of Menmaatra Ibeheru in Abydos, on water (or) on land.

(Stela of Nauri, ll.55-57; Griffith 1927: 202, pl. XLI; Kitchen 1969-1990, Vol. I: 54 [11-13]; 1993: 47 [14]).

Here, the lexeme *mnmn.t* refers to distinct animal groups, not being restricted to mammal quadrupeds. In fact, as stated by Meeks (2012: 527-528), the co-existence of the two animal grouping lexemes – *ꜥw.t* and *mnmn.t*– is justified by matters connected to cattle management. Whereas the former indicated the animals destined to be confined to be fattened, the latter would name the herds that could profit from a higher degree of freedom of movement, even if both words refer to animals under human control and administration, regarded as social and economic assets. In that sense, it seems logical to connect *smw* and *mnmn.t,* as that would stem from the practical and quotidian reality.

In above-quoted passage from Cairo CG 58038, only the *ꜥw.t* are said to be issued directly from the Creator's sphere of activity. In this regard, it is interesting to consider pre-New Kingdom sources that already referred to Humanity as the Creator deity's 'cattle', precisely employing the lexeme *ꜥw.t,* such as the *Teachings to Merikare,* where one reads: *ḥn rmṯ.w ꜥw.t n.t nṯr,* 'Humans, the god's cattle, are provided for' (see pErmitage 116A, vs. 131; Quack 1992: 78-79). The animal lexeme seems to be here employed to underline the all-encompassing provisional aspect with which the Creator invests his relation to humankind, equated to 'cattle' that is continuously looked after by the supreme deity as if he was a shepherd. The succession *rmṯ.w* + *ꜥw.t* is thus also verified, even if not indicating an intrinsic cosmogonical act. Nonetheless, it might be fruitful to consider that the author(s) of the Cairo hymn were aware of the *Merikare* passage, consciously keeping the sequencing *rmṯ.w* and *ꜥ.wt* in a distinct phraseological construction that would retain the animal lexeme that previously engaged with the human one while referring not directly to the supreme deity's provisional ability but instead to his inherent creative aspect (for the intertextuality between *Merikare* and the Cairo Amun's hymn see Luiselli 2004: 6). Moreover, the animal lexeme *ꜥw.t* being metaphorically employed in reference to human beings is also attested in the New Kingdom religious hymns, such as in Berlin ÄM 7317, a text dated from the 18th dynasty as well, albeit later than Cairo CG 58038:

j.nḏ ḥr=k Rꜥ (...) w [tm] (J)tm-ḥr-3ḫ.ty nṯr wꜥ ꜥnḫ m M3ꜥ.t jr nty qm3 wnn.t n ꜥw.t pr(j).t m jr.t=f

Greetings to you, Ra! [Creator] of the Humanity (?) Atum-Horakhty, sole god, who lives from Maat, who made what it is and created what exists for the (small) cattle that came forth from his eye!

(Berlin ÄM 7317, 1-3; text: Roeder 1924: 139-142; http://www.smb-digital.de/eMuseumPlus?service=ExternalInterface&module=collection&objectId=760679&viewType=detailView; further references: Assmann 1999: no. 62; Barucq and Daumas 1980: no. 33; Porter and Moss 1981: 733; Scharff 1922: 43-45; Stewart 1966: 70).

Not only is the lexeme *ꜥw.t* written with human classifiers (A1 and B1), the *ꜥw.t*-collective is also said to emerge from the Creator’s eye, one of the longstanding Egyptian anthropogenic motifs, as previously noted. Moreover, this textual instance also points to the intimate connection between humans and the *ꜥw.t*, the latter being occasionally labelled as the former, which might have stemmed from domesticity.

The cosmogonical sequence ‘Humanity-animals-plants’ that structures the Cairo’s excerpt seems to indicate that the following element is essential for the maintenance of the previous one. Thus, just like animals are vital for human beings, plants are crucial for animals (which would then occupy an intermediary position in this hierarchical ontological scheme). The fact that this last aspect is portrayed with a different word than the one previously used asserts that the *mnmn.t* are also part of the assembly of living beings for which the Creator is ceaselessly looking after, providing them with everything they need. The joint attestation of two animal words implies a difference in translation, thus requiring further lexicographic studies to fully grasp and apprehend the whole meaning of these lexemes, considering that their significations could have changed over time. In this specific case, whereas Barucq and Daumas (1980: no. 193) have translated as ‘troupeau’ and ‘bétail’, respectively, Assmann (1999: no. 87) and Luiselli (2004: 2) have opted for ‘Vieh’ and ‘Herden’; Foster (1995: 58-65) prefers to translate the first lexeme as ‘creatures’ and the second one as ‘cattle’. For the above-explained reasons, it appears reasonable to interpret this binomial as ‘cattle’ and ‘herd’, respectively.

Great Hymn to the Aten

As noted by Pascal Vernus (2005: 24), mentions to the creation of fauna as well as the participation of the latter in the adoration of the Creator deity navigate smoothly from hymns dedicated to Amun(-Ra) to texts that praise Aten, the upmost sun-disk deity of the Amarna Period (and back to the first ones once the Amarnian interregnum is over). Indeed, in the so-called ‘Great Hymn to the Aten’, animals are part of the array of beings that the sun-god creates ‘upon the land’:

Pꜣ nṯr wꜥ nn ky ḥr ḫw=f ***qmꜣ=k tꜣ n jb=k jw=k wꜥ.tj m rmṯ.w mnmn.t ꜥw.t nb(.t) nty nb ḥr tꜣ šmw ḥr rd.wy nty m ꜥḫ ḥr pꜣ(y)w m dnḥ.w=sn*** *ḫꜣs.wt Ḫꜣrw Kꜣš tꜣ n(y) Km.t rdj=k s nb r s.t=f jr=k ḫr(y).t=sn wꜥ nb ḫry-r wnm=f ḥsb ꜥḥꜥ=f ns=w wpw m md.wt qd=sn m-mjt.t jnm.w=sn sṯnw stny=k ḫꜣsty.w jrr=k ḥꜥpy m dwꜣ.t jn=k sw r mr(j)=k r sꜥnḫ rḫy.t mj jrr=k sn n=k nb=sn r-ꜣw wrd(w) jm=sn pꜣ nb n tꜣ nb wbn(w) n=sn pꜣ Jtn n hrw ꜥꜣ šf.t ḫꜣs.wt nb(.t) wꜣ.t jr=k ꜥnḫ=sn rdj.n=k ḥꜥpy m p.t hꜣy=f n=sn jrr=f hnw ḥr ḏw.w mj Wꜣḏ-wr r tḥb ꜣḥ.wt=sn m dmj=sn*

The sole god, there is no one else of his kind! **You create the land in accordance with your desire, (you) being alone: the Humanity, all the herds and cattles; everything that exists upon the earth; everything that walks on feet and everything that flies with their wings**; the foreign lands of Kharu and Kush, (as well as) the land of Egypt! You set every man in his place, and you provide everything they need! Everyone has their own food, and his lifetime is measured. Their tongues are different in their speeches [= languages] as well as their appearance. Their skin colours are distinct for you differentiate the foreign people. You trigger a flood when you are in the Duat, and you bring it in accordance with your desire, to make the *rḫy.t*-people live because you create them for you, being their Lord of Totality, who tires himself for them! The Lord of all lands, who shines for them, the Aten [= sun-disk] of the day, great in prestige. As for the far-away lands, you make them live. You make so that a flood from the sky descend for them. You make the waves beat on the mountains, as a Great-Green [= sea?] to irrigate their fields when they touch it!
(Great Hymn to the Aten, 7-10).

Alongside several transformations and changes in art, society, and religion, the so-called 'Amarna Period' was also characterised by the adoption of Late Egyptian as a written language (see, among others, Neveu 2015: xv; and Winand 1992: 3-30). Among the various Late Egyptian linguistic novelties, one can highlight the introduction of the definite article placed before the noun it determines, which is discernible in mentions to Aten himself (as at the beginning of the above-quoted excerpt *pꜣ nṯr wʿ*, 'the sole god'), as well as significant shifts in the verbal system. These included the gradual loss of the *n* in the *sḏm.n=f* form, which thus became the perfective *sḏm=f*, expressing a past tense (nevertheless, it shall be noted that this verbal form seems to be limited to transitive verbs and that it coexisted with the previous *sḏm.n=f*; on the perfective *sḏm=f,* see Neveu 2015: 51-53; Satzinger 2020: 65; Winand 1992: 192-198). However, it should be emphasised that Late Egyptian was not homogeneously adopted in every textual context and/or register. In fact, in the New Kingdom one can observe the concomitance of two parallel languages, to wit, Late Egyptian and 'traditional Egyptian' (after Vernus's 'égyptien de tradition'; for an introduction to the concept with further bibliographical references see Vernus 2016). Whereas the former was mainly used in private letters, administrative and legal texts, as well as narratives and literary compositions, the latter was an artificial language mostly employed in religious and/or monumental texts (Vernus 2016: 3; Winand 1992: 9-10). Therefore, New Kingdom religious hymns, including Ramesside ones, tend to be written in 'traditional Egyptian', seeking to emulate the grammar and phraseological constructions of the previous language stage, presumably to enhance its prestige (which does not mean that they are completely exempt from Late Egyptian elements, as evidenced by the frequent attestation of determiners and 'new' verbal forms in said texts). Moreover, taking the content of the text into consideration, one might infer a certain tension between *creatio prima* and *creatio continua,* the former referring to the 'actual/original creation', i.e., the sequence of events that account the universe and its components' coming into existence (labelled in several ancient Egyptian sources as the "First Time" [*sp tpy*]); and the latter pointing to the ceaseless (re-)creation of the Cosmos via the daily emergence of the sun deity (for an introduction to this conceptual binomial see Knigge 2006: 67–70). Scholars appear to have been acknowledging this tension, oscillating between the past and the present tenses in their translations (see Assmann 1999: no. 92; Foster 1995: 102-107; Grandet 1995: 97-152; Lichtheim 2006: 96-100; and Murnane 1995: 113-116), plausibly interpreting some verbal forms as pointing to *creatio prima* while others would indicate *creatio continua.* In fact, it seems fitting to interpret this passage as covering both the cosmogonic task(s) carried out by Aten as a Creator deity (*creatio prima*), and his endless zeal towards the whole Cosmos, in his capacity of light and life provider (*creatio continua*). One might even consider the possibility of an intentional entanglement of said two concepts. Nonetheless, owing to the fact that the Great Hymn to the Aten was composed at an early stage of the Late Egyptian 'official' adoption and on account of its nature and content – a religious text praising a solar deity – it was here opted to present the various *sḏm=f* attested in the above-quoted excerpt in the present tense. Nevertheless, it should be avowed that such a choice entails some degree of uncertainty, not intending to impose it as a categorical solution to an ongoing debate.

The above-quoted excerpt must be framed within the universalist views embodied in the New Kingdom's thought, and that is due, among other factors, to the political, colonial, and territorial expansion that was taking place at that historical moment. Indeed, not only are the Egyptians and their space mentioned, but also great attention is paid to the foreigners and the ways the holy benevolent god takes care of them. Moreover, this text presents a 'catalogue of creatures' that the god is said to originate, which includes the animals. Due to the religious features of 'Atenism', which official precepts included the refusal of any deity other than the sun-disk Aten, the 'gods' (*nṯr.w*) are not included in this array, contrary to what happens in Cairo CG 58038, IV.2-3. As the Cairo papyrus was undoubtedly

composed before the Amarna hymn, one might wonder whether we are facing here a selective reuse of the earliest text, where the now non-suitable elements would be left aside. Regardless, the so-called 'papyrus Boulaq 17' allows to state that New Kingdom hymnographers considered an ethnic difference concern long before the Amarnian period.

It is interesting to note that far from restringing to the two most common lexemes in what zoogony is concerned in this *corpus* – *mnmn.t* and *ꜥw.t*– this text holds a more naturalistic and faunal investment, mentioning other kinds of animals not by the names of their species but rather describing the way they move. It is worth noticing that these ethological observations are placed only after the couple '*mnmn.t + ꜥw.t',* to support and further detail the idea that the god 'created everything that exists upon the earth'.

This text presents both similarities and differences to Cairo CG 58038. On the one hand, both excerpts exhibit the sequence 'anthropogeny + zoogony' and introduce the latter with the verb *qmꜣ.* On the other hand, whereas Cairo CG 58038 mobilises two related creative lexemes to individuate anthropogeny and zoogony, the 'Great Hymn to the Aten' places both features under the same act. Moreover, the fact that the latter bears *n jb=k* in addition to *qmꜣ* nuances the interpretation of one text and the other. Whereas in the Cairo one zoogony seems to be the result of a non-defined and non-specified act, in the Amarna excerpt, zoogony, paired with anthropogeny, is the product of the god's 'desire', processed in the divine 'heart'- or perhaps most adequately 'inner dimension - as this body element was envisaged in the Egyptian cosmological framework as the siege of thought. The complex Egyptian word *jb* covers a vast semantic spectrum pointing to a wide range of translational options which include but are not limited to 'heart', 'mind', 'wish', 'character' or even 'interior' or 'inner dimension' (Erman and Grapow 1925-1963, Vol. 1: 59.10-60.11). Moreover, it has been argued that *jb* did not denote a physical corporeal element *per se* but rather the inner self. In fact, in the religious texts and discourses, body parts and corporeality in broader terms operate beyond strict anatomical functions. To address this issue, the phenomenological philosophical distinction between *Körper* – the physical-anatomical body, the one linked to the five senses – and *Leib*, that is, the body as a living experience, developed by the German philosopher Herman Schmitz and firstly applied to Egyptian sources by Rune Nyord (2009: 41), might provide some useful research and interpretative avenues. Although the present article is certainly not the right occasion to further expand on this issue, Nyord's (2009: 55-126; 2012: 173) insight on this topic, considering that *jb* shall be envisaged predominantly as part of the 'lived body' (*Leib)* rather than of the 'anatomical body' (*Körper*), which Nyord conceptualises for the *Coffin Texts*, might be applied to the study of this lexeme in the religious hymns of the New Kingdom as well. Moreover, *jb* understood as a creative device would be further explored in the Late Period account of the so-called *Memphite Theology,* a text that details the way Ptah set the world into being through the utterance of the plan firstly designed in his *jb* (see El Hawary 2010; for an introduction to the creation through the heart in the Egyptian complex religious systems see, among others, Bilolo 1982: 7-14). The Amarna text does not present such a detailed cosmogonical account but establishes an explicit link between the coming into existence of the different creatures and divine 'intention' and 'will', implying a more specific creative procedure than the one alluded to in the Cairo's hymn.

Moreover, it is difficult to ascertain whether the pairing *mnmn.t + ꜥw.t* is meant to portray a particular line of ontological and religious importance to the two animal groupings. Even though this pattern is more than once attested in Amarna[13] and elsewhere, the sequence *ꜥw.t + mnmn.t* may also be observed

[13] In the so-called 'Short Hymn to Aten', 3, one reads: *pꜣ nṯr šps(y) qd(w) sw ḏs=f jr(w) tꜣ nb qmꜣ(w) nty ḥr=f m rmṯ.w mnmn.t ꜥw.t nb(.t),* 'The august god, who built himself by himself, who made the whole land and created

in this and other *corpora* (Meeks [2012: 523]) indicates that this is the most common ordering of the pair in the 'lists of living beings'). Furthermore, the joint attestation of *mnmn.t* and *ꜥw.t* in this excerpt is often translated with terms that seem to mix both sized-based notions and more 'functional/organisational' terminology. The result is an *ensemble* of translational options that might be arduous to fully grasp. To mention just a few examples, whereas Murnane (1995: 14) aligns with size-related concepts when translating this binomial – 'all large and small animals' – Grandet (1995: 97-152) suggests instead 'bétail/les petits animaux', this kind of double-categorisation of the faunal lexemes being also attested in Foster's (1995: 105) rendering – 'cattle and every sort of small beast'; Assmann (1999: no. 92) and Lichtheim (2006: 98), on the contrary, put forward animal collective nouns placing no weight on their proportions – 'Herden und jeglichem Wild' and 'herds, and flocks', respectively. While it is plausible to assume that all this terminology attests to the variety of faunal beings created according to Aten's explicit intention, it could be advisable to pick one or the other understanding when translating this animal-related pair. Furthermore, the way one translates these lexemes also impacts different conceptualisations of the textual passage's structure. Should one opt for translating the binomial *mnmn.t/ꜥw.t* with animal size-related words, the excerpt will firstly allude to a physical aspect (proportion) and then move on to a more ethological one, with an emphasis on the way the animals created by the solar deity move (*šmw ḥr rd.wy nty m ꜥḫ ḥr pꜣ(y)w m dnḥ.w=sn*). However, given that the distinction between *ꜥw.t* and *mnmn.t* apparently stemmed from more ethological and functional aspects of the animals within the domestic and economic sphere (Meeks 2012), not necessarily being a commentary on the size of the animals included in those groups, words such as 'cattle', 'herds' and 'flocks' might be more appropriate. Even if, obviously, it could have been the case that animals belonging to one category were bigger than the ones pertaining to the other, that does not necessarily mean that size was the single criterion through which New Kingdom Egyptians would distinguish and differently name them. In fact, the translation 'large and small animals' could end up encompassing biological species that were not necessarily envisaged by the ancient Egyptians when referring to *ꜥw.t* and *mnmn.t*. One could even argue that the rationale behind including a mention to animals that 'walk on their feet' and 'fly with their wings' aimed precisely at covering a broader faunal spectrum, which would not have been comprised neither by *ꜥw.t* nor by *mnmn.t* and thus underlining Aten's over-arching creative ability.

Hymn of Tura

As previously stated, *jrj* is a broad lexeme that might introduce several distinct categories of beings encompassing the Cosmos. In a graffito recorded at the Tura quarry, this lexeme is summoned to indicate not only the creation of humans and animals, but also of deities:

jr=k st nṯr.w m šms.w=k
ḏr pr(j)=k wꜥw.tj m Nnw
jr=k rmṯ.w ꜥw.t mnmn.t
ḫpr.t wnn.t [nb.t]

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everything in it: the humans and all the herds and cattle!' (Text: Davies 1903: pl. XXXVII; 1906: pls XVI, XXIII, XXIX, XXXII-XXXIII, XL, XLIII; Grandet 1995: 121-133, 153-158; Sandman 1938: 10-16; further references: Hoffmeier 2015: 217-218; Lichtheim 2006: 90-92; Murnane 1995: 157-159; Scharff 1922: 67-59; numeration according to the tomb of Apy [Tomb Amarna 10]).

ḥr nb ḥr dgy sn-nw=f
ḫ^{cc}=sn n=k ršrš=sn n=k
jry=sn hnw n kꜣ=k
dwꜣ=sn tw mj jr=k st
sn n=k tꜣ ḏr jr=k st

You made this, the gods, as your companions
When you came forth alone from the Nun
You made the humans (as well as) the cattle and the herds
Everything that comes into existence, and that exists
Every face [= everyone] sees his fellow
They rejoice for you; they are in joy for you!
They make the *hnw*-gesture for your *kꜣ*
They adore you because you made them
They ‘kiss the earth’ [= bow down] for you since the moment you made them!
(Hymn of Tura, 15-18).

This passage appears to be an existential compendium, where the Creator is credited with the creation of several beings, including gods, humans, and animals. The verb *jr(j)* is here written before various nouns to render the vast ontological existence originated by the action of the Demiurge. Besides theogony being mentioned before anthropogeny, the motivation behind the former seems clear: to cease the primordial isolation of the creator. The gods would then act as ‘companions’ (*šms.w)* of the creator deity. As for humans, their creation is acknowledged alongside the animals’ one, just like we have observed concerning Cairo CG 58038. However, the expression ‘every face’ (*ḥr nb*) refers most probably to Humankind, who is in perpetual worship of their Creator. Even if humans and animals seem to form part of the same group, the emphasis placed upon the former might point to a higher degree of importance ascribed to them. The ontological hierarchy manifest in this excerpt seems to follow the ‘deities-humans-animals’ structure.

It is worth noticing that, contrarily to what we had previously observed in Cairo CG 58038, here the explicit creative mention is ascertained to both *ʿw.t* and *mnmn.t,* showing that the two lexemes can be together ascribed to unequivocal creative references. Additionally, the Tura excerpt differs from the Cairo one inasmuch as anthropogeny and zoogony (and here even theogony) are introduced by the same lexeme, *jrj,* and not by two distinct lexemes. If the order ‘theogony-anthropogeny-zoogony’ seems to promote a particular existential hierarchy, the use of the same lexeme to allude to them all might reinforce that they are all brought into existence by the same entity, the Creator deity who creates every being in the same vein.

Moreover, as was stated for the ‘Great Hymn to the Aten’, it is (still) debatable whether the pairing *ʿw.t + mnmn.t* implies a particular line of ontological and religious importance articulated with the two animal groupings. Regarding this particular passage, Assmann (1999: no. 88) presents a size-charged translation – ‘[D]as Klein- und Grossvieh’ (see also Assmann 1995: 162 – ‘creatures great and small’), whilst Barucq and Daumas (1980: no. 74) understand these works in more functional/ethological terms, translating this binomial as ‘troupeaux et bétail’. If one interprets the lexemes as pointing to the physical proportions of the animals they group, then it would have to be accepted that ‘smaller’ animals are more important than ‘bigger’ ones, in this excerpt, should the ‘order = ontological ranking’ principle be adopted. Simultaneously, one can also ponder the possibility that *ʿw.t* were more vital to the domestic economy or that the lexeme is here firstly rendered merely since the pairing *ʿw.t + mnmn.t* is statistically more observed in the record, so the scribe/author would have a higher chance of having gotten in touch with the order *ʿw.t + mnmn.t* rather than the reversed one looking at other sources while

compiling this hymn. In fact, this text was recorded in a quarry, visited by many workers and plausibly religious staff. It is virtually impossible to determine whether the author would have copied it from a papyrus/ostracon that they would have carried along the journey or simply from their own recollections of a given phraseological repertoire. Truthfully, it might also be that this order was written for no discernible and/or traceable reason.

BM EA 9901.1

The lexical root *ḫpr* – 'to become', 'to come into existence', 'to occur' (Erman and Grapow 1925-1963, vol. 3: 260.7-265.13; Meeks 1998: 77.3049, 78.2988, 79.2182) implying the acquisition of an actual form (Assmann 1984: 210; Vernus 2005: 442) - as well as its causative form *sḫpr* - are also attested in reference to the creation of animals. An example of this can be observed in chapter 15 of Hunefer's *Book of the Dead*:

j.nḏ ḥr=k Rᶜ m wbn=f (J)tmw m ḥtp=f wbn=k sp sn psḏ=k sp sn ḫᶜ.tj m nswt nṯr.w ntk nb p.t nb tꜣ jr ḫr.t (sbꜣ.w?) ḫr.w nṯr wᶜw ḫpr m sp tpy jr tꜣ.w qmꜣ rḫy.t jr Nnw qmꜣ ḥᶜpy jr n[y]w.t sᶜnḫ jmy=s ṯs ḏww ***sḫpr rmṯ(.w) mnmn.t***

Greetings to you! Ra, when he rises! Atum, when he sets. You rise, you rise! You shine, you shine! Arisen as king of the gods! You are the lord of the sky and the lord of the earth. Creator of the sky (the stars?) and of the ones below [= human beings?]! Sole god, who came into existence on the First Time. Maker of the lands, creator of the *rḫy.t*-people, maker of the Nun, creator of Hapy, maker of the flood, who keeps alive what is in it. Raiser of the mountains, **creator [lit. 'Who caused to come into existence'] of *rmṯ*-people and the herd(s)**!
(BM EA 9901,1, 3-10).

Through a sequence of *jrj* and *qmꜣ* forms, the Creator deity is praised for bringing into existence various cosmic entities, including himself. As for the creation of human beings, there are possibly three mentions of this phenomenon in the above-quoted excerpt. Firstly, the reference to the 'ones below' (*ḫr.w*) suggests an allusion to humans, who would live on earth, as opposed to the celestial dimensions, for which the Creator is accounted as well. Then, the Demiurge is said to be the 'creator of the *rḫy.t*-people'. Scholars have differently interpreted the lexeme *rḫy.t,* putting forward explanations that include 'pure spirits', 'present generation', 'mortals', 'living men', and 'rational beings'. However, more geographic as well as religious-based notions have also been advocated ('Delta people'; 'foreign rebels'; 'Seth's followers'; for an overview of the different ways this lexeme has been understood see Griffin 2018: 10-19.). For long, the most consensual understanding regarding the identity of the *rḫy.t*-people would connote them to a lower social status, being often translated as 'common folk', 'subjects (of the king)', 'populace', and related words (Erman and Grapow 1925-1963, vol. 2: 447.9-448.2; Griffin 2018: 16). Nonetheless, in a recent PhD dissertation dedicated to the textual, iconographic, and material attestations of the *rḫy.t*-people, Griffin (2018) argues that the sources that support such a social/class understanding of the latter are sparse, thus undermining a sociological rendering of this lexeme. As for the geographic connotations of it, the scholar suggests that *rḫy.t* might indeed have been used to designate the people of the Lower Egypt but that by the beginning of the Middle Kingdom, this identification was probably lost and/or forgotten, and the lexeme started to be employed to refer to the whole Egyptian population. In that sense, the word would gradually be closer to *rmṯ* conveying the meaning of 'people' in general. Both lexemes occur in this passage, and no meaningful distinction seems to be immediately identified. Both *rḫy.t* and *rmṯ* are said to be created by the Demiurge and both benefit from his benign action. However, it must be noted that the verbs/actions through which *rḫy.t* and *rmṯ* are created differ. Whereas the former comes into existence by means of a *qmꜣ*-act, the latter are 'caused

to come into existence', the used verb being *sḫpr,* that is, the causative form of the verb *ḫpr*. Simultaneously, whilst *rḫy.t* is presented in the context of the creation of the lands, where they live, and of the Nilotic flood, from which they profit, *rmṯ* is written in a binomial structure that links human and animal creation. Hence, there is some degree of distinction between *rḫy.t* and *rmṯ,* at least on a phraseological level, given that the conceptual one looks rather challenging to trace. One might also consider the possibility of interchangeability between both words, which might have acted as synonyms, just like someone would say 'people' and/or 'human beings' in modern English. Regardless, they both seem to refer to the human collective, which is clearly stated to be created by the Demiurge. Indeed, he is also described as 'creator of the *rmṯ*-people and herds', with reference to the most common Egyptian term for 'people' and to the interconnection between the creation of both humans and animals, as previously noted.

However, it is worth noticing that, contrarily to previously considered textual excerpts, *mnmn.t* stands here as the single zoogenic lexeme, attesting that it could be employed to allude to the creation of animals, just as it was remarked for *ʿw.t* in Cairo CG 58038. In addition, similarly to what is observed in the Tura text, anthropogeny and zoogony are introduced by the same lexeme, here *sḫpr* and there *jrj,* and not by two separate lexemes. Nevertheless, the same order of the factors is retained – 'anthropogeny + zoogony'. Furthermore, it shall also be noted that, once again, the animal lexeme is preceded by *rmṯ,* even if another human collective is mentioned beforehand in this textual passage, more specifically, one that was primarily written with an animal sign (*rḫy.t* was graphed using G24, a bird hieroglyph). In fact, to the best of the current state of the author's knowledge, nowhere in this *corpus* is zoogony paired with any other human-related lexeme besides *rmṯ*.

BM EA 10684

Anthropogeny, theogony, and zoogony are also attested in this *corpus* as emerging from a creative verbal procedure, namely, in the hieratic papyrus BM EA 10684:

jȝw n=k Jmn-Rʾ-Tm-ḥr-ȝḫ.ty ḏd m[14] *r=f ḫpr m wn(.w) rmṯ(.w) nṯr.w* ***mnmn[.t] ʿw.t nb mj qd=s pȝy.t ḫnn.w***[15] ***r-ȝw*** *qmȝ.n=k jdb.w ḥȝ.wt-nb.wt grg m nj̓w.t jry šȝw ȝḫy.w b[ȝ]kȝ.t m Nnw ḥr ms.w ḥr sȝ bw nfr nn ḏr.w tnw=sn r mḫr.w ʿnḫ.w*

Praises to you, Amun-Ra-Atum-Horakhty, (the one) who spoke with his mouth and Humanity, the gods, **and all herds and cattle in totality came into existence, everything that flies and alights**! You created the riverbanks (as well as the) the *ḥȝ.wt-nb.wt,* established with cities, and fertile lands impregnated by the Nun who (then) gives birth to good products, in unlimited number, in the provision of the living ones!
(BM EA 10684 recto 7, 5-9).

The joint presence of the verbal form *ḏd* and the noun *r* leaves no doubt about the verbal character of the alluded cosmogonic deed, contrarily to the mere mention to the god's mouth, which might be understood as a physic-biological act rather than a verbal/intellectual one (or perhaps an intentional ambiguity and contiguity between the two). It is interesting to observe that all beings are said to be created in the same way, even if humans are first mentioned. Moreover, their importance seems reasonably equivalent, given that the god is said to provide the means for the sustenance of the 'living

[14] Taking Gardiner's (1935: II, pl. 15, n. Rt. 7,5 b) emend correcting  to  .

[15] TT 23(3), 3 engraved in hieroglyphic on a tomb wall and dated from the reign of Merenptah, has *pȝy nb ḫnn.*

ones'. Therefore, it appears that they do not play a secondary role for the deity, as he continuously ensures their survival. Simultaneously, it is worth noting that the creative verbal mechanism only affects living beings, as spatial dimensions (such as the riverbanks or the 'islands') are created via a *qmȝ*-act.

In what zoogony is concerned, it shall be noted that, like in the Amarna hymnology, the rarer pattern *mnmn.t* + *ꜥw.t* is the one at play here. Once again, one can wonder whether the inclusion of the expression *pȝy.t ḫnn.w* serves to add to the zoogonical capability of the Creator deity, ensuring that not only is he responsible for the coming into existence of quadrupeds, but he is also explicitly credited to the creation of 'everything that flies and alights', most probably, a reference to the birds. In this regard, it is worth-mentioning that both *pȝy.t* and *ḫnn.w* exhibit a bird-sign (G41 in Gardiner's list) in this excerpt, in the former as a phonogram and in the latter as a classifier. Thus, birds appear to be here pointed out through a behavioural description rather than by a more general lexeme such as *ȝpd.w* (Erman and Grapow 1925-1963, vol. 1: 9.5-8: 'Vogel (allg.)', 'Geflügel (koll.)', 'Birds (gen.)', 'Fowl').

Leiden I 344 verso

As previously noted, in New Kingdom laudatory texts, the Creator is recurrently portrayed as the author of different categories of beings - gods, humans, and animals. Moreover, this feature can be introduced together with references to social-geographic organisational aspects, in which the deity is presented as responsible for structuring the territory into its administrative units, dividing it into 'cities' and 'districts'. One striking example is observed in the papyrus Leiden I 344 verso:

jȝw n=k ms(w) nt.t nb.t Jmn [jt] mw.t nṯr nṯr.t twt[=sn n mrw.t?]=f qd rmṯ(.w) jr nṯr.w ***mnmn.t ꜥw.t nb(.t) mj qd=st*** *sḫpr njw.t grg spȝ.wt*

Praises to you, who brought to existence everything that exists! Amun, [father] and mother of the god(s) and goddess(es)! They are gathered [because of?] him! Builder of humankind, **maker of gods and all herds and cattle, in their totality**. Creator of the cities and founder of the districts!
(Leiden I 344 verso, II.1-2).

The Creator operates on both cosmic and human levels, providing the beings with what they need to subsist but also supplying them with fundamental organisational tools. The binomial 'father/mother' serves to assert Amun's primacy over other deities and his ontological anteriority places him as a chief god, who superintends over the entire Cosmos. Although the gods are the first ones to be mentioned, it is interesting to observe that in the catalogue of the creator's achievements, Humanity is firstly enumerated, the god is said to bring it into existence via a crafted task. Regarding theogony, on the contrary, not only does it take the second position but also it is said to happen through a less targeted action, *jrj*. Moreover, whereas Humanity's creation is assigned its own process, gods and animals share the same creative mechanism (*jrj*). Thus, this excerpt presents a tripartite cosmogonic structure that follows the scheme 'anthropogony-theogony-zoogony', placing gods and animals under the same group, which raises the question of whether they are hereby depicted as sharing some degree of a common ontology. Nonetheless, the absence of a rigid pattern in the enumeration of the various beings throughout this *corpus* turns any significant and categorical conclusions rather tentative.

Leiden I 344 verso is also a compelling document inasmuch as it likely bears the only textual attestation in this *corpus* that posits the creation of *mnmn.t* and *ꜥw.t* via two distinct processes, rather than placing them under the same cosmogonical act:

ṯz mnmn.t msj ꜥw.t nb.t

(The one) who ‘ties’ (?) the herds and gives birth to/fashions all the cattle(s)!
(Leiden I 344 verso, IX.3).

The lexeme *ṯz* is generally translated as ‘to tie’ (Erman and Grapow 1925-1963, vol. 5: 396; Meeks 1998: 78.4717, 79.3504). In a few New Kingdom laudatory texts, it appears to convey a cosmogonical sense (see, for instance, TT 84 (1), 2; BM EA 9901.1, 9; BM EA 10684, 9.10; and Leiden I 350, II.27). It is interesting to observe that a regular quotidian action – the tying of herds – is here being employed in what seems to be an allusion to the creation of the animal group itself. Moreover, the pairing *ṯz* + *msj* offers some translational challenges. Even if the latter is most commonly translated as ‘to give birth’, thus implying a physio-biological act, it is important to bear in mind the polysemy of the lexeme, which semantic scope might also include more crafted/artisanal related concepts, such as ‘to fashion’ or ‘to model’ (Erman and Grapow 1925-1963, vol. 2: 137.4-138.17; for a more comprehensive overview of the various attestations and possible meanings of *msj* in the religious hymns of the New Kingdom see Borges Pires 2020). Thus, one can easily suggest at least two interpretations of this passage. Should we take *msj* as a manual activity, then the creation of the two animal types would be conveyed by two acts semantically connoted with a manual task; however, it is also possible to admit that the hymnographer would rather mobilise two different creative mechanisms - manual and biological - to refer to two distinct groups of animals, and thus differentiate them also on a cosmogonical level.

Nevertheless, further translational possibilities emerge if one ponders on the multiple semantic lexical connections of *ṯz* and derivative lexemes in relation to animals. As a noun, with the addition of a *t,* the lexeme is attested for instance, in one of the 5th dynasty’s official Neferirtenef’s titles - *jmj-rꜣ ṯzt* - which can be translated as ‘overseer of the herds’ (Erman and Grapow 1925-1963, vol. 5: 400.14, 403.8; Meeks 1998: 78.4722; Van de Walle 1978: 62, n. 211). One can wonder whether the sequence *ṯz mnmn.t* would have been perceived with a double-folded animal resonance by the reader/listener of the text. More chronologically relevant for the Leiden text here considered, however, is the use of the lexeme *ṯz(j)* referring to the ‘collecting’ or ‘gathering’ of animals (Erman and Grapow 1925-1963, vol. 5: 404.5-10; Meeks 1998: 78.4717, 79.3513) in Ramesside sources, including lyric texts (see, for instance, the Battle of Kadesh ‘poem’ [Kitchen 1969-1990, vol. II: 85.2]) and even hymnic ones (see Condon 1978: 15,4; 35). Furthermore, other meanings that increment the polysemy of *ṯz* shall not be disregarded, such as ‘speech’ or ‘elevate/raise’, as they could have been at issue in the writing of the above-quoted excerpt. Thus, depending on the interpretative avenue one decides to take, either both *mnmn.t* and *ꜥw.t* are here introduced in terms of their creation or merely the latter, should one assume that the former is linked to a more organisational task, such as ‘tying’ or ‘gathering’. However, given the nature of the text in which this passage is written, that intends to praise Amun for his cosmogonical deeds, it could be argued that this excerpt points to the creation of different animals, all brought into existence by the Creator deity.

This passage seems quite challenging to apprehend fully. This difficulty is somehow corroborated by the main editor of this text, Zandee (1992: 783-786), who seems to hesitate on the correct way to render this sentence: ‘Der das Grossvieh erschafft (‘zusammenknüpft’) und alles Kleinvieh hervorbringt (‘gebiert’)’.

Final Remarks

Coming back to the question that titles this article, and after briefly analysing six texts, one can answer it affirmatively. From what has been detailed, there seems to be some value in referring to zoogony in the religious hymns of the New Kingdom. Regarding the concept itself, a modern English dictionary proposes the following definition: ‘The generation or development of animals or of living things

generally; a theory, doctrine, or account relating to this'.[16] Whereas it is certainly inadequate to refer to a 'theory' or a 'doctrine' related to animal generation in these sources, as no systematic and thorough approach seems to have been procured therein, it appears advantageous to make use of the concept as a pointing way to address animal creation in the religious texts, which could function as complementary to 'theogony' (creation of deities) and 'anthropogeny' (creation of humans), mimicking the same word formation process. In fact, the creation of animals is indicated in these texts in several different ways, which concur to a much more complex panorama than the one considered in this paper. In that sense, some final remarks might be fruitful to better address and broadly conceptualise zoogony in New Kingdom laudatory texts.

Firstly, it is important to bear in mind that zoogony is by no means a homogenous reality in this *corpus.* In fact, not only it is rendered by various creative-related lexemes (*qmꜣ, jrj, (s)ḫpr, ḏd, ṯz, msj, wtt,* among others) but also the phraseology in which these lexemes are employed is a very diverse one, not only in what its structure is concerned but also its orthographies and palaeographies, even if there are some instances of intertextuality. In what concerns the script, at the present stage of this research, 10 zoogenic mentions in hieratic, 10 in hieroglyphic and one in cursive hieroglyphic have been gathered. As for materiality, 10 of them are attested in tomb walls, 7 in papyri, 2 in ostraca, and 2 in the mining site of Tura. However, one should be cautious regarding these data, as future research on the topic might result in changes in the overall picture.

Moreover, zoogony can be alluded to by itself, or together with theogony and/or anthropogeny, the order of the cosmogonical processes evidencing a high degree of variation between sources. Phrasing the creation of deities, humans, and animals while keeping their differences and respective place in the existential ranking, serves to assert the 'ontological solidarity' (Vernus 2005: 22) they share, as outcomes of the same Creator deity's activity and deeds. However, whereas anthropogeny and theogony can exchange the first position in the sequence, zoogony is constantly placed at the final of the ordering (i.e. 'anthropogeny-theogony-zoogony' and/or 'theogony-anthropogeny-zoogony'). While it is certainly debatable whether the order of the elements necessarily equates to a ranking of existential importance, the number of attestations seems to corroborate the higher ontological significance of deities and humans over animals. So far, 72 possible theogonic mentions and 68 renderings of anthropogeny in this *corpus* have been counted. These numbers are significantly larger than the 21 zoogenic identified instances and the distribution will unlikely change dramatically over the course of future research endeavours.

Considering faunal lexicon, even though *ʿw.t* is more frequently attested than *mnmn.t* in the assembled textual instances (17[17] vs. 9) it is the latter that tends to precede the former in the analysed sources (6 vs. 2); in what animal terminology is concerned, it is also relevant to pinpoint the attestations of *pꜣy.t ḫnn.w* and *ḫfꜣ.t* (Erman and Grapow 1925-1963, vol. 3: 72-73.5: 'Schlange', 'Gewürm', i.e., 'Snake', 'Worm') in the gathered zoogenic phraseological repertoire. Nevertheless, it should be recalled that the presence of animal-related lexemes in a given phraseological construction does not suffice alone to individuate a zoogenic instance, as this terminology might also be used to refer to human beings, as seems to be the case in Berlin ÄM 7317 (1-3). Each attestation of this and other words shall thus be

[16] See https://www.lexico.com/definition/zoogony; the Oxford dictionary details that the word was first employed by the philosopher Richard Burthogge (1638-1705) in the late 17th century.

[17] Including two probable mentions to *ʿw.t ḫꜣs.wt,* which should be regarded as a separate sub-lexicalised category, as the expression would not relate to domesticated animals but rather to wild, non-confined ones (see Erman and Grapow 1925-1963, vol. I: 170.14; Faulkner 1986: 39; Meeks 1998: 77.0593, 78.0654, 79.0437; for further considerations on the distinct classifying strategies and translational choices linked to the two animal groupings in the Old Kingdom sources see Thuault 2017: 324-325; 2020: 64, 299-301).

individually considered and assayed. Finally, it is important to bear in mind that the animal vocabulary attested in this *corpus* is much more varied in textual instances where the supreme deity is described as the one who maintains and sustains the various beings that emerged from him, including the ones pertaining to the animal kingdom; despite not being explicit zoogenic renderings – and thus having been left out of this paper – they imply a constant care that the Creator devotes to his creatures, a topic that is widely and diversely alluded to in New Kingdom hymnology. Besides *ꜥw.t* and *mnmn.t*, these 'creatures lists' (such as the ones attested in Cairo CG 58038, Berlin 6910 and TT 218 (8); see Meeks 2012) and other texts with a great faunal investment (e.g., Great Hymn to the Aten) include, among others, fish (*rm.w*), birds (*ỉpd.w, qy.w*), mice (*pn.w*) and various reptiles and insects which translation is often tricky to precise, such as *ꜥpnn.t, ḫnws, ḏdf.t,* and *pyw*.

