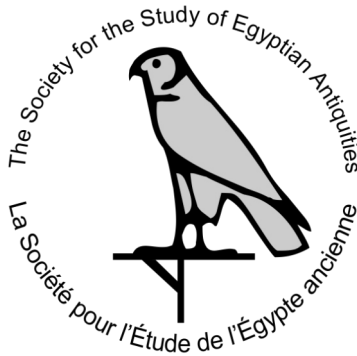




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Table of Contents

Editorial Forward	vii
In Memoriam: Morris Bierbrier	ix
Reminiscences on the 50th Anniversary of the <i>JSSEA</i>	xi
Articles	
Mohammed Isamil Khaled The Antechamber of Sahura's Pyramid at Abusir	1
Anca Seculin, Valerie Angenot La vectoralité complexe des scènes agricoles de la tombe de Khâemhat (TT57)	17
Stephen Smoot A Reconsideration of the Berliner Lederhandschrift (pBerlin 3029) as <i>Königsnovelle</i>	43
Mark Trumpour & Gayle Gibson Coffin AA2190.A : On the Texts from Queen's Master of Art Conservation Program	53
Book Reviews	
Jean-Arcady Meyer: The Rise and Fall of the Library of Alexandria <i>Robert Stephen Bianchi</i>	69
Susan Redford: The Tomb of Parannefer, Butler of Pharaoh Akhenaten <i>Stephan Bojowald</i>	73
Guidelines for Contributors	75
Directives aux Auteurs	76
About the SSEA	77

Editorial Forward

With volume 50, the *Journal* and the Society itself have reached a milestone, which we are proud to share with all of you. Volume 49 featured the deeply heartfelt reminiscence of James Hoch by Donald Redford, , and in the present volume we are including a similar Remembrance of Morris Bierbrier by his former colleague Jeffrey Spencer. This volume also includes a retrospective comprising members' recollections and reminiscences of the formative years of the Society, and highlights of our own experience and growth as Egyptologists nurtured by this (dare we say) unique environment, and this unique assortment of teachers, colleagues and friends who have nurtured us, and whom, hopefully, we have nurtured as well.

With volume 51, we shall commemorate another devoted member of the Society who contributed a great deal, a scholar of outstanding knowledge and excellence, whose expertise encompassed ceramics and literary texts, Dr. Steven Blake Shubert, with whom one of the undersigned – Ed – was privileged to spend a season at East Karnak on Don Redford's excavation. As always, the articles and reviews highlight the latest research by Egyptologists and related specialists exemplifying the progress of our field. We hope you find these contributions intriguing and exciting. Enjoy!

Edmund S. Meltzer, Simone Burger Robin and Dawn Power

In Memoriam: Morris Bierbrier

Morris Leonard Bierbrier 1947 – 2024

I first met Morris Bierbrier in 1971, when he arrived in Liverpool to take up research for a doctorate at the University. He had previously studied in Canada at McGill University in 1964-68 and then completed an MA degree at the University of Toronto in 1970, specialising in Egyptology. He had already participated in a fieldwork project in Egypt, at the site of the temple of Osiris Heka-Djet in Karnak. His developing interest in the history of the Late New Kingdom made the choice of Liverpool appropriate for his ongoing research, to have the opportunity to benefit from the supervision of Dr (later Professor) Kenneth Kitchen, an expert in the period. Indeed, during his time at Liverpool, Morris remarked on several occasions on Dr Kitchen's ability to produce references to obscure published sources of relevance to his research. It was while at Liverpool that he met and married Lydia Collins, then secretary in the Department of Archaeology.

Morris successfully combined his Egyptological studies with his other interest: that of genealogy. In this field he was regarded an expert, writing regular contributions on medieval genealogy for *The Genealogists' Magazine* and being a Fellow of the Society of Genealogists. He was also appointed chairman of the Foundation for Medieval Genealogy in October 2016. Fortunately, thanks to the abundance of written records from ancient Egypt, the Late New Kingdom of Egypt offered many opportunities for the application of genealogical analysis to history, and Morris was able to track the lineage of many families of the period. Among these were those who resided in the settlement of tomb-workers at Deir el-Medina, of whom he published a detailed study in his volume, *Tomb Builders of the Pharaohs* in 1982. The popularity of this book has ensured its continued reprinting. Morris completed his research at Liverpool in 1974 and received his PhD, subsequently published in 1975 as *The Late New Kingdom in Egypt (c.1300-664 B.C.) A Genealogical and Chronological Investigation*, in the Liverpool Monographs in Archaeology and Oriental Studies series. In addition to tracing nine families of the New Kingdom, this volume also includes six families of the 22nd to 23rd dynasties (including the royal line) and that of the high priests of Amun. Such a comprehensive study made possible many adjustments to the chronology of the period.

In late 1975, Morris was appointed to the post of Research Assistant in the Egyptian Antiquities Department at the British Museum. This was a position I had myself occupied briefly, before being appointed an Assistant Keeper, so having been together at Liverpool University we were again colleagues in the same institution at the British Museum. In the following year he also was promoted to Assistant Keeper and we continued to work side by side in this role for the next 24 years. There were the normal activities of the post to be taken in hand, including matters of display, storage, registration, loan exhibitions and publication of the collection. Morris escorted a loan to Bulgaria, and returned with interesting stories of his adventures travelling by truck. When the computerization of the collection records was first begun, data had to be prepared on hand-written forms by curators, which were then sent to the computer section for input. Morris was particularly efficient at this, completing the greatest number of data sheets for the department prior to the task

being handed to a dedicated team. Of course, the collection of the Museum offered much material for his research, particularly the inscribed stelae and other monuments of the New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period. He published many of these in three volumes of the series *Hieroglyphic Texts from Egyptian Stelae*. Other museum publications which he edited include *Papyrus Structure and Usage* (1986) and *Portraits and Masks, Burial Customs in Ancient Egypt* (1997). Outside the British Museum he wrote *A Historical Dictionary of Ancient Egypt* (1999), and *The A to Z of Ancient Egypt* (2010) but one of his major undertakings was the editing of *Who was Who in Egyptology* for the Egypt Exploration Society, seeing it through five editions from 1984 to 2021. He was also involved with the management of the Egypt Exploration Society, being Honorary Librarian and Reviews Editor 1986-93 and serving on the Committee between 1985 and 2021. He was a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries and also a member of the Committee of the London Centre for the Ancient Near East. His contributions to the fields of Egyptology and genealogy will surely stand the test of time.

Jeffrey Spencer

Reminiscences on the 50th Anniversary of the *JSSEA*

The SSEA -- First Encounters of the Best Kind

Having spent my undergraduate years at the University of Chicago with teachers including Friedrich Junge, Klaus Baer, George Hughes and Ed Wente, and a very strong and helpful mentor in Keith Seele, I was thinking earnestly and intensely about graduate schools. One day, a distinguished gentleman named R. J. Williams walked into the library and had very serious conversations with me and a fellow student, now colleague, Ron Leprohon. The outcome of this process was that both of us went to the University of Toronto. Once there, I found a new world, a new adventure opening up. I found a great set of teachers, including Prof. Williams, Don Redford, Nick Millet and Tony Mills, a great student community, and a then quite new Egyptological society very welcoming to students, the SSEA, founded and headed by a remarkable avocational Egyptologist, a retired businessman named Geoff Freeman. The Society published a Newsletter, which in 1977 officially became the *JSSEA*, and sponsored a lecture series and an excavation in Egypt, the East Karnak Excavation, which gave me and many other students our introduction to Egypt and initiation into Egyptian archaeology. The lectures enabled us students to meet, hear and learn about the work of leading scholars other than our own teachers. The Newsletter contained the first publications of many Toronto students. Now it has become a major peer-reviewed journal in the field, which you hold in your hands. For a very long time, the Newsletter/Journal was put together by a group of us in Geoff Freeman's study, on the top floor of his house. This was normally followed by a visit to a local eatery or pub, frequently the University of Toronto Faculty Club. Another major element of the early SSEA was attending the annual ARCE meetings -- on a smaller scale than today's meetings -- in which a group of us filed into a car and rode off to the meeting hotel or motel. These gatherings were also important elements of professional development, as we met many fellow Egyptologists who would become dear friends, and some of us began to present papers at those meetings. And the SSEA also sponsored Special Projects such as the cataloguing of privately owned antiquities in the Toronto area, some of which we have published.

"Those were the days, my friend. . . ." And. . . they're still continuing!

Edmund S. Meltzer

The Antechamber of Sahura's Pyramid at Abusir

Mohamed Ismail Khaled ¹

Abstract: This paper focuses on a recent conservation initiative within the pyramid complex of Sahura at Abusir. The primary objective of the project was to clean the interior rooms and stabilize the substructure of the pyramid. The entire project is financially supported by the Archaeological Endowment Fund (AEF) of the American Research Centre in Egypt (ARCE). The team achieved successful cleaning operations and the removal of all fallen blocks and debris, thereby unveiling, for the first time, the actual dimensions of the antechamber.

Résumé: Ce document se concentre sur une récente initiative de conservation au sein du complexe pyramidal de Sahura à Abousir. L'objectif principal du projet était de nettoyer les salles intérieures et de stabiliser la sous-structure de la pyramide. L'ensemble du projet est financé par le Fonds de Dotation Archéologique (FDA) du Centre de Recherche Américain en Égypte (ARCE). L'équipe a réussi les opérations de nettoyage et l'élimination de tous les blocs tombés et des débris, dévoilant ainsi, pour la première fois, les dimensions réelles de l'antichambre.

Keywords: Abusir, Old Kingdom, Fifth Dynasty, Pyramid, Sahura, Antechamber.

Mots-clés: Abousir, Ancien Empire, Cinquième dynastie, Pyramide, Sahourê, Antichambre.

Introduction:

The pyramid of Sahura stands at a height of 47 meters and is relatively small with a base length of 78.50 meters and an angle of 50° 45', cased with fine white limestone from Tura.² The state of the preservation of the pyramid poses challenges for obtaining accurate dimensions (Fig.1). The substructure,³ resembling the designs of Menkaura, Mastaba of Shepseskaf, and the pyramid of Userkaf, was constructed in an open pit. Unfortunately, Sahura's pyramid substructure has suffered significant deterioration.

The core of the pyramid consisted of irregularly shaped limestone blocks

¹ Lehrstuhl für Ägyptologie, Universität Würzburg / Egyptian Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities

² Dietrich D. Klemm and Rosemarie Klemm, *The Stones of the Pyramids: Provenance of the Building Stones of the Old Kingdom Pyramids of Egypt* (Berlin-New York: Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2010), 131–34.

³ J. E. Perring, *The Pyramids to the Southward of Gizeh and at Abou Roash; Also, Campbell's Tomb, and a Section of the Rock at Gizeh; From Actual Survey and Admeasurement*. (London: James Fraser, 1842), 16; Ludwig Borchardt, *Das Grabdenkmal Des Königs S'ahu-Re* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1910), 70–73, 94–96, pl. 7,12; Vito Giuseppe Maragioglio and Celeste Ambrioglio Rinaldi, *L'architettura Delle Piramidi Menfite VII* (Rapallo: T. Canessa, 1970), 48–52, pls. 8–9.



Figure 1. General view of Sahure pyramid from the north showing the entrance (© Abusir Project, photo by M. I. Khaled).

quarried to the west of Abusir. John Perring⁴ and Borchardt's⁵ key publications describe the core as being built in six horizontal steps using rough blocks of local limestone from Abusir south. Perring, the first one to break off and clean the entrance and descending access passage, revealed a small vestibule containing remnants of a granite portcullis.

The north-south axis of the pyramid, located 8.23 meters from the end of the descending corridor, could accommodate up to three portcullises, each measuring 2.7 meters.⁶ To the south of the portcullises, an extended uphill corridor spanned about 23.3 meters. A vestibule and level passage, interrupted by a portcullis in the north-south axis, led to a room described by Perring as a burial chamber, filled with fallen blocks and oriented vertically. (Fig.2 a, b plan Perring, Borchardt).

Burial chamber or Antechamber

Based on available information, scholars have described the burial chamber in conflicting ways. According to Perring, the chamber was a simple room with a north-south width of 3.59 meters. However, he did not provide the east-west length.⁷ On the other hand, Mark Lehner characterized it as a rectangular room measuring 12.6 by 3.15 meters.⁸ The scholarly community remains uncertain about the interior design of the pyramid, debating whether it consisted of a single large burial chamber or two chambers, with the vestibule and burial chamber situated to the

⁴ Howard Vyse, *Appendix to Operations Carried on at the Pyramids of Gizeh in 1837. Containing a Survey by J. S. Perring, ESO. Civil Engineer, of the Pyramids at Abou Roash, and to the Southward, Including Those in Faiyoun, Vol III* (London: John Weale, 1842), 16; Perring, *The Pyramids to the Southward of Gizeh and at Abou Roash; Also, Campbell's Tomb, and a Section of the Rock at Gizeh; From Actual Survey and Admeasurement.*, 1842, 5.

⁵ Borchardt, *Das Grabdenkmal Des Königs S'ahu-Re*, 70–73, 94–96, pl. 7, 12.

⁶ Evidence collected by the current author and his team confirms the number of the portcullises.

⁷ Vyse, *Appendix to Operations Carried on at the Pyramids of Gizeh in 1837. Containing a Survey by J. S. Perring, ESO. Civil Engineer, of the Pyramids at Abou Roash, and to the Southward, Including Those in Faiyoun, Vol III*, 15.

⁸ Mark Lehner, *The Complete Pyramids* (Cairo: American University in Cairo, 1997), 143.

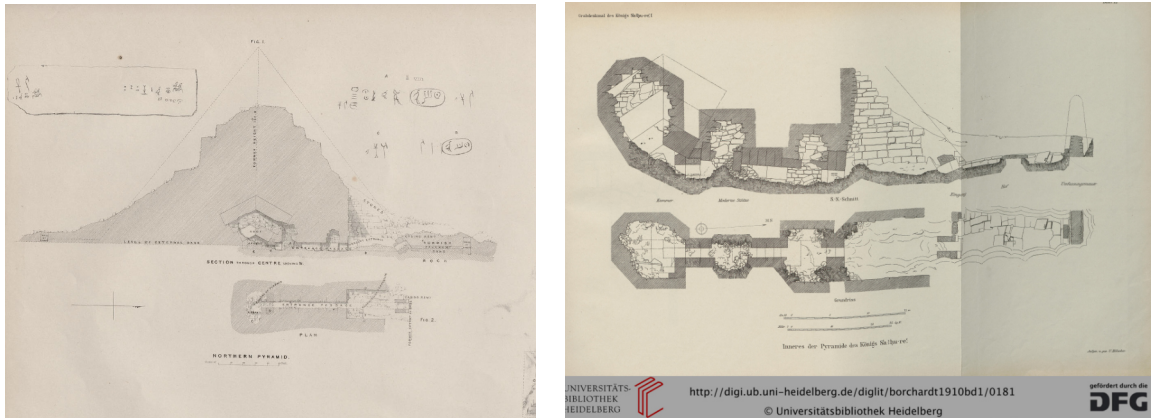


Figure 2.a, b. Plans for the interior design of the pyramid (after Perring 1942 / after Borchardt 1910).

west.⁹

In Perring's plan, it is evident that he only reached what he termed a burial chamber, emphasizing the uncertainty regarding its original dimensions. He also discovered remnants of a basalt sarcophagus in the debris of this room. However, this alone does not conclusively establish it as a burial chamber. Perring did not venture further west to explore the possibility of finding an actual burial chamber, nor did he reach the main original western limestone walls of the room due to their non-linear configuration in his plan.

Notably, he acknowledged the discovery of a low passage (labelled as C in his plan) on the eastern walls of the room. Nevertheless, he mentioned that this area was filled with debris and rubbish, preventing him from entering due to extensive damage.¹⁰ In the course of Borchardt's investigation of the pyramid, it became evident that he refrained from inspecting or excavating any part of the room and did not uncover any fragments of the sarcophagus. His published work suggests that he ascended the fallen blocks, taking photographs without engaging in thorough exploration. Remarkably, he delineated the floor plan of the pyramid, designating specific areas as the antechamber and burial chamber, yet he did not offer further elucidation. There is a possibility that he derived this ground plan from the pyramid of Neferirkara and Niuserra.¹¹

Furthermore, Borchardt unaccountably excluded passage C, located on the eastern wall of the room, from both his plan and description, as highlighted in Perring's plan. This is proof that Borchardt based his plan for Sahura on the interior

⁹ Rainer Stadelmann, *Die Ägyptischen Pyramiden: Vom Ziegelbau Zum Weltwunder*, Kulturgeschichte Der Antiken Welt 30 (Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern, 1991), 171; Miroslav Verner, *The Pyramids: A Complete Guide*, 1st ed (New York: Grove Press, 2001), 284–85; Miroslav Verner, *Sons of the Sun: Rise and Decline of the Fifth Dynasty* (Prague: Charles Univ. of Prague, Faculty of Arts, 2014), 160–61.

¹⁰ Vyse, *Appendix to Operations Carried on at the Pyramids of Gizeh in 1837. Containing a Survey by J. S. Perring, ESO. Civil Engineer, of the Pyramids at Abou Roash, and to the Southward, Including Those in Faiyoum, Vol III*, 16; J. E. Perring, *The Pyramids to the Southward of Gizeh and at Abou Roash; Also, Campbell's Tomb, and a Section of the Rock at Gizeh; From Actual Survey and Admeasurement*. (London: James Fraser, 1842), 5.

¹¹ Borchardt, *Das Grabdenkmal Des Königs S'ahu-Re*, 70–73, 94–96, pl. 7, 12.



Figure 3. The beginning of 2019 exploration showing the antechamber filled with falling blocks.
(© Abusir Project, photo by M. I. Khaled)

layouts of Neferirkara and Niuserra. In doing so, he failed to recognize the critical factor that the pyramid of Sahura is the inaugural pyramid constructed in Abusir, suggesting potential design differences that should have been considered.

During their examination in the early 1960s, Maragioglio and Rinaldi entered the room by crawling over the existing debris, and falling blocks. They observed that the upper part of the northeast corner of the room remained visible, but the accumulation of debris and rubble expanded towards the south and west sides of the room. This observation led them to exclude the idea of finding an eastern passage leading to potential storerooms, as suggested by Perring. Instead, they chose to adhere to and adopt Borchardt's floor plans.¹²

New Investigation

In 2019, under the author's direction and with financial support from the Archaeological Endowment Fund (AEF) of the American Research Centre in Egypt (ARCE), a conservation project was initiated for the interior compartments of the pyramid. The focus of the work was on cleaning the interior rooms and undertaking the consolidation and restoration of the pyramid's substructure to prevent further collapse and ensure its protection.

The campaign commenced in 2019, starting with the corridor leading to the entrance of the vestibule and/or the burial chamber. As previously mentioned, the room was filled with debris and falling blocks that had not been cleared since the last exploration work of Perring. The primary objective of the project was to relocate and

¹² Maragioglio and Rinaldi, *L'architettura Delle Piramidi Menfite VII*, 52, pl. 8 fig. 2.



Figure 4. The remaining beams from the first level of the antechamber's ceiling. (© Abusir Project, photo by M. I. Khaled)

reinstall the fallen stones, filling the voids behind the walls with limestone blocks reinforce the beams of the ceiling. The team also conducted investigations and documented the current state of preservation of the pyramid.(Fig. 3)

The ceiling

Initially, the roof had a gabled structure composed of three layers of massive limestone beams. These beams varied in sizes, lengths, and weights, especially in the first layer, with each beam measuring up to 11 meters in length, 3 meters in width, and 4 meters in thickness. The gabled ceiling, supported by the limestone walls of the room, experienced significant damage inflicted by stonecutters.

At present, only a few beams from the first layer of the ceiling in the room are still visible. Propitiously, most of the beams that rest on the northern wall are still in their original places. Only the second beam from the eastern side is broken. However, remains of its upper part can still be seen.

In contrast, the beams that rest on the southern wall are destroyed except for the first one on the western side, which, although broken in places, is still in its original place. Above it, a toppled upper beam from the second layer is still visible.

Another noteworthy beam can be seen on the south wall of the room that Maragioglio and Rinaldi described as the fourth beam (the fallen one).¹³ Originally, it fell from the second layer, but instead of landing on the floor, its upper edge rested on the second beam on the northern side and prevented it from falling. This beam was accessible by modern visitors who wrote their names on it (Fig. 4).

¹³ Maragioglio and Rinaldi, *L'architettura delle piramidi menfite VII*, 52, pl. 8, fig. 2.



Figure 5. The northern face of the granite architrave of the final horizontal corridor at the entrance of the antechamber. (© Abusir Project, photo by Reis Mohamed Antar).



Figure 6. The reconstructed new wall of the western part of the northern wall. (© Abusir Project, photo by M. I. Khaled).

The North Wall

The team successfully reduced the level of fallen blocks in the room. The initial focus of the cleaning efforts was on the western part of the northern wall, where all the original walls had suffered significant damage. During this process, the team uncovered the northern face of the granite architrave of the final horizontal corridor at the entrance of the room. This architrave had been concealed behind the original limestone wall, which no longer existed (Fig. 5). Upon clearing the space that was supposed to host this wall, the team revealed the intact original floor. Traces of the original mortar and masonry marks were still visible on the floor, aiding in locating the northwest corner and determining the accurate measurement of this wall from the entrance to the northwest corner, which is 1.20 meters. Using fallen blocks, the team reconstructed new walls to simulate the original ones, completing missing sections with smoothed white limestone blocks (Fig. 6).



Figure 7. The intact eastern section of the northern wall with the hole for the oil lamp showing remaining of dropped burning oil.
(© Abusir Project, photo by M. I. Khaled).

Subsequently, the team shifted their focus to the eastern part of the northern wall, the other division of the entrance. After clearing away fallen blocks and rubble, the wall appeared completely intact. Borchardt had previously documented only the upper part of this wall during his investigation inside the room (Fig. 7). Maragioglio and Rinaldi also mentioned the visibility of the upper part of the northeast corner in their investigation.

Further cleaning efforts uncovered the north-eastern corner of the room, revealing the original floor and enabling the documentation of precise measurements for the height of this section of the northern wall for the first time – measuring 1.95 meters in length from the entrance of the horizontal corridor to the NE corner. The wall measures 2.95 meters in height (Fig. 8).

Interestingly, in the middle of the wall, a 0.10-meter hole was found, likely intended for a candle or an oil lamp, with visible traces of black burning and fire triggers, which were likely made by stonecutters.



Figure 8. The northeastern corner of the antechamber showing the traces of the passage. (© Abusir Project, photo by M. I. Khaled)

The total length of the northern wall including the width of 1.25 meters for final horizontal corridor is 4.40 meters.

The West wall

Following the reconstruction of the west part of the northern wall and the identification of traces of the north-western corner on the original floor, attention shifted to the western side of the room. Unfortunately, this wall had previously suffered complete destruction, necessitating the tracing of original mortar and masonry marks. The challenging task was compounded by the fact that fallen blocks primarily originated from the western side, making the endeavour more difficult.

Surprisingly, the effort led to the observation that additional blocks appeared to have originated the western side, unveiling a previously unseen area about 7 meters to the west. This newly found area provided confirmation of the existence of an undetected and

unexcavated burial chamber. Regrettably, the ceiling of this area had entirely collapsed, with only remnants of the third layer of the south gabled limestone beam remaining.

Upon climbing into the newly opened area, the team revealed for the first time a clear view to the east, exposing the three layers of the gabled ceiling of the chamber (antechamber) that were positioned above each other, consistent with scholarly descriptions and drawings.

Due to concerns about falling blocks, a decision was made to reconstruct the wall of the western part without reaching the southwest corner. Recognizing that we were working in the antechamber, our priority shifted to obtaining the precise measurements of the antechamber and securing and reconstructing it. Subsequently, the team will develop a plan for the exploration of the burial chamber. (Fig. 9)

The length of the western wall has been verified to be 3.40 meters, slightly less than Perring's description by 10 centimeters.



Figure 9. The reconstructed wall of the western side of the antechamber, (© Abusir Project, photo by M. I. Khaled).

The South Wall

After fortifying the western side and reconstructing the western wall to mitigate the risk of falling blocks, the focus of the exploration work shifted to the south wall. Upon clearing away fallen blocks and rubble, it became evident that the south wall had sustained extensive damage.

The cleaning was originally planned to commence from the southwest corner. However, due to the destruction of the original wall and concerns about cleaning the area filled with rubble and small falling blocks, especially under the only existing beam from the first layer, the team proceeded cautiously.

Cleaning was done meticulously in a 0.30×0.30 -meter section near the original floor, revealing traces of original mortar. The team promptly reconstructed this cleaned area, completing the south side with a new, simulated wall. The reconstructed wall extended to the east under the mentioned dropped beam from the second layer. However, the cleaning efforts could not reach the area of the southeast corner due to fallen blocks from the east side (see below). (Fig. 10).

The total length of the southern wall is measured to be 4.40 meters.

The East Wall



Figure 10. The reconstructed wall of the southern side of the antechamber, (© Abusir Project, photo by M. I. Khaled).



Figure 11. The falling blocks from the eastern side of the pyramid into the antechamber. (© Abusir Project, photo by M. I. Khaled).

Figure 12. The northern wall of passage with the remains of its ceiling. (© Abusir Project, photo by M. I. Khaled).



Figure 13. The SE corner of the antechamber after cleaning the falling blocks. (© Abusir Project, photo by M. I. Khaled).

As previously mentioned, the eastern side of the antechamber was another source of fallen blocks and debris. Only the north-eastern corner and a 0.30-meter section from the eastern wall were still discernible, while the rest of the eastern wall had suffered significant damage. The work in this area commenced from the NE corner, and after 0.30 meters, an exciting discovery unfolded—traces of a passage were detected. This crucial finding validated Perring's perspective on this part of the pyramid's interior design.

Consequently, the team decided to depart from the plans of both Borchardt and Maragioglio, Rinaldi, and instead, follow Perring's plan (Fig. 11). It is noteworthy that Perring, in his time, was unable to proceed further east in the passage.

Working in this area presented challenges, as excavating the discovered passage and reaching the original floor proved to be difficult. Cleaning the southeast part of the antechamber was especially problematic due to the risk of heavy falling blocks from the eastern side and concerns about the collapsed beam from the second layer potentially falling into the antechamber. To address this, a four (4) meter high supporting wall was constructed, providing stability from both the northern and southern sides of the dropped beam.

The team managed was finally able to secure the situation revealing the original outline of the eastern wall of the antechamber and determine the width and depth of the passage.

The length of the eastern wall is measured to be 3.40 meters, symmetrical to the western wall. (Fig. 12).

The passage

The only surviving portions of the passage is part of the northern wall, and it extends 1.30 m. to the east. Unfortunately, the south wall was destroyed. However, traces of its original mortar and masonry marks were still visible on the floor, which helped obtaining the measurement of the width of the passage i.e. 0.90 m. to the south. The location of the passage is very confusing, because it is very close to the NE corner of the antechamber. It is not located in the middle of the eastern wall, as it is well known in the intact pyramids. (Fig. 27a) Therefore, the work focused to clean the rest of the eastern wall to see if there was a possibility of finding another passage close to the SE corner of the antechamber.

Although it was very difficult to reach the SE corner of the room due to fallen blocks originating from the eastern part of the pyramid, the team managed to remove debris and clean it.

Unexpectedly, the eastern wall was solid and extended towards the SE corner of the room without other passage (Fig. 13). A supporting wall was quickly built in the whole area of the SE corner to prevent any other falling blocks from the east side. As a direct result, the reconstruction of the eastern wall was not completed, simulating the original plan.

Another interesting observation came to light: that the ceiling of the eastern side of the pyramid is flat and does not have a gabled shape. The discovery of large, horizontal white fine limestone slabs started to appear indicating the ceiling of the

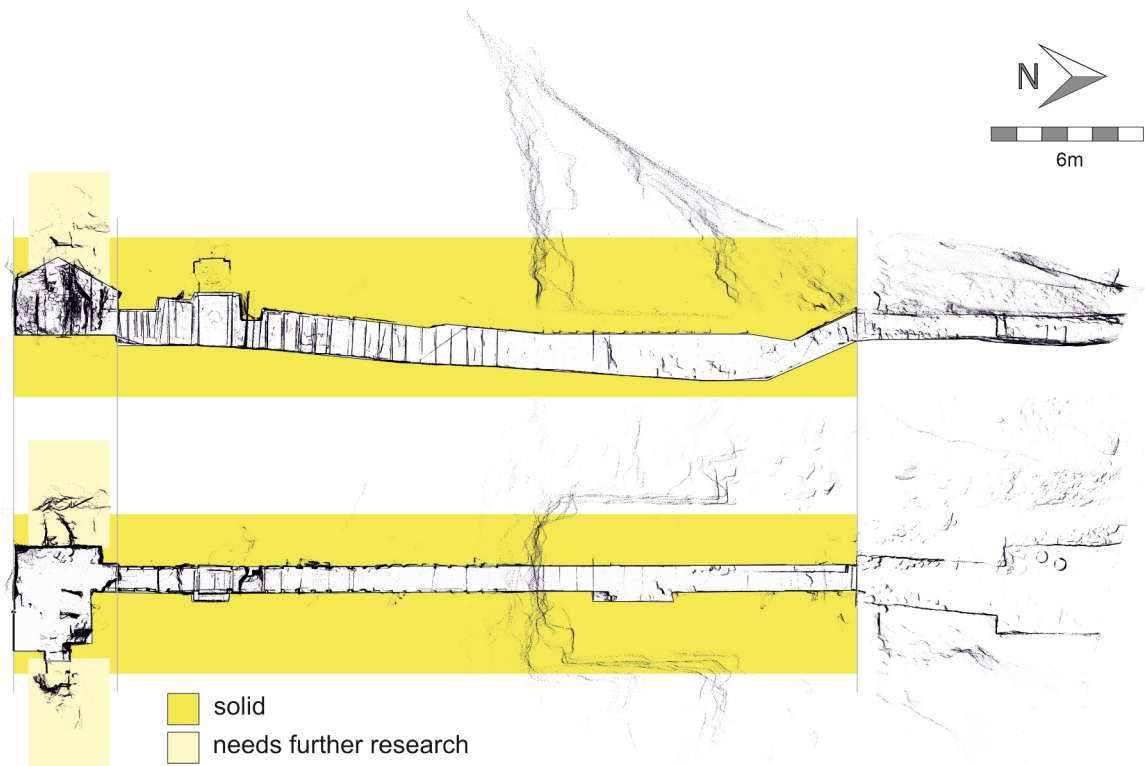


Figure 14. Result of the photogrammetry reconstruction for the interior design of the pyramid including the reconstructed antechamber. (© Abusir Project, plan by Johannes Vāthjunker).

storerooms.

