

UNIVERSIDADE DE LISBOA  
FACULDADE DE LETRAS



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André de Campos Silva

Orientadores: Professor Doutor José Augusto Martins Ramos  
Doctor Rune Nyord

Tese especialmente elaborada para obtenção do grau de Doutor no ramo de História, na  
especialidade de História e Cultura das Religiões

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To Harold M. Hays, *in memoriam*

To Laurentina Bernardo, *in memoriam*



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## Resumos

As instruções sapienciais do Egito antigo muitas vezes apresentam-se como textos didáticos redigidos por um pai para o seu filho de modo a ensinar-lhe a conduta e o comportamento éticos adequados na sua vida profissional e noutras situações sociais, tais como interações com amigos ou pessoas menos favorecidas. Assim, estes textos são obras pragmáticas preocupadas com a ação individual na sociedade. Embora não sejam tratados de especulação teológica, deus (*ntr*) é uma figura central neles. O objetivo deste estudo é explorar os dois principais papéis de deus nestes textos: o de agente com a função de retribuir as transgressões, e com a função de protetor.

Este trabalho centra-se na mobilização de deus (*ntr*) nas instruções sapienciais dos Impérios Médio e Novo. Através de uma análise discursiva baseada na metodologia de Michel Foucault, explorou-se alguns dos papéis desempenhados por deus nestes textos.

Antes, porém, e porque este estudo se enquadra na história das religiões, foi feita uma introdução ao estudo histórico e sociológico da religião, abordando a história da disciplina, e algumas das polémicas que a têm acompanhado. Foi decidido não definir religião, considerando-se esta como mais um aspeto de uma cultura.

De seguida explorou-se o contexto social das instruções. Ao contrário do que se poderia pensar, sobretudo porque as instruções se apresentam como textos didáticos e aptas para a formação de novas gerações, não é de todo claro que tenham sido usadas num contexto de ensino, formal ou informal. Também não é garantido que tenham sido escritas com o objetivo de servirem de manuais de aprendizagem de boas maneiras, uma vez que, à semelhança de outros textos literários, podem ter sido usadas num contexto essencialmente de entretenimento. No caso das instruções do Império Novo há mais indícios de que tenham sido compostas para um propósito didático.

Ainda assim, as instruções são textos pragmáticos centrados neste mundo e que estão construídos como textos que pretendem moldar a conduta ensinando ao pupilo o que precisa de saber para ser bem-sucedido socialmente e evitar a retribuição divina. Por conseguinte, é lícito que o discurso das instruções se preste a um estudo histórico e

sociológico no sentido de se conhecer melhor a sociedade do tempo em que foram redigidos.

No capítulo terceiro abordou-se um dos principais papéis de deus: o papel de agente que castiga e retribui certas transgressões. É relevante salientar que nem todas as transgressões estão representadas em todas as instruções, nem todas têm o mesmo castigo. Algumas são específicos a um período temporal, e outras são específicas a certas instruções.

Identificaram-se as seguintes transgressões: contra indivíduos e contra o estado: maus-tratos a outros, fraudulência e aquisição ilícita de bens, discurso falso e/ou inflamatório, profanação de túmulos, execução de cortesãos; contra deus: detestação (*bw.t*) de deus, e transgressões e falhas rituais.

Os maus-tratos estão atestados nas instruções do Império Novo. Embora conte com duas atestações em instruções do Império Médio, a fraudulência e a aquisição ilícita de bens está sobretudo atestada na *Instrução de Amenemope*. É possível que o volume de atestações neste texto seja um reflexo dos tempos conturbados do final do Período Raméssida. *Amenemope* expressa preocupação com o roubo do estado, mas também com a exploração dos mais vulneráveis da sociedade. Na categoria de discurso falso e inflamado, também é em *Amenemope* que se concentram as atestações. Antes de estas serem discutidas foi feita uma discussão acerca do homem de temperamento quente (*šmm*), personagem importante não só em *Amenemope* como noutros textos do Período Raméssida. Interessantemente, ao contrário desses textos, *Amenemope* parece ser leniente com o homem de temperamento quente, chegando a sugerir que se lhe deve prestar auxílio se ele se encontrar numa situação difícil. De contrário, raramente é leniente com o pupilo a quem a instrução é endereçada, como se a sua preocupação fosse o comportamento do seu aluno e não propriamente a conduta daqueles com quem ele se cruza.

O tópico da profanação de sepulturas apenas é abordado na *Instrução para o Rei Merikaré*, uma das duas instruções reais que chegaram até nós. Enquanto instrução endereçada ao rei, mesmo que na prática também estivesse acessível aos funcionários, trata de tópicos que lhe são únicos. Em particular a guerra civil do Primeiro Período Intermediário, da qual o(s) autor(es) parece(m) conhecer bem. O rei a quem a autoria do texto é atribuída admite que, sem o seu conhecimento e a sua autorização, os seus soldados

dessacralizaram uma necrópole. Cabendo-lhe a responsabilidade por ser o chefe do exército é a ele que deus castiga, seguindo o princípio taliônico de responder com o mesmo. Este passo esboça uma verdadeira teoria do nexo de causa-consequência (*Tun-Ergehen-Zusammenhang*). É também apenas na mesma instrução que está atestada a proibição de executar alguém próximo na corte. Curiosamente, a interdição contra o homicídio, prática que é negada no famoso capítulo 125 do *Livro dos Mortos*, não está atestada nas instruções que chegaram até nós.

As atestações da detestação (*bw.t*) de deus são de um grande interesse, porquanto a associação da detestação com um deus limita a subjetividade do analista ao selecionar este ou aquele passo como pertencendo a uma dada transgressão. Interessantemente, a detestação de deus só está atestada numa instrução do Império Médio, e numa cópia do Império Novo. De resto, está apenas presente em instruções do Império Novo. Enquanto na *Instrução de Ani* está sobretudo ligada a transgressões rituais, na *Instrução de Amenemope* e na *Instrução do Papiro Chester Beatty IV* está sobretudo associada à fraudulência e ao roubo de material do templo. Surge na *Instrução de Amenemope* um passo interessante em que, numa situação de emergência, o escriba que tem o dever de inspecionar um barco de transporte não deve recusar a ajudar que lhe for pedida por medo de o ato de executar trabalhos que não sejam condignos à posição social que se ocupa poder ser considerado uma detestação de deus. À semelhança de outras culturas onde os interditos religiosos são levantados em situações de emergência, *Amenemope* assegura o escriba de que pode ajudar sem se preocupar. Podemos perguntar, no entanto, se havia opiniões divergentes na sociedade egípcia.

O tema das transgressões e falhas rituais, que tem vindo recentemente a ser cada vez mais trabalho no âmbito do estudo histórico e sociológico das religiões, está também presente nas instruções, quer do Império Médio quer do Novo. Nas instruções do Império Novo, as transgressões prendem-se, sobretudo com o comportamento a adotar nas consultas oraculares dispensadas pela estátua do deus durante as procissões. Na *Instrução de Hordjedef* é possível que uma falhar ritual seja aproveitada por um rival, algo que está atestado noutras sociedades.

O outro grande papel de deus é o de protetor. Três categorias de proteção foram identificadas: proteção de conflitos com outros que possam prejudicar seriamente o pupilo,



proteção em relação à incerteza quando ao futuro, e proteção da necessidade, sobretudo através da providência divina.

Tanto a proteção dos conflitos como a proteção em relação ao futuro estão atestadas apenas em instruções do Império Novo, algo que se pode dever ao contributo da piedade pessoal que está manifesta em todas as instruções daquele período. É muito no âmbito da proteção dos conflitos que surge a recomendação para uma atitude quietista, em que o pupilo se desliga da situação conflituosa para deixar que seja o deus a tratar do assunto.

Na proteção em relação ao futuro, salienta-se a vulnerabilidade humana e a segurança que dá a imputação do desconhecido a deus, que é discursivamente construído como uma entidade capaz de procurar garantir o melhor para o pupilo.

A providência divina está amplamente atestada na *Instrução de Ptahhotep*, onde parece ser mais ou menos automática, ao passo que na *Instrução de Amenemope* e na *Instrução do Papiro Chester Beatty IV* parece estar dependente do cultivo da relação com o deus pessoal.

No âmbito da piedade pessoal, *Amenemope* tem ainda a particularidade de mostrar o outro lado: se nos textos relativos à piedade pessoal o suplicante é perdoado, em *Amenemope* sucede o contrário.

**Palavras-chave:** Deus; literatura sapiencial egípcia; discurso; piedade pessoal; religião.

## **Abstract**

The ancient Egyptian wisdom instructions often present themselves as didactic texts composed by a father to his son in order to teach him the adequate conduct and ethics to adopt in his professional life and in other social situations, such as interactions with friends or less favoured people. These texts are thus pragmatic works concerned with individual action within society. Although they are not speculative theological treatises either, god (*ntr*) is nonetheless an important figure in them. The aim of this study is to explore the two main roles of god in these texts: as an agent in charge of retributions for transgressions, and as protector.

**Keywords:** God; Egyptian wisdom literature; discourse; personal piety; religion.

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Responsibility for mistakes and shortcomings lies with the author alone.

## Notes

Note on style: the sixteenth edition of *The Chicago Manual of Style* (2010) was followed in the writing of this thesis. Any mistake is the responsibility of the author.

Note on references to the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae*: Because links to the specific pages of translations and comments in the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae* would take up too much space and be cumbersome for the reader to type in the web browser from a printed version, only the name of the translator and of the project under which the translation was done are given.

Note on the appendix: The translations in the appendix are numbered, and the reader will be referred to them in the main text with the indication ‘see no. ###’.

## List of symbols and abbreviations

### Symbols:

**Bold** = Words or sentences rubricised

\* = Verse point

\*\* = Indicates a slight break in the text.

{ } = Words or signs mistakenly written

<> = Words or signs that are added to correct the text

() = In the transliterations: words or signs that were not spelled out. In the translations: additions to clarify the text.

(?) = Uncertain reading.

[] = Words or signs which were destroyed but that are either barely visible or present in other copies with the same passage

[...] = Lost parts of the text

... = Ellipsis used to shorten the citation

§ = Section

§§ = Sections

### Abbreviations:

BCE = Before the Common Era

bk. = book

cf. = (Confer, compare, see by way of comparison)

CE = Common Era

DeM (following O., P., etc.) = Deir el-Medina

e.g. = Exempli gratia

l. = Line

ll. = Lines

lit. = Literally

n. = Note

nn. = Notes

no. = Number

nos. = Numbers

O. = Ostrakon

P. = Papyrus

pl. = Plate

pls. = Plates

S. = Stela

T. = Tablet/writing-board

TT = Theban tomb

v. = Verse

vv. = Verses

# Introduction

## Object of study

The ancient Egyptian wisdom instructions (*sb3.yt*) are framed as didactic texts addressed by a father to his son or by a retiring officer to his successor<sup>1</sup>. They are pragmatic texts whose declared aim is to shape the conduct of future officials. Although these texts are ‘generally anthropocentric’ (Adams 2008, 16) and mostly focused on the world of the living<sup>2</sup>, they have the particularity of mobilising a divine agent, often referred to as *ntr*, ‘god’, but at times also named (e.g., Sekhmet<sup>3</sup> or Thoth<sup>4</sup>).

As will be discussed in chapter 2, it is not known for all periods of Egyptian history what primarily motivated the composition of the instructions, nor how they were used by their audiences. But it is clear that these texts are not ‘systematic theological treatises’ (Adams 2008, 21)<sup>5</sup>, nor are they to be used in a cultic context in the same way that hymns, for instance, would be used<sup>6</sup>, even if several copies were found in religious settings, namely among the burial equipment in tombs<sup>7</sup>, and even if New Kingdom instructions do advise on the conduct to observe during a ritualised contact with a deity<sup>8</sup>.

In a brief overview of wisdom literature from the Middle Kingdom, James Allen (2010b, 263) considers this type of texts to be part of the ‘ancient Egyptian secular literature<sup>9</sup>’, and conjectures that the mobilisation of ‘god’ in these texts ‘simply reflects the secular origin of wisdom literature, composed by officials and learned men who meant their compositions for a wide audience and who had themselves a broader or more general view of the divine than that of any one theological system.’ In turn, Nili Shupak (1993, 366n55) argues that the wisdom literature of the ancient Near East was not ‘secular’, but, instead,

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<sup>1</sup> The instructions’ genre and social location will be discussed further below in chapter 2.

<sup>2</sup> See Siegfried Morenz (1968, 416) and Erik Hornung (1979, 218). See also Adams (2008, 50).

<sup>3</sup> *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu*, S. Cairo CG 20538, section 5 (short version), v. 5.13 (see no. 18).

<sup>4</sup> *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 16, v. 18.2 (see no. 47).

<sup>5</sup> See also Miosi (1982, 84).

<sup>6</sup> On the function and use of hymns in ancient Egypt see, for instance, Salis (2007, 8-14) and Quirke (2004, 24).

<sup>7</sup> See, for instance, Quirke (1996, 390-91).

<sup>8</sup> See examples in chapter 3, subsection 3.2.2.3.4.

<sup>9</sup> Aisha El Ghazzawy (2016, 1) designates the instructions as ‘profane literature’, an expression that avoids some of the contemporary baggage of the term ‘secular’ (but see Hulsether 2004, 355).



‘has always been founded on religion’. The religious dimension would not have pervaded the Egyptian wisdom literature homogeneously, however: instead, Shupak (1993, 42, 270-72, 347 with n. 29), following Assmann (1979, 12-15), argues for a gradual development from a focus on natural wisdom to a focus on faith and personal piety.

John Baines (1991, 160) postulates that, because instructions and other literary texts ‘are works of art with a rich metaphorical formulation, they do not report directly to beliefs, focusing rather on their own chief didactic concerns’<sup>10</sup>. Without bringing into the equation the problematic category of ‘belief’<sup>11</sup>, Samuel Adams similarly argues that the Egyptian instructions are primarily centred on human affairs and that ‘we generally see language about the deity in Egyptian instructions when an author wishes to comment on how “the god” shapes earthly events, especially the consequence of human actions’ (2008, 18n11).

The perspective that the Egyptian instructions are not ‘religious texts’ per se, but draw, perhaps strategically, from a broader theological discourse, as it were, seems accurate and useful as a premise for the present study. The question remains to what extent the mobilisation of god in the instructions conforms with or deviates from the dominant ideas about how and why a deity could become involved with human affairs. In fact, because the primary purpose and use of the instructions is not well known for all periods, which begs the question as to how much mainstream or marginal these texts may have been, any sociological study of these texts is somewhat tentative in what concerns what we may learn from them about the society that produced, reproduced and consumed them. But it is nonetheless relevant that the instructions are presented as authoritative, and, consequently, as being knowledgeable about god. Even if god is mobilised in creative and uncommon ways, that creativity would certainly not go against what would be perceived as realistic, and, because of the texts’ authoritativeness, new ways of conceptualising a god could be accepted by audiences as valid.

The wisdom instructions are not alone in the mobilisation of divine agents, and several literary texts without a declared didactic purpose also mobilise named deities and the anonymous *ntr*<sup>12</sup>. Although these texts also raise the question – perhaps more intensely

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<sup>10</sup> The aesthetic and didactic elements of the instructions will be considered in chapter 2, section 2.3.

<sup>11</sup> On which see, *inter alia*, Nye (2008, 105-27 with references).

<sup>12</sup> See, for instance, the *Eloquent Peasant*, P. Berlin P 3025 + P. Amherst II (= B2), v. 115, and *Sinuhe*, P. Berlin P 3022 + Amherst m-q (= B), v. 43.

because they are not formally marked as didactic texts – as to whether their mobilisation of divine agents conformed or not with dominant ideas, they are equally useful to study the range of possible conceptualisations of the divine<sup>13</sup>. Other literary texts that also mobilise divine agents and, like the instructions, either implicitly or explicitly associate themselves with a didactic context are the Late-Egyptian Miscellanies<sup>14</sup>. Even though other texts may also be eligible for this kind of research, the wisdom instructions seem to offer a particularly interesting set of data for several reasons: they are marked as didactic texts by the specific heading *sb3.yt*, ‘instruction’, and by the structure of the texts themselves, most of the surviving instructions are attributed to an author, fictional or historical, and, unlike the extant Late-Egyptian Miscellanies which are attested only for the Ramesside Period (between the Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasties), the attestations of the extant instructions span a time period between the Middle Kingdom and the Ptolemaic Period.

As the instructions claim to impart important knowledge and, particularly in the Middle Kingdom, are ascribed to the authorship of distinguished persons, they place themselves in the position of both reflecting social values and shaping social conduct. This claimed position, which does not necessarily reflect their precise social location<sup>15</sup>, presents an interesting opportunity to study what is taught from a pedagogical and authoritative point of view about how and in what circumstances a god can and will intervene in daily life, and about how human agents can and/or should relate towards divine agents.

As it has been widely noticed<sup>16</sup>, it is a feature of the Egyptian instructions to refer to divine agents mostly in the singular and using the generic and anonymous term (*p3*) *ntr*, ‘(the) god’<sup>17</sup>. In fact, several authors have engaged with the question of the identity of the divine agent(s) behind this generic term. References to named deities are also attested, as mentioned above, and it is possible that the plural ‘gods’ may be subsumed under the third-person plural suffix pronoun (= *sn*) in several passages<sup>18</sup>.

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<sup>13</sup> A case in point might be *Sinuhe*; see, for instance, Sousa (2006, 127-28) and Baines (1987, 90).

<sup>14</sup> On the Late-Egyptian Miscellanies and on the differences between this collection of texts and the instructions see the beginning of section 2.2 in chapter 2.

<sup>15</sup> On this issue see, for instance, Rüpke (2011, 288-90) and Phillips and Hardy (2002, 72).

<sup>16</sup> See, for instance, Fox (1980, 123-24 with references).

<sup>17</sup> As it will be discussed below, the singular (*p3*) *ntr* does not exclude the idea of a plurality of gods (see also Barta 1976, 87).

<sup>18</sup> These are open to interpretation and are consequently more difficult to pin down (see further the first note to v. D118 of the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* in the appendix (see no. 4)). Cases in point might be, however, the

The term *ntr*<sup>19</sup> is attested<sup>20</sup> three times in the fragmentary *Instruction of Hordjedef*, once in the also fragmentary *Instruction for Kagemni*, twenty-one times in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, four times in the *Instruction of Khety*, nine times in the *Instruction of a Man for His Son*, thirteen times in the *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu*, four times in the fragmentary *Oxford Wisdom Text*, also four times in the equally fragmentary *Instruction of Papyrus Ramesseum II*, twenty-two times in the *Instruction for the King Merikare*, twice in the *Instruction of Amenemhat I*, once in the *Instruction of Amennakht*, nineteen times in the *Instruction of Ani*, eleven times in the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*, once in *The Prohibitions*, thirty-two times in the *Instruction of Amenemope*, twelve times in the *Instruction of Papyrus Brooklyn*, twenty-eight times in the *Instruction of Ankhsheshonqi*, and 104 times in the *Instruction of Papyrus Insinger*.

The term *ntr* is, thus, attested 83 times in the instructions of the Middle Kingdom, 64 times in the instructions of the New Kingdom, and 116 times in the Demotic instructions. In total, there are 263 attestations of (*p3*) *ntr* alone in the extant Egyptian instructions.

As mentioned above, the claimed position of the instructions as authoritative didactic texts which intend to shape conduct suggests not only that the texts have privileged knowledge about how and why a divine agent may act towards human agents and about how human agents can and cannot relate to divine agents, but also that divine agents are mobilised as part of the texts' strategy to shape conduct. In this sense, it is arguable that god plays certain roles in the instructions.

This study will centre on the passages mobilising *ntr*, and in a few occasions also named gods, that are considered sufficiently illustrative of the roles attributed to god by the texts. In order to keep this study manageable, the analysis will focus on the instructions of the Middle and New Kingdoms. Although there are substantial differences between the

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*Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, maxim 6, v. D118 (see no. 4), maxim 10, v. D182 (see no. 5), maxim 12, vv. D216 and D218-D219 (see no. 6), maxim 10, v. D182 (see no. 5), the *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu*, O. Ashmolean 1938.912, 'long version', v. 5.5, the *Instruction for the King Merikare*, P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, v. 53, and the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 6, v. 8.16 (see no. 41).

<sup>19</sup> Lemma no. 90260 in the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae*.

<sup>20</sup> Numbers are derived mainly from the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae* and report to the copies most readily accessible. Other copies, of which the present author is not aware of or that remain as yet unpublished, may contain new attestations. A list of attestations of divine agents in several instructions from the Middle Kingdom to the Ptolemaic Period is conveniently provided in Vergote (1963, 170-86), and in Miosi (1982, 102-106).

Middle Kingdom and the New Kingdom, there are arguably even more differences between these two periods and the Late and Ptolemaic periods; in the latter period the differences are not only cultural, but linguistic as well. These differences may then be taken as “natural” limits’ (Phillips and Hardy 2002, 74) in the selection of the primary sources, which is a necessity in any study (S. Taylor, 2013, 60, 84; Lewis 1994, 574; Shanks 2008, 137).

The main passages used in this study, even if not discussed in detail, are listed and translated with comments in the appendix. Where considered useful, passages not included in the selected corpus, are also brought into the discussion. An overview of the corpus will now be provided.

## Corpus

From the Middle Kingdom<sup>21</sup>:

1. *Instruction of Hordjedef*: probably composed in the Middle Kingdom, but known only from New Kingdom sources (Parkinson 2002, 313-14; Hagen 2012, 41n11). Only the beginning is preserved.

2. *Instruction for Kagemni*: of Middle Kingdom date, only its end is preserved on P. Prisse (Parkinson 2002, 313).

3. *Instruction of Ptahhotep*: of Middle Kingdom date<sup>22</sup> and completely preserved on P. Prisse (Vernus 2010a, 106-107). It is addressed to officials (Hagen 2012, 57-59; Vernus 2010a, 107-108; Adams 2008, 35).

4. *Instruction of Khety*: probably of Middle Kingdom date (Vernus 2010a, 240), is only attested in New Kingdom copies (Hagen 2012, 41n11).

5. *Instruction of a Man for His Son*: possibly composed in the Middle Kingdom but preserved only in New Kingdom copies (Parkinson 2002, 119).

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<sup>21</sup> The *Oxford Wisdom Text*, the *Instruction of Papyrus Ramesseum II*, and the *Instruction of Amenemhat I* are not included in the corpus because the attestations of *ntr* in those texts were either not considered relevant for this study or take place in fragmentary passages. The extremely fragmentary P. UCL 32106C recto, P. UCL 32107E+H, and P. UCL 32117C+G, which may have contained an instruction (*The El-Lahun Wisdom Text*), although that is not certain (Parkinson 2002, 311), have no attestation of divine agents.

<sup>22</sup> Not all authors accept this date for this and the two previous instructions and postulate an earlier date of composition (see e.g., Lichtheim 1973, 6, 58; Williams 1981, 9 with references).

6. *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu*: preserved in a Middle Kingdom stela and in copies from the New Kingdom<sup>23</sup> (Vernus 2010a, 265; Allen 2015, 155). This and the two previous instructions may form a triptych that covers an official's education from his early years into the later stages in scribal instruction<sup>24</sup>.

7. *Instruction for the King Merikare*: unlike the other instructions in this corpus, this is a royal instruction, addressed to a king and not to officials. Probably from Middle Kingdom date, but only attested in New Kingdom copies (Parkinson 2002, 315-316).

From the New Kingdom<sup>25</sup>:

8. *Instruction of Ani*: probably from the Nineteenth Dynasty<sup>26</sup>, this instruction addresses the middle-ranked elite (Quack 1994, 80).

9. *Instruction from the Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*: preserved only in this papyrus, it is part of a Late-Egyptian Miscellany, although it is distinctly an instruction (Gardiner 1935, 37; Vernus 2010a, 345, 347). Appears to have been written between the late Nineteenth Dynasty and the Twentieth Dynasty (Gardiner 1935, 28).

10. *The Prohibitions*: a collection of groups of aphorisms preserved across several ostraca from Deir el-Medina and probably composed in the Nineteenth Dynasty (Hagen 2005, 150, 153-55).

11. *Instruction of Amenemope*: composed between the end of the New Kingdom (Twentieth Dynasty) and the beginning of the Third Intermediate Period (Twenty-first Dynasty) (Laisney 2007, 7). Even if this instruction which addresses the intermediate elite<sup>27</sup> was composed in the early Twenty-first Dynasty, it still reflects the ambience of the late New Kingdom.

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<sup>23</sup> Recently it has been established that this text, traditionally known as *Loyalist Instruction*, was authored by Kairsu and, accordingly, some authors began to use the title *Instruction of Kairsu* (e.g., Hagen 2012, ix). That practice is adopted here.

<sup>24</sup> See Fischer-Elfert (2001a, 441).

<sup>25</sup> The *Instruction of Hori*, the *Letter of Menna*, and the *Instruction of Amennakht* are not included in the corpus because they do not mobilise any divine agent.

<sup>26</sup> See Quack (1994, 62).

<sup>27</sup> See Laisney (2007, 234).

## Previous approaches and methodology

Several studies have dealt, more or less centrally, with the mobilisation of divine agents in the Egyptian wisdom instructions. In particular, the anonymity of the term (*p3*) *ntr*, ‘(the) god’, attracted scholarly attention. Vergote (1963, 159-66 with references) reviews the discussion on whether the anonymity of god in the instructions referred to a monotheism of the sages or to monotheistic tendencies in the Egyptian religion. He considers that (*p3*) *ntr* designates the ‘unique God’ of whom the cult gods are hypostases (167). From a corpus of instructions<sup>28</sup>, he characterises the ‘Dieu unique’ of the instructions as having the following six properties: ‘Le Dieu unique’, ‘le dieu tout-puissant’, ‘le maître des événements’, ‘providence des hommes’, ‘juge et rétributeur des bonnes et mauvaises actions’, and ‘l’omniscience de Dieu’ (167-70).

From a more expanded corpus of instructions<sup>29</sup>, Winfried Barta (1976) also engages with the issue of the anonymity of god. The author sets out to contribute to the clarification of the debate between the conjecture that the god of the instructions is a monotheistic or supreme deity and the conjecture that this god refers either to an abstract and general notion of divinity or to specific gods, such as the sun god or the local god, depending on the situation (1976, 79). The author (86-88) concludes that the identity of the god attested in the instructions is difficult to pin down, but, when *ntr* refers to the local god, the term involves the abstract unity behind all local gods. Thus, instead of monotheism, one may speak of henotheism in the instructions (88).

In his study of the conceptions of god in Ancient Egypt, Erik Hornung (1982, 49-60) also addressed the topic of god in the instructions in the context of challenging the notion of there ever having been monotheism in ancient Egypt. Bearing in mind that the instructions were addressed to future officials who could be sent to different parts of the country and who could even witness a change in the deity favoured by the crown, Hornung

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<sup>28</sup> Instructions for Kagemni, of Ptahhotep, for the King Merikare, of Amenemhat I, of Khety, of Ani, of Amenemope, and of Papyrus Insinger (Vergote 1963, 170-86).

<sup>29</sup> Instructions of Ptahhotep, for Kagemni, for the King Merikare, of Amenemhat I, of Khety, Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu, instructions of a Man for His Son, of Papyrus Ramesseum II, of Ani, of Amennakht, of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV, of Amenemope, The Prohibitions, instructions of Ankhesheshonqi, on P. Louvre 2414, and of Papyrus Insinger (Barta 1976, 80n10).

(1982, 57-59), like Hermann Kees (1956, 273), suggests that the generic term *ntr* allows for any god that is relevant at the time, situation, or place to be referred to<sup>30</sup>.

A state of the art on these debates was given in Fox (1980, 123-26 with references) and in Williams (1981, 11-13 with references). Fox (1980, 124-25) rejects the idea of a generalised henotheism in the instructions, and instead argues that ‘the religion of wisdom literature is best designated as polytheism with a monistic perspective’ (125). While Williams (1981, 11) also mentions this topic, he expands his overview into other topics like divine determinism (12), the relation between the instructions and biographies (12), and the relation between aspects of the concept of silence in the Egyptian wisdom literature and early Coptic hermitism (13).

Nili Shupak (1993) developed an important study on several topics and concepts of the Egyptian and biblical wisdom literatures, establishing comparisons between the two. While not focusing specifically on the mobilisation of god in the two wisdom literatures, the author also takes it into account (e.g., 1993, 63, 162).

In a significant contribution to an edited book entirely dedicated to the Egyptian instructions, Jan Assmann (1979) argued for a connection between the Middle Kingdom loyalism, of which the instructions centred on loyalty to the king are important manifestations, and the Ramesside personal piety. This argument was picked up by the author in a later article about conversion in the context of personal piety (1999b).

Antonio Loprieno (1996b, 406-10; 1996d, 541-47) also argued for a connection between the mobilisation of *ntr* in the instructions centred on loyalty to the king and the proximity to one’s personal god which characterised personal piety.

Michela Luiselli (2007a) analysed the function of personal piety in the instructions and in the ‘fictional’ texts of the Middle and New Kingdoms. The author engaged with passages mobilising god from the two groups of texts from each period, and concluded that, in their function of integrating the individual in the kingly and divinely ruled cosmos, the two sets of texts complemented each other (2007a, 179-80), but, whereas the New Kingdom instructions gave continuity to the instructions from the Middle Kingdom, the

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<sup>30</sup> It was also suggested in Silva (2010, 61) that, accepting that the instructions were intended to be used as school texts, the anonymity of god makes them more ‘accessible to students coming from different places of Egypt.’

fictional texts from the New Kingdom no longer had the didactic purpose of their Middle Kingdom counterparts (181-82).

In an influential paper, Hellmut Brunner (1963) argued that instructions prior to the New Kingdom shared of an impersonal act-consequence nexus based on the principle of Ma'at (108), but that, due to the influence of personal piety, from the New Kingdom instructions onwards god increasingly acquired more autonomy to the point that 'das Maatdenken der älteren Weisheit is aufgehoben' (109) and that retribution is no longer according to one's actions but to divine will (109-112). Drawing from New Kingdom sources, among which the *Instruction of Amenemope*<sup>31</sup>, Jan Assmann (2003, 143; 2006a, 259-60) took this idea even further and concluded that Ma'at was replaced by divine will: 'In der Theologie des Willens hat sie keinen Platz mehr' (2006a, 260). In a study on the transition from an earthly act-consequence nexus to an eschatologised retribution framework in the Israelite wisdom literature of the late Second Temple period, Samuel Adams (2008) engaged with these arguments, because the Egyptian instructions are part of 'the tradition that influenced these Israelite sages' (9). Adams put Brunner's and Assmann's conclusions into perspective and concluded that there is a rather coherent retribution framework across the instructions of the Middle and New Kingdoms, and that, instead of favouring one to the exclusion of the other, the texts either privilege Ma'at or the divine agency depending on the particular point they are trying to make in particular passage (9, 50-51).

Frank Miosi (1982) problematised the mobilisation of divine agents in the most representative instructions from the point of view of 'fate' and 'free will', concluding that fate concerned primarily the determination of one's lifetime and that, as a rule, free will was not curbed in the sense that 'the individual is never described as being arbitrarily fated to mechanically perform any action' (101-102).

The present author also discussed the topics of free will and divine intervention in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* using an approach based on philology and on philosophy (Silva 2010).

More recently, Aisha El Ghazzawy (2016) studied the expression of the 'will of god' and its intervention in human affairs in the 'profane literature' ranging from the Old to

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<sup>31</sup> In particular chapter 20, vv. 21.5-21.6, of P. BM EA 10474 recto (see no. 50).



the New Kingdoms, including wisdom instructions. The author undertook a lexicographical study of several terms relating to divine action, and of elements that could change god's will. The author also compared passages from the Egyptian texts with passages from the Bible and from the Quran. Of great interest is the author's argument for continuities of ancient practices in modern Egypt (e.g., 2016, 70-71).

The present study will engage with the selected corpus from a historical and sociological approach in order to explore some of the most significant roles played by god. Besides the sociological outlook, this study is informed by discourse analysis as it is understood in the social sciences, and by philology.

As pointed out by Engler (2006a, 516), in many works using the term, a definition of 'discourse' and a clarification of its theoretical filiations are seldom provided. Such clarifications are important, inasmuch as the term is mainly used in two fields of research – namely, social sciences and linguistics (2006a, 516-17). In differentiating the two senses in which discourse may be used, Murphy (2000, 397-98) states that: 'On the one hand, discourse may simply refer to language ("discourse" in the more common sense of the term); on the other hand, the meaning of the term may be extended to designate not just language systems but any unified, coded or systematic practice of signification.'

A useful definition of discourse, in the sense that this term is used in the social sciences, is given by Titus Hjelm (2011, 135): 'discourse is a way of speaking that does not simply reflect or represent things "out there", but "constructs" or "constitutes" them'. Discourse, then, constructs social reality and does things. An example is provided by Talal Asad in a discussion on the debate about the acceptability of the use of torture in modern societies under certain circumstances: 'the implications of public debate on torture are not merely a sign of freedom. Open dispute over what constitutes torture (physical or psychological distress *beyond* certain limits) legitimizes the idea that suffering may be inflicted *within* limits. And it thus opens the way to arguments, especially among liberals, in favour of shifting the limit in exceptional circumstances' (2010, 7, italics in the original).

A number of factors led to this sociological perception of discourse<sup>32</sup>, and an influential theoretician was Michel Foucault (Phillips and Hardy 2002, 21; Hjelm 2011, 136; Fairclough 1992, 37). Two of the main strands of discourse analysis used by social

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<sup>32</sup> See Guilhaumou (2010, 720-23), Murphy (2000, 396-97), and Hjelm (2011, 136).

scientists are social constructivism<sup>33</sup> and critical discourse analysis<sup>34</sup>. Foucault's work was particularly influential to the latter (Phillips and Hardy 2002, 21).

It was in *L'archéologie du savoir* (Foucault 1969) that the notion of discourse became central in Foucault's work. The purpose of that book was to investigate the conditions for the formation and existence of knowledge. Central to Foucault's epistemology is the notion that there is no subject, particularly an author, who is autonomous and independent from social constraints. Instead, for Foucault, any individual is unconsciously moved and constrained by rules of which he is unaware. Foucault's archaeological methodology has to do with uncovering these sets of rules and the subject positions that persons who meet the necessary requirements are able and allowed to occupy (1969, 172-73).

Besides discourse, crucial terms in Foucault's archaeological method are 'statement' (*énoncé*), 'discursive formation', 'discursive' and 'non-discursive practices', and 'archive'. The statement is 'l'unité élémentaire du discours' (Foucault 1969, 107). Discursive formations are, 'au sens strict, des groupes d'énoncés' (151). They concern the rules as to how subjects, objects, concepts, and strategies emerge discursively<sup>35</sup> (1969, 60, 89, 91, 141, 151-52):

Ce qui a été défini comme 'formation discursive' scande le plan général des choses dit au niveau spécifique des énoncés. Les quatre directions dans lesquels on l'analyse (formation des objets, formation des positions subjectives, formation des concepts, formation des choix stratégiques) correspondent aux quatre domaines où s'exerce la fonction énonciative. Et si les formations discursives sont libres par rapport aux grandes unités rhétoriques du texte ou du livre, si elles n'ont pas pour loi la rigueur d'une architecture déductive, si elles ne s'identifient pas à l'œuvre d'un auteur, c'est qu'elles mettent en jeu le niveau énonciatif avec les régularités qui le caractérisent, et non pas le niveau grammatical des phrases, ou logique des propositions, ou psychologique de la formulation (1969, 152).

The rules of statements are, then, determined by discursive formations (Foucault 1969, 152-53). A discursive practice 'c'est un ensemble de règles anonymes, historiques, toujours déterminées dans le temps et l'espace qui ont défini à une époque donnée, et pour une aire

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<sup>33</sup> On which see Hjelm (2011, 140) and Phillips and Hardy (2002, 19).

<sup>34</sup> On which see Phillips and Hardy (2002, 19-21), Hjelm (2011, 134, 136, 140-42), and Engler (2006a, 518).

<sup>35</sup> See also Barker and Jane (2016, 102).

sociale, géographique ou linguistique donnée, les conditions d'exercice de la fonction énonciative' (153-54). Non-discursive practices include 'institutions, événements politiques, pratiques et processus économiques' (1969, 212). Importantly, Foucault argues for the relevance of the study of the interrelation between discursive and non-discursive practices<sup>36</sup> (212-15). The archive is described by Foucault in the following terms: 'Entre la langue qui définit le système de construction des phrases possibles, et le *corpus* qui recueille passivement les paroles prononcées, l'*archive* définit un niveau particulier: celui d'une pratique qui fait surgir une multiplicité d'énoncés comme autant d'événements réguliers, comme autant de choses offertes au traitement et à la manipulation. ... C'est *le système général de la formation et de la transformation des énoncés*' (1969, 171, italics in the original). Importantly, Foucault (171) remarks that no archive from a single period in history can be fully known and described, and it is impossible for us to be aware of our own archive.

Of interest to the present study is Foucault's description of discourse 'en tant que pratique'<sup>37</sup> (1969, 63), his insight that discourses produce themes or theories, which Foucault dubs 'strategies' (85), and his account of how discourses produce and regulate subject and object positions<sup>38</sup> (68-72).

In particular, Foucault argues that the subject position is not occupied at will. On the contrary, there are a set of rules that establish who might speak or write within a given discourse. Foucault gives the specific example of nineteenth century physicians, and describes three sets of rules: 1) a doctor must be authorised to occupy the physician position by being knowledgeable in his area of expertise, by the laws that enable him to exercise within certain limits, by being part of a hierarchized staff, by being accepted by society; 2) institutional positions (*emplacements institutionnels*), such as the hospital, private practice, the laboratory, and the library as a place of sharing of the several reports and observations, are also pivotal in legitimising the doctor's discourse; 3) the actions the doctor, as subject of the discourse, is allowed and/or compelled to perform on the objects of the discourse, in this case the patients, also define and shape him as subject: these actions

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<sup>36</sup> See also Deleuze (1986, 38-41, 69).

<sup>37</sup> Foucault (1969, 173) also states that 'L'archéologie décrit les discours comme des pratiques spécifiées dans l'élément de l'archive.'

<sup>38</sup> On this issue see also Murphy (2000, 401-403).

include questioning, listening, observing, recording the observations, and using the information thus collected to teach new physicians (Foucault 1969, 68-72). It is the interaction between these sets of rules that shapes clinical medicine (*médecine clinique*), and this interaction is ‘effected by the clinical discourse’, since discourse is a practice (73-74).

Inasmuch as discourses attempt to structure social reality and social practice, and to the extent that discourses, in the Foucauldian sense, establish who has authority to speak and make claims and establish power relations between subjects, power is a significant element in the Foucauldian discourse theory<sup>39</sup>. This sense in which discourse may be understood contributed greatly to the development of the critical discourse analysis<sup>40</sup>, which ‘focuses on the use of power in discourse’ (Hjelm 2011, 149).

Another relevant feature that Foucault (1969, 155-58) identifies in discourses is that they are circumscribed and, therefore, not all that could be said is in fact said. Concerning the instructions of the Middle and New Kingdoms, certain topics, even if marginally present, never became dominant. A case in point is the almost complete absence of injunctions against killing another human being. The topics of death and of death penalty are present in several instructions<sup>41</sup>. However, explicit references to murder are virtually absent<sup>42</sup>, and explicit injunctions against it are in fact absent from the instructions of the Pharaonic period. As noted by Müller-Wollermann (2015, 229), the most used terms for ‘to kill’ were ‘*sm3*, later *hdb*<sup>43</sup>.’ Outside the *Instruction for the King Merikare*, the term *sm3*<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> See also von Stuckrad (2010, 159).

<sup>40</sup> See Phillips and Hardy (2002, 21) and Hjelm (2011, 141).

<sup>41</sup> For examples of references to natural death see, for instance, the *Instruction for Kagemni*, P. Prisse, v. 2.7, the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 18.2-18.3, and the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 25, v. 24.19 (see no. 54). Explicit attestations of the death penalty in the extant texts are much fewer, however: *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 11, v. 15.3, chapter 20, v. 21.20 (see no. 50). The expressions *bt3 ʿ3 (nj) mwt*, ‘great transgression worthy of death’, in the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 16.12 and 16.16, and *štm ʿ3 n(.j) m(w)t*, ‘a great injury worthy of death’, in *Amenemope*, chapter 20, v. 21.10, are probably not to be taken literally (McDowell 2001, 318; Lorton 1977, 32n143, 39n179).

<sup>42</sup> The only exceptions seem to be attested in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, maxim 18, v. D288 (also attested, with slight changes, in P. BM EA 10509 (= L2)), and in the *Instruction of Amenemhat I*, P. Millingen, section 7, which describes the assassination of the king. The famous passage from *Ptahhotep* implies that adultery will result in the murder of the male (at least). As also pointed out by Lorton (1977, 15-16n61), this is not a reference to the death penalty, but to score-settling between private individuals. Importantly, it is not murder that is advised against, but the behaviour that will lead to it.

<sup>43</sup> Shupak (1993, 391n26) has reservations about this sense of *hdb*.

<sup>44</sup> Lemma no. 134370 in the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae*.

is attested in the *Instruction of Khety*, P. Sallier II = P. BM EA 10182, v. 8.3, in the *Instruction of Ani* P. Boulaq 4 recto, v. 23.1, and in the *Instruction of Papyrus Brooklyn*, P. Brooklyn 47.218.135, vv. 2.11 and 4.14. But none of these attestations, with the possible exception of the very fragmentary P. Brooklyn 47.218.135, v. 4.14, involves murder. And the term *hdb*<sup>45</sup> is attested only in the New Kingdom *Letter of Menna*, O. Chicago OIC 12074 + O. IFAO Inv. 2188 verso, v. 7, also without referring to or discouraging murder. Müller-Wollermann (2015, 229) claims that: ‘Nearly all evidence of killings stems from the time of the end of the New Kingdom and the beginning of the Third Intermediate Period, a time of social and political unrest.’ About that dearth of evidence before those two periods, John Baines (1991, 139) comments that: ‘The general absence of public presentations of violence could correspond to a low level of violence in Egyptian society, although both indirect arguments and evidence from the more variously documented Late Period suggest that the sources may here disguise realities, while certain types of violence, such as homicide and feuding, may have been kept outside the institutional framework of the state.’

Interestingly, the Demotic terms *hdb*, ‘death, murder, (death) penalty’<sup>46</sup>, and especially *hdb*, ‘to kill’<sup>47</sup>, are more well documented in the Demotic instructions<sup>48</sup>. Significantly, the term *smʒ*, ‘to kill’, is attested in several texts of the speculative-pessimistic wisdom literature in the context of murder: in the *Eloquent Peasant*, P. Berlin P 3025 + P. Amherst II (= B2), v. 113, in the *Admonitions of Ipuwer*, P. Leiden I 344 recto, vv. 5.7, 6.8, 8.9, 9.3, 12.14, 14.14, and in the *Prophecy of Neferti*, P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116 B verso, vv. 44-45, 49. To be sure, these are descriptive and literary, as opposed to mobilisations of instances of murder framed in a didactic context. However, the composition of the speculative-pessimistic wisdom literature and of the Middle Kingdom instructions roughly at the same time, coupled with the mobilisation of killings in the Demotic wisdom literature, suggests that the almost complete absence of this topic in the

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<sup>45</sup> Lemma no. 124950 in the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae*.

<sup>46</sup> Lemma no. -7853 in the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae*.

<sup>47</sup> Lemma no. 4923 in the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae*.

<sup>48</sup> See attestations in the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae*. A similar pattern was also observed with the terms *sbj* and *sdb*; see chapter 3, sub-subsection 3.1.5.4. The Demotic term *smʒ*, ‘to kill’ (lemma no. 5282 in the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae*), is not attested in the Demotic instructions, however.

Middle and New Kingdom instructions<sup>49</sup> is a matter of discourse boundaries rather than, for instance, of cultural taboo.

Another case in point is ‘the paucity of references to the afterlife’ (Adams 2008, 51). To be sure, there are passages bearing on eschatology in the instructions, but, in a culture where there was a great investment in the preparation for the afterlife and in its depiction, with vivid images of its punishments<sup>50</sup>, it is curious that the instructions do not mobilise them. Contrarily, in a Buddhist work of the Mahāyāna tradition, images of punishments in the afterlife are mobilised in order to motivate monks to perform their spiritual duties. For example:

How can you remain at ease like this  
When you have done the deeds that lead  
To contact on your tender baby flesh  
Of boiling liquids in the hell of Extreme Heat? (Chapter 7 § 12) (Shāntideva 2006, 99)

Passages like this one are not mobilised in the Egyptian instructions, which, again, points towards discursive boundaries. These boundaries were permeable to other discourses, however. In particular, New Kingdom instructions were especially receptive to the personal piety discourse<sup>51</sup>.

Discourse analysis is not a rigid methodology to be applied in a strict way. Instead, discourse analysis is rather flexible and may be adapted to each study in accordance to factors such as the object of study, the research question, and the type of data available (Phillips and Hardy 2002, 74; Hjelm 2011, 142, 146; Engler 2006a, 518; Fairclough 2003, 124). Discourse analysis also tends to be done differently in linguistics and in the social sciences: linguists tend to do minute grammatical analyses, whereas social scientists ‘have usually been more interested in the level of meaning’ (Hjelm 2011, 143; see also Fairclough 2003, 2, 214-15). However, attempts have been made to bridge the gap between

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<sup>49</sup> Although it belongs to a different discourse and has a different function, the ‘negative confession’ in chapter 125 of the Book of the Dead provides an interesting contrast with the New Kingdom instructions. In the copy of Iuya (P. Cairo CG 51189) from the Eighteenth dynasty, for instance, the deceased claims on v. 693 *n sm3<=j> wndw.t*, ‘<I> did not kill people’, and on v. 713 *j nh3-ḥr prj m r3-št3.w n sm3=j r(m)l*, ‘oh fierce-of-face who comes from Rosetau, I did not kill any person’ (Backes 2014).

<sup>50</sup> See, for instance, Hornung (1982, 205-206).

<sup>51</sup> On personal piety see Luiselli (2011; 2014), Baines and Froot (2011), Mota (2012), Vernus (2003b, 143-46), and Assmann (2001, 221-30).

these two types of application of discourse analysis, particularly by critical discourse analysts (Fairclough 1992, 37; Engler 2006a, 518).

The approach followed here has Foucault's insights on discourse theory as its referential, but is not limited to that referential. What is taken from Foucault's theory are the notions that discourses are practices that reflect and constitute social reality, and therefore that texts do things and attempt to shape social reality, that discourses create positions that are occupied by different agents (such as humans and gods), and that discourses involve power relations.

While not excluding the interaction of discourse with elements external to it<sup>52</sup>, Foucault overemphasised the primacy of discourse, but here a more balanced perspective, such as the one proposed by Norman Fairclough, is adopted: 'It is important that the relationship between discourse and social structure should be seen dialectically if we are to avoid the pitfalls of overemphasizing on the one hand the social determination of discourse, and on the other hand the construction of the social in discourse' (1992, 65).

The focus on how discourse operates and on how it creates subject positions led Foucault, in his archaeological method, to virtually ignore the agency of the individuals occupying those positions (see Barker and Jane 2016, 277). Again, a different perspective is preferred here, namely that subjects do possess agency.

The sociological concept of agency has become somewhat muddled due to the several senses in which it has been mobilised in the social sciences and in the contemporary public debate on social and political issues, such as gender identity<sup>53</sup> (e.g., Gardner 2008, 100). As pointed out by Barker and Jane (2016, 280-81) and by Shanks (2008, 135), agency has to do with the individuals' ability to choose and act despite the constraints imposed by the social structure. However, this is not to say that agents are completely independent from society. Instead, the concept of agency is useful to highlight that agents act along 'pathways of action that are themselves socially constituted' (Barker and Jane 2016, 281). For instance, the ability to ask a deity for forgiveness can be one such pathway of action, while being incarcerated or having some rights removed is a type of pathway that limits one's

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<sup>52</sup> See Foucault (1969, 218).

<sup>53</sup> On the concept of agency see, for instance, Gardner (2008), Asad (2000), Janico et al. (2018, 571-72, 575-80), Hays (2009), and Barker and Jane (2016, 277-84).

ability to act<sup>54</sup>. The concept of agency has the advantage of reminding us that individuals are not merely determined by the social structure<sup>55</sup>, but can act according to their motivations and bring about change (Shanks 2008, 135-36). Agents can resist, but they can also act in ways that contribute to the maintenance of the social structure (see Gardner 2008, 102). Extra-human beings, to whom agency is also attributed<sup>56</sup>, may be assigned pathways of action that either reinforce or deviate from the dominant structure.

The mobilisation of god in the instructions of the Middle and New Kingdoms will then be approached from the perspective that the instructions form a discourse, that they do things, that they have boundaries, that they use strategies to achieve their aims, that they involve power relations among humans and between human and divine agents, and that they attempt to create, reinforce, or change pathways of action in accordance to their declared objective of shaping the addressee's conduct.

Because the instructions are recorded in an ancient language, this approach will be complemented by a philological approach. Not all practitioners of discourse analysis agree with an analysis of data in a language other than the original (Fairclough 1995, 190-91). However, that it is not practical in the study of ancient cultures. The alternative followed here, and which is also suggested by Hjelm (2011, 146n5), is to include the original version in an appendix. To be sure, an added challenge is that the accuracy of the translations provided in the appendix to this study is contingent not only upon the present knowledge of the language, but also upon the formulation of the texts themselves and their state of preservation.

### **Layout of the thesis**

Because this study is located not only in Egyptology but also in the history of religions, it begins with a discussion of the definition of religion and with an overview of the academic study of religion, in order to introduce the reader to its specific challenges.

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<sup>54</sup> See also Janico et al. (2018, 571).

<sup>55</sup> See Shanks (2008, 135-36).

<sup>56</sup> See Janico et al. (2018, 571).



The second chapter discusses both text-internal and archaeological evidence in order to attempt to locate the social setting in which the instructions were composed, transmitted, and used.

The discussion of the roles of god begins on chapter 3. In this chapter the role of god as punisher and deterrent is analysed from a set of categories formulated from a set of selected passages and which serve as a platform of observation of the mobilisation of god. When more than one passage is discussed a summary and concluding discussion are presented.

In the fourth chapter attention is shifted to another role of god, namely as protector. The discussion is also structured around the ways divine protection was mobilised in the selected passages.

A commented translation of the most significant passages discussed in the previous chapters is provided in the appendix.

# 1. Overview of the academic study of religion

This thesis is concerned, even if indirectly at times, with the ancient Egyptian religion. Although historical and linguistic inquiry are also involved in this work, the study of religion presents challenges and is surrounded by controversies that are unique to it. Some of these challenges and controversies will be discussed below, in order to situate this work in relation to them. But to begin with, what can be understood by religion as an analytical category?

## 1.1 (In)definition of religion

First of all, and as will be discussed further below, it is important to acknowledge that the notion of ‘religion’, as a scholarly and colloquial category that designates a specific area of culture, is largely a ‘Western’<sup>57</sup> product. This does not mean that what we may consider religion is exclusively found in Western societies, but that the way we look at other religions is influenced by the specific history of the emergence of religion in the West. For instance, one may be led to overemphasise the role theology or mythology has in a particular culture, because that is familiar. And when we come to define religion, in a universal sense, that factor may come in between. But before one may even define religion in a universal sense, one must ask whether religion is likely to be universal.

To be sure, there are practices, beliefs, institutions, and writings in many other cultures that strongly resemble or fulfil a similar role to what in the West is usually designated by religion. Certainly, there is a wealth of variations from culture to culture, for instance, in the content of texts, or in the expression and intensity of beliefs, just to name a

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<sup>57</sup> As noticed by Benavides (2001, 107), the term ‘West’ is vague and imprecise, as the ‘West’ is constituted by different societies and, taken in a historical perspective, by different periods. For example, there are important differences between Europe and the United States, and within them as well: for instance, there are significant differences between northern European countries and southern ones. The heterogeneity of the ‘West’ is also visible in what concerns religion. At present the United States remain a largely religious country, with a proliferation of Protestant religions as well as of new religious movements, whereas in Europe religion, while not disappearing altogether, receded to a significant extent due to the ‘secularisation’ process, and the religions with most expression have historical roots – such as Roman Catholicism in Portugal and Spain and Anglicanism (at least as official religion) in England. Despite the simplifications ‘West’ and ‘Western’ entail, these terms are used here for convenience’s sake.

few. But, regardless of those variations, there is often a point of contact that allows us to recognise in other cultures expressions of religion. However, that is not enough to say that religion is universal, as, seemingly, it is possible to live without religion. Otherwise, atheism, agnosticism, and secularity would not be possible.