It should be stressed that none of the above-mentioned is straightforward and clear-cut. Zoogonic phraseology develops along intricate paths, both synchronically and diachronically, with expressions attested throughout the New Kingdom's hymnology and others that seem limited to more delimited periods. It should then be underlined that this is a multi-folded and hyphenated reality that requires further research and studies to be fully scrutinised.

Acknowledgments

This paper was supported by Fundação para a Ciência e Tecnologia (FCT) [SFRH/BD/131336/2017]. I am thankful to the anonymous peer-reviewers for their thoughtful comments that have contributed to better this article. I would also like to express my gratitude to Gary Perry for having proofread my paper and improved the English. All errors remain my own.

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Water, protection and destiny: an interpretation of the *wr.t*-demon

Gabriele Mario Conte

Abstract

The *wr.t* is an entity that recurs several times in the corpus of the Oracular Amuletic Decrees (OAD) and until now has eluded every attempt of identification. The first translator of the OAD, Iorwerth Eiddon Stephen Edwards, conceived them as 'elves, mischievous demons who lay in wait for the unwary'. This explanation rests on the fact that in the majority of cases the Decrees describe the *wr.t* as a creature belonging to the natural landscape, particularly streams and stretches of water. However, the OAD also contains *wr.t* of the sky, the Underworld, and even of persons. Given that an interpretation as generic spirits of the natural world is unsatisfactory, my research aims to shed light on the nature of these mysterious entities. First, I will extend the analysis to other sources mentioning the *wr.t*: ostraca and stela from Deir el-Medina (where *wr.t* appears to be an entity belonging to a person) and demotic texts (where *wr.t* has become an entirely evil entity, equated in the horoscopes to the Greek 'house of the bad luck' and opposed to the benevolent *špšy*). Secondly, through comparison with the *šps.wt*, I will analyse the *wr.t* as a protective hippopotamus-deity, related to the destiny of the person and to the flow of time. The connection with the Goddess of the Eye and the astronomical conceptions of the Third Intermediate Period will offer elements to understand the negative evolution of these entities in the OAD. Finally, I will address the problem of the aquatic nature of the *wr.t*.

Keywords

Oracular Amuletic Decrees; demons; Taweret

Attestations of the *wr.t*-demon

In the Oracular Amuletic Decrees (a corpus of amuletic papyri widespread during the 22nd dynasty) appears a class of dangerous supernatural entities called *wr.t*. Their divine nature is made clear by the determinatives of the cobra and the falcon-on-standard; however, although the *wr.wt* are well known by the scholars, their exact nature and place into the Egyptian religion is still debated. In his publication of the OAD corpus, I.E.S. Edwards identified the *wr.wt* as 'elves, mischievous demons who lay in wait for the unwary' (Edwards 1960: xxii). In his view, the term *wr.t* points generically to every kind of demon, particularly those that inhabit the natural landscape, where the incautious passer-by can bump into them (as elves in Anglo-Saxon folklore; Griffiths 2003: 47–54). The activity of the *wr.t* is usually described as *ḳ* 'action' and *snj* 'pass by, come close', both with a negative and threatening nuance (L5, vs. 14-15; L6, rt. 77; T1, vs. 1-5; T2, rt. 119-120; P3, rt. 102-103; C1, 53-54; NY, rt. 42-43; Ch, 29; the numeration of the amulets follows Edwards's publication); in L6 rt. 83 the action is described more precisely as *jr bt*ꜣ *r rmṯ* 'doing a crime against mankind', while in L5 vs. 24-33 the *wr.t* must be appeased with offerings. Edwards perceives the *wr.t* as particularly related to water, since in the vast majority of the occurrences in the OAD corpus, the *wr.t* appears associated with various kinds of water streams:

mr 'canal'	L1, vs. 22–23; L3, B 48–49; T1, vs. 3; T2, rt. 64; B, rt. 34
šd.t 'well'	L1, vs. 23; L5, vs. 25; L6, rt 79; T1, vs. 3; T2, rt. 64–65; B, rt. 34–35
jtrw 'river'	L1, vs. 24; L3, B 50; L4, 16; T2, rt. 63–64
š 'lake'	L1, vs. 24–25; L6, rt. 80; T2, rt. 65
ḫꜣᶜ-mḥ 'basin'	L1, vs. 25–26; L5, vs. 28; L6, rt. 78; T1, vs. 4; C2, vs. 7; B, rt. 35
ḥnw 'pool'	L3, B 50–51
ḫꜣs 'creek(?)'	L3, B51–52; L6, rt. 78–79
ḫꜣrw 'wadi'	L5, vs. 25–26; L6, rt. 80
bwꜣ.t 'swamp thicket(?)'	L5, vs. 26–27; L6, rt. 81–82; T1, vs. 5; C2, vs. 8
sḏ.t 'cleft(?)'	L5, vs. 27; T1, vs. 4–5

The aquatic aspect is undoubtedly essential in defining the nature of these entities; however, a closer look at the occurrences shows that this is not the only, although the predominant, aspect of the *wr.t*. For example, the corpus presents *wr.wt* of the earth (L4, 15; L5, vs. 24-25; Ch. 30-31), the sky (L2, rt. 32-33; L5, vs. 24; Ch. 30-31) and the Duat (Ch. 30-31, even if one might ask if this attestation reflects a true belief of a *wr.t* living in the Underworld or is simply the usual periphrasis that in Egyptian texts indicates the whole universe, since *wr.t dwꜣ.t* occurs only in this papyrus and in concomitance with the *wr.t* of the sky and the earth). However, the most interesting occurrences, where my analysis begins, are the ones where the *wr.t* seems to belong to persons, particularly the owner of the amulet (T2, rt. 121) and his/her relatives: father (L1, vs. 28; L3, B 54; L5, vs. 30), mother (L1, vs. 28; L3, B 53; L5, vs. 29) and parents' relatives (L1, vs. 28-30). Taking in consideration these elements (and other attestation that we will analyse later on), Lucarelli reformulates the definition of *wr.t* and states that 'the term seems to be a general epithet for evil spirits inhabiting different places on earth and in the sky but also possessing human beings or representing deceased relatives' (Lucarelli 2009: 235). The definitions of Edwards and Lucarelli are very generic and not completely satisfying. Egyptians had numerous ways to refers to evil spirits (*ỉḫ, m(w)t, nsy, ḫfty,* etc.) and, as we will see, before the Third Intermediate Period the *wr.t* does not appear as one of them. The present paper therefore aims at investigating accurately the origins, the characteristics, and the religious implications of the *wr.wt* in order to explain their notable presence in the OAD corpus and to determine if they are generic spirits and demons or something more complex.

Before starting, it should be noted that the OAD corpus offers us one certainty about the *wr.t*: they are female entities. The term *wr.t* is no more than the female form of the adjective *wr* 'great'. Moreover, all the occurrences of the word in the OAD shows the determinatives for female divinity, the cobra and the egg. Some traces show that this term underwent a process that gave birth to the substantive *wr.t*. As often happens in Egyptian magical texts, the dangerous entities are associated with their female/male counterpart in long lists. Significantly, the male counterpart of the *wr.t* is not the *wr*, as we would expect, but the *wr.t ᶜḥꜣ.wty* 'male *wr.t*', while only when combined with the male partner is the female *wr.t* defined as *wr.t sḫm.t*. A further proof of this is that the *wr.t ᶜḥꜣ.wty* maintains the female determinatives. The only exception (in T2, rt. 62-63, where it appears a male *wr*) is not

relevant, since the adjective *ʿḥ3.wty* accompanies the word as in the other cases: it would not have made sense to add the adjective 'male' to a masculine word, unless we suppose that it was not. The use of gender adjectives is significant because it shows us both that the base form was feminine (Lucarelli 2009: 234) and that there was the necessity to highlight this, since generic terms for the demons were usually masculine. In conclusion, we can suppose that the *wr.wt* were in Egyptian mind inherently female, even if it is possible that they had a male counterpart in the non-canonical Egyptian religion.

Personal *wr.t*

The analysis will start with those aspects of the *wr.wt* that, apparently, are the less common. The connection with persons is interesting, but, unfortunately, the OAD do not provide definitions or descriptions of this phenomenon. Therefore, we are forced to look for other sources that mention the *wr.t* as belonging to a person, and these sources can be divided into two groups, quite distant in time. The first group contains two objects from Deir el-Medina, dated to the 20th dynasty:

- oDeir el-Medina 251 (Borghouts 1982: 15-19): 'Please make me a *wr.t*, for the one you have made for me has been taken by theft. So it/she may work a manifestation of Seth against me'. A village workman requests the fabrication of a *wr.t*, since someone has stolen his own. The *wr.t* seems to be an object with magical power, since the owner believes that the thief can use it to summon the *bꜣw* of Seth. It is not clear who stole the *wr.t* nor who could produce it.

- Libation-basin Turin 22031 (Habachi 1977: 39-40): 'An offer given by the king to the *wr.t* of Penbui, so that she may give life, strength and health to the *kꜣ* of the servant of the Seat of Truth, Nakhtmin, his sister, the mistress of the house, Wab, justified'. The basin belongs to Nakthmin and his wife, and is dedicated not to a god, but to the *wr.t* of a deceased workman, Penbui.

The first group of attestations shows the real possibility that the *wr.t* belongs to a person. In both cases, the *wr.t* can be interpreted as a benevolent creature, since the author of the ostracon desires to have it with him, and probably also as an object, supposedly a statue of a divinity (this seems quite clear for the ostracon, where the word *wr.t* is determined with the sign of female goddess, Allam 1973: 112; in the second case is probable that a libation-basin was dedicated in front of the statue of a god). The situation changes entirely in the occurrences of the Graeco-Roman Period:

- The *wr.t* appears regularly in the self-dedication texts. These texts aim to protect the person from several malevolent supernatural entities, among whom the *wry* (demotic spelling for *wr.t*) appears. The *wr.t* is usually combined with another demon, *sšr*, and is a dangerous entity. Cf. pMichigan Inv. 3603, 5 (Ryholt 2015: 331); pFreiburg Inv. 76 VIIIa, 7 (Daniel, Gronewald and Thissen 1986: 80); pFreiburg Inv. 76 VIIIb, 6 (Daniel, Gronewald and Thissen 1986: 81); probably pBerlin P 15791, 8 (Daniel, Gronewald and Thissen 1986: 82) and pCairo 50018, 25-26 (Migahid 2002: 301); pBerlin P 23745 + pLipsia Inv. 1364, 5 (Ryholt 2019: 1043); pMilan TM 34/17, 8 (Bresciani and Pestman 1965: 191); pMilan Dem. 6, 7 (Bresciani and Pestman 1965: 193). In the self-dedications, the *wry*'s action consists in 'exercising authority' (*jr sḫy*) over a person. According to Ryholt, the specific purpose of the self-dedication is to prevent every supernatural entity but the god having power over the person (Ryholt 2015: 342-343).

- A linen band from the Michaelidis Collection (Hughes 1968: 176-182) contains an invocation to Thot: the owner asks the god to dispel the *wry*'s nefarious effects and to propitiate his *špšy*. The *wry* seems to be something deeply related to the person's fate and is opposed to its 'positive' version, the *špšy*. Hughes translates the two words as 'Evil Genius' and 'Good Genius', in evident accordance with the concept of the Greek *daimon*.

- pBerlin 8345 (Hughes 1986: 53-69): this astrological papyrus in demotic mentions twice (II, 1; IV, 15) the 'house of the *wry*' (*ꜥ.wy wry*) as one of the places where the astrologer can find a planet during his observations. The 'house of the *wry*' is the sixth house of the horoscope, and corresponds in Greek documents to the house of the κακὴ τύχη: it has an evident negative influence on human life and is in opposition to the fifth house, the house of the *špšy* - ἀγαθὴ τύχη.

In this period, the *wry* is an entirely dangerous entity. Moreover, it seems that the Egyptians of the Graeco-Roman Period believed that two opposed entities could determine their fate, the *wry* and the *špšy*. The *wry* in this period resembles the *daimon* or *genius* of Greek and Roman culture: a supernatural entity inherently related to a person, his behaviour, and his destiny. As we have stated, the nature of the *wry* in the demotic texts is harmful and evil, in contrast to the situation in the New Kingdom. We can detect the intermediary passages of this evolution in the OAD corpus, where the *wr.t* is as dangerous as the other demons, and in a papyrus of the Late Period, pBrooklyn 47.218.2. The papyrus is a collection of magical spells, particularly for the protection of a child. In the column x + V, 5 (Guermeur 2016: 172), among other malevolent creatures that the magician must keep away from the *mammisi*, we find the *wr.t*, written with the determinative of the dead enemy. Until now, the occurrences suggest that the *wr.t* was conceived of as a personal supernatural entity even outside the OAD corpus and that it evolved from a protective and positive entity to a malevolent and dangerous demon during the Third Intermediate Period/Late Period.

The *špš.t*

In order to understand how this evolution took place, we must turn our attention to the positive counterpart of the *wry* in the demotic texts, the *špšy*. The word derives from Middle Egyptian *špš.t*: like the substantive *wr.t*, the word *špš.t* is a substantivised adjective meaning 'the noble' and referring to a class of female divine entities, whose characteristics we can identify more easily than those of the *wr.t*. First of all, the demotic texts show us that the *špš.t* was a personal and protective genius in the same way as the *wr.t*. In the Oracular Decree pCairo 58035, we find the same opposition between *wr.t* and *špš.t* that we have noticed in some demotic sources, particularly in the linen-band Michaelidis: 'We shall keep him safe from the action of a *wr.t* and from every passage of a *wr.t*. We shall propitiate his *špš.t* for him, we shall propitiate the four *špš.wt* who are in Memphis' (C1, 53-57; Edwards 1960: 96, pl. XXXVIII). As in the linen band, while the god must ward off the *wr.t*, he should propitiate the personal *špš.t* of the beneficiary.

Two doorjambs of a tomb gate from Memphis, Brooklyn 56.152, and Cambridge E.5.1909 (Jansen-Winkeln 1997; Mendel 2005: 40–44; Quaegebeur 1975: 156-157), constitute another significant source. The tomb was constructed during the 26th dynasty for *T̲ꜣj-ꜣs.t-jmw* and was restored during the 30th dynasty by *Jꜥḥ-ms-sꜣ-N.t*, who appropriated the grave with royal consent. On the doorjambs, *Jꜥḥ-ms-sꜣ-N.t* is represented with the ancient owner and declares that he restored the worship place of the *špš.t* of *T̲ꜣj-ꜣs.t-jmw*, while at the same time installing the cult of its own *špš.t*. The two entities appear

as two women protecting the two men. The two *šps.wt* have even a name: the one of *Jꜥḥ-ms-sꜣ-N.t* is *šps.t ꜥnḫ.t* while that of *Ṯꜣj-ꜣs.t-jmw* is *šps.t sms.t*, where *ꜥnḫ.t* and *sms.t* are the names of two hippopotami-goddesses of the months, *sms.t-sḏfꜣ.t-nḫn* '*Sms.t* who feeds the child' for IV *šmw* and *ꜥnḫ.t-wnm.t-wnn.t* 'the flame that eats what exists' for III *šmw* (Mendel 2005: 55-57). Quaegebeur suggested that the two *šps.wt* represent the birth months of the two men and were connected with the person's fate at the moment of the birth. The connection between the *šps.t*, the person, and the person's destiny as it is stated at the moment of the birth is better exemplified by the use in the Late Period of the name *tꜣy=s-šps.t-hr.ty* 'her *šps.t* is pleased' (Quaegebeur 1975: 157); the name, given after the birth, confirms the perpetual protection of the *šps.t* toward the person. At the same time, during the Late Period, the *šps.t* is considered as a *paredra* of the god of destiny, Shai: this is particularly evident, among other occurrences, in some graffiti from Upper Egypt, where the two entities (interpreted by Griffith as 'the divinity and the lady') appears coupled (graffiti Dakka 1, 3-4; Philae, 273, 1; 408, 5; 420, 5; 422, 4; 425, 2-3 in Griffith 1937. Cf. also Quaegebeur 1975: 159-160). It is very important to highlight that the doorjambs inscriptions consider the *šps.t* not only as protective entities but also as temporal entities related to the months. During the Late Period, the months of the year received great worship, specific names, and representations. The months were personified as Taweret-like hippopotamus-goddesses and were depicted on the walls and ceilings of the temples (Mendel 2005). These goddesses are usually called *šps.wt*, as a generic and collective denomination.

Going back to the Oracular Decree pCairo 58035, the text provides us with more interesting elements. Alongside the owner's personal *šps.t*, the text mentions the 'four *šps.wt* who are in Memphis'. Other sources present the four *šps.wt* and help us to shed light on their nature. The most important occurrences are the ones in two spells of the New Kingdom: the first is preserved on pChester Beatty VIII, vs. I, 1–II, 3 (Gardiner 1935: 71-72, pl. 44) and pAthens 1826, x + 13, 10-x + 15, 18 (Fischer-Elfert and Hoffman 2020: 204-207); the second one is present on the ostracon Gardiner 363 (Ritner 1990) and on pAthens 1826, x + 16, 4–10 (Fischer-Elfert and Hoffmann 2020: 209-213). Both the spells are protective incantations for the room and the house against every demon and nightmare that could try to enter during the night. The practical instructions at the end of the spells prescribe the realisation of four *šps.wt* made of clay with a flame in their mouth:

pChester Beatty VIII, vs. I, 8-10: *šn.n=f tꜣ* 4 *šps.wt nty tkꜣ=sn m r.w=sn nbj=sn m-ḫt=sn r sḥr ḫfty nb ḫft.t nb.t m(w)t nb m(w)t.t nb.t nty m ḥꜥ.wt n mn ms.n mn.t nn jw=sn r=f m grḥ m hrw m nw nb*

'He has enchanted the four *šps.wt*, whose flame is in their mouths, whose fire is with them, in order to repel every male enemy, every female enemy, every male dead, every female dead who are in the body of NN born of NN; they shall not come against him by night, by day, at any time'.

oGardiner 363, 8-12: *ḏd mdw* [*ḥr šps*]*y.wt* 4 *jr.w m sjn wꜥb* […] *bsw m r.w=sn rdj wꜥ.t ḥr qꜥḥ* [*nb ꜥ.t*] *nty s s.t r-pw jm=s* [...] *ḥr sḏr ḫnꜥ tꜣy* […]

'to recite over four *šps.wt* made of pure clay [...] a flame in their mouths; place one in every corner [of the room] in which there is a man or a woman [...] while sleeps with a man [...]'.

The figurines were collocated at the four corners of the room to provide complete protection. These attestations are not isolated because in the Ptolemaic ritual of *sꜣ-pr* (protection of the house), preserved on the walls of the temple of Edfu, the magician must surround the house with the *šps.wt: stꜣ=j n=k tkꜣ jr sꜣ srḫ=k pḫr pr=k m šps.wt* 'I will light for you the torch, to make the protection of the throne; I will encircle your house with the *šps.wt*' (E, 145, 1; Jankuhn 1972: 22). The texts do not describe the shape of these protective figures, but scholars have argued that the four *šps.wt* were

uraei, given the protective role that they performed, usually spitting fire from their mouth (Fischer-Elfert and Hoffmann 2020: 209; Ritner 1990: 34–39; Szpakowska 2010: 32–34). Clay figurines of rearing cobras were found in several excavations (mainly in Lower Egypt and the Levant) and are usually interpreted as votive objects for the cult of snake-goddesses such as Renenutet. However, their domestic occurrence, where they were often associated with other objects like headrests and amulets of Bes and Taweret, suggests that they are material evidence of the ritual of protection of the bedroom (Szpakowska 2003; 2013: 32-42). Groups of four fire-spitting uraei are also attested in the *Book of the Dead* (Spell 147; Quirke 2013: 362), in the *Book of Amduat* (Hornung 1963: vol. I, 178; vol. II, 171-172), in papyrus Salt (Derchain 1965: 141-142; pl. 13-14, 24) and on the walls of Edfu (Ritner 1990: 38–39).

The uraeus is also connected with the Goddess of the Eye (Sekhmet, Bastet, Wadjet, Smithis), whom, according to the legend, Re put on his forehead as a protector (Germond 1981: 123-127, 135-137). Rituals of protection based on the number four are widespread in the cult of the goddess Sekhmet. The ritual of the four bowls prescribes the realisation of four small clay balls that are connected with a manifestation of the Goddess through the name written on it or through a lion-face shape: the ritual is preserved on pMMA 35.9.21 (Goyon 1975), pBrooklyn 48.218.138, x + XIV, 10–x + XV, 10 (Goyon 2012: 100–108), pBerlin 3037, pLouvre 3237 and 3239 (Chassinat 1893). In the first hour of the nocturnal *Stundenrital* preserved on the walls of the temple of Edfu, the goddesses Sekhmet, Bastet, Wadjet, and Smithis are identified both with the four *šps.wt* and the four clay balls (*bnn.t*; Pries 2009: 21-22). Examples of balls are in the Louvre Museum (from the Graeco-Roman necropolis of Tehnah; Lefebvre 1903; Ziegler 1979) and in the Übersee Museum of Bremen (Martin 1992: 419-421). According to the wall inscriptions of the Mut temple at Karnak, during the celebrations for the arrival of the Goddess from Nubia, four 'divine images' (*sḫm*) had to be erected towards the four cardinal points (Spalinger 1993: 179). Finally, in the papyrus Salt, the four uraei in the vignette are surmounted by a fire-spitting lioness called 'Sekhmet Mistress of the place of execution who sets fire against who rebels against you' (Derchain 1965: 24). The goddess herself often has a fourfold manifestation, best exemplified by the '*Hathor quadrifrons*': this manifestation of Hathor is not only helpful in granting her protection to the entire world but allows an easy syncretism with other goddesses like Sekhmet, Bastet, Wadjet, and Smithis (Derchain, 1972: 3-24).

The reason for the number four is that the protection of Sekhmet must be effective in every part of the world, represented by the four cardinal points: in the sixth spell of pVienna 8426, for example, the protective uraei are presented in the couples sky-earth, south-north, west-east, inside-behind the pharaoh, and as *sꜣ*- and *mk.t*-protection of the pharaoh (Flessa 2006: 84). At the same time, fire assures the protective nature of the *šps.wt*: this is confirmed by further occurrences. The use of four flaming objects recalls the Ritual of the Four Torches, attested mainly in the *Book of the Dead*, spell 137A (Quirke 2013: 307–310). In this spell, the four sons of Horus carrying four torches protect the body of Osiris. The protection of the deceased by four fire-bringing *šps.wt* is present also on the Sarcophagus of Merenptah, where the entities burn the enemies of the pharaoh (line 59-62: 'Ich veranlasse, daß "die vier Edeldamen (*šps.wt*)" für dich brennen (*nbj*), daß sie dir leuchten auf allen deinen Wegen, daß sie dir deine Feinde abwehren Tag für Tag, daß sie eden Rebellen vertreiben, den Bösartigen'; Assmann 1972: 53, 63). Considering what we have said about the representation of the month-goddesses, it is very interesting that many sources show the existence of torch-bearing divinities in the form of hippopotami. The most valuable occurrences are in the *Book of the Dead*: a vignette of a hippopotamus-goddess bearing a torch in front of a cow emerging from the Western Mountain (a manifestation of Hathor) usually accompanies spell 186 (Quirke 2013: 483-485); in the papyrus of Nebseny (18th

dynasty), a vignette of a torch-bearing hippopotamus-goddess called 'Ipy Mistress of Protection' accompanies the spell 137B ('spell to light a torch'; Quirke 2013: 311). More information comes from comparison with another class of hippopotami-goddesses, the Asbet. The name 'Asbet' means 'she who burns': a goddess with this name appears already in the *Pyramid Texts*, as a protective divinity (*PT* 342: 'It is Teti, Isis! it is Teti, [Asbet]! it is [Teti], Nephthys! Come and see your son, whom the Great Black Bull nome serves, whom the crown serves'; Allen 2005: 74). The Asbet could be single or multiple, as shown in the Edfu reliefs: in *Edfu*, I, 195-196, the images show a group of four hippopotami-like Asbet called *ḥr.wt-tkꜣ* 'the ones appointed to the torches' protecting the god Osiris (Gutbub 1961: 37-46).

To sum up, the figure of the *šps.t* shows an incredible number of intersections and parallels between different concepts and fields. They are a group of multiple entities with protective tasks; they are expressions of the subdivision of time (particularly the months); they have connections with the birth moment and consequently with the fate of a person; they are hippopotami-goddesses, and as such are related to other hippopotami entities as the Asbet; they are present in spells for the protection of the house, where the *šps.wt* appear as a group of four uraei; as uraei, they are naturally connected with the Goddess of the Eye. Can we detect these characteristics in the *wr.t*?

Two statues of the *wr.t*

To answer this question we have to turn to a couple of statues already discussed by scholars that can offer relevant information for our argument. The Louvre statue 25479, originating from Thebes and dating to the 22nd dynasty, is a protective statue for a man called *Ḏd-Ḏḥwtj-jw=f-ꜥnḫ* (Ceruti 2020: 65-66; Jansen-Winkeln 2005: 140–146). The text on the back pillar runs as follows:

1. *jnk tꜣ rr.t hd m ḫrw=s qq m ḥs=s qꜣ ḫrw khb dnj.t nḥm pr m ḥꜥ.w=s jnk wr.t m sḫm=s ꜥḥꜥ ḥr jš.t=s dr ꜥwꜣy.w ḥr* 2. *sꜣ=s ḥr jnk jp.t ḥr-jb ꜣḫ.t mk ds nb ḏr nb nrw ꜥpr ḫpr dndn sbj.w-ḥr ḥsb jn.w n.t ḫtmy.w šmꜣy.w ḫr-ḏbꜣ=j qdf.tyw ḥr <ḏd> mj pw r=f jr=n wḏ* 3. *.n=j m(w)t r ꜥnḫ*

1. I am the Sow that attacks with her voice, that eats those who she turns back, loud of voice, violent of shriek, that protects those who comes out from her body. I am the Great in her power, that fights over her property and drives away the robbers from 2. her son Horus. I am Ipet in the midst of the horizon, whose knife protects the Lord of All, the mistress of terror, perfect of form, who rages against who rebels, who counts the tributes of the *ḫtmy.w*-demons. The *šmꜣy.w*-demons are under my control, the *qdf.tyw*-demons say 'what is this, that we should do?' since I have 3. ordered death instead of life.

The goddess is identified as Reret, Ipet, and *wr.t*, and appears as a powerful and aggressive but also protective entity. Moreover, the goddess is portrayed as the commander of the *šmꜣy.w*-demons, that she counts and to whom she gives orders before they can spread in the entire world. Usually, the *šmꜣy.w*-demons were under the command of the goddess Sekhmet (Bommas 1999: 58-59), and in some late traditions she used to count the evil-doers and the demons during the month of Epiphi, consecrated to the hippopotamus-goddess Ipet: one clear attestation of this is the sarcophagus of Ankhnesneferibre, where one can read: 'may she not be given to the execution place of Sekhmet, may every enemy of the addition of the year not take her. May she not be counted (*ḥsb.tw=s*) in the *Book of Calamities* of the end of the lifespan. She will not be handed over to the knives of the *ḫꜣ.tyw*' (columns 132–135 in Sander-Hansen 1937; I, 137-140 in Wagner 2016: 149-152). The month of Epiphi was a fundamental moment for the cult of the Goddess of the Eye since it was the period of the annual

reunion of Hathor and Horus in Edfu during the feast of the Good Reunion, a celebration of the return of the distant goddess as a representation of the flood; at the same time, the first day of the month was consecrated to Ipet, who is one of the hippopotamus-goddesses mentioned in the statue (Goyon 2006: 63–67; Von Bomhard 2008: 199–200; 2012: 95–97; Yoyotte 1986-1987: 168-169).

The Saite statue of Cairo CG 39145 comes from a *naos* (Cairo CG 70027), built by Pabasa in favour of the God's Wife of Amun Nitokris and decorated with the representations of two hippopotamus-goddesses and the Seven Hathors, the goddesses of destiny (Kákosy 1982: 184-185; Mendel 2005: 33-37; Nagy 1992; Verner 1969). The statue portrays the second month of the year as it is identified by the inscriptions on the *naos*, while in the inscriptions on the base and the back pillar she is greeted as follows: *j wr.t sp-sn j rr.t sp-sn jnḏ-ḥr=t wr.t ꜥ3.t ḥn.t 3ḫ.t* 'Oh *wr.t*, oh *wr.t*, oh Reret, oh Reret! Hail to you *wr.t*, Mistress of the Horizon! Protect her things, fight for her property!'. The two statues confirm what we have previously supposed. The *wr.t* are represented as hippopotami-goddesses, combining the aggressive and protective nature of this animal. The inscriptions demonstrate that the term *wr.t* (if we do not consider it as a simple epithet) can accompany other names of hippopotami-goddesses, as Reret and Ipet: there was not significant difference between these entities in the Egyptian mind. The Louvre statue presents a clear connection with the Goddess of the Eye, while the *wr.t* of Cairo is the representation of a month, as were the *šps.wt*. In other words, we can suppose that the two statues represent a *wr.t* as a hippopotamus-deity, and as such, they can assume all the prerogatives of this class of supernatural and divine entities. At the same time, the statues confirm that most of the characteristics of the *šps.wt* (protection, rule on time, destiny, connection with the Goddess of the Eye) can also be applied to the *wr.t*.

The *wr.t* and Sekhmet

The link with Sekhmet and the Goddess of the Eye needs some clarification. First of all, the Goddess shares an ambiguous nature with the *wr.t*, at once aggressive, dangerous, benevolent, and protective. The lioness, like the hippopotamus, is a fearsome animal but becomes truly violent only when it protects its offspring. Secondly, the Goddess is the expression of an emblematic twofold phenomenon, the flood. The return of the water was an event both positive and destructive that the Egyptians waited for with anxiety. As anticipated, Sekhmet finds help in her rampage in the gangs of demons under her command, mainly the *ḫ3.tyw* and the *šm3y.w*-demons. These entities appear firstly as helpers of the sun god Re in funerary texts, but during the Middle Kingdom they often became the subordinates of Sekhmet even if they maintained their role of messengers of other gods, particularly Osiris, and of tormenters in the Underworld (Bommas 1999: 35-37; Leitz 1994: 244-254; Sass 2020). Sekhmet and her demons are responsible for the spreading of a particular illness, the 'pest of the year', an indeterminate epidemic (maybe the bubonic plague, but it could also be a generic denomination of everything terrible that could happen during the crucial and liminal period of the end of the year) that regularly affects the country in the last days of the year, in concomitance with the flood (Germond 1981: 286-297; Gestoso-Singer 2017: 237-240; 2019: 190-203; Leitz 1994: 205-208). In the Louvre statue, the *wr.t* is at the head of the *šm3y.w*-demons, but we can detect a general agreement between the groups of demons of Sekhmet and the *wr.t*, who are multiple entities according to the OAD. A further point of convergence is a spell preserved in three variants: pBerlin 15749 (Fischer-Elfert 2015: 133-140), pHeidelberg H 3a-b (Fischer-Elfert 2015: 220-229), and pChester Beatty VIII vs X, 1–8 (Gardiner 1935: 75, pl. 47). The text is an exorcistic spell against various demons (in the Heidelberg exemplar, the demon is the famous Sehaqeq), and it contains a prayer to the *wr.t*.

However, in this case, we are not dealing with our demon/goddess, but with the Goddess of the Eye. The word *wr.t*, as an adjective, could be attributed to various goddesses, but in this circumstance it is used as the name itself of Sekhmet.

Since the flood is an annual and regular phenomenon that marks the end of the year, Sekhmet becomes the divinity connected to the division and flow of time. In the Ptolemaic reliefs, the chronocrator goddesses usually appear as lioness-headed women (Leitz 2002: 137-139; Yoyotte 1980: 62-63, figs. 10, 12); however, the countless statues that adorned the funerary temple of Amenhotep III already provided an expression of the dominion of Sekhmet over time, since their number was two times the days of the year (Bryan 1997: 59-61; Yoyotte 1980: 49-54). Despite this, it is undeniable that after the New Kingdom the connection between Sekhmet and time grew stronger thanks to the new view of the stars and their effects on human life. During the Third Intermediate Period, the decanal stars, which until then were only the main means of time subdivision, began to be regarded as potentially dangerous. They assumed the twofold nature of Sekhmet and the *wr.t*, since they could be both protectors of a man's life but also fearsome entities. In an enlightening essay, László Kákosy (1982) analysed a group of statues of the goddess Sekhmet typical of the Lybian Period: Sekhmet is usually depicted seated on a throne decorated with images of the decans as lion-headed figures or snakes. These statuettes represent the power and control that, according to the religious speculations of the period, Sekhmet exercised over the stars and, consequently, time. This role of the goddess is not surprising: as we have stated, Sekhmet was related to a specific and recurrent moment of the year that occurred in concomitance with the heliacal rising of a star, Sirius. The consequence of this aspect is a convergence and juxtaposition (not an identification) between the demons of Sekhmet and the decans. On the walls of the Temple of Esna, for example, the description of the nefarious actions of the decans is the same as the description of the *ḫ3.tyw*-demons on the papyrus Leiden I 346, more than one thousand years older (Esna 406, Von Lieven 2000: 42-43; pLeiden I 346, I, 3-6, Bommas 1999: 34). The astral interpretation of the *ḫ3.tyw*-demons was a matter of debate among scholars. Joachim Quack and Alexandra Von Lieven accepted the complete equation between the demons and the decans but with a specification: the demons are the seven 'dead decans', that is to say, the seven decans that remain under the horizon (Quack 1997: 283-284; Von Lieven 2000: 48-55). Christian Leitz and Anne-Sophie Von Bomhard suggest another explanation, based on pJumilhac: the *ḫ3.tyw* are the seven stars around the constellation of Seth's foreleg (Leitz 1994: 246; Von Bomhard 2008: 217). Whatever the exact identification (and probably there is not one), it is clear that during the Late Period the *ḫ3.tyw* demons were seen as similar to the stars.

We can assume that, during the Third Intermediate Period, the Egyptians regarded both the demons and the stars as messengers and disease-bringers under the command of the gods. How does this information fit with our theme? We can identify the same similarities between the demons and the decans in the *wr.wt*, and a couple of sources strengthen this hypothesis. The depiction of the throne of one of the Lybian Period statuettes of Sekhmet shows six decans as hippopotami-goddesses, while a necklace from the Budapest museum is decorated with 36 golden hippopotami, the same number as the decans (Kákosy 1982: 184-187). The statuette and the necklace demonstrate not that the decans were the same thing as the *wr.wt* (there are no clear attestations of this) but only that decans can be compared in their shape to the hippopotami-goddesses due to the prerogatives they have in common. Moreover, the hippopotamus is an animal widely present in Egyptian astronomy. One of the main constellations of the Egyptian sky is the Hippopotamus constellation, represented according to the image of the hippopotamus-goddess. The Hippopotamus holds an adze/foreleg, the *msḫ.tyw*, the Egyptian interpretation of what we know as the Ursa Major: according to the papyrus Jumilhac, the foreleg belongs to Seth, and the Hippopotamus is in charge of guarding it (pJumilhac XVII, 9-11,

Vandier 1961: 129). Like any other hippopotamus-entity, the constellation can be called *wr.t*: this happens, for example, in the amuletic papyrus Deir el-Medina 44 (Koenig 1999). The papyrus presents a vignette with two constellations, the Hippopotamus and Orion, surrounded by the Uroboros. The name of the Hippopotamus is recorded above the image (the other images are unnamed) and is *wr.t*. The spell itself is titled *mḏ3.t mk.t ḥ^{c}.t wr.t* 'Book of protection of the body of the *wr.t*': the *wr.t*, in this case, can be any protective goddess. However, the presence of the vignette points to an identification with the hippopotamus-goddess (Koenig translates it without hesitation as 'Thouéris'). In the astronomical ceilings, the Hippo constellation is usually identified with Isis or with *hs3-mw.t*, 'the fierce mother'; however, sometimes, as in the temples of Shanhur and Esna, it is called Ipet or *wr.t*, and in the astronomical texts (like papyrus Jumilhac or the *Book of Day and Night*) it is also known as *rr.t* and *rr.t wr.t* (Neugebauer and Parker 1969: 183-191, pls 40a and 44). The idea that this constellation might have influences on human life was already present during the New Kingdom. The author of oDeM 251 feared that the thief might use the *wr.t* to summon the *b3w* of Seth: understanding this fear relies on recognising the control that the Hippopotamus constellation exerts on Seth's foreleg (Borghouts 1982: 18-19). Moreover, Sabrina Ceruti has supposed that the fearsome nature of the hippopotamus-goddess in Deir el-Medina, particularly Taweret, was due to the familiarity that the workmen of the village had with the representation of the constellation on the astronomical ceilings of the royal tombs (Ceruti 2020: 65).

The Hippo constellation allows us to better highlight the relationship between the *wr.wt* and the hippopotamus-goddess par excellence, Taweret. The name itself of the goddess is the determined form of *wr.t*, through the article. Taweret shares the protective and fearsome aspects of the *wr.wt*, and could be related to the sky (as she is often called *nb.t p.t* 'mistress of the sky'; cf. for example stela British Museum 284, Kitchen 1980: 718.5 and British Museum 1297; stela Turin CGT 50057 and 50062, Tosi and Roccati 1972: 93, 100; the doors of the *naos* of *Jmn-w3ḥ-sw*, Pushkin Museum I.1a.4867a-b, Kitchen 1980: 753-754; stela Metropolitan Museum 47.105.4; besides these examples, coming from Deir el-Medina, we can also add the statue-block of Hor, MMA 23.8, Van de Walle 1971; and the stela Cairo TR 8/3/25/7, from Karnak, Mariette and Maspero 1872: 93). At the same time, Taweret was consistently present in popular religion. In Deir el-Medina, we have many traces of popular piety towards the goddess (Bruyère 1939: 105-108; 1952: 72-82): little statues, of stone or wood, which are probably of the same nature as the *wr.t* of oDeM 251; stela, realised on behalf of the villagers as a sign of devotion and gratitude; ostraca that, as Ceruti suggests, attest the fear of the people towards the manifestations of Taweret (Ceruti 2020). I consider particularly significant a couple of examples. The stela Turin 50057 shows Taweret as *nb.t p.t ḫnw.t šd.t* 'mistress of the sky, lady of the pool', where the last word is one of the aquatic places where one could find the *wr.wt* according to the decrees (Gabler 2017: 4–5; Tosi and Roccati 1972: 93). The second stela is EGNN.683 from the Kelvingrove Gallery in Glasgow (Bierbrier and de Meulenaere 1984: 23-33). It was dedicated by the workman Penbui to Taweret: the man asks forgiveness for his impiety and promises that he will let everyone know the name of the goddess. Penbui is the owner of the *wr.t* addressed in the basin Turin 22031, and we can imagine that he kept his promise and that the *wr.t* of Penbui was a statue or an *ex-voto* renowned in Deir el-Medina. The astral connection could be the key to better understand this relationship, because while Taweret is considered a single and defined entity, the *wr.wt* are a group of several entities. In the OAD, they are determined not with the article but with the adjective *nb*, which points to a multiplicity. There is only one case of *wr.t* determined with the article in the OAD. In OAD BM 10251, rt. 32–33 we read that *t3-wr.t p.t* 'the *wr.t* of the sky', as a single entity, is *t3 ḥ3ty-^{c} n3 wr.t* 'the foremost of the *wr.t*' (Edwards 1960: 15, pl. IV). Considering this text and what we have said until now, I think we can accept what was firstly suggested by Kákosy (Kákosy 1982: 185), that Taweret is one form of or

a single *wr.t*. More specifically, it is the *wr.t* that belongs to the sky, that is to say, the constellation of the Hippopotamus. The statues we have analysed show us that the word *wr.t* was used as a generic definition for the hippopotamus-goddess, and in specific contexts, it developed into the name of a specific form of the divine hippopotamus.

The *wr.t* and water

This analysis has focused until now on the relationship between the *wr.t* and the fate of the person; we have seen that starting from this aspect the nature of the *wr.t* must be recognised as very complicated and multi-layered, with every layer connecting and overlapping with other deities and supernatural entities. However, to fully comprehend the *wr.t*, we must move to the main aspect of these entities in the OAD corpus, namely the aquatic aspect. In this respect, we meet immediately with difficulty, since, outside the OAD corpus, the *wr.t* appears to have no connection with water; however, we can reach some hypothesis based on what we have previously stated. The most obvious and probably appropriate explanation is that the *wr.wt* are hippopotami, and the hippopotamus is an aquatic animal. The Egyptians were used to seeing water streams populated by these fierce creatures, whose violence was of a protective and defensive kind. Therefore, we can imagine that, notwithstanding the theological, religious, and astronomical evolution that the *wr.wt* undertook, Egyptians continued to see them as aquatic entities. The Egyptian language, however, has a specific and distinct word for 'hippopotamus', *dbj*. When the authors of the OAD used the word *wr.t* is highly probable that they did not refer to the real and concrete animal but to something else that anyone could meet near water streams.