Measurements of the Antechamber

Obtaining the final measurements of the antechamber proved to be a challenging task. Following the thorough cleaning of all the walls in the antechamber, the team successfully employed photogrammetry and laser scanning documentation techniques. As a result, a new plan for the room, complete with its original measurements, is now available for the first time. The dimensions of the antechamber are 3.40x4.40, totalling 14.96 m². (Fig. 14)

Finds

During the cleaning process in the antechamber, several intriguing discoveries were made among the fallen blocks and rubble, many of which were dropped by modern visitors. Notable among these finds was a cigar band with remnants of its binder, labelled “Willem II Cigars”, indicating its origin from the famous Netherland cigars factory established in 1916 AD. (Fig. 15).

It is also interesting to note that modern visitors left their marks inside the pyramid, carving their names. The team has gathered a collection of visitor graffiti



Figure 15. A cigar band was found in the debris of the antechamber (© Abusir Project, photo by M. I. Khaled).



Figure 16. Discovered fragments of basalt in the debris of the antechamber (© Abusir Project, photo by Benedikt Fuchs).

ranging from the year 1913 AD to 1945 AD.¹⁴

Additionally, numerous pieces of basalt were found during the antechamber excavation, resembling those discovered by Perring. He suggested that they belong to the sarcophagus (Fig. 16). As the work progressed eastward, reaching the end of the northern wall of the passage with the remaining ceiling, a surprising discovery unfolded.

A new wall extending to the north appeared, confirming the presence of storerooms on the east side of the pyramid, the work continued and eight new storerooms were discovered for the first time inside Sahura's pyramid.¹⁵

Conclusion

The present paper details the extensive conservation efforts carried out within the inner chambers of Sahura's pyramid. These efforts have led to the remarkable rediscovery and confirmation of the existence of an antechamber, as well as the discovery of a previously unknown and undocumented burial chamber situated to the west. Furthermore, the project unveiled eight new magazines within the pyramid, significantly enhancing our understanding of its internal layout.

Prior to these discoveries, scholars' knowledge of the inner system of Sahura's pyramid was limited and primarily based on incomplete personal observations and theories. The conservation project has thus revised our understanding, providing concrete evidence and a more comprehensive view of the pyramid's complex internal structure.

The conservation work undertaken within Sahura's pyramid is notable not only for the restoration and reconstruction of various sections of the antechamber, but also for the acquisition of new measurements and the identification of the entrance to the burial chamber. These achievements, alongside several other significant findings, underscore the importance of this project.

The discovery of the antechamber and burial chamber is particularly significant as it reveals that the architectural pattern observed in Sahura's pyramid had its origins in earlier structures, such as the pyramid of Menkaura at Giza and the identical design of the Mastaba of Shepseskaf at Saqqara. This architectural tradition continued into the early Fifth Dynasty, as evidenced by the pyramid of Userkaf at Saqqara. The newly discovered magazines within Sahura's pyramid suggest that Sahura might have been an innovator in this architectural development, with his innovations subsequently adopted and refined by his successors.

Overall, the project has provided invaluable insights into the architectural and functional evolution of pyramids during this period, highlighting Sahura's potential role as a pioneer in these developments.

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¹⁴ Mohamed Ismail Khaled, Allister Humphrey, Elsayed Shoura, "Moderne Besucher in der Pyramide des Sahure in Abusir", *Sokar* 41, 2024, 32-49.

¹⁵ Mohamed Ismail Khaled, "Newly Discovered Magazines in the Pyramid of Sahura at Abusir: Preliminary Report", *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 59, no. 1 (November 7, 2023), 127-144, <https://doi.org/10.5913/jarce.59.2023.a006>.

La vectorialité complexe des scènes agricoles de la tombe de Khâemhat (TT57)¹

Anca Seculin, Valerie Angenot

Abstract: This paper seeks to analyze and understand the complex reading pattern (or “vectoriality”) which characterizes the sequence of agricultural works in the tomb of Khaemhat (TT57), a royal scribe and overseer of the granaries of Upper and Lower Egypt during the reign of Amenhotep III. As is always the case in these types of recurring funerary scenes, the prior knowledge of the narrative induces the decipherment of the decoration and the eye-movements of the visitors on the wall. Their eye-movements thus pragmatically contribute to (re)activating the annual agricultural cycle, a well-known metaphor of the perpetual cyclical time - *neheh*, upon which the deceased’s resurrection depends. The semiotic analysis proposed here highlights formal metaphors (homophonic and homomorphic), symmetry, and Gestalt effects, on which the decipherment of the overall vectoriality is based. These mechanisms establish several conceptual allusions to the solar cycle, its horizon and its cosmic movement, which is hardly surprising in a historical context marked by a generalized solarization of the cults.

Résumé: Cet article propose d’analyser et comprendre le schéma de lecture (ou “vectorialité”) complexe qui caractérise la scène de travaux agricoles de la tombe de Khâemhat (TT57), scribe royal et inspecteur des greniers de Haute et Basse Égypte sous le règne d’Amenhotep III. Comme c’est toujours le cas dans ce genre de scènes funéraires récurrentes, c’est la connaissance préalable du récit qui induit le déchiffrement des décors et le mouvement des yeux du visiteur sur la paroi. Ses mouvements oculaires contribuent ainsi de façon pragmatique à (ré)activer le cycle agricole annuel, une métaphore avérée du temps cyclique perpétuel *neheh*, duquel dépend la régénérescence du défunt. L’analyse sémiotique ici proposée met en relief métaphores formelles, jeux d’homophonie, des références visuelles, des effets de symétrie et de Gestalt sur lesquels s’appuie le déchiffrement de la vectorialité. Celle-ci se caractérise par de nombreuses allusions conceptuelles au cycle solaire, son horizon et son mouvement cosmique, qui ne surprendront guère dans un contexte historique marqué par une solarisation généralisée des cultes.

Keywords: Khaemhat (TT57), reading patterns, vectoriality, Gestalt, subliminal images, puns, visual metaphors, agricultural scenes, surveying, solarization, cosmic movements, akhet, neheh.

Mots-clefs: Khâemhat (TT57), schémas de lecture, vectorialité, Gestalt, images subliminales, jeux de mots, métaphores formelles, travaux agricoles, arpentage, solarisation, mouvements cosmiques, akhet, neheh.

¹ Cet article résulte de la fusion entre un travail de session présenté par Anca Seculin au cours de baccalauréat HAR453C, “Art et architecture de l’Égypte et du Proche-Orient anciens”, session d’automne 2022, Université du Québec à Montréal, intitulé “Analyse de la scène agricole de la tombe de Khâemhat [TT57]” et d’une conférence présentée par Valérie Angenot au Centre de recherche interuniversitaire sur les humanités numériques (CRIHN) en février 2023. Suite à la soumission de son travail, Anca Seculin a intégré l’équipe du projet de recherche *Oudjat – Regards croisés entre Égypte ancienne et Occident moderne*, dirigé par Valérie Angenot à l’UQAM, une recherche expérimentale en sémiotique de la réception des images funéraires égyptiennes, visant à comprendre les processus d’acquisition des schémas de lecture des parois de tombes (vectorialités) par le lecteur à l’aide des technologies oculométriques et de l’analyse cognitive. Le projet est financé par une subvention *Savoir* du *Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada*.

Le sens de lecture des images

Si l'on considère des genres narratifs imagés modernes et occidentaux tels que les bandes dessinées (BD), on admettra que la lecture séquentielle des images s'effectue en fonction de schémas prédéfinis, fixés par convention, et qui consistent, dans les livres écrits en caractères latins, par exemple, à effectuer un mouvement des yeux linéaire allant de gauche à droite, puis un mouvement tabulaire² allant de haut en bas, pour suivre une narration qui mène inexorablement vers la fin du récit. Dans une éventuelle version arabe de cette même BD, le sens de lecture demeurera conventionnel, mais le mouvement linéaire s'effectuera de droite à gauche, conformément au protocole régissant la lecture de l'écriture arabe.

Cette façon de procéder de manière conventionnelle n'est pas universelle, pas plus que ne l'est, d'ailleurs, le format linéaire de telles narrations visuelles, avec leur corolaire quasi inéluctable que constitue l'achèvement du récit.

Dans d'autres cultures et d'autres types de productions visuelles, les schémas de lecture peuvent aussi ne pas être prédéfinis par convention. Par exemple, dans les *Scènes de la Passion du Christ* de Hans Memling au XVe siècle (Fig. 1), le peintre a organisé les différentes étapes chronologiques de son récit en fonction d'un vecteur temporel allant de gauche à droite —conformément à la convention de lecture des textes propres à sa culture —, mais se déployant, de façon non conventionnelle, dans l'espace du paysage urbain d'une Jérusalem fictive.³ Le vecteur temporel de lecture est donc ici codépendant des possibilités qu'offre l'agencement spatial de la ville. Les quatre dimensions du temps et de l'espace sont condensées dans les deux dimensions de la surface du tableau.

Dans ce cas, le schéma de lecture n'est donc pas conventionnel. C'est la préconnaissance du récit figuré qui permet au lecteur-type de découvrir le sens de lecture, par un processus de "trial and error".⁴ Nous utiliserons le terme de "vectorialité" pour désigner le mouvement du regard suggéré soit par un vecteur (par exemple de type temporel), soit par l'agencement plastique de l'image.⁵ La captation de cette vectorialité repose ici sur la connaissance de l'hypotexte biblique et la reconnaissance visuelle par effet gestaltien polymodal des étapes marquantes du récit.⁶ La vectorialité n'est pas non plus signifiante en soi, si ce n'est que son caractère sinueux pourrait potentiellement constituer une métaphore des méandres tortueux de

² Sur les termes "linéaire" et "tabulaire", voir le Groupe μ , *Rhétorique de la poésie : lecture linéaire, lecture tabulaire* (Paris : Seuil, 1990).

³ Peter Happé, *Cyclic Form and the English Mystery Plays: A Comparative Study of the English Biblical Cycles and their Continental and Iconographic Counterparts*, Ludus : Medieval and Early Renaissance Theatre and Drama 7 (Amsterdam : Rodopi, 2004), 118-124.

⁴ C'est notamment ce processus de "trial and error" oculaire que cherche à étudier le projet *Oudjat – Regards croisés* susmentionné.

⁵ Valérie Angenot, "Lire la paroi. Les vectorialités dans l'imagerie des tombes privées de l'Ancien Empire Égyptien", *Annales d'Histoire de l'Art et d'Archéologie*, vol. XVIII (1996), 7-21. Fernande Saint-Martin, *Sémiologie du langage visuel* (Montréal : Presses de l'Université du Québec, 1987), p. 168.

⁶ L'effet gestaltien polymodal fait référence au fait que la reconnaissance du récit biblique repose sur l'association d'une "visualisation", d'une traduction visuelle mentale, de textes bien connus du lecteur-type et sur base de différentes variantes iconographiques culturellement acquises (d'où l'effet gestaltien) permettant ensemble l'identification des étapes signifiantes du récit figuré. On pourrait rapprocher ce phénomène de ce que Walter Benjamin appelle "le souvenir du jamais-vu", Karine Winkelvoss, "Erinnerung an das nie Gesehene – Vergewärtigung und Geistesgegenwart der Bilder", *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, vol. 81, n° 2 (2018) : 185-197.



Figure 1 : Le schéma de lecture des Scènes de la passion du Christ de Hans Memling (ca 1470) et ses 23 étapes réparties dans la spatialité d'une Jérusalem fictive, Galerie Sabauda, Turin.

la foi et de la poursuite de la vérité spirituelle.⁷ Les deux commanditaires du tableau (Tommaso Portinari et Maria Baroncelli) se trouvent figurés en prière à l'intérieur de l'image, respectivement aux coins inférieurs gauche et droit.

Les images égyptiennes ont souvent été comparées à de la bande dessinée.⁸ Si on y reconnaît effectivement une organisation structurée linéairement et tabulairement comme en BD, les schémas de lecture sont, à l'instar de l'œuvre de Memling, non conventionnels et reposent sur la préconnaissance des étapes du récit par le lecteur-type auquel ces images sont destinées. Mais contrairement à Memling, peut-être, les artistes égyptiens y ont aussi vu l'opportunité de donner un sens à l'acte de lecture lui-même.⁹

Afin de s'assurer d'une bonne préconnaissance de la succession des étapes de lecture des parois, les travaux sur les vectorialités dans l'iconographie funéraire égyptienne ont débuté avec l'étude de la figuration des travaux agricoles.¹⁰ Ces derniers ne relèvent en effet pas entièrement d'un séquençage culturel, mais proposent

⁷ Happé, *Cyclic Form and the English Mystery Plays*, 119.

⁸ Patrick Peccate, "La bande dessinée et la Tapisserie de Bayeux [1/2]", *MARSAM*, décembre 2016. <https://marsam.graphics/la-bande-dessinee-et-la-tapisserie-de-bayeux-12/> (consulté le 4 novembre 2023). Daniel A. Werning, "The representation of Space, Time, and Event Sequence in an ancient Egyptian Netherworld Comic", dans Gaëlle Chantraine et Jean Winand (éds), *Time and Space at Issue in Ancient Egypt*, *Lingua Aegyptia Studia Monographica* 19 (Hambourg : Widmaier Verlag, 2018), p. 209-242.

⁹ Valérie Angenot, "Lire la paroi. Les vectorialités dans l'imagerie des tombes privées de l'Ancien Empire Égyptien", *Annales d'Histoire de l'Art et d'Archéologie*, vol. XVIII (1996), 7-21.

¹⁰ Valérie Angenot, "Le texte en écriture rétrograde de la tombe de Sennefer et les scribes montrant du doigt. Étude sur les vectorialités", dans *Thèbes aux 101 portes. Mélanges à la mémoire de Roland Tefnin*, éds Eugène Warmenbol et Valérie Angenot, *Monumenta Aegyptiaca* XII, série IMAGO n°3 (Turnhout : Brepols, 2010), 11-25 ; Valérie Angenot, "La vectorialité de la scène des travaux des

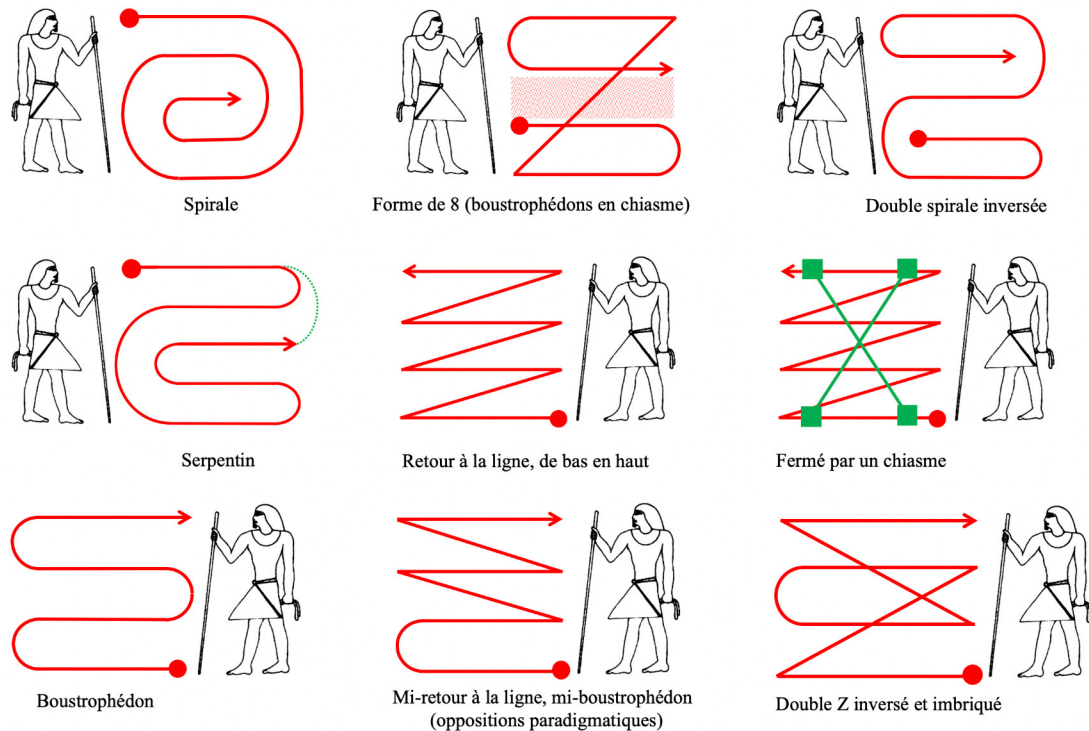


Figure 2 : Quelques exemples de vectorialités conçues comme schémas de lecture théoriques par des artistes égyptiens des Ancien et Nouvel Empires.

une succession quasiment universelle, régie par la nature. Il a de tout temps fallu semer avant de récolter, récolter avant de vanner, tamiser, mesurer les récoltes avant de les engranger, voire fabriquer du pain ou de la bière avec le grain, comme c'est parfois représenté.¹¹

Cette logique a, depuis quelques années, permis la découverte de différents types de schémas de lecture possibles attendus de l'observateur, c'est-à-dire de vectorialités conçues par l'artiste (Fig. 2).

Cet échantillon montre que le concepteur des décors a conçu son schéma théorique de lecture soit comme une figure qui s'enroule sur elle-même, tels une spirale, une forme de 8, un serpent...¹² ou une figure qui part du défunt pour réaboutir à lui,¹³ donc qui retransite éternellement par lui. Dans quelques rares cas, la séquence ouverte, linéaire et tabulaire, est fermée par des agencements plastiques et topologiques tels que le chiasme.¹⁴

champs chez Mérérouka. Étude sur le sens de lecture des parois de mastabas de l'Ancien Empire", *Göttinger Miszellen*, n° 176. (2000) : 5-20.

¹¹ Baudouin Van de Walle, *Le mastaba de Neferirtenef* (Bruxelles : Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire, 1973), 26.

¹² Voir Angenot, "Lire la paroi", spirale ou serpent dans le mastaba de Ptahhotep et Akhetotep (p. 11) ; forme de 8 dans le mastaba de Sekhentiou et Nefersechem-Ptah (p. 12) ; Angenot, "Le texte en écriture rétrograde de la tombe de Sennefer", double spirale inversée chez Nakht (p. 19).

¹³ Angenot, "Lire la paroi", retour à la ligne chez Kaemnefert (p. 15) ; boustrophédon dans le mastaba de Sekhemankh-Ptah (p. 9) ; hybride chez Kahief (p. 14) ; Angenot, "La vectorialité de la scène des travaux des champs chez Mérérouka", pour le double Z inversé (p. 13).

¹⁴ Voir Angenot, "Lire la paroi", chiasme chez Kaemnefert (p. 15) ; Pepiankh-Heryib (p. 17) ; Pepiankh-Henikem (p. 18) ; Idou (p. 18).

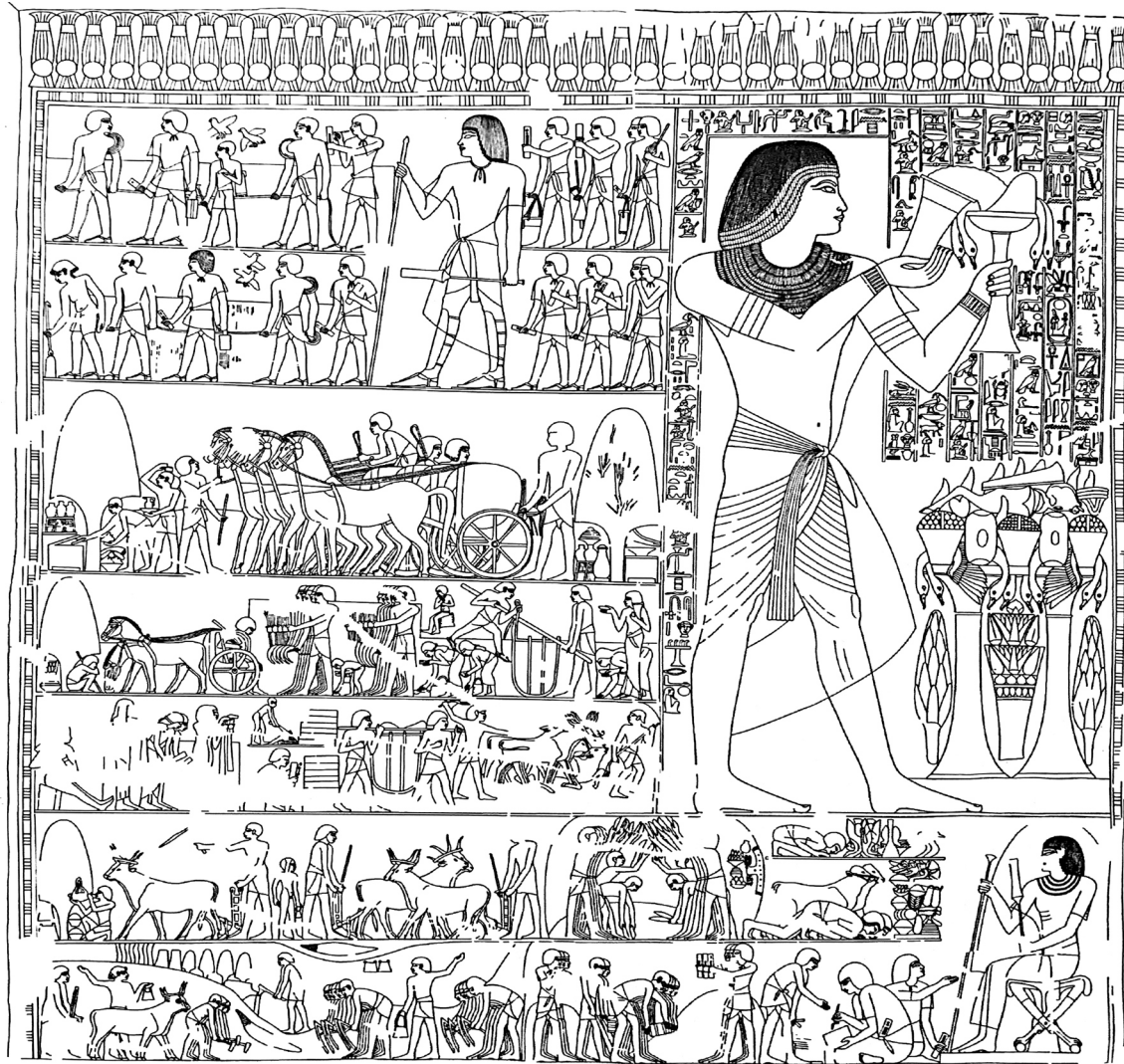


Figure 3 : Les scènes agricoles sur la paroi nord-est de la salle transversale de TT57 (infographie sur base des relevés d'El-Tanbouli, p. 200 et d'une remise aux proportions).

L'idée sous-jacente à ces agencements était d'activer magiquement le cycle des saisons, de manière à ce qu'il soit éternellement reconduit par ces schémas de lecture signifiants et par l'impulsion du regard des visiteurs de tombes. Le défunt s'inscrivait alors dans un cycle temporel dynamique et infini. Ainsi, l'acte de lecture lui-même a-t-il été rendu signifiant et performatif, grâce à la participation active et à l'agentivité volontaire du lecteur.¹⁵

Les travaux agricoles dans la tombe de Khâemhat

Dans la tombe thébaine de Khâemhat (TT57), les travaux agricoles se trouvent figurés sur la paroi nord-est de la salle transversale de la chapelle, directement à droite en entrant dans la tombe (Fig. 3).

¹⁵ Sur la question de l'agentivité, voir Alfred Gell, *Art and Agency. An Anthropological Theory* (Oxford : Oxford University Press, 1998).

Khâemhat était particulièrement concerné par les questions agricoles, puisqu'il exerçait notamment les charges de scribe royal et d'inspecteur des greniers de Haute et Basse Égypte sous le règne d'Amenhotep III, à la 18^e dynastie. Il était donc responsable des approvisionnements en grain du palais.¹⁶ C'était un proche du pharaon Amenhotep III, qui est d'ailleurs figuré sur les deux murs focaux ouest de la même salle transversale, de part et d'autre de la porte menant à la partie la plus sacrée de la chapelle.¹⁷ Sa tombe est une des quatre tombes privées du règne d'Amenhotep III, à être décorées en bas-relief dans la nécropole thébaine. Elle est datée de manière précise de l'année du premier *heb sed* du roi, soit de l'an 30.¹⁸

Sur cette paroi, Khâemhat est figuré trois fois, dans trois espaces distincts. D'une part, de grande taille à droite, effectuant une "offrande à la porte", en réalité une offrande au soleil levant dont les rayons matinaux pénétraient chaque jour dans l'encadrure orientée vers l'est. Les références solaires utilisées par l'artiste sont ici multiples, comme nous le verrons. Même si cette scène est fréquente dans les tombes de la 18^e dynastie, rappelons que le premier *heb sed* d'Amenhotep III est annonciateur d'une assimilation du roi à tous les dieux d'Égypte, d'une solarisation généralisée des cultes et de l'avènement d'une version phénoménologique du soleil en sa manifestation lumineuse de Rê-Horakhty, qui évoluera en "Globe resplendissant" sous Amenhotep III, puis en "Aton vivant" sous le règne de son fils, Akhenaton.¹⁹

Khâemhat est ensuite représenté de taille moyenne, "en accolade" d'une scène d'arpentage située aux deux registres supérieurs. Il est enfin figuré assis face aux deux registres inférieurs où sont dépeintes les premières et ultimes activités agricoles de l'année, semailles et reddition des comptes par ses scribes. Au centre, les attelages de la délégation du palais surplombent deux registres montrant les activités de la saison de *chemou* (été, récoltes).

En quête de la vectorialité

Temps 1

Il fallait faire du sens de cette organisation *a priori* aléatoire. Si l'on procède par ordre chronologique, la vectorialité des travaux agricoles part du bas à gauche, où sont illustrées les activités ayant cours à la fin de la saison d'*akhet* (inondation). Les eaux de l'inondation se sont retirées, laissant derrière elles quelques flaques, reliquats métonymiques de l'immersion des terres. La présence de ces flaques entraîne déjà potentiellement une première allusion à l'horizon solaire,²⁰ puisque les phonèmes

¹⁶ *PM I*, 113.

¹⁷ Seuls les favoris du pharaon pouvaient représenter le roi dans leur tombe. Suivant une stratégie visuelle, le kiosque royal apparaissait sur les deux pans de parois directement éclairés par les rayons solaires en entrant dans la tombe, indiquant par là-même le statut de courtisan de son propriétaire. Voir Melinda Hartwig, *Tomb Painting and Identity in Ancient Thebes, 1419-1372 BCE*, Monumenta Aegyptiaca X, série IMAGO N° 2 (Bruxelles : Brepols, 2004), 51 et 54-73.

¹⁸ Mohamed Abdel-Latif El-Tanbouli, *Tomb of Khâemhat TT57. The royal scribe and overseer of the granaries of Upper and Lower Egypt* (Le Caire: The American University in Cairo Press, 2017), 1.

¹⁹ Ray Johnson, "Images of Amenhotep III in Thebes: Styles and Intentions", dans *The Art of Amenhotep III: Art Historical Analysis*, dir. Lawrence Berman (Cleveland : Cleveland Museum of Art et Indiana University Press, 1990), 37-42.

²⁰ Valérie Angenot, "Rébus, calembours et images subliminales dans l'iconographie égyptienne", dans *Rébus d'ici et d'ailleurs : écriture, image, signe*, eds Claire-Akiko Brisset, Florence Dumora et



Figure 4 : Temps 1 : Les deux registres inférieurs gauche de la paroi nord-est (infographie d'après El-Tanbouli).

akhet désignent aussi bien la saison aquifère que ce dernier concept métaphysique.²¹ C'est la période de la préparation des sols en vue des semailles qui auront lieu au début de la saison de *peret* (émergence) et de l'abatage des arbres pour l'hiver²² (Fig. 4).