This possibility of living without religion would presuppose that religion and, say atheism are fundamentally distinct and play different social roles. For some scholars, usually from traditions that refute reductionism when applied to religion and claim that it is *sui generis* (we will return to this question below), religion does occupy a unique space in cultures and is not replaceable. For others, however, religion is virtually undistinguishable from secular ideologies, such as Marxism, or even atheism (Lambert 1991, 78). Science may also be considered to fulfil the role previously played by religion, especially as a source of knowledge about reality and about how to interact with and manipulate it. The same holds true for mental states. For instance, it has been argued that certain states of conscience can be achieved both outside and within religious activities. An example are hallucinations resulting from several consecutive days without sleeping: this may occur outside a religious framework because a person cannot sleep due to insomnia, or within a religious setting if a person purposefully engages in a vigil in order to trigger visions, as often done by shamans (e.g., Winkelmann 2010, 141-42). Other areas not traditionally associated with religion may also be considered to have shared dynamics with religion and thus to be quasi-religious. That is the case of football, and of film and music stars. But to consider that 'religiously' attending the matches of one's football team, or seeing a film character and actor as if they were semi-divine is religion might be going too far, as remarked by Malory Nye (2008, 15-16).

As put by Yves Lambert (1991, 79), either religion is considered to be one source of meaning and of values alongside ideologies which are similar to it only in structure, dynamics, and roles they play, but are not themselves religions – such as Marxism or Neoliberalism –, or it is regarded as the only source of meaning and values and all other ideologies are religions. If the first hypothesis is true, then religion is not necessarily universal. But if the second hypothesis holds, then religion is probably universal as it is difficult to conceive a culture that has no ideology or value system whatsoever.

As mentioned by Lambert (1991, 81-82), three criteria are evoked in most definitions of religion: 1) the postulation of the existence of two worlds, a natural or human and a supernatural or superhuman one<sup>58</sup>; 2) the existence of a system of communication between these two worlds through symbolic means, such as the priesthood, rites, cult, sacrifice, etc.; 3) and the existence of means of communalisation through institutions, such as churches, sects, and others. Lambert further equates these criteria with 1) beliefs, 2) practices, and 3) structures, respectively. He also adds that if only one criterion were to stand, he would choose the first one. Especially the first criterion mentioned by Lambert would rule out the hypothesis of secular ideologies as religions, although the other two criteria would not necessarily do so – the second criterion could be adjusted, so that the mediation is between e.g., those who hold positions of power through those ideologies and those who do not partake of that power and are not initiated in those ideologies.

Universal definitions ought to accommodate the spectrum of the object one is trying to define. Concerning these three criteria, Lambert (1991, 82) cites a few borderline problems (*problèmes de frontière*): early Buddhism and more philosophical branches of esotericism would hardly meet the first criterion, while in astrology humans do not communicate and interact with the superhuman world, and magic and sorcery meet the first two criteria but, in several cases, do not meet the last one. Some of these examples, like astrology and some branches of esotericism, are probably to be expected to stay out of any definition of religion. Other cases, however, are less certain.

It is debatable, for instance, whether shamanism is best considered as a religion or instead a part of a people's religion, even though it may meet all these three criteria. Modern Spiritualism too, postulates the existence of two worlds, and the possibility of communication between them, but does not necessarily involve communalisation: there are centres (especially in Europe and Brazil) and churches (particularly in the Anglo-Saxon

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<sup>58</sup> The dichotomy human-superhuman may be appropriate to several cultures. However, not all humans are considered as such, and the sorcerer among the African society Tshidi is regarded as a superhuman being (B. Morris 2006, 180). It is also relevant to notice that the dichotomy human-superhuman is at times best thought as a spectrum, as certain individuals, such as shamans and divine or sacred kings, occupy an intermediary position between these two categories. In turn, the distinction between natural and supernatural is not always useful. It is pertinent to cultures that postulate a physical world, working according to 'natural' laws, on which metaphysical forces and entities may act either by breaking or bypassing those laws. In other cultures, however, those metaphysical forces and entities – including superhuman beings – may actually be regarded as being part of this world and thus to be natural (see Lewis 1994, 579).

countries) that congregate mediums and offer their services, and may even promote meetings for adepts of Spiritualism, but people (including mediums as well as non-medium adepts) may also work privately and pursue their spiritual practice by themselves (Wilson 2013, 30, 76-78). Furthermore, not all scholars and not all adepts of Spiritualism consider it a religion but instead a movement<sup>59</sup> (Wilson 2013, 33-34). Spirituality, in the sense of individual pursuit of one's personal development and growth outside a traditional religious framework, is often construed by practitioners as an alternative to religion. This latter statement is also true for practitioners of traditional religions, such as Christianity. Roman Catholic Christians, for instance, may consider themselves religious without, however, ever attending the mass.

This discrepancy between what a religion says of itself, or what scholars' criteria would suggest, and what practitioners do and say of themselves is often present, as a rule, in other 'religions'. That is the case of 'Buddhism'. The different branches of Buddhism are arguably religions, and most meet the aforementioned three criteria. But many Buddhists do not see Buddhism as a religion but rather as a philosophy (see e.g., Keown 2013, 15). And yet, several types of Buddhism, especially the Mahāyāna school, do include expressions found in other religions: for example, although the Buddha is not formally presented as a god in earlier writings, he is often treated as such (Keown 2013, 63). And although Buddhism does not usually encompass communication with the superhuman world, in some areas Buddhism intermixed with shamanism, and shamans and Buddhist monks may complement each other (Kōkan 1990, 110). Those who claim Buddhism is not a religion often cite the fact that Buddhism is atheist<sup>60</sup>. Buddhism does acknowledge the existence of gods, who, despite being more powerful and living longer lives than humans, are 'stuck' in the divine realm and have to be reborn as humans in order to be able to achieve Enlightenment (Keown 2013, 36-37).

As a precondition to establish whether religion is universal or not, Malory Nye (2008, 15-17) states that a definition of religion is required. But, as the author recognises, that is a problem in itself. As will be discussed below, the notion of religion emerged from

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<sup>59</sup> According to Wilson (2013, 34), 'the principal reason why Spiritualism is referred to as a movement becomes clearer as soon as it is appreciated that Spiritualism is principally a vehicle for the practice-based tradition of mediumship. The term movement is consistently used by Spiritualists themselves, and reflects an insider perception that mediumship is "the unique contribution that Spiritualism has to offer"'.  
<sup>60</sup> On the uselessness of this category to think about Buddhism see Keown (2013, 5).

the Western history, and even though there are cultures with domains identifiable as religion, any definition should probably be applicable for religions both in Western cultures and in other cultures as well. Many definitions of religion have been given, but all are debatable and have their limitations. It does not mean, however, that they are useless. In fact, and as pointed out by Jonathan Smith (1998, 281), they show not that religion is undefinable but that many definitions of religion may be given.

As an alternative to attempt to provide a working definition of religion, several authors opt for a more flexible approach. Instead of setting up an *a priori* definition of religion, they take as frame of reference what we customarily understand by religion. This is called definition by example or case paradigm (Taliaferro 1998, 21). This approach may accommodate more easily religions like Buddhism and ancient religions. It is also useful to consider religion as another cultural domain, as argued by Nye (2008, 18): ‘I suggest that those who study religion and culture do not become bogged down in finding a definition, but instead work on the assumption that in many cultural contexts there is a field of cultural activity that is labelled as “religion”. If we accept this as something that is given, then the purpose of our study is to see how the activities that go by this loose term are practised as part of, not separate from, the rest of cultural life.’ This will be the approach followed here.

## 1.2 Approaches to the study of religion

Currently there are essentially two options available to those who wish to study what we may designate as ‘religion’: either one engages with its theological, and thus confessional, study, or one approaches it with a scientific, and non-confessional, outlook (see e.g., McCutcheon 2013, 89. 96-97; M. Taylor 1998, 12-13; Durand 2009, 45; Alles 2005, 8761).

This cleavage between theology and the academic study of religion<sup>61</sup> does not mean, however, that both disciplines<sup>62</sup> cannot cooperate with each other, at least in certain points

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<sup>61</sup> The terms ‘academic study of religion’, ‘*Religionswissenschaft*’, ‘religious studies’, ‘history of religions’, and ‘religious history’ are sometimes used interchangeably (e.g., Alles 2005, 8761). ‘*Religionswissenschaft*’, which can be equated with ‘religious studies’ (Wiebe 2005, 111), tends to be broader in its object of study and methodologies, and to focus more on contemporary issues. ‘History of religions’ and ‘religious history’ (the latter term in the sense of what in France is called *histoire religieuse*) tend to place a greater focus on historical perspective, although, as Natale Spineto points out, ‘[c]ontemporary research increasingly tends to

(Alles 2005, 8762; see also Wiebe 2005, 103). But, commenting on the effort to promote a dialogue between the two disciplines by the journal *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses*, Russel McCutcheon (2013, 91n6) states that such collaboration is seen as useful by some scholars, but as confusing by others. In religious studies, scholars tend to avoid associations with theology and even to be antitheological (see M. Taylor 1998, 13). On this subject, Mark Taylor (1998, 13) comments that: ‘Critics of theology often embrace the methods of social sciences ranging from history and psychology to sociology and anthropology with an enthusiasm bordering the religious.’ The antagonism is not one-sided, however, and, especially prior to the council Vatican II, the Catholic Church, for instance, also opposed the academic study of religion, particularly when the latter was establishing itself as a field (Auffarth and Mohr 2006, xvi-xvii; Durand 2009, 45, 51). Conversely, theology may also look positively towards the academic study of religion, especially when it can use the latter’s research results to legitimise its claims<sup>63</sup>.

A field where theologians and religious studies scholars might productively work together is the translation of religious texts, as theologians are often trained in the languages in which the texts of their religious traditions are written<sup>64</sup>. A case in point are Catholic theologians who are frequently versed in Hebrew, Greek, and sometimes Aramaic. This interchange might benefit Egyptology as well, as several theologians, both Catholic and Protestant, also have significant knowledge of the ancient Egyptian language due to the cultural contacts between ancient Egypt and ancient Israel. A notable example is Vincent

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concentrate on current issues’ (2009, 47; see also Stausberg 2008, 24). In the literature, ‘religious studies’ and ‘academic study of religion’ are often used as generic catch-all terms (Wiebe 2005, 115), even though there is no clear consensus on their definition (Wiebe 2005, 98, 114-21; Alles 2005, 8765; 2008, 7), and are opposed to ‘theology’, also in a general sense (for problems in the cross-cultural use of this term see Alles (2008, 10n6, 11n6)). Whereas theology pursues a confessional and apologetic study of religion, the academic study of religion studies religion from a non-confessional and objective viewpoint (McCutcheon 2013, 87n1; Wiebe 2005, 99-100, 121; Alles 2008, 7). It is in this sense that I use the term ‘academic study of religion’, as an umbrella term for the several disciplines that engage in the scientific and non-confessional study of religion. In this sense, ‘historical and sociological study of religion’ may be an alternative to the vaguer ‘academic study of religion’.

<sup>62</sup> On the contested validity of the term ‘discipline’ see Wiebe (2005, 98, 115).

<sup>63</sup> See, for instance, Hans Kippenberg (2003, 286) on the use of the history of religions by liberal protestants in the Netherlands in the late Nineteenth century to justify the superiority of their religion. On the use of results from the academic study of religion by theologians see also McCutcheon (2013, 93).

<sup>64</sup> As pointed out by the Padmakara Translation Group concerning their translation of Shantideva’s *Bodhicharyāvātāra* from the Tibetan rendering of a Sanskrit version, the interests of scholars and of practitioners in the translation of texts overlap in an understanding of the texts and of the language as much correct as possible, but diverge considerably in the way the texts are used (Shantideva 2006, xii–xv).

Pierre-Michel Laisney (2007) who published an important critical edition of the Instruction of Amenemope.

This kind of cooperation apart, theology and the academic study of religion have different epistemological aims and frameworks that have to do with their purposes. As said, theology is confessional and apologetic, whereas the academic study of religion is objective, non-confessional, and ‘neutral’ – neither supporting nor debunking religion. Or so it is supposed to be. As we will see, this is not always the case. But before we follow this venue further, we will first introduce the origins of the academic study of religion in Europe and North America<sup>65</sup>.

### **1.3 History of the emergence of the academic study of religion in Europe and North America**

As Aaron Hughes points out, different cultures have engaged with the classification of the ‘religious’ beliefs and practices of other peoples (2013, 2). But in order to be scientific and academic, that classification requires a rigorous and objective approach. In the European context, the attempt to examine religion in a rationalistic and rigorous way may be traced at least to the ancient Greek philosophy (Junginger 2006, 8-9). But it is especially since the Renaissance that the origins of the contemporary academic study of religion can be dated.

Seeking to better understand the ancient classics and to free them from later interpretations, the Renaissance humanists read them in the original languages, using, and further developing, philological techniques (Auffarth and Mohr 2006, xii–xiii; Junginger 2006, 9; Casini 2015). Both the Fall of Constantinople in 1453 and the expulsion of the Jews from the Iberian Peninsula by the end of the fifteenth century contributed much to this work of the Renaissance humanists, as manuscripts in the original classical languages and Hebrew became available to them (Smith 2004, 364). The texts subjected to the

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<sup>65</sup> Here our concern is limited to the academic study of religion in the European and North American contexts because its historical circumstances shaped, to a great extent, the university disciplines that study religion. However, the academic studies of religion emerged differently in other parts of the world (see e.g., Alles 2005, 8762–63). On important elements that will be left out of this account see Alles (2005; 2008), Auffarth and Mohr (2006), Durand (2009), Kippenberg (2003), Langlois (1986), Junginger (2006), Rousselle (1986), Rudolph (2005), Smith (1998; 2004), Stausberg (2008), Mark Taylor (1998), and Wiebe (2005).



philological critique were not only the Greek and Roman ones, but also the very Scriptures themselves. This was an important step towards the academic study of religion, as it contributed to the relativisation of the Bible as humanly transmitted, if not man-made literature (Auffarth and Mohr 2006, xiii). It is also worth mentioning that the philological analysis of ancient texts is one of the most relevant legacies of Renaissance humanists to the modern history of religions, as mastery of the language of the culture one studies and employment of tools of textual analysis are still requisites to become part of this discipline today (Smith 2004, 364, 368; Rousselle 1986, 584-85). But this is not the case with the other disciplines of the academic study of religion, such as religious studies, as these tend to focus increasingly on contemporary issues and, thus, to abandon the historical and philological approaches<sup>66</sup> (Stausberg 2008, 24).

Beginning in the early fifteenth century, the European Expansion and imperialism further contributed to the relativisation of Christianity, causing the Catholic Church to further lose the monopoly on the interpretation of religion. With the discovery of new societies, conquest of new lands, and the dispatch of Catholic missions to work with native peoples, European societies received through time an abundance of reports on new and different religions, and inclusively on Christianities in Asia with which European Christianities had lost touch since the thirteenth century CE (Smith 2004, 365).

The Roman Catholic religion had been exposed to religious diversity since its inception, having to distinguish itself from ‘pagan’ religions, Judaism, and rival Christian churches (Smith 1998, 276). But the religious diversity that emerged as a result from the European Expansion was more threatening, as, for instance, the discovery of the Americas challenged the predominant view of a tripartite world, and the discovery of eastern religions with complex histories and bodies of writing, as well as of forms of Christianity in Asia unknown to Europeans, contributed to further challenge the authority of Roman Catholicism (Smith 2004, 364-65). Even today religious diversity, together with the nontheistic far eastern religions are mobilised in the philosophy of religion to support the argument against God’s existence (Quinn 2002, 534). But religious diversity also had the opposite effect, expressed, for instance, in the debates of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries concerning ‘natural religion’, in the sense of a common core to all religions, and

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<sup>66</sup> On the discard of history as an approach to the study of religion see, for instance, Kippenberg (2003, 281).

in the comparative study of religion of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries which also postulated a fundamental unity between religions worldwide (Alles 2005, 8762; Smith 1998, 272).

The increase in data on religious diversity also triggered the need to classify the ‘new’ religions<sup>67</sup>, and led to the question of the origin of religion(s) (Auffarth and Mohr 2006, xiii; Rüpke 2011, 289; Smith 1998, 275-76; M. Taylor 1998, 8). As Jonathan Smith summarises (1998, 275): ‘A different set of taxonomic questions were raised by the “religions” and became urgent by the nineteenth century: Are the diverse “religions” species of a generic “religion?” Is “religion” the unique beginner, a *summum genus*, or is it best conceived as a subordinate cultural taxon? How might the several “religions” be classified?’

The sixteenth century Protestant Reformation contributed further to relativise Roman Catholicism and to create favourable conditions for the academic study of religion. Besides augmenting an already increasing religious diversity, the Protestant Reformation, which was not uniform but instead bred several movements and churches, also fuelled the debate concerning religious truth. It is important to point out, as remarked by J. Z. Smith (1998, 269-71), that whereas prior to the Reformation the word “religion” – applied by Roman Catholicism both to itself as well as to other religions, such as indigenous ones – had the sense of ritual performance, it acquired the sense of ‘belief’ and ‘piety’ with protestant theology. If religion was defined by belief, and there was a multitude of religions, it mattered then to ascertain which belief was true and justifiable.

The question of the origin of religion(s) raised by the European Expansion was accompanied by the question of religious truth sparked by the Protestant Reformation (Smith 2004, 365). As hinted above, both questions relativised Roman Catholic Christianity’s monopoly on the interpretation of religion and opened a space to look at religion with a critical gaze. That space was further widened with the eighteenth century Enlightenment with ‘the fundamental discrepancy ... between the knowledges arrived at through faith and through scientific understanding’ (Junginger 2006, 9). This is an important legacy of the Enlightenment to the academic study of religion, as rationalism, as

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<sup>67</sup> On this process see Smith (1998, 275-80).

opposed to religious faith, is still a methodological tenet of this field and distinguishes it from theology (Durand 2009, 44, 52; Rousselle 1986, 585).

According to Gregory Alles (2005, 8762), the academic study of religion becomes possible when at least the following three conditions are met: 1) existence of institutions of knowledge, such as universities, 2) existence of a consensus about what can be termed 'religion', and 3) willingness to undertake an anthropological and non-confessional perspective in understanding and explaining religious phenomena, as against engaging in apologetics. The historical circumstances that were surveyed thus far fall especially under the third condition.

Another important step towards the autonomy and institutionalisation of the academic study of religion was given by the German Protestant theologians of the *Religionsgeschichtliche Schule*. In the wake of Friedrich Max Müller's *Religionswissenschaft*, which focused on a comparative study of religion and gave special attention to the Indo-European religions (Junginger 2006, 10; Smith 1998, 280), and of the historicisation of religion in the nineteenth century (Rüpke 2011, 289), these liberal theologians applied philology and the historical-critical method – the latter also still valuable today (Rüpke 2011, 291–92) – to biblical criticism with important consequences (Rudolph 2005, 7706). Among those results are the discovery of an editorial history of the books of the Bible, that the writing and editing of those books were influenced by specific historical circumstances and events, and that the composition of the New Testament was not based in the Old Testament alone, but was also open to other sources like Hellenistic Judaism (Auffarth and Mohr 2006, xvi; Rudolph 2005, 7707; Junginger 2006, 9). The efforts of the *Religionsgeschichtliche Schule* contributed to the relativisation of Christianity, by considering it one religion among others, and to the separation between theological dogma and historical inquiry (Auffarth and Mohr 2006, xiii; Rudolph 2005, 7708), but at a cost: 'The Religionsgeschichtliche Schule began as a movement within theology, but it ended outside theology because its methods and approach were so radical. The attempt to restore the ties connecting the school and Christian theology expresses only the personal piety, or Christian faith, of the school's representatives. Here again the Religionsgeschichtliche Schule created a dilemma, in this case one of the most difficult that

the history of religions as such must face: the relation between personal conviction or faith and scientific honesty or objectivity' (Rudolph 2005, 7708).

As the other social sciences, the disciplines that make up the academic study of religion began to develop in the nineteenth century<sup>68</sup>, and thus, from the late nineteenth century on, departments devoted to the study of religion began to emerge in universities, and in some cases replaced pre-existing theological departments (Auffarth and Mohr 2006, xvi). During this process of change of identity, 'often uneasy (even antagonistic) mixtures of theology, history, and social sciences evolved in this early academic study of religion' (Ruff 2005, 8785).

At this stage the link with theology had not yet been completely broken. In fact, the road towards the relativisation of religion and of theological knowledge, since at least the sixteenth century, produced immediately a reaction by theologians who sought to secure the value of religious truth, appealing, for instance and as said, to 'natural religion' as a universal religious core. This task was not undertaken by Roman Catholic theologians alone, but also by liberal Protestant theologians. And their attempts to protect religion from reductionism, that is, the recognition of religion as simply one more cultural phenomenon instead of a *sui generis* phenomenon originated by religious causes<sup>69</sup>, would eventually lead to what would be called phenomenology of religion, represented, in Europe and in North America, by important scholars such as Rudolf Otto and Mircea Eliade, thus prolonging the tension between a global theology and the non-confessional academic study of religion<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> On this subject see Junginger (2006, 8), and Le Goff (2009, 9–10, 31, 35-36).

<sup>69</sup> Malory Nye (2008, 127) argues that both positions are rooted in a focus on belief: 'Many studies of religion may be classed as either reductionist or phenomenological, and both remain focused on the idea of religion as belief. Reductionists tend to assume religion as "false", whilst phenomenologists seek to treat it as a thing in itself, as "sui generis".' Nye (109) suggests, instead, that 'to study religion in a cultural as well as in a naturalistic perspective is to look at the broader context of how people come to talk and think (and believe) in the ways in which they do. In order to do this, one not only looks at the content of beliefs (for example that Christians believe in god), but at the specific contexts of such statements. That is, the study of Christian traditions does not begin or end with a theoretical analysis of whether belief in god is a human projection or a manifestation of a divine reality. Or rather, I would prefer to leave such questions to theologians.' See also Nye (2008, 114-15).

<sup>70</sup> To many, the phenomenology of religion is tantamount to theology (Auffarth and Mohr 2006, xxi; Ryba 2006, 115), as witnessed by Thomas Ryba (2006, 91): 'About twenty years ago, I ran across a description in Openings, the US list of positions in religious fields. It read something like this: "A small college in the Eastern United States is looking for a candidate to teach introductory courses in Western religions and courses in her/his religion of specialization at the upper undergraduate level. Phenomenologists of religion need not apply.'" But that identification is not necessarily accurate, as pointed out by Russel McCutcheon (2013, 98):

well into the twentieth century<sup>71</sup> (Alles 2005, 8762–63; Fitzgerald 2000a, 99; Fitzgerald 2000b, 14, 21, 41, 47, 67; Morris 2006, 5–6; Saler 2001; Sheedy 2013, 26; McCutcheon 2013, 97; M. Taylor 1998, 10).

In North America the protection of religion from reductionism, as well as its discussion using theological categories was in charge of the ‘Chicago School’ of Religious Studies led by Mircea Eliade (McMullin 2013b, 53). Despite this scholar’s claim to work in the history of religions, several authors now consider him more a phenomenologist of religion<sup>72</sup> (Auffarth and Mohr 2006, xxi). His work and his school dominated much of the study of religion, especially in the United States, until, in religious studies, which emerged in the United States during the 1960s and 1970s (Ruff 2005, 8785), in the history of religions, and in anthropology, the focus was shifted from the phenomenological study of religion to its construction in the academic discourse and its role in the studied societies<sup>73</sup> (Hughes 2013, 4-5; Sheedy 2013, 24-25).

This is largely owed to the self-reflexivity introduced by authors like Jonathan Z. Smith, Bruce Lincoln, Talal Asad, Russell T. McCutcheon, and Gustavo Benavides. Of particular relevance is Jonathan Smith’s (1982, xi) stress on the imagination, or manufacture of the category of religion by scholars of religion, and, later, Talal Asad’s (1993) focus on the genealogy of religion as a result of Western culture and history. This kind of works ushered in the awareness that religion does not exist by itself, but is largely a Western and academic construct. In this respect, Jonathan Smith’s statement ‘*there is no data for religion*’ is often cited (1982, xi, italics in the original).

During these developments two other disciplines in the academic study of religion developed: the history of religions and religious history. Both share much of the historical development of the other disciplines that make up the field of the academic study of religion, and emerged, to a significant extent, from Christian theology. In particular,

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‘It is important to keep in mind that much of the recent criticism of phenomenology has been more concerned with the faulty application of its methods than the methodology itself.’

<sup>71</sup> However, the experience of the two world wars also played an important role in the directions taken by the phenomenology of religion, as pointed out by Auffarth and Mohr (2006, xx–xxi).

<sup>72</sup> The main reason that justifies this criticism to Eliade’s approach seems to be a focus on religion as something unique and not historically and socially located and constructed (see Sheedy 2013, 24-25).

<sup>73</sup> On the adoption of the deconstructionist perspective see also Spineto (2009, 44-47).

religious history is, to a significant degree, a scientification of the ecclesiastical history of Roman Catholicism (Durand 2009, 43-47).

As the term ‘history’ in the names of these two disciplines indicates, they are more closely related to developments in this field. Of particular relevance is the creation of the French journal *Annales* in the late 1920s which opened historical inquiry to other social sciences, such as sociology and anthropology. The resort to methodologies from these two social sciences, especially since the 1960s and 1970s, contributed much to the emergence of religious history and of the history of religions (Auffarth and Mohr 2006, xxvi; Durand 2009, 47, 49; Langlois 1986, 577). For example, the contributions from sociology enabled them to regard archival records from Catholic parishes and overseas missions as sources, and to raise new problematics (Bethencourt 2009, 312; Durand 2009, 48, 50).

Perhaps one of the most distinctive traits of the history of religions, in particular, is the already mentioned heavy focus on philological and linguistic analysis, in a similar way to the Renaissance humanists and the theologians of the *Religionsgeschichtliche Schule*. But, as denounced by Jonathan Z. Smith (2004, 368-72), the focus of the history of religions on philology is not always useful. Unless one critically analyses and translates the texts, one will do no more than reproduce and paraphrase them, thus protecting and conserving the integrity and unity of the subject of study<sup>74</sup>.

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The emergence of the academic study of religion within the university setting was enabled by the gradual and increasing detachment of scholars studying religion from theology and apologetics<sup>75</sup>, with the identities of the disciplines in the field becoming more

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<sup>74</sup> While not with the same motivation, the end result is similar to the protection of religion from criticism in the phenomenology of religion (see McCutcheon 2013, 96-97).

<sup>75</sup> It is relevant to point out that the teaching *about* religion, as against *its* teaching, in public schools and universities in the United States became possible with the Supreme Court decisions in the cases *Engel v. Vitale* and *Abington School District v. Schempp* in 1962 and 1963, respectively (Hughes 2013, 9–10; M. Taylor 1998, 11). Prior to those rulings, and according to the religion clause of the First Amendment of the United States’ constitution, religion was considered exclusively a private matter and its teaching was left to private, and often religious, institutions (Gharavi 2012, 11–12; M. Taylor 1998, 11). In the United States this constraint still holds sway among several state universities (Gharavi 2012, 11), and in Europe, and perhaps more intensely in France, religion also tends to be seen as pertaining to the private and individual sphere and to be kept from the public domain, with the end result of an alarming religious illiteracy (Durand 2009, 59).

established since the 1960s and 1970s (Ruff 2005, 8785; Durand 2009, 45). Contrarily to the theological perspective, which seeks to better understand and propagate one's religion and one's faith, the academic study of religion approaches religion as an historical and sociological phenomenon. What matters to the student of religion is not its 'essence', nor religion itself, but how people construct, relate to, and use religions. The shift in how religion was studied was made self-reflexively explicit in a manifesto by Annemarie Schimmel (1960) that sought to veer the International Association for the History of Religion (IAHR) from theological concerns and approaches to the academic study of religion (1960, 236-37; see also Stausberg 2008, 26):

*Religionswissenschaft* understands itself as a branch of the Humanities. It is an anthropological discipline, studying the religious phenomenon as a creation, feature and aspect of human culture. The common ground on which students of religion *qua* students of religion meet is the realization that the awareness of the numinous or the experience of transcendence (where these happen to exist in religions) are – whatever else they may be – undoubtedly empirical facts of human existence and history, to be studied like all human facts, by the appropriate methods. Thus also the value-systems of the various religions, forming an essential part of the factual, empirical phenomenon, are legitimate objects of our studies. On the other hand the discussion of the absolute value of religion is excluded by definition, although it may have its legitimate place in other, completely independent disciplines such as e.g. theology and philosophy of religion.'

#### 1.4 Reservations about the objectivity in the academic study of religion

It is important to be aware of the history of the academic study of religion, and of the specific disciplines that it comprises, because it influenced the kind of works that were published in this field, and which in turn influence new works, and because the unresolved issues derived from this history help understand the contemporary controversy surrounding the study of religion.

The indebtedness of the historical and sociological study of religion to theology may partially help to explain why people outside academia often confuse the historical and sociological study of religion with theology (Junginger 2006, 8). And it probably also explains the more worrisome confusion between the two fields made by scholars of other social sciences (Wiebe 2005, 110-111). This is exemplified by Malory Nye (2000, 7) when he says of scholars of cultural studies that: 'It seems that the majority of those working in

cultural studies have yet to be convinced that religious studies scholars are not closet theologians.’

There is not only a confusion between the aims of both disciplines – theology and the academic study of religion –, but there is actually the suspicion and concern (also shared by several scholars of religious studies) that scholars of religion may have a ‘hidden theological agenda’ (Benavides 2000, 113, 120n8; Fitzgerald 2001, 111; Korom 2001, 108; McMullin 2013a, 75, 78-80; McCutcheon 2013, 97; Saler 2001, 103; see further references in Wiebe 2005, 100, 103-104, 107). Besides religious illiteracy, another consequence of the secularisation’s<sup>76</sup> effect of confining religion to the private sphere is the enrolment in programs concerning the study of religion by students with personal religious interests, which prompts some scholars in religious history to fear a reconessionalisation of the discipline (Durand 2009, 59-60). And while this does not benefit the field of the academic study of religion, it may not benefit students as well: as remarked by Russel McCutcheon (2013, 94), students who seek personal answers in the study of religion and to reinforce their faith through it may be left disappointed and even see their faith shaken, which leads him to conclude that ‘the academic study of religion is therefore not the province of personal faith’.

The concerns about a theological commitment by scholars of religion seem to be stronger in the United States of America<sup>77</sup> where, as in the United Kingdom, there is a close proximity, at the institutional level, between theological and religious studies. For example, in the University of Chicago the academic study of religion is conducted at the Divinity School (Benavides 2000, 120n8; Fitzgerald 2006, 404-410; McMullin 2013a, 74; McMullin 2013b, 53; M. Taylor 1998, 10). Contrarily to this proximity, in Germany, for instance, there is a sharper distinction between theological departments and the *Religionswissenschaft* or religious studies departments. For example, the academic study of religion in the University of Erfurt is pursued at the *Max-Weber-Kolleg*, signalling its affiliation with the social sciences. The point being made here is not that it necessarily follows that the pursuit of the academic study of religion in a confessional institutional

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<sup>76</sup> This term is used for convenience’s sake. On its usefulness see, for instance, Santos (2009, 306-307).

<sup>77</sup> That is by all means not negligible at all, as discussions in North America often reverberate through the remaining academic world, not least due to English being the primary language of academic internationalisation.



setting will not be objective, while its pursuit in a non-confessional setting will, but that such context may encourage doubts about the objectivity of scholars of religion<sup>78</sup>.

And, as it was hinted above, the study of religion in the United States was largely dominated between the 1950s and 1990s by the Chicago School of Religious Studies led by Mircea Eliade (Apple 2013, 47), which can further fuel the reservations concerning the contemporary study of religion (Alles 2005, 8762). In reshaping the identity of their field, several scholars of religion criticised the Eliadean paradigm throughout the 1980s and 1990s<sup>79</sup> (e.g., Segal 2013; and McMullin 2013b; see references in Sheedy 2013, 25; and in Hulsether 2004, 356–57), while others sought to right what they perceived as excessive and unjustified criticism of Eliade’s work (e.g., Ebersole 2013).

Neil McMullin (1989b, 76-77) goes even beyond the influence of the Eliadean paradigm and of the Chicago School of Religious Studies and points out the role universities play, since their inception in the Middle Ages to this day, in supporting the state and the power establishment. Indeed, universities and scholars are not divorced from the rest of society, no matter how high in the ‘ivory tower’ they may seem to be, and the fact that they may work in favour of and be influenced by political, or other ideologies ought to be borne in mind, regardless of whether those ideologies are considered ‘good’ (e.g., religious freedom) or ‘bad’ (e.g., religious ‘fundamentalism’<sup>80</sup>).

This raises the question of whether any scientific enterprise, and the study of religion in particular, can really be neutral and objective. For several authors that is not the case (Alles 2005, 8766; M. Taylor 1998, 9–10; see further references in Wiebe 2005, 100, 117). Picking up McMullin’s (2013a, 77) argument again: ‘One of the myths of the modern academy is that of “objective scholarship”: we must ask about how indoctrinated the intellectual elite of modern Western societies are, about the ways in which they/we function as the “secular priesthood” (in N. Chomsky’s words) of the state.’

Besides the ideologies of Western academia and societies, scholars of religion need to be particularly aware of whether or not their personal convictions are getting in the way

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<sup>78</sup> Discussions about the objectivity of scholars in institutional settings that could suggest otherwise seem to be especially concerned with giving credibility to the academic study of religion, in particular to scholars of other sciences.

<sup>79</sup> However, critiques to Eliade’s methods and approaches had begun at least since the 1950s (Sheedy 2013, 24 with references).

<sup>80</sup> On this topic see e.g., von Stuckrad (2006, vii–viii) and Gharavi (2012, 9–10).

of a scientific and objective study of religion, and of the origins both of their field and of their subject of study<sup>81</sup>. This is valid for other fields and for other subjects of study as well. For example, personal fascination<sup>82</sup> with the statements of the Negative Confession of the Book of the Dead's Chapter 125 may lead an Egyptologist to force on the text an ethical component that might not be there.

If the disciplines that constitute the academic study of religion might lend themselves to a more religious, and less scientific study of religion, then the latter should perhaps be studied by other disciplines. This was the suggestion made by Timothy Fitzgerald: when used without a theological agenda and as a viable analytical category, religion is undistinguishable from culture and there can be societies without religion but not societies without culture (2000b, 17, 19-20, 244-46, 249). Furthermore, 'the best work being produced in religious studies departments is not essentially any different from the work being done in departments of cultural studies or departments of cultural anthropology' (2000b, 221). Given these reasons, and because of the theological and western colonialist baggage of the term religion, Fitzgerald proposes 1) its abandonment as an analytical category (2000b, 11, 106; 2001, 112), the use of the term 'religion' being reserved to describe its history and ideological uses in the European and American settings (2000b, 106), and 2) its replacement by 'culture' and subsequent study under cultural studies and cultural anthropology, as these two disciplines are better equipped than religious studies to self-reflexively criticise the category of 'culture'<sup>83</sup> (Fitzgerald 2000b, 235; Fitzgerald 2001, 112). Based on his research experience with Ambedkar Buddhism, to which the category religion proved unhelpful, he has further proposed the use of 'ritual, politics, and soteriology' as more useful analytical categories (2000b, 121-22, 128-31).

However, as recognised by Fitzgerald himself (2000b, xi, 221, 223, 237), and argued by several authors, the category of 'culture' is no less problematic than the category of 'religion', as there is also a multitude of definitions of it, and its introduction to and use

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<sup>81</sup> In other scientific disciplines scholars may also feel attracted to elements of those disciplines in a way that hinders their critical judgment and leads them away from a more scientifically accurate approach – for instance, excessive fascination with exotic societies and cultural elements in anthropology (Auffarth and Mohr 2006, xxviii; see also Smith 1982, xii), and with the Egyptian official propaganda in Egyptology (Baines 1991, 127; Wilkinson 2010, 9).

<sup>82</sup> This term will be discussed below.

<sup>83</sup> See also the positive opinion of Auffarth and Mohr (2006, xxxiii) on moving the study of religion to cultural studies.

in anthropology since 1871 served ideological purposes as well (Saler 2001, 103-104). As remarked by Frank Korom (2001, 109) and Russel McCutcheon (2000, 133), the categories of ritual, politics, and soteriology have their own ideological baggage and are as problematic as the category of religion, a conclusion with which Timothy Fitzgerald agrees, recognising that these categories need to be used carefully (2001, 111).

Disagreeing with Fitzgerald, McCutcheon (2000, 133) argues for the utility of the term 'religion' as an analytical category: 'not every use of this term need be attended by the kind of ideological mechanisms that both he and I see operating in its *sui generis* versions. If "religion" is merely a descriptive tag placed on certain sorts of human behaviours – a tag that is dropped once the acts become theorised as social or political, for example – then it has no more or less utility than naming an act in any other fashion.' Other authors (e.g., Saler 2001, 103; Benavides 2001, 105) have also argued against the need to jettison the term 'religion', claiming that, despite its problems and as long as one is explicit about what one means by it (which, however, is part of the problem for Fitzgerald 2000a, 103), it remains a valid category.

Perhaps it is enough for scholars to be aware of the conditions and causes of the construction of religion, and of its interdependence with other social and cultural phenomena, as have done authors like Jonathan Smith, Timothy Fitzgerald, Russel McCutcheon, and Talal Asad. In his presentation as member of The Critical Religion Association, in the association's blog<sup>84</sup>, Fitzgerald explains the relevance of that kind of deconstructive work:

To deconstruct religion is not to be anti-religious; it is to ask what people mean when they talk about religion as though it picks out some obvious kind of practice. It is to question why some practices and values are classified as religious and others as secular. Such diverse ideologies as Nationalism and Liberal Economics seem to me to share many family resemblances<sup>85</sup> to what are typically classified as 'religions', yet they are typically classified as 'secular'. On the other hand, practices such as meditation and yoga have family resemblances with scientific empirical observation but they are usually classified as 'religion'. How can we account for these classificatory practices? I argue that 'religions' are modern inventions which are made to appear ubiquitous and, by being removed to a marginal, privatised domain, serve to mystify the supposed natural rationality of the secular state and capital. Feminist deconstruction of gender categories shows how

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<sup>84</sup> <http://criticalreligion.org/scholars/university-of-stirling/timothy-fitzgerald/>, accessed January 22, 2016.

<sup>85</sup> On this notion and on its application to the study of religion see Fitzgerald (2000b, 72–97).

power constructions which serve male interests come to appear as natural and inevitable. This insight provides a powerful analogy to the mystification of power relations by the modern invention of religious and secular domains. The secular nation state and capital appear as natural and unavoidable, ‘in the nature of things’. In some ways analogous to feminist critical deconstruction of gender categories, I strive to demystify the category religion and its ideological deployments in the making of capitalist ‘reality’<sup>86</sup>.

The deconstructive work needs not only be applied to religion, but also to the very disciplines from which that deconstruction is made. Mark Taylor has argued for a similarity between methodology and theology, inasmuch as methodology occupies the place previously held by theology as ‘queen of the sciences’ (1998, 13; see further references in Wiebe 2005, 113). Gustavo Benavides (2000, 119) has also argued that the raw materials used in the manufacture of religion – namely, the emotions identified by Rudolf Otto – are essentially the same involved ‘in the manufacture of theories about religion, and in the manufacture of theories about theories of religion’: ‘Besides the fear that forces North American academics ritually to resort to a mudra-like gesture that allows them to exorcise humanist and modernist demons such as ‘human’, ‘true’, ‘cause’, ‘fact’, ‘need’ by means of quotation marks drawn in the void, there is the *fascinans* of the latest theories and the *augustum* embodied by cutting-edge theorists. There is, also, the ranking determined by one’s identification with theories and theorists.’

Perhaps more than replacing ‘religion’ by another category, which is bound to be no less problematic (Saler 2001, 104), it is important to be aware of the personal and institutional influences on how one studies religion, and of the complex manufacture of religion as a scholarly category.

That awareness is of especial relevance for students of ancient religions. To begin with, several ancient cultures, particularly the preclassical ones, did not have a word for religion. That does not mean that those cultures did not have religion, but it ought to alert us to the fact that what we claim to identify as religion in the cultures of Antiquity is, to a significant degree, a product of Western institutions, both religious and ‘secular’.

The genealogies of religion in the West influence modern interpretations of ancient religions. For example, whether one considers ‘Akhenaton’s religion’ as monotheistic or not depends, in some measure, on how similar to the Jewish and Christian monotheisms

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<sup>86</sup> On this subject see Fitzgerald (2001, 111).

one thinks it might have been (see e.g., Baines 2009, 104-105). Not properly contextualised, the term ‘personal piety’, often used for the sake of convenience to describe a kind of religiosity in several ancient religions, may force on the ancient sources a Christian connotation (see e.g., Luiselli 2014, 105). And at least in Egyptology it is still popular to place emphasis on religious beliefs, as opposed to practices, an emphasis that originated, as mentioned above, with the Protestant Reformation (Nye 2008, 107).

The nature of the archaeological and textual records of ancient cultures, and the priority given to those sources by the disciplines which study them may combine with the history of the emergence of the scholarly category of religion. For example, the priority given by Egyptology to archaeological sources of religious nature, which were built in less perishable materials, together with the gradual separation and exclusion of religion from politics and from the public space in the West, has led many to state that religion was everywhere and that it was inseparable from politics. To some extent this is debatable, as the lack of many sources, either lost forever or not yet unearthed, precludes a larger picture of the Egyptian religiosity (see Quirke 1994, 222-23). And even if it is accurate to say that religion and politics were inextricable, in the construction of Egyptology, and of other disciplines that study cultures of Antiquity, both were kept separate as analytical categories. The same holds true for magic. By the influence of Christianity on important nineteenth century anthropologists, magic was interpreted as different and separable from religion. Since then that opposition was revised and it is widely accepted that in ancient cultures, as well as in several indigenous societies, magic and religion are not opposed to each other, but are instead complementary. Nonetheless, religion and magic are also kept apart as separate analytical categories. It is not argued here that it is unhelpful to keep these categories distinct, only that such distinction is constructed and is part of how the genealogies of religion in the ‘West’ contributed to construct the study of other cultures.

Returning to Fitzgerald’s suggestion that religion should not be studied under religious studies and related disciplines, it is relevant to note the suggestion by other authors that religion might be studied under the field of the academic study of religion as long as its disciplines are open to contributions from the natural sciences, such as cognitive science and evolutionary psychology (e.g., Saler 2001, 104; see further references in Hughes 2013, 12–13). For example, Benson Saler (2001, 104) argues that ‘the findings of

students of religion should be compatible with the findings of the sciences, particularly those sciences that deal with what means to be human.’

Behind the appeal to use methods and approaches from the natural sciences lies often the criticism that humanistic methodologies are not enough, and, at its extreme, that they are too subjective and imprecise<sup>87</sup>. For instance, in anthropology, which has been at the crossroads between humanism and naturalism, there were authors who shunned empirical science, while others denounced it as a ‘literary enterprise’ and sought ‘to “purify” anthropology of’ its hermeneutic tradition through cognitive science and evolutionary psychology (Morris 2006, 2–3). It has been argued, however, that, in social sciences like anthropology and history both approaches can be complementary<sup>88</sup>.

Despite their at times extreme epistemological relativism, movements like postmodernism and the linguistic turn are certainly important for their legacy to the social sciences. In what concerns the study of religion, multiculturalism and multidisciplinary are important parts of that legacy (M. Taylor 1998, 15). And scientific approaches, from cognitive science and evolutionary psychology, for instance, are undoubtedly a significant part of that multidisciplinary<sup>89</sup>. Therefore, humanist and subjective methodologies, alongside naturalist and objective ones, certainly have their place in the academic study of religion.

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It was here acknowledged that the academic study of religion has a long history, as well as a significant debt to theology, and that because of such indebtedness there are concerns about the scientificity of the historical and sociological study of religion. Those concerns are justified because many scholars have engaged in the theological study of religion while claiming, and some no doubt often seeking, to study it scientifically.

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<sup>87</sup> On the criticism of history as part of the linguistic turn see Iggers, Wang, and Mukherjee (2008, 304) and Mohn (2006, 869-70).

<sup>88</sup> See Brian Morris (2006, 2) on this claim for anthropology, and Iggers, Wang, and Mukherjee (2008, 389) for history.

<sup>89</sup> See, however, the argument, by Benavides (2000, 117), that postmodernist approaches and cognitive science are not readily compatible.

## 2. Social Setting of the Instructions

### 2.1 Instructions genre

In the modern interpretation and translation of the ancient Egyptian culture groups of texts were identified as ‘literature’. As with ‘religion’, ‘literature’ – as a ‘field of cultural activity’ (Nye 2008, 18)<sup>90</sup> encompassing texts which contain and express, *inter alia*, cultural values<sup>91</sup>, as well as an author’s views and experiences on a given subject, and whose scope of use ranges from leisure to individual and collective formation and to symbol of status – also has its own genealogies as a Western construction. Thus, the category of literature in contemporary England or Russia, for example, is not the same as, say the category of literature in Arabic countries. Therefore, ancient Egyptian literature is expectable to differ from any of these literatures. However, and again as with religion, common points exist that enable us to use the category of literature cross-culturally. At any rate, the differences that exist between ancient and Western literatures ought to be borne in mind, especially when comparisons between the two are made with the intent of enlightening ancient attitudes towards literature. Such comparisons need not be discontinued<sup>92</sup>, but analogies with other literary traditions may prove useful as well (Quirke 2008, 28).

Western literature comprises several genres, whose boundaries tend to not be very fluid, although they are not completely airtight either, as literary works may combine different aesthetic and content elements of different genres. In ancient Egypt the boundaries of genres seem to have been more blurred<sup>93</sup>, and a difficulty felt in the attempt to trace the genres of ancient Egyptian literature arises from the lack of clear markers for genres which may have been either unattested in the evidence or are yet to be discovered. A notable exception is the instructions genre, *sb3.yt*.

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<sup>90</sup> As mentioned above, Malory Nye makes this statement concerning religion. This point may also be extended to literature.

<sup>91</sup> These may be attributed to and recognised in a text immediately after its composition or long after (see Hagen 2012, 56-58).

<sup>92</sup> For a helpful example, which is mentioned in more detail below, see Parkinson (2002, 54).

<sup>93</sup> As noted by Stephen Quirke (2004, 24, 26), a number of features, such as narrative mode, are shared by texts associated with a literary context and by texts with a non-literary function, such as legal texts.

A number of texts have the marker *sb3.yt*, ‘instruction’ or ‘teaching’, in their title, which may indicate genre awareness, as argued by Fredrik Hagen (2012, 31), although Ronald Williams argued that the title *sb3.yt* need not indicate a genre (1981, 7). Many of the compositions bear the title *ḥ3.t-ꜥ m sb3.yt jr.n*<sup>94</sup> *NN*, ‘beginning of the instruction made by NN’<sup>95</sup>. This version was the one used in Middle Kingdom compositions<sup>96</sup>. In the title of several New Kingdom instructions the term *mtr.t* was introduced as a qualifier of *sb3.yt* (as in the instructions *of Ani* and *of Amennakht*<sup>97</sup>), although it could also be used by itself (for instance, in the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM 10474, v. 1.2, and in the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4, v. 22.14). As argued by Nili Shupak (1993, 35), *mtr.t* is a polysemous term. By itself it also means ‘instruction’, but it is arguable that it has a more practical overtone as well as the nuanced connotation of oral instruction on ethical values, in contrast to the more abstract *sb3.yt* as written instruction on professional competencies (Laisney 2007, 24 with n. 20; Moers 2010, 688; Quack 1994, 83n3; Shupak 1993, 36, 361-62n8, 363n23). ‘When *mtr.t* appears in *parallelismus membrorum* with *sb3.yt*, the latter term may well be understood to designate a manual for professional training, i.e., the two terms complement each other to form a single concept – a dual instruction embracing both professional training and rules of ethical conduct’ (Shupak 1993, 36), and *sb3.yt mtr.t* may further designate an instruction based on the personal experience of the author who also has

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<sup>94</sup> *jr.n*, according to Hagen (2012, 31).

<sup>95</sup> The copy in P. Prisse of the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* is an exception as the title reads *sb3.yt n(j)t [...]* *ptḥḥtp*, ‘Instruction of [...] Ptahhotep’. Other copies of this instruction have the other, fuller version (e.g., P. BM EA 10509 = L2, § D1). However, as the beginning of the L1 copy is lost, it is impossible to know whether P. Prisse is the only exception or not. See also Hagen (2012, 219-20).

<sup>96</sup> Namely, the *Instruction of Amenemhat I* (P. Millingen, § H1a), the *Instruction of Khety* (P. Sallier II = P. BM EA 10182, § 1.1), the *Instruction of Hordjedef* (O. Munich 3400, § H1.1), the *Instruction of a Man for His Son* (L. BM EA 10258, §§ 0.1-0.2), the *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu* (P. Rifeh = P. London UC 32781, § 1.1). The beginning is absent from the fragmentary instructions *of Oxford*, *for Kagemni*, *of P. Ramsseum II*, and *of Lahun*. The title is also absent from the fragmentary beginning of the *Instruction for the King Merikare*.

<sup>97</sup> This was not the case with the *Instruction of Amenemope*, but the prologue of this text placed the terms *sb3.yt*, *mtr.w* (derived from *mtr.t*), and *tp-rd* in parallelism (Vernus 2010a, 15). According to Nili Shupak, unlike *sb3.yt* and *mtr.t*, *tp-rd* has a harder tone as it often indicates an order given by a superior to a subordinate (1993, 39-40, 364-65 n. 44; see also Hagen 2012, 191). In the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM 10474 recto, v. 1.3, *tp-rd* has the sense of ‘rule’ (*règle*, Laisney 2007, 24). Christopher Eyre also translates *tp-rd* in this passage of the *Instruction of Amenemope* as ‘rules’, but argues that it has the sense of ‘detailed guidance, given by a superior or expert’ (2013, 60), instead of a legal sense like the term *hp*, ‘law’ (60-61).



a close relation with the recipient of the instruction<sup>98</sup> (Shupak 1993, 36-38; Vernus 2010a, 15)<sup>99</sup>. As pointed out by Andreas Dorn (2004, 51), the composite term *sb3.jt-mtr.t* also distinguishes the New Kingdom instructions from the previous ones, but does not necessarily create a new, separate genre.

The compositions mentioned so far share a number of features – such as the address of the instruction by a father to his son, the exposition of counsel in short, thematic maxims (although a few of them are more descriptive), and the preference for themes concerning professional and ethical conduct (see also Shupak 1993, 361n6) –, but also differ from each other in important ways<sup>100</sup>; as argued by Hagen (2012, 31), these texts ‘were not composed based on a “blueprint” of a genre.’ These compositions alone do not entirely make up the *sb3.yt* genre, as other texts, with significant differences from the instructions, are also titled *sb3.yt*. Examples of those texts are: the ‘encyclopaedic’ list known as the *Onomasticon of Amenemope*<sup>101</sup>, a calendar of lucky and unlucky days, Late-Egyptian Miscellanies<sup>102</sup>, and the biography of the tomb of the High Priest of Amun, Amenemhat which begins with *h3t-<sup>c</sup> m sb3.yt jr.n [...] jmn-m-h3.t* (Hagen 2012, 32; Shupak 1987, 108; 1993, 32; Moers 2010, 687). There are also references to the *sb3.yt* of Akhenaton, but no written record of an instruction of Akhenaton was found (Hagen 2012, 32; but see Vernus 2010a, 12 on the oral *sb3.yt* of kings<sup>103</sup>) and, as argued by Hagen (2012, 116), not every reference to a *sb3.yt* need to indicate a literary work in that genre.

<sup>98</sup> This is all the more probable, insofar as it is plausible that the individuals to whom New Kingdom instructions were ascribed were in fact real and not fictitious (Dorn 2004, 52n75; Hagen 2012, 62; Moers 2010, 688).

<sup>99</sup> For additional meanings of *sb3.yt* and *mtr.t* see Shupak (1993, 31-39) and Vernus (2010a, 45-47).

<sup>100</sup> For example, the instructions of *Ani* and of *Amennakht* include a dialogue with their claimed recipients, a feature absent from the other instructions, and the tenor of the dialogues also differs significantly in those two instructions.