Supernatural encounters in a fluvial scenario are present in Egyptian mythology and imagination. The most famous case is the *Tale of the Herdsman*, where the protagonist meets a 'non-human', seductive but unsettling woman, near a pond. The first time the herdsman meets her, she is defined as *s.t-ḥm.t* 'woman', although *nn sj m ḥm rmṯ* 'she was not with a human body' (pBerlin 3024, 3-4), since she was covered in fur; the second time, the narrator calls her *nṯr.t* 'goddess' (line 23). Unfortunately, the tale is fragmentary, and it is not clear what happened between the two; however, it is probable that the entity was an hathoric goddess (Goedicke 1970: 258-266). Crocodiles also frequently have a supernatural nature in Egyptian tales and poems: the crocodile of papyrus Westcar is the creation of a magician; in the *Tale of the Two Brothers*, a water stream full of crocodiles appears suddenly between Anubis and Bata by order of Re; in the *Tale of the Doomed Prince* the crocodile is one of the fates forecasted for the protagonist by the Seven Hathors; moreover, it is depicted while he fights in a lake against an entity called *nḫt* 'the strong one', presumably a demon (the word is an epithet used for several divinities, cf. *LGG* IV, 311-312; in pBritish Museum X, 2-3 is mentioned a *nḫt* that is probably a disease-demon, Leitz 1999: 70). The goddess Taweret, as hippopotamus, has an essential connection with water. The place where this connection is emphasised is Gebel el-Silsila: on the walls of the sanctuaries and on the stela dedicated there, Taweret appears as 'Taweret of the pure water' and the one 'who precedes the flood', assuming in this form a regenerative and hathoric power, exemplified by the relief of her breastfeeding the king (Desroches-Noblecourt and Kuentz 1968: 111-113; Koek 2020). The geology of Gebel el-Silsila was the perfect setting for this cult: the Nile, flowing through a narrow passage between rock cliffs, reaches its higher level; the water is particularly pure and during the flood the flow becomes violently strong. The cult of 'Taweret of the pure water' also reached Deir el-Medina: Penbui, besides the stela of Glasgow and the basin, dedicated to the goddess another stela, Louvre E 16374 (Kitchen 1980: 741.10), where in the upper register he worships *t3-wr.t p3 mw wꜥb nb.t*

p.t 'Taweret of the pure water, Mistress of the sky', while in the lower register the women of his family adore *ḥw.t-ḥr-ỉs.t-wr.t mw.t nṯr nb.t p.t* 'Hathor-Isis the Great, Mother of gods, Mistress of the sky'; another stela from Deir el-Medina (Pushkin Museum, nr. I.1.a.5627) was dedicated to *t3-wr.t nb.t mw wꜥb* 'Taweret Mistress of the pure water' (Hodjash and Berlev 1982: 135-136); Taweret of the pure water also appears in the libation-basin BM 28 (Kitchen 1980: 796.15, 797.2) and on the stela Cairo 36661, both realised by a villager of Deir el-Medina, Pashed (Bruyère 1952: 77-78). The aquatic aspect of Taweret shows us the possibility for a hippopotamus deity to be an aquatic entity. To sum up, it is my opinion that the *wr.t* of the water is not the hippopotamus as an animal, but rather a divine hippopotamus, a supernatural entity in the shape of a hippopotamus that for this reason is widespread (according to Egyptian conception) in water streams.

This explanation could be enough to resolve the problem, but I think we should consider another intriguing hypothesis. As previously mentioned, the current interpretation of ostracon DeM 251 sees the *wr.t* as an object, probably a small statue: we know that hippopotamus figurines and Taweret-like statues are among the most attested artefacts of Ancient Egypt. Considering the previous interpretation, we can suppose that meeting a water-*wr.t* was more frequent and concrete an occurrence than one might think. Egyptians always had great respect and fear for images since they conceived them as living things, not mere representations of a living entity, but the entity itself. As such, images can haunt places in the same way as other creatures. Particularly famous is the case of mutilated hieroglyphs in Middle Kingdom tombs: cutting up signs, especially when they depict dangerous animals like snakes, was the best way to prevent the creature depicted from harming the deceased. Another useful example is a hieratic graffito of the Third Intermediate Period from the walls of the Osireion at Abydos. The inscription reads: 'adoration of Re-Harakhte, Lord of the Two Lands [...] the Great God, King of the Gods, Lord of Horns, with pointed Atef-crown [...] may he save the scribe [...] from the demons (= *ḫ3.tyw*) that are in this place, may he save the scribe Pedamûn from the demons that are in this place' (Gunn 1933: 88). There are two possible explanations for the graffito, both plausible: the author thinks that demons haunt the ancient temple; or the author is scared of the wall depictions of deities and supernatural creatures, which for him have the same concreteness as real demons. We can apply these interpretations to the *wr.t*: they could be both demons in the shape of a hippopotamus haunting the watery places, and the statues and representations of these creatures, maybe located near water streams. The 'material' interpretation of the *wr.wt* can also shed light on a tricky passage of the amuletic decree Turin 1984, lines vs. 84–85 (Edwards 1960: 71, pl. XXVI): *jw=n šd=s m ḏ.t n3 nṯr.w nty jr wr.t r p3 rmṯ* 'we shall keep her safe from the hand of the gods who make a *wr.t* against the people'. We can suppose that what the gods make is precisely an object, a material form of the *wr.t* (another possible translation, that excludes the 'material' interpretation, is 'we shall keep her safe from the hand of the gods who act as a *wr.t* against the people').

Another possible interpretation of the *wr.t* as an aquatic entity is the convergence between the hippopotamus-goddess and the Goddess of the Eye. As we have seen, the hippopotamus-goddess shares many characteristics with the Goddess, and Taweret herself can be depicted with hathoric horns. The power of Sekhmet and Hathor was at its apex during the flood, which was both a dangerous aquatic event and an annual occurrence, something predictable and useful for dividing the time flow. In Philae, there was a perfect convergence between Hathor, as the returning flood, Isis, as a manifestation of the star Sirius, and the hippopotamus Ipet, as a protective entity, related to water and time and identifiable with Isis in her role of guardian of Seth's foreleg (Ciampini 2013: 67-69; cf. also Von Bomhard 2012: 96). During the flood, the aquatic world prevailed over the rest of the universe, with positive and negative consequences. Therefore, we can suppose that the equation

Goddess of the Eye–flood–hippopotamus-goddess was to be expected in the Egyptian religious mentality and undoubtedly contributed to enforcing the fear of some supernatural or divine entity near the water.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I think it is possible to affirm that in the corpus of the Oracular Amuletic Decrees, the term *wr.t* refers to a specific class of supernatural entities, characterised as hippopotamus-deities. In the other sources, the term *wr.t* was used to refer generically to hippopotamus-deities, as an epithet for specific hippopotamus-deities, and for the manifestations of the Goddess of the Eye. It is also possible that the most famous hippopotamus-goddess, Taweret, was perceived as one specific component of the group of the *wr.t*, more specifically as the hippopotamus of the sky. Consequently, the term *wr.t* recalls in the mind of ancient Egyptians all the prerogatives and characteristics of the hippopotamus-goddesses: protective nature, violence, connection with water and the flood, control over time-flow (particularly as month-goddesses), and affinities with the Goddess of the Eye. At the same time, the nature of the *wr.wt* did not remain unchanged over the centuries. In the first attestations, the *wr.t* is indistinguishable from other hippopotamus-entities, such as the *šps.wt*, and is conceived of as a protective entity. The OAD reflect a new stage of the evolution of the *wr.t*, where they appear as hostile and dangerous creatures opposed to the benevolent *šps.wt*. I would suggest that the similarities and the affinities with other groups of demons and time-controller entities, such as the decans or the *ḫ3.tyw*, had a significant role in enhancing the malevolent nature of the *wr.wt*. The final result was the situation in the Graeco-Roman Period, where the need for clearness in the astrological field assigned the *wr.wt* to the house of bad luck and made the *šps.wt* their counterpart. Finally, the OAD are a fundamental testimony of the longevity of this entity in Egyptian religion and its continuous and pervasive presence in the everyday life of Ancient Egypt.

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The transmission of themes and motifs between copy and innovation: the decorative programmes of the late monumental tombs

Valeria Tappeti

Abstract

This paper aims to reconstruct the influences and the main models of the decorative programmes of the late monumental tombs of the 25th and 26th dynasties of the Asasif plain, Thebes. These texts and iconographic motifs allude to different traditional elements of the Pharaonic cultural and religious knowledge. Some examples of these decorative programmes will be analysed to reconstruct their influences and the main ways that underline their realisation. The analysis of religious corpora and iconographic themes of the monumental tombs, according to their architectural and cultural context, provides us with a better understanding of the transmission and editing process of the ancient texts and figurative compositions. The analysis allows a broader comprehension of the role of the Theban priestly class in these processes between the Third intermediate Period and the Late Period. Examining the decorative programmes of the monumental tombs of Asasif, the function of the tombs as a sort of 'archives' and the concept of identity and memory connected to it will be considered. The link of this hypothesis to the process of direct copying and the problem of monuments' accessibility will also be addressed.

Keywords

Late Period; 25th-26th dynasties; copy; identity; innovation; Asasif; Late Period tombs; Archaism

Introduction

This paper[1] aims to analyse the decorative programmes of the late monumental tombs of the 25th and 26th dynasties of the Asasif plain, Thebes. They are characterised by decorative programmes that draw on formulas and pieces chosen by the main Egyptian funerary corpora, ranging both in chronological and geographic terms. These texts and iconographic motifs allude in a renewed way to different traditional elements of the Pharaonic cultural and religious knowledge. Following the phenomenon of Archaism, it is possible to recognise the revival of ancient elements. However, the difficulty of tracing the possible models is evident. One may point out references from the Old to the New Kingdom and the circulation of models over large areas, with elements from Lower Egypt in the Theban area and vice versa. Furthermore, it seems possible to identify references to specific monuments, older and contemporary to the 25th-26th dynasties. With the definition of archaic motifs, we refer to elements of the past fallen into disuse, recognising a time gap between the model and its reproduction (Der Manuelian 1994; Kahl 2010). However, it is not so evident which elements of the decorative programmes of these tombs can be defined as archaistic or not in line with this definition. It fits well with some

[1] The topic of this paper is part of my Ph.D. thesis at the Sapienza University of Rome, entitled 'Le "tombe-palazzo" di al-'Assāsīf, Tebe, della XXV e XXVI dinastia (747-525 a.C.), tra "archivio culturale" e luogo di culto'.

reliefs and inscriptions, as for a sun hymn from the tomb of Pabasa (TT 279; Assmann 1983: 312-313 [227]), which could propose a hymn from the Memphite tomb of Horemheb (BM no. 522; Edwards 1909, T. 27). The presence of the same hymn in the tomb of Sheshonq (TT 27; Assmann 1983: 36 [28]),[2] instead, may correspond to an allusion to contemporary models of the 25th-26th dynasties, even in the same late monumental tombs, thus highlighting internal references to the necropolis. Therefore, it is evident that the definition of Archaism as a reference to elements of the past fallen into disuse constitutes, perhaps, only a part of the cultural and artistic phenomenon of the 25th-26th dynasties. It enhances the recovery of rare and precious motifs, with allusions to ancient and contemporary themes, and manifests a profound knowledge and the desire to display belonging to the Theban elite. In this context, this paper will discuss some of the key cases of allusion to specific iconographic and textual models identified in the late monumental tombs of Asasif, to illustrate the peculiarities of this versatile phenomenon of the revival of themes and motifs.

Archaic elements: the reliefs with scenes of everyday life

Among the cases of allusion to older motifs that fall within the definition of Archaism, there are representations of the deceased seated at the offerings table or daily life scenes. The latter scenes are not depicted in the Ramesside tombs, which mostly explore religious themes, but reappear in the decorative programmes of the 25th-26th dynasties. In these cases, the programmes of the most ancient Kushite tombs seem to prefer mainly, but not exclusively, allusions to Old Kingdom motifs. It is evident, for example, in the iconography that recalls the powerful musculature of the characters, with a large torso and narrow waist. The representations of Karabasken (TT 391), for example, would be traced to the depictions of the deceased of the 4th dynasty (Pischikova 2008: 83-84).

Moreover, agricultural and farming depictions from the court of Harwa (TT 37) seem to recall Memphite tomb details. An example is a scene from the northern wall of the solar court with a man carrying a calf away from it' s mother, also present in Ti's tomb. The Kushite relief takes up the same iconography but emphasises the emotional impact of the scene in the rendering of the calf looking at the herd (Tiradritti 2004: 190-191, n. 45, fig. 42).

The 25th dynasty's reference to the Old Kingdom may be connected with a desire to recall the glorious Memphite monarchy and its magnificent necropoleis (Pischikova 2008: 83 ff.). Instead, the passage between the 25th and 26th dynasties is marked by a wider reference to the 18th dynasty. The expression of an eclectic Archaism, which summarises the inspiration from different models, can be identified in the decorative programme of Montuemhat's tomb (TT 34). Various scenes depicted inside that monument draw elements from the Old, Middle, and New Kingdom.

References to the canons of the Old Kingdom can be drawn, for example, from fragments with hunting scenes in the marshes, as in the relief depicting a man with a birdcage (Bothmer *et al.* 1960: 18-19 [16], fig. 34, pl. 14; Der Manuelian 1985: 115 ff., figs. 7-8) that draws clear allusions to Memphite tombs. The vigorous execution of the bearer's musculature or the caption '*jw nn n kȝ …*' / 'this is for your Ka ...', referring to the birds destined for the deceased, might be compared with the representation of a bearer with a similar caption in the mastaba of Mereruka in Saqqara (6th dynasty). However, other details of the relief reveal references to the New Kingdom, such as the man's wig, rendered in the style of the 18th

[2] These sun hymns were also the subject of my paper presented at the International Congress for Young Egyptologists 2019, Leiden.

dynasty (Bothmer *et al.* 1960: 18). Other elements are typical of Saitic art, such as the slender fingers or the rendering of physiognomic details.

The daily life scenes, such as viticulture, breeding, or agricultural activities of the late monumental tombs, meld different inspirations, from the Old to the New Kingdom. The iconography is renewed through the physiognomic details and the transposition of these scenes into ritual attitudes that are not proper to the activities depicted (Pischikova 1994). These transpire from the priestly clothes of the characters, their elegant poses, or other elements not directly related to daily life, such as vases for ointments and precious furnishings. Thus, daily activities lose their more realistic character by including some variations and uncommon objects within the scenes, while their symbolic value and ritual function is emphasised.

Allusion to specific monuments outside the necropolis

Among the cases of allusion to ancient themes, this study aims to consider some references to monuments outside the necropolis, which seem to emphasise a personal taste in the selection of each decorative programme. This process often consists of references to the main royal monuments of Deir el Bahari and Karnak, to the Osireion, or allusion to New Kingdom Theban tombs, particularly of the 18th dynasty. Although some motifs generally seem to recall a New Kingdom iconography, others allude more clearly to details of specific tombs. One could thus highlight a certain degree of predilection for a monument and its decorative programme; such preferences seem to highlight a personal taste that would characterise the selection of each monumental tomb. Thus, for example, Montuemhat (TT 34) contains elements from the tomb of Menna (TT 69) and Rekhmira (TT 100), which are also recalled by Pabasa (TT 279). While Basa (TT 389) and Anch-Hor (TT 414) allude especially to Puyemra (TT 39) (cf. Assmann 1973: 68-75, 89-92, 103; Bietak and Reiser-Haslauer 1978-1982: 237-244, figs. 113, 116, pl. 64; Pischikova 1994: 74-77, pl. 3; 2008: 88).

These allusions highlight a profound knowledge of the monuments to which they refer, suggesting the possibility that the drafting process considered direct contact with the ancient monument, often close to the necropolis, in search of inspiration and selection of themes. A relief from the western portico of the tomb of Montuemhat (TT 34) is mentioned in this regard (Der Manuelian 1983: 227 [6]; 1985: 100-112, figs. 2, 5; 1994: 21, doc. 11, fig. 3). The scene portrays a line of bearers carrying large rectangular boxes filled with goods. The central couple of bearers recalls a scene from the tomb of Rekhmira (TT100) of Sheikh Abd el - Gurna (Davies 1973: pl. 90).

The musculature of Montuemhat's bearers is outlined with the vigorous canons of the Old Kingdom, and the objects depicted present different details from the Thutmoside representation. However, the general pattern reproduces the two bearers with the exact sequence of goods. Therefore, the Saitic version introduces some innovations in the rendering of objects and body and alludes to the scene that it imitates. It recalls its identifying elements: as if to capture the attention of an expert eye, suggesting an immediate comparison, and then embellishing the scene with original details.

The tomb of Montuemhat also provides several examples of themes recovered from the mortuary temple of Hatshepsut in Deir el-Bahari. In fact, this monument close to the Asasif necropolis can be recognised as an element of inspiration for the decorative programmes of the late monumental tombs. Here is, briefly mentioned, the register with scenes of sacrificial slaughter on E and W walls of chapel C, probably inspired by the Southern Hall of Offerings (Der Manuelian 1994: 33-51, doc. 16, figs. 8-12; Erman 1915). Peter Der Manuelian (1994: 33-51, doc. 16, figs. 8-12) emphasised the affinity of the two

compositions, and Adolf Erman (1915) considered it an example of a copy from an older monument. The differences found in the two versions may be due to modern copyists' errors (Der Manuelian 1994: 40-41, 51; Erman 1915: 91-92) or even to cases of correction of the older version, misunderstandings, and omissions reported in the Late Period inscription (Der Manuelian 1994: 39 [I, 3], 42 [I, 7], 47 [II, 3]). The evidence of other allusions to the Southern Hall of Offerings within the late monumental tomb supports the hypothesis that it is an example of a copy from the oldest monument.

Allusion to specific monuments within the necropolis

Possible allusions to other monuments are also visible within the Asasif necropolis, regarding iconographic and textual elements identifiable in other monumental tombs. Among these cases a scene is cited that depicts Anubis holding the deceased by the hand and accompanying him to the netherworld for his revival, reproduced in the tombs of Harwa (TT 37) and Pabasa (TT 279). In the relief of the passage from the pillared hall to a side chamber of the saite tomb of Pabasa the representation has a particular detail: in front of the god's head a curved line is drawn that has no obvious relationship with the portrayed scene (see Tappeti 2018: 203, with further bibliography). Comparing this detail with the same relief in the tomb of Harwa, it is possible to assume that it repeats an error of the Kushite tomb. In fact, in the passage from the pillared hall to the chapel of Harwa's tomb, the god Anubis is two-faced: the first version of the relief depicts Anubis with the head turned back toward Harwa. Then, likely following a rethink, the deity was represented looking forward. This is clearly an artist's error, probably, the previous head was ultimately covered with plaster.

The curved line of Pabasa is traceable in the depiction of the rear extremity of Anubis's first head in the tomb of Harwa, which turns towards the deceased. Therefore, it can be assumed that the artists in charge of Pabasa's decorative programme went to the oldest tomb in search of inspiration and used it as a direct model. Probably not fully understanding the meaning of the partially visible curved line, they copied it, respecting the model, and featuring part of the artist's error.

The decorative programme of the tomb of Pabasa is strongly influenced by the iconographic and textual plan of the nearby Kushite tomb of Harwa. It could be seen, for example, with the sequence of Pyramid Texts spells inscribed in the wall to the right of the access to the pillared hall in the tomb of Pabasa that follows a very similar placement and arrangement to that of the pillared hall of Harwa's tomb (see Tappeti 2018: 200-202, with further bibliography).

Another interesting case of internal allusion inside the Asasif necropolis is that of the relief with a monkey sitting under the seat of the deceased in the tomb Anch-Hor (TT 414) and a sketch on an *ostracon* found inside the fill of the cultic hall, R6 (Bietak and Reiser-Haslauer 1978–1982: I, 100, figs. 26-27; II, 236-237, pls. 16-17, 42b, 43a) of the same tomb. The analysis of this case, in fact, could provide further data on the method of diffusion of iconographic motifs during the 25th and 26th dynasties. On the western wall of the solar court of this monument, in the third register, one can see a monkey eating fruit, sitting below the seat of the deceased. In the same tomb, but in secondary deposition, an *ostracon* was found. It portrays the sketch of a sitting monkey eating fruit in front of a basket full of fruit. This relief has parallels in several New Kingdom tombs, especially of the 18th dynasty, including the tomb of Puyemra at El-Khokha, which is dated to the reign of Thutmose III. On the northern wall of the room, the deceased and his wife are depicted in a seated position. Below the woman's seat, a small monkey is portrayed with the same attitude as on the *ostracon* of Anch-Hor (Bietak and Reiser-Haslauer 1978–1982: II, 236-237; Der Manuelian 1983: 224 [1]; 1994: 21-24, doc. 12, fig. 4). The scene of the little monkey eating fruit from a basket below the seat of the deceased is also illustrated in a fragmentary relief from the

tomb of Ibi (TT 36), on the west wall of the vestibule (Kuhlmann, Schenkel 1983: pl. 13). In the New Kingdom offering scenes to the deceased,[3] the animal is most often tied under the seat of a woman. In the two Saitic tombs, instead, the deceased is depicted alone in front of the offering table. Below his seat is the little monkey, apparently unbound.

Inner elements and their diffusion starting from the main tombs of the necropolis

In the analysis regarding the references of the late tombs of Asasif, finally, there are some cases where it is possible to recognise the allusion of several monumental tombs to the same themes. These are elements that, probably starting from one of the main tombs, namely Karakhamun (TT 223), Harwa (TT 37), Montuemhat (TT 34), and Petamenophis (TT 33), spread into the necropolis. The selection and layout of the Book of the Dead of the late monumental tombs is an example of this process, with references to the oldest monumental funerary buildings, those of Karakhamun and Harwa. This is evident with the recurring association of *BD* 45 and 50, often opposed to *BD* 89 (Einaudi 2012; 28-9; 2015: 1649-650; Rosati 1993; 2006: 289). Starting with the solar court of the tomb of Harwa, this pattern returns in the solar courts of the later tombs of Pabasa (TT 279), Padihorresnet (TT 196), Anch-Hor (TT 414), and Sheshonq (TT 27), highlighting the specific reference to the famous Kushite tomb.

Another interesting case, briefly cited here, is the version of an excerpt from the Book of Nut (§1-4), accompanied by a representation of a mummified hawk placed on a standard (Régen 2015; 2018). This composition appears on a wall instead of on the ceiling, which is the common resolution for writings from the Book of Nut. This particular framework seems to be attested exclusively inside the necropolis of Asasif, in the tombs of Montuemhat (TT 34), Petamenofi (TT 33), Mutirdis (TT 410) and Pabasa (TT 279). It is, therefore, possible to assume the circulation inside the necropolis of the same model or the allusion to more ancient and well-known funerary monuments of Asasif.

Conclusions

This survey shows the multiplicity of inspirations of the decorative and architectural programmes of the late monumental tombs. There are revivals of archaic motifs, with general elements or patterns that allude to specific monuments inside and outside the necropolis. Alongside these cases that seem to suggest direct contact with the monuments, other compositions were arguably transmitted through temple archives.

[3] See for example: a. The tomb of Djehuti, Dra Abu el-Naga (TT 11, 18th dynasty, Hatshepsut, Thutmose III): hall, S wall, eastern portion; monkey eating fruit from the basket placed in front of the legs. It is sitting under the chair of a third character, probably the father, seated next to the deceased and his wife; under the seat of the woman is an ointment vase (Säve-Söderberg 1958: fig. 2); b. The tomb of Puyemra, el Cocha (TT39, 18th dynasty, Thutmose III): hall, N wall, western portion; monkey eating fruit from the basket placed in front of the legs. It is sitting under the chair of the deceased's wife and tied to the chair with a rope (Porter and Moss 1960: 72, 8-9); c. The tomb of Pahery, El-Kab (EK 3, 18th dynasty, Thutmose III): hall, N wall; monkey eating fruit from the basket placed in front of the legs. It is sitting under the chair of the deceased's wife and tied to the chair with a rope (Tylor and Griffith 1895: pl. VI); d. The tomb of Setau, El-Kab (EK 4, 20th dynasty): hall, N wall; monkey eating fruit from the basket placed in front of the legs. It is sitting under the chair of the deceased's wife and tied to the chair with a rope (Kruchten and Delvaux 2010: pls. 12-13); e. The tomb of Hay, Deir el-Medina (TT267, 20th dynasty, Ramses III): hall, N wall; monkey eating fruit from the basket placed in front of the legs. It is sitting under the chair of the deceased's wife and tied to the chair with a rope (Valbelle 1975: pls. V, XIX).

There is also evidence of the circulation of models, even over long distances, as exemplified by the sun hymn of the Memphite tomb of Horemheb (BM no. 522; Edwards 1909, T. 27), identified in the monuments of Pabasa (TT 279; Assmann 1983: 312-313 [227]), Basa (TT 389; Assmann 1983: 368 [260]), and Sheshonq (TT 27; Assmann 1983: 36 [28]). Some reliefs of the temple of Taharqa in Kawa, modeled on Sahura's monument in Abusir (5th Dynasty), highlight the circulation of models and workers. Moreover, Late Period casts of the Abusir temple reliefs (Kahl 2010: 4-5, fig. 7), or the 25th-26th dynasties grids of copyists written on two reliefs in the underground chambers of the step pyramid complex of Djoser in Saqqara (Firth and Quibell 1935: I, 5, 33-34; II, pls. 15-16; Morkot 2003: 85-86), attest the direct contact with ancient monuments. Moreover, the different *ostraca* found inside the Asasif necropolis may be identified as intermediate copies, suggesting the potential textual and iconographic transmission also through *ostraca* made for a specific occasion.

It is, therefore, necessary to consider the contribution of direct copying in the transmission of themes and texts, parallel to the more traditional archive transmission. In this perspective, the owner of the single monument could also take part in the selection for his decorative programme. As high members of the Egyptian elite, Montuemhat, Petamenophis, or Sheshonq were known for their intellectual skills. The monumental tombs, in fact, within common elements, show a marked individuality, perhaps also attributable to the taste of the single owner. The choice of the elements implies the knowledge of the monuments to which they allude. The appeals to the living in the tombs of Petamenophis (TT 33; Traunecker 2014: 220; 2018: 136-137, fig. 6 [33]; Traunecker and Régen 2016: 66), Ibi (TT 36; Kuhlmann and Schenkel 1983: pl. 23), and Sheshonq (TT 27; Donadoni 1973: fig. 5) suggest a sort of scholars' pilgrimage, above all in the Theban area, in search of precious motifs and elements. Such inscriptions, in fact, require funeral offerings and invite the visitors of the tomb to look, read, or even copy the same inscriptions. The statement of the text is, therefore, joined to the invitation to the copy, together with the desire of the tomb owner to be remembered. The appeal to the living has a real purpose, to assure the deceased the maintenance of the funeral cult. The prayers have a concrete expectation, that the future tomb owners in search of inspiration, may find the oldest monument and officiate a funeral offering in exchange for precious models. The meaning of the prayers lies, thus, also in the purpose of the tomb owner to obtain an exchange, to ensure that the offerings for his survival in the afterlife do not end and that his tomb is not abandoned, but rather becomes a destination of pilgrimages and object of memory.

The material discussed above, outlines a wide framework for the transmission of motifs and elements between the 25th and 26th dynasties: parallel to an archive transmission, with temple or workshop models, it is evident that a wide circulation of these motifs was also inspired by a specific client, who was part of the Egyptian elite, for a particular monument. This selection moves from the desire to preserve and to be remembered, to affirm the belonging to the cultural entourage of the Theban elite. The tomb is a place of rituals and regeneration but also a place of memory and transmission. The individuals affirm their belonging to a social class, and their monuments become the object in which private and community memory can be expressed, they become a means of preservation and transmission of knowledge. Therefore, the tomb is a place of worship and a sort of archive, as it summarises the main, and funerary, knowledge of ancient Egypt.

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Unpublished Greek and Demotic papyri from Graeco-Roman Tebtunis: a research project at the University of Parma

Nicola Reggiani and Alessia Bovo

Abstract

The Project 'Seminar of study on unpublished papyri from Tebtunis' began at the University of Parma (Italy) in 2006 on the initiative of late Professor Isabella Andorlini, who secured arrangements with The Center of the Tebtunis Papyri, University of California-Berkeley, now directed by Todd Hickey. The agreement assigned to the Italian research group – made up of students of various levels and disciplines – some unpublished or described papyri from the Berkeley Collection with the purposes of study and publication in a volume of the Tebtunis Papyri series. The work continued until 2013, and then was suspended when the ERC project DIGMEDTEXT started. Professor Andorlini's untimely death prevented the Seminar from being renewed until 2019, now under the direction of Nicola Reggiani and the general coordination of Alessia Bovo. The edition of 70 texts – including Greek literary and documentary pieces, a Demotic scrap, and several pieces of painted mummy cartonnage – is ready for publication, while we intend to carry on the work on further Greek and Demotic papyri. A significant selection of texts is preliminarily presented here.

Keywords

Greek papyri; Demotic papyri; Ptolemaic Egypt; Roman Egypt; Tebtunis

General survey of the project[1]

The project of editing a batch of the unpublished Greek papyri from Tebtunis kept at The Center for the Tebtunis Papyri, Bancroft Library, University of California-Berkeley was launched by Isabella Andorlini when she became Associate Professor of Papyrology at the University of Parma, in 2006. She had already worked on some papyri from that collection, and it was easy for her to promote an agreement with the American colleagues Donald Mastronarde and Todd M. Hickey. The papyri assigned to Parma became objects of study in the framework of a training and research seminar: their high-resolution digital pictures were distributed to BA, MA and PhD students with the final purpose of the collective publication of a volume in the *Tebtunis Papyri* series. The seminar was arranged in periodical meetings of the group, personal work, and yearly workshops, during which the young researchers could present their works in progress and discuss with established guest scholars (Andorlini 2008; 2009; Fantasia 2019).[2] The work was almost completed in 2013, when it was suspended

[1] The present paper falls within the projects *Fragmentary Voices from the Past: Editing Unpublished Papyri from Graeco-Roman Egypt* (P.I. Nicola Reggiani) funded by the University of Parma and Fondazione Cariparma and PRIN 2017 *Greek and Latin Literary Papyri from Graeco-Roman Fayum: Texts, Contexts, Readers* (P.I. Lucio Del Corso, University of Cassino; Local Research Unit at the University of Parma, coordinator Nicola Reggiani). The first two parts are authored by Alessia Bovo and the third one by Nicola Reggiani. We are most grateful to Andrew Hogan (The Center for the Tebtunis Papyri) for his precious linguistic revision.

[2] ‹http://www.papirologia.unipr.it/ricerca/tebtynis.html›, accessed 30 October 2021.

because of the concurrent beginning of the ERC project DIGMEDTEXT (Reggiani 2019: 90–93).[3] It was never resumed due to Professor Andorlini's untimely passing on November 11, 2016.

The project was then resumed by Nicola Reggiani – a former member of the research group – in 2018, after his appointment as Researcher of Papyrology at the University of Parma, with the general coordination of Alessia Bovo. The renewed seminar recovered the texts already assigned – in some cases with the same original editors, according to their availability – and added further ones, to the number of 70, in order to enlarge the research group even outside the University of Parma, engaging scholars and students from other institutions. Todd Hickey's professional and friendly support as the new Director of The Center for the Tebtunis Papyri proved essential for the success of the project and the Parma team owes the utmost gratitude to him as well as to his collaborators (Talia Prussin, Emily Cole, and Andrew Hogan), who promptly checked the availability of the texts and provided high-resolution and infrared images of the papyri.

The renewed project has been presented at the 29th International Congress of Papyrology (Lecce, 28 July-3 August 2019, poster by N. Reggiani and A. Bovo) and at the 12th Papyrological Workshop at the University of Parma (12 November 2019, paper by A. Bovo). In 2019 it received a funding grant from the University of Parma and Cariparma Foundation, under the title of 'Fragmentary Voices from the Past: Editing Unpublished Papyri from Graeco-Roman Egypt', which allowed us to complete the work and the volume, which has been assigned the official numbering of Tebtunis Papyri VII[4] and which is now under review (see below).

Tebtunis and its papyri

Thanks to the plentiful papyrus records found there, Tebtunis is one of the most studied and known places of Graeco-Roman Egypt. The village is located on the south-eastern edge of the ancient Arsinoites district, corresponding to the current site of Umm el-Braygāt in the Fayum oasis, about 140 km south-west of Cairo. It likely dates back to the 12th Pharaonic dynasty, around c. 1800 BC, but almost nothing is known of its earliest history, except for the fact that its foundation and its development is closely related to the activities of recovery of the former swampland, continued until the reign of Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285–246 BC). Tebtunis was among the wealthiest villages in the Hellenistic, Roman, and Byzantine times and it was inhabited till around the 10th century AD.

The papyri studied by the Parma project belong to the first batches of written records unearthed at the dawn of the 20th century (namely, the winter season 1899/1900) by the archaeological expedition conducted by British papyrologists Bernard Grenfell and Arthur Hunt (O'Connell 2007). Several papyri were discovered in the cartonnage wrappings of the human and crocodile mummies buried in the local cemeteries; some of them came from neighbouring villages like Kerkeosiris and Oxyrhyncha and were imported to be reused in the mummification process. Others were excavated from the temple of the crocodile god Soknebtunis and from the surrounding urban area. The expedition was funded by philanthropist Phoebe Hearst on behalf of the University of California: This is the reason why today the collection is mostly under the stewardship of The Center for the Tebtunis Papyri of the Bancroft

[3] ‹http://www.papirologia.unipr.it/ERC›, accessed 30 October 2021.
[4] In previous publications, it has appeared as Tebtunis Papyri XI, which was the former numbering, now updated after reconsidering the other projects in progress.

Library, University of California-Berkeley.[5] The fragments have not yet been exhaustively counted and inventoried, but their number is estimated to exceed 26,000 items (Verhoogt 1994: 4–7).

Grenfell and Hunt published two volumes of papyrus editions in 1902 (P.Tebt. I)[6] and 1907 (P.Tebt. II). A third volume, in two parts (P.Tebt. III.1, 1933; P.Tebt. III.2, 1938) was edited by Hunt – who recovered and completed Grenfell's work, interrupted at the latter's death in 1920 – in collaboration with J.G. Smyly and the assistance of other eminent colleagues (Lobel, Rostovtzeff), as well as by C.C. Edgar, who recovered Hunt's materials after his death in 1934 with the help of Smyly. A fourth volume was published in 1975 by James Keenan and John Shelton (P.Tebt. IV). A monograph authored by Arthur Verhoogt about the Menches archive is commonly considered as the fifth volume of the regular series (P.Tebt. V) (Verhoogt 2005) and further publications are in progress (Lippert 2008). Several other literary and documentary papyri from the Berkeley collection are published sparsely and individually in journals, collections of essays, and the like.

Subsequent illegal as well as official excavations have contributed to increase the quantity of papyrus fragments from Tebtunis – now kept also at Ann Arbor, Copenhagen, Padua, Florence, Rome, Milan[7] – and to enhance our knowledge of the topography and history of the village (Gallazzi 2001). The archaeological findings comprise important buildings like the temple of Soknebtunis, the headquarters of the desert guards, the public baths, the public granary as well as private houses and administrative offices (Hadji-Minaglou 1995; 2009; 2012; 2015; Rondot 2004). The written sources provide invaluable testimonies to the private, public, social, and cultural life of the village and of its region. Almost all the Ptolemaic papyri come from the mummy cartonnage. They were reused from rolls or sheets discarded from the offices of Tebtunis and nearby places, so that they mostly witness the public administration of daily life and the official management of land and taxes. The papyri of Roman Age – beside numerous private documents – comprise relevant records from the local notary office with important pieces of information about population; interesting data come from property and census declarations belonging to family archives, which show that many Roman citizens with legal residence elsewhere possessed a second home at Tebtunis, which was very likely a sort of vacation resort thanks to its healthy environment (see below). Cultural life is well attested too. Literary and technical texts point to school practices, scientific activities and erudite interests both in the temple area and in the private quarters (Gallazzi 1990; Norsa and Vitelli 1934; Van Minnen 1998: 155-180).

It is not surprising, therefore, that the wide mass of Greek and Demotic written records from Tebtunis – assessed/estimated around 100,000 fragments altogether, amounting to roughly one quarter of the entire papyrological corpus originating from Egypt – permits us to reconstruct ample historical, social, cultural, administrative, economic overviews and insights of the village and of its neighbourhoods,[8] often thanks to homogeneous archives like those of Menches, village scribe of Kerkeosiris in the 2nd century BC (P.Tebt. I, Appendix I; Crawford 1971; Verhoogt 1998b), and of Kronion, notary officer of the 1st century AD (Langellotti 2015; 2020), as well as to the rich and

[5] Some pieces found or purchased by Grenfell and Hunt in those same years are kept in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford.

[6] The abbreviations of the papyri editions follow the Checklist of editions of Greek, Latin, Demotic and Coptic papyri, available on ‹htttp://papyri.info/docs/checklist›.

[7] For further bibliography see the Introduction to Tebtunis Papyri VII forthcoming.

[8] For further bibliography see the Introduction to Tebtunis Papyri VII forthcoming.

interesting temple library of the sanctuary of the crocodile god (Gallazzi 2018; Hanson 2001; Ryholt 2005; 2013; 2018). The outcome of the Parma project goes precisely in that direction.

Survey of the volume (P.Tebt. VII)[9]

There is necessarily no homogeneity in a miscellaneous volume of papyrus editions except for some general common threads that, in the present case, can be recognised in the provenance from Tebtunis. Nevertheless, it is still possible to outline some global considerations, which allow us to frame the relevance of the texts within the general overview sketched above.

Literary texts

In compliance with a long-standing, established tradition of papyrological studies, the volume is articulated in two main sections devoted to the papyri of literary and documentary contents, respectively. Among the literary papyri, it is no surprise that Homer, the most attested Greek author in the papyri, is numerically prevalent. The Homeric papyri edited here are all *descripta* (i.e. just summarily described) or unpublished, and the few cases of texts that have already been published elsewhere are presented in a decisively improved fashion, offering revisions and new readings. Written in more or less careful book hands, they reveal interesting details of ancient literary practices, such as diacritical signs connected to a practical (erudite or school) use of the text, and of textual transmission, like variants that can have philological or linguistic relevance.

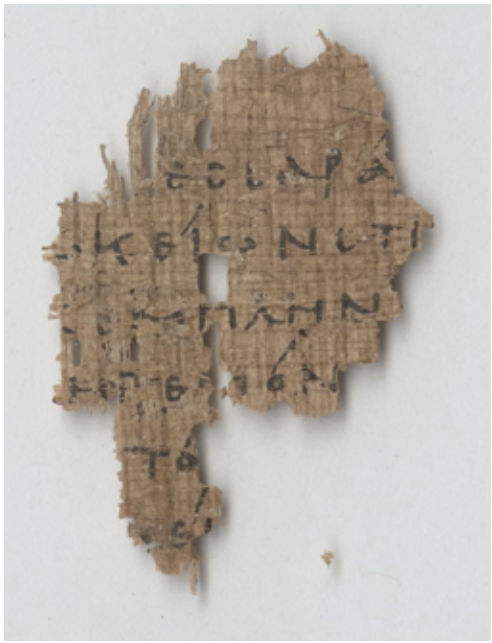

Figure 1. P.Tebt. VII 5 (=P.Tebt. Frag. 21,009), fragment from Homer's Iliad II.Courtesy of the Center for the Tebtunis Papyri, University of California, Berkeley.

[9] The papyri are cited with the progressive number assigned in the volume.