Comme dans la tombe de Nakht (TT52), dont cette partie de paroi est clairement inspirée,²³ le registre inférieur est divisé en deux par la ligne sinueuse du sol qui contourne des flaques — figurées en rabattement selon le principe aspectif —,²⁴ témoins du retrait des eaux. Cette ligne ondulée du sol offre une vision cartographique du paysage qui dynamise la scène. Il s'agit d'une émancipation vis-à-vis des figurations habituelles de ces scènes qui montrent généralement les champs en coupe verticale et indiquent le sol par une ligne horizontale.

La vectorialité démarre donc au centre du sous-registre inférieur, avec l'abatage des arbres, se poursuit à droite avec la préparation des sols à la houe, pour repartir vers la gauche avec la préparation des sols au maillet, et des semailles de part et d'autre. À ce stade, on a probablement déjà, greffée au vecteur temporel, une opposition paradigmatique entre la culture du lin à gauche et la culture des céréales à droite, figurées en vis-à-vis. En effet, la préparation des sols est typique de deux types

Marianne Simon-Oikawa (Paris : Maisonneuve & Larose / Hémisphères, 2018), 96-97.

²¹ Cloé Caron et Valérie Angenot, "Les graphies de l'*3h.t* dans les Textes des Pyramides et les Textes des Sarcophages", dans *Signs, Language and Culture. The Semograms of the Pyramid Texts, between Iconicity and Referential Reality*, dirs Josep Cervelló et Marc Orriols-Llonch, Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta (Leuven : Peeters, sous presse).

²² Angenot, "Le texte en écriture rétrograde de la tombe de Sennefer" : 16.

²³ Valérie Angenot, "Copy and Reinterpretation in the Tomb of Nakht: Ancient Egyptian Hermeneutics", dans *Evolving Egypt: Innovation, Appropriation, Reinterpretation in Ancient Egypt*, eds Kerry Muhlestein et John Gee (Oxford : Archaeopress, 2012), 53. Voir aussi Dimitri Laboury, "Tradition and Creativity. Toward a Study of Intericonicity in Ancient Egyptian art", dans *(Re)productive Traditions in Ancient Egypt*, éd. Todd Gillen (Liège : Presses Universitaires de Liège, 2017), 238-248.

²⁴ Emma Brunner-Traut, "Aspective", dans Heinrich Schäfer, *Principles of Egyptian Art*, (Wiesbaden : Harrassowitz, nouvelle édition 1986).

de terrains géographiquement et ontologiquement distincts : un sol humide proche des berges du Nil propice à la culture du lin, que l'on prépare au maillet ; et un sol plus sec propice à la culture des céréales, dont on brise les mottes asséchées à la houe.²⁵

Cette symétrie asymétrique à l'égyptienne,²⁶ avec ses deux termes en opposition paradigmatique encadrant la courbe vallonnée du sol, qui enserme l'abatteur d'arbres, constitue probablement une des innombrables métaphores visuelles possibles de l'horizon solaire.²⁷ Il est habituel, dans une sphère d'expression funéraire, de voir le monde empirique offrir la possibilité d'une lecture transcendante.²⁸ Dans la perspective d'une telle lecture, l'arbre abattu au creux du vallon devrait théoriquement avoir une valeur solaire. On pense évidemment directement à l'épisode de la division de l'arbre-*iched*, évoquée dans le chapitre 17 du *Livre des Morts*, qui relate la mise à mort des ennemis de Rê lorsque le soleil entre dans le ciel oriental : “Je suis ce Grand Chat à côté duquel l'arbre-*iched* a été fendu (*psš*) dans Héliopolis, en cette nuit de combat et de garde des rebelles, ce jour où ses ennemis ont été détruits. Qu'est-ce que cela signifie ? Ce Grand Chat à côté duquel l'arbre-*iched* a été fendu à Héliopolis, c'est Rê lui-même ”.²⁹ Nous allons voir juste après la façon dont cette idée se combine avec la composition du registre supérieur.

Il est remarquable de noter la présence, de part et d'autre du vallon, de deux semeurs figés dans le moment le plus stéréotypique de leur action, le bras levé à l'équerre, déversant la semence (*stī* )³⁰ dans les sillons. Ce “bras à l'équerre” possède une forte empreinte visuelle et une symbolique qui s'est mise en place au début de l'histoire égyptienne, puisqu'on le trouve dès l'époque thinite sur la palette de Narmer. Il y signifie le maintien de l'ordre par la figure du roi maîtrisant un ennemi.³¹ Il évoluera en un geste typique des actes de création,³² convoquant la valeur

²⁵ On peut comparer cette scène avec celle de la tombe de Nakht, qui fait une distinction nette entre graines de céréales et graines de lin et la préparation de leurs sols respectifs. Abdel Ghaffar Shedid et Matthias Seidel, *The Tomb of Nakht. The Art and History of an Eighteenth Dynasty Official's Tomb at Western Thebes* (Mayence : Philipp von Zabern, 1996), 34.

²⁶ Sylvia Schoske, “Symmetrophobia - Symmetrie und Asymmetrie in der altägyptischen Kunst”, dans *Symmetrie in Kunst, Natur und Wissenschaft*, éd. Bernd Krimmel (Darmstadt : Roetherdruck, 1986), 151-156.

²⁷ Wolfaert Westendorf, *Altägyptische Darstellungen des Sonnenlaufes auf der abschüssigen Himmelsbahn*, Münchner Ägyptologische Studien (Berlin : Verlag Bruno Hessling, 1966) ; Caron et Angenot, “Les graphies de l'*ʒh.t*”.

²⁸ Valérie Angenot, “A Method for Ancient Egyptian Hermeneutics (With Application to the Small Golden Shrine of Tutankhamun)”, dans *Methodik und Didaktik in der Ägyptologie. Herausforderungen eines kulturwissenschaftlichen Paradigmenwechsels in den Altertumswissenschaften*, Ägyptologie und Kulturwissenschaft IV, eds Burkhard Backes, Alexandra Verbovsek et Catherine Jones (Munich : Wilhelm Fink, 2011), 262-263.

²⁹ Par exemple dans le *Livre des Morts* de Youya, le père de la reine Tiy, épouse d'Amenhotep III, Papyrus Caire CG51189. Thomas George Allen, *The Egyptian Book of the Dead: Documents in the Oriental Institute Museum at the University of Chicago*, Oriental Institute Publications 82 (Chicago : The University of Chicago Press, 1960), 90.

³⁰ Adolf Erman et Hermann Grapow, *Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache im Auftrage der deutschen Akademien* (Leipzig, Hinrich, 1926), ci-après ‘Wb’ IV, 346, 13.

³¹ Orly Goldwasser, *From Icon to Metaphor: Studies in the Semiotics of the Hieroglyphs*, Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 142 (Fribourg : University Press Fribourg Switzerland, 1995).

³² Il est, par exemple, typique du dieu Min ityphallique, comme geste fécondateur. Pour une autre interprétation phonétique de ce geste chez Min (*k3*), Jean-Guillaume Olette-Pelletier, *Min, l'Horus victorieux. Le dieu Min au Moyen Empire*, Cahiers Égypte Nilotique et Méditerranéenne 33 (Montpellier : ÉNiM, 2023), 640-649.

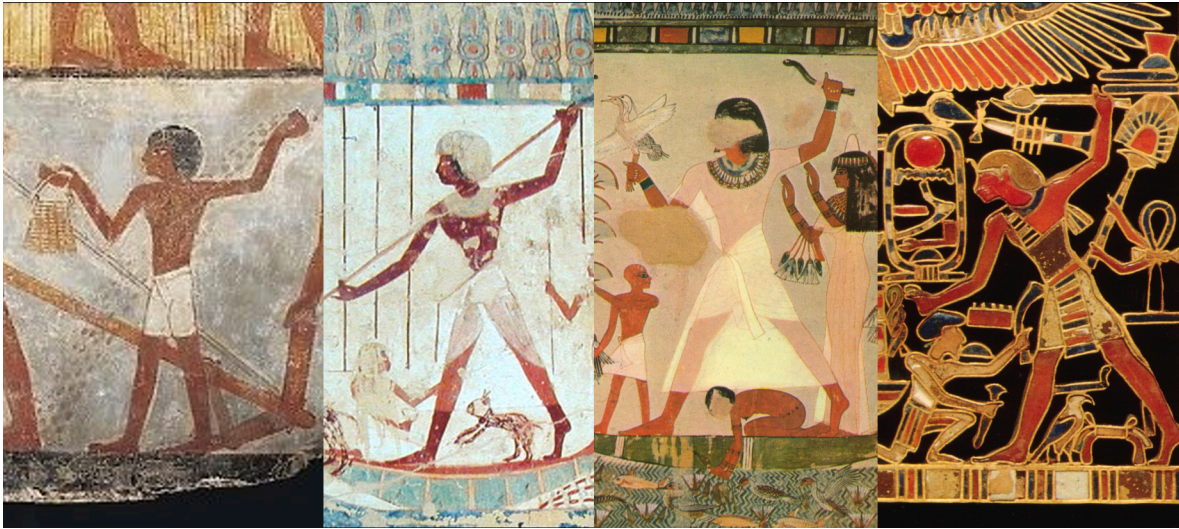


Figure 5 : Les différentes métaphores formelles du “bras à l’équerre” : ‘semer’ (Ounsou), ‘harponner’ (Ouserhat), ‘lancer’ (Menna), ‘soumettre’ (Mereret)

phonétique *km3* “créer” $\text{𓂏} \text{𓂐} \text{𓂑}$.³³ Dans les tombes des nobles, cette iconographie royale fut adaptée sous une forme *a priori* plus triviale, mais non moins symbolique, dans la composition chirale des chasse et pêche dans les marais.³⁴ Le défunt y est figuré en symétrie miroir face à lui-même, harponnant d’un côté les poissons (*sti* $\text{𓂏} \text{𓂐}$),³⁵ et lançant un bâton de jet sur les oiseaux de l’autre (*km3* $\text{𓂏} \text{𓂐} \text{𓂑}$).³⁶ Cette scène récurrente du répertoire iconographique funéraire privé constitue déjà une métaphore formelle de l’*akhet* et condense, sous la forme d’allusions visuelles et phonétiques, toutes les conditions nécessaires à la renaissance *post mortem* du défunt (Fig. 5).

Comme dans les scènes de chasse et pêche, l’acte sexuel masculin nécessaire à la résurrection du défunt est ici aussi suggéré par un jeu d’homophonie portant sur le verbe *sti* qui signifie à la fois “semer” / “ensemencer” $\text{𓂏} \text{𓂐}$,³⁷ “éjaculer” $\text{𓂏} \text{𓂐}$,³⁸ mais également “jaillir” $\text{𓂏} \text{𓂐}$,³⁹ pour caractériser la crue fertilisante du Nil, que l’on retrouve allusivement ici sous la forme métonymique des flaques d’eau caractéristiques de la fin de la saison d’*akhet*.⁴⁰ Le terme *sti*, qui s’est sémantiquement

³³ Wolfaert Westendorf, “Bemerkungen zur ‘Kammer der Wiedergeburt’ im Tutanchamungrab”, *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde*, vol. 94. (1967) : 139-150.

³⁴ Sur la chiralité, enantiomorphie et symétrie miroir, voir Philippe Viallefont, “La chiralité”, *Bulletin de l’Académie des Sciences et Lettres de Montpellier*, vol. 52 (2021) : 1-13, [en ligne] <https://www.ac-sciences-lettres-montpellier.fr/academie_edition/fichiers_conf/VIALLEFONT-2021-2.pdf> [21.20.2022] ; Danièle Dehouve, “Chiralité, symétrie et cosmogramme”, document de travail à paraître ; Danièle Dehouve, “Los simbolismos de los numerales en el ‘tonalpohualli’ centromexicano”, *Itinerarios*, vol. 37 (2023) : 23-48.

³⁵ *Wb* IV, 326, 1.

³⁶ *Wb* V, 34, 3.

³⁷ *Wb* IV, 346, 13.

³⁸ *Wb* IV, 347, 10.

³⁹ *Wb* IV, 329, 3.

⁴⁰ Pour plus de précisions voir Valérie Angenot, “Sémiotique et herméneutique de l’art égyptien ancien”, dans *Pratiques de l’histoire de l’art à l’UQAM*, eds Johanne Lalonde, Ève Lamoureux et Thérèse St-Gelais (Montréal : Presses Universitaires de l’UQAM, 2018), 10-17.

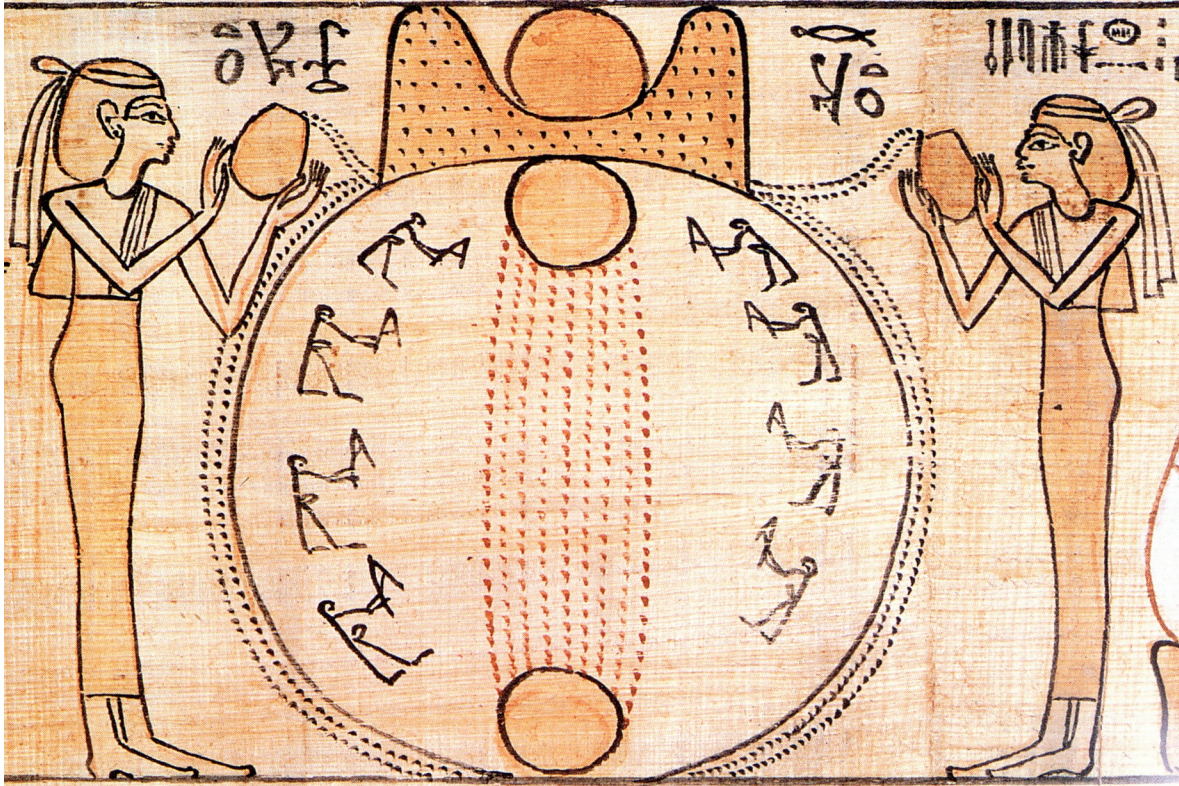


Figure 6 : L'ogdoade balisant à la houe la trajectoire solaire vers l'horizon-akhet. Papyrus mythologique de Khonsoumose, 21e dynastie (Wiki Commons).

étendu à partir des idées de “verser” $\text{𓆎} \text{𓆏}$,⁴¹ “jaillir” $\text{𓆎} \text{𓆏}$ ⁴² et “transpercer” $\text{𓆎} \text{𓆏}$,⁴³ peut également signifier “darder ses rayons” $\text{𓆎} \text{𓆏}$ ⁴⁴ en parlant du soleil. L'astre combine ainsi son action porteuse de vie sur terre avec l'effet fécondateur de la crue, tandis que le défunt aspire à inscrire sa résurrection dans le cycle éternel de ces phénomènes récurrents (renaissance quotidienne du soleil et retour annuel de la crue).

La présence des paysans maniant la houe face aux semeurs dans cette composition n'est pas non plus sans évoquer la représentation de la trajectoire solaire dans le papyrus mythologique plus tardif de Khonsoumose (21e dynastie),⁴⁵ balisée à la houe par les dieux de l'ogdoade, au pied de l'horizon (Fig. 6). Cette évocation s'accorderait bien avec les éléments de la poursuite de la vectorialité au registre supérieur.

En effet, la logique temporelle nous mène ensuite au registre du dessus, qui prolonge les activités agricoles de la saison d'*akhet* avec les labours et semailles de la

⁴¹ *Wb* IV 328,9.

⁴² *Wb* IV, 329, 3. L'idée de jaillir constitue sans doute l'action-source à la base de l'onomatopée *sti* qui imite le son d'un liquide jaillissant, d'où l'éjaculation, la crue, les semailles (qui font un bruit similaire et portent une action fécondatrice, le grain [collectif] étant assimilé à un liquide coulant).

⁴³ *Wb* IV, 326, 1. L'élargissement sémantique du terme bifurquant dans des sens liés à la fois au jaillissement d'un liquide et à une perforation indiquerait potentiellement que l'étymon d'origine serait *sti*, “accomplir l'acte sexuel masculin”, “forniquer” (*Wb* IV, 347, 10) qui possède les deux sens de “pénétrer” et “féconder” et deux déterminatifs pour le catégoriser : la peau de bête percée d'une flèche et le phallus éjaculant.

⁴⁴ *Wb* IV 330, 13.

⁴⁵ Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienne, inv. AS.3859.



Figure 7: Le soleil naissant dans l'horizon sous la forme d'un enfant royal dans un ouroboros émergeant d'un bucrâne surplombant deux lions adossés, comme figuration de l'horizon-akhet, Papyrus d'Heroubenkhet, 21^e dynastie (dessin d'après Wilkinson).

saison de *peret*. Après avoir déchiffré la métaphore visuelle du niveau inférieur, on reconnaît sans effort sur ce registre une composition chirale (= en symétrie miroir) similaire, formée de deux attelages de labours adossés avec, en leur centre, un petit semeur-enfant portant la tresse latérale. Il est possible que, sur le plan immanent, le positionnement des charrues marque, là aussi, une opposition paradigmatique entre les labours des champs de lin et ceux des céréales. Sur le plan symbolique et transcendant, l'enfant est ici une allusion au soleil naissant dans l'horizon, tel qu'il sera dépeint de manière plus explicite aux époques ultérieures, comme par exemple dans le Papyrus d'Heroubenkhet à la 21^e dynastie (Fig. 7).⁴⁶ Ainsi, après que sa trajectoire a été balisée par l'ogdoade, ses ennemis abattus durant la nuit et l'arbre-*iched* fendu, le soleil peut renaître, enfant, le matin dans l'*akhet*.

Notons que l'attelage de droite est une réinterprétation d'une composition similaire chez Nakht (TT52), elle aussi déjà métaphore visuelle de l'horizon solaire avec un arbre-*iched* en son centre (Fig. 8a).⁴⁷ Plus encore que chez Nakht,⁴⁸ le réagencement par superposition des attelages chez Khâemhat (Fig. 8c) peut traduire, sur le plan immanent, la spatialité et la profondeur de l'espace, pour signifier le mouvement des charrues évoluant en boustrophédon sur les aires de labours (Fig. 8b).

Ainsi, la sous-vectorialité générale de ce bout de paroi prendrait la forme d'une spirale dextrogyre (Fig. 9b). Si l'on tient compte de l'orientation des visages, elle partirait du centre pour aller vers la droite. Mais vu le caractère symétrique de l'ensemble, rien n'empêcherait réellement de partir dans l'autre sens (spirale sinistrogyre) (Fig. 9c). Quelques arguments vont d'ailleurs dans le sens de cette seconde option (voir ci-dessous).

⁴⁶ Caire JE 19323. Richard H. Wilkinson, *Reading Egyptian Art: a hieroglyphic guide to ancient Egyptian painting and sculpture* (Londres : Thames and Hudson Ltd., 1992), 20-21.

⁴⁷ Angenot, "Rébus, calembours et images subliminales dans l'iconographie égyptienne", 95-96.

⁴⁸ En raison de la nécessité de faire s'affronter les deux attelages chez Nakht pour créer la symétrie nécessaire à la métaphore formelle de l'horizon.

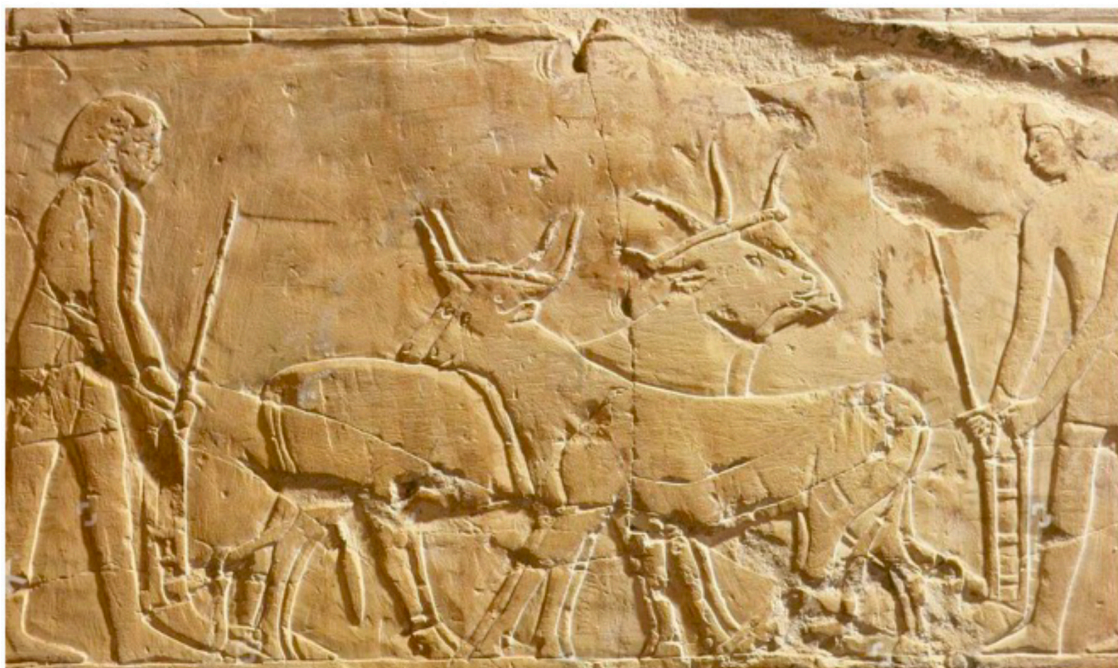
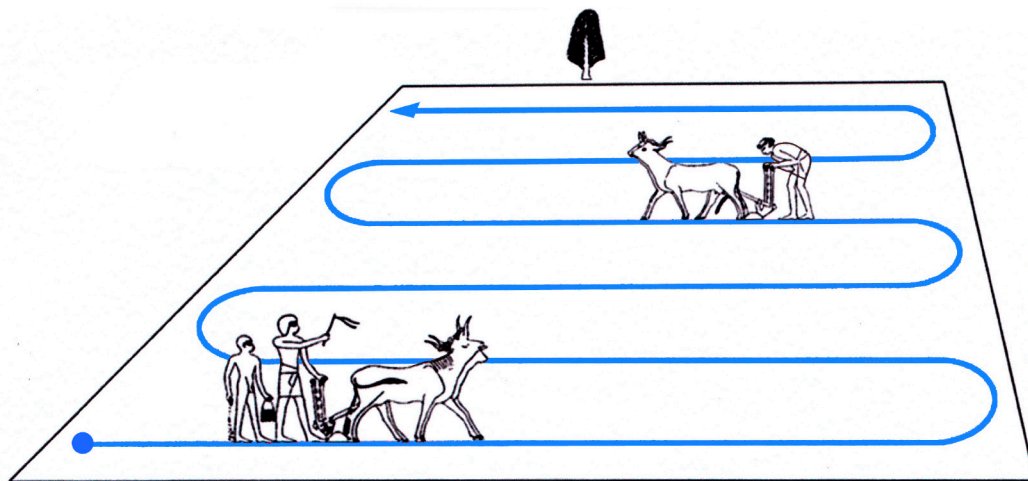


Figure 8a-b-c : Le rendu de la profondeur de l'espace chez Nakht (TT52, haut) et chez Khâemhat (TT57, bas)
(aquarelle Davies MET 15.5.19b; dessin et photographie, Valérie Angenot)

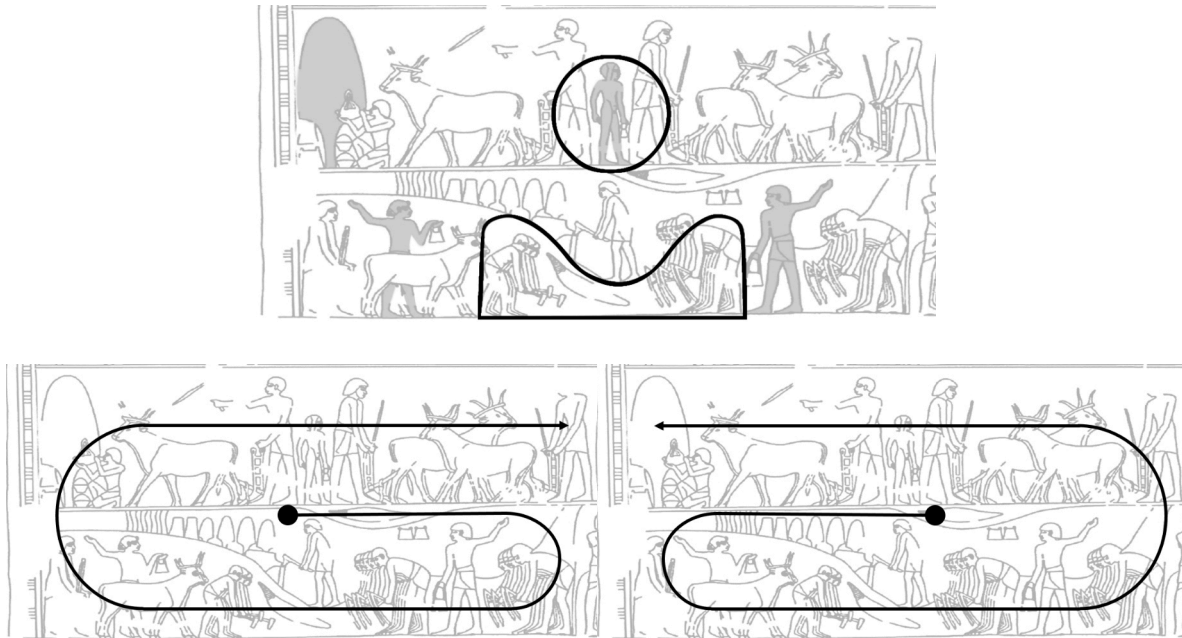


Figure 9a-b-c : (a) Les allusions visuelles complexes et (b-c) les deux vectorialités possibles de la partie inférieure gauche de la paroi.

On comprend bien ici que la vectorialité n'est pas le principe unique régissant l'ensemble, et qu'à la logique purement temporelle s'ajoutent des considérations spatiales (zones humides ↔ sèches), paradigmatiques (lin vs blé) et conceptuelles sous la forme de métaphores formelles ('horizon-*akhet*') et sonores (*sti*, *3h.t*), rendant ce petit bout de paroi déjà très alambiqué en soi (Fig. 9a-b-c). Les jeux allusifs se complexifient exponentiellement en cette 18^e dynastie glorieuse et chaque artiste semble vouloir rivaliser d'inventivité avec les prédécesseurs dont il s'inspire.

La vectorialité aboutit à un arbre duquel pend une outre, à laquelle se désaltère un homme accroupi. L'arbre ne dénote pas sur le plan conceptuel, puisqu'il est susceptible d'évoquer ici encore l'arbre-*iched* au pied duquel le soleil renaît chaque matin.⁴⁹ L'outre-*šdw*, de laquelle dérive le hiéroglyphe *šd*  qui intervient parfois dans la graphie du nom de l'arbre (*išd*   ), aux 18-20^e dynasties,⁵⁰ pourrait être un jeu phonétique allant dans le sens d'une connotation mythologique de la scène.⁵¹ La scène évoque ainsi encore les figurations du pharaon se désaltérant à une déesse-arbre nourricière, telles que celle de Thoutmosis III allaité par Isis dans la chambre J de sa tombe de la Vallée des Rois (KV34)⁵² ou, chez les privés, la scène de l'abreuvement des défunts par la déesse du sycamore.⁵³ Il est intéressant de noter qu'une telle scène se

⁴⁹ Valérie Angenot, "Hormin. Vignette du chapitre 17 du Livre des Morts", dans *Voir double, pièges et révélations du visible*, eds Michel Weemans, Dario Gamboni et Jean-Hubert Martin (Malakoff : Hazan, 2016), 135.

⁵⁰ *Wb* I 136, 6.