<sup>101</sup> This is the only onomasticon whose beginning is preserved (Quirke 2004, 41).

<sup>102</sup> Where the title is preserved, the Late-Egyptian Miscellanies were designated as *sb3.yt s<sup>c</sup>.t* (Baines 1996, 168n76; Hagen 2012, 32, 123; 2006, 85). The title *h3.t-<sup>c</sup> m sb3.yt s<sup>c</sup>.t jr.n zh3.w N ... n hr.j-<sup>c</sup>=f N*, ‘beginning of the epistolary instruction made by the scribe N ... for his assistant N’, is attested in e.g., P. Sallier I = P. BM EA 10185 recto, 3.4 (this title version does not include the *n hr.j-<sup>c</sup> N* part), and in P. Lansing = BM EA 9994 recto, v. 1.1 (the title in this manuscript is corrupt before the *n hr.j-<sup>c</sup> N* part) (Gardiner 1937, 79, 99). The title on an, apparently yet unnamed, ostrakon found in TT 400 presents a slight variation: *h3.t-<sup>c</sup> m sb3.yt s<sup>c</sup>.t jr.n zh3.w pthh<sup>t</sup> dd n hr.j-<sup>c</sup>=f n(j)-sw-jmn*, ‘beginning of the epistolary instruction made by the scribe Ptahhotep who speaks to his assistant Nesamun’ (Végh 2016, 149-50).

<sup>103</sup> In the Middle Kingdom stela Berlin 1204 of Ikhernofret in Abydos, the king believes he will succeed in the task of refurbishing the temple of Osiris as he was educated in the palace. The sentence *dr-n.tt jnj(.w)=k js pw m sb3.tj hm=j* (G.6; Landgrafova and Dils 2014) is translated, *inter alia*, by Christopher Eyre as ‘because the fact is you have recourse to the teaching (*sb3yt*) of my Majesty’ (2013, 57). The other possible translation,

What seems to unify these texts under the label *sb3.yt* is the aim of teaching, even if the subjects are different (Hagen 2012, 43; Shupak 1993, 32, 49): for instance, while the traditional instructions specialise in the teaching of professional and ethical values, other *sb3.yt*-labelled texts are concerned with more pragmatic matters (e.g., the *Onomasticon of Amenemope* and the calendar of lucky and unlucky days)<sup>104</sup>. As we will see below, a pedagogical use of the classical instructions seems to have been more common in the New Kingdom, and, as remarked by Fredrik Hagen (2012, 32, 43), the examples of the other *sb3.yt*-labelled texts come from the New Kingdom, and that may signal a broadening in this period of the *sb3.yt* genre in its pedagogical sense (cf. Williams 1981, 7).

Despite the wide scope of the *sb3.yt* genre, Egyptologists have tended to group the classical instructions, or ‘maxim texts’ in John Foster’s terminology (2001, 503-504), in a subdivision of this genre, a practice justified by what unites those instructions and separates them from the other texts titled *sb3.yt*, and which will be followed here<sup>105</sup>. The instructions

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‘because it is as a pupil of my majesty that you were brought’ (Landgrafova and Dils 2014; Lichtheim 1988, 98), seems more sensible in light of the following statement: ‘(*jw hpr.n=k js m sd.t(j) hm=j sb3.tj w<sup>c</sup> n(j) <sup>c</sup>h=j*) You have indeed grown up as a foster-child of my Majesty, and as the sole pupil of my palace’ (G,6-G,7; Landgrafova and Dils 2014; Lichtheim 1988, 98). Whether one reads *sb3.yt* or *sb3.tj* does not necessarily change the sense, namely that Ikhernefret was raised and taught in the royal palace and possibly under the king’s supervision, and, like the kings’ oral instructions, does not necessarily entail that the king had actually wrote an instruction, in the literary sense, for him.

<sup>104</sup> It should be noted that the subjects taught may not have been at the same level, as the New Kingdom Egyptians possibly distinguished, as we do, between the ethical values of the traditional instructions and the more ‘mechanical’ and ritualistic knowledge of a calendar of lucky and unlucky days. If such a distinction was held, at least in New Kingdom Egypt when other texts bearing the title *sb3.yt* emerged, it may be asked which one was more valued. The answer may not be a straightforward one, as, on the one hand, traditional instructions were among the most popular literary texts in ancient Egypt (Hagen 2012, 82), while, on the other, much of the textual sources surviving from ancient Egypt concern ritual.

<sup>105</sup> Hereafter the texts of this subdivision will be referred to only as ‘instructions’. Of the compositions with *sb3.yt* on their title, the Late-Egyptian Miscellanies from the Ramesside Period may be the closest to the traditional instructions, as they also contain sapiential passages and might also have been used in an educational context (a setting often ascribed to the instructions with basis on their contents and on the purpose they claim to have). However, there are important differences that warrant the separation between the traditional instructions and the Late-Egyptian Miscellanies. To begin with, the Late-Egyptian Miscellanies are, as the name they are known by in Egyptology indicates, a collection of excerpts and passages from different kinds of texts (to some extent the instructions may also be considered collections of maxims, but they all relate to the same genre) (Végh 2016, 153). The texts that make up the Late-Egyptian Miscellanies include instructions (e.g., the *Instruction of Ani*; see Vernus 2010a, 363; Moers 2010, 690), hymns, prayers, letters – fictional or real –, administrative notes, and, in the style of the *Instruction of Khety*, praises of the scribal profession and derogations of other professions, especially the military (Hagen 2006, 86; Moers 2010, 688; Vernus 2010a, 346). They may also include drawings (Hagen 2006, 86). Each miscellany is unique in that each has a different selection of texts, and while some may have equal amount of excerpts, others have a predominance of one type of compositions over the others (Hagen 2006, 86; Végh 2016, 153). But miscellanies are united in that they are concerned with the scribal profession (Végh 2016, 153), even if they may develop that theme differently (Hagen 2006, 86-87). Passages of texts may also be copied autonomously,

may be further divided into ‘private’ and ‘royal’ instructions (see e.g., Parkinson 2002, 109-10; Hagen 2012, 33).

## 2.2 Wisdom Literature

It has also been traditional in Egyptology to consider the instructions part of the broader genre of wisdom literature<sup>106</sup> which, in ancient Egypt, besides the instructions or ‘didactic wisdom literature’<sup>107</sup> (in the terminology of Shupak 1987, 99), is also considered to include other compositions, such as laments (namely the *Admonitions of Ipuwer* and the *Complaints of Khakheperreseneb*), discourses (e.g., of *Sasobek*), the *Prophecy of Neferti*,

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or they may be framed as letters which, as suggested by Hagen, may be an attempt to match the form of the text with the manuscript’s title. Miscellanies have a scribe and an assistant, or apprentice (however, in the extant record, P. Sallier I = P. BM EA 10185 recto does not mention the apprentice, and O. Gardiner 357 does not mention the scribe; Végh 2016, 154). With the exception of P. Sallier I = P. BM EA 10185 recto, all other miscellanies have a scribe and an assistant, or apprentice. Another important difference between the instructions and the Late-Egyptian Miscellanies is that the latter explicitly relate to school. As will be discussed further below, references to the school, to punishments given to lazy and rebel students, and exhortations to study are almost completely absent from the instructions, but abound in the Late-Egyptian Miscellanies (e.g., P. Anastasi IV = P. BM EA 10249 recto, vv. 2.4-3.2, P. Anastasi V = P. BM EA 10244, vv. 8.1-9.1, 17.3-18.5, 22.6-23.6, P. Lansing = P. BM EA 9994 recto, vv. 2.3-3.3, P. Turin A = P. Turin Cat. 1882 verso, vv. 1.5-2.2; see also Vernus (2010, 477-89)). Some authors suggest that the miscellanies were exercises given by an experienced scribe to an apprentice for him to copy as part of advanced learning (e.g., Vernus 2010a, 13, 345-46, 363; Szpakowska 2008, 106; Moers 2010, 688; see also Végh 2016, 153). This interpretation owes much to Adolf Erman’s classification of the miscellanies as ‘school texts’ or *Schülerhandschriften* (see Hagen 2006, 84). However, several uses of the miscellanies and their individual texts were possible: these range from a didactic use, which may have been a secondary use of the texts, to their use as reference works, as templates for letters and other types of writings, and as literary works (Hagen 2006, 86-87, 95-97; Quirke 1996, 383). It is also important to mention that the Late-Egyptian Miscellanies differ particularly from the Middle Kingdom instructions, having more features in common with the New Kingdom instructions (such as the dialogues in the instructions of *Ani* and of *Amennakht*, the fact that both the Late-Egyptian Miscellanies and the New Kingdom instructions may have been authored by historical persons, and themes like the ability to learn versus the strength of one’s natural dispositions and the relationship with god) (Moers 2010, 689-90, 692; Quack 1994, 199). The points of contact between the Late-Egyptian Miscellanies and the New Kingdom instructions (perhaps with the exception of the *Instruction of Amenemope*) may be due to the cultural context shared by the two kinds of compositions (Quack 1994, 199-201), to a common genealogy (Moers 2010, 690), or to a mixture of these and possibly other alternatives. Be that as it may, the Late-Egyptian Miscellanies and the New Kingdom instructions are still different enough to justify modern scholars in considering them separately.

<sup>106</sup> It is arguable that this genre occupies the cultural place of works composed by individuals with valued life-experience and who may or may not be literate and learned, and which teach, or simply promote ethical and life values, and sometimes professional conduct. Wisdom texts are often the work of respected individuals, and may be taught to young generations or transmitted throughout time as cultural works. This genre will be further discussed below. Wisdom literature is probably present in cultures worldwide, and displays significant similarities, despite important differences, among the cultures of the Fertile Crescent. For a criticism of the genre of wisdom literature in Mesopotamia see Buccellati (1981, 44).

<sup>107</sup> In the terminology of Miriam Lichtheim (1996, 243) ‘didactic literature’ is synonymous with ‘wisdom literature’.

and other literary texts (viz., the Eloquent Peasant and the *Dialogue of a Man and His Ba*) (Parkinson 2002, 110; Shupak 1987, 100; 1993, 25-26; Adams 2008, 15-16). These texts may be termed ‘speculative-pessimistic wisdom’ literature (Shupak 1993, 18<sup>108</sup>) or ‘reflective wisdom texts’ (Parkinson 2002, 110). Nili Shupak also counts ‘school texts’<sup>109</sup> as part of the Egyptian wisdom literature. Examples of these are: the *Kemit*, *Late Egyptian Miscellanies*, onomastica such as the *Onomasticon of Amenemope*<sup>110</sup>, model letters, and texts praising the superiority of the scribe – a subgenre which emerged in the Ramesside period based on the *Instruction of Khety* (Hagen 2012, 33; Quirke 1996, 382) –; since Middle Kingdom instructions were copied by students in the New Kingdom, the author also counts some of the classics, such as the instructions of *Khety* and *Amenemhat I* as school texts (Shupak 1987, 100, 105; 1993, 26-28). Biographical inscriptions from tombs of high officials might also be considered part of the genre of wisdom literature (Shupak 1993, 28-29; Vernus 2010a, 47-49; Williams 1981, 1).

It is certainly beyond doubt that these several texts share several similarities, both in form and content, and have a significant degree of affinity, which John Foster designates as ‘embeddedness’ (2001, 503). However, to what extent they may be considered wisdom texts is debatable, starting with the fact that the ‘Egyptian wisdom literature’ is a construction of Western academia. The label ‘wisdom literature’ was adopted by Egyptologists from biblical studies (Lichtheim, 1997, 7; Schneider 2008, 34; Williams 1981, 1, 7), and, as argued by Miriam Lichtheim (1997, 5, 8, 91, 93), wisdom, in the sense of the ‘intellectual phenomenon’<sup>111</sup> of classical Greece (= *Sophia*) and biblical tradition (= *Hokhma*), emerged only in the second half of the first millennium BCE with Greek philosophy and with the personification of *Hokhma*, ‘Wisdom’, in the biblical Book of Proverbs. According to Lichtheim, this kind of more refined concept of wisdom was not manifest in the Egyptian instructions before the late instructions of *Ankhsheshonqi* and of *Papyrus Insinger*. Still according to Lichtheim (1997, 7-8, 93), since no Egyptian word denoted the concept of wisdom in the Hellenistic and biblical sense prior to these two

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<sup>108</sup> In a previous publication the author had used the term ‘speculative wisdom literature’ alone (Shupak 1987, 100; see also Williams 1981, 1).

<sup>109</sup> As will be discussed below, not all copies of texts used in schools, such as model letters, were actually used in education.

<sup>110</sup> For a convenient introduction to the onomastica see Quirke (2004, 41).

<sup>111</sup> The expression is of Buccellati (1981, 44).

instructions, possibly apart from *rh*<sup>112</sup>, it follows that ‘wisdom’ in that sense was simply absent from ancient Egypt until the Ptolemaic Period. The author does concede, however, that, despite the absence of a lexeme for wisdom in ancient Egypt, there were ‘wisdom attitudes’ (Lichtheim 1997, 93).

Lichtheim’s points are certainly well taken and her argument reminds us that the category of wisdom literature is, to a certain extent, alien to ancient Egypt. But so is literature, piety, religion, and so on. In the same way that it may be argued ‘that in many cultural contexts there is a field of cultural activity that is labelled as “religion”’ (Nye 2008, 18), it may also be argued that wisdom literature is an aspect of several cultures as well. In the case of religion, Christianity is an important reference in the cross-cultural study of religions, as it was involved, even if indirectly, in the origins of the academic study of religion. In the case of the cross-cultural study of wisdom literature, the references are, following authors like Miriam Lichtheim, the Hellenistic and the biblical wisdom literatures, and it is arguable that several cultures have texts whose cultural place is similar to the ones of the latter two wisdom literatures, pre-classical Egypt being no exception. Therefore, instead of refraining from using the word ‘wisdom’ for pharaonic Egypt<sup>113</sup>, it might be sufficient to bear in mind that, like religion, it has historically located genealogies and that, as an academic category, it might be used cross-culturally. We will return to this argument below.

### 2.3 Didactic Purpose and Function of the Instructions?

While a cross-cultural use of the category of wisdom literature may be useful in the analysis of part of a culture’s literature, an uncritical use of that category may lead to the imposition of exogenous expectations and benchmarks on the analysed material. That seems to have been the case with the study of the ancient Egyptian wisdom literature. A number of studies takes for granted the didactic purpose the instructions claim to have, and assume they were used above all in a didactic context (Shupak 1993, 31, 32, 350; Williams 1972, 215-217). For instance, Nili Shupak (1993, 32) stated that: ‘All of these works [the

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<sup>112</sup> See also Hagen (2012, 43-44 with n. 14).

<sup>113</sup> In the same way that Timothy Fitzgerald suggested to abandon the term ‘religion’.

ones titled *sb3.yt*] served as textbooks in Egyptian schools.’ To be sure, instructions do have a didactic tenor (Hagen 2012, 43, 60), and were certainly used in an educational context (Fox 1996, 229), even if particularly since the Second Intermediate Period and with more intensity during the Ramesside Period, as suggested by the available evidence (Hagen 2012, 64; Parkinson 2002, 235-36). But a few questions remain, especially for Middle Kingdom instructions: Were they primarily composed to be used in formal schools or in less formal settings of education? If not, what were they primarily composed for? And were they immediately received in the ways intended by their authors? Besides being used in an educational context, even if that was not their main goal, were they used in other ways? Assuming other uses were made of them, were they used predominantly in education or not? How did the instructions relate to institutions with a possible interest in them, such as schools and the royal court? Was there an interplay between the discourse of the instructions and those institutions as non-discursive formations? And to which social groups, even if within the elite, were the instructions mostly associated? These questions are important to the main topic of this thesis as, concerning the ways *ntr* was used by the authors of the instructions, it matters whether the latter were addressing the audience in an authoritative and prescriptive manner or whether they had a less prescriptive aim in mind. How the instructions were received by their audiences is also of importance to this question, as ‘a reader is as much the defining agent in literature as an author’ (Quirke 2004, 24) and thus the passages involving *ntr* may be received differently depending on who is reading them. Of equal importance is the interplay between discursive and non-discursive formations<sup>114</sup>. These issues will be addressed in the course of the remaining chapter.

In a work on Middle Kingdom literature, Richard Parkinson discussed the issue of the setting of the Middle Kingdom instructions under a section with the suggestive title of ‘Learning Nothing: The Problem of Context’ (2002, 235-41). While not doubting the literal

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<sup>114</sup> A commentator of Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze, gives the following example of an interplay between a discursive formation and a non-discursive one: ‘La prison comme visibilité du crime ne dérive pas du droit pénal comme forme d’expression; elle vient d’un tout autre horizon, “disciplinaire” et non juridique; et le droit pénal, de son côté, produit ses énoncés de “délinquance” indépendamment de la prison, comme s’il était toujours amené à dire, d’une certaine façon, ceci *n’est pas* une prison ... Les deux formes n’ont pas la même formation, la même genèse ou généalogie, au sens archéologique de Gestaltung. Et pourtant il y a rencontre, même se c’est à la faveur d’un tour de passe-passe: on dirait que la prison substitue un autre personnage au délinquant pénal, et, à la faveur de cette substitution, produit ou reproduit de la délinquance, en même temps que le droit produit et reproduit des prisonniers’ (1986, 69). See also Deleuze (1986, 38-41).

sense of *sb3.yt*, Parkinson suggests that these texts ‘belong to the same literary context of entertainment as the tales and discourses’ (235). He grounds his suggestion on two arguments:

1) According to the author, ‘no Middle Kingdom copies [of instructions] show any evidence of having been made by apprentice scribes’, while he considers several Middle Kingdom writing-boards with other texts – ‘model letters, funerary formulae, name lists, and the educational composition *Kemit*’ – to be the product of educational activity due to ‘the temporary nature of their surface’<sup>115</sup> (236).

2) Using a fictionalised framework, ‘teachings signal their cultural role as literary texts by placing wisdom at issue, rendering it problematic, non-pragmatic and fictionalized’ (239). Two cases in point advanced by the author are the two royal instructions of *Amenemhat I* and *for the King Merikare*. The *Instruction of Amenemhat I* ‘states it will teach how to be king (1d)’, but ‘the most instruction that *Amenemhat* gives is that kings should not trust people, and should be morally good’ (238). And ‘the claim of the *Teaching for Merikare* to “give all the laws about kingship” (48b) cannot be taken literally’ (238). Besides their unfulfilled didactic promises, in Parkinson’s view the royal instructions are, to a significant extent, programmatic (240-41). Furthermore, Parkinson supports his position with a comparison with the modern reception of the *Georgics*, composed by the Roman poet Vergil, which, despite being more didactic than the Egyptian instructions in the type of information given, is seen by several modern scholars as a work of fiction instead of didactic poetry (239). However, Parkinson does not see the primary role of the instructions as literary texts incompatible with their later use in a didactic context, and even argues that ‘the idea of literature as play as well as education’ (239) is present in several Middle Kingdom instructions<sup>116</sup>, such as the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* (239-40)<sup>117</sup>.

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<sup>115</sup> We will return to the nature of the material supports further below.

<sup>116</sup> Parkinson (1996, 148) makes a similar argument about narratives. Concerning the representation of solitariness in *Sinuhe* and in the *Shipwrecked Sailor*, the author argues that the solitude of those characters could have been a didactic warning against following in their footsteps. At the same time, and without having to overrule the didacticism of the theme, the representation of the isolation of the main characters could also have been entertaining to officials.

<sup>117</sup> In discussing the informal learning in traditional cultures, Anders Högberg, Peter Gärdenfors, and Lars Larsson (2015, 848) mention that, even though it may be structured to a greater or lesser extent, ‘most researchers agree that play has a vital role in children’s learning’. They also suggest that play not only facilitates learning, but is part of teaching as well, as ‘adults and other peers influence what is allowed in play’ (850). See also Hagen (2012, 54).

The author concedes that the New Kingdom instructions, especially the ones composed and circulated at Deir el-Medina during the Ramesside Period, were written by historical authors and for a didactic context, but argues that their emulation of the Middle Kingdom instructions, which were classics by then, sheds no light on the cultural location and role of their Middle Kingdom counterparts (238-39), a view also shared by Hagen (2012, 41, 58).

The issues raised by Richard Parkinson are doubtless important and must be dealt with in the attempt to establish the *Sitz im Leben* of the Middle Kingdom instructions. Following Parkinson's critical analysis of the primary purpose of the Middle Kingdom instructions, one may ask whether or not the didactic potential of these texts had relevance during the Middle Kingdom, and whether they were later used in an educational context because of their didactic features which combine play with education, or due to their cultural value acquired over time<sup>118</sup>.

In his discussion of the wisdom genre, Fredrik Hagen proposed a reading of the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* through the aspects of 'didactic function', 'poetic qualities', and 'cultural work'<sup>119</sup> (2012, 41-60), and concluded that the aesthetic and poetic features of the instructions do not invalidate their didacticism, even if it may seem so for modern readers (2012, 43, 56, 60, 241; see also Hagen 2006, 87). His conclusion is further supported by the comparison he makes with other modern ethnic literatures, usually performed orally<sup>120</sup>, and which also combine aesthetic elements with a didactic function and thus also combine play with education<sup>121</sup> (54-56). In another study (2013, 189), Hagen further compares the self-conscious expectations of the *Instruction for Kagemni* and of the *Eloquent Peasant* concerning the texts' reception by audiences, which bear remarkable similarities<sup>122</sup>, and

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<sup>118</sup> Concerning the latter hypothesis, one may evoke the narrative of *Sinuhe*, a text that was probably used in New Kingdom education settings without necessarily being didactic (e.g., Hagen 2012, 88).

<sup>119</sup> The author discussed this latter aspect in terms of the reception of the Middle Kingdom instructions in the New Kingdom.

<sup>120</sup> As probably were also at least some of the Egyptian instructions (Hagen 2012, 54).

<sup>121</sup> One may also make a comparison with an example closer to ancient Egypt, namely the biblical book of *Psalms* (Hebrew *Sēfer T'hillīm*, 'Book of Praises'). Although their function may be debatable, several of the *Psalms* also combine sapience with aesthetic features, which further suggests that, contrarily to what modern audiences may expect about sapiential texts, an investment in aesthetics in wisdom literatures does not have to diminish their didactic validity before their audiences.

<sup>122</sup> In the *Instruction for Kagemni* it is stated that, after being given the vizier's writings, the children read them and *wn.jn nfr st hr jb=sn r h.t nb.t n.t{j}<.t> m t3 pn r-dr=f* 'and it was more beautiful/good upon their *jb*-hearts than anything else which is in this entire land' (P. Prisse, 2.6-2.7; Hagen 2013, 189n23; Parkinson



does not alter his previous conclusion: ‘It may be significant that the imagined reader reception of both a Tale and an Instruction are described in almost identical terms, and that they privilege the enjoyment of literature over didactic aspects, but that is not to say that the didactic message would have been peripheral in a reader’s experience of either text’<sup>123</sup> (2013, 189).

Besides the fact that didactic and poetic elements do not necessarily exclude each other, actual uses of texts may transcend an author’s intention. For instance, the instructions may have been composed for a didactic purpose but received as non-didactic literature, and vice-versa. As claimed by the New Philology and reader-response theory (on which see e.g., Hagen 2012, 41-42; Quirke 2004, 24), and as mentioned above, audiences – including readers, copyists, and performers – are of enormous importance in determining how a text is socially perceived and used. Thus, as pointed out by Stephen Quirke (2004, 25), a text may be composed with a functional purpose in mind at first and be later received as a literary piece, and, conversely, a text primarily intended to be read may later be used for a given function, like teaching. In the case of the Egyptian wisdom instructions, authors of the Middle Kingdom instructions may have intended their works to be taken as didactic textbooks, but the contemporary audiences may have used the texts in different ways. Similarly, the later canonisation of the Middle Kingdom instructions as cultural works and use in teaching contexts during the New Kingdom resulted more from the way New Kingdom audiences received them and less from the authors’ intention (but see Hagen 2012, 57; 2013, 188-89). Therefore, an exclusively educational context for the Egyptian instructions is not automatically guaranteed by their didactic and prescriptive mode of address alone, and the way they were used was also subject to several factors<sup>124</sup>. It may be

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1996, 145 with n. 65; Dils 2014; Gardiner 1946, 74, plate XIV). In the *Eloquent Peasant* the appeals of the peasant which were set in writing were sent to the king and *wn.jn nfr st hr [jb]=[f] r [h.t] nb.t n.t.t m t3 pn r-dr=f* ‘and it was more beautiful upon his *jb*-heart than anything else which is in this entire land’ (P. Berlin P 3025 + P. Amherst II (B2), 131-32; Hagen 2013, 189n23; Dils 2014). See other similar sentences from other texts in Hagen (2013, 189n24).

<sup>123</sup> DeBernardi (1994, 870) mentions the argument that poetic form and politics are interrelated among several tribal societies, such as the Khawlani of Yemen, as the display of ‘skill in the manipulation of poetic form ... gives the poet power in the constitution of social reality’ (870). If the same principle is applied to the Egyptian instructions, instead of diminishing the seriousness of their teachings, poetic features might actually contribute to their authoritativeness.

<sup>124</sup> On this point a comparison may be made between performances, as interpreted by Richard Schechner, and the instructions. According to Schechner’s interpretation (1994, 622), all performances are characterized by ‘an interplay between efficacy and entertainment.’ Efficacy-centred performances do something: they

asked, however, exactly what didactic purposes did the Middle Kingdom instructions fulfil in the New Kingdom. This question and its implications will be considered further below, and for now the text-internal evidence of the instructions concerning their primary purpose of composition will be discussed.

### 2.3.1 Text-internal evidence for an educational use of the instructions in the Middle Kingdom

According to Richard Parkinson (2002, 236), the evidence suggesting a use of literary texts in the scribal training of the Middle Kingdom is meagre. He cites only two arguments that could support that use: one of them is the interpretation by Pascal Vernus that the copies of the Instruction of Ptahhotep known as Carnarvon Tablet I, P. BM EA 10371+10435 (= L1), and P. BM EA 10509 (= L2) are part of a textual tradition which departs from the original in P. Prisse and tries to give students more accessible versions of the text (Parkinson 2002, 236; Vernus 2010a, 103-106). Parkinson disagrees with this interpretation, arguing that there are no indications that the L1 copy was a school version,

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transform (one may think of the Opening of the Mouth ceremony in ancient Egypt), propitiate an extra-human agency (as in the Egyptian daily cult to the gods), etc.; in sum, they ‘get “results”’, and, due to their focus on efficacy, criticism is discouraged (1622). Contrarily, in entertainment-centred performances, the main goal is to entertain audiences, transformation need not occur, and criticism is encouraged (622). As Schechner (2006, 79) further explains: ‘A performance is called one or the other because of where it is performed, by whom, in what circumstances, and for what purpose. The purpose is the most important factor determining whether a performance is ritual or not. If the performance’s purpose is to effect change, then ... the performance is a ritual. But if the performance’s purpose is mostly to give pleasure, to show off, to be beautiful, or to pass the time, then the performance is an entertainment. The fact is that no performance is pure efficacy or pure entertainment.’ In a way similar to performances, instructions could also have been used for didactic (= efficacy) and entertainment (= entertainment) purposes without one having to rule out the other completely, and depending on the circumstances they were performed and/or read. At least some of the instructions seem to have been self-conscious about a spectrum encompassing didacticism and entertainment, even if the latter was in the service of the former. For instance, in the prologue of the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* the author claims to teach wisdom according to good speech: ‘(D42) (*h3.t-<sup>c</sup> m tz.w n(.jt) md.t nfr.t*) Beginning of the maxims of good speech ... (D47) (*m sb3 hm.w r rh*) in instructing the ignorant ones in wisdom, (D48) (*r tp-<sup>h</sup>sb n(.jt) md.t-nfr.t*) according to the norm of good speech’ (P. Prisse, D42, D47-D48; see Dils 2014; Allen 2015, 170-71; see also Hagen 2012, 44, 57, 241). Also, in the New Kingdom *Instruction of Amenemope* the author says about his instruction that: ‘(27.7) (*ptr n=k t3y 30 n(.jt) hw.t*) See these thirty chapters:/ (27.8) (*st sd3-<sup>h</sup>r st sb3*) They appeal, they instruct’ (P. BM 10474, chapter 30, vv. 27.7-27.8; see Laisney 2007, 228). The verb *sd3-<sup>h</sup>r* is often taken to have the meanings of ‘please’ (229), ‘amuse’ and ‘delight’ (*Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae*), and ‘entertain’ (Vernus 2010a, 417), but its meaning may be more literal, in the sense of captivating one’s attention (see Nyord 2009, 164n1240). At any rate, *sd3-<sup>h</sup>r* in this chapter of *Amenemope* may refer not only to the humanistic value of the instruction, but also to the way it is written. For another example, see the *Instruction for Kagemni*, P. Prisse, 2.6-2.7.

and that the variations between the P. Prisse and L1 versions, both dating from the Middle Kingdom<sup>125</sup>, do not necessarily imply the latter was used in an educational context. Parkinson's reservations about Vernus's interpretation may be further supported by the fragmentary nature of the L1 papyrus, which renders a full comparison with P. Prisse impossible (Hagen 2012, 131, 219-20), and by the possibility that it was composed before the Prisse version (Hagen 2012, 134, with references).

The second datum cited by Richard Parkinson as a possible indicator of an educational use of literary texts in the Middle Kingdom is a passage from the *Instruction for the King Merikare*, P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, vv. 50-51 (see no. 21), where it is said that the king used to sing the writings: '(m sm3m z(j) jw=k rh.tj 3h.w=f \* (51) p3.n=k hsj zh3.w hn<sup>c</sup>=f\*) Do not kill a man, whose usefulness you know, (51) with whom you sang the writings' (see no. 21). Again, Parkinson shows reservations by pointing out that 'the type of writings and level of education are not specified' (2002, 236).

In his turn, Ronald Williams (1972, 216-17) suggested these writings are the same alluded to at the beginning of the same instruction: '(35) (snj r jt.w=k [t]p(.j)w-<sup>c</sup>=k \* b3k.tw [...] m rh \* m=k mdw.t=sn mn m zh3) **Emulate your fathers and your ancestors.** One works [...] through knowledge/as a knowledgeable one. See, their words are set in stone (lit. established in writing)' (See no. 20). In the interpretation of Williams, the writings referred to on vv. 35 and 51 are 'the classical works of Egyptian literature' (1972, 216). Christopher Eyre (2013, 316) suggested the latter passage has to do with education, based on an analogy with a passage from the New Kingdom *Instruction of Ani* (vv. 20,4-20,5) which he also interprets as referring to education. In this passage, Ani urges his son to become acquainted with the writings (lit. '(<sup>c</sup>k m zh3.w) enter the writings') and says that a scribe (zh3.w) will consult (ndnd) the writings (zh3.w) when assigned to a new position. Although this passage does seem to describe an actual practice, the type of writings is also not mentioned. And given the contrast between the more concrete passage from *Ani* and the more abstract, and possibly idealised<sup>126</sup> passage from *Merikare*, this passage from *Ani* might not be the best analogy to shed light on whether or not the author of *Merikare* was referring to the study of literary texts.

<sup>125</sup> All the other manuscripts with the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* are from later periods.

<sup>126</sup> Due to the reference to the ancestors.

A more suitable parallel to the passage from *Merikare* might be found in the prologue of the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* where the author requests permission from the king Izezi to form a successor and teach him the *shr.w jm(.j).w-h3.t / p3u.w sdm n ntr.w* ‘advice of the ancestors / who listened to the gods’ (P Prisse, vv. D31-D32) (Dils 2014; Hagen 2012, 251-52; Vernus 2010a, 109-110). No direct allusion to any writings is made in this passage, although, besides the oral transmission suggested by the text<sup>127</sup>, the ancestors’ advice could also have been handed down in writing. The author’s claim to pass on the counsels ancestors heard directly from the gods may be interpreted as a legitimation device through mythology<sup>128</sup>: presumably, the author is making a reference to the time when Egypt was ruled directly by the gods<sup>129</sup>. It is possible that v. 35 from *Merikare* also shares from this mythology and, therefore, both passages are here considered unreliable to assess educational practices during the Middle Kingdom.

Perhaps of more relevance in the attempt to demonstrate an educational use of Middle Kingdom instructions from their text-internal evidence is the term used in one of the most famous passages from the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*: ‘(nn msj.y s3w) No one is born wise’ (P. Prisse, D41; Dils 2014; Hagen 2012, 252). According to the analysis of Nili Shupak (1993, 223), *s33*, as verb, noun, and adjective, designates ‘practical skills’ and ‘professional expertise’ of members of the administrative and ruling elite, including the

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<sup>127</sup> Ludwig Morenz (2013, 230) also takes the passage where it is said that *md.t nfr.t*, ‘good speech’, may be found among the women working with the millstones (D58-D59) as a reference to the text’s historical origin in oral transmission (but see Parkinson 2002, 56-57). Michael V. Fox (1996, 237n38) makes a similar observation in discussing the claim by Ben Sira (6:33-35) that folk wisdom in oral form is to be valued (Fox 1996, 236-37). However, the author of *Ptahhotep* seems to be referring to the female servants not as a source of eloquent speech to be sought and consulted, but, above all, to support his case for the need of humility on the part of his disciple. That working at the millstones was perceived as socially downgrading is further indicated by the laments, on the part of the author of the *Admonitions of Ipuwer*, that dependants (*hnm.w*) (P. Leiden I 344 recto, v. 4.8) and (story?) tellers (*sdd.w*) (P. Leiden I 344 recto, v. 4.13) are at the millstones (Enmarch 2014; see also Parkinson 1996 144 with n. 57). Evidence for the written recording of oral performances is perhaps best attested in the *Prophecies of Neferti* (P. Petersburg 1116 B, verso, vv. 15-16; Dils and Felber 2014) and in the *Eloquent Peasant* (P. Amherst I + P. Berlin 3023 (B1), vv. 109-11) (see Eyre 1993, 115).

<sup>128</sup> As also noted by Hagen (2013, 188).

<sup>129</sup> This interpretation may be dependent upon accepting that this cosmological notion, better known to us through the *Book of the Heavenly Cow*, was known by the author and his intended audience. However, all extant New Kingdom copies of the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* with v. D32 preserved have a different version of it. Instead of ‘who listened to the gods’, they have *p3u.yw b3k.w n tp.jw-<sup>c</sup>.w* ‘who worked for the ancestors’ (P. BM EA 10509 = L2, D32; Dils 2014; Hagen 2012, 255). This is curious, as the *Book of the Heavenly Cow* was inscribed in tombs from the New Kingdom. This is speculative, but perhaps the claim in P. Prisse that the ancestors had listened to the gods had become incompatible with an exclusivist discourse of divine kingship by the New Kingdom.

king. This would seem to support the interpretation that the instructions were used in the education of the Middle Kingdom elite. However, in the corpus analysed by Shupak (222), this term occurs in the court writings and in three Middle Kingdom instructions<sup>130</sup>, but is not to be found in the Late-Egyptian Miscellanies – which Shupak takes to be school texts –, in the *Kemit*<sup>131</sup> – a Middle Kingdom document often associated with schooling –, in the New Kingdom instructions, and in other New Kingdom texts associated with teaching, such as the *Letter of Menna*. The absence of *s33* from the mentioned New Kingdom texts may be due to changes in discourse. For the present discussion about the text-internal evidence which may or may not indicate whether the Middle Kingdom instructions were composed for an educational use, it might be more relevant that *s33* – as verb, noun, and adjective – is also absent from the *Kemit*. However, it may be problematic to compare one text with the three Middle Kingdom instructions where this term, as verb and participle/adjective, is attested. And, although primarily a school text, the *Kemit*'s discursive field might not be directly concerned with the officials per se, as were the Middle Kingdom instructions which address the audience as someone already or close to be working as an official or king. By itself, then, the attestation of *s33* might not be indicative of the intent to use a text in an educational setting.

Another textual passage (not mentioned by Parkinson) that may indicate a didactic use of the instructions is found in the *Instruction for Kagemni*:

(2.3) (*rdj.jn t3.t(j) njs.t(w) n3y=f n hrd.w m-ht ʕrk=f shr*) (2.4) (*(r(m)t bj(3).t=sn m jyi.t hr=f*) Now the vizier had his children summoned, after he had gained full knowledge<sup>132</sup> of the nature of (2.4) man and of their character, as what had come to him.

(*dr.n dd.n=f n=sn jr n.t.t nb.t m zh3w hr*) (2.5) (*p3 šfd.w*) In the end he said to them: ‘As for everything which is in writing, on (2.5) this papyrus roll,

(*sdm st mj dd=j st m zni h3w-hr s33.t*) Hear it as I say it! Do not go beyond what is determined!’

(*wn.jn=sn*) (2.6) (*hr rdi.t st hr h.wt=sn wn.jn=sn hr šdi.t st mj n.t.t m zh3*) Now they laid it (the papyrus roll) on their bellies and read it according to what was in writing.

(P Prisse, 2.3-2.6; Dils 2014; Allen 2015, 166)

<sup>130</sup> Namely the ones of *Ptahhotep, of a Man for His Son, and for Merikare*. In these texts only the attestation as verb and adjective is attested.

<sup>131</sup> This result can be confirmed using the statistic research tools of the online database *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae*.

<sup>132</sup> On the meanings of *ʕrk* see Shupak (1993, 62-62).

This passage may describe an actual practice of an officeholder transmitting his knowledge to future officials, but it may also be a fictional element. More specifically, it may be part of the framework of a father instructing his son.

### 2.3.2 Framework of a Father Instructing His Son

The framework of the instructions as works composed by an official to his son, who would eventually succeed to his office (*Instruction of Ptahhotep*, *Instruction for Kagemni*) or pursue a scribal career at another position (*Instruction of Khety*; *Instruction of Ani*), is among the self-reflexive and text-internal indications of the context and purpose of the instructions.

Earlier studies of the Egyptian instructions tended to take this framework at face value and to use it as source for the study of the education of members of the ruling and literate elite. Recent works, however, tend to be more critical of the veracity of the father-son framework and to question its usefulness in the study of the Egyptian educational system. The arguments for the literariness of that framework will be reviewed next, and a contextualisation of those arguments will follow. The arguments for the fictionality of the father-son framework will then be discussed.

Among the authors who take the instructions' framework of a father teaching his son to the letter, is Leo Perdue who claims that, during the Old Kingdom<sup>133</sup>, officials trained their son or another young boy to succeed them, while acknowledging that the “son” in the sapiential literature may refer either to a biological son or to a novice in a guild’ (2008, 18)<sup>134</sup>. According to him, ‘this nomenclature’ persisted ‘even after the establishment of formal schools’ in the Middle Kingdom (18).

Ronald Williams also accepts the existence of an informal structure of training of future officials, at least since the Old Kingdom, whereby an older official ‘trained suitable lads in their own homes as prospective successors’ (1972, 215). He argues that not all of the

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<sup>133</sup> He ascribes the beginning of the instructions genre to this period (2008, 17).

<sup>134</sup> This work is fairly recent, but its views on the framework of a father instructing his son are on par with earlier works.

trainees were the officials' sons, as both Ptahhotep and the magician Djedi, the latter from a tale of P. Westcar, were said to have children despite being 110 years old (215)<sup>135</sup>.

Contrarily to Perdue, Williams seems to suggest that this informal system of training of officials lasted until the first century A.D. (215). Drawing on the Old Kingdom tomb biography of Ptahshepses and on the aforementioned stela of Iikherneferet, he also argues that the training of officials could be pursued at the palace. In the Old Kingdom there seems to have been a less formal structure, as the author of the biography of Ptahshepses claims he was taught at the royal harem, but, according to Williams, the description of Iikherneferet's training suggests the existence of a palace school (216). Still according to Williams, the need for a more formalised educational system would have arisen in the wake of Egypt's political reunification after the First Intermediate Period with the consequent need for an 'enlarged bureaucracy' (216).

Hellmut Brunner (1981, 75; 1991, 10-13) also supports the thesis that, given the small size of the administration during the Old Kingdom, future scribes were taught by older officials, and that the young trainees would move in to the teacher's house in order to become acquainted with the administrative procedures and with the elite milieu. Each official could train several youngsters who were called 'sons' due to the level of intimacy generated<sup>136</sup>. Still according to Brunner, the bloody wars of the First Intermediate Period originated a shortage of personnel in the Egyptian administration which was countered during the Middle Kingdom with the organised training of new officials in schools. Nonetheless, the practice of private education under an official's supervision would have coexisted with education in schools throughout Egyptian History. Brunner (1981, 75-76; 1991, 12-13) also suggests that royal schools had not only the purpose of giving a special education to the sons of powerful families but also of forging a strong sense of loyalty to the future king, as they were educated with the princes (see also Shaw 2012, 53-54; Wilkinson 2010, 253).

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<sup>135</sup> Although it would not necessarily be a biological impossibility, it is in fact very improbable. At any rate, the age of 110 years is symbolic, and therefore its attribution to the author of a wisdom text and to the protagonist of a tale is in all likelihood a literary device.

<sup>136</sup> There is a modern parallel to this theory in modern Brazil, where elementary school teachers are often called 'aunts'. A possible parallel to the designation of the teacher as 'father' may be the German name for a dissertation supervisor, '*Doktorvater*'.

Based on the instructions' text-internal evidence, Michael V. Fox argues that the instructions were not composed in a school setting, nor to be used primarily in schools, although he concedes they were used there secondarily (1996, 229-30). This inference is grounded in how the authors and the recipients of the instructions are presented. To be sure, Fox acknowledges that some of the authors may be pseudographical attributions – namely Amenemhat I, Hordjedef, and the author of the *Instruction for Kagemni* –, but accepts Khety, Amenemope, and Ani as real authors who are presented as scribes and not as teachers<sup>137</sup> (230 with n. 9). He further points out that the sons of Amenemope and Ani, to whom these two authors address their instructions, are described with titles befitting fully trained scribes and not young pupils. Therefore, Fox concludes that 'the ascriptions show no predisposition to see teachers as the authors or scribal students as their audience', and that 'various maxims in the Wisdom Instructions speak of passing this wisdom on to one's own children, never to one's pupils'<sup>138</sup> (230).

Fox also raises a provocative, but important question: 'If the ostensive setting [of a father instructing his son] really is just a cloak for a teacher-pupil school setting, why are the schoolteachers, for a period of some 2600 years, so determined to hide the instructor's role in Wisdom authorship?'<sup>139</sup> (1996, 232). To complete his argument, Michael Fox makes

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<sup>137</sup> Fox is not explicit about his position on the authorship of the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*. It is perhaps worth pointing out that in P. Prisse this instruction is only implicitly addressed to Ptahhotep's son (e.g., D534-D535). But it is explicitly addressed to him in the other versions where the beginning (D29) is preserved (Carnarvon Tablet 1, P. BM EA 10509 (= L2), P. Turin 54014, O. DeM 1232) (see also Hagen 2012, 236).

<sup>138</sup> This seems to be especially apparent in the *Instruction of Khety*, as the author is not presented as a teacher and gives this instruction to his son on the way to school (*ḥ.t-sb3 n.t zh3.w*; P. Sallier II/BM EA 10182, 1.1-1.4). Also, in the *Instruction of Ani*, the author is presented as scribe from the temple of Nefertari (T. Berlin 8934) – probably Ahmes Nefertari (see Vernus 2010a, 332n15) –, and Khonsuhotep seems to have already completed his education by the time the instruction is made for him, as the author mentions the time his mother took care of him while he was attending school (P. Boulaq 4, 20.20-21.1). In the *Instruction of Amennakht*, the author is simply described as a scribe (but see O. Cairo without no., v. 3, where it is said he is of the House of Life), while the addressee, Horimin, is his son, according to one manuscript (O. DeM 1248 + Bruxelles E.6444, v. 4) and assistant (*hr.j-ḥ*), according to another (O. BM EA 41541, v. 4), as pointed out by Fox (1996, 230-31n11). It is also of interest that Horimin's school experience is described in the past (O. BM EA 41541, vv. 1-4, and O. Lacau = HO III/3, vv. 31-38). However, Horimin seems to have been son of Hori, a colleague of Amennakht, and a close friend to Amenemhotep, one of Amennakht's sons; in a graffito Horimin is described as Amenemhotep's brother, which makes more understandable his designation as Amennakht's son in O. DeM 1248 + Bruxelles E.6444 (Bickel and Mathieu 1993, 37). For some reason Amennakht addressed his instruction to his colleague's son; after Amennakht's death, Hori also addressed an instruction to one of his sons, possibly Horicheri (see Fischer-Elfert 2001a, 441, and Bickel and Mathieu 1993, 49-51; see also the doubts about the identification of Hori expressed in Quirke 1988, 161).

<sup>139</sup> Later on in his paper, Fox (1996, 235-36, 238) argues that the authors and redactors of the *Book of Proverbs* were the 'king's men' – that is, the officials, both of high and low ranks, who worked at the court –, and that they conveyed their own programmatic, though not necessarily propagandistic, and idealised view of



a very interesting comparison with the medieval Jewish ethical testaments. As he explains: ‘Ethical testaments are instructions written by men in their maturity for the religious-ethical guidance of their sons and, sometimes, daughters. (These texts are, in fact, descendants of ancient Wisdom Literature, since they use *Proverbs* as a model.) The testaments are family Wisdom but nonetheless literary. The father addresses his son (or sons) and through him speaks to a larger reading audience. The form became popular and was sometimes used as a fictional literary setting, but other testaments were written for an author’s actual children’ (1996, 232). His point seems to be that the biblical and Egyptian instructions were not necessarily composed for schools while claiming to have been composed by a father to his offspring<sup>140</sup>, even though that may be true in some cases, as the example of the medieval Jewish ethical testaments shows that a wisdom text can be genuinely written by a father to his offspring even if the ethical testaments were popular outside the familiar unit and even if in some cases the framework of the testaments was fictional (232). Of interest to our discussion is the implication that, like several medieval Jewish ethical testaments, some Egyptian instructions may accurately point to the motive of their composition by claiming to have been composed by a father intending to impart his life values to his son.

There are at least three important inferences from these works that merit further discussion: 1) in the Old Kingdom tuition for future office-holders in the administration was privately given by older officials; 2) formal schools were established near or during the Middle Kingdom; 3) the self-presentation of the instructions as a text made by a father to his son is indicative of a private primary purpose of composition, as opposed to a literary device hiding a school-oriented primary aim of composition. These three conclusions will now be discussed:

1) *In the Old Kingdom tuition for future office-holders in the administration was privately given by older officials*: The authors reviewed above grounded this claim in the instructions once generally thought to have been composed in the Old Kingdom, namely

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reality. He also argues that the sayings that make up this biblical book were selected by those officials working from the royal court among a body of available sayings (237-39). However, he does not discuss the relationship between the programmatic didacticism of the king’s men and the presentation of proverbs addressed from father, and also mother (231), to son. It is possible to ask whether that framework was added by the court officials to the *Book of Proverbs* from other sources (including oral tradition (on which see 236-37)) as it was presented in those sources, or whether it was adapted to fit the idealised depiction of reality.

<sup>140</sup> For the biblical wisdom literature Fox (1996, 231) gives the example of Prov 4:3.

the ones of *Hordjedef*, *Ptahhotep*, and *Kagemni* (Perdue 2008, 18; Williams 1972, 215; Brunner 1991, 10). However, these instructions were most probably composed in the Middle Kingdom, the period to which these authors ascribe the advent of formal schools. Assuming for now that formal schools were created in this period, even if those Middle Kingdom instructions were not pseudepigraphic, they could hardly be describing a contemporary practice (unless one concedes, as Hellmut Brunner (1981, 75), that such practices were concurrent with formal schools).

Be that as it may, it is certainly possible that until the late Old Kingdom, or even during the whole period (Baines 2007a, 44-45; Fischer-Elfert 2001a, 441-42), some type of more or less informal system of education existed prior to a more extensive reform of the educational system (cf. Quirke 1988, 161), a reform that may have occurred as early as the Fifth Dynasty when major changes in the Egyptian administration took place (Wilkinson 2010, 94-95, 99-100). Veteran high officials may have had a degree of involvement in that kind of informal system of scribal training, directly or through their estates. As pointed out by John Baines (2007a, 45), the framework of a father supervising his son's tuition is also occasionally attested in the funerary discourse of the Old Kingdom elite in the form of the high official's presentation as father to a young son who is portrayed as a scribe, either by carrying the scribal gear or by bearing a scribal title. If accurate (see the contrary opinion of Quirke 1988, 161), this presentation of the official and his son may lend further support to the argument for the modality of private tuition in the Old Kingdom.

Parallel to that modality, a more intensive training may also have been dispensed at the royal palace to those who were to become high officials. The teaching of officials at the palace would continue well after the Old Kingdom. John Baines converges with the position of Hellmut Brunner, who argues that the teaching of officials together with the future king could foster loyalty to the latter (Brunner 1981, 75-76), in suggesting that the selection of those who were to be trained at the royal school obeyed to 'political factors' and that 'such education may sometimes have generated an inner group around a future king' (Baines 2007a, 45).

In sum, although the instructions may hardly be used to support the argument that tuition was given in the Old Kingdom in an informal system outside a more organised school setting, that system may indeed have been in place.

2) *Formal schools were established near or during the Middle Kingdom*: The available textual evidence lends support to the thesis that what can be considered formal and organised schools did not emerge before the First Intermediate Period, as, according to Hellmut Brunner (1991, 13 with n. 11)<sup>141</sup>, the word for school, in the sense of classroom, *ḥ.t-sb3*, appears for the first time in the tomb of the nomarch Khety II from Asyut (Siut IV, 66). The word alone does not provide information on what kind of school it was, nor on what was exactly taught there, but its absence from the extant textual discourse of the Old Kingdom and its emergence in the First Intermediate Period may indeed be suggestive of modifications in the educational system during this period and at least in Middle Egypt<sup>142</sup>. Even though ‘it is hardly possible to write a history of the First Intermediate Period’ (Willems 2010, 83), due to the scarcity of documentation, it is a fact that, as Toby Wilkinson puts it (2010, 142), this period was a crucible for important changes in several domains, such as beliefs and practices concerning the afterlife (Wilkinson 2010, 142-58). It is thus possible that reforms in the educational system took place during this period. But then again, exactly what may have led to the formation of organised schools at least in Middle Egypt (e.g., in the town of Khety II, Asyut, and in the town of the House of Khety<sup>143</sup>, Herakleopolis) is still to be explained.

In the Middle Kingdom, a revamp of the administration does seem to have followed after the political reunification under a single ruler. As Kasia Szpakowska puts it: ‘In the wake of the turbulent First Intermediate Period, the Middle Kingdom rulers focused on reorganizing the administration of the freshly reunified country. New bureaucracies were formed and new policies set into place. A side-effect of this reassertion of the dominance of the central government was a need for the training of more scribes. Among other tasks, people were needed to record transactions, document policies, and chronicle royal events’ (2008, 102). Several authors also argue that the overhaul of the administration in the Middle Kingdom contributed to the emergence of a new class of workers, which some

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<sup>141</sup> See also Edel (1984, 109-111), Baines and Eyre (2007, 72), and Fischer-Elfert (2001a, 441).

<sup>142</sup> However, it is possible that the changes implied by the discursive emergence of the term *ḥ.t-sb3* had actually taken place during the (late?) Old Kingdom.

<sup>143</sup> On which see Wilkinson (2010, 123).

authors describe with the ideologically-loaded term ‘middle class’ and which may have been behind the emergence of literature in this period<sup>144</sup>.

If the administration was overhauled in the Middle Kingdom, with an increased need for schools, as opposed to the more informal method of training new officials that may have prevailed during much of the Old Kingdom, the primary purpose of the Middle Kingdom instructions as school textbooks, which was already mentioned above, may then be a possibility.