Not few are the attested variants to the vulgate Homeric text. Sometimes they are simple scribal mistakes, either due to transcription mechanics or influenced by the spoken language: for example, Φωκείων instead of Φωκήων in Iliad 2.525 (P.Tebt. VII 5, 1st-2nd cent. AD, ed. A. Bovo: Figure 1), which is attested in another Homeric papyrus (P.Lond.Lit. 6 + P.Ryl. III 540 + *add.*, 1st AD),[10] is a typical interference of spoken Greek (κοινή dialect). In other cases, they are proper philological alternatives like Τρῶες μὲν λέξασθαι ἐφέστιοι ὅσσοι ἔασιν instead of Τρῶας κτλ. in Iliad 2.125 (P.Tebt. VII 4, 2nd century BC, ed. I. Bonati: Figure 2), which the unanimous tradition of the manuscript witnesses and also Grenfell and Hunt's previous reading of this line (Bonati 2011). The variant was reported by grammarian Eustathius, who stated to have found it ἔν τισιν ἀντιγράφοις 'in some copies' of the Homeric poems at his times. This version, perhaps to be traced back to Aristarchus' edition, is preferred by some scholars (Leaf, Ludwich, West) to the traditional version for stylistic reasons (such as the parallel with the nominative ἡμεῖς at Iliad. 2.126). This papyrus is therefore the earliest direct witness of this version, together with an unpublished papyrus from Oxyrhynchis (p828 West), which is reported to have *epsilon* deleted by the ancient scribe. Another such example is Τρ]ώ̣ε[c]ς̣[ιν] ἐ̣πάλμεν[oc instead of Τρώεccι μετάλμενoc in Iliad XIII 362 (P.Tebt. VII 10, 2nd century AD, ed. A. Bovo), a variant which is attested in three more papyrus witnesses of the Roman age (P.Lit.Lond. 22, 1st AD; P.Rein. II 71, 3rd AD; unpublished P.Oxy. reported by West *ad loc.*) and in three of the oldest medieval codices (Marc. Gr. 822, 10th cent.: *varia lectio*; Laur. 32.15, 12th century; Oxon. Bodl. Auct. T.2.7, 13th century). Especially in the case of the Ptolemaic papyri, it is possible to recognise the fluidity of Homeric textual transmission, with entire verses omitted or added (P.Tebt. VII 1, second half 3rd cent. BC, ed. A. Bovo; P.Tebt. VII 3, late 2nd century AD, ed. A. Bovo).[11] A fragment is the oldest direct witness of Phoenix' discourse to Achilles (P.Tebt. VII 6, second half 1st-early 2nd century AD, ed. I. Bonati) (Iori and Bonati 2010). The formal quality of the items ranges from elegant 'library' copies, transcribed on the recto of the papyrus rolls in considerable handwritings, to personal copies for research or even school purposes, copied on the verso of reused documentary rolls. Particularly noticeable are the items featuring punctuation and diacritical marks, among which are perhaps the oldest papyri preserving the Aristarchan signs (P.Tebt. VII 3,4, see above), as well as a copy that systematically notes the prosodic accents (P.Tebt. VII 5, see above). This is likely to be connected to a school use, though it is worth noting that an ancient erudite debate about Homeric prosody is attested especially in relation to the grammarians Aristarchus and Herodianus. In some cases, it has been possible to attempt a material reconstruction of the original roll.

Figure 2. P.Tebt. VII 4 (=P.Tebt. 4), fragment from Homer's Iliad II (particular). Courtesy of the Center for the Tebtunis Papyri, University of California, Berkeley.

[10] The abbreviations of the papyri editions follow the Checklist of editions of Greek, Latin, Demotic and Coptic papyri, available on ‹htttp://papyri.info/docs/checklist›.
[11] On the fluid textual transmission of Ptolemaic Homeric papyri cf. West 1967 and Bird 2010.

Two interesting non-Homeric fragments complete the literary landscape: a Ptolemaic exercise with the first verse of Euripides' *Bacchae* (ἥκω Διὸς παῖς τήνδε Θηβαίαν χθόνα) copied at least four times (P.Tebt. VII 2, 2nd century BC, ed. A. Bovo) and an anonymous philosophical text, mentioning some σοφισταί, 'wise men' or 'sophists', which is noteworthy for its most elegant manufacture, especially the refined uncial book hand, the large *agraphon* (initial unwritten space), the punctuation marks (two mid dots), and the filling signs to keep the right-hand alignment of the column. It was certainly a luxury book roll (P.Tebt. VII 7, early 2nd century AD, ed. A. Bovo: Figure 3) (Centenari and Iori 2010; 2019).

Figure 3. P.Tebt. VII 7 (=P.Tebt. 269), unknown philosophical prose. Courtesy of the Center for the Tebtunis Papyri, University of California, Berkeley.

Ptolemaic documentary texts

The Ptolemaic documents pertain to the most various aspects of daily life. Some fragments of private and official letters have not preserved enough text to clarify the writing context, but it is important to publish such scraps for the possibility of future improvements. The same can be said of some accounts and lists, which – as often happens – are of obscure interpretation, though revealing interesting onomastic elements: unique occurrences (e.g. Nemeschonsis, Tanarbescheis, Kolophon), rare names (e.g. Leonteios, Olympichos, Korainos), and phonetic variants unattested so far. Some accounts and registers of payments allow a better understanding of their context: the expenses for a feast (P.Tebt. VII 28, 2nd century BC, ed. N. Reggiani) and private deposits of money (P.Tebt. VII 16, second half 3rd centuryBC, ed. N. Reggiani; P. 26, 2nd century BC, ed. G. Barocelli). A few calculations can be reconstructed in their entirety. Monetary aspects related to the exchange between silver and bronze standards, which are deeply rooted in certain economic issues of the Ptolemaic kingdom, emerge from

a fragment of an official ordinance regulating coinage (P.Tebt. VII 23, late 3rd-early 2nd century BC, ed. A. Bovo, which – among other things – contains the hapax κολλυβιστήριον 'exchange office': Figure 4) and from an account which calculates the respective changes (P.Tebt. VII 45, late 2nd BC, ed. A. Bovo). Agriculture, the true economic and social engine of Hellenistic Egypt, is mirrored in the legal cases of some petitions and official letters dealing with land-related controversies, as well as in a couple of land registers. Some aspects of law enforcement surface in an order to appear in court (P.Tebt. VII 15, *c.* 245 BC, ed. E. Scarpanti), in a notification of stolen objects (P.Tebt. VII 36, 184 or 160 BC, ed. N. Reggiani), and in the mention of a jailer in a private context (P.Tebt. VII 16, second half 3rd BC, ed. N. Reggiani) (Reggiani 2012). Two contracts, unfortunately preserved just in their formulaic heading, perhaps belong to the same register, from which other known similar documents come (P.Tebt. VII 37, 182 BC, ed. A. Bovo; P.Tebt. VII 38, *c.* 180 BC, ed. M. Guareschi).

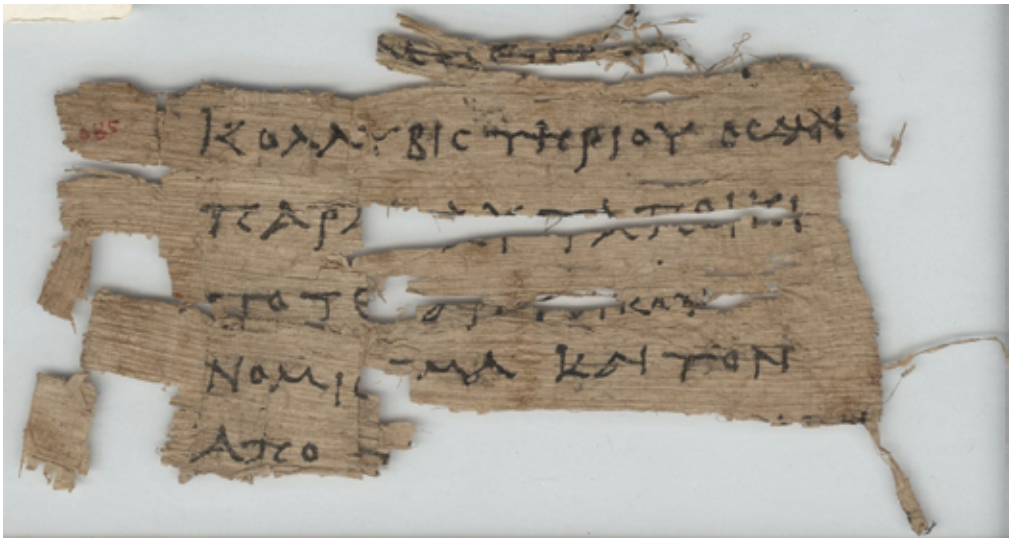

Figure 4. P.Tebt. VII 23 (=P.Tebt. 485), official ordinance regulating coinage. Courtesy of the Center for the Tebtunis Papyri, University of California, Berkeley.

Limited though interesting is the contribution to already known archives: an order of summons from the archive of Patron, ἀρχιφυλακίτης in the Oxyrhynchite nome (P.Tebt. VII 15, see above and below), and three documents from the archive of Menches, κωμογραμματεύς (village scribe) of Kerkeosiris (P.Tebt. VII 42, official letter concerning Artemidoros, κωμογραμματεύς of Ibion Eikosipentarouron, *c.* 118–112 BC, ed. E. Scarpanti; P.Tebt. VII 43, petition, 114–112 BC, ed. N. Reggiani; P.Tebt. VII 44, agricultural report [Reggiani 2016] 113/2 BC, ed. N. Reggiani). These last three items feature recurring technical terms and formulaic syntactic peculiarities that are limited to documents of the same provenance, thus showing the heavily standardised bureaucratic habits of local administration. The case of the petition (P.Tebt. VII 43: Figure 5) is particularly noteworthy: it was issued to a village scribe (κωμογραμματεύς), whose name is lost, by the comarch and the royal cultivators of an equally unknown place, in order to complain about some oppression (perhaps from the σιτολόγοι, the exactors of the taxes in kind) suffered so much that they were forced to leave their homes (κινδυνεύ | [οντες] τὴν ἰδίαν ἐγλιπεῖν, ll. 6–7). This document can be traced back to Menches thanks to the closing formula, which contains a peculiar linguistic feature that is attested elsewhere in other petitions from

the Menches archive only. It is the anacoluthon δι̣ὸ̣ ἐ̣[πι]δ̣ί̣δ̣ο̣μ̣έν coι τὸ ὑπόμνημα | ὅ̣π̣ω̣ c̣ π̣ε̣ρ̣ὶ̣ ἑ̣κάστων ὑπογραφὴν | πο̣ι̣ή̣cη̣ι̣ π̣ροcυποτάξαντα (instead of προcυποτάξας*) καὶ* τοῦ | ὑ̣π̣ο̣μ̣ν̣ή̣μ̣α̣τος ἀντίγραφον κτλ. (ll. 44–47: 'Therefore we deliver this petition to you, so that you subscribe it on each point, attaching a copy of the petition...'), which is exactly paralleled eight more times (P.Tebt. I 38, 45–47, 50; IV 1095–1097) from that archive in the period 114–112 BC. A further possibility is that the petition is connected to the 'strike' of the royal cultivators in 114 BC as attested in other papyrological sources (Verhoogt 1988b: 90–94 and 167–175).

Figure 5. P.Tebt. VII 43 (=P.Tebt. UC 1581), petition to Menches (particular, ll. 44–47). Courtesy of the Center for the Tebtunis Papyri, University of California, Berkeley.

Roman documentary texts

The papyri of Roman Age put us in direct connection with tax management, which was then rationalised and systematised in a sharper way than before. Some registers of payments, an official letter to some exactors (P.Tebt. VII 51, AD 14, ed. I. Andorlini, in which the rarely attested officer called ἡγούμενος κώμης is mentioned) and a regional tax report (P.Tebt. VII 59, first half 2nd century AD, ed. M. Guareschi, mentioning such poorly attested levies as the ὑποκείμενα ἐπιστρατηγίᾳ and the ἁλική) give us examples of the complex bureaucratic system of Egypt as a Roman province. As usual, some accounts are of more difficult comprehension, yet by no means less relevant for their social, economic, and onomastic aspects (see e.g. the rare name Silibois, which appears twice in P.Tebt. VII 56, tax register, first half 1st AD, ed. M. Legnini). Some characters of higher officials – almost always with Roman names – appear here and there in official documents: Tiberius, likely a strategus, in a communication to the tax farmers (P.Tebt. VII 51, see above); strategi Maximus alias Nearchus, addressee of a census declaration (P.Tebt. VII 61, AD 146/7, ed. I. Andorlini), and Bolanos, addressee of a fragmentary petition (P.Tebt. VII 65, AD 196–198, ed. M. Nuti); the Prefect of Egypt Munatius Felix, in a papyrus that transmits his orders seemingly about grain requisitions (P.Tebt. VII 62, AD 152/3, ed. M. Nuti) (Nuti 2019). Agriculture in its public and private sides emerges from a couple of cadastres or land registers (P.Tebt. VII 68, 3rd century AD, ed. N. Reggiani; P.Tebt. VII 69, first half 3rd century AD, ed. D. N. Musca), from a memorandum of farming works (P.Tebt. VII 67, late 2nd – early 3rd century AD, ed. M. Nuti) and in a report of payments to estate managers (P.Tebt. VII 60, AD 137/8 or 158/9, ed. A. Bovo: Figure 6). This latter text is particularly noteworthy since it is an almost complete sheet. It records an accounting report of payments issued to a couple of estate managers (φροντισταί), with calculations made over an entire year (the 21st of an unmentioned Roman emperor – the current year of composition being the 22nd). The possibility that the papyrus comes from the so-called archive of Laches' descendants (Clarysse and Gallazzi 1993; Kehoe 1992: 74–92; Scofield Bagnall 1974), unearthed in the famous 'cantina dei papiri' discovered by Achille Vogliano at Tebtunis (Gallazzi 1990), is

suggested by the likely identification of the first φροντιστής with Kronion, superintendent of Ptollarion I or II, attested in two instruction letters (P.Mil.Vogl. II 59 and 60). The chronological range of the archive (*c.* AD 108–176) is compatible with the palaeography of our papyrus and with the mention of the month name *Hadrianos* for Choiak (attested from Hadrian's visit to Egypt in AD 130 to the entire 2nd century, and further on). In the light of the mention of the year number, it is therefore possible to precisely date the document to AD 137/8 (22nd year of Hadrian) or 158/9 (22nd year of Antoninus Pius).

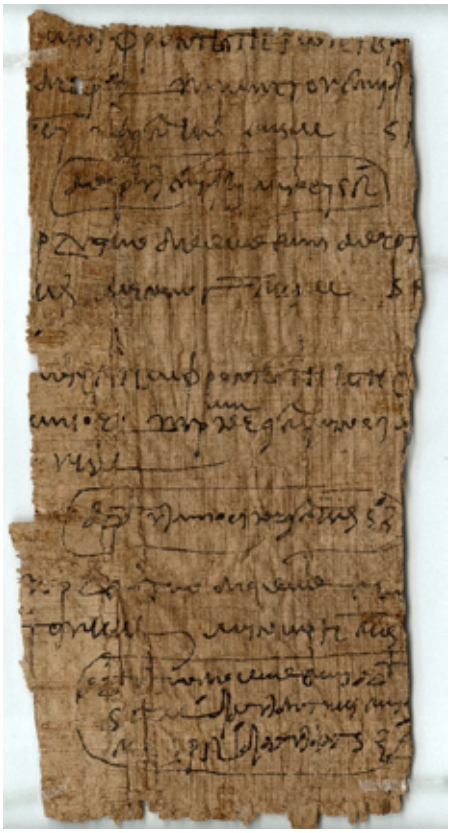

Figure 6. P.Tebt. VII 60 (=P.Tebt. UC 2427r), estate accounts. Courtesy of the Center for the Tebtunis Papyri, University of California, Berkeley.

The very last papyrus (P.Tebt. VII 69–70) clearly poses the interesting question about the presence of documents of external provenance in Roman Tebtunis. Unlike the Ptolemaic Age, when the presence of papyri of non-local provenance in the mummy cartonnages can be explained with specific acquisitions (donations?) of homogeneous batches of administrative origin,[12] the evidence of extra-

[12] That of Menches' papers from Kerkeosiris is the most striking case and it has been explained with the voluntary donation of reuse material to the temple of the crocodile god (Verhoogt 1998b: 49). More difficult is to reconstruct the route followed by the papers of Patron, police superintendent (ἀρχιφυλακίτης) in the Northern Toparchy of the Oxyrhynchitenome around the mid-3rd century BC, which flowed into the mummy cartonnages of Hibeh but also in those of Tebtunis (P.Tebt. III 744–749 e 937–939): the presence, in the very same cartonnages, of much later documents (even one century later) allows to think that the reuse of this dossier happened much later than its actual discharge. Cf. TM Arch 408; P.Yale I 35, Introduction (pp. 94–97); Fati 2012. On the storage of papyri to reuse for mummification at a later time cf. Verhoogt 1998b: 20–21 apropos of the

Tebtunis texts in Roman Age is to be traced back to the presence of people who dwelled in other regions but came to Tebtunis on a sort of vacation (see above), bringing books and documents along with themselves. Cases of people from Antinoupolis are already well-known (Hanson 2005: 396 ff; Verhoogt 1998a), while our papyrus points to the Herakleopolite nome, because of the onomastics of the people mentioned on both the recto (P.Tebt. VII 69, a land register, see above) and the verso (P.Tebt. VII 70, an official declaration, *c.* AD 244/5, ed. A. Bovo: Figure 7), and because of the explicit mention of the Herakleopolitan village of Machor on the verso. It is a very remarkable instance, because so far, according to the available catalogues (Berkeley APIS, Trismegistos), these are the only Herakleopolitan documents found at Tebtunis, recovered from 2nd-century BC Ptolemaic mummy cartonnage and can be traced back to a homogeneous administrative archive, not dissimilar from Menches' and Patron's cases.

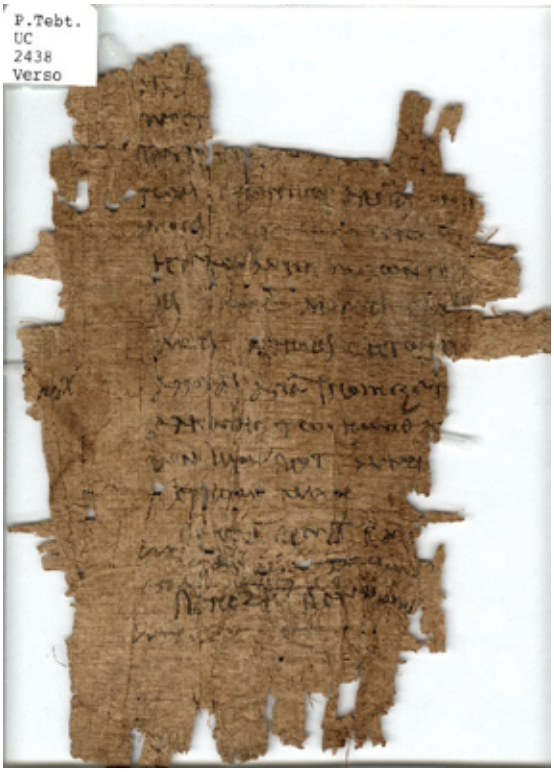

Figure 7. P.Tebt. VII 70 (=P.Tebt. UC 2438v), official declaration. Courtesy of the Center for the Tebtunis Papyri, University of California, Berkeley.

crocodiles. Another interesting case, the one of the Demotic notary documents from 2nd-century BC Oxyrhyncha, coming from the Tebtunis mummy cartonnages as well, has been studied by Lippert (2008: 165–167), who notices that also Greek documents, originated from the κωμογραμματεία of the same village, flowed into the Tebtunis mummies, and generally hints to the supply of reuse paper from those administrative offices to the mummifiers.

Material evidence

Beside the texts, we wished to offer a total view of the papyri as material evidence, providing a more 'archaeological' edition of the painted remains of cartonnage preserved on some fragments (Appendix, ed. E. Urzì). An even different scrap, with ritual pictures - the coloured images of gods Tutu and Bes beside the image of a man conducting a bull – and Demotic captions (P.Tebt. VII 50, *c.* 2nd century BC, ed. E. Urzì: Figure 8) (Kaper 2003: 227–228; 2004: 557–564), can perhaps be compared with some drafts of cultic images or amulets, of which other examples have already been retrieved at Tebtunis (e.g. PSI XIV 1450: draft or caricature of a worshipper in front of an uraeus and an Apis bull, with Demotic captions; PSI XIV 1451: anthropomorphic figure holding a spear, a snake, and a scorpion; both from the 2nd century AD).[13]

Figure 8. P.Tebt. VII 50 (=P.Tebt. Frag. 13,385), ritual pictures with Demotic captions. Courtesy of the Center for the Tebtunis Papyri, University of California, Berkeley.

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[13] PSI XIV1451 is reprinted in Botti 2019: 171–173.

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The *Πλοιαφέσια* in the Greek landscape: a local expression of a global festivity

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Abstract

The *Navigium Isidis* or *Πλοιαφέσια* is the most attested annual festivity honouring Isis, celebrating her influence over the sea and offering safety to seafarers. Evidence for this festivity comes mainly from Apuleius, who describes the procession held in Cenchreae, and the epigraphic data that attest to the sites around the Mediterranean where the festivities were held. As the social actors created a vivid network through which a cult that originated in Egypt became global, a dense network of cultural interchanges was created. This growing interconnectedness of material culture led to the adoption of common cultic practices by groups of people that originally had a different cultural background. In this context, the festival reached numerous ports and locations.

The chronological frame of this research is set between the Hellenistic and Roman periods. The geographical frame is set around the Aegean and the Greek mainland. I aim to bring the data corresponding to the above-mentioned frames together in order to examine the form of this festival and its cultic practices in Greece. I also investigate the public offices that took part in this religious experience. In addition, I focus on each local community in order to understand the perception of the *Πλοιαφέσια* by the locals. Starting from these sites, the existence of a network between these sites and both Egypt and the western Mediterranean can be explored. In addition, my purpose is to understand the balance between global engagement and the local community involved in these activities.

Keywords

Πλοιαφέσια; *Navigium Isidis*; Isis; Roman Greece; Apuleius; sea networks

Introduction

The relation of Isis with the sea is a vast subject and has been the centre of important publications (see mainly Bricault 2006 in French and Bricault 2020 in English that include all previous bibliography). This paper aims to investigate only a specific expression of this feature of the goddess in the regions of Hellenistic and Roman Greece. The *Πλοιαφέσια* or *Navigium Isidis* was a festival that honoured Isis as protector of navigation and inaugurated the beginning of the sailing season in the Mediterranean each year. Even though processions are an element of ritual practice that leave unsubstantial traces and are difficult to detect through archaeological investigation (Luginbühl 2015: 49), I shall start my research from the material evidence that allows reconstructing aspects of this festivity in order to understand the choices made by social actors while they lived in a world characterised by connectivity and local expressions of global phenomena. The geographical and chronological frames set for this research are the areas of mainland Greece and the Aegean during the Hellenistic and Roman periods. As most of the evidence comes from the inscriptions, I dedicate a few words to the offices mentioned in the epigraphic evidence that had an active role in the processions. I examine both sites already known to the research and a couple of newer additions. Combining this data, I aim to focus on the social actors and their religious behaviour in each specific context while they prayed for the safety of seafarers using both features traced back to Egyptian origins and related

to Graeco-Roman traditions. I then consider religious connectivity among these sites and the balance between local communities involved in these activities and global engagement. Therefore, before proceeding to the evidence, I shall introduce the basic idea that will allow me to show how we can understand the *Πλοιαφέσια* through the concepts of human agency in the *glocal* Mediterranean (Pitts and Versluys 2014: 14)

From early antiquity on, social relations between Egypt and Mediterranean sites were formulated, allowing the circulation of people and objects. Their intensity changed rapidly from the Hellenistic period onwards. While the trade activities increased, the cultural relationship between different cultural groups intensified. Cultural and religious elements became not only known but also exchanged, and, due to the secure and vast world that the Hellenistic and Roman worlds provided, religious connectivity acquired the form of a dense network (Collar 2013: 8-9; Vlassopoulos 2013: 305). Within this network of communications, the relationships between entities like people, objects, rites, and ideas shaped their interconnectedness. Their study allows us to understand the behaviour of the actors involved and the cultural, social, and religious evolution and exchange (Collar 2013: 58). People searched for people and objects that would suit their needs and the context in which they would interact, developing practices that would bring together the old and the new, the traditional with the notion in motion. This process led to continuous mobility, the reconstruction of existing identities, and the formation of new ones (Knapp and van Dommelen 2010: 5-6).

The above-described world of increasing connectivity can be better understood by the neologism of *glocalisation*: the local adaptation of those widely shared practices and values. This term focuses on the perception that individuals, communities, and cultures interacted with the global *koine* (Vlassopoulos 2013: 22). It is a term that emphasises how the homogenising elements of global culture, material culture, social practices, and ideas were differently incorporated into the local cultures, which were in turn altered in the process (Pitts and Versluys 2014: 14). Isis as protector of maritime activities was an outcome of this increasing connectivity. At the same time, she provided guidance and protection to the agents that worked in this same field of communications in the Mediterranean.

Having all that in mind, I also consider that Isis was deliberately chosen by these agents because she was a goddess that fulfilled a wide range of activities, rites, and emotions through these interconnections. Isis of all the Egyptian gods was so successful outside Egypt because her aspects and affordances made her suitable for another cultural environment and the types of these environments were susceptible to her charms: she was already a prominent deity in Egypt and her cult was easily accessible to non-Egyptian people; the myth of Isis searching for Osiris was reminiscent of the myth of Demeter and Kore; the diaspora of the Isiac cult did not just fill the space which local deities might had left but the agents could connect her cult with local cults. In addition, her association with navigation made her particularly loved by the people who travelled overseas. More than that, joining the cult required one to opt in and participate in initiatory rituals, festivals, associations, and, in general, to group-making activities (Mazurek 2022: 31). The festival discussed here is one of these activities that promoted shared action and facilitated a sense of commonality.

Before proceeding to the evidence, I need to briefly comment on the origins and the history of the *Πλοιαφέσια* in Egypt in order to understand better the interconnected globalised world in which this festivity was born. The origins of the *Πλοιαφέσια*, the most attested annual festivity honouring Isis, literally meaning 'launching of the ships', have created a series of questions that still remain unanswered. The discussion on the origins of the festivity is a fascinating subject with important articles such as the contribution of Gwyn Griffiths (1974). It is an ongoing discussion that has created a fruitful debate among scholars that goes beyond the aims of this research. Scholars attributed them to Alexandria (Hani 1976: 378) a plausible hypothesis that is not a fact: after all, Byblos would also be an acceptable candidate (Bricault 2020: 208). They have also related them to other festivals, such as the Ptolemaic *Kikellia* (Merkelbach 1963: 35–41), creating a debate on that subject as well (see *contra*

Dunand 1973: 229 and Griffiths 1975: 40-41). It is also debatable whether it was originally a non-Egyptian festival for the new maritime season that was later put under the patronage of Isis, or it was a new Hellenistic festival created for Isis as 'mistress of seafaring' (Pfeiffer 2018: 687-688). Whichever the case, in the Imperial Period, the *Navigium Isidis* of March 5th and the *Sacrum Phariae* of April 25th, both connected to marine Isis, had become part of the Roman calendar (Bricault 2020: 203).

The Evidence

The name of the festival as *Πλοιαφέσια* in Greek survives in an inscription from Byzantium (Bricault 2005, 114/0703), in the literary work of Apuleius (*Metamorphoses* 11.17), and in the work *De Mensibus* of John Lydus (*De Mensibus* 4.45) who places the festivity precisely on March 5th. The Latin name of the festivity, *Navigium Isidis,* survives in a plethora of other sources (see Bricault 2020: 203-204).

Three academic disciplines intersect in the study of processions and cultic festivals: history of religion, archaeology, and literature studies. In the case of this festival, archaeological, epigraphic, and literary sources have been studied, creating the main body of publications on the subject. Here I focus on archaeological and epigraphic material, taking also into consideration the literary description of Apuleius. The eleventh book of the *Metamorphoses* of Apuleius consists of the most vivid description of the *Πλοιαφέσια.* It describes an initiative experience for which there is no concrete comparanda. Nonetheless, we should always be aware that confronting the excavated data with the description of the procession by Apuleius is a methodological approach that can be misleading. Explaining artefacts and artworks through the Apuleian narrative, which is a fictional narrative, has led to circular reasoning. Such an indicative example are the paintings from the sanctuary of Isis in Pompeii, often explained with reference to Apuleius (Keulen and Egelhaaf-Gaiser 2015: 543, Pfeiffer 2018: 676). It is, therefore, methodologically inaccurate to investigate the normative development of these ceremonies through this literary work (Bricault 2020: 211). Moreover, we should take into consideration the question of how broadly in time and space we can follow Apuleius' narrative. Even if Apuleius describes something entirely true, this might reflect only a specific set of practices and rites of the specific time and place and not an initiation rite practiced throughout the Mediterranean (Mazurek 2022: 35). In the present study, I devote some words to Apuleius's account mainly to compare this description with the material evidence.

Additionally, it is crucial to keep in mind that what the ancient writer describes in his *Metamorphoses* perhaps never corresponded to any ancient locale. It is an idiosyncratic piece of evidence, considered sometimes autobiographic (Pfeiffer 2018: 673). Apuleius describes this ritual as part of a long journey of a certain Lucius, who experienced an initiative process to the cult of Isis. It is the ritual of the launching of the ship (*Metamorphoses* 11.16–17) that a masked procession would precede (*Anteludia*, *Metamorphoses* 11.8) that was hierarchically structured. This procession is vividly described, appearing very appealing to the senses as it includes colourful images, sounds, and scents. It involved women dressed in white sprinkling petals and perfumes, holding mirrors that reflected the image of Isis. It also included a large crowd of men and women carrying various sources of light: lamps, torches, and candles. Then followed the musicians and a chorus of youths. The initiates, men with shaved heads and women whose hair was moist with perfume, would also take part at the procession. These people were followed by the six ministers of the cult, the *antistites sacrorum*, each holding one different object: a golden lamp in the form of a boat, a small altar, a golden palm branch and a caduceus, a left hand with outstretched palm and a small gold breast-shaped vase used for the libations of milk, a gold winnowing-fan filled with golden branches, an amphora. The procession continued with the images of the gods Anubis and Isis, a cow, a cist, and jar-shaped Osiris. Lastly, the crowd advanced. They all headed towards the port in order to purify a decorated ship named *Isis* and consecrate it to the goddess. The devotees filled it with aromatics and votive offerings and poured libations of milk mixed with cereal onto the waves. The ship opened to the sea, manoeuvred by the *ναύαρχοι*, an office that

will be discussed later as it is mentioned in some inscriptions that concern this research. Finally, they returned to the temple, pronouncing some vows for the prosperity of the emperor and the people and venerating the statue of Isis.

According to the writer, the procession took place in Corinth's eastern port, Cenchreae. As stated before, this cannot lead to firm conclusions on the existence of the festival at that site nor the form that the procession had. It has been often used, though, to strengthen a series of evidence relating Cenchreae to the *Πλοιαφέσια* and, in general, to maritime Isis. This evidence comes both from the eastern port of Corinth and from the city itself. Pausanias attested to a site consecrated to Isis Pelagia in Corinth (ἐς δὴ τὸν Ἀκροκόρινθον τοῦτον ἀνιοῦσίν ἐστιν Ἴσιδος τεμένη, ὧν τὴν μὲν Πελαγίαν, τὴν δὲ Αἰγυπτίαν αὐτῶν ἐπονομάζουσιν, Pausanias, 2.4.6). In addition, the iconographic type of Isis on the sail is quite common in the coins of Roman Corinth dating to the times of Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius, Lucius Verus, Commodus, and Septimius Severus (Bricault and Veymiers 2007). Here, though, I wish to highlight a representation on a coin of Antoninus Pius (Bricault 2020: 178), which does not just show Isis on the sail but highlights the cult of Isis as protector of maritime activities in the port of Cenchreae. It is a coin showing this exact port. In the centre a statue is highlighted; in some coins this statue corresponds to Isis, while in others to Poseidon. It is unnecessary to take this image as a realistic representation in order to identify the buildings. Despite that, the symmetry of the composition and the round shape of the representation on the coin have provided an interesting similarity with the geomorphology of the harbour and the excavated buildings (Figure 1), emphasising the place of the central statue, either representing Isis or Poseidon. The authority issuing these probably contemporaneous coins, intended to highlight that the port was under the protection of both marine divinities. Except for that, the evidence that suggests that a sanctuary dedicated to Isis would be situated at the west end of the port has been proven insufficient (Bricault 2020: 179 *contra* Scranton 1978).

Figure 1. Aerial view of the port of Cenchreae (source: Google Maps)

The epigraphic evidence that clearly indicates the festival's presence in a city is not abundant; some keywords support this deduction. The mentions of offices such as the *ναύαρχος* and the *τριήραρχος* in an Isiac context might suggest a relation between these officials and the festival. The inscriptions bearing those names suggest that the festivity was celebrated in the ports of numerous cities. Such inscriptions have survived from Byzantium (Bricault 2005, 114/0703), Seleucia Pieria (Bricault 2005,

*402/0201), Tomi (Bricault 2005, 618/1007), Ephesus (Bricault 2005, 304/0609), Kios (Bricault 2005, 308/0301), Eretria, Tenos, and Amphipolis. These three last sites will be discussed extensively.

On a large marble stela found in the sanctuary dedicated to Isis in Eretria (Bricault 2005, 104/0109), a list of *ναύαρχοι* was preserved, more than 80 lines long and bearing 95 names on one side, dating to the first century BC. On the opposite side, a list of local ephebes was carved dating to the beginning of the third century BC, probably coming from the sanctuary of Apollo (Bruneau 1975: 84). The list with the names of the *ναύαρχοι* is a work of different hands and was created over the years. There is here, possibly, a list enumerating, year after year, the members of the crew of the ship sent out to sea for the *Πλοιαφέσια* (Bruneau 1975: 141). This is not the only evidence from Eretria. The beginning of another list (Bricault 2005, 104/0110) was inscribed on another stela. It is very similar to the first one, but it is written following a different syntax and with the names in a different position on the stone. This second one was not of marble but of green schist. This unusual duplication has been explained as an attempt initially to produce an inscription on the schist stone. When it was proven to be unsatisfactory, the effort was abandoned in favour of inscribing the list on the marble stela, with the above-mentioned minor changes (Bricault 2020: 207). In total, four inscriptions discovered in the same sanctuary provide names of the *ναύαρχοι*. The third inscription is a dedication of a *ναύαρχος* (Bricault 2005, 104/0111) to Serapis, Isis, Osiris, Anubis, and Harpocrates. The fourth is a fragmented piece of marble that preserves only a list of some names probably related to the same office (Bricault 2005, 104/0104). Another list of *ναύαρχοι* was found at Eretria but probably originated from the nearby city of Chalcis (Bricault 2005, 104/0114). This inscription offers a new series of names, while for the first time, a certain *Νικαίνετος* is named *ἡγεμών*. This *ἡγεμών* could be related to the god Anubis and, precisely, to an image of the god. The role of this *ἡγεμών* has been related to the cultic processions; he would be someone who would carry a statue or be dressed as Anubis, an allusion to the role of the god as the one who leads (Sfameni Gasparro 2018: 101).

Focusing on the title of *ναύαρχος*, we should keep in mind that it does not always appear in a context that is clearly Isiac. In some cases, there is a risk of confusion between this cultic title and the title of the military officials. Such is the case from the island of Tenos (Bricault 2005, 202/0604), where a *ναύαρχος* was the head of a cultic association, the Isiac character of which is plausible but not certain.

It should also be briefly commented that scholars are not unanimous on how to explain the duties of the Isiac *ναύαρχος*. The inscriptions from Eretria suggest that each festival needed more than one *ναύαρχος*. Rather than being in charge themselves, they were among those who formed the crew of this ship and depended on another authority. This could have been the role of the aforementioned *ἡγεμών* but perhaps also of the Isiac *τριήραρχος* (Bricault 2020: 219-220).

A *τριήραρχος* is attested in an inscription coming from Amphipolis (Bricault 2005, 113/0908), from where there is additional material enforcing the presence of *Πλοιαφέσια* and, in general, the maritime aspect of Isis, soon to be published. The inscription informs us that a priest and the *ὑπόστολοι* honoured a man because he had adequately executed the role of the *τριήραρχος*. This role – as well as the *ναύαρχος* – was limited for a certain period. It likely consisted of more than just an oversight of activities during the launching of the ship. Most probably, the *τριήραρχος* organised and financed the ceremony as, according to Apuleius (*navem faberrime factam,* Apuleius, *Metamorphoses*, XI.16), in some cases, the boat was new.

Apart from Amphipolis, inscriptions attesting to the presence of a *τριήραρχος* in an Isiac context are also known from other cities. The first comes from Cios, in Bithynia, where in the first century BC or AD, a man was honoured for being a *τριήραρχος* and successfully accomplishing his role (Bricault 2005, 308/0301). This inscription reveals another name of a festivity dedicated to Isis as, among others, the role of the *τριήραρχος* was to organise or lead the festivity called *Χαρμόσυνα* of Isis. The second inscription attesting to a *τριήραρχος* in an Isiac context comes from Elaea, near Pergamum, dating to

the Imperial Period. It is also an honorific inscription, even though the connection it holds with the Isiac cults is not as strong as in the previous case (Bricault 2005, *302/0101).

I return to the inscription from Amphipolis, which mentions not just the *τριήραρχος* but also the *ὑπόστολοι* in order also briefly to comment on this office. While the role of the *τριήραρχος* in the Isiac cult is well known, the *ὑπόστολοι* are mentioned just in two other inscriptions, both honouring a priest or a *τριήραρχος*. The first one comes from Eretria (Bricault 2005, 104/0103); it is an already commented inscription that mentions a *koinon* of *ὑπόστολοι*. The second one comes from Demetrias (Bricault 2005, 112/0703). The term *ὑπόστολος* is a term that has created a debate over the years as different scholars disagree on the meaning of the term. It had been suggested that they had an auxiliary position to the people dressing the cult statue. Another hypothesis related the term to a group of high-ranking faithful associated with the performance of hidden, masked acts of worship instead of with the clothing of the statue (Veligianni 1986: 244-245). Other researchers consider that their name comes from the cloth they wore, which left bare the upper part of the torso. This cloth might be related to the description of the *antistites sacrorum* by Apuleius ('Antistites sacrorum proceres illi, qui candido linteamine cinctum pectoralem adusque vestigia stricti iniecti potentissimorum deum proferebant insignis exuvias', *Metamorphoses* 11.10). According to the ancient writer, they wore a cloth that left the upper part of the chest and shoulders bare. This cloth could be also recognised in some iconographic examples throughout the Mediterranean. Such are the sculptures of the Iseum Campense at Rome or the paintings of the peribolos of the Iseum at Pompeii (Malaise 2007: 307-309). He has also summarised the iconographic documentation in the same article (Malaise 2007: 309-315).

In general, the existence of these offices in the aforementioned inscriptions is an indication of the inclusion of the *Πλοιαφέσια* to the official calendar of the Roman Empire that transformed these celebrations into public events henceforth integrated into their city's religious life. Indeed, the first inscription mentioning the festival comes from Byzantium, at the beginning of the first century AD (Bricault 2005, 114/0703). In such a framework, the role of the *ναύαρχος*, like that of the *τριήραρχος*, became true liturgy and perhaps became related to certain families, such as the case of the Salarii in Thessalonica (Martzavou 2010: 190–193; Nigdelis 2006: 267-273). This family is an example of a family of Roman *negotiatores* in the Aegean that, through maritime networks of communication, reached the city of Thessalonica and rapidly became part of the city, promoting religious change, as discussed later.

The cities that have been discussed here have been often related to the *Πλοιαφέσια*. I now follow a few cases that should be included when reconstructing the bigger picture and investigating networks of communications despite providing only indirect evidence. In Thessalonica, there is no direct mention of the *Πλοιαφέσια*. Additionally, the only evidence relating Isis to the aquatic environment is a funerary altar representing Isis with the sail. It was found almost 10 km east of the sanctuary, in the area that today is known as Pylaia. Nearby, two other funerary altars were found, now lost, with inscriptions that were thought to refer to the same deity (Adam Veleni 2002: 83). Yet, the inscriptions do not mention the name of the goddess, and since they are now lost, we should be prudent with this interpretation.

On the contrary, the sanctuary of the Egyptian deities of Thessalonica, covering an extended period of five centuries of use, has not revealed such evidence so far. The sanctuary was located in the west part of the city, close to the port and the western city walls, in an area hosting other sacred places, often called the *sacred area* of the city. New evidence coming from excavations in the west part of the city and the vicinity of the sanctuary and city walls have revealed a few artefacts that can be related to the Isiac deities and perhaps to the *Πλοιαφέσια*. Such evidence is a terracotta mask dated due to its context to the second or third century AD. It bears two small horns over the forehead and two small holes suggest that a diadem would be attached between the horns. It was found fragmented outside the western city walls, and it has been attributed to Isis-Selene (Tsamisis 2016: 9, 73; 2021: 840). In

addition, dozens of terracotta lamps were found in the vicinity, decorated with a half-moon and a ship, and dated between the first and the fourth century AD (Tzevreni 2011: 217-218).

According to recent propositions (Tsamisis 2021: 841-842), these artefacts can be related to processions that followed the route of the large cardo that reached the port gate. This cardo, on a south-north axis, would start from the port and pass through the area of the sanctuaries (modern Leondos Sofou and Soutsou streets). More precisely, it was situated just outside the east side of the sanctuary of the Isiac deities and, heading north, it would reach one of the main decumani of the city (modern Agiou Dimitriou street) (Figure 2). Geological research in the same area has shown that a stream existed just east of this street (Zervopoulou and Pavlides 2008: fig. 12). According to Tsamisis, this stream and the cardo descending to the port would reconstruct the adequate scenery for a procession of Egyptian character, such as the *Πλοιαφέσια*, reminding the Nilotic environment. According to the same researcher, the same street would be used as a processional road for other cults and practices as well, such as those honouring Dionysus, whose sanctuary would not be far (Tsamisis 2021: 850-851). Even though the attribution of the mask to Isis-Selene is hypothetical, it opens an interesting discussion on the religious festivities in Thessalonica, to which I will return in the next section.