⁵¹ Pour une liste des jeux phonétiques du même type, voir Valérie Angenot, "Eating in Ancient Egypt: Semiotics of an iconographic Absence", *Journal of the Society for the Study of Ancient Egypt*, vol 47, (2020-2021) : 19-21.

⁵² Voir photographie de Kent Weeks, 1979, <https://thebanmappingproject.com/images/15621jpg?site=5754>.

⁵³ Goldwasser, *From Icon to Metaphor*, 114-125,

trouve justement figurée juste à gauche du balisage de la trajectoire solaire à la houe par l'ogdoade, dans le papyrus mythologique de Khonsoumosé (Fig. 6), offrant un parallèle métaphorique frappant à la composition de Khâemhat.⁵⁴

Si la vectorialité ne domine pas par rapport aux effets de symétrie miroir et aux allusions conceptuelles, la forme qu'elle épouse est néanmoins tout à fait remarquable et mérite qu'on s'y arrête plus longuement. Davantage qu'une simple spirale, cette vectorialité est aussi un hiéroglyphe et le déterminatif de verbes décrivant le mouvement des astres :  *dbn* "tourner autour, entourer",⁵⁵  *dbn pt* "traverser le ciel", "faire le tour du ciel",⁵⁶  *dbn.ty* "les deux tournantes" [pour désigner le soleil et la lune].⁵⁷ Dans sa version inversée (mouvement ascendant),⁵⁸ elle est un idéogramme possédant la valeur phonétique *phr*, qui dénote aussi le mouvement des astres créateurs de temps :  *phr* "entourer", "encercler",⁵⁹  *phr.yt* "période de rotation des astres", "temps",⁶⁰  *m phr* "en mouvement [pour les étoiles / les astres et le cours du temps]". Nul doute que l'idée de cette forme signifiante aura été empruntée à Nakht (TT52), astronome d'Amon et grand observateur des mouvements astraux, puisque la vectorialité des travaux agricoles de sa tombe propose une combinaison des deux signes (double spirale inversée).⁶¹

Temps 2

Poursuivons notre quête de la vectorialité qui est maintenant rompue dans son élan initial et amorce un mouvement alternatif aux registres supérieurs. Chronologiquement parlant, après les semailles et avant les récoltes, on devrait se rendre à la scène d'arpentage (de la mesure et de l'inspection des champs) qui se trouve aux deux registres tout en haut de la paroi. Les céréales⁶² sont hautes et prêtes à être récoltées : c'est la saison de *chemou*.⁶³ Cette scène est séparée des scènes de travaux agricoles proprement dites par un registre où figurent des chevaux et des chariots (Fig. 10).⁶⁴ Il pourrait s'agir de l'arrivée de Khâemhat et de ses "harpedonaptæ" ("tireurs de cordes", arpenteurs) sur les champs.

Cette insertion manifeste sans doute la volonté du concepteur de la paroi de bien distinguer les deux activités : celles effectuées par les paysans, qui constituent une métaphore des saisons qu'inspecte Khâemhat et celle activement effectuée par le propriétaire de la tombe en sa charge de scribe royal et inspecteur des greniers : l'arpentage. Ces deux scènes ont potentiellement été séparées par l'artiste, car elles relèvent de deux ontologies différentes : une métaphore du temps au plan conceptuel, qui participe de la vectorialité spatio-temporelle d'une thématique à haute valeur

⁵⁴ <https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010458983>

⁵⁵ *Wb* V 437, 4-11.

⁵⁶ Dans les Textes des Pyramides, *Wb* V 437, 4.

⁵⁷ Plus tard, dans les temples ptolémaïques, *Wb* V 437, 14.

⁵⁸ Mais les deux formes semblent relativement interchangeables.

⁵⁹ *Wb* I 544, 12 à 547, 7.

⁶⁰ *Wb* I 548, 6-10.

⁶¹ Angenot, "Le texte en écriture rétrograde de la tombe de Sennefer" : 19.

⁶² Des traces de peinture semblent indiquer que les champs figurés aux deux registres étaient des champs de céréales.

⁶³ Angenot, "Le texte en écriture rétrograde de la tombe de Sennefer" : 17.

⁶⁴ On trouve une scène semblable dans la chapelle thébaine de Menna (TT69). Melinda Hartwig éd., *The Tomb Chapel of Menna (TT 69). The Art, Culture, and Science of Painting in an Egyptian Tomb*, ARCE Conservation Series 5 (Le Caire : AUC Press, 2013), 26-29.

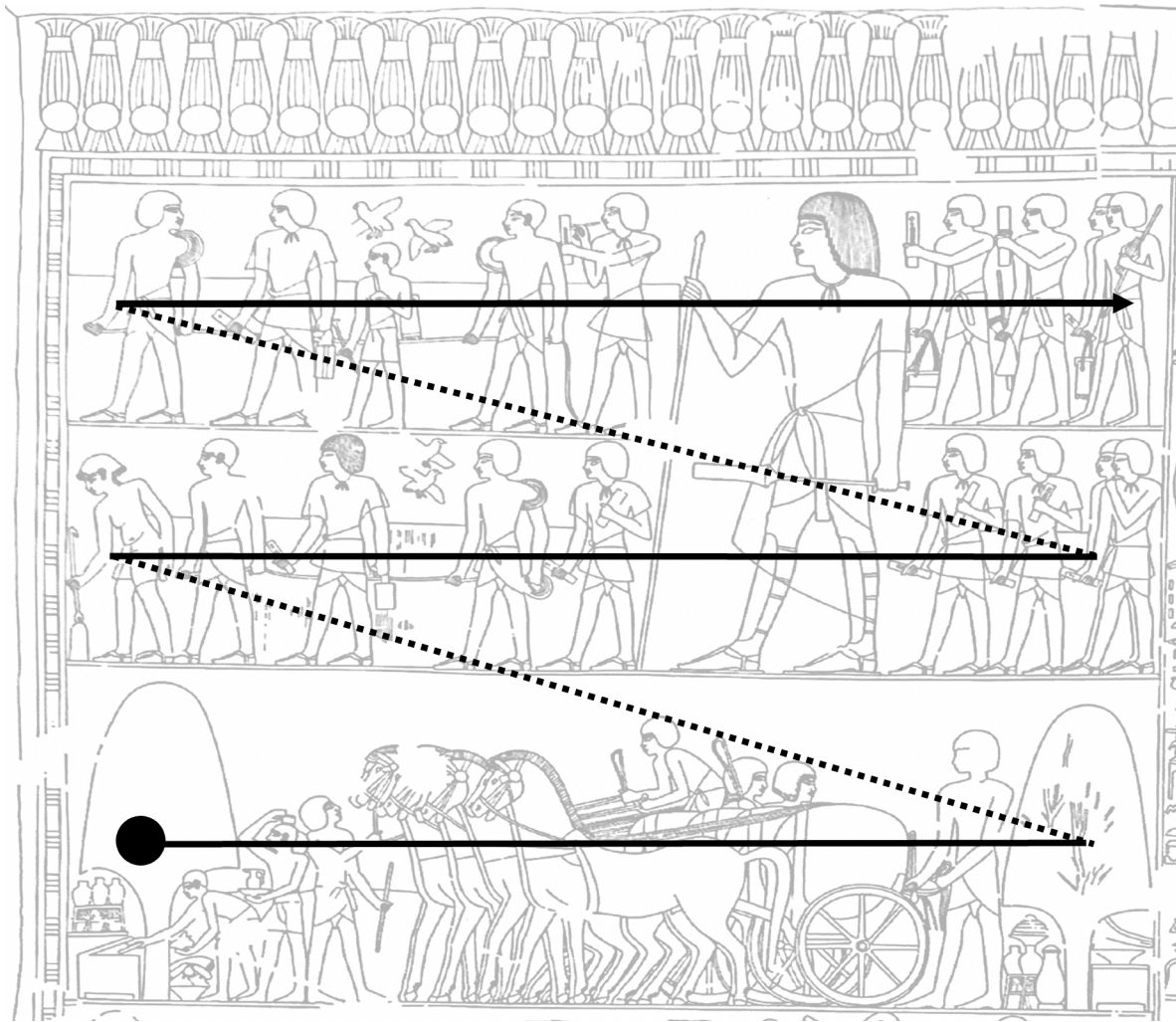


Figure 10 : Temps 2 : La scène d'arpentage en haut de la paroi et la scène d'arrivée des chariots du maître et ses scribes.

symbolique ; et la figuration concrète des activités terrestres du propriétaire de la tombe, relevant de sa charge professionnelle. La figure de Khâemhat se détache de grande taille (métaphore conceptuelle de son importance) sur fond de deux registres d'arpentage. Petit détail pratique à "effet de réel",⁶⁵ le maître porte des jambières pour éviter de se faire lacérer par les fibres de paille, en arpentant (au sens propre et figuré) les champs du pharaon.

On peut ainsi relever les oppositions paradigmatiques suivantes entre le bas et le haut de la paroi :

⁶⁵ Roland Barthes, "L'effet de réel", *Communications*, vol. 11, n° 1. (1968) : 84-89.

Cycles agricoles saisonniers

Activité de surveillance “passive” <i>Khâemhat assis à l’écart</i>	vs
Thématique conceptuelle	vs
Reconduction du temps et des offrandes	vs
Renaissance post mortem <i>Imitatio solis</i> ⁶⁷	vs
Transcendance	vs
Conceptuel	vs
Temps	vs

Arpentage

Activité cadastrale “active” <i>Khâemhat debout au cœur de la scène</i>
Thématique concrète (néanmoins conceptualisable)
Témoignage d’activités professionnelles
Survie sociale ⁶⁶ <i>Mémoire</i>
Immanence
Empirique
Espace

En allant à la rencontre des visages, la vectorialité serait donc brisée et ascendante : un schéma de lecture linéaire simple, contrastant avec la complexité conceptuelle des registres inférieurs. Au registre supérieur, un scribe prend note des résultats des mesures, tandis que les scribes dans la suite de Khâemhat brandissent leur palette, peut-être pour signifier qu’ils en font eux aussi usage.⁶⁸

Notons que dans la tombe plus ou moins contemporaine⁶⁹ de Menna (TT69), qui possédait, quant à lui, le titre hiérarchiquement inférieur de “scribe des champs de pharaon”, donc scribe du cadastre, l’activité d’arpentage a, là aussi été figurée au registre supérieur, surplombant les autres travaux agricoles. La scène d’arpentage n’apparaissait traditionnellement pas dans la suite des travaux agricoles jusqu’alors. Il s’agit là d’une innovation datant de la 18^e dynastie. Quatre tombes thébaines présentent cette scène et datent toutes des règnes de Thoutmosis IV (1400/1-1390 av. J.-C.) et/ou d’Amenhotep III (1390-1352 av. J.-C.) : respectivement les tombes d’Amenhotepsise (TT75, Th.IV), de Djoserkarâseneb (TT38, Th.IV), de Menna (TT69, Th.IV-Am.III) et de Khâemhat (TT57, Am.III).⁷⁰

En dépit de son ancrage empirique dans les activités professionnelles du défunt, rien n’empêche évidemment là aussi d’envisager ce thème sur un plan conceptuel. Cette corde encerclant les blés dorés est, en effet, susceptible d’évoquer ici la formule familière “tout ce qu’entoure le globe”,⁷¹ à savoir le mouvement de l’astre solaire et sa lumière génératrice d’espace,⁷² dont les mystères se trouvent au

⁶⁶ Jan Assmann, *Mort et au-delà dans l’Égypte ancienne*, traduit de l’allemand par Nathalie Baum (Paris : Rocher, 2001), 74-113.

⁶⁷ Inclusion dans le cycle cosmique, notamment solaire, et son éternelle reconduction.

⁶⁸ Sur les pratiques de l’arpentage en Égypte, voir Hans Barnard, “Surveying in Ancient Egypt”, dans *Encyclopaedia of the History of Science, Technology, and Medicine in Non-Western Cultures*, éd. Helaine Selin (Dordrecht: Springer Dordrecht, 2014), 1-5.

⁶⁹ Sans doute légèrement antérieure, datant des règnes de Thoutmosis IV-Amenhotep III.

⁷⁰ John F. Brock, “Who Were the First Surveyors? Four Surveyors of the Gods in the XVIII Dynasty of Egypt – New Kingdom c. 1400 B.C.”, *International Federation of Surveyors*. (mars 2005) : 4-10. https://www.fig.net/resources/monthly_articles/2005/brock_march_2005.asp

⁷¹ *Šnn Itn. Wb* IV 490, 7.

⁷² Jan Assmann, “Akhanyati’s Theology of Light and Time”, *Proceedings of the Israel Academy of*

cœur des préoccupations théologiques de Khâemhat. On trouve effectivement dans sa tombe un des premiers hymnes solaires annonçant l'époque amarnienne, dont les termes se profilent en cette fin de 18^e dynastie.⁷³

Le potentiel conceptuel de l'activité cadastrale sera d'ailleurs exploité ultérieurement dans les figurations de la Douat, dans le *Livre des Portes* et le *Livre de l'Amdouat* des tombes royales ramessides des 19^e et 20^e dynasties.⁷⁴ Mais il en existait assurément des versions antérieures. Un prototype du *Livre de l'Amdouat* se rencontre à la 18^e dynastie, sur les parois de la tombe KV34 de Thoutmosis III.⁷⁵ Ces livres, étroitement liés à la conception du temps et à la course nocturne du soleil, décrivent aussi la façon dont l'inframonde est divisé en parcelles allouées aux esprits, de manière à ce que chacun puisse subvenir à ses propres besoins. Par exemple, la légende de la 5^e heure du *Livre des Portes* qui surplombe douze divinités portant une corde (allusion aux douze heures de la nuit) indique qu'il s'agit des "porteurs de la corde (de mesure) des champs de la Douat".⁷⁶ À la 5^e heure du *Livre de l'Amdouat*, Rê en personne s'adresse à ces divinités en ces termes : "Vous qui portez la corde de l'Ouest, qui allouez les parcelles aux esprits-*akh*, saisissez la corde et prenez les mesures du champ des Occidentaux".⁷⁷ Ces scènes se trouvent aussi généralement situées au registre supérieur des compositions. Ailleurs, la corde portée est remplacée par un serpent qui partage avec elle un sens similaire, et incarne la course et la division du temps.⁷⁸ Une emphase sur les cordes est également mise dans la composition symétrique (métaphore formelle de l'*akhet*) qui constitue la graphie traditionnelle du terme *neheh*, désignant l'éternité cyclique $\text{𓏏} \odot \text{𓏏}$.⁷⁹

Temps 3

Après la mesure des champs vient le temps des récoltes. On constate une nouvelle rupture de la vectorialité dont la logique temporelle nous oblige à présent à redescendre vers le centre de la paroi où débute l'énonciation des différentes activités de la saison de *chemou*, sur deux registres situés entre la scène des chars, en haut, et la figuration des saisons d'*akhet* et de *peret*, en bas.

La lecture de ces deux registres s'amorce par le bas et adopte une forme jusqu'ici inédite, mais non moins signifiante. Si l'on suit l'ordre chronologique, il faut commencer en bas à gauche avec l'arrachage du lin, la mise en botte et l'égrainage des tiges au peigne. Cette ultime étape du traitement agricole du lin est figurée sur un

Sciences and Humanities, vol. VII 4 (1992) : 143-176.

⁷³ Harry M. Stewart, "Some Pre-Amarnah Sun Hymns", *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, vol. 47. (1960) : 88-89, fig. 2. Tout comme ces champs, le domaine d'Akhetaton sera délimité par des bornes (dans ce cas, des stèles frontières) définissant l'étendue de ce territoire de lumière, sanctuaire par excellence de l'astre.

⁷⁴ César Guerra Méndez, *Snake iconography in the Egyptian Book of Gates*, Mémoire de maîtrise (Liverpool : Université de Liverpool, 2020), 47-48.

⁷⁵ Sur la tombe de Thoutmosis III comme tombe-Amdouat, voir Catharine H. Roehrig "The Building Activities of Thutmose III in the Valley of the Kings", dans *Thutmose III. A New Biography*, eds Eric H. Cline et David O'Connor (Ann Arbor (MI) : University of Michigan Press, 2006), 239-259.

⁷⁶ *Hry.w nwh m sh.wt dw3t*. Erik Hornung et Theodor Abt, *The Egyptian Book of Gates* (Zurich : Living Human Heritage Publications, 2014), 152.

⁷⁷ *Hry.w nwh n Imnt.t, sšmy.w 3h.wt n 3h.w, šsp n. tn nwh, ndr n. tn sBy.w 3h.t nj Imntyw*. Hornung et Abt, *The Egyptian Book of Gates*, 152-153.

⁷⁸ Guerra Méndez, *Snake iconography in the Egyptian Book of Gates*, 49-50.

⁷⁹ *Wb* 2 299, 2 - 302, 9.

semi-registre surélevé qui incite à ensuite porter le regard vers le registre supérieur plutôt qu'à poursuivre vers la droite, où la séquence semble "obstruée" par un mur de bottes marquant une séparation spatiale. Les graines de lin récoltées serviront à produire de l'huile, tandis que la fibre des tiges servira à la confection de tissus pour l'habillement et l'embaumement. À l'extrémité gauche du registre, se trouve une scène d'allaitement. Si l'on se fie aux représentations des tombes thébaines, le travail dans les champs de lin relevait majoritairement du domaine féminin. Il n'est, par ailleurs, pas rare de voir des travailleuses égyptiennes un enfant accroché à leur cou ou un bébé pendu à leur sein dans l'exercice de leurs activités professionnelles.⁸⁰ Au-delà de l'anecdotique et du pittoresque, de telles scènes sont évidemment chargées d'une symbolique de renaissance qui n'est plus à démontrer⁸¹ et semble tout à fait propice dans un contexte funéraire visant la renaissance *post mortem*.

Au-dessus à gauche, un chariot attelé fait écho aux attelages supérieurs ; sans doute ici aussi celui du maître-inspecteur, représenté tout à l'opposé, en bas à droite. On assiste là encore à une "tranche de vie", avec la sieste des deux cochers, l'un assoupi dans le caisson du char et l'autre sous un arbre voisin, patientant pour la fin de la journée.

Face à eux, des paysans fauchent le blé, tandis que des glaneuses ramassent les épis tombés et qu'un jeune garçon joue de la flûte. Le mouvement imprimé par les effets plastiques de la composition est courbe et ascendant (du personnage accroupi sous l'arbre aux paysans debout puis au petit flûtiste). À droite, deux paysans essaient de refermer un sac de blé trop rempli. Cette scène, une fois de plus pittoresque, a été inventée par le peintre de la tombe d'Ouserhat (TT56), puis recopiée et réinterprétée par le peintre de Nakht (TT52).⁸² C'est cette dernière version qui a eu la faveur du sculpteur de Khâemhat pour sa propre copie (TT57). La figure du paysan suspendu dans les airs à la tringle de portage ne manque pas d'humour et de piquant,⁸³ tout en suggérant l'abondance des récoltes propice à la production d'offrandes.⁸⁴ Par sa disposition, la scène imprime cette fois un mouvement descendant qui incite à poursuivre la lecture au registre inférieur. La logique temporelle, quant à elle, veut que nous la reprenions là où nous l'avions laissée, c'est-à-dire au centre du registre. Une fois le sac fermé, il est transporté sur les aires de dépiquage où évoluent ânes et bœufs pour séparer le grain de sa balle (Fig. 11).

⁸⁰ Valérie Angenot, "La femme dans l'Égypte ancienne, entre indépendance et pouvoir", catalogue de l'exposition *Splendeurs d'Égypte. Trois mille ans sur le Nil*, Pointe-à-Callière, Cité d'archéologie et d'histoire de Montréal, Montréal : Beaux-Arts Éditions, 2023, p. 32-35.

⁸¹ Voir Youri Volokhine, "Le lait et l'allaitement dans le discours égyptien sur la constitution du corps", *Anthropozoologica*, vol. 52, n 1 (2017) : 84.

⁸² Dimitri Laboury, "Tradition and creativity. Toward a Study of Intericonicity in Ancient Egyptian Art", dans *(Re)productive Traditions in Ancient Egypt*, *Ægyptiaca Leodiensia* 10 (Liège : Presses Universitaires de Liège, 2017), 236-239.

⁸³ Valérie Angenot a présenté en 2018 une conférence intitulée "'Rire à dents découvertes et à cœur déployé' – le rire analeptique en Égypte ancienne", sur le potentiel analeptique des scènes humoristiques dans le décor des tombes égyptiennes (sixième colloque Arts et médias de l'Université de Montréal, *Sens de l'humour*, Université de Montréal, du 14 au 16 novembre 2018). Sur le rire comme catalyseur d'énergie et générateur de vie, voir Cédric Gobeil, *Modes et domaines d'expression de la joie au quotidien en Égypte ancienne*, thèse de doctorat (Paris : Sorbonne, 2008), 221-222, 241.

⁸⁴ Angenot, "Le texte en écriture rétrograde de la tombe de Sennefer", 17-18. Voir aussi le jeu d'assonance dans cette scène dans Angenot, "Rébus, calembours et images subliminales dans l'iconographie égyptienne", 98.

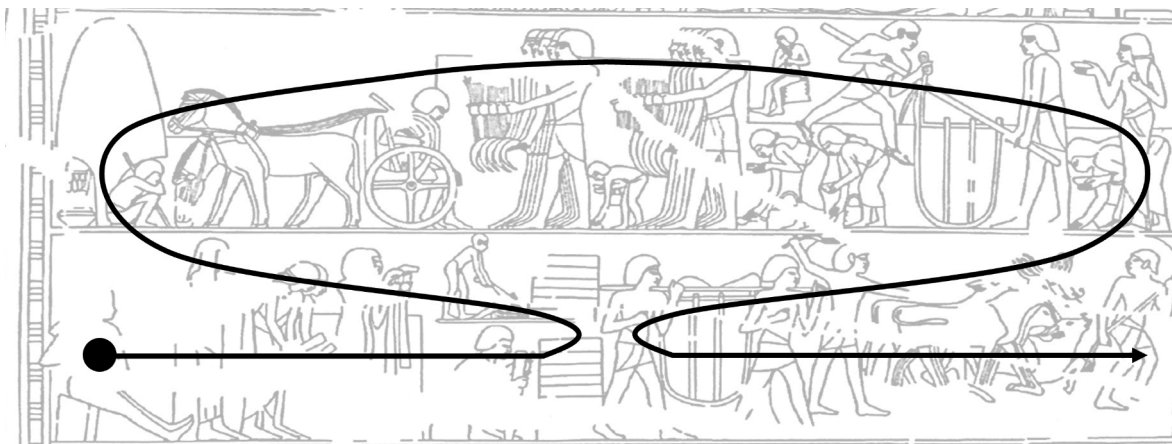


Figure 11 : Temps 3 : La vectorialité de la récolte du lin et du blé aux registres médians.

Ainsi, ce tronçon de vectorialité évoque-t-il la forme d'un oméga ou, pour le dire en termes plus égyptiens, le mouvement ainsi tracé virtuellement par le regard n'est pas sans rappeler la silhouette du signe *chen* , hiéroglyphe dénotant l'éternité cyclique et les mouvements astraux.

Sans vouloir en voir partout à tout prix (quoique cela aurait du sens), il n'est pas impossible que les deux scènes de paniers pleins aient aussi été l'occasion d'imprimer une allusion gestaltienne à l'horizon-*akhet* dans l'esprit du lecteur égyptien, comme c'était le cas aux registres inférieurs. En effet, la scène de fermeture du sac se superpose à l'aire de dépiquage, située juste en dessous, où le grain apparaît disposé en forme de double colline  (Fig. 12).⁸⁵ La scène de transport du sac de blé doré, quant à elle, se superpose aux deux attelages évoluant en boustrophédon du registre inférieur, décrits plus haut et mis en parallèle avec son modèle chez Nakht (TT 52), générant une allusion semblable (Fig. 13). La volonté de créer cet effet visuel secondaire pourrait justifier l'apparent déséquilibre dans la première formation symétrique entre un attelage unique à gauche et deux attelages à droite (Fig. 9, registre supérieur).

Un autre argument pour soutenir cette idée est l'usage isolé de ce panier, en dehors de toute autre allusion agricole, dans la tombe ramesside d'Ouserhat (TT176).⁸⁶ Des paysans transportant un ballot semblable — mais évoquant encore

⁸⁵ C'est plus clair dans la tombe de Menna (TT69), où les couleurs ont été bien préservées. Voir Hartwig, *The Tomb Chapel of Menna*, fig. 2.3a, 27.

⁸⁶ Bram Calcoen et Christiane Müller-Hazenbis, *TT176. The Tomb Chapel of Userhat*, GHP Egyptology 16 (Londres : Golden House Publications, 2012), pl. 2, 9, 19 et II. Les auteurs suggèrent qu'une scène agricole se développait sur toute la largeur du mur, aux deux registres supérieurs de la paroi, à droite des porteurs de panier et à droite de la scène des pleureurs/ses en bateau. Ils préfèrent d'ailleurs identifier cette scène — contre l'avis de Porter et Moss — à une visite du domaine agricole comme étant "more likely" (p. 13), suivant en cela leur idée initiale. Nous ne sommes pas d'accord avec cette interprétation qui ne considère que le sens propre de la scène et non son potentiel métaphorique et ne s'appuie sur aucun argument tangible. À droite des porteurs de blé, on devine les restes d'un pied et d'ombelles d'un fourré de papyrus. Il est peu probable que des scènes agricoles aient été dépeintes dans cet espace restreint de la paroi (au mieux ½ mètre d'après l'échelle), en plus de ce fourré. Il s'agirait plutôt d'une scène lacustre faisant justement pendant à la scène agricole, peut-être pour mettre en avant une opposition paradigmatique culture vs nature (domestication vs chaos). Le fourré de papyrus possède en outre un potentiel apotropaïque, pour peu qu'un ou des chasseurs y aient été figurés (peut-être une scène de tenderie ?). Mais dans tous les cas, la scène du sac de blé aura été ici sélectionnée seule, parmi l'ensemble des autres étapes agricoles possibles.

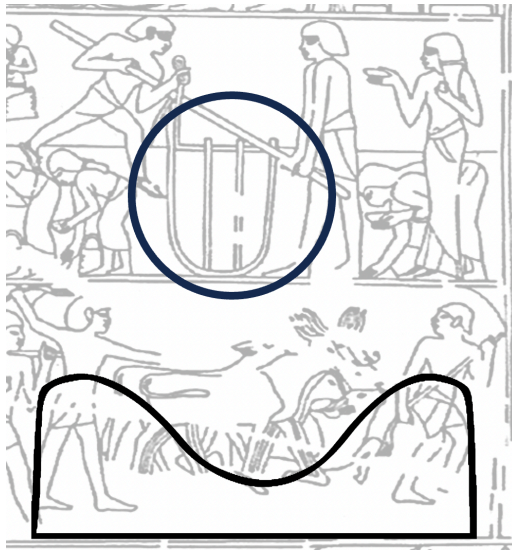


Figure 12 : La fermeture du sac et l'aire de dépiquage comme allusion à l'horizon.

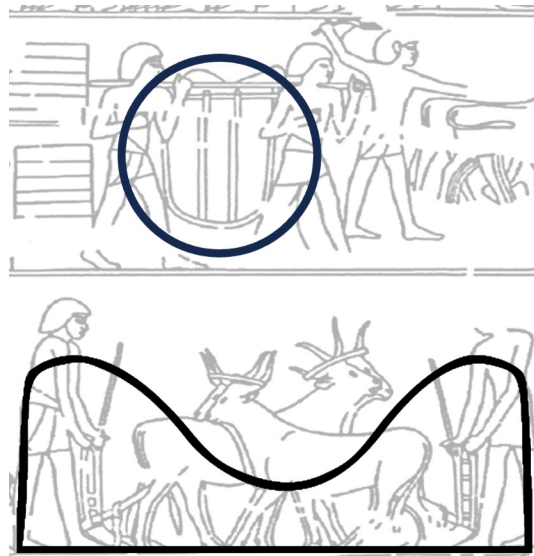


Figure 13 : Le transport du sac et les labours comme allusion à l'horizon.

davantage un globe solaire par sa forme parfaitement circulaire —, se superposent aux scènes d'aller (avec voile) et retour (sans voile) du pèlerinage du défunt à Abydos (Fig. 14). Cet usage isolé d'une scène agricole surprend si on l'envisage au sens propre. Mais elle prend tout son sens si on la comprend formellement sur les plans métaphorique et métaphysique,⁸⁷ comme une allusion au soleil dans sa barque et au cycle de l'astre dans lequel tout défunt aspire à s'inscrire *post mortem*.

Temps 4

Le dépiquage des céréales ne constitue guère la phase ultime des travaux de la saison de *chemou*. Et si le choix des étapes agricoles dépeintes dans les tombes varie en fonction des artistes ou des commanditaires qui y puisent un échantillon révélateur — mais rarement exhaustif — d'activités signifiantes, le concepteur de la paroi de Khâemhat n'en est, quant à lui, pas resté là. Il a procédé à une nouvelle rupture de la vectorialité en disposant les derniers éléments de la séquence chronologique sous la scène d'offrande "à la porte" — selon l'expression consacrée —, en réalité, comme déjà mentionné, une offrande au soleil levant se manifestant dans l'embrasure de la porte. Le "temps 4" n'est donc pas tout à fait un "temps 4", mais une prolongation logique du "temps 3", disposé dans la partie droite des deux registres inférieurs, en vis-à-vis de la partie gauche où s'était amorcée notre lecture. La boucle est ainsi bouclée.