3) *The self-presentation of the instructions as a text made by a father to his son is indicative of a private primary purpose of composition, as opposed to a literary device hiding a school-oriented primary aim of composition:* The aforementioned observations made by Michael V. Fox are very pertinent, especially in what concerns his remark about the self-presentation of the instructions as family-oriented texts, as opposed to school-oriented textbooks. The facts that instructions appear in the textual record only in the Middle Kingdom and that most, if not all, instructions of that time are pseudepigraphic may indicate that probably they were not composed within a familiar setting. If that were the case, it would be expectable that instructions were not pseudepigraphic and that they would have been composed since the Old Kingdom, especially as tuition at that time might have been a private matter and might have been given in a familiar atmosphere. However, the comparison Fox made between the Egyptian and biblical instructions, on the one hand, and the medieval Jewish ethical testaments, on the other, comes in handy to remind us that the teachings and values transmitted in the Egyptian instructions are normally passed on within the family unit. Perhaps this statement carries too much of a modern bias, but it is probably expectable for all times and spaces that one’s family is involved, at least to a certain point, in one’s ethical upbringing. Perhaps, then, the instructions evolved from oral form to a written tradition. With basis on this hypothesis, it is possible to argue that the father-child framework of the Middle Kingdom instructions is a ‘fossilised’ remnant of the instructions’ origins<sup>145</sup> (but see Fox 2003, 160-65, 169-70; Quirke 1988, 161). Unfortunately, however, that tells us next to nothing about the instructions’ primary purpose of composition and setting of circulation. The fact that the Middle Kingdom instructions contain values that

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<sup>144</sup> This argument will be discussed further below.

<sup>145</sup> Michael Fox (2003, 156) also argues that: ‘When the father-son setting is fictional, it reveals that Wisdom authors presumed to be the natural and appropriate setting for instruction.’

might be associated with the family does not demonstrate that they were composed within a family setting. On the contrary, it is quite possible that the father-son framework was kept out of tradition alone (Fox 2003, 156). The same does not hold for the New Kingdom instructions, as these were probably written by historical individuals as real instructions for their sons<sup>146</sup>, although the genealogy of the framework of these instructions probably lies in the model of the Middle Kingdom instructions which were regarded as classics (Hagen 2012, 123; Parkinson 1996, 144nn54, 59; 2002, 76, 238-39; Fischer-Elfert 2003, 123; see also Dorn 2004, 52 with n. 75).

Although the father-son framework of the instructions is not sufficient to argue that, for the Middle Kingdom, they were not composed for an educational setting, Fox is certainly right in pointing out that it is symptomatic that the authors and recipients of the instructions are never said to be teachers and students, respectively.

Furthermore, it may be added that a school context is largely absent from the content of the instructions. The counsels and admonitions given in the instructions concern the situations the scribe will encounter during his work, and how he ought to behave, both with people from his milieu as well as from outside of it. The audience is advised against calumny, against dishonesty, against angry reactions and insubordination, but not to behave during ‘classes’ or to diligently copy the exercises the teacher tells them to. Similarly, threats of typical school punishments, such as being beaten and restrained (Brunner 1981, 79-80; Szpakowska 2008, 107), sometimes for long periods of time while having to do writing exercises, are also conspicuous by their almost complete absence. But there are a few notable exceptions.

To begin with, the school (𐎓.𐎥𐎠𐎢) is referred to in the *Instruction of Khety* (P. Sallier II = P. BM EA 10182, § 1.3; P. Anastasi VII = P. BM EA 10222, §§ 22.4, 26.1)), and the author enjoins the addressee to make the best of his time there (§ 22), but it is not where the instruction is given. At any rate, it is significant that this is the only Middle Kingdom instruction where 𐎓.𐎥𐎠𐎢 is attested. In a passage from the *Instruction of Ani* also quoted above (P. Boulaq 4, §§ 20.4-20.5), the author urges his son to study by instructing

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<sup>146</sup> Vernus (2010a, 393) points out that if the presentation of Amenemope as the author of the instruction bearing his name is not real, at least is credible.

him to go over the writings<sup>147</sup>, but this counsel is not necessarily related with the school. The most explicit mention of both the school and its punishments occurs in the *Instruction of Amennakht*: in his response to his instructor's initial exhortations, Horimin praises the blows (*hwj*) on the back Amennakht gave him, and the beatings (*knkn*) he received at school (*ṣ.t-sb3 (?)*<sup>148</sup>), as they made him a better student (O. Lacau = HO III/3, §§ 33-35). It is curious that Amennakht is involved in the type of beatings normally associated with the school<sup>149</sup>, which could suggest he taught there, but it is also possible to interpret the punishments of Horimin as taking place both at home and at school<sup>150</sup>.

Newer approaches to the framework of a father teaching his son in the wisdom instructions tend to interpret it more critically and to consider it a literary *topos* that does not, in most cases at least, reflect reality. In relation to this topic, the distinction between the instructions of the Middle Kingdom and of the New Kingdom is not always explicitly made in the Egyptological literature, but it is important to bear that distinction in mind<sup>151</sup>. As mentioned above, Richard Parkinson (2002, 239) pointed out that the presence of this framework in the New Kingdom instructions is probably due to the influence of the Middle Kingdom instructions. Therefore, in attempting to establish whether or not the father-son

<sup>147</sup> Similar advice is given in the *Instruction of Amennakht*, where the author says to his son: '(*jrj.y=k zh3.w phr=kwj pr-ṣnh \**) Become a scribe who goes to the House of Life' (O. BM EA 41541, v. 23; Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 371).

<sup>148</sup> Only O. DeM 1254 preserves the end of the word, and there it reads *ṣ.t-sb3.yt* (Dils 2014; Dorn 2004, 41).

<sup>149</sup> See e.g., the Late-Egyptian Miscellany of P. Anastasi V = BM EA 10244, vv. 8.5-8.6.

<sup>150</sup> However, homeschooling and its relation with the educational system is not well known (Lazaridis 2010, 2). As far as it could be determined, these three instructions are the only ones where *ṣ.t-sb3* is attested. The attestation in the *Instruction of Ani* was mentioned in a note above and occurs in P. Boulaq 4, v. 20.20. Another institution frequently associated with education, the House of Life (*pr-ṣnh*), is also largely absent from the instructions, occurring three times in the *Instruction of Amennakht*. In the first attestation, Amennakht is presented as working there (O. Cairo without number, v. 3). This information is corroborated by the graffito 2173, although it is not possible to trace from these two sources his exact position there (Bickel and Mathieu 1993, 36 n. 32). However, Vernus (2010a, 56) suggests that the association of Amennakht with the House of Life was honorific and that it was made after his demise. The second attestation of this term (O. Cairo without number, v. 3) appears isolated after a lacuna following what seems to be a citation of the *Instruction of Amenemhat I* and is the last legible word in the ostrakon (on this citation see Vernus 2010a, 56). In the third attestation of *pr-ṣnh*, after instructing Horimin to become a scribe, Amennakht further tells him to become acquainted (lit. *phr*, 'to go about') with the House of Life (O. KV 18/3.614+627, v. 23; see also Dils 2014, and Dorn 2004, 43, 45). Both *ṣ.t-(n-)sb3* and *ṣ.wj-n-ṣnh* are absent from the Demotic instructions.

<sup>151</sup> For instance, it is important to take into account that, in terms of presentation and of transmission, most of the New Kingdom instructions were arguably somewhere between the classical Middle Kingdom instructions and the Late-Egyptian Miscellanies (see e.g., Moers 2010, 689, 690; Dorn 2004, 51). Another important change in discourse from the Middle Kingdom instructions to the New Kingdom ones is that the royal instructions were abandoned in the New Kingdom.

framework may be a reliable indicator of the primary purpose of composition of the instructions, the present discussion will be more concerned with the Middle Kingdom texts.

In commenting the address of the *Instruction of Hori* to a son of one of his colleagues (possibly the author of the *Instruction of Amennakht*), Stephen Quirke doubts this framework goes back to a practice of homeschooling during the Old Kingdom, due to the narrow link between literacy and the bureaucratic milieu which would require practical schooling at the office, as it were, rather than at home, and argues that: ‘I prefer to regard the genre instruction as a literary device which derives not from a historical method of education but from the ideal of handing down one’s position to one’s children, as expressed in the “Appeals to the Living”’ (1988, 161; on the expectation that a son would succeed to his father’s office both in the administration and in kingship see further Eyre 2013, 55, 286)<sup>152</sup>.

In a later discussion on the function of texts, Quirke argued that, despite their claims of didactic function, it is difficult to know whether the instructions were seen as fictional by ancient audiences (2004, 25). Concerning the (accurate or not) attribution of the *Instruction of Amenemhat I* to one Khety<sup>153</sup> in P. Chester Beatty IV = P. BM EA 10684 verso, vv. 6.13-6.14), Stephen Quirke is cautious in stating that: ‘This is not evidence of an intention to deceive readers into believing that someone else wrote the teaching, any more than in modern literary examples such as the *Memoirs of Hadrian* by Marguerite Yourcenar’ (32).

Christopher Eyre compares the instructions’ framework of a father teaching his son to the ‘motif of the King as teacher and the official as pupil’ attested in texts such as the already mentioned account of Iikherneferet (S. Berlin 1204, vv. G.3-G.7) and the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Dynasties *Duties of the Vizier* and *Installation of the Vizier* (2013, 56-57). He further adds about these latter texts and about the instructions that: ‘The literary frame is that of the model official as model teacher of his successor: the author of a wisdom text, a man of great experience in office passing on the sum of his acquired knowledge’ (57). As also pointed out by Eyre, contrarily to the *Duties of the Vizier*, which present procedural norms related to the office of vizier, the counsels given in the

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<sup>152</sup> In other professions that did not require literacy, the norm does seem to have been the inheritance of a father’s profession by his son(s) and the necessary training seems to have been in charge of the father or of another experienced relative (Frood 2010, 481; Fischer-Elfert 2001a, 439).

<sup>153</sup> Who may or may not be the same Khety that authors the *Instruction of Khety* (Quirke 2004, 32).

*Instruction of Ptahhotep*<sup>154</sup>, whose author also claims to lay down the instruction in order to prepare a new vizier, are not specific to the office of vizier but instead ‘as a core text of scribal education its role as *sb3yt* was a wider socialization into the ideology and behaviour of the office holder, presented as knowledge of proper hierarchical behaviour. Specific procedural knowledge was then acquired in practice, as apprentice (*hry-ꜥ*) to the functionary’ (57). Samuel Adams also remarks that the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* ‘targets a broader swath of society’ than most of the other Middle Kingdom instructions (2008, 35), and that may suggest that it was a literary text intended for teaching.

Concerning the *Instruction of Khety*, Nikolaos Lazaridis suggests that the framing of the instruction indicates that children of lower social groups could go to school (*ꜥ.t-sb3*), as no high-ranking title is attributed to Khety (see also Hoch 1991-1992, 100 n. 4), but he cautiously prefers to interpret the framework of Khety taking his son Pepy to school as fictional (Lazaridis 2010, 6). In commenting the relationship between master (which may be termed *jtj*, ‘father’) and apprentice, which will be discussed further below, he further adds that the term *jtj* is used in literary texts, including the instructions, to refer to the relationship between a teacher and ‘an audience that has still much to learn’ (3).

For Fredrik Hagen, the father-son framework is a literary *topos* from which it is problematic to draw conclusions on the social setting of the instructions (2012, 115-16).

All in all, besides the text-internal evidence of the instructions – such as the passage from the *Instruction for Kagemni* discussed above (P Prisse, D2,3-D2,6) – there seems to be no other evidence clearly demonstrating a historical origin of the framework of a father teaching his son in an actual family setting, although that remains a possibility. As argued by Stephen Quirke and Christopher Eyre, ideal expectations on professional and ethical education probably played a larger role in the framing of the instructions, even though, as also pointed out by Quirke, the reaction of ancient audiences is difficult to infer. But it may still be significant, in terms of discursive analysis, that an instruction is to be handed down by a father to his son (see also Assmann 2006, 26).

As in the nineteenth century medical discourse analysed by Michel Foucault, in which the physician plays the active role of observer while the patient plays the passive role

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<sup>154</sup> On the intertextual relation between the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* and the *Installation of the Vizier* see Hagen (2012, 189-94).



of examined, the body of professional and ethical advice proceeds from the figure of the father as an experienced and seasoned official to the figure of the son as someone who is ignorant and lacks proper training. What Benjamin Foster said for a Mesopotamian theory of the transmission of knowledge can be said, in general, for the Egyptian instructions: ‘Presumption of superior knowledge in proportion to social status implied a theory that useful knowledge was transmitted vertically, from above to below; for example, from the powerful to the weak<sup>155</sup>, the erudite to the unlettered<sup>156</sup>, the elderly to the young’ (B. R. Foster 2005, 245).

The longstanding suggestion that the use of pseudepigraphy in the instructions was meant to legitimise them before the audiences of their real authors works well with discursive analysis: as in ancient Mesopotamia, the transmission of ethical advice and professional knowledge in the Middle Kingdom instructions was unilateral, which required an unquestionable source of authority<sup>157</sup>. In the case of the private instructions those sources of authority were high-officials, at least one prince (Hordjedef), and kings in the case of the two royal instructions<sup>158</sup>.

Due to the lack of other evidence demonstrating its reliability, the instructions’ framework of a father instructing his son is probably best regarded as a discursive element seeking to establish the instructions’ authoritativeness<sup>159</sup>. Although they may have not originated in a familiar setting, it is undeniable that, at certain point, they came to be used in schools. One may then ask whether or not there could have been a relation between the textual emergence of the instructions and the formal schools of the Middle Kingdom, and how much weight the instructions might have had in the educational systems of the Middle and New Kingdoms.

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<sup>155</sup> This particular case applies well to the aforementioned instructions of the Egyptian kings to the officials.

<sup>156</sup> See however the passage of the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* (P. Prisse, vv. D58-D59) where the author states that ‘good speech’, *md.t nfr.t*, may be found among female servants.

<sup>157</sup> Even in the two later instructions where a dialogue between father/teacher and son/pupil is featured, namely the ones of *Ani* and of *Amennakht*, the son/pupil is ultimately convinced to comply with the instruction (*Ani*) or actually praises it (*Amennakht*). The introduction of a dialogue in later instructions may have been due to other factors, and it should be borne that it is a regular feature of Late-Egyptian Miscellanies from which it may have been imported (Moers 2010, 692), but may also have been due to the less authoritative status of their authors.

<sup>158</sup> With the exception of the *Instruction of Amenemhat I*, it does not seem entirely clear which criteria were used in the selection of the figures from the past.

<sup>159</sup> But that does not necessarily mean, however, that that discursive element was fictional in the sense of something made up to deceive or manipulate the audience.

### 2.3.3 Schools, Material Evidence for Educational Practices, and Teaching Modalities

The term ‘school’ is often used to describe ancient institutions of education, but, like virtually any other term postdating the time period one studies, it may also carry connotations alien to that time (see e.g., Hagen 2012, 86; Vernus 2010a, 56). There is that risk with the term ‘school’, especially if one has in mind modern schools with more or less established curricula and with state supervision. It has the advantage, however, of conjuring up a more or less organised institution where literacy and skills dependent on it are taught, as opposed to more informal and less regulated systems of teaching, such as homeschooling (Lazaridis 2010, 2). For that reason, this term will continue to be used here.

Evidence for both formal and informal schools in ancient Egypt is not abundant (Fischer-Elfert 2001a, 441; Lazaridis 2010, 4-5; Quirke 2004, 27). In terms of textual evidence there are three terms associated with literate education:  $\text{ḥ.t-sb}^3$ <sup>160</sup>,  $\text{pr-ḥnh}$ , and  $k3p$ . As said above,  $\text{ḥ.t-sb}^3$  has the sense of classroom, and is attested five times in three instructions<sup>161</sup>. As also mentioned above,  $\text{pr-ḥnh}$ , ‘House of Life’, occurs three times in the *Instruction of Amennakht*<sup>162</sup>. It is debatable whether it served more as a school and a scriptorium – in the sense of a place where texts circulated, were copied, and stored –, or as an institution devoted to advanced learning in a way similar to modern universities (Lazaridis 2010, 4-5).

The  $k3p$  may be translated as ‘royal nursery’ and was a royal institution located within the palace and accessible only to a select few (Callender 2000, 165). As suggested by Edda Bresciani (1990, 246), it may be considered a ‘men-only club’ where the king relaxed with his mates, but it was also the place where princes and other children (not all necessarily from elite families) were educated (Shaw 2012, 53-54). This institution existed

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<sup>160</sup> As pointed out by Pascal Vernus (2010, 56), this is the writing used in the instructions, but the copyist of the Late-Egyptian story of *Truth and Falsehood* (P. Chester Beatty II = BM EA 10682, vv. 5.1, 5.2) uses the indirect genitive,  $\text{ḥ.t-n(j)-sb}^3$ , which would be the correct form (on the spelling of the term in the two attestations in the manuscript with the story of *Truth and Falsehood* see the comments in Popko 2014; see also Gardiner 1932, 32a n. 5,1a).

<sup>161</sup> *Instruction of Khety* (P. Sallier II = P. BM EA 10182, § 1.3; P. Anastasi VII = P. BM EA 10222, vv. 22.4, 26.1), *Instruction of Ani* (P. Boulaq 4, v. 20.20), and *Instruction of Amennakht* (O. Lacau = HO III/3, v. 35).

<sup>162</sup> O. Cairo without number, v. 3 (there are two attestations in this section), and O. KV 18/3.614+627, v. 23.

at least since the Middle Kingdom and became more prominent since the Eighteenth Dynasty (52-53). There is no textual evidence indicating what the students of the royal nursery were taught (54), but it is arguable that their intellectual training included the education normally given to scribes and perhaps even more, as princes were probably taught secret religious knowledge (55). That at least by the New Kingdom they learned Middle Kingdom instructions is suggested by the already mentioned references to the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* (especially to maxim 27 of the L2 copy (= P. BM EA 10509)<sup>163</sup>, and to maxim 16 of the same manuscript<sup>164</sup>) in the *Installation of the Vizier*, a text where the king addresses the new vizier (see Hagen 2012, 189-94). Unlike the other two terms, the *k3p* is not attested in the instructions.

With the exception of the *k3p* and of the royal school prior to its institution, which were located within the palace (Shaw 2012, 53), it is generally assumed that formal schools were associated with temple ‘libraries’ and ‘archives’ and with buildings of the central administration, as these required scribes to function (Lazaridis 2010, 5; Shaw 2012, 54; Baines 2007a, 45, 51; Allen 2010a, 661). However, it is difficult to locate in the archaeological record the *ᶚ.t-sb3* and the *pr-ᶚnh*, as the material evidence is often circumstantial and may derive from activities other than scribal training (Lazaridis 2010, 5; Hagen 2012, 78-79). The exception is the House of Life located with certainty in el-Amarna (Spencer 2010, 266; Quirke 1996, 394). A negative consequence of this lack of evidence is that it becomes uncertain whether instructions circulated in these institutions or not, and in which quality (master sources, students’ copies, reference works, and possibly others).

Other possible locations of schools have been suggested in the vicinity of the Deir el-Bahri temple complex, around the Ramesseum temple, in New Kingdom temple of Mut within the larger temple complex of Karnak, and in the workers’ village of Deir el-Medina (Fischer-Elfert 2001a, 441; Lazaridis 2010, 5). The large group of ostraca unearthed near the Ramesseum might suggest that an *ᶚ.t-sb3* or a *pr-ᶚnh*, or even a combination of both, functioned in connection with the mortuary temple of Ramses II, but it might also simply

<sup>163</sup> This maxim corresponds to maxim 28 in P. Prisse, but the passage in question – *bw.t ntr rd.it hr [gs]*, ‘partiality is the abomination of god’ – is only found in the L2 version, although it may have been included in the L1 version as well (Hagen 2012, 191).

<sup>164</sup> Maxim 17 in P. Prisse. This maxim stresses out the importance of listening to petitioners, which was also one of the vizier’s duties according to the New Kingdom text.

indicate the presence of scribes and not necessarily of students (Hagen 2012, 78-79, with references; see also Fischer-Elfert 2001a, 441; Quirke 1996, 393).

In one of the block statues containing his biography, the high priest of Amun during the reign of Ramses II, Bakenkhonsu, claims that: *pr.n=j m jz-n(.j)-zh3.w m nds jkr m hw.t-ntr nb.t-p.t*, ‘I came out from the room of writings, as an excellent young<sup>165</sup> man, in the temple of the Lady of the Sky’ (CG 42155, back pillar; Kitchen 1980, 296 ll. 1-2; see also Frood 2007, 43; Lazaridis 2010, 7; Allen 2010a, 661). As pointed out by Elizabeth Frood, this passage may suggest that Bakenkhonsu was educated at the temple of Mut (2007, 235n14).

A large part of the New Kingdom literary ostraca comes from the tomb workers’ village of Deir el-Medina. But for many of the ostraca the archaeological context is either not properly recorded or has been altered in antiquity (that is the case of the sites where no longer used ostraca were dumped), and there are also several New Kingdom ostraca whose place of provenience is unknown but that are often assumed, even if tentatively, to have come from this village due to the high amount of ostraca produced there (Hagen 2012, 84-86). This circumstance makes it difficult to locate a school, or a less formal area devoted to literacy training, but that it surely existed is indicated by the unusual high levels of literacy at the village and by the relative isolation of Deir el-Medina from the rest of Egypt which probably precluded people from sending their children to schools outside (Hagen 2012, 73; Wilkinson 2010, 373-74). In fact, the K2 site has been proposed as the most likely candidate for a school area (Hagen 2012, 86). As in the area around the Ramesseum, a large amount of ostraca was found at this site which indicates that ‘this was an area in which scribes frequently copied literary texts, and some of this activity was probably linked to training and education’ (86). However, and without doubting that schooling took place at those New Kingdom sites, Stephen Quirke rightly questioned ‘whether we are justified in identifying schools from concentrations of literary material’ (1996, 393). As he also suggests, such concentrations may ‘reflect the presence not of teachers but simply of

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<sup>165</sup> The term used, *nds*, may also refer to one’s low social standing in the elite hierarchy, but the fact that it is used in the Munich statue (Staatliche Sammlung Ägyptischer Kunst Gl. WAF. 38) to say that Bakenkhonsu spent four years as a *nds jkr*, before stating that he spent eleven more years as a trainee stable-master (Kitchen 1980, 298 ll. 3-4; see also Frood 2007, 41), suggests that it refers to the age of Bakenkhonsu.

scribes responsible for organisation of building projects and accountancy'<sup>166</sup> (393). Fredrik Hagen is also reticent in accepting a large quantity of manuscripts as strong evidence for the location of a school, and points out that not much is known about the organisation and appearance of formal and informal schools which renders the identification of schools based on one line of evidence alone more difficult (Hagen 2012, 86).

Presumably elements like the nature of the writing materials and the quality of the copies could help determine whether materials like the ostraca found around the Ramesseum and at Deir el-Medina, were produced by students or by scribes no longer in training. This assumption seems to be popular in Egyptology: for instance, as mentioned above, Richard Parkinson assumed the copies of several Middle Kingdom texts in writing-boards originated in an educational context because of 'the temporary nature of their surface' (2002, 236; see also Fischer-Elfert 2001a, 439; Lazaridis 2010, 4; Williams 1981, 5); mistakes and corrections are also sometimes assumed to have been made by students and teachers, respectively (Allen 2010a, 661; Williams 1981, 5; Hagen 2012, 97, with references).

To be sure, and as the modern saying goes, where there is smoke there is fire, and at least in some cases cheap and reusable materials and garbled copies are signs of an educational context (Hagen 2012, 93, 98; Eyre 2013, 30; Quirke 1996, 383, 394; Lazaridis 2010, 4). But several authors have stressed that it is problematic to make generalisations from the nature and content of the materials themselves, because other explanations are possible.

Concerning the aforementioned writing-boards, or tablets, Fredrik Hagen (2012, 100) points out that the tendency in Egyptology to associate them primarily, if not exclusively with a teaching setting comes from observations of early Egyptologists of the use of tablets in Islamic schools of nineteenth century and modern Egypt. But in that context the tablets are used only for learning 'the language and writings of the Qur'ān' (100). Based on pictorial and textual evidence suggesting writing tablets were part of the equipment of a fully trained scribe (101, with references), as opposed to pertaining essentially to the educational apparatus, and on the wide range of uses of writing-boards in

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<sup>166</sup> Despite this reservation Quirke does concede that 'many if not most literary Theban ostraca' may have been applied didactically (1996, 394).

the Greco-Roman Period – which seem to have included the record of documents usually kept for a long time, such as contracts and wills –, Hagen makes a different interpretation: in pharaonic Egypt, besides a use in scribal training, writing tablets might have been used for other purposes, including the keeping of literary and administrative texts for reasons other than scribal education and sometimes for long periods of time (101; see also Eyre 2013, 31). However, pinpointing the precise uses and purposes of writing tablets is a task often made more difficult due to the combination of different kinds of texts in a single board (Hagen 2012, 101). Hagen (101) gives the example of Carnarvon Tablet I, from the Eighteenth Dynasty, which ‘combines the narrative introduction of *Ptahhotep* with a *senet* game-board drawn up immediately below, with another literary-historical composition on the other side (*Kamose and the Expulsion of the Hyksos*)’. In cases like this one may ask whether the scribe was making the most of the available space, as was often done with papyrus rolls (Eyre 2013, 308-309), in a support he did not immediately want to reuse due to the value of the texts or if the tablet was being used for drafts for other purposes, such as a later copy into another support.

Together with writing-boards, ostraca are also often associated with scribal training (e.g., Lazaridis 2010, 4; Laisney 2007, 209n1193). Frequently the raw materials for ostraca were potsherds, but at Deir el-Medina limestone flakes were easily available and especially suitable for writing (Hagen 2012, 73; Eyre 2013, 29; Quirke 1996, 392). At Deir el-Medina ostraca were used mainly ‘between the second half of the 19th and the first half of the 20th Dynasty’ (Hagen 2012, 72, with references), and were either inscribed or figured. Inscribed ostraca had different types of inscriptions: non-literary contents, usually relating to administrative and tomb building work, and literary texts such as instructions (Hagen 2012, 70-72). Work related ostraca may have been used as mother copies and drafts, the latter sometimes to be copied later<sup>167</sup>.

At Deir el-Medina ostraca were certainly used in teaching<sup>168</sup> (e.g., O. Petrie 28 = UC 39628<sup>169</sup>), but, alongside papyrus rolls, they may also have been used to copy texts,

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<sup>167</sup> Fredrik Hagen (2012, 71) mentions the O. Gardiner 7 as an example of a draft copied later to another material support due to the writing in large letters of *sphr*, ‘copied’. Christopher Eyre (2013, 30) also recognises that the inscription of *sphr* in ostraca may signal that the content of the ostrakon was copied to another support, but observes that it may also be related to another administrative process.

<sup>168</sup> See Fischer-Elfert (2001a, 439-40), Hagen (2012, 98), Quirke (1996, 394).

including literary ones, for several personal uses<sup>170</sup> (Hagen 2012, 94, 120-21, with references). Despite the overall lack of knowledge on the transmission and circulation of texts at Deir el-Medina (120), there is textual evidence suggesting one way texts circulated at this ancient village was through a system of scribes, or other literate individuals, lending copies to colleagues and friends so that they could make their own copy (120-21, with references). Apparently texts did not circulate by means of a book market during pharaonic Egypt (120-21).

Due to the customary small size of ostraca<sup>171</sup>, texts seem to have been copied across several ostraca. This is suggested by some ostraca containing the beginning of texts, others containing chapters (*hw.t*) between the beginning and the end, and yet others bearing the ending part with a colophon (2012, 95-96). As suggested by Hagen (91-96), elements such as numbering, rubricising the beginning and ending lines of individual chapters, inscribing dates, and including colophons on ostraca were probably devices for organising the excerpts and may indicate awareness of the unity of texts<sup>172</sup> (see also Brunner 1981, 73-74; Quirke 1996, 399; 2004, 30). As Hagen (2012, 92) and Brunner (1981, 74) also point out, the Nineteenth Dynasty *Satirical Letter* of P. Anastasi I (= P. BM EA 10247, vv. 97.3-98.2; see Dils 2014) may indicate that scribes were probably required to know the sequence of chapters by heart. Although texts copied in this way may have been used for private purposes, the *Satirical Letter* of P. Anastasi I suggests that the system to keep track of the sequences of texts across several ostraca may have played an important role in scribal training (see also Hagen 2012, 92-93, with references).

The effect of dividing a text across several ostraca was probably somewhat similar to modern publications in fascicles. It may also have allowed readers to keep passages they

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<sup>169</sup> The kind of grammatical paradigms present in this ostrakon probably relates to literacy training, but, as Stephen Quirke argued (1996, 383), it is also possible that such paradigms are ‘autodidactic orthographic and spacing exercises’.

<sup>170</sup> Among the personal uses of literary texts, albeit primarily on papyrus rolls, is their private collection and storage. There are textual references from the Middle Kingdom to what may be personal ‘libraries’, but archaeological evidence for them comes especially from the personal collection of Qenherkhepeshef at the New Kingdom site of Deir el-Medina (Parkinson 2002, 69; Hagen 2012, 67-68; Quirke 2004, 13, 17-19). This collection includes a copy of the *Instruction of Khety*, and another of the *Instruction of Ani*. Another personal collection of texts from the Eighteenth Dynasty, which has no recorded archaeological context, contains a copy of the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* and another of the *Instruction for Merikare*. Another Ramesside ‘library’ also without enough information on its archaeological context contains copies of the *Instruction of Amenemhat I* and of the *Instruction of Khety*.

<sup>171</sup> For examples of large ostraca see Hagen (2012, 87-88). See also Eyre (2013, 40).

<sup>172</sup> On the numbering of seemingly related ostraca see also Parkinson (2002, 54) and Quirke (1996, 395).

were fond of at hand. This system may also have been used for figured ostraca, as Jennifer Babcock (2012) suggests that several figured ostraca, previously thought to constitute isolated units<sup>173</sup>, ‘might form an assemblage of images, or even a narrative’.

Despite the possible advantages of using ostraca to record and access literary texts and visual narratives, a bundle of ostraca was probably difficult to transport if necessary, as opposed to a papyrus roll. Normally, several of the texts and images copied to ostraca would have been copied to papyri or other material supports (Hagen 2012, 125; Eyre 2013, 30). However, as argued by Christopher Eyre, the supply of papyrus rolls to Deir el-Medina, which would have come from outside workshops, does not seem to have been always constant (2013, 29-30, with references), and the rolls might also not have been cheap for the village workers<sup>174</sup> (26-27; see also Hagen 2012, 113-14). As mentioned above, there was a ready supply of new ostraca, and, as a rule of thumb, villagers probably deemed it easier to get a new flake of limestone instead of washing an already inscribed ostrakon for reuse, although there were cases at Deir el-Medina where ostraca were reused (Eyre 2013, 34-35). These circumstances, together with the high rates of literacy, may explain the abundance of ostraca at this village of tomb workers. On the one hand, such circumstances might not allow to extrapolate the uses of ostraca at Deir el-Medina to the rest of Egypt, but, on the other, the village of Deir el-Medina is arguably not very different from other villages in New Kingdom Egypt<sup>175</sup> (Lehner 2010, 95). Be that as it may, the example of Deir el-Medina demonstrates that, besides literacy training, other uses of ostraca could be made. Although tentatively, one may ask whether the same may have applied to other material supports, such as writing tablets, during the Middle Kingdom. This question becomes even more relevant when one takes into account that a few New Kingdom wisdom texts locally composed at Deir el-Medina, namely the instructions of *Amennakht* and of *Hori*, were preserved on ostraca alone (even though there is the

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<sup>173</sup> See Cooney (2012, 158-61, 164, with references).

<sup>174</sup> The idea that papyrus rolls were expensive and thus kept for particular occasions and texts is perhaps still widely held in Egyptology. For example, in a work on Egyptian kingship Gary Shaw states that: ‘Papyrus was expensive to produce and so was only used for formal documents’ (2012, 56). According to Hagen (2012, 113), the copy of a text on papyrus does not necessarily indicate it had a higher status.

<sup>175</sup> In his discussion of the explanations of the collapse of central power which brought the Old Kingdom to an end, Barry Kemp (1983, 177) cautions that: ‘The notion that explanation is possible at all also depends on the assumption that the evidence and factors at work were distributed fairly evenly around the country, so that what is encountered in one area can be regarded as nationally typical.’ See also Richards (2005, 30; see also Kruchten 2001a, 277).



possibility that copies on other supports existed but have not survived or have not been unearthed yet).

As said above, mistakes and corrections on writing materials like ostraca are also often taken as evidence of scribal training (e.g., Allen 2010a, 661). Since many of the copies with literary texts, including instructions, contain mistakes, and some are even almost illegible, it may be asked whether those mistakes, and the corrections that sometimes accompany them, were in fact the result of teaching activity.

The causes traditionally considered to underlie the corruptions in copies of literary texts are summarised by Ronald James Williams as: '(1) the misreading of hieratic (or demotic) signs and the miscopying of passages, (2) mistakes arising from dictation through the confusion of words that sounded alike, (3) errors caused by copying from faulty memory, as well as (4) the usual unintentional slips due to carelessness' (1981, 5; see also Brunner 1981, 73; Hagen 2012, 214-15; Quirke 2004, 29, 45). Of these explanations for mistakes in copies, the most debatable is probably the second one. To be sure, dictation may very well have been used by Egyptian teachers (Baines and Eyre 2007, 79n10), and there is cogent evidence to support that argument<sup>176</sup> (see an example in Allen 2010a, 661).

However, there are other possibilities: for the many corrupt copies on Deir el-Medina ostraca, and on papyri, of the *Instruction of Khety*, James Hoch proposes that mistakes did not originate in dictation, but were instead copied from the received master copies (1991-1992, 88). He further argues that the corrupt copies were nonetheless understood, as 'the sheer numbers of ostraca indicate that this was a popular text, and it seems unlikely that there would be so much interest in a text that was mostly gibberish' (88). Richard Parkinson (2002, 54) also recognises that the copies of literary texts made by scribes and students may have been based on corrupt master copies. He further makes a comparison with bad master copies of Shakespeare works during Elizabethan England which were nonetheless copied and possibly read (54). John Baines (2007b, 153) also argues that some corrupt texts may have been kept for their cultural value alone and not necessarily to be read. Fredrik Hagen (2012, 118-19) points out that the argument advanced by James Hoch indicates that, in the case of copies of Middle Kingdom texts transmitted in

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<sup>176</sup> However, as a method of copying and transmitting texts, it has not been demonstrated for the instructions (Hagen 2012, 214).

the New Kingdom, errors do not necessarily have to be attributed to an inability by Deir el-Medina villagers to read and write Middle Egyptian. However, John Baines (2007b, 153) importantly raises the question of the uses of Middle Kingdom texts in the New Kingdom by arguing that Deir el-Medina students who copied the *Instruction of Khety* were possibly not particularly concerned with the quality of their copies, as ‘they were transmitting a cultural artefact, not something that was orally alive, although it may have been alive in other contexts in the same period.’

The fact that instructions may have been copied from versions with errors makes it difficult to ascertain whether those copies were made by apprentice students or by scribes, as the mistakes might have been similar due to the supply of faulty master sources. It is also uncertain whether those texts were copied for their cultural worth alone or whether practical sense could still be made of them.

Several texts on ostraca and papyri also contain what seems to be corrections. Among those texts are those normally associated with an educational setting, such as the Late-Egyptian Miscellanies<sup>177</sup>, but also other kinds of writings such as daybooks and other work-related registers (Hagen 2012, 97-98; Eyre 2013, 235-36). Some corrections may have been made by teachers: for instance, Kasia Szpakowska argues that, in Lahun, ‘the presence of teachers is suggested by a papyrus containing a series of nine model letters, some with corrections in red ink’<sup>178</sup> (2008, 106). However, many of the corrections, at least in New Kingdom sources, were in fact clarifications of particular signs, and in several cases appear to have been made by the same person who wrote the text<sup>179</sup>, indicating that the corrections were not made by a teacher but were instead self-corrections made by the scribe himself (Hagen 2012, 98; 2006, 87-88; Quirke 1996, 383). If this applies equally to the Middle and New Kingdoms, then mistakes and corrections on copies of literary texts are also not a reliable indicator of whether a copy originated in a teaching context or not.

The type of texts is also not necessarily indicative of the context in which copies were produced, as e.g., model letters are often difficult to distinguish from real letters (Hagen 2012, 98-99). Other texts, however, like the *Kemit* and the onomastica are probably

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<sup>177</sup> But see Hagen (2006, 96-97) and the discussion above.

<sup>178</sup> It is also possible that the corrections in P. Stockholm MM 18416, with a small part of the *Instruction of Amenemope*, were made by a teacher, since their handwriting is different (Peterson 1966, 121, 128).

<sup>179</sup> For instance, in the New Kingdom P. 10509 = L2 with the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* (Hagen 2006, 88; 2012, 98).

more related to teaching (see also Hagen 2012, 98; Quirke 1996, 381). At least in the New Kingdom, that might also have been the case of a few instructions, namely the *Instruction of Khety*, the *Instruction of a Man for His Son*, and the *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu*. Interestingly, not only these three instructions may, in this order, actually have formed a triptych comprehending a curriculum from youth to adulthood<sup>180</sup> (Fischer-Elfert 2001a, 441), but, together with the *Instruction of Amenemhat I*, they were among the most copied instructions at Deir el-Medina<sup>181</sup> (Hagen 2012, 84; see also Parkinson 2002, 53). But, to be sure, and as was argued above, not all copies of those instructions need to relate to an educational context.

Whether the most copied instructions at Deir el-Medina were already more popular than the other instructions during the Middle Kingdom or whether this was a New Kingdom response to those texts is less certain<sup>182</sup>. Overall, the instructions genre was popular and central throughout Egyptian history (Hagen 2012, 82), and even though apparently a text like the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* was not widely copied at Deir el-Medina (184-87), it was quoted or alluded to in other New Kingdom texts such as the aforementioned *Installation of the Vizier*. But what weight the instructions may have had in the training of new scribes is less certain.

The curricula of schools are not well known, especially before the New Kingdom, and apparently were not established nationwide, as there seems to have been little

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<sup>180</sup> See further chapter 3, subsection 3.1.5.2 below.

<sup>181</sup> According to the estimates made by Hagen (2012, 84, 246) for instructions copied on ostraca at Deir el-Medina, the most copied instructions were: 1) *Instruction of Khety*, 2) *Instruction of Amenemhat I*, 3) *Instruction of a Man for His Son*, and 4) *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu*. The numbers of extant ostraca range between c. 210 (*Khety*) and c. 70 (*Kairsu*). Less copied were, in descending order, the instructions of *Hordjedef*, *Amennakht*, *Ani*, *Ptahhotep*, *Merikare*, and *Hori*. The numbers for these instructions range between c. 20 (*Hordjedef*) and c. 1 (*Merikare* and *Hori*) copies on ostraca. These figures may be due to the chance survival of written artefacts at the village, but may be significant nonetheless.

<sup>182</sup> It is relevant to point out that only a few Middle Kingdom instructions are attested in material supports dating to that period (Hagen 2012, 41n). Those instructions are: the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, the *Instruction of Kagemni* (both preserved in P. Prisse which may date to the second half of Twelfth Dynasty (Hagen 2012, 142)), the *Instruction of P. Ramesseum II* (P. BM EA 10755, possibly dating to the Thirteenth Dynasty (Vernus 2010a, 303)), the *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu* (only the part preserved in the S. Cairo CG 20538 of Sehetepibre which dates from the reign of Amenemhat III in the Twelfth Dynasty (Vernus 2010a, 265)), and the *Instruction of Lahun* (P. London UC 32106C which dates between the Twelfth and Thirteenth Dynasties) (see Dils 2014). All the other Middle Kingdom instructions (namely *of Hordjedef*, *Amenemhat I*, *A Man for His Son*, *of Khety*, and *for Merikare*, and the *Oxford Wisdom Text*) are known only from New Kingdom copies (see Dils 2014).

intervention from the state in schools<sup>183</sup> (Lazaridis 2010, 2; Piacentini 2001, 188). Presumably this gave flexibility to schools and teachers in terms of what was taught, and also in terms of where teaching was given. At least in New Kingdom schools, subjects taught probably included letter-writing, Middle and Late-Egyptian, current foreign languages, mathematics and geometry, geography, music, sports, rhetoric, and ethics (Fischer-Elfert 2001a, 439-41; Brunner 1981, 76-78). For the latter two the instructions may have been used as textbooks (Fischer-Elfert 2001a, 440-41), as exemplified by the educational use of the instructions of *Amennakht* and *Hori* at Deir el-Medina, and, for the Middle Kingdom community of Lahun, Kasia Szpakowska suggests that, as students repeated the writing exercises, they would absorb ‘the values of the society in which they lived and codes of good conduct’ (2008, 106). However, the New Kingdom *Satirical Letter* of P. Anastasi I (= P. BM EA 10247, vv. 97.3-98.2) introduces the interesting idea that, at least in the New Kingdom, instructions were primarily memorised and not necessarily understood:

(97.3) (*dd.w=k n=j [w]ˢ [t(3)s] n(.j) hr-dj dj=f*) You quoted me a maxim of *Hordjedef*.

(97.4) (*bw rh=k [(j)n] n[fr] [m]-r'-pw bjn*) Do you know whether it is good or bad<sup>184</sup>?

(97.5) (*ju-ḫ3 ḫw.t r-ḫ3.t=f n{.t}j-[m] [hr-s3]=f*) Which chapter comes before it? Which comes after it?

(98.1) (*mn[t]k sšs3.w m-ḫ3.t jr.j.w=f*) You are a wise one ahead of your peers.

(98.2) (*sb3y.t [šfd.w] ḫt.y.tj hr jb=k*) The instructions of papyrus rolls are carved on your mind.

(Dils 2014)

This didactic ‘letter’, which was intended to be copied by students, pitches an army scribe against one of his colleagues who represents an established tradition which promotes memorisation of subjects instead of understanding them (Wente 1990, 99; Piacentini 2001, 188; Moers 2010, 689-90). It is perhaps uncertain whether the author was exaggerating or not, but there is probably some degree of veracity underlying this literary text.

<sup>183</sup> It also appears that ‘there does not seem to have been a class restriction in Ancient Egypt on who could become a scribe’ (Szpakowska 2008, 104).

<sup>184</sup> In terms of wording, it is relevant to notice that in the previous verse the term *ts* was used. This term literally means ‘knot’, and it is the duty of the student to untie it (*whˢ*; see Shupak (1993, 63-64)). In this case it means knowing whether the passage is encouraging or prohibiting a certain course of action (see Dils 2014).

By the Ramesside Period, Middle Kingdom literary texts were being canonised (Hagen 2012, 41; Vernus 2010a, 347), and one may wonder whether these texts, particularly instructions, were still relevant for and relatable to New Kingdom audiences, or if they were valued primarily as cultural artefacts and symbols of status. The fact that the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* was ‘updated’ to Late-Egyptian (e.g., L2 version) and that the *Instruction of Khety* inspired the Late-Egyptian Miscellanies in the praises of the civilian scribes and in the denigration of the military (Hagen 2012, 33; 2006, 86-87), as part of the competition for scribes between the civilian administration and the military (Vernus 2010a, 346), may suggest an affirmative answer. But it is also important to recognise that texts circulating in Middle Egyptian during the New Kingdom would not have been accessible to all due to the need for training in the previous stage of the Egyptian language, something which, as argued by Hagen (2012, 117-18), certainly increased the status of those who were able to read them.

The flexibility allowed to schools and teachers by the state may have been manifest not only in the specific subjects and texts taught at those schools, but also in the places where teaching was given. Although it may be related to special and exceptional cases, there is evidence suggesting that teaching could be given on settings we would normally not associate with schooling. The already mentioned K2 site at Deir el-Medina may have served as an informal space where education was given, as opposed to a formal classroom (Hagen 2012, 86). Even more detached from our modern notion of schools and classrooms is the possible use of tombs to train new scribes.

This is suggested especially by the so far unique finding of 140 graffiti inscribed between the Seventeenth and Twentieth Dynasties in the chamber of tomb N31.1 at Asyut dating from the First Intermediate Period<sup>185</sup> (Hagen 2012, 75). These graffiti encompass traditional visitors’ graffiti, as well as ‘hymns, historical notes, offering formulas and drawings of humans and animals’ (76). Among these graffiti are also the beginnings of several Middle Kingdom literary texts in hieratic, probably inscribed in the Eighteenth Dynasty, such as the *Instruction of Amenemhat I*, the *Instruction of Khety*, the *Instruction of a Man for His Son*, the *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu*, and the *Prophecy of Neferti* (76). It is

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<sup>185</sup> On the broader relationship between literary texts, particularly instructions, and tombs see Vernus (2010a, 51-54), Hagen (2012, 64-65 with n. 3), Quirke (2004, 14-19, 46), Végh (2016, 152-53, 156), and Geoffrey (1976, 12).

possible that all of these are visitors' graffiti, and that the beginnings of literary texts were inscribed as part of the visitors' self-presentation and display of education (76-77). But it is also possible that the literary texts were used for teaching purposes. It has been suggested that fieldtrips were made to this tomb where students copied and read the texts<sup>186</sup>, a hypothesis that, for Fredrik Hagen (76), is plausible but may rest too much on the notion that, during the New Kingdom, Middle Kingdom texts were used primarily in an educational setting. This tomb is special because texts possibly used in scribal training were inscribed in the walls of the tomb itself, but if teaching in tombs was relatively common it may have been done using traditional material supports, such as ostraca, and thus left few evidence behind. The idea that tombs could be regularly used for scribal training is also supported by Pascal Vernus (2010a, 53), who argues that it would make teaching more practical as they were being taught in their future workplaces, which would mean 'gain de temps, gain d'espace.'<sup>187</sup> Receiving education at one's future workplace is not fundamentally different from the ideal of succeeding to the profession of one's father and thus learning from him. In this case students would learn from scribes working in the necropolis<sup>188</sup>. For Lahun, Kasia Szpakowska (2008, 107) suggests that teachers were scribes who taught about their area of expertise<sup>189</sup>, and here it would have been no different. Even for scribes who carried the titles of *sb3*, 'teacher', and of *jmj-r<sup>c</sup>-sb3.w*, 'overseer of teachers', Fischer-Elfert argues that 'teaching was not their main occupation' (2001, 441).

The hypothesis of the use of tombs as practical places for teaching is further strengthened by the discovery of inscribed and figured ostraca, possibly with exercises, in the forecourt of the tomb of Senenmut<sup>190</sup> (TT 71; Fischer-Elfert 2001a, 441). In the tomb of

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<sup>186</sup> Hellmut Brunner (1981, 78) also suggests that other monuments were visited by students who left their graffiti there. But Fischer-Elfert (2001a, 439) has reservations about the study of monumental hieroglyphs by scribal students.

<sup>187</sup> See also Végh (2016, 156), who suggests that scribes working in tombs could practice writing texts on ostraca and by heart when no master copy was available.

<sup>188</sup> Unlike tombs in progress at the Valley of the Kings, the tomb N31.1 at Asyut was centuries old by the time the literary texts were inscribed there. It may be asked if purification rituals were required from teachers and students in order to avoid offending the deceased, or if using a tomb as classroom was considered to be honourable to the deceased.

<sup>189</sup> The same may have been true for the royal tutors of the *k3p* (Shaw 2012, 53).

<sup>190</sup> The education of scribes at their future place of employment is consistent with the argument of Anders Högberg, Peter Gärdenfors, and Lars Larsson about teaching in traditional societies: there too teaching tends to be informal, and, among Inuit societies for instance, it is argued that 'children mimic and imitate adults in

Sennedjem a large ostrakon, with 106 x 22 cm and containing a copy of *Sinuhe*, was also found. However, this ostrakon may have been part of the burial equipment of the tomb (Hagen 2012, 88; Quirke 2004, 17).

This teaching modality is also compatible with the ‘community practice’, a way of teaching which may have been used in the training of draughtsmen and which Elizabeth Frood (2010, 482) suggests that may have been used in the training of scribes as well<sup>191</sup>. Frood supports her suggestion with the several references in Ramesside biographical inscriptions from tombs to ‘rooms of instruction’ (*ḥ.t-sb3*, e.g., Kitchen 1982, 143 l. 11) and ‘rooms of writing’ (*jz-n(.j)-zh3.w*, e.g., Kitchen 1980, 296 l. 1). However, those might have featured a more traditional approach to teaching in which a teacher is responsible for a group of students. Scribal training through community practice seems more adequate to a ‘semi-organised training in literacy’ (Hagen 2012, 78) in the tombs where the scribes from Deir el-Medina worked.

Possibly as part of the flexibility of teaching, and despite the instructions’ ideal, mentioned in the previous section, of a father instructing his son who would eventually succeed him<sup>192</sup>, at least at Deir el-Medina, and possibly at Lahun as well, it seems to have been usual for reputed learned men to teach students whose fathers were either not literate or no longer alive and thus able to teach them themselves<sup>193</sup> (Szpakowska 2008, 107). A case in point is the aforementioned tuition of one of the sons of Amennakht, after his

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tasks like hunting, care-taking and household activities, and in so doing the children actually enact the life of the grown-ups’ (2015, 848).

<sup>191</sup> The model of ‘community practice’ was suggested by Kathlyn Cooney to explain a series of figured ostraca from Deir el-Medina. This model is described by Cooney (2012, 166) in the following way: ‘The community of practice in ancient Egypt was a flexible and adaptable system that did not rely on linear master-pupil relationships. All those who belonged shared an interest in visual memory acquisition, equalization, style, socialization, standardization, and creativity. The members of this community of practice held different areas of influence – some were masters and thus full participants, some were just learning and thus on the periphery of the system.’

<sup>192</sup> Although ‘there does not seem to have been a class restriction in Ancient Egypt on who could become a scribe’ (Szpakowska 2008, 104), there may have been a real expectation, at least in some cases (such as the vizierate), that a son would succeed to his father’s office in the administration (Eyre 2013, 55, 286). In other professions that did not required literacy that seems to have been the case: trades were inherited and the required training was provided by the father or by another experienced relative (Frood 2010, 481; Fischer-Elfert 2001a, 439).

<sup>193</sup> An interesting feature of the scribal education attested at Deir el-Medina, and possibly also at Lahun, is that not all students seem to have pursued a scribal career (Szpakowska 2008, 107). This was probably not a local feature, but standard practice: in the same way that all princes were educated to become kings in the event of the premature death of the crown prince (Shaw 2012, 48), so too a surplus of individuals with scribal training was apparently maintained in order to guarantee the availability of scribes in the event of deaths among working scribes (Baines and Eyre 2007, 92).

passing away, by one Hori, presumably a colleague and friend of him (Bickel and Mathieu 1993, 51). Why would Amennakht take one of Hori's sons as apprentice is less clear (Bickel and Mathieu 1993, 37; Fischer-Elfert 2001a, 441).

As part of advanced scribal training<sup>194</sup> (Lazaridis 2010, 3), which apparently was not covered by schools (Lazaridis 2010, 2; Fischer-Elfert 2001a, 441), scribes, who were called 'master' or 'father' (*nb* and *jtj*, respectively), would accept students as apprentices and assistants<sup>195</sup> (*hr.j-ḥ*) (Lazaridis 2010, 3). Interpreting<sup>196</sup> and copying instructions was possibly a part of the training of assistants<sup>197</sup>, and at least in the case of the just mentioned *Instruction of Amennakht* the author addressed the instruction to his assistant Horimin. This type of advanced learning was probably also pursued in connection to the instruction in tombs, but it seems less certain whether this tutoring relationship took place under a formal framework or under more informal arrangements.

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In sum, the educational system of ancient Egypt is not very well known, and the nature of the evidence is not even, as much of the evidence which may relate to literacy training in the pharaonic period dates from the New Kingdom and comes especially from the village of Deir el-Medina. Besides not being equally distributed across all periods of the

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<sup>194</sup> This method of private tuition may also have been used in more basic stages of learning when circumstances called for it (Lazaridis 2010, 3; Fischer-Elfert 2001a, 441).

<sup>195</sup> There is evidence suggesting that, in a similar manner to the relationships between pupils and teachers in the Old Kingdom, as conjectured by Hellmut Brunner, the relationships between teachers and scribal apprentices at Deir el-Medina could be close (Frood 2010, 481-82; Fischer-Elfert 2001a, 441). Among the evidence are dedications made to a scribe by an assistant in the colophon (see e.g., the O. DeM 1014 in Hagen 2012, 96). However, to conclude that all dedications were made in the context of apprenticeship, thus signalling scribal exercises, is problematic, as Hagen points out (2012, 96, with references), as there are cases where the dedications are addressed to gods. He further argues that dedications in ancient Egypt may have not been fundamentally different from modern ones (to family members, colleagues, etc.), and concludes that: 'Although the colophons may reveal social structures (master and assistant) they cannot be used to reconstruct social practices (scribal education): they are as a whole problematic as criteria for identifying scribal exercises' (97).

<sup>196</sup> It is possible that in this phase of advanced learning the student was also called to interpret writings and ask questions, as suggested by Shupak (1993, 64-65) in her discussion of the term *whḥ*.