Figure 2. Map of Thessalonica showing the relation of the Isiac sanctuary to the urban landscape (source: Google Maps)

The lamps from Thessalonica lead to whether the presence of ritual lamps in an Isiac context can be related to this festivity. For instance, the sanctuary of the Egyptian deities in Marathon brought to light a large number of ritual lamps – nineteen lamps were found on the floor of the corridor at a short distance from the south pylon entrance and about seventy were stored in one of the rooms that served as auxiliary spaces for the sanctuary. These lamps have an impressive diameter of about 40 cm, and they would be used for rituals (Fotiadi 2011). This evidence might suggest nocturnal rituals but

not necessarily the *Πλοιαφέσια*. Nevertheless, the excavator has proposed that one of the statues found at the site could be related to this procession. It is a statue of a priest whose hands do not survive, but it has been suggested that he carried an object such as the ones carried by the priests in the *Πλοιαφέσια* or an analogous festivity (Fotiadi 2017: 151). It would be safer to assume that these lamps would probably frame processional routes used in daily rites or during festive events (Podvin 2015: 41).

On this matter, another type of lamp that has been usually discussed concerning the *Πλοιαφέσια* in the Greek cultural landscape is the naviform lamp. One such lamp was found by chance near the Odeon of Corinth, while the others come from the Athenian Kerameikos, where they were probably manufactured. The majority of them were found in deposits from the beginning of the fourth century AD. The best preserved is 29 cm long and portrays the busts of Isis and Serapis (Bricault 2020: 198-199). An open question and an ongoing debate when discussing this subject is the use that should be attributed to these boat-shaped lamps: they could be liturgical, votive, funerary, or just functional. Several scholars have connected these lamps to the *Πλοιαφέσια*, and in particular to the narrative of Apuleius. The ancient writer uses the word *cymbium* (*Metamorphoses* 11.4.3), which is understood as a bowl in the shape of a small boat (Keulen and Egelhaaf-Gaiser 2015: 142). It has been related iconographically to a painting from the peribolos of the Isiac temple in Pompeii where one of the represented officiators carries a small golden lamp in the form of a boat. Nevertheless, nothing enables us to conclude that such a lamp would be indeed connected to this procession. Furthermore, even if they were used during the month of March for this festivity, this does not exclude another use of the same object for another festivity or in a practical use throughout the year. After all, opportunities to use a lamp, including one in the form of a boat, are abundant (Bricault 2020: 200).

Finally, two more cities are taken into account as suggestions that the *Πλοιαφέσια* were also held at river sites during the Roman times. The first is Tithorea; Pausanias provides us with such an information. According to him (ἐν δὲ τῇ Τιθορέων καὶ δὶς ἑκάστου τοῦ ἔτους τῇ Ἴσιδι πανήγυριν ἄγουσι, Pausanias 10.32.14), the festivities that honoured Isis took place twice a year, once in spring and once more in autumn. The spring festival should be the *Πλοιαφέσια*. How can such a festival be explained in this environment at the foothills of Mount Parnassos and more than 25 km away from the sea? The exact location of the sanctuary is unknown to us today, but it is known that it was built close to the Kephisos river. An excavation held in that area during the 1940s and the 1960s revealed two wells perhaps related to the Isiac sanctuary (Papadimitriou 1978: 138-143). The closeness to the river can also be confirmed by Pausanias, who explains that the nearby river reeds were used to construct the stalls for the festival (ταύτῃ μὲν δὴ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τοσαῦτα περὶ τὸ ἱερὸν δρῶσι, τῇ δὲ ἐπιούσῃ σκηνὰς οἱ καπηλεύοντες ποιοῦνται καλάμου τε καὶ ἄλλης ὕλης αὐτοσχεδίου, Pausanias 10.32.15).

This is not the only suggestion from mainland Greece. An offering table with a dedication to Isis from Macra Come (Bricault 2005 109/0101), in the region of the ancient Ainis of Central Greece, was found in the same context with a stone anchor. Even though it is unwise to relate these two findings to pursue the existence of a temple dedicated to Isis with a marine character, it should be kept in mind that the village was built at the shores of the Spercheius River. This is not the first time an anchor would be related to the Isiac veneration, even though it is somewhat rare. A parallel case with the name of Isis written on two anchor stocks comes from Cagliari (Gavini 2014: 36).

Religious and Festival Connectivity

The first conclusions regarding the sites discussed here show a large diaspora (Figure 3). This map can be completed by sites from other parts of the Mediterranean, as already studied and presented by L. Bricault (Bricault 2006: 135). Unfortunately, no site bears enough evidence to reconstruct the procession, colours, words, and ship with certainty. Each site provided just glimpses of this ceremony. Nonetheless, the continuity through the centuries is clear. In the beginning, the cult, as well as the festivity, was restricted to specific families. Even though it gradually involved more people, in Eretria, even in the first century BC, the names of people from the same family continued to appear as *ναύαρχοι*.

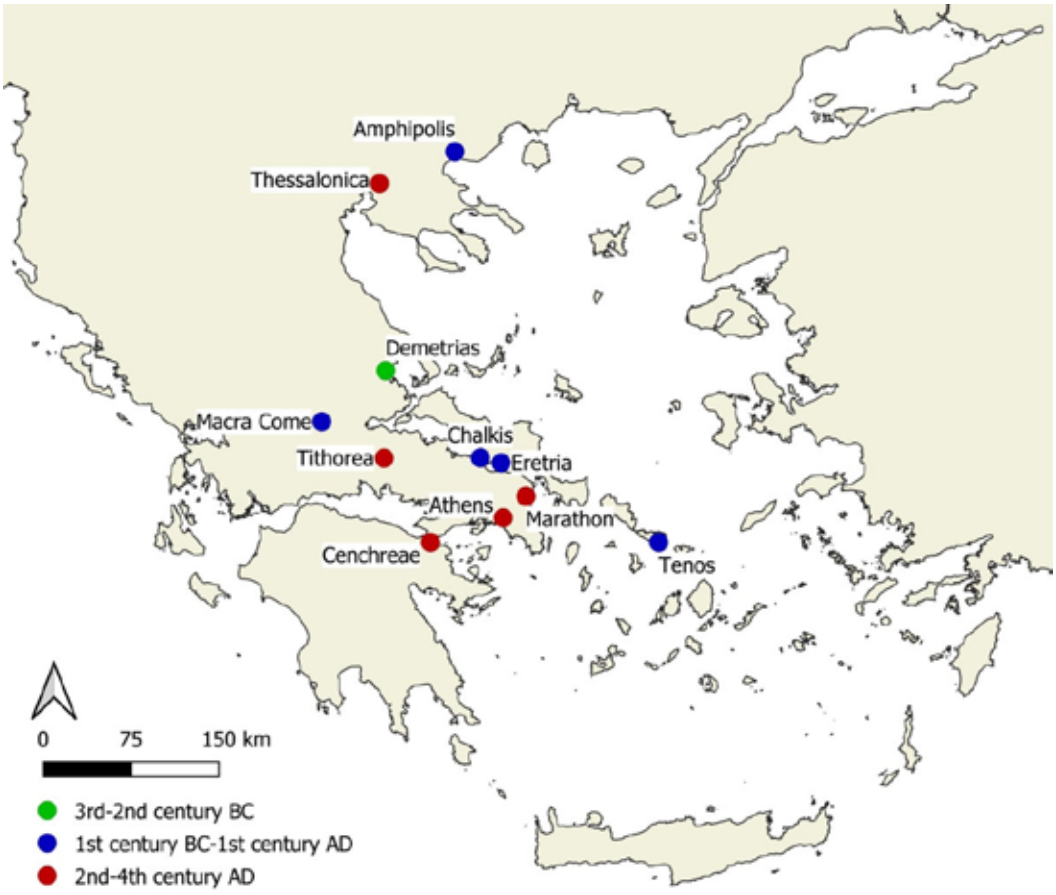

Figure 3. Map of the sites discussed in relation to the Πλοιαφέσια (created by Dafni Maikidou-Poutrino)

The procession followed a well-established path that included rituals taking place in the area between the temple and the sea or the rivers (Bricault 2020: 215). It sometimes followed important public routes, especially when the procession would end up at the port, highlighting the city's cosmopolitan character and the relation of the sanctuary with the urban centre or the port. Such an indicative case is Thessalonica, one of the biggest ports in the North Aegean during the Hellenistic and Roman times, situated on via Egnatia, next to the estuaries of the long, navigable rivers Axios and Haliakmon (Nigdelis 2010: 20-21). I highlight that the evidence from Thessalonica is not conclusive on the existence of the *Πλοιαφέσια*. Despite that, it should be kept in mind that the sanctuary of the Isiac gods was situated close to the port, along an important cardo and in the so-called sacred area of the

city. The route that this or each other festival would follow was along with one of the main cardines of the city, leading to the port and crossing the decumanus that led to one of the main gates of the city.

Except for these cases with a prominent public visibility of the procession, can we assume that such a festival could take place in a private location like the Egyptian sanctuary of Marathon? The sanctuary of the Egyptian gods at Marathon is a sanctuary built by the wealthy Herodes Atticus in the mid-second century AD on a marshy area close to the sea. It was probably built in his landholdings and was also used for his teaching activities (Maikidou-Poutrino 2020: 86). Why would such a festivity be needed? For which ships? The excavator conducting research along the nearby coastline in the 1930s suggested the existence of the ancient port of Marathon contemporaneous to the sanctuary, probably built by the same man (Tobin 1997: 254). Nevertheless, whether it served personal needs or the whole community is a question that remains unanswered. Despite that, could the festival engage the local community? The cult might have a private expression, but the preparations, the people involved, the money needed are all factors that would solidify the bonds of the cultic communities for sharing an experience. On the other hand, it should not be forgotten that during the first years of the arrival of the cult in Greece, the festivity and the cult itself were confined to certain specific families. The names and the evidence from Eretria concur with this conclusion. Therefore, even in the second century AD, when the cult had expanded, it would not be strange at all to see such a festival in a small port of a private estate conducted by a small group of people.

Each procession consists of some central elements: spatiality, participants, mediality, and meaning as instruments of interpersonal communication. The *Πλοιαφέσια* as a physical and emotional experience provided the framework for a collective assembly of people moving along a defined route in an appropriate manner, dressed in distinct clothing and carrying specific objects (Stavrianopoulou 2015: 349-350). It was thus an occasion for giving great visibility both to the deity and to cult servants and devotees, all in a communal framework that supported strength and cohesion (Luginbühl 2015: 48), involving a public that was at the same time both spectator and participant. It would be a bonding factor for different people of the city, especially in the first years when Egyptian communities would integrate with locals who might have joined the procession even from curiosity. Participating would solidify the feeling of belonging, but for outsiders, the unusual dresses, the sounds, the masks would contribute to perpetuate the exoticising stereotypes about the Isiac cult. At the same time, it would be an opportunity for the community of participants to visualise its own social contours (Mazurek 2022: 37). As it is accepted that religious associations played such a role, I argue that religious processions would also fulfil the purpose of the formation of a group identity. Participants and spectators that were not yet initiates might feel part of the cult and of a specific community or they would even have the chance to interact with a cult of which they would decide to become initiates after this experience.

The festivity was held in a cultural community where people arrived and left the cities importing and exporting ideas. Migrants, either coming from the eastern provinces, Egypt or being Roman *negotiatores* in the Aegean, rapidly became part of each city. These people brought religious change. Families, such as the aforementioned Salarii were the agents of this change, promoting specific ritual traditions within the broader frame of the Isiac cult and shaping through the rituals the perception of the deities and the religious experience of the participants (Bricault 2018: 225; Martzavou 2018: 143). In these cases, the marine character of Isis was both close to their activities and a reflection of their route of arrival at the city. Certain members of these families introduced the cult in the Greek cities, organised and participated in the ritual and festive activities and, in the meantime, acquired higher positions. There is an analogous case of the family of Apollonius and Demetrius in Delos. Apollonius was an Egyptian priest from Memphis who established the cult of Serapis in Delos. His son, Demetrius, became the priest of Serapis after his father's death since priesthood was hereditary and then, his son, Apollonius, continued the same path. Therefore, this is a case of a family that introduced the cult in a specific place and held custody for at least three generations. Material culture – such as a thesaurus

and a votive offering both accompanied by inscriptions (Bricault 2005, 202/0124 and 202/0101) – preserves their names for the following generations. At the same time, the story, the names and their origins carved in the inscriptions helped to perceive the site as an heirloom, as argues Antoniadis in a forthcoming paper.

These social and religious interactions led to linguistic interaction as well. This is evident in Demetrias during the Hellenistic times. A study of the onomastics on the grave stelae of Demetrias suggests that the city hosted Egyptians bearing Greek names and Egyptian names transcribed in Greek. A characteristic example is *Οὐάφρης Ὥρου Ποσειρίτης*, which would be the transcription of the Egyptian *w3h-jb-R^{c} or w3h-jb-p3-R^{c}* (Bricault 2005, 112/0701); his patronym 'son of Hor' and the toponym 'Busiris' all conclude to his Egyptian origin. All these people formed a social group that would actively participate in the local Isiac cults (Kravaritou 2014: 208) without strictly separating the original Egyptian form from the newer elements. Locals and Egyptians were both involved in the cult and the processions; the already discussed inscription of the *ὑπόστολοι* (Bricault 2005, 112/0703) reveals a Greek name, the one of *Κρίτων Κρίτωνος*. Therefore, this example also shows that people that related themselves to Isis and her circle came from heterogeneous ethnic and social backgrounds.

Additionally, in the course of their religious life, each of these social actors participating in such a festivity would be involved in a vast array of other rites and festivities. Each individual did not just belong to a rigid category as the cults, just like people, interlinked according to contexts (Veymiers 2018: 56). Therefore, individuals participating in the *Πλοιαφέσια* would, at another time, participate in the cultic festivities towards another deity of Egyptian or non-Egyptian origin. There is no evidence from the Greek landscape that explicitly refers to such an interconnection between the *Πλοιαφέσια* and other festivities or deities. There are, though, a few cases of other festivities that can be used as parallel case studies in order to delve into this phenomenon of the interrelationship of festivities, deities, and people. For example, in Hyampolis, there is a manumission decree happening during the festivity of Boubastia in the presence of the priest of Serapis and Isis (Bricault 2005, 106/0303). In this case, the festivity, probably related to the protection of childbirth, could be liked to Artemis, one of the principal goddesses of Hyampolis and a protector of childbirth. At the same time, the people involved in this act would also be related to the cult of Isis (Schachter 2007: 387).

The majority of the evidence described here has shown that it is challenging to determine what was purely created for the *Πλοιαφέσια* and what was used for other analogous ceremonies. The ritual and naviform lamps could be used for the *Πλοιαφέσια*, the Inventio Osiridis, any other festival, or for practical reasons. Additionally, there is no reason to think that every site would celebrate the festival in the exact same manner. The appropriation of things that originated from Egypt would follow different paths in each local community. Social actors would react differently in each interaction with a new element. The jackal-headed Anubis mask was already used in Egypt before being used in the Graeco-Roman world and before being incorporated into this festivity (Régen 2020). Additionally, except for the *Πλοιαφέσια,* it was used for other purposes as well. Seeing people dressed like Anubis would not be rare, as it would be part of the dramatisation acts that would arouse emotions such as fear, hope, or joy (Chaniotis 2013: 177). In Thessalonica, for example, the funerary relief that portrays a wreath enclosing a man wearing such a mask, an *Ἀνουβοφόρος*, should not be directly related to this festivity (Despinis *et al.* 1997: 140-142). It could represent a man who was a member of an association dedicated to the god. Similarly, the mask from Thessalonica that perhaps represents Isis and was used for the *Πλοιαφέσια* might show a festivity with dramatisation acts driven by the need of people to express their hope for the new navigating season or to exorcise fear for the dangers of the sea.

Associations would have members that would also be participants in the Isiac processions as the *Πλοιαφέσια.* While priests would hold either a hereditary position (see the above-mentioned case of Delos) or serve after civic appointment, associations offered opportunities for devotees to ascent socially and form intracommunity bonds (Mazurek 2022: 37). I argue that people participating in this

festivity, especially agents holding a prominent role in the procession, would accomplish the same social ascent. It is not a coincidence that these associations are found in cities that were easily accessible by maritime routes, traders, and travellers and included agents of the middle class originating from all over the Mediterranean (Arnaoutoglou 2018: 268).

Figure 4. Head of a priest, S 33, Ephorate of Antiquities of Athens, Ancient Agora, ASCSA: Agora Excavations. ©Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Sports/ Hellenic Organisation of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.RE.D).

Figure 5. Head of a priest, ΜΘ 10844, Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki © ΑΜΘ, ΥΠΠΟΑ – ΟΔΑΠ.

Figure 6. Sphinx, ΜΘ 4922, Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki © ΑΜΘ, ΥΠΠΟΑ - ΟΔΑΠ

Material culture remarkably captures this polysemy and variety of images. For example, in Greece, Egyptian priests would sometimes follow the style imposed in Egypt with the linen cloths and the shaved heads. Such a representation has been found in the Athenian Agora. It is a portrait of a middle-aged man wearing on his shaved head a rolled diadem (Harrison 1953: 12-14) (Figure 4). Other times priests would be portrayed in Graeco-Roman style. Such an example comes from Thessalonica: a bust of a man represented bearded, with curly hair, wearing a chiton and himation has been identified as a priest of the Isiac deities due to the relation of his rare name with the Isiac cult (Despinis *et al.* 2003: 146-148) (Figure 5). At the same time, the sanctuaries would host Egyptian artefacts – such as the black basalt sphinx found at the Egyptian sanctuary of Thessalonica (Despinis *et al.* 1997: 62-63) (Figure 6) – but also locally produced objects reminding Egyptian prototypes – such as the sphinxes of the sanctuary of the Egyptian deities at Marathon (Dekoulakou 2011: 32) (Figure 7).

The same polysemy and variety should also be kept in mind when reading Apuleius' text. What the ancient author offers is one of the many narratives of that festival and attributing a specific use to an artefact is one of the many uses that this object could serve. The limits between what is Egyptianising, Isiac, maritime, created for the *Πλοιαφέσια* or not are as fluid as the sea routes that led people from one shore of the Mediterranean to the other. The *Πλοιαφέσια* adapted to each local landscape, following longer or shorter routes from the sanctuary to the sea, being celebrated on routes that led to rivers, perhaps even lakes (Bricault 2020: 210), suggesting a change in the perception of connected space, even from the shores of the Aegean to inland sites.

These appropriations were determined by social and religious developments unfolding over time and determined by different spaces, simultaneously global and local, offering possibilities for cultural innovation. All of these create a multifaceted aspect of the cult which reflects a multifaceted aspect of the *Πλοιαφέσια.* It should not be forgotten that the festivity survived until even post-antique times, adapting to the changes of society and even in some nowadays traditions. Emblematic of this is a ship named 'Isis', a frigate of the British Royal Navy used during the American Revolutionary War (Bricault 2020: 5-6).

Figure 7. Sphinx, Archaeological Museum of Marathon, Λ 437 © Ephorate of Antiquities of Eastern Attica, Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Sports/ Hellenic Organisation of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.RE.D)

To conclude, when studying the *Πλοιαφέσια* in the Greek landscape, we may imagine overlapping physical and social networks, reflecting the different ways of the religious behaviour of individuals (Eidinow 2015: 60). The agents aimed at social interaction, able to rework the everyday life routines and create new networks. People committed themselves to each other and to the divine, creating at the same time a feeling of belonging. As shown, material culture plays an important role, as the memory of earlier such activities would linger through material culture. Architecture, objects, the landscape, decoration, cloths, music are all elements that constructed the experience of such a procession. Objects reminiscent of the Egyptian origins of the cult would also create a sense of extraordinary uniqueness. The cult starting from Egypt soon became global, creating a dense network of cultural interchanges. This growing interconnectedness of material culture led to the adoption and appropriation of cultic practices by groups of people that originated from different cultural backgrounds and engaged with them in their own environment. In the end, the discussion on Isis and the *Πλοιαφέσια* is either way a discussion about the sea. It is how the sea contributed to bringing together the social actors and religious features and how people ritualised their relationship with the sea aiming to safely achieve this improved communication with people around the Mediterranean.

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Iconographical and iconological study of the snake-footed Anubis in Alexandria: connections and new creations

Beatriz Jiménez Meroño and Francisco L. Borrego Gallardo

Abstract

Egypt's position between Africa and the Mediterranean has allowed rich and complex connections with both areas over time. In Ptolemaic and Roman times these interconnections increase, by incorporating Graeco-Roman models and conceptions to the pharaonic traditions, giving rise to more complex and multifaceted dynamics. In addition to political and economic changes, there were also social, ideological, and religious innovations where the Egyptian substratum was reconfigured to accommodate new beliefs. The similarities and prototypes among deities made several Egyptian gods experience syncretisms or adaptations. In the case of Anubis, his snake-footed image found in the Alexandrian catacombs of Kom el-Shoqafa stands out. Its analysis must be carried out from a plural point of view, studying both the Egyptian implications (serpent divinities and their relationship with Anubis and protection) and the Greek and Roman implications (mainly the Alexandrian Agathos Daimon). This paper aims to carry out an iconographic and iconological analysis of this figure while considering the Alexandrian realities and creations, within the Graeco-Roman religious and cultural dynamics in their interaction with the pharaonic realities.

Keywords

Alexandria; Anubis; anguipede deities; Graeco-Roman Period; Kom el-Shoqafa

Introduction

The image of the snake-footed/anguipede Anubis in the Alexandrian catacombs of Kom el-Shoqafa stands out as a remarkable example of syncretism. However, this assumption has hardly been based on careful and thorough analysis. This should be carried out from a plural point of view, studying both the Egyptian and the Greek and Roman implications in the Alexandrian context. The aim of this work is therefore to make an iconographic and iconological approach to this particular representation of Anubis while considering the Alexandrian realities and creations within the dynamics of the culture and society in Graeco-Roman Egypt.

Representations of the anguipede Anubis

The Roman catacomb of Kom el-Shoqafa (von Bissing and Gilliéron 1901; Corbelli 2006: 16-20; Dodson and Ikram 2008: 299-303; Savvopoulos 2013: 114-119, figs. 8-14; von Sieglin and Schreiber 1908; Venit 2002: 124-146) dating to the late 1st and 2nd century AD, are located on Alexandria's western necropolis. It is a subterranean complex on three levels, accessed by a spiral staircase. The first level

has a rotunda and a triclinium, whereas some *arcosolia* and galleries of loculi are located both on the second and the third floors. The so-called 'Main Tomb' is on the second floor (Figure 1). Here, after leaving a double stairway behind, a hall gives access to a façade mixing pharaonic elements (a pair of columns with composite four-stemmed capitals, winged solar disk, two pairs of raptors with folded wings facing each other, portals with uraei and cavetto-cornice) and Graeco-Roman components (arch pediment with a disk on the tympanum, bed-mould of dentils, and plain frieze and architrave). Under the portico, on each anta is a niche in the shape of an Egyptian *naos* containing a statue in pharaonic fashion and a Roman-style portrait, a male on the right and a female on the left. On each side of the front wall appears a *clipeus* with a four-winged *gorgoneion* over an Agathos Daimon as a bearded serpent with a *sekhemty*-crown, a thyrsus, and a caduceus upon an Egyptian *naos*. Between them opens a door with a cavetto-cornice and a frieze of uraei leading into a square room, where is a recess with a sarcophagus adorned with garlands, masks and bucrania and three panels in relief on each side. This is the place where the principal depictions of this funerary subterranean complex are located, depicting funerary Egyptian deities, performers, and motifs in a hybrid style.

Figure 1. Entrance to the Main Tomb at Komel-Shoqafa (Clemens Schmillen, CC BY-SA 4.0).

On the eastern inner doorjamb of the square room (Figure 2) an anguipede figure of Anubis is represented in a high relief, whose lower half is a scaly serpent's body with eight-shaped twists. Besides his characteristic canid's face, he is dressed as a *thoracatus* legionary, wearing a mantle that he holds with his left arm and leaning his right arm on a spear. He also shows an *atef*-crown over his head (Grenier 1977: 36-39, pl. XIII.B; Leclant 1981: 870 [73]; Venit 2002: 145, fig. 125). It corresponds on the opposite inner doorjamb to a similar figure of Anubis. In this case, however, he shows a pair of legs in a contrapposto and a tripartite wig with a disk crowning his head, and a sword suspended by a baldric. In addition, he does not wear a mantle and leans upon an upright shield (Grenier 1977: 36-39, pl. XIII.A; Leclant 1981: 871 [73]; Venit 2002: 143-144, fig. 123). These differences between them remind

one passage of Diodorus Siculus (I, 18) where Osiris is accompanied in some expeditions by two sons of him dressed as warriors, Anubis with a helmet of dog's (*kynos*) skin and Makedon another of wolf's (*lykos*) skin (Burton 1972: 83; Grenier 1977: 46-47).

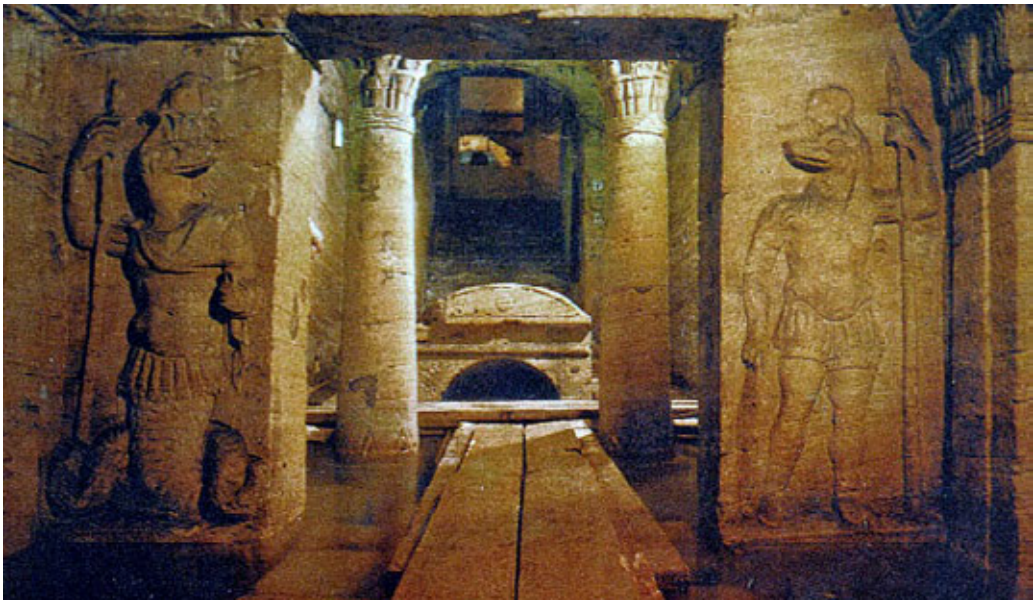

Figure 2. The two representations of Anubis flanking the entrance of the Main Tomb at Komel-Shoqafa (Jerrye and Roy Klotz CC BY-SA 3.0).

Up to date, there are two close parallels for this remarkable anguipede representation of Anubis, consisting of two bronze figurines of unknown provenance (Grenier 1977: 38-39, pl. XIV.A; Venit 2002: 145). One is now kept in Cairo (CG 32371: Edgar 1904: 91), and the other in Warsaw (MNW 148140: Majewska 2012). They have been dated to the Ptolemaic period. In both examples, the god has lost the crown and is holding an *ankh* in their left hand and seems to have had a spear in the right arm. They also show a tripartite wig and, unlike the Kom el-Shoqafa's example, does not wear the Roman cuirass and the *pteryges*, but a traditional pharaonic attire, the *shendyt*-kilt, leaving the torso naked. The lower part, in the form of an eight-shaped serpent's body, shows incisions delineating the scales. It is possible that the differences between the relief and the statuettes lie partly in their slightly dissimilar dating: earlier, before the Roman conquest, in the case of the bronze figurines, and later, already under Roman rule, in the case of the Alexandrian relief.

Roles and semantics of the anguipede Anubis

Several scholars have tried to explain the symbolism and functions of this noteworthy iconographic type of Anubis of Graeco-Roman Egypt. Grenier (1977: 37-39) has interpreted this anguipede form of Anubis as a visual translation of the roles of warrior and tomb's sentinel, comparing him with the serpent guardians of the doorways of the pharaonic Egyptian traditions and the Agathoi Daimones of other Alexandrian tombs. He has also noted that this combative aspect would already appear in a passage of a text of Ptolemaic date, the *Papyrus Jumilhac* (13.18-20 and 14.2-3), which refers that Anubis transformed into a serpent to fight Seth, Osiris' murderer (Vandier 1961: 125). However, this

metamorphosis is, rather, fully ophidiomorphic and shows features different from this iconographic type, as it can be read as follows: *wnn Jnp*(*w*)Ỉ *jr ḫpr=f m ḥfy ꜥ ḫr dnḫwy ḫr dm jw tmty n ds m ꜥwy=f jw 6 ḥfy pr* Ỉ *jm=f 3 ḥr jmnty=f 3 ḥr jꜣb=f jw=sn wd nb m-swꜣw=f nb* 'Then Anubis | made his transformation into a big serpent with sharp wings and two flint knives in his hands, and with six serpents coming out | from him, three on his right and three on his left, shooting flames all around' (13.18-19).

Other scholars (e.g. Venit 2002: 144-145; 2016: 71) have vaguely linked the guardian role of this figure of Anubis with the Alexandrian Agathos Daimon. In that sense, recently Majewska (2012: 219-223) has pointed out that this local deity is also present in Kom el-Shoqafa, and that this form of Anubis would reflect the syncretism of Greek and Egyptian chthonic conceptions. She has also resembled them morphologically to some serpentiform representations of Isis-Thermuthis and Serapis-Agathos Daimon, and the description of Anubis as a cosmic god, earthly and celestial, mentioned by Plutarch (*De Iside et Osiride* 44.368e; vide infra).

It should be noted, as Grenier (1977: 38-39) has himself recognised, that the military character of this form of Anubis in Kom el-Shoqafa does not appear in all his snake-footed representations. Hence, it can be understood that its core meaning should be another. Besides, although Venit (2002: 145) and Majewska (2012: 218-223) have compared this image with some serpentiform elements of Graeco-Roman deities, they have only stated their possible parallels, such as the Alexandrian Agathos Daimon in his guardian role. In that sense, these can be presented in a slightly different way, attending to a more thorough and nuanced iconological analysis.

The snake-footed image of Anubis has been connected with several Alexandrian serpentiform deities, such as Serapis-Agathos Daimon and Isis-Thermuthis (Venit 2002: 143). However, in the case of the former, his form is not strictly equivalent to that of the anguipede Anubis, as he usually has either a snake's body and only a bearded human head or a full ophidiomorphic appearance with beard and *kalathos* (Boutantin 2014: 494).

Isis-Thermuthis, a deity of chthonic character and promoter of regeneration and fertility (D'Ascoli 2015; Franci 2015), is regularly shown as a serpent with a crown combining two long lyriform horns embracing a solar disk and a pair of falcon's feathers. Her close connections with Anubis (Majewska 2012: 220; Venit 2002: 145) have led her to link her with his snake-footed image. In this case, it should be noted that several examples of terracotta statuettes from the 2nd-3rd century AD show her in human form with her lower part in the shape of a serpent's body (e.g. Boutantin 2014: 494; Dunand 1967: 16-20; 1979: 173-176, pls. XVII-XXI; R. Preys apud Willems and Clarysse 2000: 278), showing more explicitly her associations with chthonic potency and renovation.

On the other hand, like Serapis-Agathos Daimon, the Alexandrian Agathos Daimon as a local deity, most often ophidiomorphic, usually displays a beard and an *atef*-crown or a *sekhemty*-crown on his head (Dunand 1981: 278-281). In the case of the two Agathoi Daimones from the Main Tomb of Kom el-Shoqafa, represented with beard, *sekhemty*-crown, thyrsus, and caduceus, Dunand (1967: 36, fig. 10) considers them to be the representation of the sacred serpents of Osiris-Dionysus-Hermes according to their attributes. The chthonic, protective and psychopompic character of their figure is thus underlined (Dunand 1981: 281).

Besides, a direct association of Anubis as a snake-footed deity with the ouroboros, present in some magical gems (Leclant 1981: 869 [62-63]; Majewska 2012: 220-221), can be ruled out. This association has led to the suggestion that the anguipede representations of Anubis could be related to the aspect of the ouroboros as deity incarnating the Time, as 'gardien de la tombe et du défunt pour l'éternité'

(Leclant 1981: 873). However, the circular representation of the latter as a snake biting its mouth does not fit well with the representation of the snake's body in this ensemble.

Other contemporary anguipede deities that have not previously been related to this form of Anubis are Dionysus, and one later form of Abraxas. The former is known by one single example: one fragment of a relief plaque in marble, dating to mid-1st century–2nd century AD, probably found at Naukratis and now kept at the British Museum (BM EA 2005, 0919.1; Bailey 2007). It depicts this deity with a markedly chthonic character frontally in a sflight contrapposto, long-haired and beardless, showing the genitalia and wearing a nebris and a himation and a *hemhem*-crown on his head. The lower part of his body is formed by an eight-shaped snake body. Assisted by Harpokrates on the top right corner, he holds a cornucopia on his left arm and a bunch of grapes on the other. It seems significant that a chthonic deity such as Dionysus presents this partial serpent's form, an animal frequently associated with the chthonic and agricultural sphere, as exemplified by the case of Isis-Thermuthis. This also explains the association of the pair of serpentiform Agathoi Daimones of Kom el-Shoqafa with the thyrsus, an element of well-known Dionysian resonances. The *hemhem*-crown displayed by Dionysus on the plaque is also related to the *atef*-crown, the *regalium* of the anguipede Anubis of Kom el-Shoqafa, both crowns 'denoting the potential for (cosmic) regeneration' (Goebs 2015: 11).

One stone plaque decorated in relief dating to the 3rd century AD and kept in a private collection[1] shows a figure that could be related to this form of Anubis. It presents under a triangular pediment with acroteria and a shell in the middle a male with a canid's head with an open mouth wearing an animal skin. He holds a key on the right hand, and a caduceus, sheaves of wheat and poppies on the left. The lower part of his body is formed by two snakes, each ending in a serpent's head, one of them showing the forked tongue. The comparison with some magical gems has allowed to identify him as Abraxas. However, despite the existence of the canid's head and the presence of some elements often exhibited by Anubis in Graeco-Roman documents, such as the key and the caduceus, the twin-snake legs and their ends as ophidian heads and not as a serpent's tail do not accord well with the anguipede figures of Anubis that are the focus of this paper.

As this analysis has shown, the elements that seem to be most closely related to the anguipede Anubis are both deities of a chthonic character, in this case, Isis-Thermuthis and Dionysus, and the Agathos Daimon of Alexandria. This city, a meeting point for different cultural traditions and a vibrant area for their fusion and the creation and negotiation of new identities, seems to have been the most favourable environment for the creation of this form of the canid god.

Meaning by place: the location of the anguipede Anubis

When analysing the figure of the anguipede Anubis at Kom el-Shoqafa, one kind of study that has not been carried out is that of its location and its spatial relationship with other elements of the same context. In this sense, the strong component of symmetry in the structure of the iconic programme of the Main Tomb of Kom el-Shoqafa has already been recognised (e.g. Venit 2002: 141), which is in accordance with its marked tomb-temple aspect and with its high degree of visual and ritual intertextuality with the contemporary temples of pharaonic tradition. It is therefore legitimate to apply some of the principles of logoiconic rhetoric and poetics from the *grammaire du temple* of the

[1] See: ‹https://www.christies.com/lot/lot-a-roman-limestone-relief-circa-3rd-century-5385502/?›, accessed 24 October 2021.

Egyptian cult places of the Graeco-Roman period (e.g. Derchain and von Recklinghausen 2004: 118-153; Egberts 1995: 389-391; Labrique 1992: 2-9, 291-313; Lurson 2007), the principles of which include complementary oppositions formed by axial and diagonal symmetries.

The previous analysis allows us to hypothesise that the anguipede form of Anubis should have been the result of the convergence of Egyptian traditions with Graeco-Roman elements, especially concerning his single snake-shaped leg. The most suitable environment for its creation seems to have been Alexandria itself, where snake-legged deities are commonly represented. In that sense, its relationship with the two figures of the ophidiomorfic Alexandrian Agathos Daimon in the 'Main Tomb' of Kom el-Shoqafa seems to be very relevant. Placed on both sides of the entrance on the façade, bearded, wearing a *sekhemty*-crown, and showing a caduceus and a thyrsus, their axial position with respect to the two figures of Anubis in the interior, its shared orientation of the four figures looking towards the opening, and the placement of each on a *naos* invites to understand that Anubis performs analogous functions in the interior to those of the Agathoi Daimones in the exterior.

Interestingly, a similar Agathos Daimon/exterior–Anubis/interior arrangement can be seen in another sepulchre of Alexandria, the 'tomb of Tigrane' (Venit 1997). There, after entering the main room, on each short wall of both sides is the figure of an Agathos Daimon facing the door, bearded and wearing the *sekhemty*-crown on the right and beardless and with a hathoric crown on the left (Venit 1997: 709, 724, figs. 2, 5-6). The central space presents on the dome a *gorgoneion* and vegetal elements (Venit 1997: 718-719, figs. 2, 21), which can correspond to the *clipei* with *gorgoneia* over each Agathos Daimon at Kom el-Shoqafa. Following the main axis, on the doorway giving access to the central niche, is the figure of a seated Anubis on the thickness of each pilaster surrounding the sarcophagus (Venit 1997: 712-713, figs. 2, 9-10).

In this respect it may be significant to note that one of the most ancient epithets for Anubis is *nb-tꜣ-ḏsr* '*Lord of the Sacred Land*' i.e. of the necropolis (Leitz 2002: 774-777), also attested in this period (e.g. Smith 2009: 667). Thus, Anubis watches over and protects the spaces of the deceased, in complementary opposition to the Agathos Daimon, protector of the city of the living:

Anubis	Agathos Daimon
Realm of the dead	Realm of the living
Necropolis	Alexandria
Inside the tomb	Outside the tomb

This can help to explain why in the Main Tomb of Kom el-Shoqafa the representations of the Agathos Daimon are found on the façade, while the two Anubis' figures correspond axially with them inside. This correspondence suggests the possibility of understanding the Anubis' anguipede form as the necropolitan version of the Alexandrian Agathos Daimon.

Figure 3. Anubis with the moon disk represented in the Mummy of Artemidora (Wikimedia Commons: MET 11.155.5 CC0).

Some elements of the iconography of the anguipede Anubis from Kom el-Shoqafa may be significant in this respect. Concerning the *atef*-crown, Majewska (2012: 222-223) has remarked that it underlines the regal power of Anubis. However, she does not consider the set of associations with the vegetal fertility and, especially, the solar renovation which has this *regalium* (Goebs 2014: 10-11). This becomes even more significant if one considers that in the figure of Anubis with human legs on the corresponding wall Anubis has, as Ritner (1985: 154-155, pl. XV. 2-3, XVI. 2) and Majewska (2012: 221-222) have suggested with good arguments, a lunar disk on his head. The association of the god with the moon (Figure 3) would emphasise 'the role of Anubis as the agent of resurrection and as the guarantor of a repetition of births like Osiris the moon' (Ritner 1985: 155). In the case of the figures of Anubis on both sides of the door of the Main Tomb of Kom el-Shoqafa, it is also possible to think that there is a complementary oppositional relationship between the two figures, highlighted by the differences in the treatment of their bodies and their headdresses:

Anguipede Anubis	Human-legged Anubis
Atef-crown: solar	Moon-disk: lunar
Day light	Night light
Daily renewal cycle	Monthly renewal cycle
Chthonic emphasis: *inferi*	Celestial emphasis: *superi*

According to this set of oppositions, the position and iconography of Anubis at the entrance of the Main Tomb of Kom el-Shoqafa seems to display a set of complementary meanings of protection and propitiation of the renewal of the deceased buried there. That seems to have a complete character, total, both in aerial (lunar disk) and terrestrial space (*atef*-crown, anguipede form) and in time, both in the totality of the day (day [*atef*-crown] and night [lunar disk]) and in the cycles of regeneration associated with them, the daily (*atef*-crown) and the monthly (lunar disk). This accords well with the chthonic and celestial nature of Anubis according to Plutarch (*De Iside et Osiride* 44.368e; Grenier 1977: 52-53; Griffiths 1970: 188-189, 466-467, 517-518), 'as the horizon which is shared by everything above and under the ground' (Griffiths 1975: 216; Majewska 2012: 222-223), as a deity who, according to Apuleius (*Metamorphoses* 11.11), links the realms of the dead of the lower world (*inferi*) and the living of the upper world (*superi*) (Grenier 1977: 71-72; Griffiths 1975: 216; Majewska 2012: 223). This character of the god exercising the function of horizon, of transit and passage, is further emphasised by the duplicated position of the god on both sides of the door of the Main Tomb. The association of Egyptian temple gates with the horizon (*akhet*) is well known and is emphasised in this case by the presence of a winged solar disk (e.g. Wilkinson 2000: 76-78), which is found twice on the façade of the Main Tomb.