Les deux tronçons de registres sont à lire de haut en bas, puis de gauche à droite, avec le vannage et le comptage, puis la reddition des comptes par les scribes à l'inspecteur des greniers Khâemhat (Fig. 15a). Le vannage s'effectue sous la protection d'une idole faite d'épis de blé devant laquelle des offrandes sont déposées. Aujourd'hui encore, au temps du vannage, les paysans égyptiens offrent une partie Quant à la scène de transport des pleureurs/ses, on voit qu'elle se prolongeait dans la partie abîmée de droite, ne laissant pour ainsi dire guère de place pour y développer quoi que ce soit d'autre.

⁸⁷ Allusions au cycle solaire et à sa génération du temps cyclique-*neheh*, comme dans les tombes de la 18^e dynastie. Dans cette tombe de la 19^e dynastie, une seule scène visuellement parlante suffit à évoquer l'ensemble du cycle saisonnier — et donc le temps —, en jouant à la fois sur la forme et le contenu, et en se soumettant aux contraintes du support

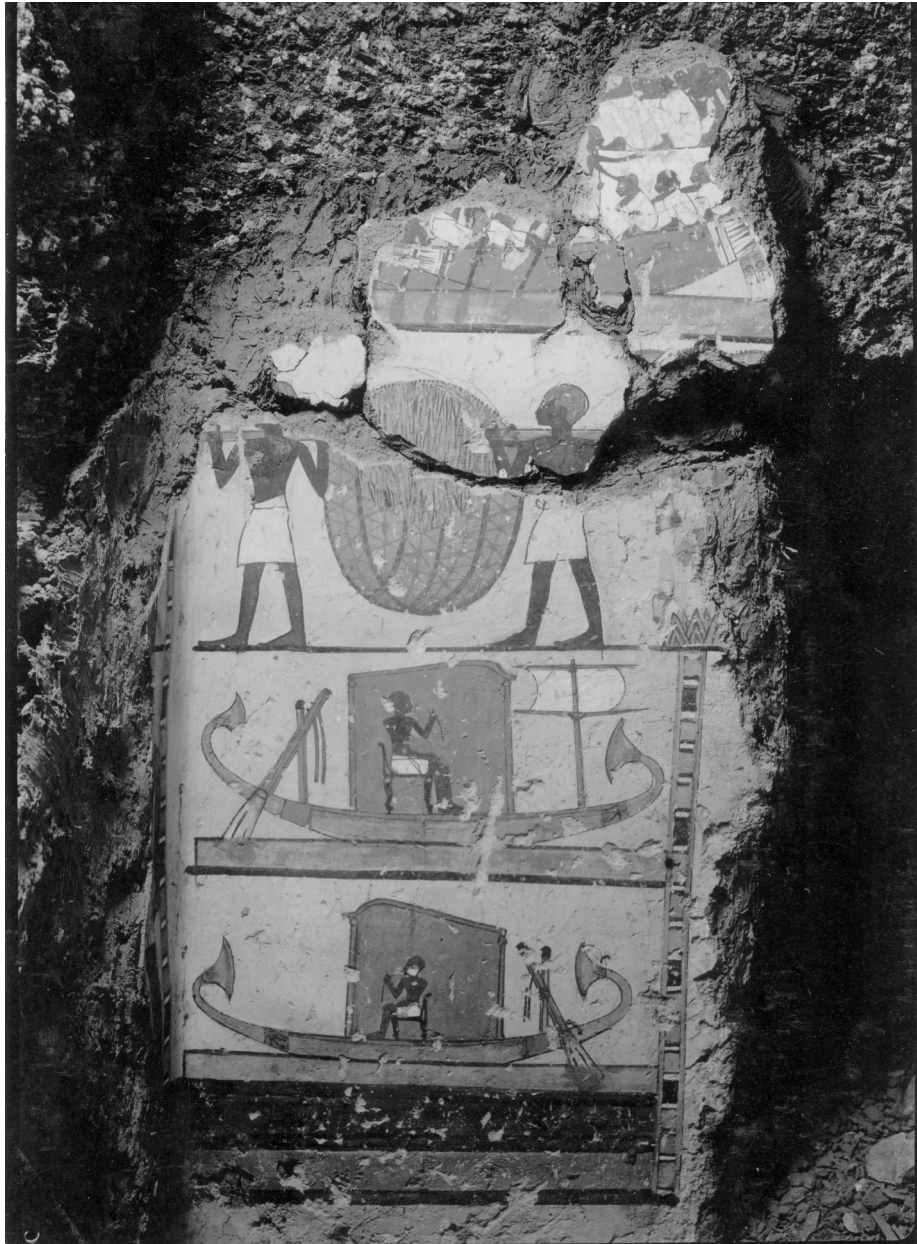


Figure 14 : Le transport du sac de blé dans la tombe d'Ouserhat (TT176) et le pèlerinage aller-retour à Abydos (photo Siegfried Schott 4258, ©Schott-Archiv (Ägyptologie der Universität Trier), avec aimable permission).

symbolique des récoltes à une poupée décorée d'épis de céréales qu'ils nomment 'arouset el-qamḥ (عروسة القمح, la fiancée du blé) ou 'arouset el-ḥaṣād (عروسة الحصاد, la fiancée de la moisson).⁸⁸ Dans différentes cultures, les derniers épis récoltés sont considérés comme le réceptacle d'une divinité du champ et sont utilisés pour fabriquer une sorte de mascotte que l'on garde jusqu'à la récolte de l'année suivante.⁸⁹ Une idole similaire est figurée dans la tombe de Nakht (TT52) et dans celle de Djeserkarâseneb (TT38).⁹⁰

⁸⁸ Abdel-Latif El-Tanbouli, *Tomb of Khâemhat TT57*, 42.

⁸⁹ Anaya Sapraki, "Harvest Rites and Corn Dollies in the Bronze Age Aegean", *Hesperia Supplements*, vol. 42 (2009) : 61-62.

⁹⁰ Valérie Angenot, *La formule m33 (regarder) dans les tombes privées de la dix-huitième dynastie. Approche sémiotique et herméneutique*, thèse de doctorat (Bruxelles : Université libre de Bruxelles,

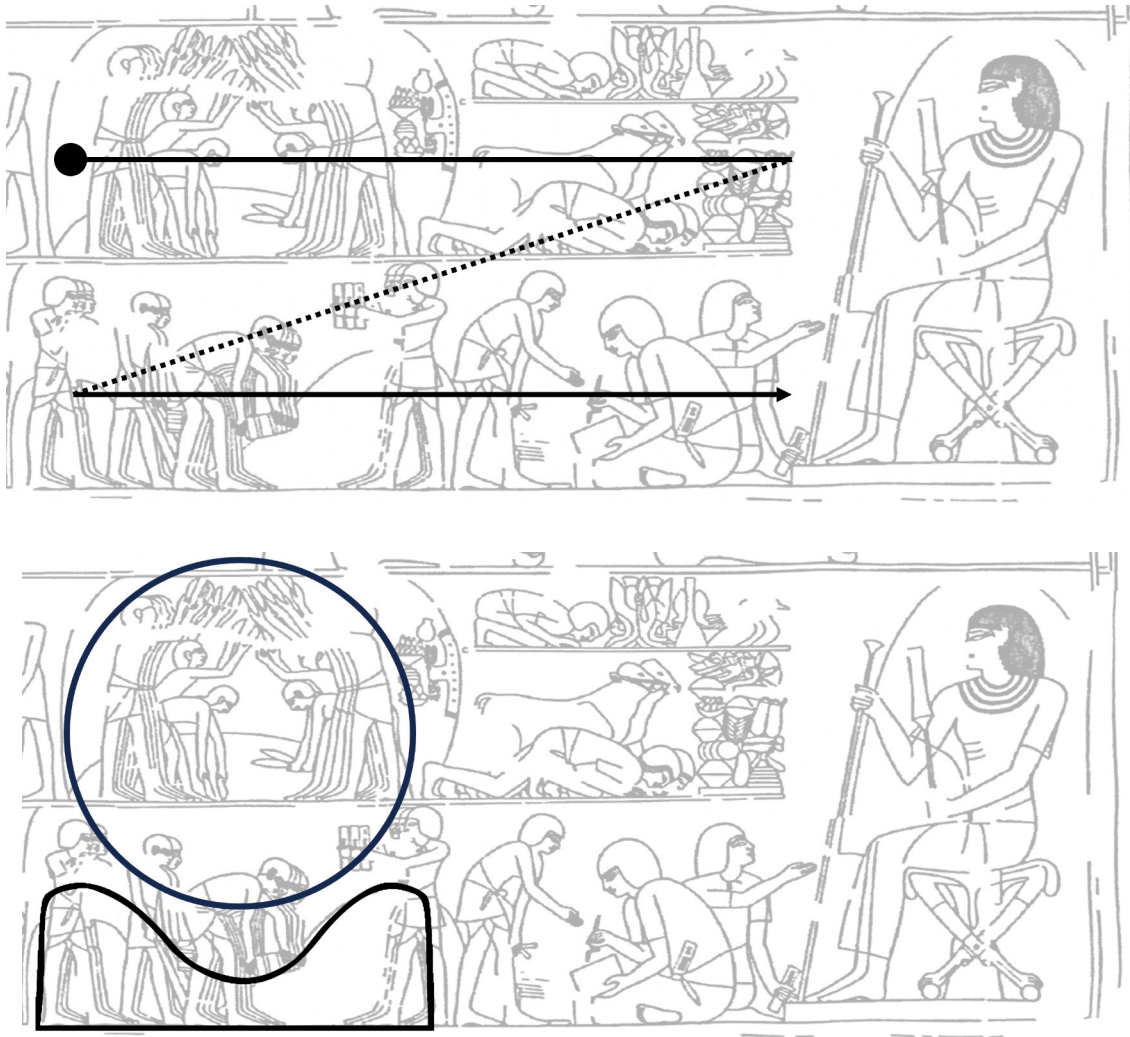


Figure 15a-b : Temps 4 : Les comptes du blé et leur reddition à Khâemhat, (a) vectorialité et (b) impression subliminale.

La superposition tabulaire⁹¹ de la scène de vannage au-dessus de la scène de comptage permet, comme chez Nakht d'où elle a été recopiée,⁹² de former subliminalement le signe de l'*akhet* ☐, en combinant deux tas de grains en forme de colline $\cap$ ⁹³ et le mouvement cinétique rayonnant des gestes des vanneurs disposés en cercle (c'est-à-dire en un face à face chiral dans leur transposition en 2D). L'ensemble donne l'illusion d'un soleil se levant dans l'horizon. La scène de vannage était soulignée par un fond circulaire, matérialisé par la sculpture et qui était peut-être aussi peint d'une couleur mordorée comme chez Nakht (TT52), avec pour but d'accentuer

2003) : 179.

⁹¹ Sur un foyer ou canevas topologique bidimensionnel, on dit que le décor se déploie linéairement (gauche et droite) ou tabulairement (haut et bas). Voir Groupe μ , "Rhétorique de la poésie : lecture linéaire, lecture tabulaire".

⁹² Angenot, "Rébus, calembours et images subliminales", 98 ; et Angenot, "Le texte en écriture rétrograde de la tombe de Sennefer", 18.

⁹³ Accompagné du mouvement descendant puis ascendant des positions des scribes et des paysans. Rien n'est laissé au hasard ; la redondance formelle appuie la validité de cette impression.

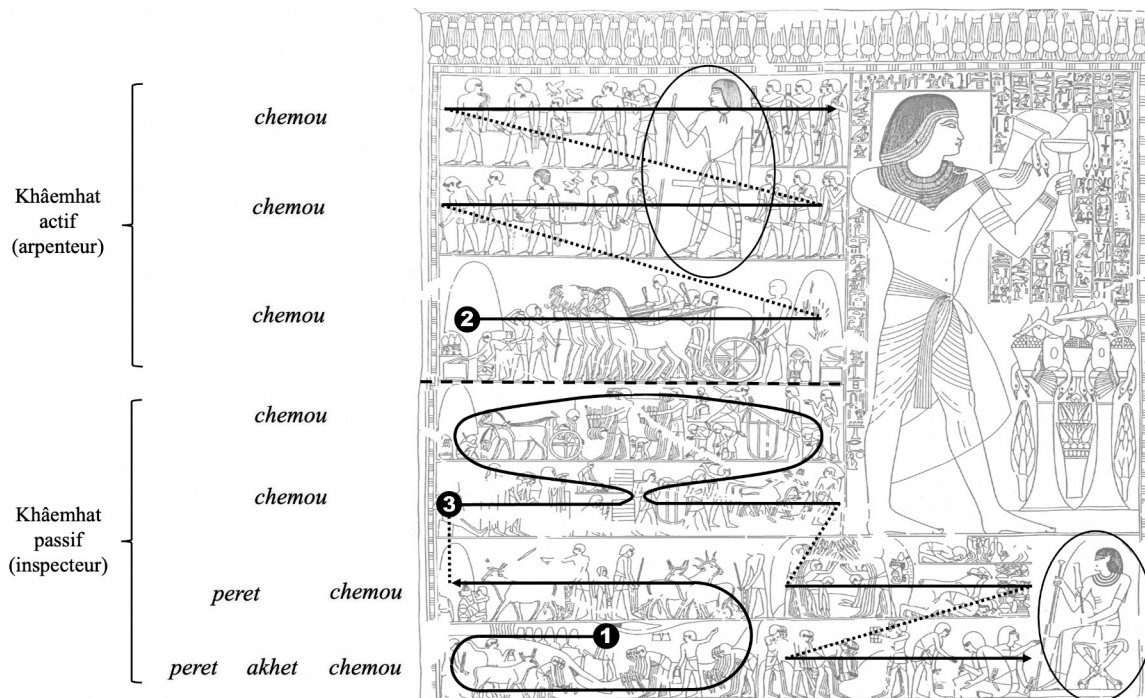


Figure 16 : La vectorialité globale de la paroi.

cette impression. Le geste des vanneurs est, en outre, formellement similaire à celui de toutes les figures humaines ou animales acclamant l'astre à son lever (*rdi.t iwꜥ.w*) (Fig. 15b).⁹⁴ Connaissant le goût des Égyptiens pour les métaphores formelles⁹⁵ et la sémiotique gestuelle,⁹⁶ nul doute que le déploiement en éventail des vanneurs sur ce fond arrondi était susceptible d'évoquer chez eux ces connotations solaires. Ce geste d'adoration formelle semble d'ailleurs mis en parallèle, à droite, avec l'attitude des serviteurs prosternés face au maître, qui ont disposé devant lui des denrées variées (adoration du soleil ↔ hommage au maître).

Enfin, tout en bas les scribes procèdent aux ultimes comptes. Un personnage se penche vers deux scribes assis pour leur rendre les résultats finaux des mesures figurées à gauche. L'un des scribes assis en prend note, tandis que l'autre transmet le décompte au défunt qui inspecte la scène. Comme cela en devient l'habitude à cette période et se développera encore à l'époque amarnienne, les deux scribes assis présentent un effet cinématographique de découpage du mouvement en deux temps, qui pourrait suggérer qu'il n'y a en réalité là qu'un seul scribe "animé".⁹⁷

Au-delà de la vectorialité proprement dite (Fig. 16), on a donc affaire ici, une fois de plus, à un agencement topologique jouant sur le phénomène de Gestalt et la psychologie de la forme, pour évoquer subliminalement l'horizon-*akhet*, lieu de

⁹⁴ Wilkinson, *Reading Egyptian Art*, 28-29.

⁹⁵ Voir le phénomène de Gestalt, dans Angenot, "Bak, Servant of Aten – An Embodied Statement of Faith", 140, 154-155.

⁹⁶ Brigitte Dominicus, *Gesten und Gebärden in Darstellungen des Alten und Mittleren Reiches*, Studien zur Archäologie und Geschichte Altgyptens, vol. 10 (Heidelberg : Heidelberg Orientverlag, 1994).

⁹⁷ Heinrich Schäfer, "Several stages of an action in one picture", *Principles of Egyptian Art*, traduit de l'allemand par John Baines (Oxford : Griffith Institute, 1986), 227-230.

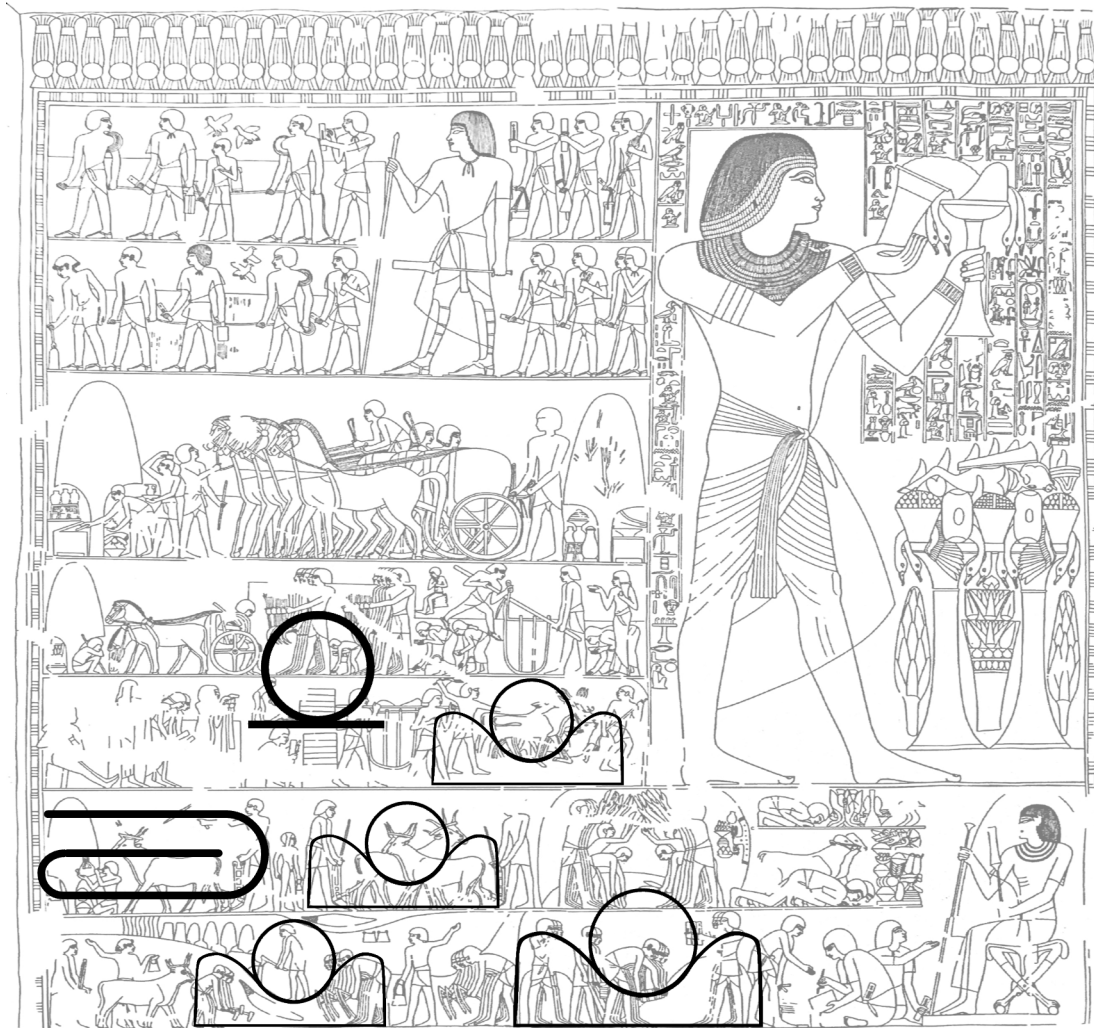


Figure 17 : Les allusions gestaltiennes solaires de la paroi et les vectorialités liées au mouvement solaire.

transformation des défunts en esprits lumineux. Mais l'orientation de lecture dominante demeure linéaire de gauche à droite, allant à la rencontre de la figure de Khâemhat qui clôt cette longue séquence alambiquée.

Si l'on considère ainsi la vectorialité globale de la paroi —qui semblait *a priori* peu cohérente—, on constate que celle-ci est en fait formellement marquée par de nombreuses allusions au cycle solaire et à son mouvement cosmique (Gestalt sur l'*akhet*, vectorialité en forme de *chen* (cycle éternel) ou de *deben* (mouvement des astres), évocation d'épisodes mythiques par calembours linguistiques et métaphores visuelles...), qui déterminent à la fois la récurrence des saisons agricoles et la renaissance des défunts qui s'inscrivent dans le cycle temporel régi par la course du soleil (Fig. 17).

Conclusion

Nouveauté dans cette tombe, chaque séquence temporelle conceptuellement signifiante a reçu un traitement propre. Les séquences relatives aux cycles agricoles

qui traduisent historiquement, dans le décor des tombes privées, la notion de saisons, de cycle et de temps,⁹⁸ se caractérisent par des mouvements circulaires complexes et des métaphores formelles alludant à des concepts mythico-cosmiques. Tandis que les séquences plus typiquement liées aux activités terrestres du défunt (chevaux, arpentage et reddition des comptes)⁹⁹ sont caractérisées par des vectorialités linéaires.

Ce constat est très intéressant, car ces associations d'idées épistémologiquement marquées entre des concepts et des formes¹⁰⁰ nous permettent de lever un pan du voile qui recouvre les rouages du modèle mental égyptien.¹⁰¹ Il fait peu de doute que ces figures rectilignes ou à enroulement soient conceptuellement liées, dans l'esprit des Égyptiens, aux deux éternités qui caractérisent leur vision du temps et de l'espace : la permanence-*djet*, incarnée et déterminée par la bande de terre  ; et l'éternel retour-*neheh*, incarné et déterminé par le globe solaire , dont le point de rencontre est précisément constitué par l'horizon solaire-*akhet* .¹⁰² Mais il est important de constater que ces concepts ont été objectivés dans des formes vectorielles significatives, fils conducteurs immatériels de l'acte de lecture, que les visiteurs de la tombe — et en particulier les lettrés "possesseurs du savoir et qui dénouent les énoncés", comme le précise Khâemhat —,¹⁰³ vont actionner par l'agentivité de leur regard.¹⁰⁴ À ce stade, il n'est plus permis de douter du caractère construit et signifiant de tels agencements. Le concept de vectorialité existe bel et bien

⁹⁸ Angenot, *La formule m33 (regarder) dans les tombes privées de la dix-huitième dynastie*.

⁹⁹ La scène du vannage pourrait être une exception notoire à ce constat. Néanmoins, dans la tombe de Pahery à El-Kab, on remarque que la montagne de grain, sur laquelle est assis un scribe, est commune à la scène de vannage et à celle d'enregistrement du grain. Cela pourrait être un effet de style, mais les deux scènes sont toujours représentées côte à côte ou l'une au-dessus de l'autre, ce qui peut dénoter aussi bien une séquence temporelle qu'un rapport spatial. On peut ainsi imaginer qu'en sa charge d'inspecteur des greniers, Khâemhat supervisait les ultimes travaux agricoles et que la superposition du vannage et des comptes relèverait en fait d'un arrangement spatial. À l'époque moderne encore, le calcul du rendement agricole s'effectue logiquement à l'endroit où a été accumulé le grain suite à son vannage, avant son entreposage en grenier. On ne peut, en tout cas, que constater que cette scène a été intégrée aux deux derniers registres face au défunt. Je suggérerais de les lire sur un plan horizontal en profondeur, rabattu dans le champ bidimensionnel de l'image, en plus de viser à susciter l'effet gestaltien de l'horizon solaire mentionné plus haut (adoration sur fond doré et tas de grain). Soulignons une fois de plus que l'agencement de ces vectorialités associe toujours considérations spatiales, temporelles et conceptuelles (par le biais de métaphores formelles).

¹⁰⁰ Un peu comme Arthur Rimbaud associait des lettres et des couleurs dans *Voyelles*. Il s'agit de métaphores intermodales, qui s'effectuent entre médias sémiotiques distincts. Les concepts sont d'abord pensés dans les termes d'objets empiriques, puis matérialisés dans des sons, eux-mêmes transcrits en hiéroglyphes, avant que ces derniers ne réinvestissent l'image en filigrane. Pour le cas de l'*akhet*, voir Caron et Angenot, "Les graphies de l'*3h.t* dans les Textes des Pyramides et les Textes des Sarcophages".

¹⁰¹ Notre projet de recherche *Oudjat – Regards croisés* qui cherche à étudier les réactions et mouvements oculaires des lecteurs face à de telles parois a pour objectif secondaire de déterminer certaines caractéristiques cognitives du modèle mental égyptien.

¹⁰² W. Westendorf, "Horizont und Sonnenscheibe", *Studia Aegyptiaca* 1 (1974) : 390-391. Les caractères masculin de *neheh* et féminin de *djet* jouent un rôle dans cette rencontre ou pénétration, selon l'auteur.

¹⁰³ Selon un texte inscrit dans le passage entre la salle transversale et la salle longitudinale de la chapelle de Khâemhat. *Urkunden IV 1845.8-1846.3* : **k.w m rh et sš nb wh* drf*. Steven Shubert, *Those Who (Still) Live On Earth: A Study of the Ancient Egyptian Appeal to the Living Texts*, thèse de doctorat (Toronto : University of Toronto, 2007), 274.

¹⁰⁴ Ils verront peut-être alors que Khâemhat a ultimement accompli son *imitatio solis* au registre supérieur, arpentant les champs d'Ialou, les deux arbres aux extrémités de la scène aux attelages pouvant évoquer une fois encore les collines de l'horizon. La métaphore du roi sur son char parcourant la ville, tel Rê traversant les cieux, sera ritualisée au règne suivant à Tell el-Amarna. Tout

en Égypte, comme nous aurons l'occasion de mieux le démontrer encore, d'un point de vue émique, dans une prochaine publication.

est dit sans être dit, par allusions subtiles, puisant dans les schémas cognitifs des passants qui voudront bien porter leur regard sur ces parois pour démêler tout cela. Dont acte...

A Reconsideration of the *Berliner Lederhandschrift* (pBerlin 3029) as *Königsnovelle*

Stephen Smoot

Abstract: The so-called Berliner Lederhandschrift (pBerlin 3029) is a small hieratic palimpsest of two columns that dates to the reign of the Eighteenth Dynasty king Amenhotep II. Even for its relatively diminutive size, the Berliner Lederhandschrift has nevertheless commanded considerable scholarly attention. The central debate surrounding the manuscript revolves around whether the inscription contained thereon, a purported building inscription for the temple of Atum in Heliopolis during the reign of the Twelfth Dynasty king Senwosret I, is a New Kingdom copy of a Middle Kingdom original or, essentially, a New Kingdom pseudepigraphon. A similar question that is often raised is whether the text can be classified as a specimen of the literary genre commonly called the *Königsnovelle*. For this paper, I will argue that pBerlin 3029 is an authentic Middle Kingdom composition and a manifestation of an earlier iteration in the development of the *Königsnovelle* tradition that took its final form during the New Kingdom. Said another way, it is my contention that pBerlin 3029 is indicative that elements of the *Königsnovelle* pre-dated the “classical” form of the genre after the close of the Middle Kingdom.

Résumé: Le « Berliner Lederhandschrift » (pBerlin 3029) est un petit palimpseste hiératique de deux colonnes datant du règne d'Amenhotep II, roi de la dix-huitième dynastie. Malgré sa taille relativement réduite, le Berliner Lederhandschrift a néanmoins fait l'objet d'une attention considérable de la part des chercheurs. Le débat central autour du manuscrit tourne autour de la question de savoir si l'inscription qu'il contient, une prétendue inscription de construction pour le temple d'Atoum à Héliopolis sous le règne du roi de la douzième dynastie Senwosret I, est une copie du Nouvel Empire d'un original du Moyen Empire ou, essentiellement, un pseudépigraphe du Nouvel Empire. Une question similaire est souvent soulevée, à savoir si le texte peut être classé comme un spécimen du genre littéraire communément appelé *Königsnovelle*. Dans cet article, je soutiens que pBerlin 3029 est une composition authentique du Moyen Empire et une manifestation d'une itération antérieure dans le développement de la tradition du *Königsnovelle* qui a pris sa forme définitive au cours du Nouvel Empire. En d'autres termes, je soutiens que pBerlin 3029 indique que des éléments de la *Königsnovelle* ont précédé la forme « classique » du genre après la fin du Moyen Empire.

The Berliner Lederhandschrift (pBerlin 3029) is a small hieratic palimpsest of two columns that dates to the reign of the Eighteenth Dynasty king Amenhotep II.¹ Even for its diminutive size, the Berliner Lederhandschrift (henceforth BLH) has garnered considerable attention. One of the crucial questions regarding the manuscript is whether the inscription—a building inscription for the temple of Re-Horakhty in Heliopolis during the reign of Senwosret I—is a New Kingdom copy of a Middle Kingdom (Twelfth Dynasty) original or, basically, a New Kingdom (Eighteenth Dynasty) pseudepigraphon. Although many tend to assume the historicity of the BLH with little or no comment,² there remain diverging opinions concerning the dating of

¹ For a translation and commentary of the palimpsest text, see Matthias Müller, “Die administrativen Texte der Berliner Lederhandschrift,” in *From Illahun to Djeme: Papers Presented in Honour of Ulrich Luft*, BAR International Series 2311, ed. Eszter Bechtold, András Gulyás, and Andrea Hasznos (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2011), 173–181.