<sup>197</sup> Other texts often associated by Egyptologists to the training of apprentices are the Late-Egyptian Miscellanies (e.g., Baines and Eyre 2007, 92). But exactly what weight did these texts have on advanced scribal training is debatable (Hagen 2006, 96-97). It may also be problematic to use these texts to reconstruct the relationship between master and apprentice, as, like the father-son framework of the Middle Kingdom instructions, the representation of this relationship in the Late-Egyptian Miscellanies could have been a 'common literary motif' (Hagen 2006, 97).



Egyptian history, the extant sources traditionally associated with an educational context are not always unequivocally so and much of the evidence may be interpreted in different ways. The educational system also seems to have been significantly flexible and not particularly concerned with providing students a nationalistic sense of identity (Lazaridis 2010, 2). Apparently there were no set curricula and teachers may have been free to teach their students what they saw fit. For the Middle Kingdom there is virtually no evidence indicating that the instructions, as well as the other literary texts (Parkinson 2002, 69), were neither primarily composed for a use in an educational context nor associated with schools. An interplay between the schools, as non-discursive formations, and the instructions, as discursive formations<sup>198</sup>, is therefore not explicitly attested for the Middle Kingdom. Evidence for that interplay emerges more clearly for the New Kingdom, although the mentioned ambiguity of the sources makes it difficult to establish precisely how much weight did those Middle Kingdom texts had in the teaching of literacy and at which stage(s) of learning they were read and copied. This is why it is reasonable to consider the Middle Kingdom instructions ‘literature’, as opposed to texts with a specific function, namely teaching<sup>199</sup>: ‘the dearth of information on schooling spares these the expulsion from the “literary” suffered by most religious compositions’ (Quirke 2004, 27).

Although a primary didactic use of the Middle Kingdom instructions cannot be determined, the New Kingdom instructions were indeed composed for teaching<sup>200</sup>. However, that was not the only context in which they circulated and thus it may be more adequate to consider them literature as well, as they may also have been used for private purposes – whether for leisure and entertainment or for other purposes, possibly including what one may term ‘personal growth’ or ‘improvement’, is less certain. That is the picture that emerges from the extant evidence from Deir el-Medina: the instructions of the Middle and of the New Kingdoms circulated across a spectrum between literacy training and

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<sup>198</sup> The nature of the interplay between the two types of formations will be addressed in more detail in the next section.

<sup>199</sup> This is not to say that New Kingdom instructions were not literature, as they may have been seen as literary as well, but their primary aim of composition was most certainly functional as they would have been intended to teach.

<sup>200</sup> It does not necessarily follow that the Middle Kingdom instructions were not didactic or that they were not primarily composed with a didactic use in mind. It only follows that the primary purpose of composition of the Middle Kingdom instructions cannot be factually established as being didactic.

private copy for some type of personal use. However, which type of use was more preponderant is difficult to establish.

Due to the linguistic differences, instructions composed in the New Kingdom were probably more widely read and understood than Middle Kingdom ones. These were still read and copied by those who understood Middle Egyptian, and the limitation of access to the language these texts were composed in probably enhanced their status as ‘cultural texts’ (Hagen 2012, 56, 117-18). The material evidence for copies of Middle Kingdom instructions is not uniform, and, at least at Deir el-Medina, there are four instructions that stand out above all others. But it is no less significant that at least one instruction (the one of *Ptahhotep*) was ‘translated’ into Late-Egyptian<sup>201</sup>.

A question of particular interest to the topic of this thesis is how relevant were the Middle Kingdom instructions in the New Kingdom in what concerns *ntr*? And how was that *ntr* perceived? The relevance of this question stems in large measure from the religious changes between the Middle and New Kingdoms. In particular, one may highlight the increased manifestations of ‘personal piety’. This religious phenomenon knew its largest expression during the Ramesside Period, which largely corresponds to the period of activity at the Deir el-Medina village. How, then, did New Kingdom readers, and more specifically readers from the Ramesside Period, relate to the *ntr* that was mobilised in the Middle Kingdom instructions<sup>202</sup>?

#### 2.4 Origin of the Middle Kingdom Instructions

As it was argued in the previous section, due to the nature of the evidence it is difficult to establish the primary purpose of composition of the Middle Kingdom instructions, as well as the ways in which they were used during that period. Concerning the latter, it is not possible, with the available evidence, to posit a relationship between Middle Kingdom instructions and schools of the same time period. However, can it be

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<sup>201</sup> An example is P. BM EA 10509 = L2 with *Ptahhotep*.

<sup>202</sup> There is probably no easy answer to this question, but, in terms of discourse and of later reception, it is significant by itself that Middle Kingdom instructions were copied during the New Kingdom and even inspired new compositions during that period. To be sure, that is not revealing per se about the perception of the Middle Kingdom *ntr* in the New Kingdom.

known with a fair amount of certainty from which institution and from which social group did they emerge?

Apart from the schools, some of which would have been associated with temples, the other institution which has been suggested to have played a significant part in the emergence of the ancient Egyptian literature, including the instructions, is the royal court. For instance, Roland Enmarch (2010, 666) states that: ‘The royal court appears constantly in Middle Egyptian literature, both as a locational setting, and as a central topic of ideological and moral discourse; it is therefore the most likely place where literature was created, and from which it was disseminated, though finds of manuscripts in provincial cemeteries demonstrate the wider participation of the elite throughout the country.’ Richard Parkinson (2002, 67; 1996, 145) also concedes that the royal court was probably involved in the creation and dissemination of literature in the Middle Kingdom, although its degree of influence is difficult to determine (2002, 69), and also highlights the local production and circulation of literary texts<sup>203</sup>. If that was so, it is also probable, as he remarks (2002, 68), that literary works ‘commissioned and/or approved by the court’ had higher status and prestige than texts composed and circulated locally.

Authors like Toby Wilkinson (2010, 160, 167-69, 174-75) and John Ray (2009, 193-94) also see in the royal court of the Twelfth Dynasty the main locus of origin of the Middle Kingdom literature, and side with the interpretation that regards Middle Kingdom literature as a ‘propagandistic’ tool that sought to win the loyalty of the courtiers and other high officials by showing ‘the qualities of the dynasty and its concern for the well-being of its subjects’ (Ray 2009, 193). According to Toby Wilkinson (2010, 160, 169), such a use of literature was complemented by a system of state surveillance to which a passage from the *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu* may refer: ‘(sj3 pw jm(.j) h3.tj.w / jw jr.twy=f(j) d<sup>c</sup>r=sn h.t-nb.t) He (the king) is Sia in h3.tj-hearts / his eyes investigate every belly’ (S. Cairo CG 20538 (‘short version’), vv. 2.5-2.6; Dils 2014; Wilkinson 2010, 168)<sup>204</sup>. If the royal court

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<sup>203</sup> In another work, Parkinson (1996, 141) discusses the use of the *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu* in the Middle Kingdom tomb of a high official, Sehetepibre, and proposes that the ascription of authorship to very high or to lower echelons of the Egyptian society ‘may be wishful thinking or an almost pastoral “travesty”’ (141 with n. 39).

<sup>204</sup> It is possible that the passage is more metaphorical than literal, but it certainly does evoke a panoptic effect. For a different perspective on state control of the population in the Middle Kingdom see Richards (2005, 28-30, 177-79).

set up at the new city capital Amenemhat-itj-tawy was indeed involved in the creation of literary texts, the instructions with a loyalist tone are candidates for works commissioned by the kingship for obvious reasons, although an alternative possibility, which will be discussed below, has been proposed. Wilkinson further argues that certain literary pieces were created in tandem with political circumstances, either to make the best of them or to steer them in the king's favour<sup>205</sup>.

Contrarily to these interpretations, Richard Parkinson (2002, 13-16; 1996, 139, 153-55) stresses that an analysis too centred on the political and propagandistic aspects of literary works risks ignoring their artistic and poetic qualities, their expression of social tensions, and the fact that they may have been received differently by audiences. He also argues that Egyptologist's 'propagandistic' readings of Egyptian texts may be an influence of Twentieth century politics, and an aversion to the siding of Egyptian literature with the official state ideology (2002, 16; 1996, 139; see also Loprieno 1996c, 517; Enmarch 2010, 666).

In turn, Nili Shupak (1993, 351) argues that wisdom literature was associated with the royal court not only in ancient Egypt, but also in the ancient Near East in general:

Wisdom composition in the ancient Near East involved not only school circles or private education but also the king's court. In Egypt, the king's court contained a school for princes and the sons of the high officials. There, too, the scribes, actually the king's officials, carried out their creative work. The firm link between wisdom and the king's court is expressed also in the attribution of some of the instructions to kings and their use in certain periods as propaganda for the king's house (e.g., the 'loyalist' instructions). A similar phenomenon is found in the Hebrew tradition which ascribes the composition of wisdom to King Solomon and asserts that King Hezekiah's men were involved in it (Prov. 25,1). The frequent mention of sage-counsellors in the kings' courts both in Biblical literature and the Egyptian sources<sup>206</sup> also points to the king's court as a setting for the flourishing of wisdom.

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<sup>205</sup> He gives the examples of the *Instruction of Amenemhat I*, which may have been commissioned by Senuseret I in order to make his assassinated father a martyr and thus capitalise on the regicide (2010, 167-68), and of the *Laments of Khakheperreseneb* and the *Admonitions of Ipuwer*, which may have been composed during the reign of Senuseret III in order to make his autocratic rule seem necessary by evoking the frailty of society's *status quo* (174-75).

<sup>206</sup> On the Egyptian sources cited as examples see Shupak (1993, 366n62, 420n40).

The context from which the biblical book of *Proverbs* emerged is also open to debate, with several authors arguing for the origin of the sayings in the Book of *Proverbs* among the folk, in the educational system, or in the royal court<sup>207</sup>. Michael Fox (1996, 229-39) argues against the first two possibilities and makes a case for the latter. Using text-internal evidence alone, he argues that sayings which concern kings and courtiers in the *Book of Proverbs* were ‘not only *about* kings and courtiers, but *to* and *for* them’ (235, emphasis in the original), as those sayings are relevant especially for kings and for officials who would come into contact with the king or at least with other (possibly high) officials, and imply knowledge of court proceedings and ambience on the part of the authors of those proverbs (234-35). Fox does not deny an influence of folk sayings in the composition of the *Book of Proverbs*, but considers the royal court to have been ‘the decisive locus of creativity’ (236) in what concerns the composition and redaction of the sayings of *Proverbs*. Therefore, even when there were sources of wisdom outside the royal court itself, what was included and what was left out was dependent on the interests of the officials entrusted with the selection, authorship, and redaction of the proverbs (237). The result is then ‘a deliberate and programmatic construal of reality’ (238), and part of that program, which does not need to be propagandistic, is the book’s didacticism, which ‘is the way the compilers of the proverbs wished their readers to view the world and their own role within it’ (238). What Michael Fox posits for the ancient Israelite context is quite possible for the ancient Egyptian context as well, especially in what concerns a programmatic selection of maxims<sup>208</sup> which fit the purposes of the authors – and/or the institutions behind them –, and which are addressed to the Egyptian social elite.

But, as cautioned by Fredrik Hagen (2012, 63), there is currently a problem with the interpretation connecting the institution of the royal court with the production of Middle Kingdom literature: ‘direct evidence for the hypothesis is almost non-existent’ (63), beginning with the fact that the capital city, Amenemhat-itj-tawy, is yet to be found. The necropolis at el-Lisht probably served the capital, and a literary manuscript, P. Lythgoe (see

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<sup>207</sup> For references and a discussion of the arguments see Fox (1996).

<sup>208</sup> Assuming the royal court played a significant role in the emergence of literature, and since nomarchs still held a significant amount of power during the Twelfth Dynasty, it is worth asking whether their views were represented in the literary texts or not. Given that several literary pieces may have been composed locally, as mentioned above, one may also wonder whether local nomarchical courts were involved in the composition of those works.

Parkinson 2002, 299-300), was found there, but that attests transmission at the capital<sup>209</sup> and not necessarily an origin in the royal court<sup>210</sup> (Hagen 2012, 63n). Another possible piece of evidence attesting a straight relationship between literature and the royal court are the references to the latter in literary texts such as the narratives of *Sinuhe* and *Eloquent Peasant*, and the *Prophecies of Neferti*. But, as also remarked by Hagen (63), it is not known whether or not their authors were familiarised with court proceedings (see also Parkinson 1996, 141-42). At any rate, many readers would not be able to tell the difference between an accurate and a fictional rendering of life at court<sup>211</sup> (Hagen 2012, 63).

Using Michel Foucault's concepts of discursive and non-discursive formations<sup>212</sup>, it is possible to conjecture an alternative hypothesis in which the royal court is not necessarily the instigator of literature but is not alien to the uses of literature either: the instructions discourse may have evolved independently from the royal court but crossed paths with it in a reciprocal interplay where one fuelled and served the purposes of the other. Thus, the royal court was quite possibly the reference and the lynchpin for the administration and its officials, in the sense that any nationwide normativisation would emanate from it and that it kept the administration united under one ruling institution<sup>213</sup>, thus creating and maintaining the figure of the official, while the instructions provide the construction of the model official<sup>214</sup>: one is recognised as an official if one makes his conduct coincide with the instructions' depiction of the official. To be sure, the target of the instructions is not always the same, and, for instance, the *Instruction of Khety* seems to be addressed to regular scribes, as opposed to the high official envisaged in several of the passages from the

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<sup>209</sup> In fact, literature was invariably associated with the literate elite and with the central administration (Baines 2007a, 51), and the royal court might have played a role in that association.

<sup>210</sup> While acknowledging that the relatively late attestation of literary texts at Lahun and Thebes may be due to chances of preservation, Parkinson (2002, 46) raises the possibility that it may instead reflect a slow dissemination from the royal court to more peripheral sites. Accepting that the late attestation of literary texts at Lahun and Thebes is not a matter of preservation but of dissemination, it is conceivable that the texts had their origin in the capital without the royal court being necessarily involved. At any rate, it is important to point out that 'next to nothing is known about the diffusion of literary texts' (Baines 1982, 32).

<sup>211</sup> This is true for modern times as well. One has only to think of historically-themed films: many members of the audience will deem them to be accurate and reflect state-of-the-art historical knowledge, when in fact a significant degree of dramatism and phantasy is often employed.

<sup>212</sup> On which see, for example, Deleuze (1986, 38-41, 69).

<sup>213</sup> However, the relationship between the central government and the provincial administration is still not well known (Eyre 2013, 197).

<sup>214</sup> This is above all an emergence in the written discourse and not an *ex nihilo* construction, as expectations on the conduct of officials by the Middle Kingdom would have been inherited from previous dynasties.

*Instruction of Ptahhotep* (see also Parkinson 1996, 141, 143), but they may all be considered officials nonetheless<sup>215</sup>.

If the instructions, and the remaining Middle Kingdom literature by that matter, emerged independently from institutions such as the royal court<sup>216</sup>, their aim might have been either to provide the elite members a sense of mystique and of identity<sup>217</sup>, or to distinguish them from the rest of the population, or even both (Quirke 2004, 25; Hagen 2012, 57-58). In fact, it is not uncommon for elite groups to separate themselves from other social groups by developing and upholding a code of conduct (Ortiz 1994, 903).

Since the late Old Kingdom, and through the First Intermediate Period, the Egyptian society underwent significant changes. Therefore, pinpointing the exact social group, or groups, which developed the Middle Kingdom literature is not a straightforward matter. The only clear and obvious fact is that it was created by a literate elite (Parkinson 1996, 140).

A social group occupying a middle position, ‘that is, lying between the small ruling elite and the rest (and vast majority) of the population’ (Richards 2005, 15), is archaeologically attested for the Middle Kingdom at least at the mortuary sites at Riqqa, Haraga, and Abydos<sup>218</sup> (Richards 2005, 173-76; see also Callender 2001, 164). The emergence of this intermediate social group began at the late Old Kingdom and progressed through the First Intermediate Period, with an increased distancing from the king and central authority, and the venues that allowed the social mobility of the members of this

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<sup>215</sup> Based on the instructions addressed by a vizier, John Baines (2007a, 51) suggests that members of the high elite would have been the main readers of high culture texts. Stephen Quirke (2004, 46, 50) suggests, however, that the creators and main readers of literature were scribes with accountancy functions. Richard Parkinson (1996, 144) also suggests that ‘if the extremes of the fictional range [i.e., authors from high levels of the court and authors from low social standings] are likely to be travesties, its centre lies with officials not necessarily from the higher reaches of the court; it is easy to imagine such officials enjoying courtly travesties, and hearing of suffering individuals from lower social levels.’

<sup>216</sup> Which does not necessarily exclude the possibility that, as with the modern prison and legal discourse, the instructions developed at first independently from the royal court, but, at some point, were brought into an interplay with it, with each influencing the other mutually (although perhaps not evenly).

<sup>217</sup> What John Baines states about the ‘natural morality’ of the Old Kingdom tomb biographies may also be applied to the instructions: ‘The great would thus be justified in appropriating the wherewithal to satisfy people’s needs (which they themselves had earlier appropriated). But because so few could read and because even access to tombs may not have been very common, the moral justification offered in these texts was probably more significant in reinforcing the elite’s own sense of status than in speaking to others’ (1991, 140). Concerning the significant ethical and moral dimension of the instructions, it is also relevant to take into account that morality ‘responds to and lessens inequality, but it also legitimizes it’ (162).

<sup>218</sup> The high elite is not attested at those sites, but were instead interred ‘near the mortuary complexes of their kings’ (Richards 2005, 175).

group may have included an increase in recruitment for the army due to the Middle Kingdom imperialism and border defence, an increase in literacy rates, and the establishment of towns for specific purposes, such as the one in Lahun<sup>219</sup> (Richards 2005, 173, 177-78; Parkinson 1996, 144-45). Although it is inferable from the available data that the people of this group were somewhat economically independent from government institutions, there is much still not known about them (Richards 2005, 176-77,180; Grajetzki 2006, 149–51), including their relationship with literature (but see Callender 2001, 171; Loprieno 1996c, 520).

In the textual discourses of the First Intermediate Period and of the Middle Kingdom a new group of people also emerged, the *nds.w*. Some authors saw as the referent of this designation a new social group, and more specifically, a ‘middle class’ ‘bourgeoisie’ which lied between the ruling ‘aristocracy’ (the *sr.w*-officials) and the rest of the population (Loprieno 1996b, 409; 1996c, 519-20; 1996d, 540n45), and which could have created the emerging literature of the Middle Kingdom (see Quirke 2004, 38-39). Other authors, however, are reticent in jumping to conclusions: ‘Usually translated “commoner”, or “free citizen” its precise social significance remains uncertain, but it describes people with titles and considerable wealth, as well as farmers’ (Parkinson 1996, 142). In his investigation of the term, Detlef Franke (1998, 46) also concluded that no social designation is entailed by *nds*.

Without making reference to archaeological findings and drawing from textual attestations alone, Antonio Loprieno (1996b, 405-406, 409; 1996c, 519-520) argues that literature was developed and read by the new social group which he argues to have been designated as *nds.w* and which he renders as ‘bourgeoisie’ and ‘free citizens’. As a new social group facing a restored central authority, there were several potential tensions that had to be neutralised, and a way to achieve that was through literature (1996d, 540n45, 546). One of the main tensions was the one between social expectations and individual

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<sup>219</sup> It may be speculated that the first two venues are related, as some of the men joining the army might have been taught there, in a way similar to many modern commercial pilots who graduated at the air force academy. The establishment of workers’ towns may also have fostered an increase in literacy learning, as it seems to have have been the case later at Deir el-Medina.



achievements as in Middle Kingdom literature societal concerns (= *topos*) progressed hierarchically towards individual concerns (= *mimesis*)<sup>220</sup>.

According to Loprieno (1996b, 404-412), the loyalist instructions known as the *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu*<sup>221</sup> and as the *Instruction of a Man for His Son* held three domains which could potentially generate conflict and which had to be neutralised. These domains are: ‘anonymity’, ‘god vs. king’, and ‘success in life vs. survival after death’.

In the way Loprieno interprets it, ‘the anonymity of loyalistic literature crystallizes the collective experience of Egyptian aristocracy vis-à-vis the state’ (1996b, 405-406). Especially in the case of the *Instruction of a Man for His Son*, in order to neutralise any criticism that could get the author(s) in trouble and to better promote the text, the instruction is not attributed to a high official, but instead to a ‘nameless bourgeois’ (= *nds*) (1996d, 540 with n. 45). The *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu* would use a similar plot, as the Middle Kingdom stela of Sehetep-ib-Re reproduces an instruction whose author was not known by the time Loprieno published his papers (1996b and 1996d)<sup>222</sup>. But that would not be a problem for Loprieno’s argument, as he compares the anonymity of both loyalist instructions with the fictional authorship of the instructions of *Amenemhat I* and *for the King Merikare*. ‘Both [the loyalist and royal instructions] convey in a veiled form the basic problematics of Middle Kingdom literary production, which is the debate between state ideology and personal experience’ (1996d, 541).

Regarding the second domain, ‘god vs. king’, Loprieno (1996b, 406-10) argues that the loyalist instructions established a more personal relationship with god, which would be further developed in the New Kingdom ‘personal piety’, a suggestion also made by Alexa Wilke (2006, 100), and that this is ultimately tied in with the social background of the new high elite which produced and read the texts. As an elite of what the author terms ‘free

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<sup>220</sup> Notice that while modern audiences tend to prefer mimetic texts, topical texts seem to have been more valued in ancient Egypt (Loprieno 1996a, 45-47; Parkinson 1996, 151n95).

<sup>221</sup> The aforementioned tomb N31.1 at Asyut contains the beginning of the text previously known only as *Loyalist Instruction* and identifies its author as Kairsu (Vernus 2010a, 277). Since this recent discovery, several authors began to use the title *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu* (Hagen 2012, ix; Dils 2014). That practice is adopted here, although it remains uncertain whether this was a New Kingdom attribution or whether Kairsu was already considered as the instruction’s author in the Middle Kingdom.

<sup>222</sup> See previous note. If Fischer-Elfert’s (2001a, 441) suggestion is accepted, that both instructions form a triptych with the *Instruction of Khety*, called *Sattire of the Trades* by Loprieno according to Egyptological tradition, the thesis of the anonymity, *stricto sensu*, of the loyalist instructions loses further ground, as the two texts would be coupled with another whose (claimed) author is identified.

citizens' (Loprieno 1996b, 409), in a liminal position between subjection to a central monarchy and having authority over several dependents at 'the point of juncture between the two potentially conflicting spheres of a well-functioning society' (410), these men would have had the responsibility of being loyal to the former and of behaving ethically towards the latter, which is part of the third potentially problematic domain, 'success in life vs. survival after death'<sup>223</sup>.

It would have been this sense of responsibility that would have prompted a quest for their self-discovery as ethically responsible agents and that led to the notion of an afterlife accessed through proper ethical behaviour appraised by a divine tribunal, as well as to the notion that 'success in life (*mjnj*) as sign of divine election (*ḥzw.t nt ntr*)' (Loprieno 1996b, 411). In this quest for self-discovery, the members of this new elite would have built upon already existing notions – even if explored almost only in relation to the king –, namely the *b3*, the *jb*-heart and *ntr*, as partners (409-410).

Loprieno's interpretation is very interesting, but several issues are debatable. Firstly, it is difficult to make an equation between the *nds.w* and the kind of communities studied by Janet Richards which occupied a middle position in the Middle Kingdom society. To classify the *nds.w* as 'bourgeoisie' and as 'free citizens', while at the same time designating the elite of high officials (*sr.w*) as 'aristocracy' may also raise problems of its own as one risks reading Egyptian social notions backwards from the western historical context in which they emerged and forcing western constructs on ancient realities<sup>224</sup>, a risk also familiar to students of religion regarding the cross-cultural use of terms like 'sin', 'saint', 'god', and 'religion' itself. Stephen Quirke (2004, 38-39, 46, 50) also denounces that the Egyptological construction of the *nds.w* as a 'middle class' independent from central authority, and among whom literature was created and consumed, may be a modern idealisation: 'These literature-men seem suspiciously close not only to the artistic genius in European Romanticism, but, more worryingly, to a heroic self-image of Egyptologists themselves, as if Egypt would have had proto-Egyptologists as its literati' (38). Instead, he

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<sup>223</sup> In the way Loprieno (1996b, 414) sees it, the king was also ascribed a liminal position between expectations of loyalism and its reality and between his participation of the divine world and his attachment to the human world, as a result of the process of humanisation of the king present in other instructions as well, namely the *Instruction for the King Merikare* and the *Instruction of Amenemhet I*. Thus, the presence of the king in the loyalist instructions would not have been exclusively propagandistic.

<sup>224</sup> See also Franke (1998, 48).

argues, literature was most probably composed by scribes (*zh3.w*<sup>225</sup>), a fact which may be unpleasant to modern expectations given that their main occupation was accountancy: ‘Academic professionals may have found comfort in projections of themselves back into time to be discovered as prototypical Western-style free-thinkers creating literary masterpieces: what a horror if the creators of that literature turned out to be the accountants’ (2004, 50).

Secondly, it is also difficult to demonstrate in which literate social group was literature developed, even if ‘it seems likely that literature was composed within the official classes, ostensibly for their hearing, and was circulated with central approval’ (Parkinson 1996, 145). The same difficulty applies to the interpretation of the anonymity of loyalist instructions as well as of the masked authorship of the other instructions. To be sure, the anonymity of the *Instruction of a Man for His Son*, which is an isolated case<sup>226</sup>, may conceal the identity of (a) high official(s) in order to deviate any criticism to a lower social group by whom the crown would feel less threatened. The same may have been used in instructions like the *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu* or the *Instruction of Khety*. But, as noticed by Detlef Franke (1998, 48), and even if those attributions are fictional, several other instructions are ascribed to members of the high elite, such as the kings Merikare and Amenemhat I, the viziers in the instructions *for Kagemni* and *of Ptahhotep*, and the king’s followers such as Sinuhe and the protagonist of the *Shipwrecked Sailor*<sup>227</sup> (see also Parkinson 1996, 143). Franke (1998, 48) also rejects Loprieno’s argument<sup>228</sup> that the texts’ audience belonged to the same social group that produced them, that is the middle social group, and, after asking what would the high elite read, claims that: ‘mir scheint das Gegenteil viel plausibler: daß die Oberschicht sich gerne Geschichten über einfache Leute anhörte, daß man lieber über das Fremde, Andere und beispielhaft über die Probleme anderer schrieb’ (48).

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<sup>225</sup> *zš* in Quirke’s transliteration.

<sup>226</sup> Notice, however, that this man can be either a man from a lower and intermediate social group or a man in the sense of a ‘son of man’, that is, a high official (see Quirke 2004, 102; Parkinson 1991, 96, 109; Fischer-Elfert 2001a, 170; Vernus 2010a, 280; but see also Gnirs 2000, 136). On the ancient near eastern expression ‘son of man’ see Lichtheim (1973, 79n59).

<sup>227</sup> However, the follower (*šms.w*) in the *Shipwrecked Sailor* does not necessarily have to be follower of the king (see Quirke 2004, 39).

<sup>228</sup> See Loprieno (1996b, 406).

Thirdly and lastly, are the conclusions drawn by Loprieno about the relationship between god, king, and the high elite serving the autocratic regime exclusive to the two loyalist instructions? Or are they extensible to the other Middle Kingdom instructions? Although the *Instruction of Kairsu* and the *Instruction of a Man for His Son* are more readily identified as loyalist instructions, the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* has some level of loyalism as well, as the text is framed by a request from Ptahhotep to the king (called both *jty* and *nb*) to make a ‘staff of old age’ at the beginning (P. Prisse, vv. D7-35), and by Ptahhotep’s acknowledgement of having lived 110 years as a gift (*dd*) from the king (*nj-sw.t*) for having done Ma’at for him (P. Prisse, vv. D641-44). *Ptahhotep*’s ascription of his lifespan to a royal gift is evocative of the question in the *Instruction of a Man for His Son* (O. DeM 1665 + O. Gardiner 1, vv. 3.2-3.3) as to whether one’s lifespan may be altered<sup>229</sup> – it is not clear whether this is a nod from one instruction to the other, but it is certainly suggestive.

In the same way, Loprieno’s argument that in the loyalist instructions *ntr* acquires a more personal connotation may also be extrapolated to other Middle Kingdom instructions, such as the *Instruction for the King Merikare* (Wilke 2006, 102), as *ntr* is often recurring in these texts and is concerned with human affairs and actions. However, Loprieno’s case is strengthened by the reference to *ntr=k*, ‘your god’. He provides two examples, one from the *Instruction of a Man for His Son*, O. Louvre 23561, vv. 5.4-5.5 (see no. 16), and the *Oxford Wisdom Text*, T. Ashmolean Museum 1964.489, v. A 3. To the knowledge of the present author, these two are the only attestations of this expression in Middle Kingdom instructions, and, in the extant material, it is not attested before the *Instruction of Ani* (P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 15.14 (see no. 26), 16.3 (see no. 27), 19.8 (see no. 29), 19.10 (see no. 29), 20.12 (see no. 31); P. Deir el-Medina, vv. vv. 21.2-21.3 (= 7.1) (see no. 32.1)) and the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*, = P. BM EA 10684 verso, vv. 2.1 and 4.10. But whereas in the loyalist instructions *ntr=k* refers most probably to the king, in the instructions of *Ani* and of *Papyrus Chester Beatty IV* it certainly refers to the god of the ‘personal piety’, as argued by Joachim Quack (1994, 73).

Richard Parkinson suggests that literature was probably ‘composed within the official classes’ (1996, 145), and that an increased access to literacy may have allowed

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<sup>229</sup> See below the discussion of that passage in chapter 4, subsection 4.3.1.

individuals from relatively low social standings to earn part of their living by composing and performing literary works (144-45). It strikes modern readers as familiar, with the potential risk of projecting modern expectations and sensibilities on ancient texts, that Middle Kingdom literature gives special emphasis to individualism and to the hardships endured by the protagonists (151). The protagonists' solitude often places them in a position from which they may criticise society, as is the case in the *Eloquent Peasant* (148-49). However, Parkinson remarks that that criticism is not addressed to society and its institutions themselves, but to their deviation from their ideal state (149). He gives the example of the Khuninpu in the *Eloquent Peasant*: 'The peasant does not denounce society itself, but its corruption: not the fact that he has a master, but that his master does not behave as one' (149). Thus, literature runs simultaneously counter and for ideology.

Literature's ability to recount personal experience and to criticise carries with it the threat of subversion, a threat Parkinson believes was dealt with through containment (153-55). Literature's subversive elements would have been neutralised by being put in writing and 'regulated into a court or other performance, or perhaps into the privacy of reading' (154). An example is 'the chaos of Khakheperreseneb [which] is in a sense neutralized by being recorded in orderly verses' (154). Parkinson (153-54) establishes a comparison between this way of containing potentially subversive elements in literature and the containment of threats in magical texts. But one may also compare this interpretation of Middle Kingdom literature with what is known in performance studies as 'liminal performances'.

These may include performances in which the participant lies between two states, for instance non-initiated and initiated, and will hopefully emerge from it transformed (Schechner 1994, 643). But they may also include other performances, such as carnivals, where an upturned state of affairs is staged, abuses and transgressions of norms are allowed (and even encouraged), but, at the end of it, the *status quo* is maintained and people will return to their lives as if nothing had happened: unlike in 'liminoid performances', no transformation is achieved<sup>230</sup> (Carlson 1996, 18-20, 23; Schechner 1994, 639-43). Like

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<sup>230</sup> Psychologically, the participants are probably changed, for instance from a stressed out state to a more relieved one. But in terms of social status, for example, participants do not acquire a new status, as is the case in initiations. And no political or social revolution is sparked by liminal performances, contrarily to the effects of liminoid performances, such as the May 68 demonstrations.

Middle Kingdom literature, according to Richard Parkinson's argument, these performances may play a role in alleviating stresses and tensions (Carlson 1996, 19). A case in point is the ancient Roman celebration *Saturnalia*: in this public festivity, slaves were allowed to play the roles of their masters while the latter would do the opposite and, in this way, slaves had an opportunity to vent the stresses and tensions deriving from their subjugation<sup>231</sup> (Bang 2009, 460).

Where liminality is not (only) carnivalesque, but involves transformation in changing from one state to another, the liminal position entails vulnerability and is potentially dangerous as one is neither one thing nor another. Examples from 'narratives', 'lamentations', and 'tales' are Sinuhe between exile and returning to Egypt, Ipuwer and Khakheperreseneb between the collapse of central authority and its restoration<sup>232</sup>, and Khuninpu between being wronged and seeing justice being done. Likewise, the disciple of the instructions is also in a vulnerable and potentially perilous position: he has yet to learn and assimilate the moral conduct being expounded to him and may still choose otherwise. The authors of instructions are unanimous in pointing out sources that could deviate the student's attention away from the proper path: one's own predispositions (often originating in the *h.t* or in a faulty character (*kd*)<sup>233</sup>), lack of interest and willingness to become a scribe<sup>234</sup>, temptation of corruption<sup>235</sup>, intercourse with women he should stay away from<sup>236</sup>, trusting too much in his servants<sup>237</sup>, not being loyal to the king<sup>238</sup>, and neglecting one's

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<sup>231</sup> Contrasting the reduced social mobilisation by the political Left in the 1990s and early 2000s with the extensive number of people who demonstrated on the streets against the Vietnam war in the 1960s and 1970s, Richard Schechner (2006, 149) ascribes a similar function to protests online: 'In a way, ironically, the performative replaced performance. The internet had become the global forum. People blogged and petitioned rather than putting bodies in the streets. When people did demonstrate – against the invasion of Iraq or the meetings of the World Trade Organisation, for example – the police were well able to control the situations. The near absolute freedom of internet expression led to lots of excellent ideas and analyses that had little effects on policies. The many opinions served more to blow off steam than to form a united front'.

<sup>232</sup> The latter is not announced in the texts, but, if these texts were written in the Thirteenth Dynasty (see Parkinson 1991, 112; 2002, 304, 308 with references), it is implicitly assumed.

<sup>233</sup> See the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, maxim 14, vv. D243-D248, maxim 23, vv. D350-D352, and maxim 35, vv. D493-D494.

<sup>234</sup> See the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*, = P. BM EA 10684 verso, vv. 6.5-6.7 (see no. 36).

<sup>235</sup> See the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 20, vv. 20.21-21.4 (see no. 50).

<sup>236</sup> See the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, maxim 18, the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 16.13-16.17, and the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*, = P. BM EA 10684 verso, v. 1.13.

<sup>237</sup> See the *Instruction of Amenemhat I*, P. Millingen, vv. 1.3-1.4.

<sup>238</sup> See the *Instruction of a Man for His Son*, O. DeM 1665 + O. Gardiner 1, section 3, vv. 3.5-3.6 (see no. 14).

duties to god and to subordinates<sup>239</sup>. These are a few examples and, though all these situations are liable to happen well after the pupil has concluded his training, he will be more vulnerable to them during his formation.

The liminal position of the protagonists of other Middle Kingdom texts had the potential to be entertaining, as ‘they would ... entertain an official audience by describing the woes of those excluded from the centre of society’ (Parkinson 2002, 148). The isolation and vulnerability of those protagonists might also have been ‘read didactically as warnings against [the isolation from society of] such individuals’<sup>240</sup> (148). The same may apply to the instructions: presenting the student between ignorance and wisdom might have been entertaining, perhaps because they dealt with the etiquette that made the elite distinguishable on a moral and social plane, while also being didactic: the instructions not only detail what could become of the disciple if he were to diverge from the correct approach to life, but also caution the audience against becoming an ignorant, a hot-belly, etc., as those are the paths to social self-destruction.

What one may now ask is whether the instructions, especially from the Middle Kingdom, were fundamentally different from other literary texts, and whether they occupied a cultural role distinct enough to be considered wisdom literature, as against being considered virtually undifferentiated from narratives and tales. Even if they did not have a cultural place of their own, sharing it instead with other literary texts, by being primarily entertainment works, their content and their complex level of writing may indicate they had a more specific role of providing the elite a sense of identity and a marker of status by spelling out the virtues of officials.

The fact that the Middle Kingdom instructions may not have been primarily used in the training of future officials, does not necessarily mean their prescriptions were pointless and just for show. On the contrary, they may reflect virtues the officials were expected to uphold. Similarly, the passages mobilising *ntr* may reproduce contemporary expectations about how god/king relates with people and their actions, even if the authors of the instructions had creative liberty in how they mobilised god to impart their message (Adams

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<sup>239</sup> See the *Instruction for the King Merikare*, P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, vv. 43-46, and 110-111 (see no. 23).

<sup>240</sup> Marvin Carlson (1996, 19) mentions that a liminal performance also ‘normally suggests that a frightening chaos is the alternative to established order’.

2008, 18n11, 50). The suggestion made by John Baines (1994, 48), that authors of instructions might have used theological ideas creatively for ‘their own chief didactic concerns’ (48), is also a valid possibility. Be that as it may, *ntr* in the Middle Kingdom instructions emerges as a key figure who complements the didactic prescriptions, for instance playing a role in retribution and in the providence of material wealth.

New Kingdom instructions were perhaps less concerned with giving their audience a sense of identity, and probably qualified more as didactic wisdom literature in the true sense of the designation. In these texts, *ntr* remains a key figure, with the added feature that the ways in which the deity was mobilised resulted not only from the heritage of the previous Middle Kingdom instructions (Adams 2008, 41-42), but also from the influences of the broader religious manifestation of personal piety.

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It is not possible to know with a comfortable degree of certainty what motivated Egyptian authors from the Middle Kingdom to compose the instructions, where and how they were mainly used during the Middle Kingdom, and which institutions were involved, more directly as the entities who commissioned the composition of the texts or more indirectly as entities who had an interest in their composition and thus provided some kind of support. Inasmuch as it would be an institution interested in the persuasion and ideological conditioning of the officials working in the ‘public service’ and in the ‘central administration’, the royal court may have been the institution which commissioned the wisdom instructions and which supported their development. Literature is a complex phenomenon with several functions, although not everything about literature needs to be functional, and meeting ideological needs from the ruling families – including not only the royal family but also the families who closely support it – might be one of those functions. One of the arguments in favour of that ideological need, namely that the Middle Kingdom ruling houses sought through a well written and captivating literature to avoid the fate of an Old Kingdom autocracy too distanced from its subjects, is difficult to counter. Part of that difficulty stems from the dearth of evidence concerning the court established at Amenemhat-Iti-Tawy with the onset of the Twelfth Dynasty. Its most probable necropolis



was found, but not the town itself. It thus remains speculative to claim that the royal court was directly involved in the production of wisdom literature and other literary texts. And while it may not be possible at the moment to adequately revise this hypothesis, it may not be advisable to depend on its accuracy either.

Similarly, schools, attached to temples and to the palace or operating in a relatively autonomous way, might have had an interest in the composition of instruction texts to be used as textbooks. Whether those texts would require the approval or permission of the royal court is less certain. But the material evidence of Middle Kingdom instructions is either insufficient or ambiguous in terms of their possible uses to allow us to determine whether they circulated at schools or not. The very evidence of the schools of this period is also not abundant. Therefore, one cannot confidently rely on the hypothesis that Middle Kingdom instructions were developed in close association with schools either.

It is only since the New Kingdom that the picture of the composition and circulation of the instructions becomes somewhat clearer. Preserved instructions from the Middle Kingdom were copied and valued as canonical and cultural texts, probably both in an educational setting as well as in the context of private copying, reading, and storing. However, it is difficult to know whether they were relevant in the New Kingdom for their content or mainly for their value as cultural treasures from the past.

New Kingdom original instructions display remarkable differences: their authors are not distinguished and high-ranking persons from a valued, and possibly idealised, past, but are instead officials distanced from the court and from the central administration, and, unlike most, if not all, of their Middle Kingdom counterparts, were probably historical authors who wrote their wisdom texts locally to teach their children, and possibly other children from their communities, in response to the perceived or real challenges of their time. Another feature separating them from the Middle Kingdom instructions is their proximity to the Late-Egyptian Miscellanies, which, besides the address by historical authors, includes the integration of dialogues with the recipient of the teaching. Many of the themes of the New Kingdom instructions are picked up from their Middle Kingdom counterparts, but the New Kingdom authors are also original in several ways, for instance in their greater emphasis on one's relationship with one's personal god, on how to react to and deal with foreigners, and in the downright exposition of corruption and poverty. In the

same way that their Middle Kingdom equivalents, New Kingdom wisdom instructions probably also circulated between educational (if informal or formal is more difficult to know) and private settings, albeit without the weight and status of cultural and canonical texts. However, which type of use may have been more predominant and who the typical reader, copyist, performer, and collector of the instructions may have been is still largely uncertain.

For the purposes of a sociological analysis of a given set of texts, it is desirable to know with enough precision who were the individuals who composed them and where they circulated, that is, which social groups read, copied, edited, performed<sup>241</sup>, and stored them. For the Egyptian instructions there is not enough evidence to tie them to specific institutions or social groups, although it can be confidently said that they could have been composed and read by individuals with the necessary levels of literacy, and that they probably appealed to high officials, particularly in the case of the Middle Kingdom instructions which were pieces of high literature. But the uncertainty about many of their composers and about much of their audience casts doubts on how prescriptive their didacticism may have been. For instance, a prescriptive work on court etiquette which is read by courtiers is more likely to be followed to the letter than if it is read by province officials who will probably never set foot on the royal court<sup>242</sup>.

In his analysis of the psychiatric and legal discourses, Michel Foucault was aware of the relationship between the psychiatric discourse and the facilities where patients were

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<sup>241</sup> As pointed out by Jean DeBernardi (1994, 868), the study of the social context of performance is important, as genre conventions alone ‘fail to convey the social meaning’ of the performance of the text, and as ‘the ethnographic approach to verbal art persuasively demonstrates that meaning is often only completed in the context of the speech event’. He gives the example of ‘the Western Apache practice of “shooting with stories”’ in which ‘reprimands or didactic messages are conveyed indirectly by moralistic stories that are linked to physical locations where memorable past events took place’ (868). The purpose of telling those stories in those specific places is to prompt the listener to introspect by comparing his behaviour with the behaviour of the anti-hero (868). This is a role the Egyptian instructions might as well have easily played, especially because, and as remarked above, the instructions underscore the paths that could lead the addressee astray.

<sup>242</sup> A modern parallel might be the different uses made of the written *bushidō* codes, revivalist compendia which sought to capture the essence of the samurai etiquette even though they were written well after the samurai, or *bushi*, had a prominent military role in the Japanese society. Twentieth century nationalistic movements in Japan read it more literally and used it to bolster an aggressive stance in international politics, probably even fuelling directly the strategy of suicide attacks by foot soldiers and airmen during World War II. But modern readers, both from Japan and other countries, are more likely to read it with curiosity, as against nationalistic fervour (but see Hurst III 1998, 24), and to draw inspiration from some of its passages instead of blindly following it. On this subject see Ackroyd (2005) and Hurst III (1998).

examined and/or committed, and between the legal discourse and the prisons. In the case of the Egyptian instructions, the discursive formations are available to us, even if somewhat fragmentarily, but which non-discursive formations, such as institutions and social groups, gave rise to, supported, and were otherwise related to the instructions is largely beyond our knowledge<sup>243</sup>. This analysis will then work with the instructions' discursive formations alone, attempting to perceive how the instructions saw their place and role in their society and in their time, and to which audience they sought to get to.

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<sup>243</sup> This is especially true of the Middle Kingdom instructions, but it is also applicable to the New Kingdom ones, as, though it is possible to gain awareness of the spectrum through which they circulated, it is still not entirely clear to which social groups they were most relevant, or to which institutions they may have been related (one may think of, for instance, of Houses of Life attached to temples).

### 3. Divine punishment

As texts largely focused on ethics, the instructions advise not only on the appropriate behaviour one ought to adopt, but also against the transgressions one should avoid. Inasmuch as transgressions and consequent punishments constitute situations of conflict, it may be useful to interpret them in the light of the model of ‘social drama’, conceptualised by Victor Turner out of Arnold van Gennep’s initiation model. The model comprises four stages: 1) ‘breach’, 2) ‘crisis’, 3) ‘redressive process’<sup>244</sup>, 4) a) ‘reintegration’ or b) ‘recognition of irreparable schism’ (Turner 1990; see also Schechner 1994, 631; Garwood 2011, 261-63). The social drama model ranges thus from the onset of conflict to its end – be it peaceful or not.

Applied to situations of conflict in ancient Egypt, this model may fit legal processes – such as the ones following the murder of Ramses III and the robbery of royal tombs by the late New Kingdom (on these see McDowell 2001, 317, 319; Vernus 2003b, 5-49, 108-20)<sup>245</sup> –, as well as penitential prayers – such as the two votive stelae of Neferabu (S. Turin 50058 and S. BM 589 verso). Both types of texts, which pertain to legal processes, such as the Turin Judicial Papyrus, and to pietistic confessions of wrongdoing, are mostly concerned with what takes place after the breach, although the mentioned legal texts take interest in establishing the circumstances of the breach event, in order, for instance, to determine who is guilty and to what extent.

The social drama model also applies to the instructions, but they are especially concerned with what takes place before the breach, and seldom detail the stages following it. They do mention specific transgressions and their punishments – the latter are often unspecified<sup>246</sup> and carried out by *ntr* –, but pursue the process no further and are mainly concerned with avoiding conflict in the first place and not with its aftermath and resolution. However, the fact that the other three stages of the model are normally not explicit in the

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<sup>244</sup> Turner (1990, 8) argues that: ‘Redressive action is often ritualized, and may be undertaken in the name of law or religion. Judicial processes stress reason and evidence, religious processes emphasize ethical problems, hidden malice operating through witchcraft, or ancestral wrath against breaches of tabu or the impiety of the living towards the dead.’

<sup>245</sup> Texts pertaining to legal processes, such as the Turin Judicial Papyrus – relating to the harem conspiracy that resulted in the death of Ramesses III –, take off after the breach stage, although they do not necessarily ignore the breach events.

<sup>246</sup> This feature will be discussed in more detail below.

instructions does not necessarily mean that the authors and audiences were oblivious of what would follow. In fact, if punishments meted out by *ntr* were mobilised to shape conduct, that use would have been predicated in the awareness of the kind of consequences that would come after transgressing.

In the instructions, transgressions<sup>247</sup> which are punishable by *ntr* can be gathered under two main groups: they may be against 1) individuals, as well as the king or the state, and against 2) *ntr*. Transgressions will now be listed according to their nature:

1- Transgressions against individuals and against the king/state:

- 1.1- Mistreatment of other persons.
- 1.2- Fraudulency and illegal acquisition of wealth.
- 1.3- Inflammatory and/or false speech.
- 1.4- Desecration of tombs.
- 1.5- Opposition to the king.
- 1.6- Execution of courtiers.

2- Transgressions against *ntr*:

- 2.1- Detestation (*bw.t*) of god.
- 2.2- Ritual failures and transgressions.

As with any categorisation where selection is involved, the categorisation of transgressions listed above is debatable and its primary aim is to organise and potentiate the discussion about the discursive mobilisation of *ntr* as an agent that may be offended and that may punish as a consequence<sup>248</sup>. The conjunction of a counsel against pursuing a particular course of action with the punishment by *ntr* served as the criterion for listing these transgressions. To be sure, there are also several passages condemning a particular

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<sup>247</sup> The more juridical term ‘crime’ is avoided here, and the more general ‘transgression’ is preferred, as the instructions do not exclusively cover crimes punishable by law, but also ethical wrongdoings.

<sup>248</sup> On methodological considerations about selection see, for instance, Rüpke (2011, 287, 290-91), Smith (1982, xi-xiii), and Lewis (1994, 574-75).

transgression that do not mobilise *ntr* as a punishing agency<sup>249</sup>. In addition, even positive injunctions implicitly evoke the possibility of transgression by creating a discursive shadow<sup>250</sup>: the opposite of what one ought to do becomes what one should not do<sup>251</sup>. But despite these cases, this study centres on spelled out transgressions explicitly condemned by *ntr*.

What will be observed in the following discussion is that not all types of transgressions are condemned in all of the instructions, and that some instructions dwell more on certain transgressions than other instructions. For example, fraudulency and corruption are almost exclusively addressed in the *Instruction of Amenemope*, while the counsel against killing courtiers is voiced solely in the *Instruction for the King Merikare*. Noticeably, tampering with oracle verdicts and stealing material from temples are transgressions featured in New Kingdom instructions alone. Also, the detestation of god is not attested in the extant Middle Kingdom instructions, with one exception. Each category will now be discussed:

### 3.1 Transgressions against individuals and against the king/state

#### 3.1.1 Mistreatment of other persons

This category was selected out of the themes addressed in the passages from the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 20.17-21.3 (see no. 32) – which deals with negligence in providing for one’s mother later in life –, and from the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 25, vv. 24.9-24.19 (see no. 54) – which deals with the mocking of the physically and mentally disabled –, and chapter 27, vv. 25.17-26.1 (see no. 55) – which addresses the mistreatment of elders. What these passages have in

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<sup>249</sup> Examples include maxims 19 and 20 from the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* which condemn the one who is greedy, and chapters 11 and 12 from the *Instruction of Amenemope* which advise against coveting and stealing goods both from poor people and from superiors, respectively.

<sup>250</sup> This term is loosely borrowed from Carl Jung’s psychoanalytic framework. For a convenient definition of the term as used in that framework see Schweizer (2010, 32). As Schweizer (32) puts it: ‘in Jungian psychology the shadow is also a technical term for the parts in us that we don’t recognize’. It is in this sense that the term is used here: what is not explicitly stated is nonetheless implicit and present.

<sup>251</sup> An example is the famous advice to avoid the wives of men with whom one wants to maintain a relationship with in maxim 18 from the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*. Doing the opposite will obviously result in a violation of the social norms regulating relationships between men.

common is that the recipient of the instruction is advised against mistreating someone who is in an inferior power relation with him. That mistreatment involves a personal injury, as opposed to other, more depersonalised transgressions, such as fraudulency.

Although only passages from New Kingdom instructions will be discussed here, that does not reflect the absence of this topic in Middle Kingdom instructions. On the contrary, the explicit mistreatment of other persons, or at least its possibility, is addressed, for instance, in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, maxims 4 and 17, and in the *Instruction of a Man for His Son*, section 10<sup>252</sup>. The novelty of New Kingdom instructions is the association of this topic with the mobilisation of a deity, no doubt under the influence of the increased manifestations of personal piety in that period.

### 3.1.1.1 *Instruction of Ani*, vv. 20.17-21.3

As pointed out by Vernus (2010a, 312), the *Instruction of Ani* seems to lack a systematised arrangement<sup>253</sup>. However, the present passage, which deals with the fairly unique topic in the universe of the instructions of the filial duty towards one's mother, arguably has points of contact with the passage that precedes it and with the one that follows it. The preceding passage on P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 20.12-20.17 (see no. 31), gives a series of ritual prescriptions, starting with the injunction *wdn <n> ntr=kwj*, 'offer <to> your god' (v. 20.12). At the end of the maxim it is revealed that offerings of both incense and food reinvigorate god (v. 20.17). While god is certainly not in the same position as the ageing mother on vv. 20.17-21.3, it is arguably not accidental that the counsel to observe one's obligations towards one's personal god precedes the injunction to observe one's filial duties. The following passage on vv. 21.4-21.10 is connected to the passage under analysis in this section by the use of the word 'bread' (*ꜥḳ*) (v. 21.3)<sup>254</sup> and by the topic of reciprocity: one should not damage social relations by not offering the bread one is having to another who is standing, as one may need those relations in times of misfortune. In the same way that the mother on vv. 20.17-21.3 expects the pupil to reciprocate to her after making

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<sup>252</sup> See, for example, O. IFAO 2010 (Fischer-Elfert 1999b, §§ 10,1-10,9).

<sup>253</sup> See also Goedicke (1992, 84).

<sup>254</sup> This is the same word used on v. 20.17.

sacrifices to raise him, so too the pupil should tend his relations to be able to expect reciprocation in times of need.

The advice from the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 20.17-21.3 (see no. 32), against neglecting one's mother runs as follows:

(20.17) (*j:k(3)b p3 ʕk j:dj= {j} n=k mw.t=k*) Double the bread your mother has given you.

(*βj sw mj βj=(20.18)sw tw*) Carry her as she (20.18) carried you.

(*jrj.y=st knw 3tp.t m-j<m>=k jw bw <dd>=sw w3h n=j*) She did a lot and carried you (while pregnant), without <having said>: 'stop it for me'!