In addition to this, it should be noted that a passage of the *Demotic Magical Papyrus* XIV (*PDM* XIV 400-404), dating to the 3rd century AD and coming from the Theban area, reminds some of these aspects. In it, Anubis is invoked as follows: 'O powerful Anubis, the good oxherd, open every[thing] to me! Reveal yourself to me, for I am NESTHOM NESDJOT NESHOTB BORILAMMAI BORILAMMAI MASTSINKS Anubis, great one, Arian the one who is great, Arian, this bringer of safety, Arian, the one who is outside! Hail, PHRIKS IKS lord IBROKS AMBROKS EBORKS KSON NBROKHRIA, the great child, Anubis, for I am this soldier. O those of the Atef crown, those of PEPHNUN MASPHONEGE; hail! Let all that I have said come to pass here today, for hail!' (*PDM* XIV 405-406; J. H. Johnson apud Betz 1986: 218). This passage is significant for the understanding of the image of Anubis. Firstly, the self-description of the speaker of the invocation as a 'soldier' could be in a context where Anubis possesses or requires such an aspect, as is the case in the two Anubis figures from Kom el-Shoqafa. Secondly, the mention of 'those of the Atef crown', a headdress exhibited by this deity in its anguipede form at this site, seems, in this case, to be related to military aspects and associated with the passage. Finally, his allusion as guardian of the passage is significant, which harmonises with the position of the snake-footed Anubis next to the doorway and with earlier and contemporary representations of this deity with weapons (e.g. Kurth 2010: 92-93, 95, 100 and 104, figs. 6a-b, 7; Quertinmont 2020).

The semantics associated with the protection and regeneration of the deceased conveyed by the figures of Anubis in the passage inside the Main Tomb corresponds to several elements of the exterior façade. One is the *clipei* with *gorgoneia*, which are associated with fertility, regeneration, and protection (Venit 2002: 129; 2016: 69). Others are the serpents representing the Agathoi Daimones, of a marked chthonic and regenerative character, which is emphasised by their association with the thyrsus and the caduceus, as seen above.

In this way, while the Agathos Daimon, not only regenerative and chthonic in character, but also as a protector of the city of Alexandria, can be considered 'external', 'urban', Anubis, on the contrary, as some of his traditional Egyptian epithets show (e.g. *nb-t3-ḏsr* 'Lord of the Necropolis'; cf. e.g. Smith 2009: 667) has his jurisdiction in the funerary realm, in the interior of the tomb, where he would be the protective genius. In that sense, in several funerary texts of the Graeco-Roman period, such as the *First Letter for Breathing*, the *Liturgy of the Opening of the Mouth for Breathing*, and the *Book of Entering the God's Domain and Promenading in the Hall of the Two Maat*, among others, Anubis is described as 'the strict doorkeeper of the underworld' (*p3 jry-ʿ3 mtr n t3 dw3t*: Smith 2009: 505, 512, 530; cf. 364, 372; cf. Herbin

2008: 50, 53 [I.3], 76 [I.8], 78 [5], 84 [3], 87 [2], 88 [3], 112 [8] and 114 [4]), and he is also requested to 'open the portals of the underworld' for the deceased (see Smith 2009: 507; cf. 471; cf. Herbin 2008: 51, 63 [I.36], 79 [19], 84 [x+6]), as he is the one who is in charge of 'bridging the gap between one world and the next' (Smith 2009: 551) and welcoming her/him (see Smith 2009: 296, 344, 588, 621; cf. Herbin 2008: 117, 119 [5], 123 [12];). In a similar vein, some contemporary funerary stelae show dogs, often paired, at the entrance of the tomb (e.g. Cairo CG 9226: Milne 1905: 55-56, pl. VIII), in some cases on a *naos* (e.g. Alexandria GRM 3215: Corbelli 2006: fig. 38), or inside the tomb (e.g. Brussels MRAH E/IT/07: M. Coenen apud Willems and Clarysse 2000: 206; Cairo CG 9207, 9212, 9254, 9256 and 9258: Milne 1905: 53, 55, 57-58, 61, pl. VIII-IX; Corbelli 2006: fig. 41; Hildesheim RPM 5269; cf. Grenier 1977: 36-37, pl. XII) (Figure 4). This same set of motifs is also present in some wall paintings from tombs of the same period (Venit 1997: 713-714, 724-725, 727, figs. 11-12), as well as on shrouds, coffins, and cartonnage cases and covers, on the feet, in front of doors, or on the top, protecting what lies beneath and the access to it (e.g. Corbelli 2006: figs. 49-50, 55; Kurth 2010: figs. 2-4, 6.a, 7-8, 23, 33, 37, 39, 44-45; Riggs 2005: fig. 49 [perhaps lunar disc instead of solar], 52, 59, 65-66, 91-94, 96, 113, 121). This presence of dogs as paired manifestations of Anubis, which is rooted in Pharaonic tradition (e.g. Grenier 1977: 16-17, pl. VII; Quertinmont 2020), recalls a passage in Proclus (*In Platonis Rempublicam commentarii* 5.417) in which he presents the dogs as an expression of Anubis' role as protector of Osiris (Grenier 1977: 49). A variant of this type of representation shows Anubis as a dog-headed male next to the deceased (Grenier 1977: 34, pl. IX). Bearing this in mind, it is possible to suggest that the original context of the two surviving bronzes showing an anguipede Anubis may have been funerary, being located inside the tombs (rather than outside). In this sense, some Alexandrian tombs have pedestals suitable for locating a statuette on both sides of an inside doorway. This is the case, for example, of hypogeum 2 of the necropolis of Anfushy (e.g. Corbelli 2006: fig. 6).

Figure 4. Funerary stela with a woman flanked by Anubis representations. 3rd-4th century AD. Byzantine and Christian Museum of Athens (BXM 477) (Wikimedia Commons: George E. Koronaios CC0).

In addition to highlighting the earthly and regenerative character of this anguipede figure, typical of chthonic deities such as Isis-Thermuthis and Dionysus, its close contextual relationship in Kom el-Shoqafa and other tombs in the city with the Alexandrian Agathos Daimon suggests that this form of Anubis could be understood as the funerary correspondent of this local deity, that is, as the protector of the necropolis of Alexandria. It would thus be a properly Alexandrian Anubis. In this respect, it is noteworthy that some Alexandrian coins dating to the 2nd century AD depict a bearded Shay-Agathos Daimon wearing a *sekhemty*-crown and dressed in Roman military uniform (e.g. BM 1974,0330.49: Veymiers 2016: 145, fig. 13).

Final remarks

The foregoing analysis has shown the semantic complexity of the anguipede forms of Anubis. This complexity seems to have been largely the result of the social environment in which this form was conceived and materialised. The most likely setting in which the confluence, negotiation and dialogue resulting in this creation could have taken place is the city of Alexandria itself. Here, during the Roman period, the substrate composed of the Pharaonic funerary traditions of the Egyptian population, the mixed Egyptian Greek identity and society resulting from Graeco-Macedonian rule, and the presence of a new elite in the city under Roman rule, entangled to a greater degree and complexity than in the rest of Egypt (Honigman 2021). Thus, although cultural entanglement (Barrett 2017: 14-15; Stockhammer 2012) inside a complex web of agents and traditions can be seen throughout Egypt in the funerary sphere during the Graeco-Roman period, the Alexandrian case is one of the most conspicuous and where it seems to have occurred with the greatest intensity. In this sense, the Main Tomb of Kom el-Shoqafa reflects a detailed knowledge of Egyptian conceptions by the Roman elites. Furthermore, its hybrid/entangled character and its integration into a complex decorative programme shows an eagerness to compare, associate, identify and integrate elements from various cultural traditions and to assume them as one's own. The case of the anguipede forms of Anubis reveals a deep knowledge of various cultural substrates, and their association with the Agathos Daimon of Alexandria, both iconographically and in the poetics of the spaces in the case of the Main Tomb of Kom el-Shoqafa, suggests that this particular association may have been a distinctly Alexandrian creation, the result of a process of *Alexandrianisation* (Savvopoulos 2013: 119-121). Through the latter, social, political, and cultural elements from Egyptian, Greek, and Roman traditions are perceived, thought together, adapted, and incorporated, resulting in an entangled and hybrid *habitus*, one of the clearest and most notable manifestations of which has been preserved in the funerary realm, and of which the snake-footed Anubis constitutes one of the most outstanding examples. Within this process, Anubis, the deity who in the pharaonic sphere guards the tombs and necropolis, could be understood in Alexandria, then, as the Agathos Daimon of the Alexandrian necropolis.

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Eggs in Graeco-Roman Egypt: food, medicine, ritual

Dimitris Roumpekas

Abstract

In Antiquity, eggs represented a very nutritive food, available in massive quantities, especially where domestic fowl were bred, and wild poultry resided. Ancient Greek and Latin medical authors, naturalists, and cooks list eggs among the most nutritious foods, consumed in many ways and used as medicine against various diseases. Additionally, eggs were a symbol of fertility, birth, and life. The aim of this paper is to deal with the use of eggs as food, medicament, and magical items in the light of the medical, magical, and documentary papyri of Graeco-Roman and Late Antique Egypt. Lists of comestibles, food orders or private letters, represent great sources of information about the consumption of eggs in everyday life (e.g. egg species, ways of cooking, prices etc.), while the study of the medical papyri sheds light on the nutritional qualities and therapeutic properties of eggs. Finally, the focus on the magical papyri of Graeco-Roman Egypt is to reveal the remarkable role of eggs as substances in magical recipes and in ritual acts.[1]

Keywords

Eggs; papyri; Graeco-Roman Egypt; food; medicine; ritual

Introductory notes

Eggs represent one of the most nourishing foodstuffs that people consume nowadays. Ancient Greek, Roman, and Byzantine medical authors, naturalists, and cooks list eggs among the most nutritious foods, capable of being consumed in several ways and used as medicine against various diseases (André 1961: 152–153; Dalby 2003: 126–127; Dalby 2010: 305; Χρόνη-Βακαλοπούλου 2007–2008: 303–307). What is more, they were widely used for ritual practices, mainly as ingredients for magic formulas. The aim of this paper is to deal with the use of eggs as food, medicine, and ritual items in the light of the documentary, medical and magical papyri, and ostraca of Graeco-Roman and Late Antique Egypt, a topic that has not been comprehensibly researched so far. What makes the papyrological sources different from the literary texts, is the fact that the papyri and ostraca, especially the documentary ones, written by everyday people, provide us with original information about the use of eggs, not only in Egypt, but also in the wider area of the eastern Graeco-Roman and Late Antique Mediterranean. I should note that my intention in this paper, is to produce a list of all documents and other kinds of papyrus texts in which eggs occur, as coherently as possible. I offer, therefore, some insights into the existence and the use of the varied eggs' species in Egypt, focusing on documentary, medical, and magical texts, which help us to catch a glimpse of the manifold aspects of the different uses of this valuable aliment.

[1] I am grateful to the anonymous reviewers for their enlightening comments on my paper.

Eggs as food: species, qualities, prices, and ways of cooking[2]

The most common edible egg species in Antiquity[3] was that of the barnyard hen, whereas eggs of other bird species (e.g. duck, goose, Egyptian goose, peafowl, pigeons, or ibis) represented mostly a luxury. The domestic hen, ὄρνις (Arnott 2007: 233; Thompson 1936: 20–26), was widely bred in Egyptian barnyards, chiefly for its meat and eggs (Cobianchi 1936: 139–147; Hasitzka 2006: 85; Schnebel 1925). Some papyrus documents (P.Mich. I 48, 251 BC, from Philadelphia, l. 2; P.Mich. XVIII 788, AD 173, from Oxyrhynchus, l. 18; SB X 10270, 1–54, AD 221–235, from Edfa, *passim*) that refer to ὄρνιθες εἰς σίτευσιν ('fowl for fattening') and ὄρνιθες τοκάδες ('hens for eggs') prove that certain species of ὄρνιθες were earmarked for providing meat and others for laying and incubating eggs. Chicken and their eggs were favorable goods in Egypt, nutritious and easy to find and cook, while they were used as gifts in many celebrations and festivals. One could say that the undetermined eggs registered in the papyrological sources refer probably to the domestic poultry eggs.

Ptolemaic, Roman and Late Antique Egypt accounts of household comestibles and expenses help us to get an idea of the wide consumption of domestic fowl eggs in the Nile country. In the Ptolemaic accounts of household expenses P.Tebt. III 885 (*c.* 200 BC, Tebtynis), *verso*, col. i, l. 51: ὠιὰ μ, and the accounts of poultry and provisions P.Tebt. III 1081, 1082, and 1084 (2nd century BC, Tebtynis and Kerkesucha), *passim*, many eggs are registered among a variety of comestibles. Eggs also appear in private accounts of comestibles and expenditure from the Roman period: identically P.Mich. II 127 (AD 45–46, Tebtynis), col. i, l. 43; P.Fouad I Univ. 26 (1st–2nd century AD), l. 7; P.IFAO III 37 (AD 136–200, Oxyrhynchus), col. iii, ll. 6, 30, col. iv, l. 13, col. v, l. 31; Pap.Choix. 20 (= P.Heid. III 243; 2nd–3rd century AD), l. 15; BGU XIII 2358 (4th century AD), ll. 4, 6. A considerable number of eggs is also registered in the private letter P.Oxy. VI 936 (3rd century AD, Oxyrhynchus), ll. 5–6: κόμισαι παρὰ Σύρου / κλουίον ὠιῶν π. Finally, a great number of poultry eggs is registered in certain accounts of expenses which belong to the archive of Dioscorus of Aphrodito (6th century AD): P.Cair.Masp. I 67058 (538 AD), col. iii, l. 9; col. viii, l. 10; P.Cair.Masp. II 67212 (AD 539–540), ll. 2, 3; P.Cair.Masp. III 67287 (AD 538), col. iv, ll. 1, 5–7, 10, 12, 22, 24; P.Cair.Masp. III 67330 (AD 545–546), col. ii, ll. 9, 10, 23; col. iii, ll. 3, 9.

Since eggs represented an easy to find, portable, and very nutritious food, they were suitable for consumption by those who travelled long journeys. Let us refer to the account of expenses P.Oxy. X 1339 (3rd century AD, Oxyrhynchus), ll. 1–2: εἰς ἀποδημίαν Σιναροὶ / ὑπ(ὲρ) τι(μῆς) λαχάνων καὶ ὠιῶν (δραχμαὶ), and the travel *memoranda* from Theophanes' archive. Theophanes was a wealthy gentleman of Hermopolis, who made a business journey from Egypt to Syrian Antioch and back at the beginning of the 4th century AD (Matthews 2006). These are probably the most informative sources concerning the consumption of eggs during long voyages. Eggs were one of the provisions that Theophanes and his traveling team had prepared before their departure from Hermopolis, as the first section of the *memoranda* reveals (P.Ryl. IV 627, *recto*, col. iv, l. 87), while they regularly bought eggs during the outward journey (P.Ryl. IV 627, *recto*, col. ix, ll. 194, 204), as well as at Antioch and homewards.[4]

[2] The abbreviations of the papyri and ostraca editions follow the Checklist of editions of Greek, Latin, Demotic and Coptic papyri, ostraca and tablets, available on ‹htttp://papyri.info/docs/checklist›. Other abbreviations used are from CMG = Corpus Medicorum Graecorum (‹http://cmg.bbaw.de/epubl/online/editionen.html›).

[3] The scientific treatises of Aristotle, the *Naturalis Historia* of Pliny, and the agricultural treatise of Columella provide us with information about the physiology and the production of eggs. Aristotle, *De generatione animalium* 3.749a10–754a20; Pliny, *Naturalis Historia*, 10.146–151, 158–166; Columella, *De re rustica* 8.5.1–25.

[4] P.Ryl. IV 639, *recto*, col. v, l. 61; col. vii, l. 110; *verso*, col. ii, l. 156; col. vi, l. 212; col. vii, l. 224. P.Ryl. IV 629, *recto*, col. ii, l. 25; col. iii, ll. 49c, 57; col. iv, ll. 74, 93; col. v, l. 113; col. vi, ll. 141, 155; col. vii, l. 171; col. viii, ll. 198, 212, 228; *verso*, col. i, l. 248; col. iii, ll. 295, 313; col. iv, ll. 323, 339; col. v, ll. 356, 365; col. vi, l. 381. P.Ryl. IV 630/636, ll.

In the case of households with no henneries or in cases that a large number of eggs was needed, this valuable foodstuff was being delivered to the consumers for domestic supplies and other circumstances by professional poulterers and/or egg-sellers. According to the order of supply P.Oxy. XLII 3055 (AD 285, Oxyrhynchus), Melas asked the poulterer (ὀρνιθάς) Ammonios to deliver ten eggs to φύλαξ Ammon for domestic use (ll. 4–5: ὥστε εἰς ὑπηρεσίαν / τῆ[ς] οἰκίας ᾠὰ δέκ[α]). Similarly, in P.Oxy. LXII 3056 (AD 285, Oxyrhynchus) Ammon ordered Ammonios to deliver a chicken and ten eggs (l. 3: ὀρνίθιον ἓν καὶ ᾠὰ δέκα). A rich source of information concerning chicken and egg–deliveries in Roman Egypt, is the documentary ostraca that belong to the archive of poulterer Aurelios Paniskos (3rd century AD, Edfa). This bookkeeping archive of a poultry farm includes many orders addressed to certain ὀρνιθοτρόφοι to deliver eggs and fowl to various people and for many circumstances, receipts of deliveries and registration documents of outgoing products. The recipients were officials and employees or clients of the poultry farm, while the motive of delivery was often εἰς ἔψησιν, i.e. to table (e.g. SB X 10270 18, l. 1), εἰς παράστασιν, that is, as a gift for the arrival of officials (e.g. SB X 10270 3, ll. 2–3: εἰς παράσ(τασιν) τῶι ἐπι/δημή(σαντι), 10270 5, ll. 2–3: εἰς παράστασ(ιν) / στρατηγῷ), or as an offer for services rendered by various employees and professionals (e.g. SB X 10270 11, l. 2: δὸς εἰς τρύγην χωρίων) (Boyaval 1965: 37–72).

Excerpts from the Attic Comedy (Μίχα–Λαμπάκη 1984: 165–166), the Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistai* and the Galen's treatises on food and diet represent informative literary sources concerning the consumption of eggs in antiquity, while the culinary work *De re coquinaria* of Apicius includes enlightening evidence of the eggs' position in the Roman table. According to Galen (*De alimentorum facultatibus* 3.21 [*CMG* V 4, 2]), barnyard fowl eggs were the best edible species in antiquity. On the contrary, Athenaeus 2.50, asserts that the peacock's eggs were the most delicious of all, while the eggs of the Egyptian goose, *chenalopex* (Arnott 2007: 50–51; Thompson 1936: 195–196), took second place, and those of the domestic fowl came last in quality. Similarly, ostrich eggs were included among the most flavourless and of inferior quality eggs in antiquity (Dalby 2003: 244; Thompson 1936: 160).[5] The papyrological sources reveal that egg species which were thought to be more luxurious and of a high quality, such as ᾠὰ χήνεα or χηναλωπέκεια, were used in special circumstances, e.g. as gifts to the king or as offerings in celebrations (see the discussion below). A few papyri reveal information about the freshness of eggs; in the private letter P.Lond. VII 1998 (250 BC, Philadelphia), Glaukon informed Zenon that Demetrios had sent Sarapion and Kraton sixty-two rotten Egyptian goose eggs (l. 3: ὠιὰ χηναλωπέκεα ξβ, σαπρά), which probably came from a batch of other putrid comestibles, unfit for human consumption. Similarly, the adjective παλαιά, that determines ὠιὰ in the private account BGU XIII 2357 (AD *c.* 270–280), col. ii, l. 13: ᾠῶν παλαιῶ[ν ± ?] (δραχμὰς) λβ, must refer to stale eggs.

Among various cooking methods the ancient literary sources refer to ᾠὰ τρομητά (Lat. *ova hapala*) 'soft-boiled eggs' (Apicius, *De re coquinaria* 7.19.1–3), ῥοφητά (Lat. *ova sorbilia*) 'eggs to be drunk' (Nicomachus 3), ἐκζεστά (Lat. *ova dura*) 'hard-boiled eggs' (Apicius, *De re coquinaria* 7.6.12), πνικτά 'poached eggs', or ταγηνιστά 'fried eggs'. In Rome, soft-boiled eggs were accompanied by *garum* or *liquamen* (André 1961: 198–200), that is, the salty sauce made by fish and brine (*De re coquinaria* 7.19.1–3 and André 1961: 152). Alexis (fragments 178 and 263) also refers to ᾠὸν ἐπιτετμημένον 'sliced hard-boiled egg' and ᾠὰ ἡμίτομα 'mid-sliced hard-boiled eggs' (Arnott 1996: 529–530, 736), common methods of cooking in antiquity (Dalby 2003: 126; Dalby 2010: 305). According to Galen, the best way to prepare eggs was that of dropping

8, 44, 106, 110, 122, 129, 154, 164, 193, 288, 361, 434, 461, 467, 500. See Καλλέρης 1953: 698; Matthews 2006: 90, 123, 160, 168, 171, 172–173, 175, 176.

[5] Oribasius, *Medical Collections* 2.45.2 (*CMG* VI 1, 1, 45); Aetius, *Medical Books* 2.134 (*CMG* VIII 1, 201); Paul of Aegina, *Medical Compedium* 1.83.1 (*CMG* IX 1, 60).

them in boiling water ('poached eggs'). The soft-boiled eggs were the most nutritive of all, while the hard-boiled ones were difficult to digest. Finally, the worst of all eggs' types was that of the baked eggs in the ashes or fried, because they became too greasy when they were cooked (Galen, *De alimentorum facultatibus* 3.21 [*CMG* V 4, 2]). Unfortunately, the papyri are proved less informative sources concerning the cooking methods of eggs; the most frequent phrase for the cooked eggs is εἰς ἕψησιν, a term that denotes mainly the boiling of eggs. The expression occurs in five ostraca from the afore-mentioned archive of the Edfa poultry farm (SB X 10270 17, l. 2; 18, l. 1; 19, l. 2; 20, l. 2; 22, l. 2) and refers to the way the recipients of the eggs were to cook and consume them. On the other hand, papyri form the Theophanes' archive inform us for the daily meals in which eggs were consumed by the travelling team, for lunch and/or for dinner: P.Ryl. IV 629, *verso*, col. iv, l. 323: ᾠῶν εἰς ἄριστον (δραχμαὶ) υ; P.Ryl. IV 630/637, l. 129: ᾠῶν εἰς ἄριστον καὶ εἰς δῖπ(νον) (leg. δεῖπνον) (δραχμαὶ) υ; l. 461: ᾠῶν εἰς δῖπν(ον) (leg. δεῖπνον) (δραχμαὶ) υ. Theophanes' *memoranda* prove that eggs were among the products that were bought and consumed daily (Matthews 2006: 168). The eggs that were to be used εἰς τὴν ὁδόν ('for the journey'), according to P.Ryl. IV 630/637, l. 467, represented those which had been probably consumed boiled.

Although breeding hens in private barnyards did not require much space or any special care, eggs were also sold (see, for example, certain ostraca from the bookkeeping archive of the poultry farm from Edfa). As far as the egg prices in Ptolemaic Egypt are concerned, not much analysis is possible, since the papyri refer to the cost of eggs without quantities.[6] In the 1st century AD, the price of the eggs was not very high; about 1 obol for 3 eggs, according to P.Mich. II 123 (AD 45–47), *verso*, col. vii, l. 20: ᾠὰ λ (ὀβολοὶ) ι; col. viii, l. 29: τιμῆ(ς) ᾠῶν ε (ὀβολοὶ) β,[7] or even 1 obol per egg, in SB XVI 12515 (1st–2nd century AD), col. ii, ll. 1, 6, 19. The Diocletian's *Price Edict* (Lauffer 1971: 112) reckons the eggs' price at about one *denarius* each (Dalby 2003: 126), a quite high price for a relatively common aliment. Theophanes' travelling team (4th century AD) was buying eggs on an –almost– daily basis, spending occasionally 100 or 200 *drachmas* for 25 and 50 eggs respectively, while 400 *drachmas* were spent, when a larger number (*c.* 100) of eggs was bought, on the preparation of the journey (Matthews 2006: 160, 220–221). The same number of eggs was included among the items that appeared as rent for a camel-stable, according to the lease P.Oxy. IX 1207 (AD 175–176, Oxyrhynchus), l. 10. Finally, in certain accounts of the archive of Dioscorus of Aphrodito (6th century), which inform us about the number of eggs bought and their cost, their price seems to have been a sixth of a *carat* per dozen (Johnson and West 1949: 184).[8]

Eggs consumed in special circumstances

Apart from the position of eggs to the daily nutrition, they seem to have been a kind of food to be consumed in special occasions too. Papyri from the Zenon archive (3rd century BC) are excellent sources for the use of either domesticated or wild fowl eggs of rare species as offerings to the king

[6] See P.Petrie III 135 (3rd century BC, Arsinoites Nome), l. 5; 136 (231–206 BC, Gurob), col. iii, l. 20; 142 (3rd century BC, Gurob), l. 3; SB XXIV 16067 (3rd century BC), fr. g+i, l. 7; P.Lille 58 (3rd century BC, Ghoran), col. ii, l. 15; Hayden 2018: 551–552, 771.

[7] Unfortunately, quantities are not included in P.Mich. XI 619 (AD *c.* 182, Oxyrhynchus?), col. i, l. 4; col. iii, l. 25, and P.Dubl. 17 (2nd–3rd century AD), l. 14.

[8] P.Cair.Masp. I 67287 (AD 538), col. iv, l. 1: (ὑπὲρ) ᾠὰ (leg. ᾠῶν) ο [κ(εράτιον) α̣]; P.Cair.Masp. II 67212 (AD 539–540), l. 3: (ὑπὲρ) ᾠὰ (leg. ᾠῶν) σ̣ κ(εράτια) β (ἥμισυ) δ΄; P.Cair.Masp. III 67330 (AD 545–546), col. ii, l. 10: (ὑπὲρ) ᾠῶν Ασκ εἰς Ἀντι(νόου) (καὶ) Τοέτο (καὶ) Πανὸς (καὶ) λοιπ(ὰς) κ(εράτια) β̣ (ἥμισυ) δ΄.

(ξένια) or votive offerings in festivals and royal celebrations of Ptolemaic Egypt (Perpillou-Thomas 1993).

Eggs of various kinds –sometimes of rare species (Reekmans 1996: 24)– were offered as gifts (ξένια) to the king (Aly 1994: 201–213; Rostovtzeff 1922: 124). For instance, an uncertain number of hen and goose eggs was to be offered as gift to the Ptolemy II Philadelphus at the festival of Isis,[9] according to the fragmentary letter P.Cair.Zen. IV 59560 (254 BC, Philadelphia), l. 5: χ[ήν]εα καὶ ὀ[ρνίθεα ± ?]; *verso*, ll. 15–16: περὶ ξενίων τῶι β[ασιλεῖ] / εἰς τὰ Εἰσιεῖα (leg. Ἰσιεῖα). Ὠιά are also listed among other items in P.Lond. VII 2144 (3rd century BC), l. 6, probably a catalogue of gifts to the king. A large variety of foodstuffs was destined for the organisation of an unknown festivity, according to the series of private letters P.Cair.Zen. IV 59562 (253 BC), col. B, l. 12: [ἑ]ορτῆς; col. C, ll. 17–18: ὠιὰ χη[ναλω]/πέκεια, χήνεα, ὀρνίθεα. With the letter P.Cair.Zen. V 59821 (254 BC), Metrodorus informed Zenon that the items which he had sent to the celebration for the king's birth anniversary (ll. 2–3: [τὰ] ξένια ἃ ἀπέστειλας / [± ? ὥστε τ]ῶι βασιλεῖ εἰς τὰ γενέθλια), had reached their destination; among them, a hundred of Egyptian goose eggs are listed, l. 8. ὠ̣ιὰ χηναλωαπέκεα̣ (leg. χηναλωπέκεια) ϱ. The eggs listed in the catalogue of offerings P.Cair.Zen. IV 59693 (3rd century BC), l. 7 were to be sacrificed on the altar of the king. Let us finally refer to a double-yolked egg[10] mentioned as an item for an unknown celebration in the very fragmentary P.Cair.Zen. IV 59602 (3rd century BC, Philadelphia), l. 2: ὠιὸν δίδυμον.

Eggs were consumed in celebrations in the Roman period, too; In the account concerning preparations for various festivals P.Ross.Georg. II 41 (2nd–3rd century AD, Arsinoites Nome), amounts of eggs were to be offered and consumed; 4 *drachmas* of eggs were destined for the celebration of two unknown festivities (col. i, l. 6; col. iii, l. 51), for Rhodophoria (col. i, l. 16), Delia (col. i, l. 22), Sarapia (col. ii, l. 37), and Myrrhobolia (col. ii, l. 44), while 8 *drachmas* were to be spent at Demetria (col. iii, l. 62). Unfortunately, the bad condition of the papyrus sheet does not allow us to determine how many eggs would have been consumed at Kepouria and Isieia (col. iv, l. 73), Stephaniphoria (col. iv, l. 86), and Souchia (col. iv, l. 93) (Frankfurter 1998: 52–58, on the afore-mentioned celebrations). What is more, according to the archive of the poultry farm from Edfa, eggs were used as gifts at officials' visits, e.g. SB X 10270 3, ll. 2–3: εἰς παράσ(τασιν) τῶι ἐπι/δημή(σαντι), 10270 5, ll. 2–3: εἰς παράστασ(ιν) / στρατηγῷ). Let us also refer to P.Mil.Vogl. II 52 (138 AD, Tebtunis), from the Laches archive, in which eggs and fowl had been used during the visit of the *strategus* (col. ii, l. 35: παρουσίας στρ[ατηγοῦ]).

Eggs as medicine in Graeco-Roman and Late Antique Egypt

In Antiquity, eggs were also used as medical substances. Both the yolk and the white of the eggs, destined either for external or internal use, represented soft healing ingredients in recipes against various health problems, such as migraine, ophthalmic and liver conditions, inflammation, pharyngitis, and abdominal diseases.[11] Medical papyri and ostraca from Graeco-Roman and Late Antique Egypt, confirm the information given by the ancient physicians, concerning the manifold usages of eggs in medical recipes (Gazza 1956: 109–110).

[9] On the cult of Isis see Dunand 1973; Malaise 2005.

[10] On double-yolked eggs see Aristotle, *Historia animalium* 6.562a; Pliny, *Naturalis Historia* 10.74.150; Curtis 1914: 55–83; Gous and Nonis 2010: 292.

[11] Galen, *De Simplicium Medicamentorum Temperamentis ac Facultatibus* 1.21; Aetius, *Medical Books* 2.134–135 (*CMG* VIII 1, 201–202); Dioscurides, *De Materia Medica* 2.50; Pliny, *Naturalis Historia* 29.11.39–51; Riddle 1985: 137–138. On the use of eggs in Byzantine medicine see Χρόνη 2011: 379–406.

The binding properties of the eggs made them a particularly useful ingredient for cataplasms and plasters against dermal affections and headache. The recipe for a white plaster with rose oil against lichens included in P.Mich. XVII 758, fol. C, *verso*, contained the whites of three cooked eggs (ll. 7–8: ᾠ̣[ῶ]ν̣ ὀπτ̣ῶν λευ/[κὰ τρία) (Youtie 1996: 25–26). The recipe preserved in the papyrus is a variation of a prescription encountered in parallel texts by Galen, Aetius, and Oribasius (see Youtie 1996: 24–26). In the fragmentary fol. M of the same codex, a prescription for fistulous ulcers, the white of a raw egg is recorded as an alternative ingredient (l. 11: ἢ ᾠ̣οῦ τὸ λευκὸν̣ [). Eggs, also, appear in the plaster recipe for migraine (l. 1: Πρὸς ἡμικράνιον) P.Cair.Masp. II 67141 (6th century AD, Aphrodites Kome), fol. 2, ll. 27–29. The prescription occurs as an alternative solution of another medical blend, consisted of more ingredients (e.g. myrrh, calamine, gum Arabic, and *krokomagma*); it only included spurge and the white of an egg, which must have been mixed together and administered on the temples, ll. 27–29: μετὰ̣ λευκο(ῦ) / τ[ῶ]ν ὠῶν κατάπλ̣α<σ>σε τοὺς κρο/τ̣ά̣[φο]υς.

Their mildness and palliative quality made eggs an essential substance in recipes for ophthalmic conditions. In the fragmentary therapeutic manual BKT X 21 (75–125 AD, Philadelphia), an egg is included among other ingredients of a cataplasm against an unknown eye condition (l. 2: κ]ύκλῳ καταπλαστέον· ἐπὶ δὲ τὸν ὀφ[θαλμὸν; l. 5: μ]ειγνύναι δὲ δεῖ τῷ ᾠ̣ῷ̣). The medical blend must have been consisted of an egg mixed with sweet wine or wine mixed with water or honey mixed with water (l. 4: [γλ]υ̣κέως ἢ ὑδ[ρ]ελαίου ἢ μ̣ελικράτου) and administered on the affected area with a soft wool swab (l. 3: ἔριον λευκόν, μαλακόν). The second recipe of the series of eye salves P.Oxy. LXXIV 4977 (2nd–3rd century AD, Oxyrhynchus) is entitled Κολ(λύριον) τὸ διὰ τῶν ᾠ̣ῶν (l. 1), since eggs were its main ingredient (l. 6: ᾠ̣ῶν δ) (Leith 2009: 81 and 83, n. on l. 6). The therapeutic blend contains calamine, white lead, gum Arabic, saffron crocus, poppy juice, and four eggs. The ingredients were to be melted in a liquid, grinded out and applied (ll. 6–8: τὸ / ὑγρὸν ἐπί̣β̣α̣λε καὶ / τρ{ε}ῖβε καὶ̣ ἀναλάμβαν(ε)). It is interesting to note that the author referred, also, to the quality of the remedy, determining it as τρυφερόν (mild, l. 9) and, therefore, appropriate for established conditions (διαθέσεις, l. 10). In addition, he pointed out that if one boiled the egg until its consistency reached a medium or rather thick level, the eye salve could stop constant discharge of tears (ll. 10–13: ἱστᾷ̣ / δὲ καὶ ἐπιφορὰν μετ’ ᾠ̣οῦ / μέσῃ κράσῃ ι παχυτέ/[ρα]; leg. κράσει ἢ).

Apart from the external use, eggs sometimes appeared as ingredients in medical drinks; in the series of medical recipes P.Oxy. VIII 1088 (1st century AD, Oxyrhynchus), an egg (col. iii, l. 58) was used in a potable prescription for liver conditions (col. iii, l. 48: πότημα πρὸς ἡπ̣[α]τ̣ι̣κ̣[ο]ύς). The drink, described as immensely effective (l. 56: ἐνεργὲς ἱκανῶς), contained cassia, myrrh, nard, and Ethiopian seseli, which must have been grinded with an egg (l. 58: μετ’ ᾠ̣{ω}οῦ λεά̣[νας]). The blend should have been mixed with centaury gruel, dissolved in a very hot mixture of honey and water, and consumed as a drink (ll. 59–62: καὶ κενταυρεί[ου] / χυλῶι ἀναπλάσα[ς] ἡλίκον Αἰ[γύπ(τιον)] / κυάμου δ[ί]δου π<ι>εῖν ἐν μελικρ[ά]/τωι θερμῶι). Let us also refer to the way an egg could be used in a medical prescription, to calm a distressed mind. According to O.Leid. 1 (2nd century BC), the patient must have eaten eggs together with the dinner, which seems to have preceded or even provoked vomiting (ll. 8–11: ἅμα ἐπὶ τῶι δίπ/νῳ ᾠὰ φάγε / καὶ τὸ πλεῖον τοῦ δίπ/νου ἀπέρασαι; leg. δείπνῳ, δείπνου) (Bagnall, Sijpesteijn and Worp 1980: 2).

Eggs in ritual

Eggs’ physical properties and their symbolism of fertility, life, and rebirth made them an item widely used in ritual: magical spells, formulas, and charms. The most valuable written sources for the position

of eggs in ancient magical practices are undoubtedly the Greek magical papyri (Bonnet 2000: 162–164; Salayová 2017: 199; Χρόνη 2011: 379–406). Ibis eggs (Arnott 2007: 109–111; Thompson 1936: 60–64) seem to have been the most common of all and used in a variety of spells and formulas. Such popularity of this egg species in magic was probably due to the abundance of ibis in Egypt and of course the sacred nature of this bird.[12] What is more, ibis' eggs, unlike those laid by chicken, must not have been consumed as food in antiquity. An ibis egg appears as an alternative ingredient of the initiation prescription *PGM* IV 26–51, ll. 49–50. The preparator should have bored a hole in the egg, inserted a falcon's feather, broken it open and rubbed the fluid on himself (ll. 50–52: χρῶ ὠῷ ἴβεως, πτερῷ δὲ ἱέρακος / τρήσας τὸ ὠὸν καὶ ἐνεὶ[ς] τὸ πτερὸν κατάρ<ρ>ηξον / οὕτω ἐγχρισάμενος). Ibis eggs were also used in erotic spells for attraction; let us refer to *PGM* IV 2441–2621, l. 2460, according to which two eggs should have been added in a blend of many other ingredients (e.g. a field mouse, two moon beetles, some storax, myrrh, crocus) and burnt in a charcoal fire as an offering. In l. 2587 of the same papyrus, ὠὸν ἴβεως νέας was to be put in a magic mixture for a coercive spell. In the slander spell to Selene *PGM* IV 2622–2707, an egg of a young ibis (l. 2652: ὠόν τε ἴβεως νέας) is listed among many ingredients that had to be offered on a wooden altar. On the same papyrus sheet, a coercive spell is included (ll. 2685–2694), the recipe of which consists of a field mouse, fat of a goat, material of a dog-faced baboon, an ibis egg, a river crab, a moon beetle, a single-stemmed wormwood, and a clove of garlic. The preparator had, probably, blended the ingredients with vinegar and made pills stamped with a Hekate ring (ll. 2690–2692: ποιή/σας κολλούρια σφράγιζε δακτυλίῳ ὁλο/σιδήρῳ, ὁλοστόμῳ, ἔχοντι Ἑκάτην). Finally, in the spell of revelation *PGM* V 370–446, the liquid of an ibis egg (l. 377: ὑγρὸν ὠοῦ ἴβεως) represents one of the ingredients that had conceivably been made into a dough shaped to form a figure of Hermes (l. 380: πλάσμα Ἑρμοῦ χλαμυδηφόρου), at the feet of which a papyrus with a certain spell was to be placed (ll. 389–390).

Other birds' eggs appear more rarely in the magical papyri. A crow egg (Arnott 2007: 167–171; Thompson 1936: 97–100) was used in the charm for gaining favour *PGM* XXXVI 283–294, l. 283: ὠὸν κορώνης. The mixture that contained the egg was to be rubbed on the female genital area to provoke male attraction (l. 286: ὅταν τρίβῃς καὶ ὅταν συνχρίῃ τὸ αἰδοῖόν σου). On the contrary, in some rituals and spells the egg species is not determined. In the spell for foreknowledge *PGM* III 282–409, l. 379, the half of an egg (ἥμισυ τοῦ ὠοῦ) must have been rubbed and added in a blend, the ingredients of which are difficult to determine due to the fragmentary nature of the papyrus. According to the love spell of attraction *PGM* XXXVI 134–160, the eggs were to be sacrificed (l. 140: τὰ ἀνόμιμα ὠὰ θύεται). Let us finally point out that in the magical papyri even insects' eggs were used in spells; a beetle (κάνθαρος) egg (Davies and Kathirithamby 1986: 84–89) is recorded among the ingredients for the 'opening doors'-spell *PGM* XIII 734–1077, ll. 1064–1066: Ἄνοιξις. Λαβὼν / ὀμφαλὸν κορκοδείλου ἄρσενος (ποταμο/γείτονος λέγει) καὶ ὠὸν κανθάρου / καὶ κυνοκεφάλου καρδίαν. The same item is listed in the catalogue of 'Interpretations' *PGM* XII 401–444, l. 437 as a bull's semen.