² See for instance Miriam Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature: Volume I: The Old and Middle Kingdoms* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), 115; Barry J. Kemp, *Ancient Egypt: Anatomy of a Civilization*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2006), 158; Rolf Gundlach, “The Berlin Leather Roll (pBerlin 3029): Ritual and Royal Ideology,” in *5th Symposium on Egyptian Royal Ideology: Palace and Temple: Architecture–Decoration–Ritual: Cambridge, July, 16th–17th, 2007*, ed. Rolf Gundlach and Kate Spence (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2011), 103–114; Colleen Manassa, *Imaging the Past: Historical Fiction in New Kingdom Egypt* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 157 n. 70.

the inscription by those who have critically examined the issue.³ Some scholars have focused their arguments for dating the inscription mainly on linguistic criteria,⁴ while others have sought to situate the text in a broader Egyptian historiographical context.⁵ In addition, another area that remains to be more fully explored is whether the BLH is in fact a genuine example of the literary genre commonly called the *Königsnovelle*. The questions of dating the inscription on BLH and whether such is a genuine example of the *Königsnovelle* are actually related. As El-Adly observed, “Falls die Datierung in die Zeit Sesostri’s I. nicht nur eine literarische Fiktion, sondern ernst zu nehmen ist, haben wir in ihr das älteste Beispiel einer Königsnovelle vor uns.”⁶ There are indeed undeniable convergences in theme and narrative between the BLH and other texts of the *Königsnovelle* genre. This naturally raises the question of whether the BLH is an early example of such, if it represents an earlier stage in the development of the genre, if it is a pseudepigraphical *Königsnovelle* of the New Kingdom, or something else entirely.⁷ In this paper I argue that the BLH is an authentic Middle Kingdom composition, and that is a manifestation of an earlier iteration in the development of the *Königsnovelle* tradition. It is my contention that the BLH is indicative of elements of the *Königsnovelle* that predate the rise of the “classical” form of the genre after the close end of the Middle Kingdom. I also would like to urge caution on how far linguistic criteria for dating a text might take us without additional points of converging data to help securely situate the origin of a text.

THE DATING AND COMPOSITION OF PBERLIN 3029

The BLH has enjoyed multiple translations and studies in English,⁸ German,⁹

³ For different views, compare Philippe Derchain, “Les Débuts de L’Histoire [Rouleau de Cuir Berlin 3029]”, *Revue D’Égyptologie* 43 (1992): 35–47; Aldo Piccato, “The Berlin Leather Roll and the Egyptian Sense of History”, *Lingua Aegyptia: Journal of Egyptian Language Studies* 5 (1997): 137–159; Andréas Stauder, *Linguistic Dating of Middle Egyptian Literary Texts*, *Lingua Aegyptia Studia Monographica* 12 (Hamburg: Widmaier Verlag, 2013), 249–257.

⁴ This has been the focus of Stauder, *Linguistic Dating of Middle Egyptian Literary Texts*, 249–257.

⁵ Piccato, “The Berlin Leather Roll and the Egyptian Sense of History”, 137–159.

⁶ Sanaa Abd el-Aziz Al-Adly, “Die Berliner Lederhandschrift (pBerlin 3029)”, *Die Welt des Orients* 15 (1984): 6. “If the dating [of the BLH] to the time of Sesostri’s I is not merely a literary fiction, but rather is to be taken seriously, then we have before us the oldest example of a *Königsnovelle*.” Translations from the German here and throughout this paper are mine.

⁷ Rudolf Jaggi, “Die Berliner Lederhandschrift eine ‘Königsnovelle’?” *Kemet* 3 (2012): 65–66, for instance, has posited that the BLH is “nicht einfach eine übliche *Königsnovelle* . . . sondern einen Text in der Art der monumentalen Inschriften in Karnak” (“not simply a usual *Königsnovelle* . . . but rather a text in the style of the monumental inscriptions in Karnak.” Compare Erhart Graefe, “Die Berliner Lederhandschrift: À propos Berlin P3029, I, 17–19”, *Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache* 146, no. 2 (2019): 138–143, who has understood the text to be “keine Kopie einer Bauurkunde, sondern eine Abschrift einer als *Königsnovelle* verschrifteten königlichen Bekanntgabe eines Bauprojekts in Heliopolis. Unter Thutmosis III. hat man eine archivierte Version des Textes aus dem Mittleren Reich im Zusammenhang mit dem Projekt der Wiederherstellung der Reliefs Sesostri’s I. in Karnak kopiert” (“...not a copy of a building inscription, but rather a copy of a transcribed royal decree of a building project written as a *Königsnovelle*. Under Thutmosis III an archived version of the text from the Middle Kingdom was copied in connection with the restoration project of the relief of Sesostri’s I in Karnak”).

⁸ James Henry Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1906), 1:240–245; Adriaan de Buck, “The Building Inscription of the Berlin Leather Roll”, *Studia Aegyptiaca I*, *Analecta Orientalia* 17 (1938): 48–57; Adolf Erman, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, trans. Aylward M. Blackman (London: Methuen, 1927), 49–52; Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 115–118; Hans Goedicke, “The Berlin Leather Roll (P Berlin 3029)”, in *Festschrift zum 150. Jährigen Bestehen des Berliner Ägyptischen Museums* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1974), 87–104, pls. 8–9; Richard B. Parkinson, *Voices from Ancient Egypt: An Anthology of Middle Kingdom Writings* (London: The British Museum Press, 1991), 40–43.

⁹ Al-Adly, “Die Berliner Lederhandschrift (pBerlin 3029)”, 6–18; Jürgen Osing, “Zu zwei literarischen Werken des Mittleren Reiches”, in *The Heritage of Ancient Egypt: Studies in Honour of Erik Iversen*, ed. Jürgen Osing

and French,¹⁰ with the *editio princeps* appearing as early as 1874.¹¹ The language of the text is Middle Egyptian. Yet Stauder has pointed out what appear to be Late Egyptianisms in the text—something that has compelled him to view the text as a New Kingdom composition imitating Middle Egyptian.¹² Later expansions or redactions to the text are at once apparent, even to those who accept the text's historicity. For instance, although it purports to date to his reign, Senwosret is acknowledged as being *m3ꜥ hrw* ("justified") in the text, a posthumous honor (I,1).¹³ While this might be evidence for later imitation, it could also just as easily be simple scribal redaction.¹⁴ Based on what he sees as a preponderance of Late Egyptianism in the BLH, Stauder has argued that the text is an Eighteenth Dynasty "production, not merely in a redactional sense, but in terms of actual composition." At the same time, though, he acknowledged that this position "stands in no contradiction with the possibility that the composers may have drawn on earlier materials: such a scenario is in fact inherently plausible in view of the cultural functions the text may have had."¹⁵ But if we are to posit the existence of underlying (but now irretrievable) sources for the text, then what is to stop us from merely taking the text's claims for itself at face value? The Late Egyptianisms in the text cited by Stauder are, in fact, relatively few, and one of them is arguably not how Stauder read it.¹⁶ We might just as well attribute these Late Egyptianisms to the New Kingdom copyist or scribe who took liberties in emending the text as opposed to outright composing it.¹⁷ What is more, few if any of the Late Egyptianisms in the text cited by Stauder are the sort of grammatical or syntactic features that Von Lieven has persuasively argued are the most compelling in dating a text by linguistic standards.¹⁸ While Stauder's position is worth considering, and the evidence he has presented does in fact appear to indicate at the very least some level of Eighteenth Dynasty scribal redaction that the text has undergone, his argument that this *must* therefore imply an Eighteenth Dynasty composition for the

and Erland Kolding Nielsen (Copenhagen: The Carsten Niebuhr Institute of Ancient Near Eastern Studies, 1992), 109–119; Irene Shirun-Grumach, *Offenbarung, Orakel und Königsnovelle* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1993), 149–158; Eileen Hirsch, *Die sakrale Legitimation Sesostris' I: Kontanktphänomene in königsideologischen Texten* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2008), 231–232; Carsten Peust, "Die Berliner Lederrolle", in *Grab-, Bau-, und Votivinschriften, Texte aus der Umwelt des Alten Testaments* 6, ed. Bernd Janowski and Daniel Schwemer (München: Gütersloh Verlag, 2011), 94–96.

¹⁰ Derchain, "Les Débuts de L'Histoire [Rouleau de Cuir Berlin 3029]", 35–47.

¹¹ Ludwig Stern, "Urkunde über den Bau des Sonnentempels zu On", *Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache* 12 (1874): 85–96.

¹² Stauder, *Linguistic Dating of Middle Egyptian Literary Texts*, 249–257.

¹³ De Buck, "The Building Inscription of the Berlin Leather Roll", 49. All translations from the Egyptian sources, unless otherwise indicated, are mine.

¹⁴ Shirun-Grumach, *Offenbarung, Orakel und Königsnovelle*, 158.

¹⁵ Stauder, *Linguistic Dating of Middle Egyptian Literary Texts*, 257.

¹⁶ Stauder read *m r3-ꜥ* at the beginning of I,19 as the Late Egyptian "as well, likewise." (Stauder, *Linguistic Dating of Middle Egyptian Literary Texts*, 254.) But Goedicke, "The Berlin Leather Roll (P Berlin 3029)," 98, read it as *m r3-ꜥwy* acting as an adverb attested in Middle Egyptian (*Wb* 2:395). Lacunae and fading in I,17–19 (Stern, "Urkunde über den Bau des Sonnentempels zu On", pl. I) makes it somewhat difficult to secure a firm reading of some of the words in these lines, as discussed in Graefe, "Die Berliner Lederhandschrift", 138–143. Stauder's reading is justifiable, but not definitive.

¹⁷ The transmission of the *Tale of Sinuhe* comes to mind in this regard. See Richard B. Parkinson, *Reading Ancient Egyptian Poetry: Among Other Histories* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 185–186. See also additional examples and commentary provided by Piccato, "The Berlin Leather Roll and the Egyptian Sense of History," 140 n. 25: "In reality the problem of the date is a more general problem which affects many other literary texts, traditionally placed in the MK but known to us only by NK manuscripts."

¹⁸ Alexandra von Lieven, "Why Should We Date Texts by Historical Linguistic Dating?" in *Dating Egyptian Literary Texts*, ed. Gerald Moers et al. *Lingua Aegyptia Studia Monographica* 11 (Hamburg: Widmaier Verlag, 2013), 161–176; compare Stauder, *Linguistic Dating of Middle Egyptian Literary Texts*, 250–253, who has offered only the use of the particle *is* as an example of a syntactic Late Egyptianism.

text is by no means definitive.¹⁹

The most vocal advocate for a Twelfth Dynasty origin of the text is Piccato. Among other things, he rejected the supposed parallels between the BLH and other Eighteenth Dynasty royal inscriptions as “not definitively conclusive”, and pointed out that, as just mentioned, “the syntactical and lexical features typical of the [New Kingdom]” are “indeed very few.”²⁰ In fact, whereas Derchain saw the BLH attempting to copy or mimic New Kingdom royal inscriptions, Piccato argued convincingly that the influence went in the other direction: it was Thutmose III, Hatshepsut, and subsequent New Kingdom pharaohs who attempted to emulate the style of Senwosret I out of “a sentiment of devotion for the royal predecessors.”²¹ This seems plausible given the penchant for artistic and literary archaism that stretched down into the Greco-Roman Period.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE *KÖNIGSNÖVELLE*

With all of this in mind, the rest of this paper shall analyze the BLH as featuring several elements known to the *Königsnovelle* genre. We might even call the BLH a sort of proto-*Königsnovelle* for the reasons I will give below. The literary genre known today as the *Königsnovelle* has been extensively studied, so this short paper will not wade into the finer minutiae of that subject.²² Instead I will provide an overview of the *Königsnovelle* and point to a few salient examples of where the BLH parallels (and diverges from) other recognized texts in the genre. The *Königsnovelle* in its “classical” form, as first articulated by Alfred Hermann in his pioneering work, originated in the Eighteenth Dynasty with the Sphinx Stela of Thutmose IV,²³ the successor to Amenhotep II. Jansen-Winkeln summarized Hermann’s early and pioneering typology of the *Königsnovelle* thus:

Die Geschichte kann z.B. beginnen, indem der König einen Traum hat, oder ihm werden (im Palast) Botschaften gebracht oder Meldungen erstattet, er breitet während einer Thronsetzung einen Plan aus, dem die Höflinge dann begeistert zustimmen, gelegentlich aber auch widersprechen, wobei sich später freilich herausstellt, wie recht der

¹⁹ See further the review of Stauder in Christopher Eyre, *Lingua Aegyptia: Journal of Egyptian Language Studies* 22 (2014): 321–326, who similarly noticed problems with Stauder’s methodology that results in his dating of the texts under consideration “tentative at best, and not securely demonstrated by firm criteria from the linguistic database.”

²⁰ Piccato, “The Berlin Leather Roll and the Egyptian Sense of History”, 139.

²¹ Piccato, “The Berlin Leather Roll and the Egyptian Sense of History”, 140.

²² For a representative sample of the literature, see Alfred Hermann, *Die Ägyptische Königsnovelle* (Glückstadt: J. J. Augustin Verlag, 1938); Anthony John Spalinger, *Aspects of the Military Documents of the Ancient Egyptians* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), 101–112; Karl Jansen-Winkeln, “Die ägyptische ‘Königsnovelle’ als Texttyp”, *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 83 (1993): 101–116; Antonio Loprieno, “The ‘King’s Novel’”, in *Ancient Egyptian Literature: History and Forms*, Probleme der Ägyptologie 10, ed. Antonio Loprieno (Brill: Leiden, 1996), 277–295; Irene Shirun-Grumach, “Kadesh Inscriptions and *Königsnovelle*”, in *Proceedings of the Seventh International Congress of Egyptologists, Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 82, ed. C. J. Eyre (Leuven: Peeters, 1998), 1067–1073; Beate Hofmann, *Die Königsnovelle: ‘Strukturanalyse am Einzelwerk’* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2004); Anthony Spalinger, “*Königsnovelle* and Performance”, in *Times, Signs and Pyramids: Studies in Honour of Miroslav Verner on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday*, ed. Vivienne Gae Callender et al. (Prague: Charles University Press, 2011), 351–374; Shih-Wei Hsu, “The Development of Ancient Egyptian Royal Inscriptions”, *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 98 (2012): 269–283, esp. 274–276; Andréas Stauder, “La *Königsnovelle*: Indices génériques, significations, écarts intertextuels”, in *Questionner le sphinx: mélanges offerts à Christiane Zivie-Coche*, ed. Philippe Collombert et al. (Cairo: Institut Français D’Archéologie Orientale, 2021), 99–136.

²³ Jansen-Winkeln, “Die ägyptische ‘Königsnovelle’ als Texttyp”, 101.

König hatte, es kommt mithin oft mals zu Dialogen, die in einem Lobpreis des Königs durch sein Gefolge enden können, darauf folgt die Ausführung des Befehls oder Plans, die teils ausführlich geschildert, teils knapp berichtet wird.²⁴

Since Hermann's foundational work, however, the typology and nature of the *Königsnovelle* has been widened. This expansion naturally resulted from the recovery of additional texts which show features of the *Königsnovelle* and thus seem to broaden the lines of the *Gattung*. Jansen-Winkel, for instance, expanded the elements of the *Königsnovelle* to include: "Thema ist ein denkwürdiges Ereignis mit dem König als 'Held', der Text ist zur öffentlichen Anbringung bestimmt, als Rahmen dient die Textform 'Bericht' und es handelt sich funktional um 'Königspropaganda'."²⁵ Another expanded definition of the *Königsnovelle* comes from Loprieno, who describes it as "a form of Egyptian narrative which focused on the role of the king as recipient of divine inspiration or as protagonist of the ensuing decision-making process."²⁶ A defining characteristic of the king's decision-making process in this view of the *Königsnovelle* is that he acts decisively in a time of great controversy or (near) national disaster—a "hero of a (real or fictional) historical episode in which a state of uncertainty or deficiency is overcome by his word or his decision."²⁷ Very often the decision is one of a military or diplomatic nature,²⁸ but Loprieno includes ritual, building, and entrepreneurial operations that fell to the king for adjudication,²⁹ a point that is significant for our evaluation of the BLH. Moreover, Redford has recognized the possibility that the *Königsnovelle* or its characteristics may occur embedded as a text-type in other macro compositions; as seen, for instance, in the battle of Megiddo section of the annals of Thutmose III.³⁰ It thus appears when one looks at a more continuous stream of comparative texts that there is an evolving tradition of several subtypes of *Königsnovelle* discernible in the evidence.

Beyond merely extolling the king, the *Königsnovelle* appears to have been utilized as a rhetorical device to maintain and amplify the image of the king as Egypt's guardian and proxy. This free blending of "historical" and "literary" conventions has made it sometimes difficult to determine the historicity of any given specimen of the *Königsnovelle*.³¹ Given these complications and competing definitions of the

²⁴ Jansen-Winkel, "Die ägyptische 'Königsnovelle' als Texttyp", 102. "The story can begin, for example, with the king having a dream, or messages brought to him in the palace or reports made, he then lays out a plan during a throne session, to which the courtiers enthusiastically agree, but occasionally also contradict, only to later, of course, acknowledge how right the king was, which often leads to dialogues that end in the king's retinue praising him, followed by the execution of the order or plan, which sometimes are described in detail, and sometimes only barely reported."

²⁵ Jansen-Winkel, "Die ägyptische 'Königsnovelle' als Texttyp", 108. "The theme is a memorable event with the king as a 'hero,' the text is intended for public affixing, the text's form serves as a 'report' framework and acts, functionally, as 'royal propaganda'."

²⁶ Loprieno, "The 'King's Novel'", 277.

²⁷ Loprieno, "The 'King's Novel'", 280.

²⁸ This is especially true of Eighteenth and Nineteenth Dynasty *Königsnovellen*, for obvious reasons. See Spalinger, *Aspects of the Military Documents of the Ancient Egyptians*, 113.

²⁹ Loprieno, "The 'King's Novel'", 280.

³⁰ Donald B. Redford, *The Wars in Syria and Palestine of Thutmose III* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 19, recognized that the *Königsnovelle* *Tendenz* in the annals' presentation of the king and his war council complicates evaluating the historicity of this source.

³¹ Redford, *The Wars in Syria and Palestine of Thutmose III*, 19–21, stressed that the presence of stereotypical and propagandistic elements in our sources does not automatically disqualify their historicity, but merely urges scholars to critically and cautiously parse the material.

Königsnovelle, Kitchen went so far as to dismiss the existence of the genre altogether.³² While outright denying the reality of the genre seems extreme, there nevertheless remains the fact that since Hermann's early work attempting to identify typologically the *Königsnovelle*, texts pre- and post-dating the Eighteenth Dynasty have been recognized as *Königsnovellen*. Thus, there is a necessity to understand subsequent work on the topic that more carefully articulates the elements, typology, and overall *Sitz im Leben* of the genre.

An example of such a case is that of two military texts from just before and after the Eighteenth Dynasty: the victory stelae of Kamose and the Kadesh inscriptions of Ramesses II. Kamose's campaign against the Hyksos is recorded in two hieroglyphic stelae and a hieratic wooden writing tablet covered in stucco.³³ In these texts, which are clearly part of the same textual tradition,³⁴ Kamose recounts his decision to expel the foreign rulers of the Fifteenth Dynasty despite pressure from his cabinet to be content with sharing Egypt with them and a Nubian dynasty. The stucco tablet text opens by depicting Kamose as speaking "in his palace to the council of officials which was in his following" (I,2–3).³⁵ The text explicitly depicts Kamose as balking at his councillors' suggestion that he be satisfied with his portion of Egypt, with the narrator explaining that any hint of sharing Egypt with foreign dynasties was "disturbing in the heart of His Majesty" (I,7).³⁶ The prospect of dividing the land is intolerable, Kamose insists, and so he issues an executive order to subdue and expel any foreign rulers and their Egyptian collaborators. The rest of the text then narrates Kamose's decisive campaign:

By the command of Amun, precise of counsel, I sailed north to my victory to repel the Asiatics, my brave army at my front as a flame of fire, the Medjai-bowmen upland of our encampment to seek out the Nubians to destroy their dwellings—the eastern desert and the western desert loaded with fat, my army being provided with supplies from everywhere (I,10–11).³⁷

With stereotypical language Kamose boasts: "I was upon him [the enemy] as though I were a hawk. . . . I repelled him and laid waste to his ramparts and massacred his people" (I,15).³⁸ The text depicts Kamose as the victorious, divinely appointed hero whose sole and quick-thinking decision saved Egypt from foreign occupation. It does so in a highly literary and rhetorical narrative fashion that is not quite straightforward history, yet not quite outright fictional fabrication. Thus, many have

³² See Kenneth A. Kitchen, review of Spalinger, *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 44, no. 5/6 (1987): 639, wherein he dismissed the *Königsnovelle* genre as "fictitious", "inaccurate", and "spurious".

³³ Alan H. Gardiner, "The Defeat of the Hyksos by Kamose: The Carnarvon Tablet No. 1", *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 3, no. 2/3 (1916): 95–110; Labib Habachi, *The Second Stela of Kamose and His Struggle against the Hyksos Ruler and His Capital* (Glückstadt: J. J. Augustin Verlag, 1972).

³⁴ The Canarvon Tablet (discovered in 1908) appears to be a copy of the principal textual source for Kamose's campaign: a fragmentary stela discovered at Karnak in the 1930s. For the text, see Frank T. Miosi, ed., *A Reading Book of Second Intermediate Period Texts*, The Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities Publications 9 (Toronto: Benben Publications, 1981), 35–41. In 1954 a second stela was discovered at Karnak that parallels the text of the first stela in many respects while also including new information. See the extended discussion in H. S. Smith and Alexandrina Smith, "A Reconsideration of the Kamose Texts", *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache* 103 (1976): 48–76.

³⁵ Gardiner, "The Defeat of the Hyksos by Kamose: The Carnarvon Tablet No. 1", 98.

³⁶ Gardiner, "The Defeat of the Hyksos by Kamose: The Carnarvon Tablet No. 1", 104.

³⁷ Gardiner, "The Defeat of the Hyksos by Kamose: The Carnarvon Tablet No. 1", 104.

³⁸ Gardiner, "The Defeat of the Hyksos by Kamose: The Carnarvon Tablet No. 1", 106.

interpreted it as an example of the *Königsnovelle*, even though it lacks some of Hofmann's typological requirements (e.g. Kamose does not experience any dreams that prompt him to his course of action).

Ramesses II's inscriptions celebrating his victory over the Hittites at Kadesh can easily be read as a *Königsnovelle*,³⁹ and one that has likely even been influenced by earlier entries in the genre.⁴⁰ In the literary or poetic rendering of the account,⁴¹ Egypt faces devastation at the hands of a coalition of Anatolian and Syrian nations. Ramesses, acting with divine approval, heroically faces down the foreign hordes at the town of Kadesh on the Orontes River in modern Syria. The text amplifies the heroism of Ramesses by depicting the king as (literally) singlehandedly facing off against an innumerable host of enemies after his army fled in terror and sought surrender.

I have called on you, O Amun, while I am amidst multitudes whom I know not. All the foreign countries have united against me, I being (left) entirely alone, no-one else with me. My regular troops have abandoned me, not one of them has looked for me, from my chariotry. When I kept shouting out to them, none of them heeded me, as I called out. Amun I found more help to me than millions of troops, than hundred-thousands of chariotry, than ten-thousands of men, whether brothers or offspring (even) if united in one will.⁴²

Despite this setback, the king nevertheless triumphs thanks to divine intervention.

Now, His Majesty was after them like a griffon, I slaughtered among them, without letting up. I raised my voice to call out to my troops, saying: Stand firm, be bold-hearted, my troops, see my triumph, (all) on my own, with only Amun to be my protector, his hand with me. And how cowardly are your hearts, my chariotry, it's no use trusting in you either!⁴³

An ensuing dialogue between Ramesses and his war council features the king excoriating his troops for their cowardice.⁴⁴ After their castigation, the members of the war council exclaim the rightness of Ramesses' rule and course. "Then they spoke out in unison: 'Excellent, indeed, is peace, O Sovereign our Lord! There is no dishonour . . . in peace, when you make it! Who shall resist you on the day of your wrath?'"⁴⁵

³⁹ Spalinger, *Aspects of the Military Documents of the Ancient Egyptians*, 109–110.

⁴⁰ Shirun-Grumach, "Kadesh Inscriptions and *Königsnovelle*", 1067–1073.

⁴¹ Ramesses' account of the Battle of Kadesh survives in both monumental and papyri sources. The so-called Poem version of the text is recorded on three papyri: pRaifé, pSallier III, and pChester Beatty III. The so-called Bulletin account of the battle is preserved as commentary and captions over the battle scenes found in temples at Abydos, Karnak, Luxor, and Abu Simbel. For an overview with bibliography see William J. Murnane, "Battle of Kadesh", in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*, ed. Donald B. Redford (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 1:166–167.

⁴² Kenneth Kitchen, *Ramesside Inscriptions: Historical and Biographical* (Oxford: B. H. Blackwell, 1979), 2:39–44, §110–118; translation in Kenneth Kitchen, ed. and trans., *Ramesside Inscriptions: Translated & Annotated: Translations, Volume II, Ramesses II, Royal Inscriptions* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), 6.

⁴³ Kitchen, *Ramesside Inscriptions*, 2:55–57, §166–173; translation in Kitchen, *Ramesside Inscriptions*, 8.

⁴⁴ Kitchen, *Ramesside Inscriptions*, 2:78–84, §251–276; translation in Kitchen, *Ramesside Inscriptions*, 11–12.

⁴⁵ Kitchen, *Ramesside Inscriptions*, 2:97, §327–330; translation in Kitchen, *Ramesside Inscriptions*, 13.

As is common in the genre, the king's exemplary and divinely sanctioned behaviour is contrasted with the ineffectual or outright contemptible counsel of his officials (who in the end acquiesce to his superior plan of action).

These two examples (and the foregoing discussion of the more recent scholarly literature) illustrate the need for nuance when it comes to speaking about the nature of the *Königsnovelle*. The first issue is agreeing on what the *Königsnovelle* looks like (i.e. what narrative and typological elements characterize it). Only then, and with careful and close readings, can supposed texts of the genre be determined if they indeed fall thereunder. Delineating the characteristics of the *Königsnovelle* has not reached a universal consensus; at this point it would appear that we are dealing with a matter of good, better, and best when it comes to the typologies or classifications that we use to describe the genre.

PBERLIN 3029 AS KÖNIGSNÖVELLE

Several scholars have recognized that the BLH either contains many of the elements of the *Königsnovelle* or is an example of such a genre. Goedicke, for instance, broke with Hermann's designation of the Eighteenth Dynasty as the beginning of the *Königsnovelle* by arguing, "As far as can be seen the '*Königsnovelle*' . . . has its earliest representatives in the *Protocol of Neferyt* and in the Stories of Papyrus Westcar."⁴⁶ Goedicke went on to include the BLH as another text "of the early Twelfth Dynasty" which "use[s] the frame-story as a literary device", such as is commonly seen in the *Königsnovelle*.⁴⁷ El-Adly followed Goedicke in this opinion,⁴⁸ and more recently Peust straightforwardly categorized the BLH as a *Königsnovelle* on the basis that in the text the king is represented as the "Helden in den Mittelpunkt."⁴⁹ Piccato, likewise, sees the text as "characteristic of the so-called *Königsnovelle*", going so far as to argue that "the text is in fact considered the first example of this literary genre."⁵⁰ The "basic elements" of the *Königsnovelle* identified by Piccato include "royal council; speech of the king; reply of the courtiers; realization of the project exposed by the king", and indeed these are fairly obviously present in the BLH.⁵¹ Piccato's typology is highly useful due to its economy, and because it can more easily account for texts before and after the Eighteenth Dynasty examples cited by Hermann.⁵²

But the Middle Kingdom texts used to illustrate these expanded definitions of the *Königsnovelle* are different than those that date after the Second Intermediate Period onward and prominently feature the elements of dreams, disputations in the king's council, and heroic actions that save Egypt;⁵³ for example, the fact that the BLH does not open with Egypt at a time of crisis. There is no military or diplomatic

⁴⁶ Hans Goedicke, *The Protocol of Neferyt (The Prophecy of Neferti)* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977), 15. Compare Hsu, "The Development of Ancient Egyptian Royal Inscriptions," 275.

⁴⁷ Goedicke, *The Protocol of Neferyt*, 15. Compare Hsu, "The Development of Ancient Egyptian Royal Inscriptions," 275.

⁴⁸ El-Adly, "Die Berliner Lederhandschrift", 14–15.

⁴⁹ Peust, "Die Berliner Lederrolle," 94. "The hero in the center point."

⁵⁰ Piccato, "The Berlin Leather Roll and the Egyptian Sense of History", 137.

⁵¹ Piccato, "The Berlin Leather Roll and the Egyptian Sense of History", 137.