...

(21.1) (*tw=k grg.t m pr=k*) Are you established in your (own) house?

(*jmm jr.t.t=k (21.2) n p3 msj.t{n}=k p3 šdj=k nb{.t} m-my.tj jrj mw.t=k*) Then pay attention (21.2) to the birthing of you and likewise to your complete rearing which your mother did.

(*m-dy.t t3y=st n=k (21.3) mtw=st tm βj ʕ.wj=st n p3 ntr mtw=f sdm sbh=st*) Do not give her reason to reproach you, (21.3) nor to raise her arms towards the god, and that he hears her cry.

The pupil in *Ani* is counselled against mistreating his mother, by not reciprocating the personal sacrifices she made for his sake instead of rejecting the chores involved in child-rearing, lest she complains to *p3 ntr* – or *ntr=st*, 'her god'<sup>255</sup>, in P. DeM 1 recto, v. 7.1 – about his ungratefulness<sup>256</sup>. What we may infer from this passage in terms of agency and power relations, and about the purpose for which *ntr* is mobilised, is that: 1) presumably due to her older age, the mother probably cannot provide for herself adequately which leaves her in a vulnerable position, while, in contrast, the addressee of the instruction, Khonsuhotep, who has benefitted from a positive child-rearing and established himself as a consequence (see vv. 20.18-21.1), is in the superior position of being able to choose either to show his gratitude towards his mother by supporting her or to ignore her; 2) his mother

<sup>255</sup> The version in P. DeM 1 recto strengthens the idea of proximity with *ntr* (*Gottesnähe*) already present in P. Boulaq 4 recto.

<sup>256</sup> It is interesting that this passage focuses on the child's relationship with the mother alone. In terms of gender history, it is an important account of the role and status of mothers in ancient Egypt (for similar passages in other Egyptian texts see Quack (1994, 177)). Perhaps of especial interest is the length of the breastfeeding which is said to be of three years (v. 20.19) (the same length of time is given in 2 Maccabees 7:27, a biblical passage that bears remarkable similarities with the passage from *Ani*, even though it concerns a very different context, namely martyrdom in the face of religious persecution).

Although this instruction was probably intended for a relatively extended audience, it is interesting to notice that the father of the immediate addressee, who would be the real or fictional author of this instruction, is left out of this passage. Perhaps it refers to a situation in which the mother is widowed.



may call upon the god to express her disappointment<sup>257</sup>, which ends up empowering her, in the sense that she is not left in a position of not being able to do anything against her child's ingratitude. No punishment is explicitly mentioned, although the injunction against leading the mother to make a complaint to her personal god<sup>258</sup>, a complaint to which the god is able to listen and understand<sup>259</sup>, implies some kind of punishment would ensue.

It is interesting that god does not react automatically to the mother's mistreatment, which may indicate either a limitation in god's power<sup>260</sup> to be attentive to all transgressions or that there are conflicts in which god participates only if appealed to. At any rate, the mobilisation of *ntr* as a powerful agent with the ability to right wrongs by exacting punishments has a deterrent effect. This has the potential effect of reducing the gap in the power relation between the established son and the vulnerable mother, as the mother's agency is enlarged by the mobilisation of the notion of god as someone who is able and willing to correct her son<sup>261</sup>. At the same time, the son's agency is reduced<sup>262</sup>, inasmuch as he would want to avoid getting on god's bad side<sup>263</sup>.

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<sup>257</sup> The version in P. DeM 1 recto, v. 7.1, further strengthens the notion that the mother will be heard by the god: *m-d.yt swd}{.tw}=sw <tw> n ntr=st mtw=f sdm j:dd=sw*, 'Do not give her reason to denounce <you> to her god, and that he hears what she said' (Dils 2014; Quack 1994, 136-37, 316-17). In his comment to this particular attestation, Sauneron (1962, 61) states that there is no doubt that 'si la mère se plaint, le dieu l'entendra; elle n'a aucune chance de ne pas être entendue'.

That *ntr* is able to listen to her and understand her may be taken for granted (see Sauneron 1962, 61).

<sup>258</sup> Which is implicit in P. Boulaq 4 recto, but explicit in P. DeM 1 recto.

<sup>259</sup> See Sauneron (1962), 61.

<sup>260</sup> On the limitations of divine power see Hornung (1982, 166-69). However, these limitations are not constant during Egyptian history. Hornung (167-68) mentions New Kingdom evidence indicating the ability of at least certain gods to transcend traditional limitations. A case in point is the appeal made by Ramesses II to the god Amun, while the king was in Kadesh, and which was heard by the deity in Thebes. In contrast, there are New Kingdom letters from individuals who were away from their town asking the addressee to act as mediator between them and their local god at the temple, which indicates that direct contact between a person and her local god was not always possible when the person was away from her town (Luiselli 2014, 107). It is also possible that the *ntr* mentioned in the passage from *Hordjedef* is the king, and that the king would not be able to know all was probably something the audiences would agree with. The *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu* claims the opposite (S. Cairo CG 20538 of Sehetepibre, 2.5-2.6), albeit in the context of loyalism towards the king and certainly as a deterrent against dissidence, which would not necessarily render that passage incompatible with the passage from *Hordjedef* under consideration.

<sup>261</sup> In the ancient Near East, crying seems to have been the main way poor people could legally complain (Shupak 1992, 11 with n. 44). While the mother is not necessarily poor, she is in an equally vulnerable position.

<sup>262</sup> On the enlargement and reduction of human agency see Janico et al. (2018, 571).

<sup>263</sup> Using an illustration to further expand this idea, this mobilisation of *ntr* as a deterrent effect is somewhat similar to someone who tries to scare away a burglar by saying he/she will call the police, thus conjuring up a number of consequences the burglar would prefer to avoid.

### 3.1.1.2 *Instruction of Amenemope, chapter 25*

As pointed out by José Nunes Carreira (1994, 143-44; see also Laisney 2007, 224 with n. 1265), the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 2, vv. 4.4-4.6 (see no. 38), introduces a theme that is relatively novel in the context of the instructions, namely the concern for the feeble and the needy. To be sure, they are not completely absent from the previous instructions<sup>264</sup>, but it is in this late New Kingdom/early Third Intermediate Period wisdom text that these categories of people emerge discursively as a focal topic. Chapter 25 of the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto (see no. 54), gives particular relevance to the conduct towards those who have physical or mental limitations. This chapter is exactly in the middle of what may be considered the third part of *Amenemope* which ranges from chapter 21 to chapter 29 (Laisney 2007, 9; 2009, 3). As pointed out by Laisney (2009, 3), this third part is thematically more scattered, especially up to chapter 25<sup>265</sup>. At any rate, Laisney (2007, 9; 2009, 3) argues that the main topic of this third part is the concern with the feeble and vulnerable. Assuming that both the author and audiences recognised a three-tiered division of the text, the location of chapter 25 at the centre of the third part supports Laisney's argument<sup>266</sup>. Although chapter 25 may be argued to be a 'Pausenkapitel' (Grumach 1972, 158) because its contents differ from the topics of the chapters that precede and follow it<sup>267</sup>, and although chapter 25 is indeed very much unique, chapters 26 and 27 (see no. 55) give continuity to its tone by addressing proper respect towards, and treatment of elders. Chapter 28 (see no. 56) shifts attention to other categories of vulnerable persons, namely the widow, the foreigner, and the poor (*šw3*), and

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<sup>264</sup> For instance, in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, maxim 17 instructs the pupil to empathically hear out a petitioner whose problem may not be solvable, while maxim 34 counsels the pupil to be generous with the bread of the storehouse (*mhr*) because *šhr.y pw šw m h.t=f*, 'the one who is empty in his belly is an accuser' (D484; similar idea in the *Instruction for the King Merikare*, P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, vv. 43-44 (see also Laisney 2007, 237 with n. 23)). In the *Instruction for the King Merikare*, after enjoining the addressee to 'do Ma'at' (P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, vv. 46-47 (see no. 21)), the author further enjoins him to quiet the weeper and to refrain from oppressing the widow (v. 47). And in the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV* (= P. BM EA 10684 verso), vv. 2.1-2.4, the pupil is also enjoined to protect the destitute (*j3d*) and the poor (*nmh*). Outside the instructions, concern with the orphan and the widow is also expressed, for instance in the *Eloquent Peasant*, P. Berlin P 3023 + P. Amherst I (= B1), vv. 93-94 (see also Fensham 1962, 132).

<sup>265</sup> Before it, chapters 21 and 22 (see no. 51 and no. 52) offer counsel on how to deal with adversaries, chapter 23 addresses table manners, and chapter 24 (see no. 53) concerns the need for discretion.

<sup>266</sup> On the strategic use of the 'centre' in *Amenemope* see Laisney (2007, 10-11 with references).

<sup>267</sup> See also Laisney (2007, 211n1199).

at the end of chapter 29 (see no. 57) concern with the one who has nothing (*p3 jw.tj*) is also expressed.

Two significant differences between chapter 25 and the chapters that follow are the concern of chapter 25 with people whose vulnerability is not only socio-economic, but physical and mental as well, and its reflection on the general vulnerability of humans vis-à-vis god. The text from P. BM EA 10474 recto (see no. 54) reads:

(24.8) (*hw.t mh-25.t*) **Chapter 25.**

(24.9) (*m-jrj sbj3 n k3mn mtw=k pjt3 nmj*) (24.10) *mtw=k hdj shr.w n kbkb*) Do not laugh at a blind man nor mock a dwarf, (24.10) and do not worsen the condition of a paralytic.

(24.11) (*m-jrj pjt3 z(j) jw=f m-dr.t p3 ntr*) (24.12) *mtw=k hs<3>-hr j:r=f th3<.tw>=f*) Do not mock a man who is in the hand of the god, (24.12) nor make an angry face at him so that he runs away.

(24.13) (*jr r(m)t m<sup>c</sup>(.t) dh3*) (24.14) *p3 ntr p3y=f kd*) As for man, (he) is clay and straw, (24.14) and the god is his builder.

(24.15) (*sw whnj sw kd m-mn(.t)*) He destroys and builds daily;

(24.16) (*sw jrj h3 n(j) tw3 n mrj=f*) he makes a thousand *tw3*-subordinates as he desires;

(24.17) (*sw jrj r(m)t.w h3 n hy*) (24.18) *jw=f n t3y=f wnw.t n(jt) n<sup>h</sup>*) he makes a thousand men supervisors, (24.18) when he is in his hour of life.

(24.19) (*rsj.wj3 sw p3 jrj ph jmn.t(j)t*) (24.20) *jw=f wd3 m-dr.t p3 ntr*) How he rejoices, the one who reaches the West (24.20) when he is safe from the hand of the god.

This chapter admonishes against the mistreatment of four categories of people with limitations and supports its exhortation with an elaboration on the power relations between man and god. While it is clear what the first three groups of people suffer from, the exact nature of the affliction suffered by ‘the man in the hand of god’ is disputed<sup>268</sup>.

While ‘il est clair qu’elle indique un état qui doit susciter la commisération’ (Vernus 2010a, 433n195), the expression *m-dr.t p3 ntr* reappears at the end of the chapter (v. 24.20), and one may ask whether the two attestations refer to a similar degree of dependency on the deity or whether the author played with two different senses to the same expression, as Laisney (2007, 215) suggests. Several authors take the expression *m-dr.t p3 ntr* to refer to a positive relation with god as part of personal piety or *Gottesnähe* (Laisney 2007, 215; Carreira 1994, 147-48; Grumach 1972, 160; Couroyer 1988, 79). A positive relation with

<sup>268</sup> See Laisney (2007, 214n1219 with references), Carreira (1994, 144n24), and Grumach (1972, 159).

god is surely attested in chapter 21, v. 22.7 (see no. 51), and chapter 22, v. 23.10 (see no. 52), but there the terms used are different: the text has *r-<sup>c</sup>.wy p3 ntr*<sup>269</sup>.

Shirun-Grumach (1990, 837, 841, 843) argues for a sharp distinction between the expressions *m-dr.t p3 ntr* and *r-<sup>c</sup>.wy p3 ntr* in *Amenemope*<sup>270</sup>. The latter has the positive sense of quietist surrender to one's personal god, and, of the examples collected by Shirun-Grumach (837-38), the most illustrative case is arguably the oft-cited inscription on the backside of the statue Berlin 6910, v. 5, from the Nineteenth dynasty: *hy p3 hmsj nfr hr-<sup>c</sup> jmn* 'How good it is to sit on the arm of Amun' (Kitchen 1975, 387 l. 15; 1999, 274-75; Luiselli 2011, 354-55; see also Carreira 1994, 147). The same text mobilises the hand of god in a synonymous sense on v. 6: *jmj n=j dr.t šd wj wbn n=j jrj=k s<sup>c</sup>nh=j*, 'Give me a hand<sup>271</sup>, save me, shine for me, that you may make my nourishment' (Kitchen 1975, 388 l. 1; 1999, 274-75; Luiselli 2011, 354-55). With a slight difference in sense, but still overlapping with the notion of a positive relation with god, it is said of Iah-Thoth in S. Turin 50046, l. 5<sup>272</sup>, from the Nineteenth Dynasty: *snb <sup>c</sup>nh m-dr.t=k*, 'health and life are in your hand'<sup>273</sup> (Luiselli 2011, 392).

This sense of dependency on the deity is heightened and taken to a new level in certain passages concerning the experience of being in the hand of a deity. Shirun-Grumach (1990, 841) only gathers examples of *m-dr.t* from *Amenemope* and from the two famous stelae of Neferabu, which Luiselli (2008, 3; 2011, 11, 27-28) does not take to be representative of personal piety although they are rooted in its discourse. In the Nineteenth dynasty (reign of Ramesses II) S. Turin 50058, vv. 4-5, Neferabu says he was in the hand of Meretseger by night and day<sup>274</sup>, and in S. BM 589 verso, v. 7, he states he was in the hand of Ptah (Kitchen 1980, 772 l. 5; 1999, 292-93; Luiselli 2011, 362). The sense of

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<sup>269</sup> In chapter 2, v. 5.4, the same expression, bar the preposition, is used. Depending on whether one adds a preposition or not, the sense may be the same.

<sup>270</sup> See also Guglielmi (1996, 487 with n. 137). Notice, however, that in certain attestations of *m-dr.t p3 ntr*, *m-dr.t* is 'reine Präposition' (Shirun-Grumach 1990, 852).

<sup>271</sup> The expression *jmj dr.t*, 'give a hand', is also attested in *Amenemope*, chapter 26, v. 25.8, where the pupil is instructed to help an elder who drank too much beer.

<sup>272</sup> In Luiselli's numbering.

<sup>273</sup> In the inscription of Rome-Ray, from the reign of Sety II, on the eighth pylon of the temple of Amun at Karnak, v. 3, the same kind of formula employs 'arm' instead: *<sup>c</sup>nh m-<sup>c</sup>=k*, 'life is in your arm' (Assmann 1995, 192; Froot 2004, 30-31; 2007, 56). In graffito No. 2, inscribed in the temple of Amun at Deir el-Bahari and dating from the Twentieth dynasty (reign of Ramesses V), it is also said that Amun empowers the weak and the poor with his hand as well as with his eye (vv. 7-9) (Kitchen 1999, 308-309).

<sup>274</sup> See Kitchen (1980, 772 ll. 15-16; 1999, 296-97) and Luiselli (2011, 359).

dependency here goes beyond the reliance on a deity to an afflictive feeling of being at her mercy. In both cases, Neferabu's experience of being in the hand of a deity is attributed to transgressions against those gods. From Neferabu's accounts and from the association in *Amenemope*, vv. 24.9-24.12, between being in the hand of the god and physical as well as psychological ailments, Shirun-Grumach (1990, 842; 1991, 247n11-a)) takes the expression *m-dr.t p3 ntr* to refer to a divine punishment in the likes of the *b3.w*-wrath of a god or *hr.jt*, 'terror'. As the author states (1990, 842), 'nicht von der Gottesnähe, sondern vom Gottesschreck ist hier die Rede'.

Of the three other conditions referred to in *Amenemope*'s chapter 25, vv. 24.9-24.10, only nanism is present at birth. Blindness and paralysis may occur later in life, although a person may also be born with those conditions. The condition mentioned on vv. 24.11-24.12 is often taken to be a *Geisteskrank* (Lange 1925, 122), a psychological or neurological condition (see Laisney 2007, 214 with n. 1219; Couroyer 1988, 87), although Couroyer (1988, 87-88) claims, without citing any evidence, that all disabled people (*infirmés*) are under the hand of a god. It is not inconceivable that the man in the hand of god suffered from mental retardation from birth, but whatever the condition, the text does not explicitly support the claim that it is the result of divine punishment.

It is a whole different matter with v. 24.20. Drawing from *Amenemope* (chapter 25, vv. 24.19-24.20, chapter 8, vv. 11.4-11.5 (see no. 43), and chapter 10, vv. 13.19-14.1 (see no. 44)) and from attestations from other sources<sup>275</sup>, Shirun-Grumach (1990, 843-45, 847) makes a convincing case that the expression *wd3 m-dr.t p3 ntr* means 'to be safe from the hand of the god'<sup>276</sup>. Laisney (2007, 138n836) contests Shirun-Grumach's literal

<sup>275</sup> One may also add S. Berlin 2081 where the addresser says to the gods of Abydos that *nttn <r> šd.t=j m-dr.t pr-š3*, 'you <will> save me from the hand of the pharaoh' (Luiselli 2011, 402-403).

<sup>276</sup> In chapter 6, v. 8.16, it is said *3h n=k wd3 hr=sn*, 'it is better for you to be safe from them [possibly the gods mentioned in the preceding verses]' (see no. 41), and in chapter 8, v. 11.5, the pupil is told that: *wd3=k r b3.w n(jw) ntr*, 'you will be safe from the wrath of god' (see no. 43). In both passages the preposition following *wd3* is not *m*, but *hr* and *r*, respectively. It could be that, in this text, the sense of 'to be safe from' is given only by the preposition *hr/r*, meaning that *wd3 m-dr.t p3 ntr* would mean 'safe in the hand of the god'. But given the crystallisation of the expression *m-dr.t*, it is also possible that the *m* was exceptionally used instead of *hr/r*, and this is further suggested by the clear sense of 'from the hand of' in chapter 29, v. 27.4 (see no. 57), and by the probable synonymity between chapter 8, v. 11.5, and chapter 10, v. 14.1 (see also the note to this verse in the appendix). Shirun-Grumach's interpretation of *wd3 m-dr.t* in *Amenemope* may be further supported by the use of the same expression in the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, v. 22.13: *šk=k r dmy (r)-h3.t htth prj=k jw=k wd3.t m-dr.t{=k}<=f>*, 'You will enter the town before the ('police' (?)) raid, and you will come out while you are safe from <his> hand (i.e., unscathed)' (Quack

interpretation of the expression, but her interpretation does fit v. 24.20 and the other passage from *Amenemope* where the same formulation is used<sup>277</sup> (chapter 10, v. 14.1 (see no. 44)). According to this view, v. 24.20 lets the pupil know he may come to suffer from the same kind of condition that afflicts the man on v. 24.11<sup>278</sup>, a point that may be reinforced by vv. 24.13-24.18 which will shortly be discussed. To suffer from the same affliction that the man on v. 24.11 seems to be the punishment mobilised against the pupil in case he mocks and distresses disabled people, and it is important to notice that this punishment, namely some form of mental affliction, may either continue in the afterlife or alternatively provoke death, as indicated by vv. 24.19-24.20<sup>279</sup>. A comparison with a personal piety text from the reign of Ramesses II attested in the votive stela of Nebre may further support the interpretation that the punishment for mocking and distressing the disabled could involve the pupil's death. In that text it is said of Amun-Re that he *šd wnn m dw3.t*, 'saves the one who is in the Netherworld' (lower register of S. Berlin 20377, v. 5) (Kitchen 1980, 654 l. 5; 1999, 286-87; Luiselli 2011, 379-80). Later in the text Nebre, the addresser of the stela, recounts that Amun saved his son, Nakhtamun, who was near death due to incurring in the wrath (*b3.w*) of the god<sup>280</sup> (v. 8).

Between the admonition against mocking disabled people and the warning of the punishment in which the pupil will incur, a description of god's creation of mankind and allotment of one's social position intervenes. This passage (vv. 24.13-24.18) has been taken as representative of a new religious and ethical paradigm that sees the breakdown of a

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1994, 118-19, 185-86, 330; Dils 2014). The referent is the *3t.w*-bailiff of the quarter (Quack 1994, 119n126). For a different interpretation of the passage from *Ani* see Vernus (2010a, 328).

<sup>277</sup> As Shirun-Grumach (1990, 842) points out, the association between the deity's hand and punishment is further supported by the association of the divine hand with divine mercy. She gives the example of Neferabu's S. Turin 50058, vv. 12-15 (see Kitchen 1999, 296-97). One may also add a stela from the Burrell Collection (S. Glasgow (no number)) from the Nineteenth dynasty (Reign of Ramesses II), where the addresser says to Taweret: *dj=t n=j dr.t jrj=t s'nh=j wd n=j ms.wt bn t3j.tw<=j> bt3 n jrr=j t3 'n.t htp.tj*, 'may you give me your hand, make me live, and decree children for me, so that <I> am not seized for the fault I committed, o pleasant one when in peaceful mood' (vv. 2-4) (Kitchen 1989, 206 ll. 6-7; 1999, 300-301; Luiselli 2011, 372-73; Vernus 2003a, 332).

<sup>278</sup> The couplet on vv. 24.19-24.20 has been interpreted differently; see, for instance, Assmann (1979, 34-35).

<sup>279</sup> '(24.19) (*ršj.wj3 sw p3 jrj ph jmn.t(j)t*) (24.20) *jw=f wd3 m-dr.t p3 ntr*) How he rejoices, the one who reaches the West (24.20) when he is safe from the hand of the god.' That v. 24.19 is an eschatological reference, was also pointed out by Drioton (1957, 279) and Adams (2008, 51). This passage may also be compared with the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV* (= P. BM EA 10684 verso), v. 5.6 (see no. 35).

<sup>280</sup> This particular episode may have inspired the god's epithet on v. 5, 'who saves the one who is in the Netherworld'.

Ma'at-driven act-consequence nexus (*Tun-Ergehen-Zusammenhang*)<sup>281</sup> and its replacement by each man's dependence on god who would reward and punish not according to the type of actions, but according to his own arbitrary will<sup>282</sup> (Brunner 1963, 107-108, 112; Gestermann 2008, 38-39; Carreira 1994, 150; 2005, 159). Gerald Moers (2010, 693) makes a related interpretation and states that: 'The clearest verbalization of god's omnipotence and the helplessness of the man is found in the image of god as an all powerful potter who creates and destroys as he wishes, poor and powerful alike'.

It is possible that the author of *Amenemope* derived the content of this passage from Ramesside hymns to the solar gods where they are presented in a monotheistic-like tone<sup>283</sup>. However, John Baines (2009, 124-25) questions whether those hymns do in fact reflect a new perception of divine nature and power, and instead proposes they mobilise increasingly complex poetic images rather than new theological ideas. The same is probably true of the passage under discussion: the *Instruction of Amenemope* is not a work of speculative theology, and the primary aim of the author is to shape the conduct of his audience. Therefore, it is possible to interpret this passage in a more pragmatic light.

By asserting that man is clay and straw and that god is his builder<sup>284</sup> (vv. 24.13-24.14), and that he makes of people subordinates and supervisors as he pleases (vv. 24.16-24.18), the author is establishing a power relation between god and the audience, with the implication that all people are equally vulnerable before god. It was mentioned above that vv. 24.19-24.20<sup>285</sup> have to do with *Gottesschrek* and not with *Gottesnähe* (Shirun-Grumach 1990, 842). What the author may have intended for his audiences to perceive, then, is that god may change their lives and their position in society. The author is not concerned with the reason why the disabled people he mentions were created in that way, but instead warns

<sup>281</sup> On this concept see Adams (2008, 1-6).

<sup>282</sup> The expression *n mrj=f*, 'as he desires' (v. 24.16), is suggestive, but is not necessarily demonstrative of a paradigm shift by itself, and not all agree with that shift (see Lichtheim 1992, 99-101; Ockinga 2001, 486-87; Adams 2008, 49-52).

<sup>283</sup> If the author had access to those hymns, the same is not necessarily true for his target audience, as solar hymns would have been available primarily to the high elite (see Baines 2009, 128).

<sup>284</sup> Shupak (1993, 282) thinks this god is Khnum. That is not necessarily the case, however, as in the New Kingdom the Esna cosmogony was incorporated into the Theban cosmogony (Assmann 1995, 158); see, for instance, O. Cairo 25207 (Assmann 1995, 167).

<sup>285</sup> '(24.19) (*ršj.wj3 sw p3 jrj ph jmn.t(j)t*) (24.20) *jw=f wd3 m-dr.t p3 ntr*) How he rejoices, the one who reaches the West (24.20) when he is safe from the hand of the god.'

his audience that they may come to suffer from the same ailments (as stated above, nanism is the only condition present from birth) or from some other form of punishment<sup>286</sup>.

### 3.1.1.3 *Instruction of Amenemope, chapter 27*

The passage from the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 27, 25.17-26.1 (see no. 55), does not involve *ntr*, but instead another divine agent, namely Aten as an aspect of the sun god. Nonetheless, the passage is arguably still relevant to be included here, at least because it shares a topic with the first two passages discussed: complaining to god due to a form of mistreatment. This passage is located in the third part of *Amenemope* which was overviewed above<sup>287</sup>. The passage reads:

(25.16) (*ḥw.t mḥ-27.t*) Chapter 27.

(25.17) (*m-jr šḥwr ʿ3 j.r=k* (25.18) *jw ptr=f p(3)-rʿ r-ḥ3.t=k*) Do not vilify one who is older than you, (25.18) as he saw Pre/the sun ahead of you.

(25.19) (*m-dr.tj smj=f tw=k n p3 jdn m wbn=f* (25.20) (*ḥr-dd jrj ky šrj šḥwr ʿ3*) Do not give him reason to report you to the Aten when he rises, (25.20) (by) saying: ‘a younger one vilified an elder’.

(25.21) (*mr zp m-b3ḥ p3-rʿ* (26.1) *šrj jw=f šḥwr ʿ3*) The affair is painful before Pre, (26.1) a young man who vilifies an elder<sup>288</sup>.

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<sup>286</sup> That the author mobilises god to balance the power relation between the addressee and people with limitations may be sociologically significant, as it may be an indicator of the vulnerability and marginality of these people (see Quirke 2015, 48-49; Fischer-Elfert 2005, 20-25).

<sup>287</sup> See the previous subsection.

<sup>288</sup> Irene Grumach (1972, 168-69) takes the setting of this chapter to be a morning prayer made to the sun god by a subordinate together with a superior in the temple. The pupil, who is in the discursive position of the subordinate, is not only advised against insulting the superior official, but is especially advised against complaining about his lot vis-à-vis the superior’s lot, since one’s position in life is ascribed by the deity (168). Since this same deity is a provider of what one needs, and will provide for the needs of the subordinate, the latter ought to quietly surrender to the god’s will (169). The educational purpose of the mobilisation of god as a provider in this passage would be for the pupil to be reconciled with his less privileged social position (169). This interpretation is very interesting and certainly in tune with *ntr*’s role as provider in the instructions in general (see chapter 4, section 4.3). But god’s role in this passage does not seem to be one of provider, but instead one of deterrence. For instance, while it is said that one should avoid prompting an elder, or a superior, to complain about one’s offence in his morning prayer to the sun god, it is not explicitly said that god will provide for the pupil’s needs. The only possible exception would be vv. 26.6-26.7, although these are somewhat cryptic and appear to be a metaphor involving only the pupil and the elder/superior. The conjecture about the setting of this passage as a morning prayer performed by the subordinate and by the superior is also debatable. That (some) people not pertaining to the temple staff (assuming this was the case in this passage) could pray in the temple is suggested in the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 17.1-17.4, but this is hardly the case on v. 25.18 above which seems to be a qualifier of the ʿ3’s age and not of his actions. For these reasons, Grumach’s interpretation of this passage is not followed here.



(26.2) (*jmj jrj=f knkn=k jw dr.t=k m kn(j)=k*) Let him beat you, while your hand is on your chest.

(26.3) (*jmj jrj=f shwr=k jw=k gr.tw*) Let him reproach you, while you remain silent.

(26.4) (*jr mj-dw3w spr=k m-b3h=f*) (26.5) (*dj=f n=k k.w m-wsdn*) When you arrive in the morning before him, (26.5) he will give you bread in abundance.

(26.6) (*jr k.w tsm{.t} n(j) nb=f*) (26.7) (*sw whwh r p3 dj st*) About bread: a dog of his owner, (26.7) he barks to the one who gave it.

The addressee of the instruction, Horemmaakheru, is advised against mistreating people who are older than him<sup>289</sup>, so that they will not complain to Aten, or the solar disk, at sunrise, with a punishment possibly following but also unmentioned. Pascal Vernus (2010a, 435n208) observed that the wording of this complaint is very similar to the wording of a prayer to the sun god in chapter 7<sup>290</sup> (see no. 42). In chapter 7, v. 10.12, it is said: *j:jrj{.tw}=k sm3c n p3 jdn jw=f (hr) wbn*, ‘It is when he rises that you should pray to the Aten’. And the passage in chapter 27, v. 25.19, runs: *m-dr.tj smj=f tw=k n p3 jdn m wbn=f*, ‘Do not give him (= the elder) reason to report you to the Aten when he rises’. The terms used, *sm3c* and *smj*, are semantically different but phonetically similar, which may indicate a wordplay, the considerable distance that intervenes between both passages notwithstanding<sup>291</sup>. The passages are thus not semantically similar, but share in common their framing and wording which seems to show that a complaint to a deity was not distinguished from what we may term a more traditional prayer. Another relevant feature from this common core is that they indicate a specific time in the day to address the deity, something which was not indicated in other passages where a complaint to a god is attested<sup>292</sup>.

In the same way as the passage from *Ani* discussed above, the warning of a complaint made to the solar deity potentially constrains the agency of the pupil, while compensating the generational inequality between young people and elders. Even though no specific punishment is mobilised, albeit some form of divine retribution is certainly

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<sup>289</sup> Whether he knows them or not is not explicit in the text, although vv. 26.2-26.5 suggests that may be the case.

<sup>290</sup> Grumach (1972, 166) also takes both passages to be a morning prayer to the sun god.

<sup>291</sup> It is relevant to point out, however, that the device, at a later stage in the text, of referring back to an earlier passage is widely attested in *Amenemope* (see Laisney 2007, 10).

<sup>292</sup> The term *smj* is also used in the *Instruction of Ani* (in P. Deir el-Medina 1 recto, v. 8.3, but not in P. Boulaq 4 recto, v. 21.14 (see no. 33), where the same passage is also attested), but, other than ‘daily’ (*m-mn.t*), there is no temporal indication about when the report should be made to the deity.

implied, the point of this passage is to indicate to the addressee of the instruction, Horemmaakheru, that he should be open to be chastised and corrected by elders who will not only participate in his moral education but also apparently help to sustain him (the latter is indicated by vv. 26.2-26.4).

### 3.1.1.4 Summary and concluding remarks

Table no. 1. Summary of transgressions and respective divine punishments concerning the mistreatment of other persons.

Text	Transgressions	Punishments	Divine agents	Observations
<i>Instruction of Ani</i> , P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 20.17-21.3 (see no. 32)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Denying support to one's mother (vv. 20.17-20.18).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not specified.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>God (<i>p3 ntr</i>) (v. 21.3).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>God only seems to react if complained to by the mother (vv. 21.2-21.3).</li> </ul>
<i>Instruction of Amenemope</i> , P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 25 (see no. 54)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mocking and causing distress to blindmen, dwarfs, paralytics, and people mentally or neurologically disabled (vv. 24.9-24.12).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Being afflicted with the same conditions that are mocked (vv. 24.13-24.18), and possibly death (vv. 24.19-24.20).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>God (<i>p3 ntr</i>) (vv. 24.14-24.18, 24.20).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The punishments are suggested by the assertion that the god creates and destroys as he pleases (vv. 24.13-24.18) and by the eschatological reference on v. 24.19.</li> </ul>
<i>Instruction of Amenemope</i> , P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 27 (see no. 55)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vilification of an elder (v. 25.17).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not specified.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aten (25.19).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>God probably reacts only if prayed to by the elder (vv. 25.19-25.20).</li> </ul>

The three passages discussed above include mistreatments of others in the form of negligence (*Ani*, vv. 20.17-21.3), mocking (*Amenemope*, chapter 25), and disrespect

(*Amenemope*, chapter 27). The persons who may be mistreated by the addressees of these instructions are in a liminal position concerning society: their dependency on others renders their power in society marginal, which makes them vulnerable to mistreatment. Possibly due to the increased manifestations of personal piety in the New Kingdom, the instructions of that period acknowledge that these individuals may benefit from divine protection. In two of the cases discussed here (*Ani*, vv. 20.17-21.3, and *Amenemope*, chapter 27), those persons may invoke divine intervention. Because the deity has to be complained and prayed to, it is conceivable that these matters did not merit an automatic response from the deity and that it was up to the persons involved to invoke her intervention.

By mentioning complaints to (*p3*) *ntr*/Aten, the authors of the instructions of *Ani* and of *Amenemope* indicated to their audiences which litigious matters, as it were, could be brought up to *p3 ntr*, and showed a way unequal relationships could be balanced<sup>293</sup>. Therefore, by empowering the agency of individuals in a vulnerable position, the resort to *p3 ntr*/Aten shielded them against abuses from the pupil, although how the deity would punish the pupil is only suggested in *Amenemope*, chapter 25, vv. 24.13-24.18 and 24.19-24.20. As the instructions were particularly focused on the conduct of the addressee (who, in the text, creates a discursive position occupied by the audiences), the main concern of the authors would not have been the protection of the vulnerable individuals per se, but the addressee's behaviour towards them.

### 3.1.2 Fraudulency and illegal acquisition of wealth

This category comprises fraudulency and illegal acquisition of wealth committed by officials as a deviation of their duty and as an abuse of their power. This category groups the following sources: from the Middle Kingdom: *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, maxim 6 (see no. 4), *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu*, P. Louvre E 4864 recto, section 12 (see no. 19); from the New Kingdom: *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapters 6 (see no. 41), 13 (see no. 45), 15 (see no. 46), 16 (see no. 47), 17 (see no. 48), and 20 (see no. 50).

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<sup>293</sup> This is not true for all situations, however. In the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 15.13-15.15 (see no. 26), the addressee is told that to appeal to his god against a superior who presumably reprimanded him will be to no avail.

Fraudulency in particular, becomes a major concern especially in the late *Instruction of Amenemope*, but, while Middle Kingdom instructions do not devote much attention to it, another Middle Kingdom literary text, the *Eloquent Peasant*, brings corruption and fraudulency to the fore. As argued by Andrea Gnirs (2000, 125-27), this text exposes the fragilities of the Egyptian judicial and administrative systems that, left unchecked, could leave them vulnerable to corruption and fraudulency. Two of those fragilities are: 1) the necessary arbitrariness awarded the judges in order to judge each case according to its specific circumstances, as advocated in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, maxim 29, vv. D422-D425<sup>294</sup> (Gnirs 2000, 131, 139); 2) the clientele system in which ‘a small gift made in order to show respect to a superior and to speed up an administrative procedure could easily be turned into a bribe’ (153). Overall, the majority of the population, pertaining to lower social strata, would have been kept from an egalitarian justice (Trigger 1993, 48).

But fraudulency and illegal acquisition of wealth does not only concern abuses of power against commoners. Instead, it also concerns the exploitation of the power delegated on the officials by the central administration to enrich illegally at the expense of the state<sup>295</sup>. Both forms of abuse of power would turn to be a major topic in the legal and religious discourses of the late New Kingdom (Vernus 2003b, 137-38), and would become a central concern in the *Instruction of Amenemope* as well. According to Pascal Vernus (2003b, 122-23), the cases of corruption, motivated, to a significant extent, by the reduction of the elite’s lifestyle which had previously been supported by the Egyptian protectorate in Syria-Palestine, correlated with a ‘moral crisis’ (121) resulting from the same cause (148). This ‘crisis of values’ would have inspired a ‘new ethic’ (123) characterised by personal piety, inasmuch as trust in human institutions supporting a Ma’at-ordered world was replaced by trust in one’s personal god<sup>296</sup> (145), especially Amun (143-44). Although the surge in the number of personal piety texts preserved can give the impression of a break with the ‘old

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<sup>294</sup> Similar topic in the Ramesside sapiential text *The Prohibitions*, O. Petrie 11 = O. London UC 39614, v. C3.

<sup>295</sup> An example is tax collection fraud. See below subsections 3.1.3.2 and 3.1.2.5.

<sup>296</sup> Interestingly, this is also observable in the *Eloquent Peasant*, P. Berlin P 3025 + P. Amherst II (= B2), vv. 111-15, when, after repeatedly trying to get justice from Rensi, Khuninpu decides to seek the assistance of Anupu (see also Assmann 2006b, 36-37; 1998, 388-89; Luiselli 2007a, 173). Given the protagonist’s name, Anupu might also have been his personal god.

ethic' (131), in which god was relatively distant from his creation and both success in this life and in the afterlife were attributed to the observance of Ma'at which represented the *Tun-Ergehen-Zusammenhang* principle (123-24, 126), it is debatable whether in the late New Kingdom there was a radical break with the ethical principles of the Old and Middle Kingdoms or whether there was a significant degree of continuity<sup>297</sup>.

### 3.1.2.1 *Instruction of Ptahhotep, maxim 6*

In the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, maxim 6 (see no. 4), fraudulency is not specifically mentioned, but illegal acquisition of wealth is. For the most part, this passage bears little relation to its immediate context, as maxims 1-4 address different themes, namely humility (maxim 1) and how to deal with opponents in conversations (maxims 2-4), and the maxims following immediately after also concern other topics: maxim 7 gives advice on table manners when having a meal with a superior, and maxim 8 admonishes against turning one official against another through the reproduction of incorrect messages, either intentionally or not. Maxim 5, however, comes close to the theme of maxim 6, as it deals with 'greed' (ʿwn-jb) (P. Prisse, v. D91), a theme that is also developed in maxims 19 and 20, and asserts that: '(93) (n p3 d3.ywt mnj zp=s) transgression<sup>298</sup> has never moored its affair'<sup>299</sup> and '(97) (wn ph.wj m3ʿ.t w3h=s) when the end is there, Ma'at endures'<sup>300</sup> (Allen 2015, 175-76; Dils 2014).

The text from P. Prisse (see no. 4) reads:

(D99) (*jmj=k jrj hr m r(m)t.w*) **May you not scheme against people!**

(D100) (*hsf ntr m-mj.tt*) God opposes with the same.

(D101) (*jw z(j) dd=f ʿnh=(j) jm*) A man says: '(I) want to live of that!'

(D102) (*jw=f šwj=f m t3 n tp-r3*) But is empty of bread because of a sentence.

(D103) (*jw z(j) dd=f wsr=(j)*) A man says: '(I) want to be powerful!'

(D107) (*jw=f dd=f sht=j r=j sj3.t(j)=j*) He says: 'I will snatch for me whatever I see!'

<sup>297</sup> See, for instance, Carreira (1994, 153-54) and Assmann (2003, 142-43), who support the idea of a radical break, and Ockinga (2001, 486-87) and Lichtheim (1997, 42-43), who argue for the continuity of the ethical system.

<sup>298</sup> On the term *d3.ywt* see Jacq (2004, 223n42).

<sup>299</sup> Compare with maxim 6, v. D115.

<sup>300</sup> Compare with maxim 6, v. D116.

(D111) (*jw z(j) dd=f hwt<f>= {f}= (j) ky*) A man says: 'I will rob another!'

(D112) (*jw=f ph=f rdj.t=f n hm.n=f*) But he ends up giving to one he did not know.

(D115) (*n p3 hr n(j) r(m)t.w hpr*) Never has a people's scheme come to fruition.

(D116) (*wd.t ntr pw hpr.t*) What comes to being is that which god decrees.

(D117) (*k3j 5nh m-hnw hr.t* (D118) *jjj.y dd.t=sn ds j<r.j>*) Think of living within contentment, (D118) so that what they give comes by itself.

Although the prologue of the instruction implies it is addressed to the future vizier (v. D28), it envisions different positions in the administration and in the social ladder. This is often marked by a conditional at the beginning of a maxim, 'if you are ...'. This maxim begins not with this formulation for a specific position within the administration, but with a subjunctive that is valid for the whole of the audience of officials, and this generalisation is in accordance with the broadness of its admonition. If the first verse may appear unclear at first sight, the following verses (D101, D103-D111) clarify that the scheming has to do with theft and appropriation of another's wealth.

Although it is not specified from whom – peasants and lower elite officials are a possibility –, nor how<sup>301</sup>, the text seems to refer to illegal acquisition of wealth from private individuals alone, and not from the state or from temple domains. At least in the late New Kingdom, theft of goods of private individuals seems to have been considered 'a tort rather than a crime' (McDowell 2001, 318) and punished with the obligation to restitute two or three times the value of what was stolen to the offended party (318; Lorton 1977, 47 with n. 209).

In the passage quoted above, references to specific punishments may be made on vv. D102 and D112: (D102) *jw=f šwj=f m t3 n tp-r3* 'But is empty of bread because of a sentence'; (D112) *jw=f ph=f rdj.t=f n hm.n=f* 'But he ends up giving to one he did not know'. The author of *Ptahhotep* does not specify whether the reproved transgression is a crime or a tort, nor does he mention the restitution in double or in triple to the rightful owner<sup>302</sup>. But the punishments he evokes, namely lacking sustenance (v. D102) and giving to another (v. D112), correspond to at least two of the punishments meted out to

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<sup>301</sup> The fact that how the robbing would be done is not detailed, implies that the audience would already know how to extort goods from peasants or lower-ranked officials, or at least know that it could be done.

<sup>302</sup> If the translation of v. D112 proposed above is accurate, there is no restitution to the one who was robbed, because the transgressor 'ends up giving to one he did not know'.

officials – the primary audience of *Ptahhotep* –, namely loss of office and its attached income (cf. v. D102), and loss of property<sup>303</sup> (cf. v. D112).

Importantly, these are not explicitly presented as punishments carried out by legal authorities, although that is certainly implicit, but instead as consequences relating to the wisdom principle of act-consequence nexus. That this is a divinely sanctioned and instigated principle in this passage is indicated by the references to god before and after the descriptions of the one who wants to become wealthy and powerful at someone else's expense and who will suffer the respective consequences (vv. D99-D100, D115-D116). On v. D100 it is indicated that the punishing agent is the very god, who may or may not be the king: (D100) *hsf ntr m-mj.tt* 'God opposes with the same'. And on vv. D115-D116 the power relation between the would-be transgressor and god is made explicit: '(D115) (*n p3 hr n(.j) r(m)t.w hpr*) Never has a people's scheme come to being. (D116) (*wd.t ntr pw hpr.t*) What comes to being is that which god decrees'. The position of these two verses at the end of the list of consequences that will befall the human transgressor imply the effectiveness of the god sanctioned punishments and, therefore, their deterring effect.

### 3.1.2.2 *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu, section 12*

A different role is played by *ntr* in the *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu*, P. Louvre E 4864 recto, section 12 ('long version'), vv. 12.1-12.10 (see no. 19). This passage is located in what may be considered the second part of the text, between sections 8 or 9 and 14<sup>304</sup>, and which includes only sections of the 'long version', meaning that they are extant in New Kingdom sources which add to the text preserved in the Middle Kingdom stela of Sehetepibre (Cairo CG 20538)<sup>305</sup>. As pointed out by Vernus (2010a, 266), the second part of this instruction concerns the relation with subordinates and workers of lower social standing, like peasants. Section 12 breaks that pattern by addressing fraudulency with taxes. The text from Louvre E 4864 recto (see no. 19) runs as follows:

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<sup>303</sup> On these two punishments see Lorton (1977, 12), McDowell (2001, 318), and Müller-Wollermann (2015, 234).

<sup>304</sup> See Vernus (2010a, 265-66) and Schipper (1998, 162n7).

<sup>305</sup> See also the note to the heading of no. 18 in the appendix.

(12.1) (*nḥb b3k[.w r-ḏ3w.t šm*) (12.2) [*m3<sup>c</sup>.tj pw*] *ḥr jb n(j){.t} ntr \**) **The one who sets tax[es in accordance to barley]**, (12.2) [is a just one] in the mind (lit. *jb*-heart) of god.

(12.3) (*nn [spj].n ḥ<sup>c</sup>.w n(j) jsf.tj{w} \** (12.4) *n gmj.n m[s.w=f d3.t=f] [\*]*) The goods of the wrongdoer are not [preserved], (12.4) [his children] will not find [his share].

(12.5) (*[jrj sfn.w] ph.wj ḥ<sup>c</sup>=f \** (12.6) *nn-wn [ms.w]=f tkn jb \**) [The troublemaker] will make the end of his life, (12.6) he will have no [children] close to the *jb*-heart.

(12.7) (*wr mr.wt n.t sw3 ḥr=[f] [\*]* (12.8) [*nn jw<sup>c</sup>.w n ḥsf ḥ3.tj \**]) Great is the love of the one who goes over [himself]; [there will be no heirs for the one who opposes the *ḥ3.tj*-heart].

(12.9) (*wr šf.yt n.t nb n(j) [ḥr.t]=f \** (12.10) *ḥ3 ḥrw jsf.t ḥr jb \**) Great is the respect inspired by the one who has his own [wealth] (lit. who is lord of his goods); (12.10) boast is wrongdoing to the mind (lit. *jb*-heart).

Here *ntr* is mobilised to indicate approval. Even though god does not have an active intervention in this passage, it does not mean his mobilisation does not have a deterring effect, since by going against what is right in his mind in defrauding the state with respect to tax collection<sup>306</sup> (v. 12.1), one would obviously incur in his disfavour. The fact that god's approval of the correct and legal setting of taxes is mentioned at the beginning of the passage seems to indicate that the consequences that fall upon the fraudulent are divinely sanctioned.

It was mentioned above that the passage from the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* referred to punishments inflicted on officials, namely loss of income and confiscation of property. The punishment mentioned in this passage from the *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu* (vv. 12.3-12.4) also overlaps with the type of punishments inflicted on officials and makes an important addition: besides the confiscation of the property of the fraudulent, his offspring will also lose the right to inherit it<sup>307</sup> (see McDowell 2001, 318; Lorton 1977, 12; see also

<sup>306</sup> The fraud in question would probably consist in setting taxes according to other reference measures, so that one keeps a portion of what should be handed to the state.

<sup>307</sup> A similar punishment is implied in the *Eloquent Peasant*, P. Berlin P 3025 + P. Amherst II (= B2), vv. 100-101. Therefore, even though the copies on which section 12 from the *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu* is preserved date from the New Kingdom (see Dils 2014; Canhão 2014, 830-31), the mention of that legal procedure may be inspired in the Middle Kingdom legal practice; both Canhão (2014, 831) and Vernus (2010a, 265) support the thesis that the version on the Sehetepibre stela is an abridged version of the fuller text recorded in later manuscripts, but it remains a possibility that later sources expand innovatively on the Middle Kingdom text (Allen 2015, 155). The statement on v. 12.5 of *Kairsu* is probably metaphorical, meaning that the wrongdoer will bring upon himself the end of his life as an official, and not that he will receive the death penalty. The indication on v. 12.6 seems to be that his offspring will draw away from him,



Quirke 1994, 224). Perhaps a significant difference from *Ptahhotep*'s maxim 6 is that the transgression referred to here is not against private individuals, but against the state, which, at least in the Ramesside Period, normally received a harsher punishment (Lorton 1977, 47) in order to assert the power relations between the centralised state and individuals: 'unless serious offenders are punished or separated from the rest of society, they are likely to threaten the very legitimacy of political and legal authority' (Ferraro and Andreatta 2010, 336).

### 3.1.2.3 *Instruction of Amenemope, chapter 6*

As a reflection of the circumstances of its time (Adams 2008, 44), as a concern of its author due to his own occupation as 'overseer of grains and fields'<sup>308</sup> (Fischer-Elfert 2001c, 171; see also Vernus 2003b, 135; Eyre 2013, 167, 184-85), or both, the *Instruction of Amenemope* devotes significant attention to the discursive themes, or 'strategies' in the Foucaultian terminology (Foucault 1969, 85; 2005, 99), of fraudulency and illegal acquisition of wealth harming both individuals and the state.

If the interpretation of chapter 4 proposed below<sup>309</sup> is accurate, concerns with theft may first be raised in that chapter, but it is in chapter 5, vv. 6.14-6.17, that they become explicit (see no. 39), even if briefly. Chapter 6 (see no. 41), which is at the centre of the first part of the instruction<sup>310</sup>, gives the topic a much lengthier treatment<sup>311</sup>. Its main focus is the unlawful reposition of the boundary markers of fields, which were displaced by the receding waters after every flood (Wetterstrom and Murray 2001, 40), and the consequent annexation of portions of fields belonging to others (see also Garven 1993, 11):

(7.11) (*hw.t mh-6.t*) **Chapter 6.**

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which further supports the interpretation that the transgressor will be removed from office, rather than executed. It is also possible to interpret v. 12.6 as meaning that the fraudulent will be denied the cult of the dead (Römhöld 1989, 163n65).

<sup>308</sup> See the author's titles in P. BM EA 10474 recto, vv. 1.13-2.6.

<sup>309</sup> See this chapter, subsection 3.1.3.1.

<sup>310</sup> See Laisney (2007, 9; 2009, 2-3).

<sup>311</sup> As will be discussed at the beginning of the next subsection, the topic of this chapter is more dominant in the second part of the instruction.

(7.12) (*m-jrj rmnj wd.y hr t(3)š.jw n(.jw) 3h.wt* (7.13) *mtw=k tfjw h3w n(.j) nwh*) Do not displace a marker on the boundaries of the fields, (7.13) nor disturb the place (lit. neighbourhood) of the (measuring) rope.

(7.14) (*m-jrj snk.ty r mh l n(.j) 3h.t* (7.15) *mtw=k h3d t(3)š.jw n(.jw) h3rj(.t)*) Do not covet one cubit (= portion?) of arable field, (7.15) nor tamper with the boundaries of a widow.

(7.16) (*dnm n(.j) h3b hb3 n(.j) p3 h̄c(.w)* (7.17) *p3 šg3jw=k sw n(.j) sh.wt*) A furrow of labour is a shortening of the lifetime, (7.17) what you took dishonestly belongs to the fields.

(7.18) (*wn(n)=f sh̄t m nh̄.yw n(.jw) d3* (7.19) *jw=f sph̄ n-m b3.w n(.j) j̄h*) If he acquires through false oaths (lit. through oaths of falsehood), (7.19) he will be caught (lit. lassoed) by the wrath of the Moon (= Thoth).

(8.1) (*j:jrj=k sj33 r p3 jry sw hr-tp t3*) You will recognise the one who did this on earth:

(8.2) (*jw=f(m) hnwtj n kb.w (= gb)*) he is a coveter of the weak;

(8.3) (*jw=f(m) hf̄(t.y) n whny m-h̄c.t=k* (8.4) *jw nh̄m nh̄ m jr.t=f*) he is an enemy capable of destroying your body, (8.4) life was taken from his eye;

(8.5) (*jw p3y=f pr(m) hf̄j(t.j) n p3 dmj*) his house is an enemy of (lit. for) the town;

(8.6) (***jw n3yw=f š̄c3.w wgp.w***) **his silos/granaries were destroyed;**

(8.7) (*jw=w t̄j 3h.t=f m-dr.t ms.wy=f* (8.8) *dj.tw p3y=f nkt n ky*) his property is taken from his children (8.8) so that it is given to another.

(8.9) (*z3w tw r h3d tš.jw n(.jw) 3h.wt* (8.10) *tm hry(.t) jn.tw=k*) Beware of tampering with the boundaries of the fields (8.10) so that a terror does not fetch you.

(8.11) (*tw=tw sh̄tp n̄tr n-m b3.w n(.j) nb* (8.12) *wpj tš.jw n(.jw) 3h.w(t)*) One appeases god through the wrath of the Lord, (8.12) who divided the boundaries of the fields.

(8.13) (*3b r=k swd3 h̄c.t=k* (8.14) *z3w tw r nb-r-dr*) Desire then to keep your body sound, (8.14) and beware of the Lord of All.