Eggs were not only used as ingredients of magical formulas, but also as magical items by themselves. In some cases, for instance, they appeared as a written material, on which the spells were written. The formula for meeting with one's own daimon *PGM* VII 505–528, ll. 522–523: τὸ ὄνομα γράφε ζμυρνομέλανι / εἰς ὠὰ δύο ἀρρενικά, one of the Himerios' recipes 'to do well in a workshop' *PGM* XII 96–106, ll. 99–100: Ἐργαστήριον εὖ πράσσειν / ἐπὶ ὠοῦ ὄρνιθος ἀρσενικοῦ ἐπίγραφε καὶ κατόρυξον πρὸς τὸν οὐδόν, ὅ[που] εἶ, τὸ ὠόν; ll. 103–104: ἡ δὲ εὐχὴ τοῦ ὠοῦ· 'ὁ μέγας θεὸ[ς], δὸ[ς ἐ]μοὶ χάριν, πρᾶξιν, / καὶ τόπῳ τούτῳ, ὅπου κεῖται τὸ ὠόν, and the formula Suppl.Mag. II 97 (5th–6th century AD), l. 3: ὀββὰ γραφόμενα,[13] probably a spell to secure favour (χαριτήσιον; l. 2: χαρ[..].). In the same category of texts, in which eggs

[12] On ibis as a sacred animal in Egypt see Smelik 1979: 225–243.
[13] For the term ὀββά see Daniel and Maltomini 1992: 256.

occur as magical items, one could include the initiation ritual *PGM* XIII 1–343, ll. 234–237, according to which a falcon egg was used as a magic gem. The half of the egg must have been coated with gold and the second half of it with cinnabar,[14] as the preparation instructions reveal: Λαβὼν ᾠὸν ἱέρακος τὸ ἥμισυ αὐτοῦ χρύσω/σον, τὸ δὲ ἄλλο ἥμισυ χρῖσον κινναβάρει. Τοῦτο φορῶν ἀθε/ώρητος ἔσῃ ἐπιλέγων τὸ ὄνομα. Similarly, in the list of articles P.Mich. I 9 *recto* (3rd century BC), from the Zenon archive, a silver plated sparrow egg is included, ll. 2–3: ᾠιὸν στρούθειον / διηργυρωμένον. This phrase refers to a sparrow egg or a sparrow-egg-shaped item covered with silver. The silver-coated egg was probably used as a decoration item or even as a gift offered to a deity. The silver-plating egg mentioned in P.Mich. I 9 *recto* reminds us of the gold and cinnabar crow egg of *PGM* XIII 1–343, ll. 234–237, mentioned above. Metal-coating ceramic and other materials as well as using metal-coated pottery for decoration purposes was a widespread practice in antiquity (Kotitsa 2012: 108–125), while the occurrence of precious decorative items made of argent are often encountered in the papyri (Russo 1999: 249–252; also, Reekmans 1996: 44–45, 47–48, for the Zenon papyri).

Finally, in some papyri eggs were not mentioned as ingredients for magic formulas but appeared as symbols of other elements. The falcon's and phoenix's eggs (Arnott 2007: 99–102, 276–278; Thompson 1936: 65–67, 182–184) occurred in the Hermes' ring spell *PGM* V 213–303, ll. 252–255: ᾠὸν ἴβεως, ᾠὸν ἱέρακος, ᾠὸν Φοίνικος ἀεροφοιτήτου represent determinations of Heron, a god of Graeco-Roman Egypt, a fusion of the Thracian god Heron and the Egyptian god Atum (Bonnet 2000: 295–296). Similarly, in the cat ritual for many purposes *PGM* III 1–164, l. 145: ἐνεύχομαί σοι κατὰ τοῦ ᾠοῦ, the egg is a symbol of the sun (see Betz 1986: 22 and n. 37).

Conclusions

The papyri and ostraca from Graeco-Roman and Late Antique Egypt reveal interesting information on many issues concerning eggs in the Nile country: species, qualities, supply, prices, ways of use and consumption. The papyrological sources prove that eggs had always been present in many crucial aspects in one's life in Graeco-Roman and Late Antique Egypt, not only in terms of nutrition, but also in medicine and religion. They represented a food item, consumed in a range of circumstances, as a staple food on the household table and at the same time as a precious gift to the king or an offering during festivals and celebrations. Their nutritive, binding, and emollient properties made eggs an effective remedy against many diseases, while both the symbolic role of the egg, linked with the creation, rebirth, fertility, and life, made it a valuable ingredient in magic. Since there is no specific study on the consumption and use of eggs in Graeco-Roman and Late Antique Egypt in the light of the papyrological sources, I hope that this paper will be a motivation for further research.

[14] For gilding and metal-covered items in antiquity see below.

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The scarab, from amulets to magical gems: transmissions and transpositions of an emblem of the pharaonic civilisation

Dominique Barcat

Abstract

Roman gems of the Imperial Period - and especially the so-called 'magical gems' - raise the question of their relationship with the ancient Egyptian amuletic tradition. Even though no continuity has been established, or at least not directly so, there are a few links between the categories of Egyptian scarabs and Roman magical gems. In both cases, we are dealing with personal objects which often fulfil a protective function. Above all, scarabs and gems share the same kind of ambiguity, since both could be linked to categories of seals and amulets. This paper provides an overview of the presence of scarabs in the iconographical compositions engraved on Roman gems and discusses their meaning. We analyse how such an emblematic amuletic motif is involved in a specific iconography related to magical rituals which are partly similar and partly different from the traditional Egyptian practices.

Keywords

Scarabs; magical gems; amulets; seals; reception of Egypt; hybrid deities

Introduction

Because it rolls its dung ball up to the entrance of its gallery, Egyptians saw in the scarab the image of the driving force that makes the sun rise each morning and then continue its course through the sky until it sets (Quack 2022: 157-180; Vernus 2005). The scarab is a deity without a temple or cult, which is nevertheless omnipresent in the representations of the Pharaonic civilisation. It was considered as a universal protector and remains, until the latest periods, an unavoidable magic–religious reference. Among the recurring motifs in the Egyptian iconographic tradition, the scarab was the most rapidly and widely adopted outside Egypt, notably throughout the Mediterranean regions and beyond. Its popularity continued into Late Antiquity, and it is frequently found on the 'magical gems' of the Imperial Period, where it is depicted in a wide variety of configurations (Dasen and Nagy 2019). Most of the 'magical gems', are now referenced in the Campbell Bonner Magical Gems Database (CBd).[1] They constitute a phenomenon common to the entire Roman Empire and are mostly dated to the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD (Zwierlein–Diehl 2019). Some researchers think that magical gems mainly originate from Alexandria, but the question is still widely debated (Gordon 2011: 40-43). They are therefore produced during a period that saw the gradual disappearance of hieroglyphic knowledge, along with a 'mythification' of these same signs (in the words of Dimitri Meeks [2018]), which lead to symbolic and esoteric interpretations.

The aim here is to trace the continuities and mutations of the diffusion of a motif and its integration into foreign modes of thought through a particular category of objects, namely seals and amulets: that is to say, scarabs, scaraboid seals, and gems. Although some researchers sustained the idea that the

[1] See: ‹http://cbd.mfab.hu/›.

Egyptian scarabs were the precursors to the magical gems (Barb 1971: 164-165), this assertion is difficult to hold today. In a recent book, Christopher A. Faraone refuted the idea that the magical gems derive from the most recent version of an Egyptian tradition (Faraone 2018). He considers these amulets to be Greek and places them in the continuity of the magico–religious practices of the Hellenistic sphere. A study of a motif which is such an integral part of Egyptian culture seems likely to contribute to the development of this question. We will attempt to understand to what extent the representations of the scarab on magical gems can be linked to – and how they fit into – the history of the reception of Egyptian motifs in the Mediterranean area. Moreover, since the subject involves material that is situated at the crossroads of the categories of seals, amulets and jewellery, and that presents certain similarities with coins, we will also address the question of ruptures and continuities from this perspective.

Magical gems are part of a system that draws on different religious traditions to the point where their creators seem almost indifferent to cultural and linguistic boundaries. This belief system is of course rooted in the religious innovations of the Hellenistic period (Faraone 2018; Mastrocinque 2014). The link with Greek and Demotic Magical Papyri (*PGM* and *PDM*)[2] (Betz 1986) seems evident here (De Haro Sanchez 2008). These texts are dated from the 3rd to the 7th century AD and include an important corpus from the so-called 'Anastasi Library', named after the merchant who, in the 1820s, collected a set of papyri from Thebes dated to the 3rd-4th centuries AD (Brashear 2016: 3402-3403; De Haro Sanchez 2008). This last corpus is thus relatively contemporary with many of the magical gems. The magical gems and the *PGM*/*PDM* posit a supreme solar deity justifying the notion of henotheism. We find in these texts mentions of the use of stones, engraved or not, shedding light on how magical gems could be integrated into rituals. Studies devoted to the question of the relationship between the *PGM*/*PDM* and magical gems stress the fact that the engraved stones mentioned in the papyri are hardly representative of the group of magical gems as a whole: these texts ignore the Anguiped and scarcely evoke Chnubis, for example (Faraone 2018: 9; Vitellozzi 2018). However, we can echo P. Vitellozzi when he states that 'the magic of the engraved gemstones is essentially the magic of the *Papyri Graecae Magicae*' (Vitellozzi 2018, 181. See also: Nagy 2002; Sfameni 2015; West 2011). It is important to understand that magical gems and *PGM*/*PDM* mobilise a very wide range of religious references in order to repurpose them, as they are used to serve the personal expectations of their owners. We can cite here Hans Dieter Betz: 'As the gods from the various cults gradually merged and their nature became blurred, they often changed into completely different deities' (Betz 1986: xlvi). *PGM* and *PDM* prescribe the use of the scarab in all its forms. Since the scarab is largely present in these texts in a wide diversity of forms and intentions, the comparison with the corpus of gems takes on its full meaning.

It should be clarified here that in this paper the name 'scarab' regroups the objects having the shape of the scarab – the Egyptian scarabs, generally in faience and steatite imitated elsewhere in the Mediterranean, and hard stone seals of Phoenician, Greek, or Etruscan Production –, but also the representations of the scarabs drawn on the stones, and – occasionally – the insect itself.

As the topic of the scarab is particularly vast, we will only touch on certain aspects here, leaving aside other points, notably the important question of the function of scarabs according to written and archaeological sources. This is a subject that would need to be developed further, particularly with regard to the role of the scarab in the protection of young children in Italian/Latin contexts, but we will leave this aspect for a future, more extensive publication.

[2] The abbreviations of the papyri and ostraca editions follow the Checklist of editions of Greek, Latin, Demotic and Coptic papyri, ostraca and tablets, available on ‹http://papyri.info/docs/checklist›.

Scarabs and gems: between seals and amulets

In the first instance, we need to compare the two types of material – scarabs (or scarab seals) and magical gems – and analyse what these categories encompass in terms of materiality, functional properties, usage and value. Manufactured scarabs are probably the artefact that was the most widely produced and distributed by the Pharaonic civilisation. Measuring no more than a few centimetres, they consist of a convex side, corresponding to the back of the animal – represented in a more or less stylised way – and a flat underside bearing a legend, generally composed of drawings and/or hieroglyphs. Each hieroglyph is first and foremost a drawing and a single figure could be both at the same time (Farout 2013). Scarabs have been produced in all kinds of materials, such as stones and metals, but most often in faience and steatite (Vernus 2005: 447). The shape of the insect is of particular importance: simple and oval; as a gem, it is well suited to the making of rings and pendants and offers a flat side, suitable for engraving or inscriptions.

From the 6th dynasty, we find – in private tombs – scarabs inscribed with the name of their owner. The list of motifs is extended during the First Intermediate Period, and, at the beginning of the Middle Kingdom, the object is deployed by the Pharaonic state. Hereafter, legends include the name of kings or great dignitaries, and the same objects are used to seal stocks of wares; their footprints are found on the clay stoppers of pottery jars, chests, or rolled papyrus documents (Ward 1994: 189).

It is interesting to note here that both scarabs and Roman gems present some connections with another archaeological category of objects, namely coins, even if this connection is not on the same level in the two cases. As seals, scarabs were used by the political authorities to ensure the integrity of goods and control their distribution. They also provide, at the same time, an occasion to diffuse its insignia and effigies. Moreover, from the 18th dynasty onwards, the scarabs were partly made by mould, and in series, like coins a millennium later. In contrast, magical gems are unique objects, difficult to reproduce identically. Their relation to coinage is quite different and relates to iconography. Coins, like intaglios, exhibit two-dimensional and miniaturised representations, sometimes transposed from statuary: 'les monnaies sont en effet pour les graveurs de pierres des modèles facilement accessibles, aisément utilisables qui véhiculent des images déjà cristallisées' (Bricault and Veymiers 2018: 481). Laurent Bricault and Richard Veymiers were even able to establish that almost all the Isiac monetary types were reproduced identically on gems.

During the New Kingdom, scarabs become omnipresent in Egypt: they are found in all excavation sites and in all types of contexts - domestic, funerary, religious. The very large number of scarabs bearing the names of kings could be used as seals but, in their majority, they were, above all, talismans (Ward 1994: 189). Nevertheless, the two categories are not mutually exclusive. As a seal, the scarab protects what is sealed by it, and, as an amulet, it allows the action of sealing to be sacred (Buchner and Boardman 1966: 22-23; Uehlinger 2015; Ward 1994: 189). A scarab engraved with a royal name – of a reigning as well as a deceased pharaoh – makes the amulet protective in two ways: the image of the scarab is apotropaic by itself, and because the king's name provides additional protection.

In sum, paradoxically, what we often call 'scarab seals' are mainly amulets, even if their usage as a seal is firmly attested (Quack 2022: 167-168; Ward 1994: 188). If the gems of the Roman Imperial Period are, as we will show, clearly in the continuity of Hellenistic seals, the magical gems, as an archaeological category, are defined by the fact that they are no longer seals but amulets. The distinction holds once the inscriptions are made to be read directly and not engraved in mirror writing, differentiating them from seals (Dasen and Nagy 2019). The link with seals is not broken, however. This is implied by the formula σφραγὶς θεοῦ, 'the seal of the god', engraved on the reverse of the gems on which appears the

image of Solomon trampling over Lilith. As Véronique Dasen demonstrated, the gem can be understood as the imprint of a god on a seal. The stone is thus seen as 'the seal' of the god (Dasen 2011; 2021). These stones have a therapeutic action like a pill, or tablet – 'cachet' in French – in the medical sense of the word, as the term *sphragis* also designates a medical pill carrying a stamp with an image (Dasen 2021). These perspectives are of particular interest to us, because they suggest that, like the Egyptian scarabs – often inscribed in positive form – the reference to the seal on the magical gems contributes to their protective power.

Mediterranean scarabs

The scarab was probably the first Egyptian motif to be adopted outside Egypt. From the beginning of the Middle Kingdom, Egyptian scarabs were exported to Crete and the Near East, a phenomenon that was soon followed by local productions. In Crete, the scarabs produced between the MM IA and the MM III reproduce the shape of the animal quite faithfully, while the legends are composed of specifically Cretan motifs (Phillips 2008, vol. I: 108–134; Ward 1994). During the same period (Middle Bronze II), faience scarabs were manufactured in the Palestinian region. Two main groups are identified depending on the subject represented: an omega–shaped motif (Keel 1989: 39–87), and a Canaanite fertility goddess (Astarte?), which derives from the tradition of cylinder seals (Ward 1994: 91). These scarabs are not imitations and the appropriation of the motif by the Mediterranean populations is, thereupon, more obvious. The same range of material was used as in Egypt, essentially faience, blue frit and steatite. As in Egypt, Cretan scarabs are found in tombs alongside their owners and sometimes used as seals (Phillips 2008, vol. I: 132).

The dynamic continues into the first millennium. Palestinian scarabs made of steatite and Egyptian blue produced between the 11th and 9th centuries BC show clearly Egyptian themes on their plates, but stylised in such a way that the local geometric style can be recognised (Keel 1995: 37). Between the 9th and 7th centuries, the products of the Palestinian workshops are recognisable by their flat underside divided into several horizontal registers. Motifs such as the winged solar disc, the winged griffin and the winged scarab are frequent (Keel 1995: 38).

Scarabs are widely present both in the Phoenician-Punic area and in the Greek world. A production, probably of Aegean origin (Figure 1), has been identified and designated as the 'Perachora-Rhodes group', or Gorton's type XXII (Gorton 1996: 62–72; Skon-Jedele 1994: 291–379). These scarabs can be recognised by the fact that they present recurrent combinations of a limited number of hieroglyphs, made in a very simplified manner and combined in a more or less fanciful way (Skon–Jedele 1994: 299–303). These scarabs are massively present in sanctuaries located near the ports of the Aegean Sea, and more specifically in Rhodes (especially at Lindos) and at the sanctuary of Hera of Perachora (Blinkenberg 1931; Dunbabin 1962; Payne 1940; Skon-Jedele 1994). They are also found, albeit in lesser quantities, in many other Greek sites (see in particular: Hölbl 1999; 2007; 2008; Skon-Jedele 1994), as well as in Italy, notably in Pithekoussai (De Salvia 1993; Hölbl 1979). These scarabs are absent from the Near East and Cyprus, which favours the hypothesis of an Aegean production. One may wonder if these scarabs are not, in a way, the precursors of the scarabs of Naucratis, produced in the first half of the 6th century BC. We also note that scarabs of the 'Perachora-Rhodes group', like the majority of the specimens distributed in the Mediterranean, present a hieroglyphic legend in positive and are therefore amulets, not seals (Gorton 1996).

Figure 1. Scarab of the 'Perachora–Rhodes Group', Gorton's type XXII (after Gorton 1996, 66 [114]).

Concerning the scarabs from Naucratis, we should refer to a recent article published by Aurélia Masson (2018). We can draw attention to the fact that a small percentage of the specimens from the scarab factory, notably the scaraboids with a ram's protuberance (Figure 2), present a Greek or Orientalising iconography: Pegasus, triton, chimera, griffin, master of animals (Masson 2018: 18, 23). Another group of Mediterranean scarabs, whose origin is not clearly defined, presents an interesting iconography for our purposes. This is the 'group XXXIX', according to the classification of Andrée F. Gorton, which presents several motifs similar to some frequently found on magical gems: a winged Bes, another orientalist figure with four wings, the solar child on the lotus, Heracles against the lion (Figure 3). The themes more widely developed in the field of glyptics from the late Archaic to the Hellenistic and Roman periods thus appear here on faience scarabs. These scarabs are from contexts dated to the 6th–3rd centuries in Carthage, Dermech or Kerkouane. As A.F. Gorton notes, the motifs used are also known from hardstone scarabs of the 5th–4th centuries. In sum, some themes appear on scarabs which are more widely developed in glyptic, from the late Archaic to the Hellenistic and Roman periods: one more aspect which brings us back to the category of seals.

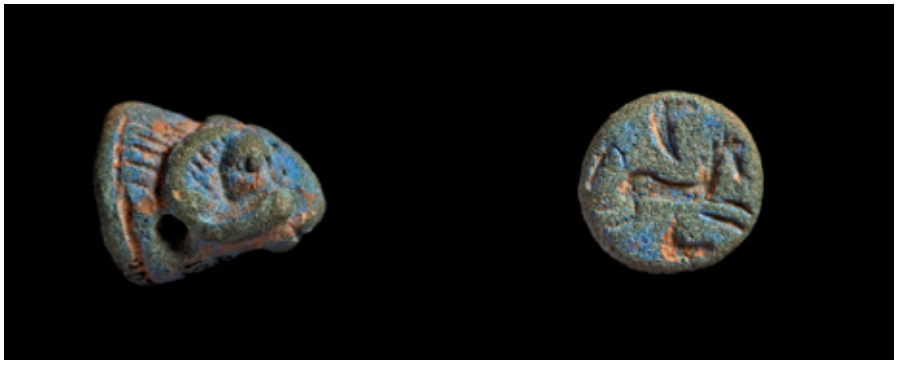

Figure 2. Scaraboid from Naucratis. Ram head. On the underside: Pegasus. 600–570 BC. British Museum. Inv: EA30705. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

Figure 3. Scarabs of Gorton's type XXXIX (after Gorton 1996: 136).

Hard stone seals

Some themes thus appear on scarabs which are more widely developed in glyptic, from the late Archaic to the Hellenistic and Roman periods: this is another aspect which brings us back to the category of seals and engraved stones. During the 6th century, the hard stone seals produced and used in the Mediterranean frequently adopted the shape of the scarab. We can distinguish three groups: the so-called Greco-Phoenician scarabs in green jasper, other more properly Greek seals which are to be linked to Ionia – most often in carnelian, chalcedony... – and finally the well-known scarabs and scaraboids produced in Etruria. It is above all the western regions, namely the Phoenico-Punic area, that have produced most of the scarabs in green jasper: Carthage, Sardinia, Ibiza, Spain, Sicily and North Africa. These gems develop an iconography characteristic of the Orientalising Period, which mixes references to the Levant, Greece and Egypt (Culican 1968: 50–56). John Boardman (1970: 139) notes that the seals bear strange versions of Greek myths – such as Perseus in a lion's skin with winged heels, decapitating the Gorgon – and it is worth noting that we also find the quite singular figure of a 'centaur-Bes' (Boardman 1970: 159). Last but not least, among the Egyptian motifs, the scarab itself appears on the plate of a number of examples, sometimes in hybrid versions, with a human head (Boardman 1970: 182, no 320; 2003: pl. 3 [5/4]). The Etruscan scarabs and scaraboids, for their part, were produced until the 3rd century BC. The mixed and Orientalising iconography of the first period is succeeded by a classical Greek style, while the object retains the unchanged form of the beetle (Giovanelli 2015).

During the Hellenistic Period, the scarab is no longer the most common form of hard stone seal. Nevertheless, a set of scarabs with striated elytra ('rilled scarabs' or 'riffelskarabäen') are still produced, probably in Alexandria. Their manufacturing begins around the end of the 2nd century BC and finishes at the beginning of the Imperial Period (Zweierlein-Diehl 2019). These scarabs are sometimes engraved with Egyptian or Egyptianising motifs, and some of them present figures and inscriptions characteristic of the magical gems – solar child on a lotus, Anubis, Aphrodite Anadyomene, Greek letters and charaktēres. According to Peter Zazoff, these scarabs would be the first examples of magical gems (Zazoff 1983: 204, 211, 304, 355. See also: Quack 2022: 346). Nevertheless, there are examples of scarabs with no inscription on the flat side, and it is possible that some scarabs were inscribed one or two centuries after their production (Zweierlein-Diehl 2019. The hypothesis of Jeffrey Spier that the inscriptions are later additions is widely discussed by the author). A particular case is a chalcedony

scarab from the Cabinet des Médailles (Figure 4) where a tiny solar child on the Lotus is engraved on the prothorax (Zweierlein–Diehl 2019: 309–310, 314). On this exemplar, Ch. Faraone stressed: 'These two images nicely reveal two important transformations of the Roman Period: the intaglio version of Harpocrates' image is added to much older pharaonic amulets, and the traditional Egyptian "*I am*" formula, perhaps originally spoken in Egyptian over the image, has been added as a Greek text' (Faraone 2018: 157).

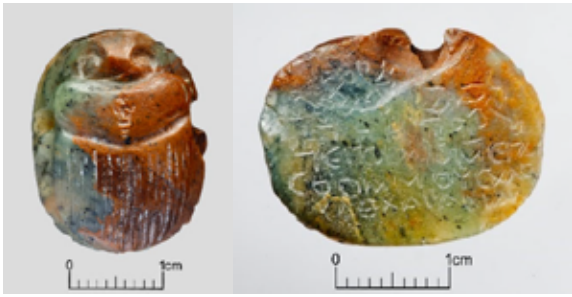

Figure 4. Chaldecony. Rilled scarab, with magical inscriptions and a solar child on the prothorax. Paris, Cabinet des Médailles. Inv.: AA. Seyrig. 242. CBd-3121.

Taking the subject as a whole, it seems logical to consider magical gems in the continuity of Hellenistic and Roman glyptic. Looking at the materials, the magical gems in semi-precious stones differ significantly from the Egyptian scarabs, which are predominantly in faience and steatite. However, in an argumentation aiming to support the idea that the Egyptian scarabs were 'the starting point' from which the magical gems developed, Barb raised the use of hematite as a common point between the magical gems and ancient Egyptian amulets: 'haematite [...] which was never at all used in classical Greek and Roman glyptic, but was a favourite material for Mesopotamian and old-Egyptian seals and amulets, provided the material for almost one-third of all the 'gnostic' gems and for the vast majority of "gynaecological" ones' (Barb 1971: 164). In the same vein, we could also cite the lapis lazuli, a stone rarely used on Greek amulets but frequent in magical glyptic, and a stone which is often linked to the image of Aphrodite and Hathor – who sometimes figures as the 'Lady of the Lapis Lazuli' in the Egyptian sources (Al-Ayedi 2007; Faraone 2011). But we are getting off the subject of the scarab here. Barb considers the whole group of the Egyptians amulets – and not just the scarabs – among which the use of hematite is quite rare in Egyptian productions. His argument cannot be taken as a decisive one, even though his remark concerning the use of hematite specifically for magical stones is interesting to note.

Hybrid scarabs

What then is the place of the scarab in the group of magical gems as a whole? The cases where the gem itself is in the shape of the beetle are relatively rare (Figure 5): fifteen examples are recorded, some of which are perhaps post–antique.[3] The scarab is much more widely present as an engraved motif. It is

[3] CBd–922, –933, –1140, –1640, –2127, –2153, –2214, –2548 (post antique ?), –3121, –3297, –4144, –4204, –4335, –3207, –4758; Scaraboïde: CBd–4335, –4363, –4390.

found in three different forms: the wingless scarab, the winged scarab, and finally, hybrid figures with a scarab body.

Figure 5. Agate, magical gem in the form of a scarab. Paris, Cabinet des Médailles. Inv. : Froehner. 2877. CBd-3297.

The last category is particularly interesting, because the hybrid figures which borrow elements from the scarab belong to a continuing production of compositions relating to both Egypt and the Mediterranean. Magical glyptic presents a wide variety of hybrids in addition to the two most frequent figures — the Anguiped and Chnubis (Endreffy and Nagy 2020: 172). Furthermore, there are a number of composite figures where the scaraboid body is associated with human or animal heads or limbs. A small group of gems present a polymorphic deity with a scarab carapace: five of them following the scheme of the so-called Pantheos (Quack 2006),[4] and two others showing ithyphallic entities — a ram-headed divinity (CBd–3313) and a hawk-headed one (CBd–1662). A scarab with the head of a hawk appears on five uterine gems, above an octopus,[5] and an interesting combination of the bust of the solar child with the body of a scarab is found on three exemplars (Figure 6).[6] Finally, human-headed scarabs occasionally also occur, although they are less prominent since at least a part of these gems is post-antique.[7]

The conception of hybrid scarabs is not an innovation of late magical iconography. During the Pharaonic Period different types of hybrids are developed which borrow elements from the scarab (Dasen 2000: 91). In addition to the god whose head is replaced by a representation of the insect (Stadler 2001: fig. 1) – a combination that does not seem to have been used outside Egypt – a hybrid figure with the body of a scarab appears in a vignette in the *Book of the Dead* where the god Amun is represented as an ithyphallic human figure, with the torso taking the form of a scarab carapace (*BD* 163; De Cenival 1992: 106). It is these figures with a scarab body that have been adapted outside Egypt. One can also think about scarabs with human or animal heads – known since the Hyksos Period, but especially during

[4] CBd–574, –575, –1313, –1778, –3314.
[5] CBd–748, –1054, –3092, –3424, –4734.
[6] CBd–502, –1669, –2054.
[7] CBd–940, –994, –995, –2091, –2851. CBd–940 is dated to the 4th-5th centuries by S. Michel. Other gems present a radiated solar figure, but CBd–994 and –995 are dated to the 17th century by S. Michel; only CBd–2091 is firmly dated to the 2nd century AD by the same author.

the New Kingdom and later – at Naucratis (Dasen 2000: 91, fig. 2c, 96 n. 12–13; Hölbl 1979, Vol. I: 112–118, nos 683–684; 1986, vol. II: pl. 124.3–4; Masson 2018).

Figure 6. Lapis Lazuli. 2nd-3rd c. AD (S. Michel). British Museum G 535. Inv.: EA 35434/OA.10007. CBd-502. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

A Greek adaptation of this scheme can be identified in the 'squatting comasts' (Figure 7), a type of terracotta in the shape of ithyphallic and obese male figures whose body, by its shape and the lines that run through its back, evokes that of a scarab, as demonstrated by Véronique Dasen. She traced how Egyptian divine dwarfs – equated with solar scarabs – travelled to Greece during the oriental period and were adapted by Greek coroplasts in a new visual language (Dasen 2000; 2015a; see also: Pautasso 2005). The pose of the pot-bellied comast derives from that of Ptah-Pataikoi, who is crowned with a scarab or equated with solar scarabs (Dasen 2000: fig. 2a-b). On a new Kingdom mythological papyrus, the dwarf substitutes for the scarab as a form of the sun god symbolising the morning form of Ra (Dasen 1993: 49-50, fig. 5-1). In Phoenician art, the presence of such a figure is more anecdotal, but nonetheless interesting – on a gold plate from Tharros (7th–6th century), a character with the body of a scarab takes part in a procession of Egyptian gods (Dasen 2000: fig. 2b; Hölbl 1986, vol. I: no 95, fig. 57). It is also interesting to note that in Naucratis, the Orientalising iconography on the scarabs in the shape of a ram's head suggests an involvement of Greeks or Phoenicians (Masson 2018: 23, fig. 59a). When the magical gems were produced, the association of the scarab with a human or animal head had already been known for a long time outside Egypt.

Figure 7. Squatting Comast vase, c. 590-570 BC. Allard Pierson Museum, inv.: 3402 (after Orsingher 2020: fig. 4).

The scarab in rituals

In order to understand what the experts behind the composition of the magical gems had in mind when they represented the scarab, we can first refer to the written sources from the time of these objects, i.e. those produced in the period from the first century AD to the end of Antiquity, in particular the *PGM* and *PDM*.

Here, it is interesting to start with a brief look at the latest reference, Horapollo (Quack 2022: 163-164). Through what he tells us about the scarab, we understand that it still held a large part of its original meaning (Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica*, 10). The scarab is defined as a demiurge ('the father') — coming into the world without sexual generation (see also: Plutarch, *Isis and Osiris*, 74) — and as a figure linked to the sun by means of its association with the cat. For centuries before, Pliny the Elder wrote that a kind of beetle with 'very long horns, with two prongs and toothed claws' was sometimes used to treat illness in children (Pliny the Elder XI, XXXIV.1; Trad: H. Rackaham). Here, this is not the *scarabaeus sacer* but rather the *lucanus cervus*, whose mandibles – designated as horns – were the subject of special procedures. These mandibles, detached from the animal's body, were used against children's illnesses and hung around their necks like amulets (Pliny the Elder XI.34.1, XXX.47.3). Pliny also mentions the use of amulets made of emerald stones engraved with the design of a scarab (Pliny the Elder, XXXVII.40.4).

The scarab appears in the *PGM* under the Greek name κάνθαρος and the Egyptian name Khepri appears from its Greek transcriptions: Chphyri(s) (*PGM* VII, 584) or Khphouris (*PGM* XIII, 326). As for the animal, a ritual orders to torture a scarab by bringing it close to a flame in order to induce the epiphany of the solar god – who is obliged to intervene in order to rescue the insect – and to obtain from him the expected action (*PGM* IV 52-85). In only one case does the Magical Papyri mention the use of a hard stone scarab. The passage in question is found in *PGM* V, in the ritual known as the 'Ring of Hermes', which aims to protect the practitioner from the divine forces he invokes (Faraone 2018: 166; Mastrocinque 2014: 42; Vitellozzi 2018, 199-200). It prescribes the engraving of a 'holy Isis' – perhaps an Isis Fortuna – on a green stone scarab, then piercing it and passing a golden thread through it (*PGM* V, 215-239). A scarab corresponding relatively well to this description is kept in the Staatliche Münzsammlung in Munich (Vitellozzi 2018: 200, fig. 10).

The making of an engraved stone with the design of the scarab surrounded by the ouroboros is also prescribed in *PGM* XII (273-279), as we will see below. But the scarab is not only represented on stones: *PGM* II orders the drawing of a scarab under a door (*PGM* II, 160), and *PGM* XXXVI suggests, as a means to counter a spell, to draw – on lead – a figure holding a torch in his right hand and a knife in his left hand, carrying three falcons on his head and a scarab under his feet, with an ouroboros snake under the scarab (*PGM* XXXVI, 178-184). It should also be noted that the scarab is present as a drawing in *PGM* II, and among some charaktēres in *PGM* III (*PGM* III, 297). The scarab is also invoked as a deity in some incantations (*PGM* IV, 942) or in prayers addressed to it (*PGM* IV, 1660). Twice in the *PDM* the officiant presents himself as the scarab or its offspring (*PDM* supp. 65-70; *PDM* supp. 163). It is also prescribed – in an initiation ritual – to recite 'the mysteries of the god who is called "Scarab" ' (*PGM* XIII, 129) and, finally, a passage from a love spell suggests that, in order to obtain the desired effect, the spirit invoked should be threatened with the possibility that the scarab might 'come down' on him (*PGM* XII, 57).

As a whole, we note that the reference to the scarab evokes, more or less directly, the attributes of the insect in the Egyptian tradition. An example is the hymn given by *PGM* IV:

' "Hail", serpent, and stout lion, natural
Sources of fire / And hail, clear water and
Lofty-leafed tree, and you who gather up
Clover from golden fields of beans, and who
Cause gentle foam to gush forth from pure mouths.
Scarab, who drive the orb of fertile fire,
O self-engendered one, because you are
Two-syllabled, AĒ, and are the first-
Appearing one [...]'
(*PGM* IV, 939-945; trad.: E.N. O'Neil in Betz 1986).

This extract occurs in the context of a divination ritual whose aim is to induce a 'direct vision' enabling the practitioner to address the god without intermediary. The hymn undoubtedly evokes the Homeric figure of Proteus and his transformations: '[...] first he turns into a bearded lion, and then into a serpent (δράκων), and a leopard, and a huge boar, then he turns into flowing water, and into a tree, high and leafy' (*Odyssey*, 4.456-458. Trad: A.T. Murray). The rest of the text reveals that the entity invoked in the hymn is Horus-Harpocrates, whose solar aspects are widely developed – especially in verses 996-999: 'whom sunrises and sunsets hymn when you arise and set'. We are thus faced here with an Interpretatio Aegyptiaca of Proteus who – in his multiple transformations (and in his ability to take on all forms of existence – animal or vegetable, solid or liquid, and finally human) – finally turns into a scarab and is then given its attributes – 'Scarab, who drive the orb of fertile fire, O self-engendered one'. First born (Πρωτεὺς) and ageless, the character lent itself particularly well to this transposition, which recognises in him the Egyptian solar demiurge, and perhaps also the 'transformed one of transformation'.

The scarab in solar or Osirian compositions

In the iconographic repertoire of the magical gems the scarab is first and foremost a solar figure, sometimes in association with Osiris. A group of gems present the single image of a scarab surrounded by the ouroboros (Figure 8). This group seems to echo a prescription of the *PGM* XII which recommends engraving the drawing of the scarab on a stone:

'Helios is to be engraved on a heliotrope stone as follows: A thick–bodied snake in the shape of a wreath should be [shown] having its tail in its / mouth. Inside [the circle formed by] the snake let there be a sacred scarab [beetle surrounded by] rays. On the reverse side of the stone, you are to inscribe the name in hieroglyphics, as the prophets pronounce [it]. Then, having consecrated [the ring], wear it when you are pure'. (*PGM* XII: 273–279, translation: M. Smith in Betz 1986. On this passage: Faraone 2018: 165–166).

Even though none of the gems, to our knowledge, correspond exactly to this prescription – with rays around the scarab and a divine name in hieroglyphs on the reverse – it is interesting to note that the text of *PGM* clearly interprets the diagram of the scarab in the ouroboros as a representation of Helios (Delatte and Derchain 1964: 46–49).

In other compositions, the scarab has the same meaning. A hematite kept in the Walters Art Gallery (Figure 9) depicts on one side a scarab wrapped in a spiral of text composed entirely of solar formulae (Bonner 1950: 157, 294 [D 251]; Delatte and Derchain 1964: 49).

Figure 8. Jasper. Paris, Cabinet des Médailles. Inv.: 58.2250. CBd-3308.

Figure 9. Jasper. Paris, Baltimore, Walters Art Museum. Inv.: 42.872. CBd-1430. Creative Commons License.

Figure 10. Jasper. 3rd century AD (S. Michel). British Museum. Inv.: EA 56134/OA.9623. CBd-503. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

In a few cases, the insect is more specifically portrayed as the rising sun. Perhaps the most obvious example is its association with the solar child – usually identified with Harpocrates. A jasper kept in the British Museum shows the solar child sitting on a scarab, which graphically takes the place of the usual lotus flower (Figure 10), whereas, as mentioned above, three other gems present a solar child with the body of a scarab (Figure 6).

As formulated by Jan Assmann: 'D'après la théorie de la cosmogonie de Hermopolis, le Dieu du soleil s'éleva de cette boue primordiale, encore une fois par une autogenèse spontanée, en tant qu'enfant sur la fleur du lotus' (Assmann 2015: 24). It seems that this is precisely the idea to which these images referred to. In addition to the already mentioned tiny solar child engraved on the prothorax of the 'rilled scarab' (Figure 4), a jasper from the Skoluda collection presents the solar divinity in its three phases of rising (Harpocrates-headed scarab), noon (Helios) and setting (Serapis) (CBd–1669; Mastrocinque 2019: 1296; Michel 2001: 34).

The scarab still appears as a solar figure on a gem from the Montfaucon collection where two female figures frame the beetle, their hands raised and turned towards it (Figure 11). The composition can be compared with a jasper from the Getty Museum where Isis and Horus perform the same gesture on either side of an obelisk (CBd-2382). We recognise here the Egyptian gesture of adoration – often performed by female figures or cynocephalus – towards solar deities or symbols.

On a jasper from Munich, the two cynocephali are positioned on either side of an Osiris surmounted by the winged scarab (CBd–2652). The convergence between Ra and Osiris is a matter of debate that we will not address here (see Stadler 2001: 73, 77–78 and, a contrario, Smith 2017: 299–344). Nevertheless, this composition could be explained considering that, as M.A. Stadler has shown, in Ptolemaic and Roman times Osiris is identified with the scarab and referred to as the 'Sonnenkäfer des Westens' (Stadler 2001, 73, 77–78. See also: Quack 2022: 165). The ultimate development of the relationship between Osiris and the scarab is found in a myth transcribed in the Jumilhac papyrus (IV 2-4, lower register) dated to the beginning of the Ptolemaic period (Quack 2008a). Thoth is said to have discovered, at the moment of Osiris' embalming, a scarab hidden under the head of the deceased god. The beetle is buried in the city of Abydos, which is called the 'city of the scarab' (*nw.t hprr*), for this reason. A mention of the scarab

emerging from the head of Osiris is already found in the Brooklyn papyrus 47.218.84 dated to the Saite period (see Meeks 2006: 299-302). This is the Osirian scarab, a winged scarab that flew from Heliopolis to Mesen, i.e. Sile, in Egyptian: Tjarou. The association of the winged scarab with the head of the deceased is an idea already found in the New Kingdom (Arnette 2020: 57-58) but which – as we see here – finds late developments in mythological texts. These developments also concern iconography, since Joachim-Friedrich Quack notes that Late Period coffins and mummy masks in particular often feature a scarab on top of the head (Quack 2022: 165).

Figure 11. Gem from the collection Montfaucon (after Mastrocinque 2004: 223 [132]).

We thus find in the glyptic the double symbolic value of the scarab linked on the one hand to the rising sun and on the other hand to the Osirian theology previously mentioned. Interestingly, as William Ward underlined, almost all the episodes of the Osirian myth were already represented on the Mediterranean hard stone scarabs of the beginning of the first millennium BC (Ward 1970; 1994: 193).

The winged scarabs as an abbreviation of the *naiskos*

The equivalence in importance between the winged solar disc and the winged scarab as universal protectors seems to be relatively clear, as it appears in the texts covering the interior façade of the enclosure wall of the Horus temple at Edfu. The text recounts a particular episode of the rivalry between Horus and Seth, where Horus becomes the defender of Ra-Horakhty and the winner of the revolt against him. Horus Behdety is in the boat of Ra when he spots the rebels about to carry out their plot. Taking the form of the winged solar disc, he strikes relentlessly at the opponent chasing him from the sky, in Egypt and in Nubia. Once complete victory is assured, Ra-Horakhty orders Thoth: 'Thou shall make this winged disk in every place in which I have rested, in the places of the gods in Upper Egypt and in the places of the gods in Lower Egypt' (*The legend of the winged disc*, 12,1; Fairman 1935: 35; Quack 2022: 303-305). Here, Horus Behdety is the morning sun who, thanks to his wings, spreads out across the sky to wage the battle against the enemy. Like the raptor that hovers in circles, the panoptic view that he then carries over the whole of the earth gives him a power of universal protection (Zaki 2004: 578). The order given to Thoth sounds like an etiological episode explaining the habit of systematically placing a solar disc at the top of steles and doors. It is important to note that the references to the winged solar disc and the winged scarab are employed here alternatively in the same sentences (Fairman 1935: 35–36).

On the gems, the winged scarab is regularly positioned above the head of a deity, most often Sarapis, where it seems to replace the thunderbolt as an attribute of the god (Dasen 2009: 281). In other cases, it is most often situated at the very top of the composition – although it can also be found at the bottom – and then occupies the entire width of the image (Figure 12)[8].

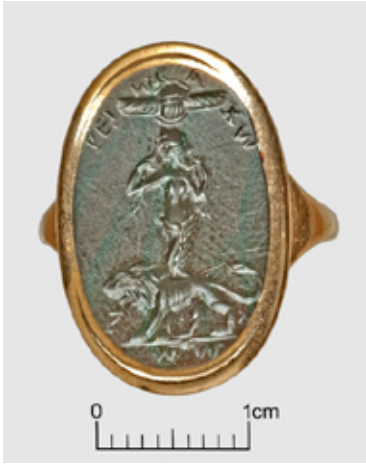

Figure 12. Touchstone. Paris, Cabinet des Médailles. Inv.: Reg. M.6100. CBd-3547.