⁵² Compare Hsu, "The Development of Ancient Egyptian Royal Inscriptions", 275, who identified three "critical" criteria for the *Königsnovelle*: "theme (memorable event both in its origin and unfolding), function (royal propaganda), linguistic form (narrative [+speech])."

⁵³ A convenient assemblage of *Königsnovellen* of this sort that date between the beginning of the Eighteenth Dynasty and the Amarna Period (what we might call the golden age of the genre) can be found in Peter Beylage,

situation that calls for immediate action to save Egypt from some sort of national disaster. Instead, Senwosret simply announces to his cabinet that he intends to dedicate monuments for Horakhty and Atum to secure his pre-ordained right to kingship, and then he does just such with no impediment (I,14–20; II,13–19). Nor, for that matter, is Senwosret directed on his course by a dream. Furthermore, unlike the Sphinx Stela of Thutmose, these monuments to the respective deities are not said to be dilapidated or otherwise in a state of disrepair. Indeed, they seem to be newly commissioned works.

The depiction of the king's council in the BLH is also surprising, as there is no actual deliberation or controversy that unfolds therein. Unlike the Kamose and Ramesses *Königsnovellen*, the councillors in the BLH are not depicted as useless, cowardly, or ineffectual, but rather just the opposite. After Senwosret announces his plan, the council immediately consents and encourages the king to execute his design. So pleased is Senwosret that he assures his councillor that "your council causes that works be done according to the desire of My Majesty" (II, 8–9). In the Kamose and Ramesses texts, the council stands in the way of the king as sort of narrative foil to highlight the heroism of the king. In the BLH, on the other hand, they actively help instead of hinder Senwosret. To be sure, the council in the BLH hails Senwosret as a hero who is acting with divine sanction, thus fulfilling this propagandistic aspect of the *Königsnovelle*. But they complement rather than contradict the king, as is later seen in *Königsnovellen* beginning at the end of the Second Intermediate Period onward.

But the question remains why the BLH seems to differ so markedly from the "classical" New Kingdom (Eighteenth Dynasty) *Königsnovelle*. If we grant that the BLH is in fact a Twelfth Dynasty production, as I believe it is, then we may easily account for this divergence by seeing Middle Kingdom proto-*Königsnovellen* such as the BLH as reflecting a different social reality than those of the Second Intermediate Period and Dynasties Eighteen and Nineteen of the New Kingdom (periods notably marked by militaristic and imperialistic concerns). This, in turn, would reinforce the proposition that the BLH is not a New Kingdom production or imitation, but an authentic, early witness to the *Königsnovelle* in its nascent Middle Kingdom form. This is not to necessarily go so far as to claim that the BLH is the first instance of the *Königsnovelle* before the Eighteenth Dynasty. El-Adly's and Piccato's observations quoted earlier are perhaps somewhat hasty in their conclusions on this point. There are, after all, other inscriptions from the reign of Senwosret I that show a *Tendenz* towards the *Königsnovelle*.⁵⁴ Reaching even further back, we might also point to the rock inscriptions of Tjehemau during the reign of Mentuhotep II and Fifth Dynasty monumental texts from the reigns of Sahure and Unas which also exhibit several elements found in *Königsnovellen* (e.g. speeches between king and court, expeditions, declarations of piety, etc.).⁵⁵ Moreover, between the BLH and the Eighteenth Dynasty

Aufbau der königlichen Stelentexte vom Beginn der 18. Dynastie bis zur Amarnazeit, 2 vols. Ägypten und Altes Testament 54. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2002), 1:1–98.

⁵⁴ For example, Christophe Barbotin and Jacques Jean Clère, "L'inscription de Sésostri I^{er} à Tôd", *Bulletin de L'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale* 91 (1992): 1–32; Wolfgang Schenkel, "'Littérature et Politique': Fragestellung oder Antwort? Zwei Diskussionsbeiträge", in *Literatur und Politik im pharaonischen und ptolemäischen Ägypten: Vorträge der Tagung zum Gedenken an Georges Posener*, 5–10. September 1996 in Leipzig, ed. Jan Assmann and Elke Blumenthal (Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 1999), 63–74.

⁵⁵ John C. Darnell, "The Rock Inscriptions of Tjehemau at Abisko", *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache* 130 (2003): 31–48; "The Route of Eleventh Dynasty Expansion into Nubia: An Interpretation Based on the Rock Inscriptions of Tjehemau at Abisko", *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache* 131 (2004): 23–37; Dominique Farout,

there are other texts which seem to fall into the *Königsnovelle*-type, at least in a broad sense. Besides the Kamose text already examined, this may also include the Abydos building inscription of Neferhotep I,⁵⁶ the Coptos stela of Rahotep,⁵⁷ and the Karnak stela of Mentuhotepi.⁵⁸ While the Sphinx Stela of Tuthmosis IV may indeed be taken as marking the advent of the “classic” Eighteenth Dynasty form of the *Königsnovelle*. There are earlier texts from that same dynasty which also appear to relate to the same tradition, including the Tempest Stela of Ahmose,⁵⁹ and the Speos Artemidos Inscription of Hatshepsut.⁶⁰ Given these examples, I am not positing a diachronic leap from the BLH in the Twelfth Dynasty to the later “classical” *Königsnovelle* of the Eighteenth. Instead, I would emphasize (at the risk of stating the obvious) that there appears to have been a gradual evolution of the elements and structure of the genre. The BLH appears to fit better at the beginning of that evolution, so the incongruous elements in the text, if read as a *Königsnovelle*, might be better understood and accounted for in that context.

This discussion highlights the precariousness of relying solely on linguistic criteria to ascertain the dating of textual compositions. In the case of the BLH, the arguments for an Eighteenth Dynasty dating based on linguistic features appear inconclusive at best. Additional criteria, therefore, are necessary. Viewing the BLH as part of the *Königsnovelle* tradition, which appears fully warranted, seems to place it more comfortably in the Twelfth Dynasty and not the Eighteenth. The explanatory power of viewing the BLH in this light is that it may account for the absence of the features of the “classical” form of the *Königsnovelle* laid out by Hermann that are seen in Eighteenth Dynasty compositions such as the Sphinx Stela. While not definitive, this approach, I nevertheless believe, gives us a productive path forward.⁶¹

“Les Déclarations du Roi Sahourê”, *Revue D'Égyptologie* 63 (2012): 103–113; “Les Déclarations du Roi Ounas”, *Revue D'Égyptologie* 65 (2014): 49–73.

⁵⁶ Rudolf Anthes, “Die Berichte des Neferhotep und des Ichernofret über das Osirisfest in Abydos”, in *Festschrift zum 150 jährigen Bestehen des Berliner Ägyptischen Museums* (Berlin: Akademi-Verlag, 1974), 15–49.

⁵⁷ Elke Blumenthal, “Die Koptosstele des Königs Rahotep (London U. C. 14327)”, in *Ägypten und Kusch*, ed. Erika Endesfelder et al. *Schriften zur Geschichte und Kultur des Alten Orients* 13. (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1977), 63–80.

⁵⁸ Pascal Vernus, “Le Stèle du Pharaon *Mntw-Htpi* À Karnak”, *Revue D'Égyptologie* 40 (1989): 145–161.

⁵⁹ Hana Navrátilová, “The ‘Unwetterstele’ of Ahmose as a historical text”, in *L'Acqua nell'antico Egitto: Vita, Rigenerazione, Incantesimo, Medicamento: Proceedings of the First International Conference for Young Egyptologists, Italy, Chianciano Terme, October 15–18, 2003*, ed. Alessia Amenta, Maria Michela Luiselli, and Maria Novella Sordi (Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, 2005), 81–88.

⁶⁰ Hans Goedicke, *The Speos Artemidos Inscription of Hatshepsut and Related Discussions* (Oakville, CT: Halgo, Inc., 2004).

⁶¹ I am grateful for the helpful feedback and citations that were supplied to me by an anonymous peer reviewer of an earlier draft of this paper.

Coffin AA2190.A: On the Texts from Queen's Master of Art Conservation Program (MACP)

Mark Trumpour, Gayle Gibson

Abstract: Fragments of three ancient Egyptian coffins are being studied by the Master of Art Conservation Program (MACP) at Queen's University, Kingston. The fragments were originally part of the collection of the Leland J. Stanford Museum and were on display there until the San Francisco earthquake of 1906 left them in pieces. Ultimately, all the recovered fragments came to the MACP.

This article summarizes attempts made to identify the original source of the fragments, based on early documentation, and now for the first time, on translation of the remaining text from one of the coffins, AA2190.A, a Late Period coffin likely from Akhmim. Based on all these sources, we suggest that the coffin is one originally collected by the young Leland J. Stanford Jr. as part of what he hoped would form the core of a museum collection.

Key Words: Akhmim, coffin, provenance, text, TIP, Stanford, Brugsch,

Introduction

The fragmentary remains of three adult coffins dating to the Third Intermediate Period are currently under study in the Master of Art Conservation program (MACP) at Queen's University in Canada.¹ One stage of a multi-phased interdisciplinary project included identifying the original sources for the coffins of which the fragments formed a part, and investigating the early chronology of stewardship and acquisition. Research in 2016 had narrowed down the possible coffin donors to three individuals: Leland Stanford Jr., Jane Stanford (Leland Stanford's mother), and David Hewes (uncle of Leland Stanford).² We can say that the coffin fragments in the MACP were once part of the former Stanford University Museum of Art's collection, where they were on display until the famous earthquake of 1906. This earthquake destroyed the entire Egyptian wing of the museum (Fig. 1). The extent of destruction is illustrated in photographs held in the Stanford University Archives where they can be viewed online.³

The remains of several coffins were sifted from the rubble and stored in cases, where they rested until a further earthquake in 1989. This second earthquake damaged the building to such an extent that the collections had to be moved out while the structure was consolidated. At the same time, the museum reformed its mission as an art museum. Archaeological and anthropological materials were moved to Stanford

¹ Mark Trumpour, "Canadians Collect Egypt: Captains, the Curious and a Famous Scoundrel," presented 7 November 2015 as part of the SSEA symposium "Egypt's Threatened Treasures: Plunder and Restoration, Past & Present." Online at https://www.academia.edu/25235295/Canadians_Collect_Ancient_Egypt_Captains_the_Curious_and_a_Famous_Scoundrel

² Mark Trumpour, Amandina Anastasiades, "Third Intermediate Period Coffin Fragments in Queen's University's Art Conservation Program: Investigation of Early Stewardship", *JSSEA*, Vol. XLIII p 85-100

³ http://quake06.stanford.edu/centennial/gallery/structures/museum/pages/museum_damage2.html



Figure 1: After the 1906 earthquake: The Egyptian Gallery was located on the right of the photo. Stanford University Archives, Courtesy of the Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries

University's Anthropology Department, while the original museum building underwent extensive restoration, to re-emerge as the Iris & B. Gerald Cantor Center for Visual Arts. The archaeological and anthropological materials are now managed by the Stanford Archaeology Center at the Stanford University Archaeology Collections.

In the aftermath of the 1989 earthquake, then-Curator Thomas J. Seligman and staff decided to divest the museum holdings of items that were not in keeping with the new mission. Among these were the remains of the three coffins, all lacking accession numbers, and not connected to any documentation at the time.⁴ In June 1993, this group of coffin remains was selected for deaccessioning. Three packages of fragments were given to the Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology in the United States and seven packages were sent to the Canadian Conservation Institute.⁵ Both sets of fragments remained virtually untouched by the two receiving institutions until the fall of 2014, when the CCI donated ten fragments from one package in its possession to the MACP's study collection at Queen's University.

In 2014-2015, Queen's students in the Artifacts Treatment stream carried out a preliminary study and analysis of a small selection of pigment and textile samples taken from the coffin fragments. In the summer of 2015, two fragments went on

⁴ Anna Soland, Assistant Curator of Collections Storage and Research, Cantor Arts Center. Personal communication, 18 February 2015.

⁵ Madeleine Fang, Conservator, Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology. Personal communication, 9 January 2015.

display in Kingston at the Pump House Steam Museum as part of the Royal Ontario Museum's travelling exhibit, "Egypt, Gift of the Nile." The interest aroused by this work, combined with study of the ethical questions surrounding the approach to preserving ancient materials⁶, prompted the MACP to request that the CCI donate its remaining fragments to Queen's University for study and research. The CCI consented and the objects arrived at Queen's in December 2015. This generous donation included over 100 fragments, some of substantial size.

At that time, a great many fragments appeared to be missing. It was hoped that some of these might be located amongst the fragments that were deaccessioned to the Phoebe Hearst Museum. Thanks to the active investigations at Queen's, the Phoebe Hearst Museum decided to donate the material in their care to Queen's. These final fragments were received at Queen's in February 2021. Unfortunately, little text was included on the fragments in this final group.

Identification of the Coffins

The coffin fragments comprise the partial remains of the three coffins. Represented are portions of one Twenty-fifth Dynasty coffin and two Twenty-first Dynasty Yellow Type V coffins; it appears that no fragments from additional coffins are included in the material.

The Twenty-fifth Dynasty coffin (AA2190.A) consists of fragments of the head, chest, the foot/pedestal from the lid, with text running down the sides (Fig. 2), and fragments of the trough. It is primarily these texts that this article translates.

The closest match for the coffin now at Queen's is one in the Budapest Museum of Fine Arts (No. 51.1995/1-2).⁷ Shared characteristics include the vertical text down the sides of the coffin, an identical border of coloured rectangles around the top of the pedestal and along the sides of the coffin lid, and a very shallow trough. This coffin type is attested at Akhmim.⁸ The Queen's coffin also has similarities to British Museum coffin EA25256



Figure 2: A rough positioning of the coffin fragments. Photo: E. Kim, Queen's University Master of Art Conservation Program

⁶ A. Anastassiades, Doxsey-Whitfield, M., Doyle, D., Guerin, A.M., Imamura, L., Porteous, G., Savage, C., Zweifel, S., "Those in the Netherworld Sing: Considering the Intangible in Conserving Dissociated Ancient Objects", Joint AIC 44th Annual Meeting & CAC 42nd Annual Conference, Palais des Congrès, Montreal, QC, May 13-17, 2016.

⁷ Eva Liptay, *Coffins and Coffin Fragments of the Third Intermediate Period* (Budapest: Museum of Fine Arts, 2011), Plate 14.

⁸ Liptay (2011), 61, identifies a number of close parallels, including one from Akhmim published in S. Aufrere (Rouen, 1987), *Collections des musées départementaux de Seine-Maritime*, 21-22

Identifying the Donors

Because the Stanford Museum's cataloguing process only began in 1910,⁹ there is no comprehensive listing of the Egyptian holdings at the time of the 1906 earthquake. Of the coffins in the collection, Osborne notes that a child's coffin, collected by David Hewes, was "crushed beyond salvage in the earthquake of 1906,"¹⁰ and "The faculty and its administrators showed little desire to salvage from the Museum's wreckage whatever could have served as the start of a new, academically useful collection. The remains of the building were allowed to fall into further disrepair, and all pretence of scholarship gradually ceased."¹¹

What is known is that the core of the museum's original collection was material collected by Leland Stanford Jr. An early record indicates that he had acquired two coffins and mummies from Emile Brugsch, then Assistant Curator of the Cairo Museum.¹²

"From 1885 onwards, there came from Akhmim an important lot of painted coffins dating from the Third Intermediate Period to the Late Period...Many of the exported coffins were negotiated by Emil Brugsch who was an assistant curator at the Bulaq Museum and in charge of export licenses and also of selling duplicates..."¹³

Leland Stanford's acquisition of the two coffins probably occurred during trips he took with his parents, one in 1880-81 and a second in 1883-84, the trip that ended in his untimely death¹⁴ at the age of fifteen. Following his passing, Leland's grieving parents seized on the idea of creating a university and museum to keep his legacy alive. Leland Stanford Jr. University opened its doors to students in 1891; the Museum opened to the public in 1894.¹⁵

Leland's mother Jane continued to collect, acquiring two further lots of Egyptian material for the museum between 1901 and the time of her death in 1905.¹⁶ A letter in the museum archives indicates that her collecting added a further four coffins and mummies, comprising three adult coffins and one child's coffin.¹⁷

The museum also received a donation of material collected by David Hewes, the husband of Jane Stanford's sister. Between 1870 and 1879, Hewes acquired the

⁹ Anna Lessenger Soland, Assistant Curator of Collections Storage and Research, Cantor Arts Center. Personal communication, 25 March 2016.

¹⁰ Carol M. Osborne, *Museum Builders in the West*, (Stanford University, 1986), 67

¹¹ Osborne, 18.

¹² Osborne, 63. Brugsch was a source tapped by dealers, collectors, tourists and museum curators. Selling many painted coffins from 1885 onwards, as reported by Maya Mueller, "From the history of archaeology: The Destruction of the late antique necropoleis in Egypt reconsidered", in A. Maravelia (ed.) (BAR, 2005), *Papers from a Session Held at the European Association of Archaeologists Ninth Annual Meeting*, 4.

¹³ Maya Mueller, 4. See FN 11

¹⁴ Theresa Johnston, "About a Boy", *Stanford Magazine* (July/August 2003). Accessed online at https://alumni.stanford.edu/get/page/magazine/article/?article_id=36804 on February 29, 2016.

¹⁵ "History of the Cantor Arts Center," accessed online on February 29, 2016 at http://museum.stanford.edu/explore/museum_history.html

¹⁶ Cherkea Howery, documentation, "Exhibit Title: Object Lessons III – 'Museum Acquisitions' ", Stanford University Archaeology Collections, 2011.

¹⁷ From a letter in the Stanford Archives, quoted by Anna Soland (see Note 2 above) in a personal communication, 25 March 2016.



Figure 3: Coffins on Display, Leland Stanford Jr. Museum, Prior to 1906. Stanford Historical Photograph Collection, Courtesy of the Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries

coffin and mummy of a child.¹⁸ This is likely the coffin that Osborne described as “crushed beyond salvage” in the earthquake. He acquired three additional “beautifully encased” mummies by purchase in Cairo in March 1890.¹⁹

While further Egyptian material was donated by the Egyptian Exploration Society and by Timothy Hopkins, a friend of the Stanfords, no coffins or mummies were included in these donations.²⁰

Existing records indicate that the collection contained six to ten coffins prior to 1906.²¹ Photographs taken of the Egyptian gallery prior to 1906 show multiple coffins on display (Fig. 3).²² While it is not certain from the images, there appear to be a total of seven coffins on display.

It may be concluded that the fragments at Queen’s today are from one or both of the coffins Leland Stanford Jr. acquired from Brugsch. Other fragments at Queen’s may belong to coffins collected by David Hewes or Jane Stanford, coffins which also seem to have come through Brugsch, either as seller or as middleman.²³

¹⁸ Osborne, 63.

¹⁹ Quoted in Osborne, 65.

²⁰ His various donations are discussed in Osborne, 17, 60 and 67. Some records of the contents of these donations are in the archives at Stanford.

²¹ Trumpour and Anastasiades, 90. The four coffins stated to have been donated by Hewes may be identical to those collected by Jane Stanford.

²² See also: SHPC Photo ID 6269.3, Reference 00009463-19576; SHPC Photo ID 6268, Reference 00009459-20377; SHPC Photo ID 6274, Reference 00009463-19581. Photos are available online at <https://exhibits.stanford.edu/shpc>.

²³ Osborne notes, “Brugsch was quite accustomed to selling antiquities and plasters to Americans either from a shop on the premises of the Bulak Museum maintained for this purpose or as a middleman in other deals.”



Figure 4: The coffin and mummy before installation, 1880s. Stanford Historical Photograph Collection, Courtesy of the Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries



Figure 5: The coffin with mummy on display, ca. 1884. Stanford Historical Photograph Collection, Courtesy of the Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries

With particular reference to Coffin AA2190.A, our search of the Stanford Historical Photograph Collection produced two key images taken prior to the 1906 earthquake: an intact coffin and mummy during installation in the Egyptian Galleries (Fig. 4); and the same intact coffin on display (Fig. 5). The intact coffin in these images is clearly identifiable as the Twenty-fifth Dynasty coffin now in fragments at Queen's (AA2190.A).

Thanks to Stanford University's curator Christina Hodge, archivist Peg Brady, and assistant Justin Muchnick, additional background information was turned up. While this material was helpful in confirming what was already known of the individual donors of the Stanford Museum's material, the donor names did not include images of the coffins beside them, and archival descriptions were not helpful in identification. However, the new information was enough to support the possibility that at least one of the coffins had been part of the original collection of Leland Stanford Jr. It is at this point that the translation of the text of coffin AA2190A takes up the story.

Coffin AA2190A: The Texts - Trough

The text from Coffin AA2190.A is in four fragments, two of them from the lower (foot) end of the coffin, one from higher up on each side (Figures 6-9).²⁴ They form portions of a standard text known as the "offering formula", and in it the king is presented as giving offerings to the gods on behalf of the deceased. It begins with the phrase *htp di nsw*, "An offering which the king gives..." Sometimes this offering is given to Osiris, sometimes to Anubis, and occasionally other deities. The king gives the offerings because he is himself a divinity, the living Horus: "...the essential role of the king as intermediary between the gods and mankind was central to the phrasing of the offering formula ...the king would intercede on behalf of the dead to ensure them a happy afterlife."²⁵ The fragments at Queen's contain two offering formulae (A6 and A8), one from each side of the trough. Fragments A11 and A16 (Fig. 7 and Fig. 9) give the list of the items being offered to the deity and the name of the deceased.

Unfortunately, the coffin lid is so heavily damaged that we will only briefly comment on some aspects of the text.

In the discussion of the fragments that follows, we have used the example of Budapest coffin, Inv. No. 51.1995/1-2 as a point of reference for the original location of each piece.²⁶ Based on the remains of the coffin at Queen's, it appears to be an extremely close parallel.

The Name of the Coffin Owner:

The name of the deceased is largely intact on fragment 16, described below. It

66.

²⁴ Photos of the fragments of coffin AA2190, figures 6-15, appear courtesy of Queen's University, Master of Art Conservation Program

²⁵ Ronald J. Leprohon, "Offering Formulas and Lists", in Donald B. Redford (ed.), *The Oxford Essential Guide to Egyptian Mythology*, New York, Berkley Books (2003), 287

²⁶ Eva Liptay, *Coffins and Coffin Fragments of the Third Intermediate Period*, 2011, Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest, 60. Inv. No. 51.1995/1-2. Plate 14, page 100. Images of this coffin are reproduced here with the kind permission of the Museum of Fine Arts/Szépművészeti Múzeum, Budapest.

appears to be “*3sty*”, a female name. The gender is consistent with the face mask from the coffin lid, which shows no trace of a beard and bears evidence of yellow/ochre pigment typically used for female skin. We will consider the name further below and will explore the implications for identifying the provenance of the coffin.

AA2190.A 8 (Fig. 6): Original position: shoulder of trough, right side

The text reads top to bottom.

This fragmentary text contains the name of the god to whom offerings are being made, namely Re-Horakhty-Atum. The preserved text would immediately follow the missing opening words, “*Htp di nsw...*”



R^c hr3hty - [i]tm nb t3wy . . .

Re-Horakhty-Atum is named in the text from the



coffin of *Di- Hr -sr*, in the Budapest Museum.²⁷ What appears to be the head of a hawk, crowned with a sundisk, can be seen in damaged form. The word *neb*, lord, would have served to introduce an epithet of the god, possibly "Lord of the Two Lands", just barely legible on this fragment.



the text continues on Fragment 11. After a lacuna,

AA2190.A11 (Fig. 7): A section of the frieze of inscription on the left edge of the trough.

This fragment of a standard offering formula, ended with the name of the coffin owner. Surviving text reads:



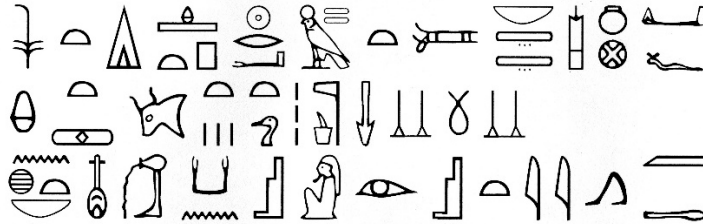
*Snt*r šs . . . *n* ḥt nb(*t*) nfr(*t*) w^cb(*t*). [*n*] k3 *n* wsir [3s]t y
 “ . . . incense, alabaster [jars of ointment] cloth,
 everything good and pure [for] the ka of the Osiris,
 [As]t-ii . . . The phrase *n* k3 *n* “for the ka of” lacks the
 first ‘n’ but is nevertheless perfectly clear. The
 comparable coffin in Budapest, **Di-Hr-sr**, also omits
 the first ‘n’ in the phrase *n* k3 *n*.



²⁷ Eva Liptay reads the name as Di-Hr-jAwt, but we believe that Di-Hr-sr (Gift of Horus the Elder) is more likely.

We reconstruct the entire line of text on the right side of the coffin trough beginning just before the extant text as:

An offering which the king gives to Ra-Horakhy-Atum, Lord of the Two Lands and Iunu, that he may give bread and beer, beef and fowl,



incense, clothing, (and) everything good and pure [for] the ka of the Osiris 3sty.

Although one would expect to see *m3^ct hrw* justified, following the name of the deceased, on the Budapest coffin the final sign is A1, the seated man determinative. Either sign might have been used here, though the low space available would seem to favour *m3^ct hrw*.

AA2190.A6: Left side (Fig. 8)

The fragments from the left side of the trough contain a similar offering formula. Fragment A6 extends downward from the shoulder a distance of 86 centimetres. Although little remains of the white ground of the beginning of the offering formula, traces of dark blue/green glyphs can be read by using software to increase the contrast on a digital image.



Remaining text:

h̄tp [di nsw] n wsr h̄nty imntt [ntr] 3

nb 3bdw di.f mw (?) b3 (?)s h̄tp . . .



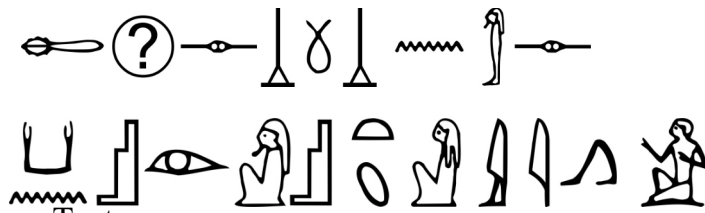
An offering which the king gives to Osiris, foremost of the West, the great (god), lord of Abydos, that he may give water (?) [for?] her

ba (?) contentment (?).

The use of Gardiner M35 (water) followed by what appears to be G21, the jabiru stork, usually used for *ba*, or sometimes the letter 'b,' is puzzling, and has no parallel on the Budapest coffin of *Di-Hr-sr*. The latter shows a standard offering formula on both sides of the coffin trough.

AA2190.A16 (Fig. 9): Left side of trough, including pedestal.

The text is similar to that of Fragment A11. The piece is the lower section of the text, below Fragment A6, extending to the foot of the coffin.



Text:

h? .[s]šs n wi(?)s [n] k3 wsr 3sty

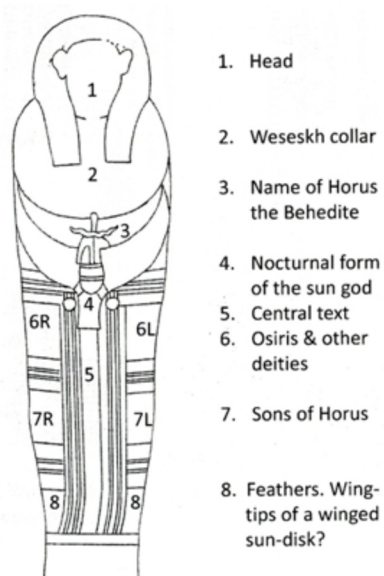
(? Possibly F 32, X belly, in mistake for X4 t, bread) followed by an apparently otiose O 34 s) . . . *alabaster (jars of ointment) and cloth, for her mummy (or perhaps O 34 in place of N35 n) for the ka of the Osiris 3sty.*

The feminine name is followed by the male determinative, and lacks the customary *m3^ct hrw*, *justified*.

Coffin AA2190A: The Texts – Lid (see Figures 2 and 11-15)

The coffin lid was smashed into many fragments. Some pieces are lost. Nevertheless, considerable detail remains on the upper surface of the lid. It is so like that of Budapest 51.1995 to suggest that both were painted in the same shop, possibly by the same hands. The diagram below shows the original pattern of the Queen's coffin. For convenience, the decoration of the lid will be discussed in the order of the numbered areas on this image (Fig. 10)

The head is covered by a tri-partite wig cover painted with blue and yellow stripes. Any decoration from the forehead or crown has been lost.



The face has lost its nose and much of its colour, but enough remains to show that it had been painted yellow; this is particularly clear on the left ear, which is entirely covered in paint. The large eyes seem to look upwards rather outward, but this may be an accident of preservation; the left eye is particularly damaged.

3sty, the name of the deceased, shown on the sides of the trough and discussed below, is clearly feminine. The yellow paint on the face is consistent with this. It is unusual for ears to be shown on a woman's coffin, but not unknown. The prominent ears might suggest that the coffin was originally made for a man and reused for *3sty*, but they are insufficient in

themselves as proof.