(8.15) (*m-jrj hbhb dnm n(.j) ky* (8.16) *3h n=k wd3 hr=sn*) Do not tread on the furrow of labour of another, (8.16) it is better for you to be safe from them.

After exhorting the addressee to refrain from displacing the boundary markers and from tampering with the measuring ropes (vv. 7.12-7.13), the author specifically admonishes him against appropriating a portion of a widow's field<sup>312</sup> (v. 7.15). In the Nauri Decree, which was set up by Seti I in Upper Nubia to state the exemptions of a foundation dedicated to Osiris of Abydos (Lorton 1977, 25), every official (*sr nb*) and every overseer of fields (*jmj-r3-3h.wt nb*) is warned against transgressing (*thj.t*) the boundary of fields (*t3š*

<sup>312</sup> The concern with the protection of the widow was widespread in the Ancient Near East (Laisney 2007, 224; Carreira 1994, 144; Fensham 1962, 129).

*n(j) 3h.wt*) of the foundation (vv. 50-51)<sup>313</sup> (Kitchen 1975, 53 l. 16, 54 ll. 1-2; Hafemann 2014; Lorton 1977, 25). Comparatively, a widow, who is implicitly described as weak (*gb*) on v. 8.2 of *Amenemope*'s passage, would enjoy less legal protection.

On the first verses the author addresses the pupil directly using the second person pronoun, but, starting on v. 7.18, the third person pronoun is introduced, thus marking the beginning of a short narrative that serves as a cautionary tale to the pupil. On v. 7.18 the author mentions an official who will not only commit fraud by physically moving the boundary markers and the measuring ropes, but also by abusing his position of authority in making false oaths<sup>314</sup>. It is not until v. 7.19 that a god as a punishing agent is first mobilised, in this case Thoth, referred to as the Moon, and it is relevant to notice that on vv. 7.18-7.19 it is pointed out that it is the fraud committed with false oaths that will be punished by the god<sup>315</sup>. This effort to deter the pupil from making a false oath<sup>316</sup> may indicate how easy, and tempting, it might have been to engage in that practice and abuse one's authority.

Following the description of the crime committed by the official, and still within the intervening narrative, the text shifts its attention to the consequences that befall the transgressor (vv. 8.1-8.8). Although several authors claim there was a breakdown of the act-consequence nexus in *Amenemope* (e.g., Moers 2010, 693; Carreira 1994, 153-54), this stanza suggests otherwise: the author implies that the condemned behaviour will be invariably and universally recognisable by the traits he displays and by the consequences that he suffers. Among those consequences, the only one that might be explicitly marked as attributable to divine punishment is attested on v. 8.4: *jw nhm ʿnh m jr.t=f*, 'life was taken from his eye'. As pointed out by Grumach (1972, 62) and Shirun-Grumach (1991,

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<sup>313</sup> The punishment ascribed to this misdemeanour will be discussed below.

<sup>314</sup> Although philosopher of language John Austin (1996, 123) argued that insincere performative utterances are ultimately infelicitous, inasmuch as they are 'an abuse of the procedure' because 'you do not have the requisite thoughts or feelings or intentions' (123), in practice one may consider they are felicitous because 'they work, they do something' (Miller 2005, 286). For a convenient overview of speech act theory see Green (2010 with references). In terms of sociological and discourse analysis, it does not matter so much whether the swearing official is lying or not, but instead that a limited level of authority was delegated on him – it is when he steps out of the limits of that authority that he becomes a transgressor. On the issue of delegation see, for instance, Hays (2009, 17-20), and on the issue of genuineness, from the perspective of ritual performance, see, for instance, Hamayon (2007, 25-30) and Lewis (1994, 568).

<sup>315</sup> Neferabu also attributes his punishment by Ptah to a false swearing in the name of the god (S. BM 589 verso, v. 2). But in his stela the term used is *ʿrk*, whereas in the passage from *Amenemope* *ʿnh* is used.

<sup>316</sup> Oaths carried penalties of their own if broken, which also aimed at a deterring effect (see McDowell 2001, 319; Lorton 1977, 32n146, 33, 37, 41-44, 47-48, 58).

232nVIII.4-a)), this may refer to the same kind of ‘blindness’ that afflicted those who offended a deity in texts relating to personal piety. However, in those texts the formulation is usually different, for instance *dj=f ptr=j kk.w m hrw*, ‘he caused that I see darkness by day’<sup>317</sup> (S. BM 589 verso, v. 3 (Kitchen 1980, 772 l. 1; 1999, 292-93; Luiselli 2011, 362)). In addition, the darkness described in personal piety texts is contrasted with brightness<sup>318</sup>, as indicated, for instance, in O. Cairo 12202 recto (Luiselli 2011, 320; Galán 1999, 21-22). If the passage in *Amenemope* does tie in with this personal piety topic, the exceptionality of its formulation may be explained as a wordplay with *nh.jw*, ‘oaths’ on v. 7.18, as suggested by Grumach (1972, 62); this connection is strengthened by the fact that on v. 7.19 divine punishment by Thoth follows as a consequence of the swearing of false oaths<sup>319</sup>.

With the possible exception of v. 8.4, the other consequences mentioned on vv. 8.5-8.8 are enforced by human agents. It is of particular interest that the two punishments mentioned on vv. 8.7-8.8, namely having the property of the ‘greedy man’<sup>320</sup> taken away from his children in order to give it to another, partly coincide with two of the punishments mentioned in the passages from the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* and from the *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu* discussed above. In *Ptahhotep* the schemer will end up giving to another he does not know (P. Prisse, v. D112), and in *Kairsu* the offspring of the fraudulent is not allowed to inherit his property (P. Louvre E 4864 recto, vv. 12.3-12.4). Rather than quoting these texts, *Amenemope* probably referred to the same legal procedures (on which see McDowell 2001, 318). The extension of the consequences to the children of an offender is again evoked in chapter 9, vv. 12.13-12.14, where it is said that the day the fault (*bt*) of the hot-tempered man is established is a wailing (*jm*) to his children<sup>321</sup>.

With v. 8.8 the cautionary tale comes to an end, and on v. 8.9 the pupil is again addressed directly. On vv. 8.9-8.10 he is cautioned against tampering with the boundary

<sup>317</sup> See alternative formulations in Luiselli (2011, 163-65) and Vernus (2003a, 319). Galán (1999, 29) suggests the beneficiaries of the stelae where this expression is attested were dead by the time the stelae were set up by relatives. But, as argued by Luiselli (2011, 166), it seems more probable that most of these stelae were commissioned during the life of their protagonists.

<sup>318</sup> See, for instance, Galán (1999, 21 with references). See also Vernus (2003a, 321-22).

<sup>319</sup> On other interpretations of v. 8.4 see the corresponding note in the translation of this passage in the appendix (no. 41).

<sup>320</sup> The terminology is Lichtheim’s (1997, 42).

<sup>321</sup> As argued by Laisney (2007, 132), and supported by a comparison with the other passages discussed here, this seems to be a human punishment and not the ‘condemnation’ at the judgement of the dead.

markers so that he is not fetched by a terror. From vv. 8.11-8.12 it is clear that this terror is of divine origin, and its association with the divine *b3.w*, ‘wrath’, was also demonstrated by Borghouts (1982, 11, 36) who takes *hry.t*, ‘terror’, to be ‘the psychic impression caused by the *b3.w*’ (11). Interestingly, and in a way similar to *Ptahhotep*’s maxim 6 as remarked above, the description of the greedy official and of his punishments is preceded and followed by references to divine opposition to the unlawful conduct. This was certainly intentional to let would-be transgressors know that the human punishments they would suffer would be an extension of the divine punishment<sup>322</sup> – marked here through the terms *b3.w* (v. 7.19) and *hry.t* (v. 8.10)<sup>323</sup>. But the admonition on v. 8.9, which is similar to the admonition at the beginning on v. 7.12, may have the added function of making clear that the consequences listed between vv. 8.10 and 8.14 involve not only earthly penalties but also divine punishments for the illegal displacement of boundary markers.

On v. 8.11 the author further uses an important expression in Egyptian religious texts: *shꜥp ntr*, ‘to satisfy god’, ‘to appease god’ (Vernus 2003a, 336; Assmann 2011, 39; Gestermann 2008, 28). This expression is often used in a ritual and cultic context<sup>324</sup> (Vernus 2003a, 336; Assmann 2011, 39), but an individual could also appease a deity outside official rituals and could also use only words, as opposed to material offerings (Gestermann 2008, 28-29). In hymns, *shꜥp* often stands in synonymous parallelism with *dw3*, ‘worship’, forming a spectrum between making the deity present and greeting her in an appeasing way (see Assmann 2011, 39). In personal piety texts the verb *hꜥp* is commonly used to appeal to a god’s merciful side<sup>325</sup>, in the context of acknowledging a fault or seeking the end of a punishing affliction (Vernus 2003a, 321), but *shꜥp* does not seem to be frequently attested in these extant sources. This may be because *hꜥp* is mostly used intransitively in these texts (Vernus 2003a, 347n48), while *shꜥp* presupposes an ‘agent extérieur, comme l’implique le causatif’ (347n48).

<sup>322</sup> See also Römheld (1989, 164).

<sup>323</sup> The order of these terms may also have been chosen in function of the chronology of the events and of the reaction of the agents: upon discovering the transgression there is wrath from the god and from authorities, and, upon receiving the punishment, dread and terror is felt by the victims (see also Borghouts 1982, 11).

<sup>324</sup> See examples in the Middle Kingdom *Oxford Wisdom Text*, T. Ashmolean Museum 1964.489, v. A3 (see Dils 2014; Barns 1968, 74, 76), in the Second Intermediate Period S. Cairo CG 20530, v. A.11, and in the biography of Onuris Anhurmoise, vv. 30-31 (Kitchen 1989, 228 ll. 3-4), in her tomb at El-Mashayikh, Thinis, dated from the reign of Merenptah (Frood 2007, 107).

<sup>325</sup> See a collection of attestations in Vernus (2003a, 324-34).

In the passage from *Amenemope* under discussion (v. 8.11), the sense in which *šhtp* is used has similarities both with the ritual and cultic context and with the personal piety context of asking for mercy regarding a transgression against the deity prayed to. As remarked by Laisney (2007, 99), the deity will be appeased by the punishment of the wrong committed. The use of the impersonal pronoun =*tw*, together with the causative verb *šhtp*, further indicates the punishment is performed by an external agency, which was revealed as the legal authorities in the preceding verses (8.6-8.8)<sup>326</sup>. In this sense, to punish the wrongdoer is akin to a ritual activity that satisfies the deity<sup>327</sup>. Borghouts (1982, 11) translates *šhtp* as ‘reconcile’ and interprets it as asking the offended god (the ‘Lord’ of v. 8.11) for clemency. The text does not seem to give any indication that the fraudulent asks for clemency, nor that it would be conceded, but there is indeed a similarity between this passage and the kind of personal piety texts where forgiveness is asked for: a deity was personally offended, which results in ‘sinful pollution’, in the terminology of Attridge (2004, 77). In personal piety texts it is possible to avert or stop the punishment for the offense<sup>328</sup>, but in this passage *Amenemope* deviates remarkably from the personal piety discourse: there is no appeal to the offended deity mentioned, there is no indication that the addressee may ask the deity to be spared from the judicial consequences; rather than reconciliation, as suggested by Borghouts, what is stressed by the text is the satisfaction and appeasement of the offended deity through the execution of the punishment.

On v. 8.13 a different kind of punishment might be indicated by the formulation *šb r=k swd3 ḥ<sup>c</sup>.t=k*, ‘desire then to keep your body sound’, which parallels the ending verse (7.10) of chapter 5: *wd3 ḥ<sup>c</sup>.t=k ḥr-tp t3*, ‘your body will be safe upon earth’ (see no. 40). The term *swd3* has the literal sense of ‘to cause to be intact’ and, if this is the sense to be read in this passage, then it indicates a punishment which compromises the integrity of the body would be performed on the transgressor. It was mentioned above that v. 8.4 – *jw nḥm ḥnh m jr.t=f*, ‘life was taken from his eye’ – could refer to blindness as divine punishment, and it is possible that this is the punishment implied in

<sup>326</sup> It is also possible that the ‘lord’ of vv. 8.11-8.12 refers to a human authority as well, namely the king, since the king, but not other humans, also possessed *b3.w* (Borghouts 1982, 32). However, it should be taken into account that the explicit term for ‘king’, *n(j)-sw.t*, is only attested once in the prologue (v. 2.1).

<sup>327</sup> Ritually framed punishments – even if they were only symbolical – are well attested (see Muhlestein 2015; Willems 1990, 29-30, 33-34, 36, 46, 51).

<sup>328</sup> On the appeasement of offended deities in general see Attridge (2004, 77-78).

v. 8.13. But another possibility is suggested by the already mentioned Nauri Decree. One of the punishments it reserves to any official or overseer of fields who shifts the boundaries of the foundation of Osiris of Abydos is *zw3 fnd=f msdr.wy=f*, ‘the cutting of his nose and of his ears’ (v. 51)<sup>329</sup> (Kitchen 1975, 54 l. 3; Hafemann 2014; Lorton 1977, 25; Loktionov 2017, 265 with n. 8, 270). This type of punishment, which is attested in the New Kingdom alone (Loktionov 2017, 266), is mostly associated with perjury in the extant sources (Lorton 1977, 33; Loktionov 2017, 269). But the Nauri Decree, which also punishes the stealing of cattle from the foundation with the mutilation of the face (vv. 71-73) (e.g., Loktionov 2017, 271), and, possibly, a decree from Horemheb at Karnak (2017, 265, 271), extend this form of punishment to ‘misappropriation offences’ (2017, 265). The following verse (8.14) indicates the Lord of All legitimises the punishment.

At first glance the punishment of the fraudulent is at odds with the leniency awarded the hot-tempered man in chapter 2, vv. 4.19-5.4 (see no. 38), chapter 3, v. 5.17 (see no. 39), and chapter 9, vv. 12.15-12.17. Perhaps it may be inferred that, despite the intensity with which the hot-tempered man is reproached in *Amenemope*, his transgressions are far less serious than fraudulency, even though one of the punishments he receives is identical with the punishment awarded the fraudulent in chapter 6 (vv. 8.7-8.8), namely to see his property taken away from him and his family (chapter 9, vv. 12.13-12.14). Another possibility – regardless of whether being hot-tempered is less serious than being fraudulent before the author, his audience, and, no less importantly, before the law –, already suggested above, is that no leniency is shown to the fraudulent because of the difference in the discursive strategy of the text: the author is not teaching the pupil how to react to fraudulent colleagues as he does with the hot-tempered man, but is seeking to dissuade him from engaging in this kind of behaviour. Even though the deity cannot choose in the pupil’s stead and cannot prevent him from acting in an illegal way, the promise of her punishment may influence his choices as an agent.

The reference to divine agents under different designations in this chapter of *Amenemope* begs the question as to whether it has to do with poetic elaboration, in which

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<sup>329</sup> The other punishment (v. 52) is forced labour on the fields of the foundation (Lorton 1977, 25 with n. 117).

the four agents mobilised<sup>330</sup> are discursively equivalent and interchangeable, or with a specialisation of the agents. Although the ‘Lord who divided the boundaries of the fields’ on vv. 8.11-8.12 may be the king, as suggested above, it is possible that this divine agent is interchangeable with the Moon (= Thoth), since they are both said to mobilise their *b3.w*, and since the role of ‘Garant der Ackergrenze’ is ascribed to Thoth on vv. 7.16-7.19 (Grumach 1972, 61; see also Laisney 2007, 93). The anonymity of ‘god’ on v. 8.11 may indicate a specialised identity, perhaps of town god. Grumach (1972, 61) points out the similarity between *z3w tw r nb-r-dr* on v. 8.14 and the formulations in Ramesside prayers of *z3w tw* followed by a god’s name. While this similarity is noteworthy, it is not mandatory that the construction on v. 8.14 was inspired by personal piety texts, given that the expression *z3w tw*, without being followed by a god’s name, is attested elsewhere in *Amenemope* and in *Ani*<sup>331</sup>. In turn, Laisney (2007, 93-94) suggests that ‘god’ on v. 8.11 and the ‘Lord of All’ on v. 8.14 refer both to the ‘supreme god’. Since ‘in the Coffin Texts it (= the epithet ‘Lord of All’) is commonly used to characterize the sun god as the supreme being’ (Hornung 1982, 234), and since the sun god is also mobilised elsewhere in *Amenemope* (e.g., chapter 5, v. 7.8), Laisney’s suggestion is a plausible possibility.

A further indicator of the differentiation of the divine agents at least into Thoth and a solar deity may be the advice on v. 8.16 following the injunction to refrain from treading on another’s furrow of labour<sup>332</sup>: *3h n=k wd3 hr=sn*, ‘it is better for you to be safe from them’. While other referents are possible<sup>333</sup>, the plural pronoun and the location of the verse in close proximity to the verses that mention the differentiated divine agents suggest the latter are the referents. It is also interesting to note that, in contrast, the divine agent in the remainder of the chapter, which deals with contentment, is consistently referred to as *p3*

<sup>330</sup> The Moon (= Thoth) on v. 7.19, *ntr* on v. 8.11, tutelary Lord of the fields on the same verse, and Lord of All on v. 8.14.

<sup>331</sup> Examples from the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto: chapter 2, v. 4.4: *z3w tw r hwr<sup>c</sup> j3d*, ‘Beware of robbing a destitute’ (see no. 38); chapter 15, vv. 17.7-17.8: *jr šrj(.t) n(.jt) h3b db<sup>c</sup> n(.j) zh3.w* (17.8) *z3w tw r rmn.t=f*, ‘As for the nose of the ibis (= Thoth), it is the finger of the scribe; (17.8) beware of deviating it’ (see no. 46). Examples from the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto: vv. 20.8-20.9: *whn* (20.9) *r(m)t hr ns{.t}=f z3w tw jr.y=k jk3t (= 3k)*, ‘A man is (20.9) ruined because of his tongue; beware of suffering ruin’ (see no. 30); vv. 20.12-20.13: *wdn <n> ntr=kwj z3w tw r* (20.13) *{bt3} <bw.t>.t=f*, ‘Offer <to> your god. Beware (20.13) of his <detestation>’ (see no. 31).

<sup>332</sup> This possibly refers to the acquisition of another’s property by usucapion (Grumach 1972, 61).

<sup>333</sup> See the note to this verse in the translation in the appendix (no. 41).



*ntr* (vv. 8.19 and 9.5). Perhaps the differentiation of divine agents aimed at increasing the deterrent effect over the fraudulent.

#### 3.1.2.4 *Instruction of Amenemope, chapters 13, 15, and 20*

Although chapters 4-5 of *Amenemope* deal briefly with the illegal acquisition of goods, and chapter 6 of the same text deals at a greater length with fraud in acquiring land by wrongful means, the topic of fraud perpetrated by officials has a more central place in what may be considered the second part of the *Instruction of Amenemope*, ranging from chapter 11 to chapter 20 (Laisney 2007, 9; 2009, 3). Chapters 11 and 12 warn against coveting the goods of subordinates (*tw3*) and of officials (*sr*), respectively, without mobilising divine punishment. Chapter 14, which also leaves out divine punishment, counsels the pupil on how to behave before someone who is trying to bribe him, whereas the first half of chapter 13<sup>334</sup>, chapter 15, and chapter 20 form another group, reintroducing divine retribution in admonishing against abuses of the power invested on scribes by falsifying documents. Chapters 16 and 17 (see nos. 47 and 48) form a third group within the second part of the instruction, and also mobilise divine punishment in reproaching fraud by tampering with official measures and weights. Chapter 18 (see no. 49) deviates from the topic of this part as it concerns the anxiety about the uncertainty of the future and the contrast between human and divine agencies. Chapter 19 concerns proper behaviour in court when appearing before a judge. The chapters from the second part of *Amenemope* that will be discussed here are 13 (first half), 15, 20, 16, and 17<sup>335</sup>.

Chapters 13 (see no. 45), 15 (see no. 46), and 20 (see no. 50) run as follows:

(15.19) (*hw.t mh-13.t*) **Chapter 13.**

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<sup>334</sup> Its second half concerns itself with the psychological and social benefits of showing compassion to the poor (*nmh*) by forgiving a significant portion of his debt (vv. 16.5-16.11) (see no. 45). It is not entirely clear from the text whether the ability to reduce one's debt was delegated on the scribe, or whether the scribe would do it out of his own accord, with the probable need to pay for the remaining debt out of his own pocket. At any rate, and if it may be taken at face value, this passage is indicative of a more or less informal social security system. On debt forgiveness see further Assmann (2006b, 59-60). The *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*, = P. BM EA 10684 verso, vv. 2.2-2.4 (see no. 34), may refer to a somewhat similar situation where the pupil is instructed to pay in the poor man's stead.

<sup>335</sup> Chapters 16 and 17 will be discussed further below in subsection 3.1.2.5.

(15.20) (*m-jrj sh3 r(m)t <m> r r r(r.t)*) (15.21) *t3 bw.t n(.jt) p3 ntr*) Do not defraud a man <through> the reed pen on the papyrus roll; (15.21) it is a detestation of the god.

(16.1) (*m-jrj jrj.y {mt(r)} <mt(r.t)> n mdw(.t) n(.jw) r d3*) (16.2) *mtw=k rmnj ky m ns{.t}=k*) Do not make a testimony with <words> of falsehood, (16.2) in order to thrust aside another by your tongue.

(16.3) (*m-jrj jrj.y hsb <n> {n}<jw>.tj nkt*) (16.4) *mtw=k s d3 <m> p3yw=k r*) Do not make a reckoning <with> the one who has nothing, (16.4) in order to falsify <through> your reed pen.

(17.4) (*hw.t mh-15.t*) **Chapter 15.**

(17.5) (*j:jrj nfr ph=k wn.w*) (17.6) *m-jrj g3y r w r th3*) Do good to achieve material comfort, (17.6) and do not ink the reed pen to transgress.

(17.7) (*jr šrj(.t) n(.jt) h3b db r n(.j) zh3.w*) (17.8) *z3w tw r rmn.t=f*) As for the nose of the ibis (= Thoth), it is the finger of the scribe; (17.8) beware of deviating it.

(17.9) (*hmsj p3 j r nj j pr-hmn.wj*) (17.10) *jw jr.t=f phr t3.wy*) The baboon (Thoth) sits in the House of the Eight, (17.10) but his eye circles the Two Lands.

(17.11) (*jr jw=f nw r p3 sh3 m db r f*) (17.12) *sw t3j drp=f n p3 mt(r)*) If he glimpses at the one who defrauds with his finger, (17.12) he seizes his food through the flood.

(17.13) (*jr zh3.w jw=f sh3 m db r f*) (17.14) *nn mtn.tw z3=f*) As for a scribe who defrauds with his finger, (17.14) his son will not be enrolled.

(17.15) (*jr jrj.yw=k h3w=k jw nn m jb=k*) (17.16) *r n3yw=k ms.wj (r) ptr=w*) If you pass your time, while this is in your mind (lit. *jb*-heart), (17.16) your children (will) observe them.

(20.20) (*hw.t mh-20.t*) **Chapter 20.**

(20.21) (*m-jrj sh3 r(m)t n t3 knb.t*) (20.22) *mtw=k rmnj p3 m3 r t(y)*) Do not defraud a person in court, (20.22) nor set aside the just.

(21.1) (*m dj hr=k n sd.w wbh*) (21.2) *mtw=k b r sw <m> ht3y*) Do not set your sight on a bright garment, (21.2) nor reject him when <in> rags.

(21.3) (*m-jrj šzp fk3 (nj) nht*) (21.4) *mtw=k g{3}w3 n=f s3w-r*) Do not accept a gift (from) a powerful, (21.4) to dismiss the weak for him.

(21.5) (*jr m3 r (.t) f3(.t) r3(.t) n(.jt) ntr*) (21.6) *dj=f sw n mrj=f*) As for Ma'at, it is a great gift of god, (21.6) he gives it to one he loves.

(21.7) (*jr t3 ph.tj n(.jt) p3 n.tj m-mj-kd.t=f*) (21.8) *sw šdj j3d m n3y=f knkn*) As for the strength of the one who is like him, (21.8) it gets the poor away from his beatings.

(21.9) (*m-jrj jrj n=k h{3}rw(.ywt) n-r d3*) (21.10) *st (m) štm r3 n(.j) m(w)t*) Do not make false reports, (21.10) it (is) a great injury worthy of death (lit. of death).

(21.11) (*st <n.j> ʕnh.yw ʕ3 n(.j) sḏḏ-tr* (21.12) *st n(.j) smt(r) n(.j) wḥm*) It <involves> the great oath of loyalty<sup>336</sup>, (21.12) it involves the interrogation<sup>337</sup> by the herald.

(21.13) (*m-jrj sḏḏ bj3.t hr ʕr(.t)* (21.14) *mtw=k ḥḏj šhr.w n(.jw) ntr*) Do not falsify an oracle on a papyrus roll, (21.14) nor change the plans of god.

(21.15) (*m-jrj gmj n=k b3.w n(.jw) ntr ds=k* (21.16) *jw bn š3y{.t} rnn.t*) Do not use for your own advantage a manifestation of god, (21.16) as if there were no Shay and Renenet.

(21.17) (*swd jh.t m n3y=w nb{n}.w* (21.18) *mtw=k wḥ3 n=k p3 ʕnh*) Hand over the goods to their owners, (21.18) and seek life for yourself.

(21.19) (*m-dy.t kd ḥ3.tj=k m pr=w* (21.20) *jw p3yw=k ks n nmj.t*) Do not allow your ḥ3.tj-heart to covet [lit. build in] their house, (21.20) as your bones are for the execution block.

As said, these three chapters deal with transgressions relating to falsification of documents. They share not only the topic, but also vocabulary:

- The term *sh3*, ‘defraud’<sup>338</sup>, occurs in chapter 13, v. 15.20, in chapter 15, vv. 17.11 and 17.13, and in chapter 20, v. 20.21<sup>339</sup>;
- The term *ʕr*, ‘reed pen’, is attested in chapter 13, vv. 15.20 and 16.4, and chapter 15, v. 17.6, but not in chapter 20;
- The related term *ʕr.t*, ‘papyrus roll’, is present in chapter 13, v. 15.20, and in chapter 20, v. 21.13, but not in chapter 15.
- The terms *ʕḏ3*, ‘falsehood’<sup>340</sup>, and *sḏḏ*, ‘to falsify’<sup>341</sup>, are attested in chapter 13, vv. 16.1 and 16.4, and in chapter 20, vv. 21.9 and 21.13, but not in chapter 15<sup>342</sup>.

<sup>336</sup> On this oath see Laisney (2007, 192).

<sup>337</sup> The term *smt* may also refer to interrogations using torture (Müller-Wollermann 2015, 234).

<sup>338</sup> In the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae sh3* (lemma no. 140050) is translated as ‘umkehren’, ‘verkehren’, and as ‘betrügen’. It is the latter rendering that is followed here. Its literal meaning is ‘to cause to go down’ (Laisney 2007, 143 § 14,10), but the determinative with the legs walking in the opposite direction (G55 (see Gardiner 1957, 457)) indicate a specialised meaning which has to do with inversion, perversion, or confusion. Laisney (2007, 143n858) remarks that this verb is seldom attested outside *Amenemope*, and uses v. 19.2 of chapter 17 (see no. 48) to explain the origin of its specialised sense as ‘tromper en abaissant un des plateaux de la balance’ (2007, 144 § 14,10). In this instruction there is a total of eight attestations of the term *sh3*, all of them concentrated in the second part of *Amenemope* which deals mostly with fraudulency as noted above (see also Laisney 2007, 142n858): in chapter 11, v. 14.10, chapter 13, v. 15.20 (see no. 45), chapter 15, vv. 17.11, 17.3 (see no. 45), chapter 16, vv. 18.6, 18.11 (see no. 46), chapter 17, v. 19.2 (see no. 47), and chapter 20, v. 20.21 (see no. 50).

<sup>339</sup> Here the term is mobilised in a slightly different context: it has to do with settling cases in court with partiality in order to favour the wealthy in detriment of those with less economical resources.

<sup>340</sup> On *ʕḏ3* and *sḏḏ* in the Egyptian wisdom literature see Shupak (1993, 93-95, 376n52, 376n54), and in the *Instruction of Amenemope* in particular see Laisney (2008, 138 with n. 838) and Adams (2008, 47). In general, these terms indicate dishonesty, adulteration, and falsification. In literary texts the adverbial expression *n-ʕḏ3* has the sense of deception, according to Blackman (1936, 44). The term *ʕḏ3* may be taken to be synonymous with *jzf.t* (Rutkauskas 2016, 265), and to indicate guilt (Bleeker 1966, 6 with n. 3). In a late

With the already noted exception of *sh3*, there is always one chapter in which one of these terms is not attested. Nevertheless, their distribution across chapters assure their common theme.

The term *ʿr.t*<sup>343</sup>, ‘papyrus roll’, is attested only in the New Kingdom instructions of *Ani* (P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 16.6 (see no. 27) and 22.16-22.17) and of *Amenemope* (P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 13, v. 15.20, chapter 17, v. 19.5 (see no. 48), and chapter 20, 21.13). The attestation of this term only in relatively late instructions matches what is known about the use of documents in the pharaonic period: although orders and authorisations could be issued in written form since the middle of the Old Kingdom (Eyre 2013, 123), legal documents seem to have been exceptional during the pharaonic period (102), and private legal documents (concerning transmissions of property, for instance), while important to settle disputes, did not have the autonomous force of a certified document that they would have in the Greco-Roman period (2013, 126-29). In this context it is not surprising that documents in general did not acquire much relevance in the instructions, and *Amenemope*’s concern with the falsification of documents is somewhat exceptional (2013, 127-28), although it must be noted that all attestations of *ʿr.t* in this

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Demotic attestation in a letter to the gods in P. Berlin P 15660, v. 20, *t3 ʿd3*, ‘injustice’ is contrasted with *p3 m3ʿ*, ‘justice’ (Rutkauskas 2016, 282; Vittmann 2014). In *Amenemope*, *ʿd3* is attested eight times, in chapter 6, v. 7.18 (see no. 41), chapter 9, v. 12.8, chapter 10, vv. 13.13, 13.15 (see no. 44), chapter 11, v. 14.9, chapter 13, v. 16.1 (see no. 45), chapter 20, v. 21.9 (see no. 50), and chapter 23, v. 23.15. In all attestations, *ʿd3* refers to dishonesty or fraudulency concerning oaths (chapter 6, v. 7.18, chapter 11, v. 14.9), words and speech (chapter 9, v. 12.8, chapter 10, vv. 13.13, 13.15, chapter 13, v. 16.1), written reports (chapter 20, v. 21.9), and chewing at a meal before a superior (chapter 23, v. 23.15; on this attestation see Vernus (2010a, 414) and Laisney (2007, 206)). While all attestations share the sense of deception, not all bear juridical overtones (e.g., chapter 10, 13.13, chapter 23, v. 23.15).

<sup>341</sup> Still in *Amenemope*, *sʿd3* occurs six times, in chapter 10, v. 14.2 (see no. 44), in chapter 13, v. 16.4 (see no. 45), in chapter 16, v. 17.18 (see no. 47), chapter 17, v. 18.16 (see no. 48), chapter 19, v. 20.9, and chapter 20, v. 21.13 (see no. 50). Similarly to the occurrences of *ʿd3*, in all these attestations of *sʿd3* the term refers to the falsification or adulteration of documents (chapter 13, v. 16.4, chapter 20, v. 21.13), words (chapter 10, v. 14.2, chapter 19, v. 20.9), and weighing or measuring instruments (chapter 16, v. 17.18, chapter 17, v. 18.16). As Laisney (2007, 138 § 14.2) importantly points out, this term is attested mostly in the second part of *Amenemope* (chapters 11-20), with only one attestation outside of it in chapter 10, and this is relevant because *Amenemope*’s second part deals principally, although not exclusively, with the topic of fraudulency and illegal acquisition of wealth as mentioned above.

<sup>342</sup> The term *th3*, ‘transgress’, is attested only in chapter 15, v. 17.6.

<sup>343</sup> Lemma no. 39230 in the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae*.

instruction may occur in the context of unequal power relations<sup>344</sup>, not only because of the harmed person's lower social status but also because of her probable illiteracy<sup>345</sup>.

Another important nuance about this topic in *Amenemope* is that in chapters 13, 20, and 17 (vv. 19.4-19.5), the transgression is against private individuals<sup>346</sup>, whereas in chapter 15 the lack of references to particular persons suggests that it is the state that is harmed. This is further suggested by the similarity between the way Thoth is mobilised in this chapter and in chapter 16, vv. 17.22-18.1, where the infraction is clearly against the state (vv. 17.20-17.21) (see no. 46).

While the three chapters under discussion share several key terms, as detailed above, the same is not true about the divine agents mobilised to meet the transgression common to these chapters, as the divine agents are different, and mobilised differently in all three chapters:

- In chapter 13 the audience is only informed that to defraud a man by falsifying a document is a detestation (*bw.t*) of the god (vv. 15.20-15.21), but, interestingly, no earthly punishment is referred to.

- Chapter 15 mobilises Thoth, referred to as 'ibis' (v. 17.7) and as 'baboon' (v. 17.9), the animals associated with this god<sup>347</sup> (Sales 1999, 184-86; Pinch 2002, 209-10). As ibis, Thoth is identified with the finger of the scribe (v. 17.7), and, in the form of baboon, this god is said to be attentive to the activities of scribes even though he is centred in Hermopolis (v. 17.9). In the only passage in these three chapters that specifies the nature of the divine punishment, vv. 17.11-17.12 detail that Thoth will deprive the transgressing scribe of nourishment;

- In the first part of chapter 20 the pupil is advised against being an impartial judge because Ma'at is a gift of god and he gives it to whom he loves (vv. 21.5-21.6). In the second part of the chapter, the pupil is counselled against falsifying the written results of

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<sup>344</sup> In chapter 13, compare v. 15.20 with vv. 16.3-16.4 (see no. 45), and in chapter 20 compare v. 21.13 with 21.17 (see no. 50). In chapter 17, vv. 19.4-19.5 (see no. 48), the inequality in the power relation is self-evident.

<sup>345</sup> This is the case at least in chapters 13 and 17.

<sup>346</sup> Marked as *rmt*, 'man', *ky*, 'another', and *jw.tj nkt*, 'one who has nothing', in chapter 13, vv. 15.20, 16.2, and 16.3 respectively (see also Altenmüller 1983, 11), as owners of goods in chapter 20, v. 21.17, and as *ḥ.wwtj*, 'peasant', in chapter 17, v. 19.4.

<sup>347</sup> The first instance of mobilisation of this god on v. 17.7 will be discussed in further detail in subsection 3.2.5.2 below with other passages that mobilise a deity in a similar way.

oracles (vv. 21.13-21.14) and against the consequent misuse of the apocryphal text (v. 21.15), because Shay and Renenet will somehow effect adverse consequences on him (v. 21.16).

### 3.1.2.4.1 *Instruction of Amenemope, chapter 13*

In chapter 13 the lack of a clear reference to a punishment suggests that the punishment is the very state of *bw.t* generated by the transgression. As said, one is only told that to falsify a document<sup>348</sup> is a *bw.t*, ‘detestation’, of *p3 ntr* (vv. 15.20-15.21)<sup>349</sup>:

(15.20) (*m-jrj sh3 r(m)t <m> r r r(r.t)*) (15.21) *t3 bw.t n(.jt) p3 ntr*) Do not defraud a man <through> the reed pen on the papyrus roll; (15.21) that is a detestation of the god.

### 3.1.2.4.2 *Instruction of Amenemope, chapter 15*

As in chapter 13, the transgression condemned in chapter 15 is abuse of office by falsifying documents (vv. 17.6-17.8):

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<sup>348</sup> This document may be a list of taxes (Lange 1925, 81; Laisney 2007, 156), but what does the fraud consist in is not entirely clear, as also recognised by Laisney (2007, 156). Altenmüller (1983, 15-17) suggests that vv. 15.20-16.2 are foreign to the text and that they are an edited treatment of a traditional theme presented in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, maxim 8, vv. D159-D160. In his turn, Laisney (2007, 156) proposes that the transgression involves the reduction of the taxes of those protected by the scribe at the expense of their increase for the peasants, without the total sum of taxes owed the state being changed (this seems to be also the suggestion by Grumach (1972, 102)). Vv. 6.16-6.17 of chapter 5 (see no. 40 above) show that the illegalities reproached by the author were not committed for the exclusive benefit of the scribe, which may lend further support to Laisney’s suggestion.

<sup>349</sup> This reproach is reinforced on vv. 16.1-16.2 and 16.3-16.4, even though divine punishment, or at least displeasure, is not mentioned in direct connection with these two couplets: ‘(16.1) (*m-jrj jrj.y {mt(r)} <mt(r.t)> n mdw(.t) n(.jw) r d3*) (16.2) *mtw=k r mnj ky m ns {.t}=k*) Do not make a testimony with <words> of falsehood, (16.2) in order to thrust aside another by your tongue’; ‘(16.3) (*m-jrj jrj.y hsb <n> {n}<jw>. tj nkt*) (16.4) *mtw=k s d3 <m> p3yw=k r*) do not make a reckoning <with> the one who has nothing, (16.4) in order to falsify <through> your reed’ (see also Vernus 2003b, 135 with n. 72). Contrarily to the transgressions on vv. 15.20 and 16.4, the transgression on v. 16.1 concerns an oral testimony and not the falsification of a document. As mentioned in the notes to vv. 16.3-16.4 in the appendix (see no. 45), it is not entirely clear whether the transgression is a fraudulent scheme against the destitute/the one who cannot afford a bribe or the injustice of taxing him, but, as suggested in that note, it is conceivable that the transgression does involve the falsification of the list of taxes in order to indebt the man ‘who has nothing’, so that he has to work for an ‘entrepreneur’ to pay off his debt; on the payment of debts through labour see Moreno García (2008, 111, 128 with n. 109, 136).

(17.7) (*jr šrj(.t) n(.jt) h3b db<sup>c</sup> n(.j) zh3.w* (17.8) *z3w tw r rmn.t=f*) As for the nose of the ibis (= Thoth), it is the finger of the scribe; (17.8) beware of deviating it.

(17.9) (*hmsj p3 j<sup>c</sup>nj j pr-hmn.wj* (17.10) *jw jr.t=f phr t3.wy*) The baboon (= Thoth) sits in the House of the Eight, (17.10) but his eye circles the Two Lands.

(17.11) (*jr jw=f nw r p3 sh3 m db<sup>c</sup>=f* (17.12) *sw t3j drp=f n p3 mt(r)*) If he glimpses at the one who defrauds with his finger, (17.12) he seizes his food through the flood.

(17.13) (*jr zh3.w jw=f sh3 m db<sup>c</sup>=f* (17.14) *nn mtn.tw z3=f*) As for a scribe who defrauds with his finger, (17.14) his son will not be enrolled.

This transgression is met with two punishments, one divine – Thoth will deprive the fraudulent of nourishment (vv. 17.11-17.12) – and the other earthly – his son will not be enrolled (vv. 17.13-17.14) –, that overlap with the type of punishments evoked in the other passages discussed so far<sup>350</sup>.

The description of the punishment of the fraudulent by Thoth on v. 17.12 is, on the one hand, metaphorical. The image of his food being swept away by the flood has a parallel, for instance, in the metaphorical description of the loss of illegally acquired property in chapter 7, vv. 9.20-10.5 (see no. 42).

On the other hand, however, the deprivation of food evoked may correspond to an actual punishment. That is the case, for instance, in the Seventeenth dynasty decree of Antef VII (Nubkheperra): the missive, recorded in S. Cairo 30770, was produced in the context of Antef VII's efforts to politically reunify Egypt, and concerned the crime of harbouring in the temple of Min at Koptos 'an enemy who was, in all likelihood, Antef's Hyksos rival' (Lorton 1977, 22n105). Although the punishment assigned to Teti, the man who takes the fugitive in, goes as far as including 'debaptism'<sup>351</sup> (v. 5), it also involves removal (*hsf*) from his office (*j3w.t*) and seizure (*nḥm*) of his income (*ḥk.w*), nourishment (*df3*), and meat for offerings (*w<sup>c</sup>b.wt*) from the temple (vv. 5-6) (see Hafemann 2014; Lorton 1977, 20).

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<sup>350</sup> As in the *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu*, P. Louvre E 4864 recto, vv. 12.3-12.4, and another passage from the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 6, v. 8.7, the second punishment – namely the refusal by authorities to allow the son of the fraudulent to be registered as scribe, and thus to follow the profession of his father – is extended to the offspring of the transgressor. The consequences of being suddenly barred from the scribal profession would be dire, as remarked by Christopher Eyre (2013, 341) about this passage: 'Registration provided benefit and protection, the opposite of which was exclusion from function and rights to income.'

<sup>351</sup> On which see Lorton (1977, 17n71, 17-18n72 with references).

Similarly, in the Eighth dynasty royal decree of Demedjibtawy, also from the temple of Min at Koptos (Koptos R), failure by any chief or official to enforce the decree is punishable by loss of authorization (ꜥ)<sup>352</sup> to their office (*j3w.t*), to their seal (*sd3.wt*), and to any of their property (*jh.t*, spelled *js.t*)<sup>353</sup> (vv. 36-38) (Sethe 1933, 306 ll. 2-6; Lorton 1977, 11; Strudwick 2005, 124).

These examples demonstrate that punishment by removal of office and consequent privation of sustenance was available to Egyptian authorities. Given the obvious connection between nourishment and the office that provides it or at least enables its acquisition, it is probable that the privation of food in *Amenemope*'s chapter 15, vv. 17.11-17.12, came as a result of loss of office<sup>354</sup>. Therefore, this punishment attributed to the divine patron of scribes overlaps with actual legal prescriptions.

The way Thoth is mobilised in this passage is revealing about the ways the wisdom literature discourse related to the personal piety discourse. As remarked by Irene Grumach (1972, 111-12), a parallel can be drawn between this passage and the already mentioned prayer to Thoth in P. Sallier I = P. BM EA 10185 recto, v. 8.3, in which the addresser asks Thoth to place him in Hermopolis and to provide him with bread and beer. Both passages present two complementary perspectives of Thoth as provider: in the prayer included in the Late-Egyptian Miscellany he is mobilised as a god who can provide nourishment, while in *Amenemope* he is mobilised as a god who can withdraw that same nourishment. Remarkably, *Amenemope* shares of the personal piety discourse but from the opposite and complementary perspective.

It is also interesting to point out that vv. 17.7-17.10 construct the agency of Thoth as embodied, and efficient beyond his town. By identifying the finger of each scribe with the body part of an animal representing attributes of Thoth on vv. 17.7-17.8, the text affirms that the god is watchful of the official acts of the scribe. This idea of the god's mobility and ability to keep individual scribes under observation is further strengthened on vv. 17.9-17.10 by asserting that, despite residing at Hermopolis, the god is able to watch the activities of scribes all over Egypt with his eye. Rather than expanding on the accepted notion of the

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<sup>352</sup> On this term see Eyre (2013, 79 with n. 8).

<sup>353</sup> Lorton (1977, 12) interprets it as 'income'.

<sup>354</sup> This relation is also present in the extension of the punishment of the fraudulent to his son (vv. 17.13-17.14), as he is also removed from office.



agency of Thoth<sup>355</sup>, the author was probably addressing potential scepticism from scribes towards the efficiency of the god, not only across the whole territory of Egypt<sup>356</sup> (addressed on vv. 17.9-17.10) but also among the multitude of scribes (addressed on vv. 17.17-17.8). The strategy of addressing potential scepticism towards divine agency is also used in the *Instruction for the King Merikare*, P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, vv. 54-55, where the author admonishes the audience against thinking that one's transgressions will be overlooked by the gods in case one had a long life, because for them a whole life is like an hour.

### 3.1.2.4.3 *Instruction of Amenemope, chapter 20*

Chapter 20 of the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, vv. 20.20-21.8 (see no. 50) reads:

(20.20) (*ḥw.t mḥ-20.t*) Chapter 20.

(20.21) (*m-jrj sh3 r(m)t n B ḳnb.t* (20.22) *mtw=k rmnj p3 m3ᶜ.t(y)*) Do not defraud a person in court, (20.22) nor set aside the just.

(21.1) (*m dj ḥr=k n sd.w wblḥ* (21.2) *mtw=k bᶜ sw <m> ḥt3y*) Do not set your sight on a bright garment, (21.2) nor reject him when <in> rags.

(21.3) (*m-jrj šzp fk3 (nj) nḥt* (21.4) *mtw=k g{}w3 n=f s3w-ᶜ*) Do not accept a gift (from) a powerful, (21.4) to dismiss the weak for him.

(21.5) (*jr m3ᶜ(.t) f3(.t) ᶜ3(.t) n(.jt) ntr* (21.6) *dj=f sw n mrj=f*) As for Ma'at, it is a greaft gift of god, (21.6) he gives it to one he loves.

(21.7) (*jr B ph.tj n(.jt) p3 n.tj m-mj-ḳd.t=f* (21.8) *sw šdj j3d m n3y=f ḳnḳn*) As for the strength of the one who is like him, (21.8) it gets the poor away from his beatings.

This passage, which shares with the two previous passages the term *sh3*, unequivocally concerns a trial where the pupil is the judge and may feel tempted to accept a bribe, a practice that, according to the increase of references to it in several sources, had become widespread in the New Kingdom, especially at the later stages of this period (see

<sup>355</sup> The prayer in P. Sallier I mentioned above, as well as other prayers addressed to this god outside Hermopolis (see examples in Luiselli (2011, 356-58, 366, 369-70)) suggest that Thoth was consensually deemed reachable and efficient outside of his traditional area of action.

<sup>356</sup> On the topic of a deity's efficiency beyond her local town see further Hornung (1982, 166-69).

Vernus 2003b, 136-38). As commented by Adams (2008, 48), ‘chapter 20 has generated the most heated arguments about causality in Amenemope’, because of the statement on vv. 21.5-21.6. For instance, Assmann (2003, 143) finds this passage a fine example of the identification of the will of god with Ma’at and further concludes that: ‘Mais identifier la Maât à la volonté de Dieu, c’est l’abolir’ (see also Assmann 2006a, 259-60). This conclusion has been accepted by several authors (e.g., Araújo 2001b, 531-32; Carreira 1994, 149; Römheld 1989, 133-34), but rejected by others (e.g., Lichtheim 1992, 100; Adams 2008, 49). Also rejecting this conclusion, Goedicke (1995, 103) proposed a different rendering of the couplet: ‘As for the righteous one, who bears the influence of god, he will reveal himself voluntarily’. This reinterpretation of the passage was accepted, for instance, by Simpson (2003e, 238)<sup>357</sup>, but the traditional understanding of the passage, which is reflected in the translation proposed here, needs not be abandoned.

About this passage, Lichtheim (1992, 100) comments that: ‘As for the Maat saying of Amenemope, it should be read in the context of the chapter; the context is a stern warning to shun bribes, so as to be able to make correct judgments. It is followed by warnings against falsifying documents. Thus the Maat saying need be no more than the observation that not everyone is willing or able to judge fairly and act honestly. Moreover, to think of one’s virtue as a ‘gift of god’ was a popular notion current at all times.’ While Lichtheim is correct in pointing back to the context of the chapter<sup>358</sup>, a somewhat different interpretation can be made.

Observed from the point of view that god is not mentioned here to be commented theologically, but is instead mobilised to play a role that contributes to the point the author is attempting to make to his audience, one may conclude that this is a warning to the pupil in case he ever becomes a judge and accepts a bribe to favour the powerful party over the weaker contender. By saying that Ma’at is a gift of god naturally indicates that there is a close connection between god and Ma’at. This does not necessarily entail that Ma’at is subsumed under god, but can signify, instead, that god is acting as the keeper of Ma’at. Brunner (1963, 104, 108) considers Ma’at to be an impersonal principle which assigns each act its proper consequence and which may be supervised by a god. But Assmann

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<sup>357</sup> See also a discussion of Goedicke’s reappraisal of the passage in Adams (2008, 48-49).

<sup>358</sup> See also Wilke (2006, 132-33).

(2006a, 66 with n. 29, 67, 178) contests Brunner's idea of a causality that guarantees that each act will be met with its proper consequence and argues instead that it is up to society to enforce that nexus (253-54). In this line of reasoning, Michael V. Fox (1995, 41) argues that 'Ma'at does not itself effect retribution; rather, retribution *actualizes* Ma'at', and that 'people and gods do Ma'at; Ma'at doesn't do Ma'at'<sup>359</sup> (italics in the original).

In texts relating to personal piety and asking for protection in court, the invoked god, especially Amun, is often lauded as an incorruptible judge (see Vernus 2003b, 138-140, 144 with references). This conceptualisation of the god as the ultimate resort to the person being trialled supports Assmann's and Fox's argument that Ma'at has to be actualised by an external agent. On vv. 21.5-21.8 the text does not state that god will intervene to help the poor (*j3d*). Instead, it is up to the pupil to be incorruptible like the god (v. 21.7). But it is possible that vv. 21.5-21.6 are a warning to the pupil: as Ma'at, in the sense of fair justice, is the gift of god, in the sense that it is upheld by god, it will be given to the pupil or withdrawn from him depending on how fairly he judges others. If the pupil comes to be trialled, he will either be loved by the god and have justice done to him or will face the opposite consequence. This form of punishment would be the other side of god's intervention in court: in the same way that god can protect the needy, he can also create the conditions to have the unfair judge condemned<sup>360</sup>. This would be similar to the New Testament idea that one will be treated and judged in the same way one treated and judged others (Matt. 7:2)<sup>361</sup>.

The fraudulent activities reproved in chapter 20, vv. 21.13-21.19, may or may not be related:

(21.13) (*m-jrj sꜥd3 bj3.t hr ꜥr(.t)*) (21.14) *mtw=k ḥdj šhr.w n(jw) ntr*) Do not falsify an oracle on a papyrus roll, (21.14) nor change the plans of god.

<sup>359</sup> In its cosmological, as opposed to social, dimension, however, Ma'at is at times presented as a goddess who will attack the enemies of the sun god (see Assmann 2006a, 183-84 with references; Araújo 2001b, 528; 2017, 287-88 with references).

<sup>360</sup> What Geraldine Pinch (2002, 210) says about Thoth may also apply here: 'Thoth set a divine example as a just judge and an incorruptible official. He lifted Maat, the goddess of justice, to her father, Ra. Thoth was responsible for framing and enforcing the laws of *maat*. In this role he could be either a gracious peacemaker or a merciless executioner.'

<sup>361</sup> This would not be the only similarity between *Amenemope* and the *Gospel of Matthew*, as chapter 18, vv. 19.11-19.12 (see no. 49), chapter 21, vv. 22.5-22.6 (see no. 51), and chapter 22, vv. 23.8-23.9 (see no. 52) of *Amenemope* also have a parallel in Matthew 6:34.

(21.15) (*m-jrj gmj n=k b3.w n(jw) ntr ds=k* (21.16) *jw bn š3y{.t} rnm.t*) Do not use for your own advantage a manifestation of god, (21.16) as if there were no Shay and Renenet.

(21.17) (*swd jh.t m n3y=w nb{n}.w* (21.18) *mtw=k wh3 n=k p3 ʿnh*) Hand over the goods to their owners, (21.18) and seek life for yourself.

(21.19) (*m-dy.t kd h3.tj=k m pr=w* (21.20) *jw p3yw=k ks n nmj.t*) Do not allow your *h3.tj*-heart to covet [lit. build in] their house, (21.20) as your bones are for the execution block.

Verse 21.13 shares the topic of the two previous chapters by using the terms *sʿd3*, ‘falsify’, and *ʿr.t*, ‘papyrus roll’. There it was implied that the crimes were economical, but here the references to the oracle and to the plans of god may suggest a different context, which is the way this passage is interpreted by Laisney (2007, 190). Following that line of thought, the context would shift next to frauds with the property of another (vv. 21.19-21.20), and subsequently to the related issue of covetousness (vv. 21.17-21.19).

However, at least at Deir el-Medina, during the Twentieth dynasty, divine oracles are known to have been used to settle property disputes among other legal matters (Eyre 2013, 115 with n. 188 with references; Teeter 2011, 74, 105, 111; Vernus 2003b, 105, 147). In this light, it is conceivable that the falsification of the oracle verdicts mentioned on v. 21.13 have to do with the illegal acquisition of another’s goods reproached on v. 21.17. Since oracles were public, which would provide more security to the process<sup>362</sup>, it is probable that the oracles would be tampered with some time after the event<sup>363</sup>. Either to avoid teaching his audience on how to do it, or because it was clear enough to go unmentioned, the author does not detail how the scribe could acquire someone else’s property by falsifying an oracle<sup>364</sup>. Nevertheless, this admonition is of sociological and legal interest, in that it suggests it could be done.