Figure 13. Chrysolite. Amulet, 'Isis-Tyche standing on pedestal in a shrine' University of Michigan, Kelsey Museum of Archaeology. Inv.: KM 1963.4.5. CBd-1290.

We can thus argue that, in the magical glyptic, the winged scarab takes the place of the winged sun disk, which is almost totally absent. This is brought to light by a gem of the University of Michigan (Figure 13). An Isis Tyche is placed in the frame of the façade of a columned aedicula with a semi-circular

[8] Winged scarab at the top of the image: CBd–2, –198, –576, –616, –699, –772, –773, –774, –841, –1046, –1098, –1237, –1241, –1242, –1243, –1244, –1246, –1247, –1290, –2652, –3246, –3315, –3547, –4254; Winged scarab at the bottom of the image: –392, –1272, –1273, –1391, –1508, –2086, –2087, –3300, –3562, –4173. Only twice is there a winged scarab in the middle of the composition: CBd–1752 and –1776.

pediment decorated in its centre with the winged scarab. The winged scarab is thus represented here on a Roman–type monument in the usual place of the winged solar disc, which was omnipresent on Egyptian and Egyptianising temples, *naiskoi* and stelae in the First Millennium BC (Barcat 2018; Hermary 1985; Parayre 1990). Representations of this type, although very popular elsewhere – and still in Roman times – are very rare on gems. The only example would be the blue glass paste gem from the Staatliche Museen in Berlin (CBd–1984). The object allegedly dates from the 18th century, but it could be a copy of an ancient original (Philipp 1986: 32 [8]). This infrequency is probably due to the fact that the representation of a rectangular element is not well suited to oval shapes since it considerably reduces the space devoted to the image. The engravers largely preferred the ouroboros, another type of sacred frame that both encloses and protects (Endreffy and Nagy 2020: 168–170; Reemes 2015). We can thus suggest that the winged scarab at the top of the image is a kind of 'abbreviation' of the *naiskos* which guarantees the integrity of everything it overhangs – or underlines –, conferring on the represented subject a sacredness equivalent to that of the *hiera* or of the divinity itself.

The magical scarab

Armand Delatte and Philippe Derchain (1964: 43) cite an exorcism described in the inscription of Ieou and transcribed in *PGM* V, where the magician makes the Akephalos say: 'my name is a heart surrounded by a snake' (*PGM* V, 155). This passage can be compared with *PGM* XII (273–279) where, as we have already noted, the scarab is mentioned in the ouroboros. The texts therefore refer sometimes to the scarab and sometimes to the heart in the middle of the circle formed by the snake, but no stone known to us shows the representation of a heart in this place. Perhaps the text of the *PGM* V implicitly refers to a scarab by the term 'heart'. In addition to the role of the scarab as protector of the heart, as known in the *Book of the Dead* (30B), we think that several other elements allow us to formulate this hypothesis.

If we follow the reflection developed by A. Delatte and Ph. Derchain, one figure, the ibis, seems to link the scarab and the heart (Delatte and Derchain 1964: 47–49). The demotic papyrus of the Louvre transcribes a ritual in which the officiant claims to be both Thoth – 'the noble ibis, the ape of Edfu' – and the scarab (Louvre, E3229; Betz 1986: 329; Quack 2008b). Moreover, for Horapollo, the ibis is — after the cat and the bull — the third animal to be associated with the scarab. This is the one 'with a single horn' — that is to say, the scarab *hypselogenia* — which has a rostrum in front of its head (Horapollo 10; Petrie 1917: 3). It could be added that, under the entry for heart, Horapollo laconically states: 'When they would denote the heart, they delineate the ibis' (Horapollo 36; trad: Alexander Turner Cory, 1840). N. West points out that, during the Ptolemaic Period, the second form of the ibis hieroglyph can be used to signify various things, including the heart (*jb*), the ibis protecting the heart, as well as the scarab (West 2011: 151).

The relationship between the heart and the ibis, already established by the fact that Thoth is sometimes referred to as the 'heart of Ra' (Kurth 2008: 241, 262 n. 217), can also be understood if we consider that it stems from a confusion between the ibis and the Bennu (heron), the Phoenix of the Greeks. Indeed, before the Ptolemaic Period, it is the latter and not the ibis that maintains a close relationship with both the heart and the scarab. The Bennu is mentioned with the scarab in spells 30 and 30B of the *Book of the Dead*, and like the scarab, it is one of the most frequent motifs on heart amulets (Sousa 2011: 16; Tallet 2013: 180–181). Representations of the ibis-headed Phoenix are found in Edfu, which suggests a shift towards confusing between the ibis and the Bennu, explaining the later links between the ibis and the scarab (Baum 2007: 338–342; Berlandini 2012: 117). This may be the reason for the composition of the greywacke gem of the Cabinet des Médailles, where the ibiocephalic Thoth – on the crocodiles – is

accompanied at his feet by a scarab and an ibis symmetrically arranged in front and behind him (Figure 14).

As is well known, the name Khepri is very similar to the verb *kheper* 'to come into existence', 'to take form'. The epithet *kheper kheperou* (*ḫpr ḫprw*), literally 'the transformed one of transformation' is attached to it (Vernus 2005: 441). As the seat of the soul, the access of the deceased to the afterlife depends on the heart, and the scarab guarantees the good progress of *psychostasis*. This is expressed in spells 30 and 30B of the *Book of the Dead*: 'La transformation (*ḫprw*) en scarabée ou en Phénix–benou fait partie des souhaits de tout défunt égyptien, car elle lui garantira la mobilité et la faculté de se transformer dans l'au–delà' (Tallet 2013: 180–181). According to M. Malaise (1975: 108), if the heart was conceived as the engine of *ḫpr.w* – i.e. of metamorphoses, or of transformations (*ḫprw*), we can assume that the beetle – protector of the heart – ultimately becomes an equivalent.

Figure 14. Greywacke. Paris, Cabinet des Médailles. Inv.: 58.2180B. CBd-3270.

In sum, magical gems can be read on two different levels. In the first instance, they are amulets featuring figures that directly help the wearer – the scarab as universal protector –, while the second instance concerns their hermetic interpretation. As Rogiéro Sousa and Ragnhild Bjerre Finnestad have pointed out, the process of mummification may have served as a conceptual model for the alchemists who could hope to gain access to a communication with cosmic forces by following a ritual path that retraced the one of the dead aspiring to spiritual rebirth (Finnestad 1997: 214; Sousa 2011: 260). This path mobilises the key notion of 'transformations' in such a way that the Egyptian scarab embodies the very process that allows the practitioner to take power over reality.

Conclusion

Egyptian scarabs and magical gems are two categories of objects which are closely related, even if there is no clear nor direct link between them. A possible element of filiation which lies in some scarabs in hard stone possibly produced in Egypt (in Alexandria) but these objects belong to the tradition of the Hellenistic seals. This raises the importance of the Mediterranean reception of the scarab, a long-term process which goes back to the beginning of the First Millennium BC. This reception concerns the scarab in its different aspects. In particular hybrid scarabs – primarily conceived in Pharaonic Egypt – found

an ideal context of development, first of all in the Orientalising art. Then, in the following centuries, and until Late Antiquity, hard stone carving offers an ideal support for the development of these hybrid figures. The subject has been slightly evoked here and obviously deserves a more detailed study.

The scarab presents a specificity in that it consists both of an object in itself – the support for the iconography – and an element of the engraved images, once hard stone carving is involved. The scarab is an amulet – not only as an object, but also as an animal – and all its representations are potentially loaded with an apotropaic value. When it comes to the image of the scarab in magical glyptic, the question of the transformation of the meaning is central, as laid out in the introduction. As has been largely developed recent years, the peculiarity of these objects is that they mobilise different kinds of traditional religious motifs for a purpose specific to the individuality of the owner, and often relate to very prosaic issues, such as abdominal aches (see, for example: Dasen 2015b). Focusing on Egyptian motives, funerary imagery is frequently present on stones which are conceived for the living (Barcat 2020). This is equally true for the scarab; however, we have shown here that the Egyptian understanding of the beetle seems to have been largely preserved. This is at least what we understand from the texts of Late Antiquity: the scarab remains the 'father', the demiurge; it represents the rising sun – sometimes transposed as the setting sun –, and takes on the function of a universal protector. All these aspects are widely attested in the documentation of the Hellenistic and Roman periods; the Latin texts echo the Egyptian ones, and the examples raised in the *PGM/PDM* are also consistent. This does not mean that the scarab is used by the magician in the same manner as in Ancient Egypt, but it underlines the fact that, even if profound changes occur at the end of the Hellenistic period (Gordon 2011: 43), the magical tradition persists (Quack 2013). In Roman glyptic, the use of the scarab shows how the beetle became a universal magical item, far removed from the context of ancient Egypt, but still consistent with the Pharaonic conceptions in its latest developments.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank, in particular, all those who contributed to this article: Marie–Lys Arnette, Árpad M. Nagy, Joachim F. Quack, Véronique Dasen, and Sterling Ellsworth for proofreading. We are also grateful to the reviewers for their sound advice. This work has been carried out thanks to the support of the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF).

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The role of Greek loanwords in Coptic magical texts. Mere technical terms or indicators of scribal education?

Krisztina Hevesi[1]

Abstract

Owing to the well-known fact that Greek loanwords play an important role in the Coptic language, their presence in Coptic magical texts is anything but surprising. As is the case with literary and documentary texts, several kinds of Greek loanwords are common in each and every part of spells and magical recipes. According to the wide-spread theory, most of these magical attestations are related to the Greek-Coptic language contact and mainly concern technical terms being untranslatable by native Coptic words or possessing different connotations to their Coptic equivalents.

The study focuses on the examination of the Coptic magical texts from a lexical perspective, with particular interest in the function of Greek loanwords in these contexts. Were these borrowings the mere result of the linguistic impact of Greek on Coptic and the influence of Greek magical practice on that of Coptic? Why were Greek loanwords used when Coptic equivalents could have taken their places? How is this phenomenon connected to the scribal circle that created, edited and copied magical manuscripts?

In the present article, I introduce some specific case studies of the use of Greek loanwords in Coptic magical texts[2] and draw attention to some of the less studied aspects of the subject such as preferences in those cases where both Coptic and Greek words could have been chosen to express an idea.

Keywords

Greek loanwords; Coptic; magical texts; textual tradition; technical terms; scribal education

Introduction

Making up approximately twenty percent of the Coptic vocabulary (Kasser 1991: 217), Greek loanwords occur very often in Coptic texts, and so their presence in the magical material is just as natural as in any other textual genre. It is a well-known fact that Greek words began to be adopted by Egyptians through the contact of speakers of the two languages, which was significant from the first millennium BC (see Bagnall 2021: 33-39; Richter 2009a: 403), although their incorporation into the Egyptian language was a slower and gradual process. Although their occurrence in Demotic was rather scarce, their number grew significantly in Coptic.

Despite the fact that many studies have been conducted in the field of Greek loanwords in Coptic,[3] with the exception of brief publications or passages in editions (for example, sporadically in Richter 2009a), magical texts have not been extensively examined from this point of view yet. In general, when the subject is discussed in relation to Coptic magic and medicine, as is the case with legal documents, the

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[2] The abbreviations of the papyri and ostraca editions follow the Checklist of editions of Greek, Latin, Demotic and Coptic papyri, ostraca and tablets, available on ‹http://papyri.info/docs/checklist›.

[3] The Database and Dictionary of Greek Loanwords in Coptic project located in Berlin is a leading research group in the subject. For the sake of example, the whole volume of Grossman *et al.* 2017 deals with the topic, as does E.O.D. Love's work (Love 2016).

importance of technical terms is emphasised, and the main reason for using Greek loanwords is attributed to the necessity of special vocabulary (although in a slightly different way than in the case of Arabic loanwords, see Richter 2009a: 425-426).

The present investigation aims to provide a more detailed explanation for the choice of Greek loanwords in Coptic magical texts than the idea that they represent purely technical terms. After a short general introduction to the field of Greek loanwords in Coptic, I will introduce the topic with a focus on magical sources, through a few case studies of Greek loanwords – or rather the main semantic and functional categories they belong to – and analyse their occurrence and the motivation for their application in a magical setting.

General facts about the appearance of Greek loanwords in the Coptic language

Linguistic borrowing can and must be examined in relation to textual genre, individuals who produced and copied manuscripts, and their geographical locations; Greek loanwords are used differently in different Coptic dialects (see Behlmer 2017: 458; cf. Grossman 2013: 218 and Boud'hors 2017, especially on page 425). In the case of magical material, I intend to focus on the first of these points, since the latter two are usually obscure because of insufficient archaeological data and thus cannot properly be investigated. However, as a result of this lack of knowledge concerning these questions, my final aim will be to use my initial conclusions to make proposals concerning magical practitioners and the socio-cultural milieu in which they worked.

One of the obvious stages where the borrowing of Greek words can exceedingly be experienced is the translation of texts, especially Biblical and liturgical texts, from Greek originals into Coptic. It is not the aim of this article to present the phenomenon in detail, although it cannot go without mention that specific Greek words (including both lexical items and grammatical function words), phrases and even grammatical structures were incorporated into Coptic translations (an introduction to Greek loanwords in Coptic can be found in Grossman 2013: 118-120). Apart from these sources, scientific and legal texts may also have been translated from Greek which could result in a similar outcome, although in these cases, the use of loanwords is most often associated with technical terms in Egyptological scholarship.

Already from the Saite but especially from the Ptolemaic period onwards, Greek gained more and more importance in Egypt, as it became the administrative language of the country (Bagnall 2021: 37-39; Richter 2009a: 405). Later, not only was it the main language of administration, but important treatises in, for example, medicine were also produced in Greek. Similarly, the number of Greek magical manuscripts is extensive, predominantly from the period between the 2nd century BC and the 5th century AD (see Betz 1986: xli). Without doubt, these traditions considerably influenced the Egyptian magical practice, and Egyptian magical texts are particularly remarkable from the point of view of the early presence of Greek loanwords (already in Demotic, see Dieleman 2005: 110-120, 308-312 and Richter 2009a: 406-408) and the development of the Coptic script itself (see the article of J.F. Quack 2017) but the spread of loanwords can be explained by more complex motives than the effect of translations or the sheer need for specific vocabulary. A further explanation for the presence of Greek words in a Coptic text might also be the endeavor to give a Greek character to the text, primarily a result of the prestige of the Greek language (Torallas Tovar 2013: 110).

Greek loanwords in Coptic magical sources: approach and case studies

When studying Greek loanwords in Coptic magical sources, apart from the general Greek vocabulary common in other text types, numerous words have either a specific meaning in magical contexts, or occur almost exclusively in magical material. There might be several reasons for the choice of particular

Greek loanwords, and these can only be discovered by a thorough examination which would extend beyond the limits of the present article. However, I propose here a rough classification of the types of Greek loanwords that are most commonly attested in the Coptic magical corpus.

Partly following the work of Heike Behlmer, in which she also proposed a system of classification for lexical borrowings in hagiographical texts (Behlmer 2017: 471), I classify Greek loanwords according to their semantic and functional fields in order to refine our understanding of their integration into texts (see Table 1 and 2; these do not provide a complete enumeration of Greek words and their orthographies in Coptic magical texts, still less in Coptic more generally, but rather present a few examples).

Table 1. Thematic and functional grouping of Greek loanwords in Coptic magical texts with some of the most general examples.

Thematic field	**Function**	**Greek**	**Coptic (most common Sahidic orthography)**	**General meaning in Coptic**	**Meaning in magical texts**
Christian/Biblical vocabulary	General use	παντοκράτωρ	ⲡⲁⲛⲧⲟⲕⲣⲁⲧⲱⲣ	Almighty	Almighty
Prayers	Christian formulaic use	ἀμήν	ϩⲁⲙⲏⲛ	Amen	Amen
Literary vocabulary	General use	κόσμος	ⲕⲟⲥⲙⲟⲥ	adornment, ornament; order, organization; expanse, wealth; world	world
	General use, asking for magical help	βοηθέω	ⲃⲟⲏⲑⲉⲓ	to help	to help
Daily life	General use	ἐργαστήριον	ⲉⲣⲅⲁⲥⲧⲏⲣⲓⲟⲛ	workshop	workshop
Particles, connjunctions		γάρ	ⲅⲁⲣ	(always depends on the context)	(always depends on the context)
		δέ	ⲇⲉ		
		ὥς	ϩⲱⲥ		

Table 2. Thematic and functional grouping of Greek loanwords in Coptic magical texts with some of the most common examples.

Thematic field	Function	Greek	Coptic (most common Sahidic orthography)	General meaning in Coptic	Meaning in magical texts
Religious/Magical	General use	δαίμων	ⲇⲁⲓⲙⲱⲛ	demon, spirit	demon, spirit
		ἄγγελος	ⲁⲅⲅⲉⲗⲟⲥ	messenger, angel	messenger, angel
Practice	General use; synonyms; fixed expressions	ἀπολογία	ⲁⲡⲟⲗⲟⲅⲓⲁ	defense, response	spell (speech), incantation
		δύναμις	ⲇⲩⲛⲁⲙⲓⲥ	power, force	magical power, force
		ἐξουσία	ⲉⲝⲟⲩⲥⲓⲁ	authority, power, right	magical power, authority
		εἰκών	ⲉⲓⲕⲱⲛ	image, likeness; appearance, form, shape, outline; picture	icon, manner, image, appearance
		ζῴδιον	ⲥⲱⲧⲓⲟⲛ	picture, sign, drawing, symbol	magical figurine, drawing
		παρακαλέω	ⲡⲁⲣⲁⲕⲁⲗⲉⲓ	to call to s.; to beseech, entreat, beg	to invoke
Ingredients	Technical terms; synonyms	ἀκακία	ⲁⲕⲁⲕⲓⲁ, ⲁⲕⲁⲕⲓⲁⲥ, ⲕⲁⲕⲓⲁⲥ	acacia; acacia-juice	acacia; acacia-juice
		λίβανος	ⲗⲓⲃⲁⲛⲟⲥ	frankincense	frankincense
		σμύρνα	ⲥⲙⲏⲣⲛⲏⲥ	myrrh	myrrh
Magical exhortations	Signal words (if they occur together)	ταχύ	ⲧⲁⲭⲏ	to make haste, to hasten to do s.th.	quickly
		ἤδη	ⲏⲇⲏ/ⲉⲧⲓ	already; quickly, immediately, straightaway	immediately
Replacement formulae	Signal words	δεῖνα δεῖνος	ⲇ̅ⲇ̅	NN; so-and-so	NN; so-and-so
Voces magicae	Signal words	αεηιουω	ⲁⲉⲏⲓⲟⲩⲱ	-	Greek vowel series (seven vowels)
		ἄλφα λεὼν φωνὴ ἀνήρ	ⲁⲗⲫⲁ ⲗⲉⲱⲛ ⲫⲱⲛⲏ ⲁⲛⲏⲣ	The four living creatures[4]	The four living creatures

The first few groups, encompassing Greek conjunctions, particles and expressions related to Christian liturgy, Gnosticism and daily life are attested in several genres of Coptic texts, and so are not specific to magical texts. Consequently, their understanding would require a more extensive study than is possible here; thus I exclude them from the current examination (see some examples in Table 1). However, it is important to draw the attention to an interesting phenomenon: some common Greek loanwords underwent a semantic shift or narrowing compared to their application in non-magical manuscripts, thus their meaning became limited to a specific field in magical texts, although they still fill in more or

[4] The four living creatures occur for example in Ezekiel 1:14 and Revelation 4:6-8.

less the same function in these as in other genres. Although in a few rare cases, it is rather the function that went through a change. For this, **ⲃⲟⲏⲑⲉⲓ** 'to help' (from the Greek βοηθέω) is an example which usually appears as an exhortation specifically addressed to higher entities to ask for magical power and help. For instance, the unpublished P. Stras. K 228 (whose edition I am presently working on) probably begins with a variant of this word which unfortunately falls into a lacuna but otherwise recurs at the beginning or end of texts (see also P. Berlin 22185 in Satzinger 1967: 113-117).

As stated above, in most cases, borrowings from Greek are understood to be related to technical jargon, usually the names of ingredients; thus nouns are generally brought into focus when it comes to the study of Greek loanwords in magic-related content (see Richter 2009a: 408 with a reference to Dieleman 2005: 110-120). However, these nouns are not the only witnesses of linguistic contact (see the different categories in Table 2) and interestingly, they were not exclusively borrowed when a particular word could not have been substituted by a Coptic equivalent. The idea of treating this assumption with caution is not new: Kasser has already drawn the attention to the flexibility and richness of Coptic language, which would have been adequate to express most of those words that came to be replaced by Greek loanwords (Kasser 1991: 217). The interchange between Coptic terms and related Greek loanwords can also be pointed out if we examine hagiographical texts (for further details, see Behlmer 2017: 468). Alongside the borrowing of technical terms, a second concept has been emphasised by Tonio Sebastian Richter, who states that in the case of Arabic loanwords, the main purpose of their use was the expression of more specific referents ('trademarks'). The use of loanwords to express unique, previously absent connotations was a motivation for the borrowing of words from both Greek and Arabic (Richter 2009a: 425).

The Greek ἄγγελος is very frequently attested in Coptic (**ⲁⲅⲅⲉⲗⲟⲥ** 'messenger, angel') and it might be assumed that the word was borrowed due to the spread of Christianity; nonetheless, its attestation as a loanword in Egyptian precedes its appearance in Coptic sources. One of its first known occurrences is in the famous magical text, P. BM 10808 whose purpose is probably to grant favor and love. The papyrus can be dated to the 2nd–3rd century AD and is currently under investigation by Joachim Friedrich Quack. In this manuscript and a joining fragment from Oxford, the word appears in Demotic transcription *(ʒngylws)* and it is simply understood as a 'higher being' (and not really an angel or messenger) who helps the ritualist. *ʒngylws* occurs with the same orthography and a divine determinative in P. Louvre 3229, also dated to the 3rd century AD (personal discussion with Prof. Quack, some details in Quack 2017: 64 and Love 2016: 20, n. 28; see the text itself in Faraone and Torallas Tovar 2022: 298–299, col. I, line 4, transl. by K. Dosoo, M. Escolano-Poveda, J. Johnson, E. Love, A. Singer, Greek text by C. Faraone and S. Torallas Tovar). Generally in Coptic magical texts, the meaning of the word corresponds with that of religious texts but as this example shows, the need for this borrowing did not lie exclusively in the lack of a native Egyptian word with a similar meaning, since its first use was in a context and with a meaning very different from that which became customary later.

Some examples for those cases in which loanwords in magical texts have different connotations, and specifically, a more limited range of meaning, than the original one, are **ⲁⲡⲟⲗⲟⲅⲓⲁ**, **ⲇⲩⲛⲁⲙⲓⲥ/ⲉⲝⲟⲩⲥⲓⲁ**, **ⲥⲱⲧⲓⲟⲛ** and **ⲡⲁⲣⲁⲕⲁⲗⲉⲓ**. While the general translation of **ⲁⲡⲟⲗⲟⲅⲓⲁ** is 'defense, response', in magic, the word denotes 'ritual speech/spell' and appears, for example, in a very common *formula,* **ⲕ̅ⲥⲱⲧⲙ̅/ⲉⲓⲣⲉ/ϫⲱⲕ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ⲛ̅ⲥⲁⲛⲁⲣⲟⲓ ⲛⲅϫⲱⲕ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ⲛ̅ⲥⲁⲛⲁⲧⲟⲟⲧ ⲛⲉⲍⲃⲏⲩⲉ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ ⲙ̅ⲡⲁⲍⲏⲧ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲛ̄ⲁⲡⲟⲗⲟⲅⲓⲁ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ ⲙ̅ⲡⲁⲗⲗⲁⲥ** 'listen to/complete/fulfill the things of my mouth and fulfill the things of my hands and all the things of my heart and all the spells of my tongue' (for a list of attestations, see Hevesi 2018: 52-54, 77-78). It is clear that **ⲇⲩⲛⲁⲙⲓⲥ** and **ⲉⲝⲟⲩⲥⲓⲁ** came from general Christian usage to magical texts, although I listed them under 'practice' in the table above, since their meaning has slightly changed in magic. **ⲇⲩⲛⲁⲙⲓⲥ** means 'magical power' like **ⲉⲝⲟⲩⲥⲓⲁ**; **ⲍⲓⲕⲱⲛ** refers to 'image, likeness' in a general sense (thus it could also be classified as a general religious term), while **ⲥⲱⲧⲓⲟⲛ** occurs in relation to ritual drawings, figurines and any kind of magical representations that have to be prepared throughout the ritual. Belonging to the most crucial parts of ritual acts, the meanings of these words have become

reserved to specific fields in magical context, although the meaning of ϩικων has not changed considerably in comparison to other genres. The two latter words, ϩικων and ϲωτιον are also attested together, maybe alluding to an 'iconic form of an image' (ϩικων ⲙⲡϲⲱϯⲟⲩⲛ, for example in P. Heid. Inv. Kopt. 514, see in Bilabel and Grohmann 1934: 388-392 or, as Korshi Dosoo suggested in a personal correspondence by reconstructing the lacuna in a different way: 'place [ⲕⲱ] the icon on the image'). Aside from magical texts, these two terms are used more broadly to refer to images in Coptic. If we examine the case of ⲇⲩⲛⲁⲙⲓⲥ and ⲉⲝⲟⲩⲥⲓⲁ, we will experience that the Coptic ϭⲟⲙ 'power, strength, might, authority' is also very often found in the same positions and contexts in magical sources which confirms that these three words were synonyms.

Nonetheless, the case of ⲡⲁⲣⲁⲕⲁⲗⲉⲓ 'to invoke' is slightly different, for not only are there Coptic equivalents for this word but it is often included together with them in idiomatic phrases. ϲⲟⲡⲥ 'pray, entreat, comfort' and ϯⲱⲃϩ 'pray, entreat' usually appear at the beginning of spells, being verbs of request. Most probably, these words correlate with the same or very similar semantic fields but they can be included in one and the same *formula* being a frozen expression in Coptic magic. P. Mich. Inv. 1523 begins with the following sentence: ϯⲥⲁⲡⲥ̅ⲡ̅ ϯⲡⲁⲣⲁⲕⲁⲗⲉⲓ ϯⲧⲱⲃϩ̅ ⲙ̅ⲙⲱⲧⲛ̅ ⲙ̅ⲙⲁⲣⲧⲩⲣⲟⲥ ⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲁⲃ 'I entreat, I invoke, I beseech you, holy martyrs!' (Meyer and Smith 1999: 217-218; Worrell 1935: 3-4). It is known that the ϯⲥⲟⲡⲥ̅ ⲁⲩⲱ ϯⲡⲁⲣⲁⲕⲁⲗⲓ formula was taken over from liturgical texts (see Mihálykó 2019: 31) and it mainly refers to the beginning of an invocation or request in magic. Its meaning is also close to ⲉⲡⲓⲕⲁⲗⲉⲓ from the Greek ἐπικαλέω 'to invoke, call upon to s.o./s.th.' and its Coptic synonym ⲱϣ ⲉϩⲣⲁⲓ 'call upon' in magical context (on the use of the Greek verbs ἐπικαλέω and παρακαλέω, see Dosoo 2021a: 201-202). The situation is similar with the two Coptic and one Greek verbs of adjuration: ⲱⲣⲕ 'to adjure, invoke', ⲧⲁⲣⲕⲟ 'to make swear, adjure' (the causative form of ⲱⲣⲕ) and ⲉⲝⲟⲣⲕⲓⲍⲉⲓ 'to conjure, adjure' (from the Greek ἐξορκίζω), although the latter verb can be attested in Coptic magical sources only once (in P. K 5520 from Vienna, see Stegemann 1934: 16 and Till 1935: 203; on the context of verbs of adjuration, see Dosoo 2021b: 141-142). Although in other, especially literary contexts, it was often used with the meaning 'banish, exile' (see one of the numerous examples in Mina 1937: 29, line 7-8), interestingly, ⲉⲝⲟⲣⲕⲓⲍⲉⲓ did not become as common as ⲡⲁⲣⲁⲕⲁⲗⲉⲓ in Coptic magical texts (and for this reason, I have not included it in Table 2), but it was rather replaced by its two Coptic equivalents.

As expected, some of the Greek loanwords do indeed fulfill the role of technical terms. For example, special ingredients used for mixtures and offerings are commonly referred to by Greek terms, although the mere demand for new words is not a sufficient explanation for their borrowing in all cases. It seems that Greek terminology is typically adopted for plant names, although most of these plants had already been employed for medicine and magic in the Pharaonic period, thus they had an Egyptian name. Among the most frequently used vegetal elements in Coptic magic, we find, for example, acacia, frankincense and myrrh. Frankincense, usually expressed by the words *ʿntjw* and *snṯr,* was prescribed, among others, for eye diseases, tooth problems, snake bites as well as gynecological issues (Nunn 2006: 143, 205).

A version of the Greek ἀκακία (ⲁⲕⲁⲕⲓⲁ, ⲁⲕⲁⲕⲓⲁⲥ and ⲕⲁⲕⲓⲁⲥ) occurs in some magical and medico-magical manuscripts, alluding to the gum arabic tree, known as *Acacia nilotica*/*Acacia arabica* and *Acacia vera* (Crum 1939: 573a-b; Till 1951: 4). In ancient Egyptian texts, *šnḏt* is attested (Erman and Grapow 1971: 520-521; Nunn 2006: 152; against a burn in P. BM 100059, see Borghouts 1978: 24-25) whose Coptic reflex is ϣⲟⲛⲧⲉ, which appears in Coptic magical spells. While in Coptic sources, ⲁⲕⲁⲕⲓⲁ only referred to the juice of the plant, the native term meant the tree itself and its different parts are specified in texts (Till 1951: 4). This usage corresponds also to its occurrences in ancient Egyptian texts in which parts are expressed by genitive constructions. In Coptic, the flower of the gum arabic tree, for instance, occurs in Ms. London Hay 10122 (ϩⲣⲏⲉ ⲛϣⲟⲛⲧⲓ for menstrual issues, see Crum 1934: 197-200) and in the Chassinat papyrus (ϩⲣⲏⲉ ϣⲟⲛⲧⲉ as part of the treatment of the disease *psora*, see Chassinat 1921: 172).

As can be seen from these attestations, the borrowing of the Greek term ἀκακία was justified by the need to refer specifically to acacia juice.

Frankincense is alluded to as ⲗⲓⲃⲁⲛⲟⲥ, although ⲥⲟⲛⲧⲉ, coming from the Egyptian *snṯr* also means 'frankincense, resin, balm'; I have not, found this word in Coptic magical material so far. Frankincense is a resin of the tree known as *Boswellia sacra* (Till 1951: 101). Several occurrences of frankincense can be identified in the list of offerings or ingredients for diverse mixtures. Its use was widespread in all types of Coptic magical practice, from violent texts like curses, erotic and separation spells, to those for positive purposes, for instance, against sore skin on the face (Ms. Michigan 136, see Worrell 1935: 26 and the new edition of the manuscript by Zellmann-Rohrer and Love 2022). As most of the examples prove, frankincense was applied for external use only in medicine, although it was generally known as burnt offering. Myrrh *(Balsamea myrrha)* is widely used in healing practices (Till 1951: 78), and mainly included as ⲥⲙⲏⲣⲛⲏⲥ, from the Greek σμύρνα, while the Coptic word ⲱⲗⲗ or ⲱⲟⲗ is again encountered only in rare cases (for example ⲱⲗⲗ ⲛⲍⲟⲟⲩⲧ 'male myrrh' in P. Heid. 682 in Bilabel and Grohmann 1934: 393-396). It can almost certainly be ruled out that the linguistic borrowings of terms for frankincense and myrrh were the result of necessity, since the Egyptian language already had words for these plants. Perhaps, these words were synonyms and the choice between them might have depended on the textual tradition and the education and idiolect of the scribe.

In the last part of my classification, I discuss a selection of those words that immediately indicate the magical content of a manuscript, since these expressions do not (or do not often) occur elsewhere. Following the terminology of Heike Behlmer's article, I call them signal words (signal words indicating different text types are mentioned in Behlmer 2017: 459). The general closing exhortation of magical spells, ⲉⲧⲓ ⲉⲧⲓ ⲧⲁⲭⲏ ⲧⲁⲭⲏ 'now, now, quickly, quickly' belongs here with both Greek adverbs repeated usually twice in the formula. It is interesting to note that Egyptian spells, having different structures preceding the Demotic texts, did not typically employed such a closing formula. By contrast, there are many Demotic examples (for example see P. Louvre 3229, recto, col. 5, line 19: *ys sp-sn tkr sp-sn* 'quickly, hurriedly!' in Dielemann 2011 and in Johnson 1977; the first attestation of the formula can be found in the *Apis Embalming Ritual,* dated to ca. 350 BC, see Dieleman 2019: 306, n. 80). Therefore the appearance of Greek loanwords might be closely connected with the origin of this particular adjuration which would come from the Greek magical tradition; thus Coptic texts guarded the Greek variants instead of their Egyptian translations seen in Demotic (which rather tended to avoid Greek loanwords).

Another instance for signal words is the presence of replacement formulae in master manuscripts where the name of the owner had to be left out; thus the Greek δεῖνα δεῖνος 'so-and-so' or the Coptic version ⲛⲓⲙ ⲡⲱⲉ ⲛⲛⲓⲙ 'so-and-so, son of so-and-so' filled in the position of personal names. In Coptic magical manuscripts, these two terms are interchangeable and the former is attested in an abbreviated form, namely two deltas with one long or two short supralinear strokes. This abbreviation already appears in Demotic magical manuscripts (based on a personal communication with J.F. Quack, also see Dieleman 2010; for a few examples, see *PDM* xii and xiv in the edition of Faraone and Torallas Tovar 2022: 63-281, transl. by J. Dieleman, K. Dosoo, M. Escolano-Poveda, J. Johnson, E. Love and A. Singer, Greek text: P. Sarischouli). Although I classify it as a signal word of magical texts, it is remarkable that ⲇ̅ⲇ̅ can also appear in liturgical texts (see Lanne 1958: 132-133 and 134-135).

Both in the case of closing and replacement formulae, the question emerges: why did these variants have to be employed instead of the Coptic ones? In the first instance, the phenomenon probably reflects a traditional, idiomatic phrase for urging entities and perhaps the borrowing from a higher prestige language, while the second example rather seems to be a question of individual decision and education, and perhaps more importantly the fact that scribal tradition likely occupied a decisive role in the production of magical manuscripts. This also means that the composition and production of magical texts was not only the responsibility of the given person who wrote them down, but that there existed well-known practices, formulae and common expressions; these might have been transmitted in the

written tradition by copying, but it can also be hypothesised that many of them also circulated in an oral tradition.

For the use of Greek abbreviated forms occurring in Coptic magical material as fixed expressions, several examples could be mentioned from ritual instructions (ⲑ̅ⲩ̅ for ⲑⲩⲥⲓⲁ from the Greek θυσία 'offering' [for instance in P. Heid. 682 in Bilabel and Grohmann 1934: 393-396]; ⲅⲣ for ⲅⲣⲁⲫⲉⲓ from the Greek γράφε 'write', sometimes with crossed ⲣ [see on page 11 of P. Macq. I in Choat and Gardner 2013: 64] or with an oblique stroke after the two letters [see a specific ligature for the abbreviation with a stroke in P. Heid. 658 in Bilabel and Grohman 1934: 385]) to plant names (for example, ⲙ̅ⲁ̅ⲥ̅ for ⲙⲁⲥⲧⲓⲭⲉ 'mastic' in P. K 11088 [see Hevesi 2015: 58 and 76, also n. 158, although I did not manage to identify the word with certainty at the time of the publication] and in P. Cologne 641 [Schenke 2017: 255]). Instead of ⲅⲣⲁⲫⲉⲓ, the Coptic synonym ⲥϩⲁⲓ also appears at times, a result again of the fact that the two different roots coexisted and could replace one another due to their overlapping meaning. However, Coptic words do not show the remarkable tendency to occur in the form of abbreviations found in the case of Greek loanwords, and it can be pointed out that these shorter variants are usually employed in those parts of texts that concern magical practice (either in terms of activities or prevalent materials). These concise references might have been common in the circle of ritual practitioners and were probably easy to understand.

Similarly, in the case of *voces magicae* of various origins, the question arises as to whether their use was a conscious decision which indicated a definite reference to Greek traditions. Most studies demonstrate that these magical names spread freely and remained part of the multicultural magical tradition of the whole Mediterranean area, also occurring, for example, in Hebrew magical texts (Bohak 2008: 233-235). They simply served to enhance the effectiveness of magical spells in general, and it is probable that they did not always preserve a foreign or exotic value. For example, the seven Greek vowels can be found in many magical texts regardless their language (for the case of Aramaic and Hebrew texts, see Bohak 2008: 264-265). Although some texts emphasise foreign origin, as it can be seen in P. Leiden I 385 in which the *voces magicae* are considered to be Hebrew (Pleyte and Boeser 1897: 470).

Conclusions

In conclusion, what do Greek loanwords tell us about the scribal education of magical practitioners? Based on the preliminary case studies discussed in this paper, it is likely that the choice of Greek loanwords, in particular in cases where Coptic synonyms already existed, was largely dependent on the idiolect, personal preference, education and bilingual (or multilingual) background of scribes, as well as the higher prestige of the Greek language (the question of prestige is also discussed in Behlmer 2017: 458; for the education, see Boud'hors 2018: 282-283). We can speak about technical terms as a predominant reason only rarely, when the borrowing of the actual word indicates that a term was non-existent or insufficiently specific in Coptic (as it could be seen with acacia juice). Consequently, each loanword must be examined independently, as a separate case or belonging to a category and the widespread view of the borrowing of technical terms should not be generalised. Sometimes, the scribes of magical manuscripts automatically used formulae and expressions that were typical parts of magical texts (see the paragraphs about signal words), while other examples prove that the choice of a loanword could also have a specific reason, such as the search for 'trademarks' and distinct connotations. Formulae of Greek origin (like substitute and closing formulae) were transmitted from the Greek magical tradition. Interestingly, a similar outcome can be seen in Coptic alchemical material, which took over most of its elements from the Greek alchemical texts, even if it can be suspected that Arabic alchemical manuscripts played an intermediary role in this transmission (Richter 2009b: 32–33). It is most remarkable that alchemical manuscripts had a close connection to magical manuscripts, since, according to several known libraries, these texts might have been compiled in the same social milieu

(see for example the case of the Theban Magical Library [Dosoo, forthcoming and Dosoo 2016] and the Berlin Magical Library I study within my PhD research [*BKU* I: 1-20]).

As different scribal hands can be distinguished in Coptic magical manuscripts and a vast number of them are documentary hands showing a tendency to cursive style, it has to be stressed that these individuals may have received a professional education which had afforded them an opportunity to acquire a more extensive Greek vocabulary. This training probably improved their knowledge of administrative and legal documents. It is unclear to what extent their education concerned magical subjects, and we possess only scarce information about education in the late antiquity in general; nonetheless, it is to be expected that literate individuals transferred their distinct knowledge of vocabulary to other fields if they produced various types of texts. Beside the question of educational level, some Greek magical terms might have been so well known from textual sources and oral tradition in the multilingual society of late antiquity that these did not even require a deep knowledge in the field of magic. Manuscripts written by less experienced hands but still containing a fair amount of Greek loanwords or magical expressions of Greek origin support this theory. For example, the same, slightly unexperienced hand wrote P. Berlin 8320, P. Berlin 8322 and P. Berlin 8327 (*BKU* I: 3, 7-8) and the scribe of these texts used some Greek loanwords confidently, although it cannot always be determined whether these were copied from another manuscript or composed independently. Since P. Berlin 8327 is a version of the text known as the Prayer of the Virgin Mary at Bartos, it was apparently taken from the textual and oral tradition.

Due to the limited length of this article, I was not able to explore in detail the intriguing question of the high degree of orthographical variation that can be observed in magical manuscripts, although this should also be examined from the point of view of scribal education and the levels of 'foreignness'. Similarly, it remains to be determined whether any significant distinction can be made between scribes using a wider variety and/or higher number of Greek words and those who did not follow this practice for any reason. According to the analysis of J. Cromwell, even graphic change can be spotted in some cases in which bilingual scribes switch between Coptic and Greek script in legal documents (for the specific study of Greek invocation formulae in Coptic legal manuscripts, see Cromwell 2018: 260-263; for letters, see Boud'hors 2018: 282). In this initial examination, I only sought to draw attention to the diverse aspects of the use of Greek loanwords but it is without doubt that the definition of the underlying reasons for borrowings will require finer research.

Acknowledgements

I thank Prof. J.F. Quack for his enriching remarks at the end of my presentation at the CRE 2021 conference. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to K. Dosoo for his generous and very helpful suggestions and English proofreading. Furthermore, I owe special thanks to the team of the Database and Dictionary of Greek Loanwords in Coptic (DDGLC) project and the team of The Coptic Magical Papyri: Vernacular Religion in Late Roman and Early Islamic Egypt project for having provided access to their incredibly rich databases which considerably promoted and facilitated my research.

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