The representation of a *wesekh* collar extends over most of the upper body, beginning at the neck with a series of thin bands: blue-green, plain yellow; red; plain yellow; blue green with yellow. The broad collar itself consists of seven strings of leaves and petals, blue-green, red, yellow and white. It is completed by a final row of petals of blue water-lily petals ‘sewn’ onto a reddish band. It is very similar to the collar on Budapest 51.1995/1.

The title of Horus the Behedite extends from either edge of the lid toward the centre, but the customary epithet, *nb pt*, Lord of the Sky, does not survive.

Though only a few signs remain on the right, the glyphs are clear on the left.



bhdy ntr ʿ3 (the) Great God, Behdety

4. The central image on the coffin is a green-faced, ram-headed falcon, the night form of the sun-god, whose outspread wings stretch completely across the coffin, protecting the deceased. Severe damage to the deity’s head prevents detection of the usual uraeus and tripartite wig; the talons which traditionally grasp shen symbols have not survived. As on Budapest 51.1995/1, the body of the bird is an oval divided into three sections. Whereas the body in Budapest is painted yellow/red/yellow, the image on the Queen’s coffin was painted green/red/green, with thin yellow bands dividing the three sections.

5. AA2190.A17 and 20, fragments *a* and *b* (Fig. 11 and 12) From the tail of the divine bird to the foot of the coffin, a central panel once contained an offering formula, whose first phrase, *Htp di nsw* is clear. ²⁸



The actual extent of the missing area following the introductory phrase has not been determined. It may have contained the name of Osiris and one or more of his epithets. The formula continues with a phrase identifying Atum, “Lord of the Two Lands, (Lord of) Iunu, that he may give . . .” *nb t3wy iwnw di ʿf*.

Glyphs naming the specific offering sought, such as a beautiful burial, have been lost.

Although badly damaged, colourful block friezes and bands of chevrons bordering the central panel show how attractive the coffin must have been in its original state.

²⁸ Conservation and reconstruction of the coffin lid are as yet tentative. We have arbitrarily given numbers a - d to the fragments discussed. Colour images of these areas can be found in Figures 13 to 17.



Figure 11: AA2190.A17 Section a, containing beginning of the offering formula (left) and image of Osiris and Isis (right). Atum appears in snake form at far right.



Figure 12: AA2190.A20 Section 'b': Continuation of the offering formula.

6. AA2160.A17, section *a* (Fig. 11) On either side of the central panel were registers with images of deities. The uppermost register on the left is well preserved. Mummiform and green of face, Osiris, wearing the *hedjet* crown with uraeus and a collar of three or four coloured bands completed by a row of green drop beads faces toward the offering formula. Glyphs identifying him are above to the left of his face. His green hands stick out from his wrappings to hold a staff with a three-part division, one aspect of which appears to have been a *was* sceptre. Both his crown and his wrappings are yellow ochre, only slightly paler than the background.

Behind Osiris stands a green-skinned Isis wearing her name-glyph on her head. A red band encircles her head. She wears a green dress. Her forward arm may once have reached to embrace Osiris. The *ankh* and *was*, symbols for life and power, seem to hang from this arm. A third sign beneath the *was* sceptre is now missing. In front of her face, two or more glyphs, may have written her name. Only Gardiner X1, *t*, can be read with certainty.

To the right, behind Isis, is a snake-headed deity in red wrappings. The bearded, white-faced snake wears a single feather on his head. Though damaged, the glyphs above his head appear to read *Atum*, *Lord of the Two Lands*.

A complementary scene, with Osiris standing nearest the centre, once balanced the register on the right, but is almost completely lost. Only Osiris' sceptre and hints of the glyphs in front of him remain.

7. (Fig. 13 and 14) Below a decorative band the Sons of Horus stood in the next register. All four figures appear to have been mummiform and wearing collars of yellow / red / yellow / blue-green/ yellow, with a bottom row of blue water-lily petals.



Figure 13: AA2190.A19 Section 'c': Two of the Sons of Horus, canine and baboon headed.



Figure 14: AA2190.A15 Section 'd': Hawk-headed Son of Horus.

AA2191.A19 (Fig. 13) On the right, the now-nameless protectors have canine and baboon heads; only one remains on the left, a hawk-headed being. Only a few glyphs suggesting the name *Hapy* remain above the hawk. The hawk-headed protector is traditionally named Kebsenuuf, but during the Third Intermediate Period, several traditions for naming these characters existed.²⁹

8. Though much damaged, the lowest register seems to contain long feathered wingtips. On the Budapest coffin, similar elements are identified as 'a winged sun-disk'.³⁰

The foot of the coffin is almost entirely without paint. Elements of a block frieze bordering the destroyed central inscription can be seen, and the tips of well-drawn feathers, spread out as if in an image of a winged being. Trough fragment AA2190.A10 (Fig. 15) shows the pedestal of the coffin decorated with thick red, blue-green, and red bands separated by thin yellow bands. This pattern may have extended across the front of the pedestal on the lid.

Examination of the lid of *3sty*'s coffin confirms a very close resemblance to Budapest 51.1995, and to other similar coffins identified as originating in Akhmim.³¹ Lack of inner decoration and the spelling of Osiris without the pennant (Gardiner R 8) suggest a date for the *3sty*'s coffin early in the Twenty-fifth dynasty.

Identifying the Provenance of the Coffin Based on the Inscription

A very early (1886) description of the collection in the Stanford library³² has a relevant item. While the Egyptian pieces in the collection were not enumerated

²⁹ ROM910.10, the Twenty-second Dynasty mummy-case of Djedmaesankh in the Royal Ontario Museum is an example of this alternate tradition.

³⁰ Liptay, p. 60.

³¹ Liptay cites the literature supporting this assertion, discusses the probable dating for the series of coffins, p. 61. See above footnote 8

³² *The Leland Stanford Jr. Museum: Origin and Description*, 1886. Call no. N781 A6, Stanford University Libraries



Figure 15: Fragment AA2190.A10: Coffin Pedestal

individually, there is a reference to "the lid of a mummy coffin, profusely decorated with hieroglyphics." The name on the coffin lid, which was collected by Leland Stanford Jr., was translated as *3st-I-h*^c by Egyptologist Georges Daressy, who had taught Leland to read hieroglyphs. To quote the old document:

"In the first case is the lid of a mummy coffin profusely decorated with hieroglyphics, of which the following is the translation [sic] given by Mr. Daressy, of Paris, an Egyptologist [sic]: "To *3st-I-h*^c, priestess of Ammon. May she be admitted to Heaven among the Gods, sail in the ship of the sun, be fed with meats from the God's tables. May her soul be preserved for her and may she retain the use of all her faculties."

From the nature of the tracings on this sarcophagus its age has been assigned to about 850 B.C. The inscription is in two vertical columns in the centre of the lid."³³

The booklet indicates that "The main and choicest part of the collections in this room was acquired by Leland Stanford Jr., between August 1883 and March 1884."

The translation of the name as given here is very like the transcription we have derived for Queen's coffin AA2190. The name may be translated as "Isis Comes." If a syllable is indeed missing, as the Daressy translation suggests, the name could be *3st-i-h*, or "Isis descends".

The name as written on the surviving fragment is slightly different from the name as translated by Daressy. There seem to be three possibilities for why this might be:

1. The name is written in an abbreviated form on the side panels or was shortened by the craftsmen who executed it to ensure the entire name fitted the space available.

³³ *The Leland Stanford Jr. Museum: Origin and Description*, "The Collection in Room 7", 1886. It should be noted that the comparable coffin example in Budapest has only a single column of text on the lid. Contemporary scholarship would not support the dating in the 1886 booklet; for a discussion of this, see Liptay, page 61.

2. Daressy misread the name, conjecturing the missing signs, and came up with a slightly erroneous translation; or
3. The lid described by Daressy belonged to a different coffin from the one whose fragments we are looking at in the MCAP collection.

It is possible that the name of the deceased, as written on the side panels of text, may be an abbreviation. The text extends almost to the very bottom of the side-panels, so one possibility, Option 1, is that there may simply not have been enough space to squeeze in the final syllable of the name, i.e. *h3*. The scribe may have been better able to accommodate the text on the lid, or perhaps the text was better planned and so fitted the space available. Shortened forms of names were used often, especially when there was not space for a complete formal name. There is, therefore, the possibility that this is more than an accident, and that the craftsmen charged with the text may have used such a contraction deliberately.

The second possibility, that Daressy erred in his translation, is difficult to evaluate considering the damaged condition of the lid and its texts. On the one hand, Georges Daressy (1864-1938) was a well-known Egyptologist. On the other hand, at the time he produced his translation in 1884, he was still a student. It is conceivable that he could have taken one of the signs – Gardiner's D 54, walking legs – to be part of the word *h3*.³⁴

The third possibility is that the lid translated by Daressy and the MCAP fragments come from two different coffins. What makes this less likely is that the name, whether *3sty* or *3sty-h3*, is not a common name. Neither form of the name appears in Ranke's *Personennamen*.³⁵ While Ranke was published in 1935, and many names have been added to the canon since this time, the name's absence suggests its rarity.³⁶ Given that the name is infrequently encountered, the possibility of there being two coffins in the same collection whose owners bear such similar names seems a very remote one indeed.

The only way to be completely sure of the name would be to have the complete coffin lid before us. However, since it appears that large areas of the lid have been irrevocably lost, we can only weigh probabilities. Based on what we know, it is more likely that the lid translated by Daressy is from the same coffin to which the MCAP fragments once belonged. If this is so, then the text not only tells us who the owner of the coffin was, but is also a key to firmly identifying the source of this coffin. It would seem to have been collected by Leland Stanford Jr. himself, acquired from Emil Brugsch, and to have formed a part of his initial collection, and further that it was acquired between August 1883 and March 1884 from the Egyptian Museum in Cairo. This collection went on to form the core of the subsequent Leland Stanford Jr. Museum's Egyptian Collection.

Acknowledgement

Thanks are due to Prof. Ron Leprohon (UofT) and Prof. Ed Meltzer (Pacifica

³⁴ Thanks are owed to Prof. Ed Meltzer for confirming this possibility. Written communication, 24 October 2019. Without seeing the text that was the basis for his translation, this can only be no more than a possibility.

³⁵ Hermann Ranke, *Die Aegyptischen Personennamen*, 2 vols., 1935 – 52.

³⁶ The name is also unfamiliar to any of those consulted in the course of this work. As Prof. Meltzer commented, "it is a perfectly good name but I've never encountered it before." (Personal communication)

Graduate Institute) for taking the time to comment on different aspects of the name of the deceased, as it appears on the coffin fragments. Their thoughts helped greatly during our work, but the conclusions drawn are those of the authors alone. We also thank Prof. Emy Kim of the MACP for her ongoing support of the work and for permission to use the images of the coffin. Lastly, we thank the Museum of Fine Arts/ Szépművészeti Múzeum, Budapest for permission to use images of the reference coffin.

Jean-Arcady Meyer

The Rise and Fall of the Library of Alexandria

Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle upon Tyne, 2023, Pp. vi-xi, 1-444, figs. 62 ISBN (10): 1-5275-1870-1; (13) 978-1-5257-1870-4

The volume has less to do with the actual library, and more to do with a history of the city of Alexandria related through a series of brief biographical sketches about its more famous historical personages. The narrative is divided into six major sections, some with broader chronological scope than others. A reading of the Preface suggests that this volume is a personal summary of everything that everyone already thinks they know about ancient Alexandria.

Messr. Meyer [hereafter M.] begins his narrative with the founding of Alexandria, highlighting the more important districts of Pharos and Rhacotis, before engaging in a discussion about the political dislocations effected by the untimely death of Alexander the Great, and concluding with his interment in Memphis. Part II - The Development of Alexandria - is actually a brief overview of the history of the Ptolemaic Dynasty presented as a sequential, biographical summary of each of its rulers. He continues that discussion with a survey of Alexandria's mercantile position and the country's economy without delving into the complexities of the monetization of its economy.¹ M. foregrounds the financial benefits accrued from alleged glass and toreutics industries. He concludes this section by reference to the three major population groups of the city - Greek, Egyptian, and Jewish - before briefly mentioning other groups and slaves. M. then attempts to imply that the diversity of the population he has just passed in review is also made manifest by the international aspects of the pomp² of Ptolemy II, ostensibly because of the parade's display of exotica.

Part IV - Seshat's Disciples - is all about the materiality of papyrus and parchment. M. informs his reader about what some of the scrolls may have contained by introducing his audience to the verses of the Homeric poems and the use of diacritical marks in the Greek language. He then discusses the careers of Callimachus and Eratosthenes. M. devotes Part V to the men of letters, the mathematicians, astronomers, engineers (whom he labels "Mechanics", individuals who are credited with the development of automatons) and physicians. M.'s discussions are often illustrated with drawings intended to aid the reader in understanding the complexities of the scientific principles discussed.

Part VI deals with the reign of Cleopatra VII, the Roman Imperial transformation of the city and its concomitant civil unrest, the transference of the capital of the empire to Constantinople, the rise of Christianity with its schismatic controversies and the destruction of polytheists' monuments, and the Islamic conquest of the country. The question of the fate of the library is the subject of M.'s penultimate

¹ Inter alia, F. Burkhalter, "Change et changeurs en Égypte ptolémaïque aux III^e e II^e s.av.J.-C.", *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique* 138 (2014), 563-582; and Thomas Faucher, Andrew Meadows, Catharine C. Lorber, Institut français d'archéologie orientale du Caire. 2017. *Egyptian Hoards*. Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale.

² For which now see, Maya Miziur-Mozdzioc. 2024. 'Ptolemy's Zoo' Exotic Animals in Third-Century BC Egypt. Leuven: Peeters. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/jj.16459312>.

chapter in which he concludes (spoiler's alert) that its destruction cannot be ascribed to any of the usual suspects. His conclusions in the Epilogue suggest the survival of at least some of the library's holdings.

Overall, there is very little, if any, scholarly engagement with controversy:

I have occasionally, but not always, restricted myself to presenting here only the majority opinion, as detailing opposite views would have taken me even further from the heart of my subject (xvi).

Consequently, M. accepts conclusions reached by all of his sources at face value and uncritically passes them on to his audience as true, thereby reinforcing stereotypes. He also promotes his own francophone academic training and his apparent command of ancient Greek and Latin (xiii-xiv). This prejudice is made manifest in the citations. The bibliography does not foreground the year of publication, now standard academic practice, but instead sequentially numbers the entries, totalling 307. Several observations emerge. The only sources cited are written exclusively in either French or in English. Scholarly contributions in other languages are absent with potentially regrettable consequences. Virtually all of the references published between the years 2015 and 2022, the most recent, deal with literary sources, and in one instance with climate, but do not contain any reference to recent archaeological activity. How is one, therefore, to accept the validity of discussions about such diverse topics dealing with the topography of the city (Pharos and Rhacotis (9-10); the project for the city (16-18); and more significantly about Part III - "Splendor of Alexandria" (73-132) without recourse to more recent studies?³ M. mistakenly states that the famous lighthouse of Alexandria...*was built on the island of Pharos* (89), which completely ignores the underwater archaeological investigations of the site which conclusively demonstrate that the Pharos Lighthouse was erected on a small islet⁴ just to the east of Fort Qait Bey.

M.'s topographical discussions pass over in silence issues of subsidence and the impact of tsunamis on the topography of the city.⁵ Such errors pepper his account. M. uncritically accepts the consanguineous marriage of Arsinoe II as *...a widespread habit among the native Egyptians* (42).⁶ without mentioning the significant role she played in his reign.⁷ Throughout M. embraces the anecdotal and scurrilous. *Ptolemy*

³ Amr Abdo. 2022. *Alexandria Antiqua*. Oxford: Archaeopress. <https://public.ebookcentral.proquest.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=6887037>; Stefan Riedel. 2020. *Die Basileia von Alexandria : Topographisch-Urbanistische Untersuchungen Zum Ptolemäischen Königsviertel*. Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols; and Barbara Tkaczow, Iwona Zych, Polska Akademia Nauk Zakład Archeologii Śródziemnomorskiej. 1993. *The Topography of Ancient Alexandria : An Archaeological Map*. Warszawa: Zakład Archeologii Śródziemnomorskiej, Polskiej Akademii Nauk.

⁴ J.-Y. Empereur and I. Hairy, "Honor Frost and the Pharos: the lighthouse of Alexandria", in Lucy Katherine Blue. 2019. *In the Footsteps of Honor Frost : The Life and Legacy of a Pioneer in Maritime Archaeology*. Leiden: Sidestone Press.

⁵ P. Cimadomo, "21 luglio 365: una crisi globale?", in Paolo Cimadomo, and Dario Nappo, eds. 2022. *A Global Crisis? : The Mediterranean World between the 3rd and the 5th Century CE = Una Crisi Globale? : Il Mondo Mediterraneo Tra III E V Secolo*. Roma: "L'Erma" di Bretschneider. 141-160.

⁶ H. Heinen, "Aspects et problèmes de la monarchie ptolémaïque", *Ktema* 3 (1978), 177-199.

⁷ Gabriella Longega. 1968. *Arsinoe II*. Roma: L'erma di Bretschneider.; to which now add Nasser Bovoletti Ayash, and Alexander Meeus. 2024. *Der Kult von Arsinoe II. Als Teil Der Ptolemäischen Religionspolitik. Formierung, Adressaten Und Seine Anwesenheit in Der Agals, Sowie Betrachtung Dessen Als Vorstufe Des Hellenistischen Isis-Kultes*. Dissertation, Heidelberg: Propylaeum. <https://doi.org/10.11588/propylaeumdok.00006315>.

*Euergetes spent his days indulging in...pleasures...earning him the nickname of Tryphon (the Enjoyer)*⁸ (43). Since M. is dealing with the rise and fall of the library, this might have been an appropriate place for him to have addressed the subject of that Ptolemy's treatment the intellectuals in his court,⁹ which he passes over in silence. He titles Part VI - The Decline of Alexandria - and immediately follows that on the next page with the heading, "Cleopatra", implying her reign was responsible for the fall. But M. is effusive in his praise of the queen calling her...*lucid, resourceful...[the] most outstanding representative* [of her dynasty] and even articulates her success (275-276).

Nevertheless, M. links certain actions of Cleopatra VII to his overriding acceptance of the theory that the Ptolemaic Dynasty embarked on a path of self-destruction beginning with...*the reign of Ptolemy IV* [which] *was especially marked by the decline of royal power...*(47)

He erroneously states *she* [Cleopatra VII] *experienced financially sumptuous periods - even if it meant stripping the Tomb of Alexander, as Ptolemy X had done before her...*(339).¹⁰ In point of fact, the economy of Egypt under Cleopatra VII was so robust that interest rates in Rome after the battle of Actium plummeted to unprecedented depths from an estimated twelve to four percent as a result of the infusion of Egypt's resources into its economy.¹¹

M.'s discussion of the transformation of Alexandria, as a city, and of its society and culture during the Roman Imperial Period is sketchy at best, because its sole focus is on sectarian violence with a very limited scope, when in fact the context of such strife is much more nuanced.¹² M. places the blame for the destruction of the Serapeum in Alexandria squarely on the shoulders of Theophilus (315-317) when *As it now becomes more and more accepted in Late Antique Studies to discard the triumphalist overtones of our Christian sources...in which violence only rarely erupted.*¹³ That temple was not destroyed by a single, violent act because its

⁸J. Tondriau, "La tryphé, philosophe royale ptolémaïque", *Revue des Etudes Anciennes* 50 (1948), 49-54, argues, on the contrary, that the epithet is not linked to his alleged debauchery but is instead cultic, related to the dynasty's association with Dionysos.

⁹S. Wackenier, "Splendeurs et misères des Lagides: le pouvoir personnel au service de la construction de l'État (milieu II^{ème} - début I^{er} s.)", in Gilles Gorre, and Stephanie Wackenier, eds. 2020. *Quand La Fortune Du Royaume ne dépend pas de La Vertu Du Prince : Un Renforcement de La Monarchie Lagide de Ptolémée VI à Ptolémée X (169-88 Av. J.-C.)?* Leuven: Peeters.

<https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=2 662401>, 95-111, who argues that the attacks were not anti-intellectually but politically motivated by targeting partisans of his opponents. His suggestion gains support from C. Thiers, "Fragments de théologies thébaines: la bibliothèque du temple de Tôd", *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale* 104 (2004), 553-572, who suggests that the library at Tod was probably funded by him.

¹⁰E. Van't Dack, "Le retour de Ptolémée IX Soter II en Égypte et la fin du règne de Ptolémée X Alexandre I", in Edmond Van't Dack, Willy Clarysse, Jan Quaegebeur, and Jan Krzysztof Winnicki. 1989. *The Judean-Syrian-Egyptian Conflict of 103-101 B. C. : A Multilingual Dossier Concerning a "War of Sceptres"*. Brussel: Comité klassieke studies Subcomité hellenisme Koninklijke Academie voor wetenschappen letteren en schone kunsten van België, 143.

¹¹C. Pelling, "Anything the truth can do, we can do better: Cleopatra the legend", in Susan Walker, and Peter Higgs, eds. 2001. *Cleopatra of Egypt: From History to Myth*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 197.

¹²*Inter alia*, Thomas J. Kraus, and Daniel Herrmann. 2021. *Alexandria : Hub of the Hellenistic World*. Edited by Benjamin Schliesser, Jan Rügemeier, and Jörg Frey. Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck.

<https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=2 640680>.

¹³J.H.F. Dijkstra, "Religious violence in Late Antique Egypt reconsidered", in Wendy Mayer / Chris L. De

colonnade was still intact during the Arab Period. It was more likely gradually dismantled over time.

M.'s biographical sketch of Hypatia (318-320) perpetuates yet another stereotype reinforced by his concluding observation, *Finally in the 20th century, she [Hypatia] became an icon of feminism and the main character of Agora, a blockbuster film* (320), because that production popularized the pervasive, but inaccurate view that such religious violence was widespread in antiquity.¹⁴

Callimachus once quipped μέγα βιβλίον, μέγα κακόν (*mega biblion, mega kakon*), a big book is not necessarily a good thing. The reader should, therefore, exercise utmost caution before uncritically accepting anything stated in this 444-page volume.

Postscript

It is common practice that publishers provide a complimentary copy of the volume to the reviewer. In this case the publisher, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, provided this reviewer with a web link to Kortext, where the volume just reviewed could be opened as a pdf-file, accessible only with the User ID and Password provided by the publisher. The link had a shelf-life of 30 days, and could neither be downloaded nor saved in any other version. When I attempted to access the pdf-file on day 31, the link was inoperable because the volume had disappeared from all of my cyberspace links.

Robert Steven Bianchi

The Ancient Egyptian Museum Shibuya [Tokyo]

Wet (Eds.), *Reconceiving Religious Conflict. New Views from the Formative Centuries of Christianity*. (Routledge Studies in the Early Christian World.) London, Routledge 2018, 222.

¹⁴Dijkstra (2018), 213.

Susan Redford

The Tomb of Parennefer, Butler of Pharaoh Akhenaten, Theban Tomb 188,

with contribution from Donald B. Redford, Architectural drawings by Keith Meikle, Facsimile wall drawings by Rupert Nesbitt and Tannis Davidson, Photographs by Alexander Nesbitt (University Park, 2022), VII-XVI, 1-183, ISBN 978-1-64602-192-5

The publication to be discussed here presents the rock-cut burial monument of the ancient Egyptian official Parennefer. The tomb is the sole archaeological site in the Theban necropolis, which can be securely dated to the reign of Akhenaten. The book consists of the following parts:

In the introduction general information is given. The tomb of Parennefer (TT 188) was constructed during the reign of Amenhotep IV. (1). The first surveillance of the tomb took place in 1913 by Gardiner and Weigall (1). The final field season ended in 2008 (1). TT 188 served as burial place for several priestly families in the 21st Dynasty (1). From the Third Intermediate Period to Roman times, TT 188 was almost continually used for secondary interments (2).

In chapter 1 the location and description of the tomb are outlined. TT 188 is located on the south wadi site of the Asasif region of the Theban Necropolis (3).

In chapter 2 the architecture is explained. The courtyard of TT 188 has a roughly rectangular shape, measuring 12 meters by 5.2 meters (9). In antiquity the courtyard has been approached on the flat (9). The external face of the monument currently reaches a height of 4 meters (9). The facade exhibits an original design plan and later renovations (9). The tomb chapel is fashioned in the typical T-shape style common throughout the 18th Dynasty (15). The ceiling of the transverse hall was supported by six rectangular pillars flanked by two engaged pilasters in the east and west walls (15). The trapezoidally-shaped transverse hall measures 15 meters by 4.9 meters horizontally, the height averaging 2.8 meters (15). The inner shrine with a statue niche at its far end measures 5.2 meters in height by 2.0 meters in width (18). The original tomb structure was added by several shafts (23-24). The facade of the tomb has suffered some damage since the early days of excavation, e. g. most of the original west reveal and approximately half of the east reveal of the entrance passage being lost (24).

In chapter 3 the decorative program is dealt with. In terms of nature and distribution of thematic decor, the transverse hall compares to some extent with earlier tombs of the 18th Dynasty (29). The thematic content of the tomb's wall scenes bears witness to the quickly changing political reformation under Akhenaten (29). On the exterior wall on the west side of the court the remnants of a royal offering scene are visible (30). The transcription "*nb h^cw*" "lord of diadems" (33) has to be altered in "*nb h^cw*" "lord of crowns". On the right thickness of the hall, the striding life-size figure of the tomb owner and his wife are depicted (39). The translation "when you shine in the horizon" of "*wbn=k m 3h.t*" (42) must be altered in "when you rise in the horizon". The north wall of the transverse hall to the east of the entrance is devoted to scenes from daily life (43). The interpretation of the definite article of *Ra* as one of the

earliest examples of the reduction of aspects of solar power (45) goes definitely too far. The translation “Pile ye up the grain for the Perfect God” of “*w3h=tn it hr ntr nfr*” (51) has to be altered to “Pile ye up the grain before the Perfect God”. The translation “archbishop [of all the god]s of South and North” of “*imi-r hmw-ntr.w n ntrw nbw sm^c mhw*” (56) has to be altered in “overseer of the prophets of all gods of South and North”. “Archbishop” is hardly the right word at best. The scenes on the north wall with Parennefer helping build the *Pr-itn* are the earliest example of a processional involving that complex (71).

In chapter 4 dating and chronology are discussed. TT 188 can be dated by the cartouches in the tomb’s hall and the art style of the decoration to the early years of the reign of Amenhotep IV/Akhenaten (100). In the tomb of Parennefer three stages of decoration can be observed (101-102). The second phase in the decoration is the most important, with the north wall of the broad hall, east and west of the entrance showing Parennefer at work (103). On both sides of the north wall and west side of the south wall an abrupt transition from the decoration in low limestone relief to flat painted murals can be detected (104-105). In a scene on the eastern side of the south wall depicting the rewarding of the tomb owner, the full-blown Amarna style and iconography appears (105). The alleged Asiatic influence on the development of windows in palace architecture (106) remains rather doubtful. The well known “woman at the window”-motif seems ill-suited to explaining royal architecture.

In chapter 5 scene restoration is executed. The restoration of the King’s figure on the south wall, west side indicates a traditional depiction (111).

In chapter 6 a catalogue of wall blocks is prepared. In total, sixty-nine fragmented wall and ceiling blocks originating in the decorated hall were recovered from the shafts and environs of the tomb (121).

In chapter 7 the tomb owner is portrayed. Parennefer credits the king with his promotion to high rank, rather than family connections or independent accomplishments (139). The career of Parennefer in the early years of Akhenaten can be separated in the spheres of food supply, endowments, and engineering (139).

In chapter 8 a conclusion is drawn. The personal name “Parennefer” points at a Theban origin (144).

The book is rounded off by the plates (1-25), bibliography (169-179), and index I (181-183).

The overall impression of the book is good. The tomb is sufficiently illuminated from all sides. The details are communicated to the reader in a clear and understandable way. The text is written fluently. The translations would have benefited from a little more care.

Stefan Bojowald

Bonn

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- Please submit article manuscripts in English, French, or German, to journalofthessea@gmail.com.
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Normal deadline for the submission of manuscripts is January 31st of each year. All submissions will be peer-reviewed. Authors may make changes after the peer-review process is complete. Once proofs are sent out, only minor corrections will be accepted.

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About The SSEA/SÉÉA

The Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities was founded in Toronto in 1969 and duly incorporated in August of 1970. It was registered as a charitable organization under the laws of Canada in a year later. In 1984, the Calgary Chapter of the SSEA was formed and in 1999, a chapter was opened in Montreal under the name “La Société pour l’Étude de l’Égypte Ancienne” (SÉÉA). In 2007, the Toronto Chapter was established as an entity distinct from the Head office of the Society (The head office or parent organization is now known as The Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities / Société pour l’Étude de l’Égypte Ancienne). A Chapter in Vancouver, operational since the summer of 2010, is currently in abeyance. Each Chapter organizes local events for its members and is maintained by an elected Chapter Executive, under the authority of the Bylaws of the Society.

The Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities / Société pour l’Étude de l’Égypte Ancienne is governed by a Board of Trustees elected annually. It organizes the Annual General Meeting, Symposium, Scholars’ Colloquium and Poster Session, the annual Sally L.D. Katary Travel Scholarship Fund lecture, maintains the membership database and sundry websites, and publishes both the Journal of the SSEA and the Newsletter, in addition to other occasional publications.

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