This may have been a particularly effective way of committing fraud, given that oracles apparently dispensed with prior written evidence<sup>365</sup> (Teeter 2011, 105). Unsurprisingly, this is one of the few passages in *Amenemope* that warns the future

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<sup>362</sup> See Teeter (2011, 109). The informal control by the public of the oracular consultation obviously excluded the movement of the priests when signaling the god’s answer.

<sup>363</sup> Perhaps they were even fabricated and ascribed to an oracular consultation sometime in the past, in a way similar to the apocryphal text known as Donation of Constantine which was produced in the Middle Ages; on the latter see Le Goff (2009, 72-74)

<sup>364</sup> Manipulations of the oracles’ answers through the movements of the priests carrying the statue of the god are documented, however (Vernus 2003b, 105-107).

<sup>365</sup> In this case the written evidence would concern the rightful owner of the property.

transgressor that he will incur the death penalty (vv. 21.19-21.20). While a common thread runs through the whole passage (vv. 21.13-21.19), technically two transgressions may be distinguished: falsification of the oracle and consequent use of the manifestation of the god for one's own interests, and appropriation of another's goods. In contrast with chapter 6, which mobilises several divine agents with a significant intensity against the appropriation of another's fields, the mobilisation of divine agents in this passage seems strikingly meagre in light of the gravity of the offense. In addition, they are only mobilised against the first transgression, although it is conceivable that the author took the evocation of the death penalty as a sufficient deterrent against the second, related transgression.

Both Shay and Renenet are mentioned only in two passages from *Amenemope*: this chapter and chapter 7<sup>366</sup> (see no. 42). Interestingly, in chapter 7 their mobilisation concerns a similar topic to the one under discussion, more specifically covetousness<sup>367</sup>:

(9.9) (*ḥw.t mh-7.t*) **Chapter 7.**

(9.10) (*m-jrj km3m jb=k m-s3 wsr.w* (9.11) *nn ḥm š3y.t rnn.t*) Do not throw your *jb*-heart after riches:  
(9.11) there is no one who ignores Shay and Renenet.

(9.12) (*m-jrj ḥ3<sup>c</sup> n=k ḥ3.tj=k m-rw(tj)* (9.13) *z(j) nb n(j) t3yw=f wnw.t*) Do not abandon your *ḥ3.tj*-heart outside: (9.13) each man belongs to his hour.

Although the main topic of both passages is similar, Shay and Renenet are mobilised from different perspectives and with different aims. Before those different perspectives are addressed, a brief overview of the two deified concepts will be made.

Both deities are associated with the not necessarily inflexible predetermination of certain events of humans' lives. Renenet<sup>368</sup> was associated with the content of one's life, in particular one's degree of material comfort (Miosi 1982, 75-76; Sales 1999, 328; Quaegebeur 1975, 125). Shay, who is attested as a deified concept only from the Eighteenth

<sup>366</sup> These deities are not mobilised individually in *Amenemope*.

<sup>367</sup> Covetousness (*ḥntj*) by the king towards what others (*k(y).wj*) possess is also condemned in the *Instruction for the King Merikare*, P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, v. 40. Greed (*wn-jb*) is equally rebuked in maxims 19 and 20 of the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse. But in neither of these passages is a divine agent mobilised.

<sup>368</sup> Renenet is sometimes interchanged with the goddess Renenutet (Collombert 2005-7, 30), but a distinction existed between them (25-26 with n. 17), as Renenet was a 'principe divin plus intellectuel et bien moins personnalisé, matérialisé, que Renenoutet' (31).

dynasty onwards<sup>369</sup>, is also associated with the degree of one's material prosperity, but, in contrast, also determined one's time and manner of death (Sales 1999, 329; Quaegebeur 1975, 123, 126, 129-32 with references). Like Renenet, Shay could be a positive influence in one's life<sup>370</sup>. But he could also be associated with misfortune and with the shortening of one's lifetime (Sales 1999, 330; Quaegebeur 1975, 128-29). According to Quaegebeur (129 with references), the negative side of Shay has contributed to the perception of Shay as negative 'fate' and of Renenet as positive 'fate', a polarisation that does not reflect reality, given that 'la notion de Shaï est plus étendue et essentiellement neutre' (129). As Jan Quaegebeur (129) also points out, Shay, by virtue of his name<sup>371</sup>, may have a passive or an active sense.

Quaegebeur (1975, 127) interprets the passage from chapter 7 quoted above (vv. 9.10-9.13) as a reminder that one's predetermined time of death may catch one off guard. Central to his interpretation is the term *wnw.t*, 'hour', which he interprets as one's time of death. Conversely, he (107) interprets the passage from chapter 20 (vv. 21.13-21.16) as a mobilisation of Shay and Renenet by *ntr* to curb human hubris. The distinction between an active and passive sense of Shay (and, by implication, of Renenet<sup>372</sup>) will be important to the interpretation of both passages that will be proposed here.

Even if *wnw.t*, 'hour', may refer to the time of death, as Quaegebeur suggests, it is attested elsewhere in *Amenemope* with the sense of moment of activity: chapter 2, v. 4.14<sup>373</sup> (see no. 38), chapter 3, v. 5.15 (see no. 39), and chapter 25, v. 24.18<sup>374</sup> (see no. 54). In these attestations, and at least in other late texts according to Siegfried Morenz (1970, 299n124), *wnw.t* overlaps with *3.t*, 'time/moment of action' (see S. Morenz 1970, 76-77, 79). Both Lange (1925, 57) and Laisney (2007, 110) followed the opposite approach of Quaegebeur (1975, 127) and, instead of interpreting the mobilisation of Shay and Renenet in chapter 7

<sup>369</sup> See Miosi (1982, 74) and Quaegebeur (1975, 122). Baines (1994, 39) suggests the Nineteenth dynasty instead.

<sup>370</sup> See Quaegebeur (1975, 130-32). According to the same author, Shay also fulfilled the role of a 'guardian angel' (124, 147, 152).

<sup>371</sup> *Š3y* may be understood as a passive participle, 'what is determined', or as an active participle, 'the one who determines' (Quaegebeur 1975, 31, 39-40).

<sup>372</sup> It is relevant to point out that both Shaï and Renenet are attested most often paired up rather than individually, which may have led to the exchange of attributes between the two deities (Quaegebeur 1975, 118, 125, 132, 153).

<sup>373</sup> Cf. Laisney (2007, 65, 110 § 9.13).

<sup>374</sup> The expression *wnw.t n(jt) ʿnh*, 'hour of life', used on this verse, clearly indicates that *wnw.t* is not always necessarily associated with death.

in function of *wnw.t*, ‘hour’, they interpreted the sense of *wnw.t* in relation to the evocation of those deities. As also observed by Lange (1925, 57) and Laisney (2007, 110), vv. 9.10-9.11 point towards one’s allotment of social position and level of prosperity in life. Therefore, they may point towards a passive sense of Shay and Renenet, inasmuch as the current life situation of the addressee is a consequence of what those deities determined in the past<sup>375</sup>. In this light, *wnw.t* has the sense of one’s spectrum of action in life<sup>376</sup>: in other words, if the addressee found himself to have a low-ranking office and a corresponding low level of income, he ought to come to terms with that. In this passage Shay and Renenet are not mobilised as punishing agents as conjectured by Quaegebeur, but instead are evoked to elicit contentment from the audience with their social position.

In contrast, Shay and Renenet possibly play a more active role in chapter 20, vv. 21.15-21.16, because their action is arguably set in the future. As was mentioned above, Shay, in the sense of one’s predetermined time of death, could be altered by the requested intervention of a deity<sup>377</sup>, by magical practices, or, to the extent that Shay was also a component of the human personality alongside the *ka* and other elements<sup>378</sup>, by one’s actions<sup>379</sup> (Quaegebeur 1975, 119-21, 123-25; Sales 1999, 330).

In the context of personal piety, gods were asked to increase one’s lifetime by adding to one’s Shay<sup>380</sup>. But if the gods could extend a person’s lifespan, then it is conceivable that they could also shorten it. In this light, Quaegebeur’s interpretation that in chapter 20, vv. 21.15-21.16, Shay and Renenet are mobilised as a form of punishment is

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<sup>375</sup> For another passage associating Shay and Renenet with one’s social position see a prayer to Thoth in the Late-Egyptian Miscellany in P. Anastasi V = P. BM EA 10244, v. 9.7 (Dils 2014; Quaegebeur 1975, 121).

<sup>376</sup> Contrarily to Lange, Laisney has some doubts about this understanding of the text and leaves open the possibility that *wnw.t* does indeed refer to the time of death.

<sup>377</sup> As in the *Report of Wenamun*, P. Moscow 120 recto, vv. 2.57-2.58 (see Hoffmeier 2001, 507; Popko 2014). In these cases, what is sought from the god is the prolongation of one’s life.

<sup>378</sup> On which see Araújo (2015, 123-26) and Assmann (2005, 87-89).

<sup>379</sup> The association between one’s actions and one’s Shay in the sense of quality of life, if not also of lifespan, is particularly developed in the demotic *Instruction of Papyrus Insinger*, vv. 2.19, 4.23, 5.1, 19.14 (see Quaegebeur 1975, 120-21).

<sup>380</sup> See for instance the hymn to Amun in P. Leiden 350, vv. 3.16-3.18 (Quaegebeur 1975, 78 with references). On the affinity between hymns and prayers, which suggests hymns may be considered part of the personal piety discourse, see Luiselli (2011, 30, 34 with references). José Ramos (2010, 242) also argues that, despite a stronger emphasis on narrative – marked by the use of a third person pronoun –, hymns are not necessarily distant from prayers addressed to an ‘you’: ‘Apesar de se formularem pronominalmente numa relação de ele, os hinos conservam implícita e intensa a ligação própria do tu.’

sensible<sup>381</sup>. The punishment in question would be the anticipation of death, materialised through the execution of the scribe who made the falsification by the authorities. This argument was made above by connecting the death penalty (vv. 21.18, 21.20) awarded to the coveter of another's goods (v. 21.17) with the falsification of an oracular verdict (vv. 21.13-21.14) committed with the aim of claiming possession of those goods. Although only the transgression of falsifying the oracular verdict is directly associated with Shay and Renenet, both transgressions are connected, which suggests that the death penalty is seen as an expression of the alteration of the lifespan of the fraudulent scribe by Shay and Renenet.

Following Quaegebeur's distinction between a passive and active sense of Shay and Renenet, it is conjectured here that the action of these two entities in *Amenemope's* chapter 20 is set in the future and not in the past, as is arguably the case in chapter 7. But it remains unclear whether they are mobilised as autonomous agents or not. In his interpretation, Quaegebeur (1975, 107) assumes they are subordinated to *ntr*. He (106-107) draws this conclusion by pairing up this passage with a passage from the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*, = P. BM EA 10684 verso, vv. 6.6-6.7: '(6.6) š3y.t rnn.t h<t>j.y (6.7) hr bj3.t m zh3.w ntr ds=f, Shay and Renenet are carved (6.7) on the character, in the writing of god himself' (see no. 36). He comments about both passages that: 'Ces deux notions constituent donc les limites que la divinité impose à l'être humain' (107). Central to Quaegebeur's conclusion is also his refusal to see Shay and Renenet acting out of their own accord, since, when they seem to act autonomously, they are in fact directed by a god or by the king (1975, 114, 119, 147).

On vv. 21.15-21.16 there is also an association between *ntr*, on the one hand, and Shay and Renenet, on the other, although a relation of cause and effect is not necessarily present: (21.15) m-jrj gmj n=k b3.w n(.j) ntr ds=k (21.16) jw bn š3y.t rnn.t) 'Do not use for your own advantage a manifestation of god, (21.16) as if there were no Shay and Renenet' (see no. 50). It is possible that the alteration of the preassigned time of death by Shay and Renenet is the punishment inflicted on the fraudulent scribe by god for the offense against him. But the text also allows the reading that the author ascribes autonomous action to Shay and Renenet, since the wording may suggest the deities are set obstacles the pupil will

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<sup>381</sup> As in chapter 6, v. 8.11 (see no. 41), chapter 15, vv. 17.11-17.12 (see no. 46), and chapter 20, vv. 21.5-21.6, here *Amenemope* shares of the personal piety discourse, but from the opposite perspective.



come up against. In the latter case, the role played by these two specialised deities is not fundamentally different from the role of punishing agent played by *ntr* in what concerns the discourse of the instructions: like god, Shay and Renenet are concerned with the pupil's actions from an ethical point of view, and are willing to intervene in order to reduce the imbalance in the power relation between a scribe willing to use his skills to commit fraud and an owner who presumably is illiterate or lacks the means to defend himself legally.

To summarise the intervention of Shay and Renenet in chapter 7 and in chapter 20: following Quaegebeur's interpretation of passive and active sense of Shay and Renenet, it is arguable that in chapter 7 the action of both deities is set in the past, and the purpose of their evocation is to remind the audience, who may feel tempted to give in to covetousness, of a preassigned social order which includes unlavish positions in life that must be accepted rather than resented. Conversely, in chapter 20 the evocation of the two deities is arguably part of a cautionary advice against tampering with oracular verdicts in order to commit property fraud, because their actions are set in the future and consist in shortening the life of the transgressor.

### 3.1.2.5 *Instruction of Amenemope, chapters 16 and 17*

Chapters 16 and 17 of the *Instruction of Amenemope* concern fraud not with documents, but with instruments used to assess and collect the taxes owed to the state<sup>382</sup>:

(17.17) (*ḥw.t mh-16.t*) **Chapter 16.**

(17.18) (*m-jrj rmnj jws.w mtw=k s<sup>c</sup>d3 ḳdj.w* (17.19) *mtw=k ḥdj r3.w dbḥ.w*) Do not move the scales nor falsify the kite-weights, (17.19) nor diminish the measuring parts.

(17.20) (*m-jrj j3bj dbḥ n(.j) sh.wt* (17.21) *mtw=k ḥ3<sup>c</sup> n3(-n) pr-ḥd*) Do not prefer the field measure, (17.21) nor discard the one of the Treasury.

(17.22) (*ḥmsj p3 j<sup>c</sup>njj r-gs t3 mh3y.t* (18.1) *jw p3y=f jb m dlj (= th)*) The baboon sits beside the scales, (18.1) while his *jb*-heart is as the plummet.

(18.2) (*jt ntr mj <sup>c</sup>3 dhwtj* (18.3) *p3 jrj gmj nm r jrj=w*) Which god is like the greatness of Thoth, (18.3) the one who found these (things) to use them?

(18.4) (*m-jrj jrj n=k ḳd.w m ḥd* (18.5) *st <sup>c</sup>33 m3<sup>c</sup> n(.j)-m b3.w n(.j) ntr*) Do not use diminished kite-weights, (18.5) they are rich in troops of the wrath of god.

<sup>382</sup> That the context is tax collection is indicated by chapter 17, v. 19.7.

(18.6) (*jr ptr=k ky jw=f sh3* (18.7) *j:jrj.w=k sw3 n=f m-w3.w*) If you see another who defrauds, (18.7) give him a wide berth (lit. pass him afar).

(18.8) (*m-jrj snk.tj n tjhs.t* (18.9) *msdj šm<sup>c</sup> nfr*) Do not be greedy for bronze (?), (18.9) and hate fine linen.

(18.10) (*jw=f n-jhj swḥw m<sup>c</sup>k* (18.11) *jw=f sh3 m-b3h p3 ntr*) What will loincloth and fabric be good for, (18.11) when one defrauds before the god?

(18.12) (*jr ṣḡ.tw nbw r ktm.t* (18.13) *ḥd t3 jw=f n dhjt*) If gold is forced into fine gold, (18.13) in the morning (lit. the earth brightens) it will be lead.

(18.14) (*ḥw.t mh-17.t*) **Chapter 17.**

(18.15) (*z3w tw r ṣḡg3j wd3.t* (18.16) *r s<sup>c</sup>d3 n3y=s r3.w*) Beware of forcing the grain measure, (18.16) in order to falsify its parts.

(18.17) (*m-jrj gns n wbn nḥt* (18.18) *hr m-dy.t šwj=s{w} m ḥ.t=s*) Do not force (it) to a great overflow, (18.18) nor empty it in its interior.

(18.19) (*dj.w=k ḥ3j.y=s mj ṣ3=s{w} ṣkw* (18.20) *jw dr.t=k ḥ<sup>c</sup>3 n mt(j)*) Make it measure as much as it arrived, (18.20) and that your hand empty it with precision.

(18.21) (*m-jrj jrj n=k jp.t n t3j 2.t* (18.22) *j:jrj.w=k jrj n p3 mt(r)*) Do not make a measuring vessel that takes two, (18.22) you make (it) for the flood.

(18.23) (*jr jp.t jr.t r<sup>c</sup>* (19.1) *bw.t=s jtj*) As for the measuring vessel, it is the eye of Re, (19.1) its detestation is the thief.

(19.2) (*jr ḥ3.y jw dj=f ṣ3 sh3* (19.3) *hr db<sup>c</sup> jr.t=f r=f*) As for a grain measurer who added or subtracted, (19.3) his [= Re's] eye seals against him.

(19.4) (*m-jrj šzp šmm n(j) ḥ.wwtj* (19.5) *mtw=k m3wr ṣr(t) j:r=f th3.tw=f*) Do not receive the harvest of a peasant, (19.5) and then write a roll against him, so that he is injured.

(19.6) (*m-jrj jrj w<sup>c</sup> (j)rm p3 ḥ3.y* (19.7) *mtw=k ḥb<sup>c</sup> ts ḥnw*) Do not associate with the grain measurer, (19.7) to toy with the taxes of the Residence.

(19.8) (*ṣ3 b3.w dnw n jt* (19.9) *r ṣnh.y s.t-wr.t*) Greater is the wrath (over) the threshing floor for barley, (19.9) than (over) the oath to the Great Throne.

The term *s<sup>c</sup>d3*, 'to falsify'<sup>383</sup>, is common both to chapter 16 (v. 17.18) and to chapter 17 (v. 18.15), and connects them to the previous chapters of *Amenemope* commented in this section, with the noted exception of chapter 15. At stake is the unjust enrichment, as it is called in modern legal terminology, of scribes tasked with the assessment of taxes due by farmers to the state<sup>384</sup>. The use of specialised terms for the instruments of measurement by

<sup>383</sup> On this term see above subsection 3.1.2.4.

<sup>384</sup> The taxed produce is barley, to judge from chapter 17, v. 19.8.

the author reflects his real, or alleged position in the administration, and the occupation of the intended audience. Therefore, this is a topic about which the author may be expected to have been taken as particularly authoritative by ancient audiences.

For the most part, the transgressions condemned by the author have to do with the unauthorised modification of measurement instruments:

- Adjustment of the scales (*jws.w*) (chapter 16, v. 17.18);
- Falsification (*s<sup>c</sup>d3*) of the *kite*-weights (chapter 16, v. 17.18);
- Reduction of the measuring parts (chapter 16, v. 17.19);
- Swapping the measure of the Treasury for the measure of the field (chapter 16, vv. 17.20-17.21);
- Alterations to the grain measure (*w<sup>d</sup>3.t*) (chapter 17, v. 18.15) and falsification of its parts (v. 18.16);
- Alterations to the measuring vessel (*jp.t*) (chapter 17, vv. 18.21-18.23).

An exception is the manipulation of written records: in chapter 17, vv. 19.4-19.5, the pupil is admonished against receiving the harvest of a peasant<sup>385</sup>, while placing him on the list of debtors<sup>386</sup>, in order to keep the taxes for himself while allowing the farmer to take the blame (see also Eyre 2013, 190); in the doublet following immediately after (vv. 19.6-19.7), the pupil is counselled against colluding with the grain measurer to fool the Residence about the real value of the taxes. The use of the term *r.t*, ‘papyrus roll’, in particular, marks the return to the topic central to the three chapters discussed before (13, 15, and 20), namely fraud with documents, and demonstrates the overall unity of these chapters under the treatment of the topic of fraudulency.

In both chapters divine agents are mobilised to oppose the fraudulent activities, but divine vigilance and intervention is arguably more visible in chapter 16. In the latter, Thoth, referred to in one of his animal forms, namely the baboon, is described as sitting beside the scales (*t3 mh3.t*), and his *jb*-heart is identified with the plummet (*th*) (vv. 17.22-18.1). In a rare instance of adjectivisation of a deity in the instructions, the author rhetorically extols the power of Thoth as the creator of weighing instruments (vv. 18.2-18.3). Immediately after, the author alerts that the use of falsified kite-weights will trigger divine wrath (*b3.w*)

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<sup>385</sup> Or a representative of the farmers, as suggested by Laisney (2007, 174).

<sup>386</sup> As suggested by Vernus (2010a, 430n149) and Laisney (2007, 175).

(vv. 18.4-18.5). Towards the end of the chapter the author rhetorically emphasises the pointlessness of enriching oneself unjustly before the god (*p3 ntr*) (18.10-18.11).

In chapter 17 the divine agent mobilised is Re instead of Thoth, and no mention to (*p3*) *ntr* is made. The eye of the solar god is identified with the measuring vessel (*jp.t*), and its detestation is said to be the thief (*jtj*) (vv. 18.23-19.1). On the following verses (19.2-19.3) the audience is warned that the eye of Re will seal (*db3*) against the fraudulent grain measurer. In the end of the chapter (vv. 19.8-19.9) the wrath (*b3.w*) may or may not be of divine nature.

The identification of the *jb*-heart of Thoth with the plummet and of the eye of Re with the measuring vessel will be discussed further below with the previous attestation in chapter 15 of the identification of the finger of the scribe with the nose of the ibis (= Thoth).

#### 3.1.2.5.1 *Instruction of Amenemope, chapter 16*

In chapter 16 the description of Thoth as sitting beside the scales, and the identification of his *jb*-heart with the plummet have been interpreted in two ways: 1) as a reference to the vignette of the *Book of the Dead* where Thoth is pictured either as an ibis or as a baboon presiding over the weighing of the deceased's heart (Drioton 1957, 273; Grumach 1972, 117-18; Laisney 2007, 169-70; Sousa 2006, 66); 2) as a reference to that god's control of the activities of the scribe (Lange 1925, 89; Vernus 2010a, 429). In what concerns discourse, it is important to establish which of the two interpretations fits the passage better, as 'a critical (and frequently overlooked) feature of the Egyptian instructions is the paucity of references to the afterlife' (Adams 2008, 51).

Although the judgement of the dead may be taken to play a prominent role in the *Book of the Dead*, as argued by Hornung (1999, 17), several versions 'may omit the "judgment scene" altogether' (Lesko 2001, 195; see also Quirke 2001, 212). But in the versions that do include a vignette concerning the judgement scene, Thoth, in the role of recorder of the judgement's verdict, is featured in three ways: 1) as an ibis-headed scribe<sup>387</sup>,

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<sup>387</sup> See an example in Hornung (1999, 20).

2) as a baboon sitting before the scales<sup>388</sup>, and 3) as an effigy with the shape of a baboon on top of the scales<sup>389</sup>.

Especially the second way of depicting Thoth in the psychostasy scene invites the interpretation of the passage from *Amenemope* under consideration as a reflection of that scene. For Laisney (2007, 170) it is also decisive that the *jb*-heart of Thoth is identified with the plummet (*th*), because the plummet (*th*) of the scales used in the judgement of the dead may have the form of an *jb*-heart<sup>390</sup>. But the main argument of Laisney (169-70) to sustain his claim that the whole of chapter 16 makes an allusion to chapter 125 of the *Book of the Dead* is that the scales at the side of which Thoth sits in chapter 16 is the same one used in chapter 125<sup>391</sup>.

There are two attestations of scales in chapter 16 of *Amenemope*, and each time with a different term, first *jws.w* (v. 17.18) and then *mḥ3.t* (v. 17.22). In the copy of the *Book of the Dead* of Nu, P. London BM EA 10477, after claiming in the ‘negative confession’ in chapter 125 that he did not reduce the area of the fields (*3ḥ.wt*)<sup>392</sup>, the deceased claims on v. 13 that he did not tamper with the *jws.w*-scales, and states immediately after on the same verse that he did not take away (*nḥm*) anything from the plummet (*th*) of the *mḥ3.t*-scales (Backes 2014). The *jws.w*-scales are attested one more time on vv. 76-77 where the deceased comes to examine (*smtr*) Ma’at and fine-tune the scales (*rdj.t jws.w r ḥḥ.w=f*) (Backes 2014). The *jws.w*- and *mḥ3.t*-scales are not mentioned again in chapter 125.

Sousa (2006, 66) considers the passage from *Amenemope* (vv. 17.18-18.3) as an extension of the *Tun-Ergehen-Zusammenhang* into the afterlife, in that the falsified weights used in life by the fraudulent will be used against him by the god in the afterlife judgement: ‘o escriba não escapava ao juízo do deus, que tudo via e que, no dia do julgamento, usaria na psicostasia os mesmos pesos e as mesmas medidas falseadas pelo próprio escriba. Era

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<sup>388</sup> A vignette featuring this scene is included in the *Book of the Dead* of Nebseny, P. London BM 9900, accompanying chapter 30 (Quirke 2001, 213). See a representation in Sales (1999, 186).

<sup>389</sup> This representation of Thoth could be combined with the representation of the god in the form of ibis-headed scribe (Hart 2005, 158). For an example from the *Book of the Dead* of Anhai, P. BM EA 10472.5, see Hart (2005, 159).

<sup>390</sup> See again the example from the *Book of the Dead* of Anhai, P. BM EA 10472.5, in Hart (2005, 90).

<sup>391</sup> This is the case in inscription 81 of the biography of Petosiris from the end of the Late Period: *dḥw.tj m ḥn ḥr mḥ3.t r ḥsb z(j) nb m jr.t.n=f ḥr tp t3*, ‘Thoth as baboon is upon the scales to reckon each man for what he did on earth’ (Lichtheim 1992, 96-97; Sales 2012, 62). But this kind of explicit reference to the afterlife judgement is not attested in *Amenemope*.

<sup>392</sup> Compare with chapter 6, v. 7.12 (see no. 41).

uma interessante reflexão acerca da retribuição divina.’ While this is an interesting and possible interpretation, it is also possible to interpret this passage as having effects in the earthly realm.

This is suggested by the very chapter 125 of the *Book of the Dead*, since the deceased asserts in the ‘negative confession’ that he did not tamper with the *jws.w*-scales nor with the *mh3.t*-scales in life. The main concern of the instructions is not what happens after death, but what one does during one’s life. Therefore, the fields of interest of the instructions and of the ‘negative confession’ overlap<sup>393</sup>. Shirun-Grumach (1991, 240nXVII.20-a)) compares v. 17.20, in which Thoth sits beside the *mh3.t*-scales, with v. 17.9 from chapter 15, in which Thoth sits in the House of the Eight. In the latter passage Thoth is quick to react, instead of deferring the punishment to the afterlife (vv. 17.11-17.12). The image of Thoth sitting beside the *mh3.t*-scales, and of his *jb*-heart being identified with the plummet, also finds parallels in the metaphorical identification of his ibis-nose with the finger of the scribe in the previous chapter (vv. 17.7-17.8), and in the equally metaphorical association between the eye of Re and the measuring vessel in the following chapter (v. 18.23). Those two images are also indicative of panoptic-like vigilance by the deities, but do not hint at an extension of retribution into the afterlife.

As a rule, punishments in *Amenemope* are suffered in life (a case in point is chapter 6, vv. 8.6-8.8), although chapter 25, vv. 24.19-24.20, may be one of the rare instances where retribution is extended into the afterlife. The reference to the multitude of troops of the wrath of god mentioned on v. 18.5 further indicates the retribution the author refers to takes place in the earthly realm and not in the afterlife, because the effects of afflictions<sup>394</sup> caused by the *b3.w* of a god are always felt during life in the extant texts. A question that may be asked is whether the punishments promised in the instructions would be carried on into the afterlife or whether transgressions could be expiated in life. In the personal piety literature offenses to deities can be expiated, and reconciliation is possible. But the horizon of the instructions is probably broader, and the question is therefore best left open.

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<sup>393</sup> Interestingly, the denial of having tampered with weights and measures is not part of the self-presentation of officials in their tomb biographies (Lichtheim 1992, 133).

<sup>394</sup> To use a term adopted by John Baines (1987, 83 with n. 19).

From the arguments presented above, it will be assumed here that chapter 16 refers to an earthly context and not to the afterlife judgement<sup>395</sup>. The couplet following immediately after praises the greatness of Thoth: ‘(18.2) *jt ntr mj ʕ dhwtj* (18.3) *pʕ jrj gmj nn r jrj=w*, Which god is like the greatness of Thoth, (18.3) the one who found these (things) to use them?’ This is the sole attestation of this god’s name in *Amenemope* (Laisney 2007, 167), and it is also one of the rare instances of adjectivisation of a god in the instructions. The construction *jt ntr mj ʕ dhwtj* is ‘inusuelle en égyptien’ (Drioton 1957, 274). But in other texts<sup>396</sup> the adjective ʕ could be combined with *ntr* to form *ntr ʕ*, ‘great god’<sup>397</sup>, an epithet that could qualify a specific god<sup>398</sup>, including Thoth<sup>399</sup>, or be used alone (Baines 1983, 15). The epithet *ntr ʕ* was more commonly used, but the isolated ʕ could also be used to qualify a god, although that is ‘relatively unusual’<sup>400</sup> (1983, 16).

To qualify Thoth as great is therefore unsurprising, but it is unique in the *Instruction of Amenemope*. Neither the other named gods<sup>401</sup> nor (*pʕ*) *ntr* are adjectivised in this instruction. Hierarchies of gods are also not common in the instructions, but an exception in *Amenemope* is the use of the epithet *nb r dr*, ‘Lord of All’ (chapter 6, v. 8.14 (see no. 41), chapter 18, v. 20.6 (see no. 49)). The other exception is the passage under consideration (v. 18.2). The rhetorical question ‘which god is like the greatness of Thoth’ evokes the hierarchical distinction between major and minor deities<sup>402</sup> and places Thoth at the top of the hierarchy. The author is not addressing the god, as in a prayer or hymn, but a human audience, and this rhetorical question intervenes between the advertisement of Thoth’s

<sup>395</sup> The reference to the *jws.w*- and the *mh3.t*-scales, in an earthly context, notwithstanding their use in metaphors for the proper working of justice, is also made in the *Eloquent Peasant*, P. Berlin P 3023 + P. Amherst I (= B1), vv. 126-28, 178-82, 189-99, 339-44, 353-55, P. Berlin P 3025 + P. Amherst II (= B2), vv. 92-94.

<sup>396</sup> See references in Hornung (1982, 187).

<sup>397</sup> Hornung (1982, 186) prefers to translate ʕ as ‘greatest’ and not as ‘great’, because in Egyptian there was no distinction between the adjective and the superlative form and because that would have been the sense in many of its attestations. In contrast, Baines (1983, 13-16, 22-23) sees ‘great’ and ‘greatest’ as forming a spectrum and takes *ntr ʕ* to refer to a ‘category of “major gods”’ (18). On the subject see also Baines (2000, 37-39).

<sup>398</sup> See Hornung (1982, 186-87).

<sup>399</sup> See Hornung (1982, 187 with n. 161).

<sup>400</sup> A special use of the adjective ʕ is attested uniquely for Thoth from the Ptolemaic Period (more specifically 165 BC (Hornung 1982, 186n156; Baines 1983, 16)), namely *pʕ ʕ ʕ ʕ*, ‘thrice great’ (Hornung 1982, 186 with n. 156; Baines 1983, 16; Sales 1999, 181), among other variations (on which see Baines (1983, 16)).

<sup>401</sup> See a list of attestations in Laisney (2007, 248).

<sup>402</sup> On this distinction see Baines (2000, 38-39).

vigilance and the metaphorical description of the wrath of god (*b3.w n(.j) ntr*) (v. 18.5). Therefore, this passage is not a piece of speculative theology, but an indirect way of asserting the power relation between the god and the transgressor: by stating that Thoth is superior to the other gods, the author makes clear that the transgressor is in no position to elude divine punishment. Laisney (2007, 170) makes the same interpretation, but with a different conclusion: ‘puisque Thot est si grand, on ne peut pas espérer lui échapper lors du jugement des morts’. As it was argued, it is assumed here that this passage refers to the god’s efficiency in keeping watch of scribal practices<sup>403</sup> and in punishing scribes in the earthly realm and not in the afterlife.

On vv. 17.22-18.3 it is advertised that Thoth is watchful of frauds committed against the state through the illegal modification of reference weights, and that this god is efficient in that task. The author does not detail the consequences that will befall the scribe if he chooses to ignore the advice given and to transgress, but vv. 18.4-18.5 allude to those consequences: (18.4) *m-jrj jrj n=k kd.w m hd* (18.5) *st ʕš3 mšʕ n(.j)-m b3.w n(.j) ntr* ‘Do not use diminished *kite*-weights, (18.5) they are rich in troops of the wrath of god’. Laisney (2007, 170) suggests that this passage refers to the ‘multitude des châtiments divins’<sup>404</sup>. In his turn, Vernus (2010a, 429n143) suggests this may be a reference to the demons (*génies émissaires*) sent by the gods to punish humans.

Instances where demons carry out a god’s punishment are well documented<sup>405</sup>, especially, but not only<sup>406</sup>, in the Late and Ptolemaic Periods (Lucarelli 2011, 109-10). In those cases, the gangs of demons are named: for instance, *šm3.yw*, *wpw.tyw*, or *h3.tjw* (Lucarelli 2017, 58). They also tend to be ascribed to the control of a specific deity (Schipper 2007, 8; Lucarelli 2011, 122). When acting under the control of a deity, they are frequently agents of divine punishment (Lucarelli 2010, 3; 2017, 56, 58, 60). That punishment may be manifested in the form of physical or mental and neurological illnesses (Lucarelli 2010, 3; 2017, 55). In fact, the latter tends to be more readily ascribed to the

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<sup>403</sup> This is further emphasized by v. 18.3 where it is asserted that Thoth has mastery over the instruments he keeps watch of.

<sup>404</sup> In this sense, v. 18.5 is perhaps comparable to the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, v. 20.15 (see no. 31).

<sup>405</sup> Borghouts (1980, 18 with n. 76) gives the example of a text inscribed on a statue of Taweret (Louvre E 25479) dating from the Twenty-second dynasty. See further references in Vernus (2010a, 429n143) and in Lucarelli (2011, 115n28, 121-23).

<sup>406</sup> See examples from the Old, Middle, and New Kingdoms in Schipper (2007, 8-9).



intervention of demons, probably because their origin is not obvious<sup>407</sup> (see Lucarelli 2010, 3; 2017, 55-56). Still under the control of a god, wandering demons<sup>408</sup> may exert their negative influence both on earth and on the netherworld, since the same gangs of demons may at times be mentioned in magical texts for daily life and for the afterlife<sup>409</sup> (Lucarelli 2017, 57-58).

Gangs of disease-demons acting under the command of a god are featured above all in magical texts for the living and for the dead, and in ritual temple texts (Lucarelli 2011, 115; 2017, 59-60). Although the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 21.20-22.3, does have a whole passage dedicated to an *akh*<sup>410</sup>, groups of demons are not commonly featured in the instructions. An exception is to be found on New Kingdom copies of the *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu*<sup>411</sup>. Following Vernus, another exception may be the passage under consideration.

The expression *mšꜥ n(.j)-m b3.w n(.j) ntr* in chapter 16, v. 18.5, does show similarities with the way wandering demons are mobilised in magical and ritual texts: it mentions a group of beings, as opposed to an individual entity; that group is mentioned in the context of divine punishment; and it is under the control of a god inasmuch as the troops (*mšꜥ*) belong to the wrath of a god<sup>412</sup>. The involvement of the *b3.w n(.j) ntr* further suggests the troops are disease-demons, since they often cause mental afflictions and the

<sup>407</sup> On extra-human beings as representations of mental mechanisms see Winkelman (2010, 204-206). In societies where illness, particularly mental and neurological disorders that lead to unusual or unaccepted behaviour, is attributed to extra-human agents, this attribution to a cause external to the person may alleviate feelings of guilt and allocate responsibility for the person's behaviour (Winkelman 2010, 207, 221-22). The Egyptian material points towards an opposite, but complementary facet, namely the moral responsabilisation of the person for coming under the influence of extra-human agents.

<sup>408</sup> On the epistemological distinction between 'wandering/messenger' and 'stationary/guardian' demons see Lucarelli (2010, 3-5; 2017, 55).

<sup>409</sup> Lucarelli (2017, 57) cites chapter 163 of the *Book of the Dead* to demonstrate that punishments inflicted by demons for wrongs committed on earth could be extended into the afterlife.

<sup>410</sup> Possibly a deceased relative or another spirit (the text advises the audience to beware of the *akh*'s taboo, which may refer either to a transgression against a familiar *akh*, or to a transgression common to all *akh*-spirits) (see also Assmann 2005, 15). Quack (1994, 182 with references) suggests this *akh* is a demon, while Lucarelli (2010, 2) argues that *akh*-spirits are generally to be distinguished from demons.

<sup>411</sup> The version of v. 5.14 recorded on the Middle Kingdom S. Cairo CG 20538 reads: *jw sβ=f r hr(.j) šm3.w* 'The one whom he hates will be in distress' (see no. 18). But O. Ashmolean 1938.912 has: *{ } <jw> sd3.w=f r hr.j šm3.yw=f \**, 'the one he makes tremble will be under his *šm3.yw*-demons' (see no. 18.1). The same passage may also be reproduced in P. Louvre E 4864 recto (see Dils 2014).

<sup>412</sup> An important contrast, however, is that the effect of disease-demons may be neutralised by magical practices and by reconciliation with the offended deity through the mediation of a ritual specialist (Lucarelli 2017, 60), a possibility that is not presented in *Amenemope*. This absence is hardly surprising, as it follows the pattern, already commented on apropos personal piety, of omitting the possibility of forgiveness by and reconciliation with the deity.

divine *b3.w* is also associated with ‘*Psychoterror*’ (Fischer-Elfert 2005, 124). That psychological terror, relating especially to a sense of guilt and fear of being caught and punished<sup>413</sup>, fits the context of the passage rather well.

The divine *b3.w* may also be mobilised in chapter 17: ‘(19.8) (*3 b3.w dnw n jt* (19.9) *r 5nh.y s.t-wr.t*) Greater is the wrath (over) the threshing floor for barley, (19.9) than (over) the oath to the Great Throne’ (see no. 48). Laisney (2007, 176) sees the *b3.w* in this passage as ‘la puissance divine qui châtie les coupables’. That may well be the case, since Re opposes the fraudulent with his eye in this chapter (vv. 19.2-19.3). In his turn, Borghouts (1982, 12) suggests the text may refer either to Nepri or Renenutet. However, besides gods the king was also possessor of *b3.w* (Borghouts 1982, 31-32). That the king rather than a god may be behind the *b3.w* mentioned is further suggested by the reference to the Residence on the previous verse (v. 19.7) and to the Great Throne which may be a sanctuary or the royal palace (Laisney 2007, 174). Since a divine agent is not clearly identified, this issue will be pursued no further.

### 3.1.2.5.2 *Instruction of Amenemope, chapter 17*

In chapter 17 the transgression of tampering with the grain measure (*wd3.t*) and with the measuring vessel (*jp.t*) (vv. 18.15-18.21) will cause the scribe to become *bw.t* to the eye of Re (vv. 18.23-19.1), and immediately after it, it is stated that the eye of Re will seal against the fraudulent grain measurer (vv. 19.2-19.3).

On v. 19.3 *db*<sup>414</sup>, ‘to seal’, is used. On v. 19.21 in the following chapter (see no. 49), a homophonic word, *db*<sup>415</sup>, ‘finger’ is used. Not only the two words are related, but, in both passages, the context is very similar: on v. 19.3 the eye of Re<sup>416</sup> seals (*db*<sup>416</sup>) against the

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<sup>413</sup> See Teeter (2011, 112-13) and Borghouts (1994, 129).

<sup>414</sup> Lemma no. 183460 in the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae*.

<sup>415</sup> Lemma no. 183430 in the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae*.

<sup>416</sup> The eye of Re represents the god’s agency on earth (Pinch 2002, 128), and it is well known from the *New Kingdom Book of the Heavenly Cow* (on which see Assmann 2001, 113-16). In terms of literary formulation, the eye of the solar god can take different forms (see Pinch 2002, 129), and on v. 19.3 it takes an anthropomorphised form. In terms of divine agency in the context of wisdom literature, it seems doubtful that there would be a significant difference between the anthropomorphism of the god himself and of one of his body parts. Couroyer (1988, 82-84) wonders whether the author mistook the eye of Horus (restored by Thoth) for the eye of Re, given the similarity of the passage with chapter 15, v. 17.7, where the beak of the sacred animal of Thoth is identified with the finger of the scribe, but the text appears to make sense as it is.

fraudulent, and on v. 19.21 wrongdoing is sealed (*htm*) with the finger (*db<sup>c</sup>*) of god. Both passages are best understood together, and their proximity would no doubt have prompted ancient audiences to see a relation between them as well (see also Shirun-Grumach 1979, 341-42). In particular, v. 19.21 makes this association clear by stating that the finger of the solar god is involved in the sealing.

In a study about the ‘finger of God’ in Exodus 8:15, Bernard Couroyer (1956) probes Egyptian sources for influences on the biblical text and concludes that, in the Egyptian culture, there is not an association between the finger of a god and power (494). Perhaps Couroyer is right in saying that in Egypt ‘il n’y a pas là trace d’une acception abstraite de doigt au sens de puissance absolue’ (488), but the god’s finger is nonetheless involved in a power relation between deity and man. This is clear in the *Instruction of Amenemope* from which he mentions chapter 18, v. 19.21, but not chapter 17, v. 19.3, which can be considered together as argued above. However, Couroyer does quote two parallel passages from Late-Egyptian Miscellanies where Amun(-Re) may judge the earth with his finger(s)<sup>417</sup>. To judge (*wḏ<sup>c</sup>*, lit. to separate) humanity is also the duty of the king in the text known as *The King as Sun Priest*<sup>418</sup>, and this discursive position necessarily involves a power relation in which the judge has power over the judged.

A comparison between the passages from *Amenemope* and the two passages from the Late-Egyptian Miscellanies reinforce the idea of formalising an accusation or moving a process against someone. Given the assumed efficiency of solar gods in the realm of earthly justice during the late New Kingdom<sup>419</sup>, both passages inform the audience that the transgressor will not escape divine retribution, even if it is articulated with the earthly judicial system as suggested by Couroyer (1988, 83-84).

The identification of the measuring vessel (*jp.t*) with the eye of Re in chapter 17, v. 18.23 finds parallels in the identification of the nose of the ibis (= Thoth) with the finger of the scribe in chapter 15, v. 17.7, and in the correspondence between the plummet of the

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<sup>417</sup> In a hymn in P. Anastasi II = P. BM EA 10243 recto, v. 6.6, it is said that: *wpj jmn-r<sup>c</sup> p3 t3 m db<sup>c</sup>=f\**, ‘Amun judges the earth with his finger’ (Dils 2014; Gardiner 1937, 16 l. 5). And in a virtually identical passage in P. Bologna 1094 = KS 3162 recto, vv. 2.5-2.6, one reads: *wpj j[mn p3] t3 <m> db<sup>c</sup>.w=fj*, ‘A[mun] judges [the] earth <with> his fingers’ (Dils 2014; Gardiner 1937, 2 ll. 14-15). Not all authors interpret *wpj* in both passages in the sense of passing judgement on people (Junge 2005, 122; Dils 2014 with references).

<sup>418</sup> See Assmann (1970, 19; 1999a, 98).

<sup>419</sup> See, for instance, Vernus (2003b, 139-40).

scales and the *jb*-heart of the baboon (= Thoth) in chapter 16, v. 18.1. These three attestations of identifications of a tool or a part of the human body with a part of a god's body take place in the context of fraudulency. But that is not the sole context that allows for this kind of correspondence in *Amenemope*<sup>420</sup>, although one may note that these attestations form a streak as they range continuously from chapter 15 to chapter 18<sup>421</sup>. The wording of the passages in chapters 15 and 17 is identical, while in chapter 16 there is a slight variation:

- Chapter 15: '(17.7) (*jr šrj(.t) n(.jt) h3b db<sup>c</sup> n(.j) zh3.w*), As for the nose of the ibis (= Thoth), it is the finger of the scribe' (see no. 46);
- Chapter 17: '(18.23) *jr jp.t jr.t r<sup>c</sup>*', As for the measuring vessel, it is the eye of Re' (see no. 48);
- Chapter 16: '(17.22) (*hmsj p3 j<sup>c</sup>njj r-gs t3 mh3y.t* (18.1) *jw p3y=f jb m dhj (= th)*), The baboon sits beside the scales, (18.1) while his *jb*-heart is as the plummet' (see no. 47).

In chapters 15 and 17 a topicalised main sentence with *jr* followed by a nominal sentence<sup>422</sup> is used<sup>423</sup>, whereas in chapter 16, a subordinate sentence beginning with the particle *jw* followed by an adverbial sentence of identification<sup>424</sup> is used. According to Di Biase-Dyson (2017, 3), while the first type of construction is a 'nominal metaphor' of the kind 'A is B metaphors', the second type of construction "'marked" with the *m* of identification form[s] a category somewhere between simile and metaphor<sup>425</sup>.' Although

<sup>420</sup> In chapter 18, in the context of a reflection about the differences between human and divine agencies and about how they may interact to benefit humans, it is said: (20.5) (*jr ns {.t} n(.j) r(m)l hm(w) n(.j) jm(w)* (20.6) *nb-r-dr p3y=f jr.j-h3.t*) 'A man's tongue is the rudder of a boat, (20.6) the Lord of All is its pilot'. Here, the Lord of All is metaphorically identified with the human heart. And in chapter 24, in the context of the reproach of indiscretion from the pupil because of the negative effects it has on the *h3-tj*-heart, it is stated that: '(24.4) (*jr h3.tj n(.jt) r(m)l fnd n(.j) ntr* (24.5) *z3w tw r mkh3=f*) As for the *h3.tj*-heart of man, it is the nose of god' (see no. 53).

<sup>421</sup> On the latter see previous note.

<sup>422</sup> On which see Allen (2010b, 73, 231) and Junge (2005, 253-54).

<sup>423</sup> A difference between them is that, in chapter 15, v. 17.7, the part of the body of the god comes first, and in chapter 17, v. 18.23, it comes second.

<sup>424</sup> See Allen (2010b, 116-17) and Junge (2005, 164).

<sup>425</sup> Camilla Di Biase-Dyson makes this comment about the passage from chapter 16, v. 18.1. On the author's theoretical assumptions see Di Biase-Dyson (2017, 1-2).

there is arguably a difference between the two types of sentences<sup>426</sup>, there seems to be no variation in the sense of these three attestations<sup>427</sup>.

If the three attestations under consideration may be interpreted as metaphors<sup>428</sup>, one possible sense of those metaphors is the one proposed by Laisney (2007, 164, 175) for chapter 15, vv. 17.7-17.8, and chapter 17, vv. 18.23-19.1, namely that to misuse one's finger and to falsify the measuring vessel is a sacrilege against Thoth and Re respectively. Drawing from the perspectives of anthropology and cognitive linguistics on metaphors<sup>429</sup>, one may suggest that the finger of the scribe, the plummet of the scales, and the measuring vessel are brought to the same level of gravity of gods. The responsibility when handling those items is the same as when dealing with a deity.

From the point of view of cognitive linguistics there are metaphors that are found across cultures and metaphors that are culture-specific<sup>430</sup> (Di Biase-Dyson 2017, 2). To increase the importance of something or someone by likening it to something or someone of recognised weight is probably universal<sup>431</sup>, but it is probable that the three attestations under consideration imply more than that. In particular, they may not be only metaphors, but may also draw from the discourse of mortuary rituals and rites of affliction<sup>432</sup>.

The equation of the finger of the scribe, the plummet of the scales, and the measuring vessels with parts of the body of Thoth and Re has parallels in the ancient Egyptian ritual discourse, more specifically in the *Gliedervergottung* or divinisation of

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<sup>426</sup> 'The nominal sentence is used when the identity is thought of as natural or unchangeable, and the adverbial sentence with *m* is used when the identification is seen as acquired or temporary' (Allen 2010b, 117).

<sup>427</sup> While it could be argued that it would be natural that the finger of the scribe would be identified with a part of the body of one of Thoth's sacred animals, there seems to be no reason why that principle would also apply to the measuring vessel and the eye of Re but not to the plummet of the scales and the *jb*-heart of another sacred animal of Thoth.

<sup>428</sup> From an anthropological perspective, 'a metaphor, we can say, is a comparison that depends on both a relationship of similarity and one of difference between the things compared. The metaphor establishes not the *identity* of the two entities, *x* and *y*, connected by the phrase "*x* is a *y*", but their *likeness*' (Weiner 1994, 597, italics in the original). From the perspective of cognitive linguistics, 'metaphor ... is a conceptual mechanism, which provides structure to abstract domains such as LOVE or ANGER. As linguistic structure reflects conceptual structure, linguistic metaphorical expressions can become a window into the conceptual structure of a linguistic community' (Nyord 2015, 2).

<sup>429</sup> See previous note.

<sup>430</sup> An example of a universal metaphor is LIFE IS A JOURNEY (on which see Di Biase-Dyson 2016, 46). Conversely, the conceptualisation of one's level of vigour and ability to perform as a battery that needs to be recharged periodically may be spatially universal but is temporally recent since it is tied to industrialisation.

<sup>431</sup> A modern example is the recommendation to a friend of a service one uses customarily, so that the friend will benefit from better quality of service as if she were the person making the recommendation.

<sup>432</sup> On which see Stevens (2011, 732-34, 736-37).

body parts in mortuary rituals<sup>433</sup>, in the identification of body parts with gods in healing rituals<sup>434</sup>, and in the identification of patients or otherwise vulnerable individuals with specific gods<sup>435</sup>, and it seems plausible that ancient audiences were aware of this similarity.

To an extent, these three kinds of identifications attested in the ritual discourse are metaphorical, but they are also ritual practices that intend to produce real effects by placing someone under the protection of deities. It is possible that the author of *Amenemope* drew from this ritual tradition: thus, the finger of the scribe, the plummet of the scales, and the measuring vessel are placed under the protection of Thoth and Re. It is not only that the gods will be offended by their misuse, but that it is their responsibility to protect them<sup>436</sup>. A question one may leave open is whether the author of *Amenemope* reflected widely held convictions or creatively drew from the discourse of ritual performances – assuming, of course, this was his source of inspiration –, perhaps to increase the impact of the admonitions in the audiences.

### 3.1.2.6 Summary and concluding remarks

Table no. 2. Summary of transgressions and respective divine punishments concerning fraudulency and illegal acquisition of wealth.

Text	Transgressions	Punishments	Divine agents	Observations
<i>Instruction of Ptahhotep</i> , P. Prisse, maxim	• Illegal acquisition of wealth from	• Lacking sustenance and giving one's	• God ( <i>ntr</i> ) (vv. D100)	• The punishment, carried out by

<sup>433</sup> The *Gliedervergottung* may be seen as relating to the reconstitution of the body of the deceased (Assmann 2005, 35-36) or as ‘the manifestation of the deceased in the sky and his acceptance in the divine realm’ (Nyord 2009a, 518).

<sup>434</sup> The identification of body parts with deities aims at protecting those parts of the body (Pinch 2006, 142-43; see also Ritner 2001b, 329).

<sup>435</sup> The purpose of identifying the vulnerable person with a certain god is to ensure a positive resolution of that person’s ailment or predicament by having the person benefitting from the mythical history, and precedent of that god – Horus frequently occupies this position because, as a child, he was vulnerable to several dangers like animal bites (see Pinch 2006, 140; see also Ritner 2001a, 325).

<sup>436</sup> Probably some form of punishment would be implied in that protection. In the case of the finger of the scribe, it probably was not so much that it was protected by Thoth, but that the god was attentive and would react in the event of its misuse, as indicated on vv. 17.11-17.14: ‘(17.11) (*jr jw=f nw r p3 sh3 m db<sup>c</sup>=f*) (17.12) *sw t3j drp=f n p3 mt(r)*) If he glimpses at the one who defrauds with his finger, (17.12) he seizes his food through the flood. / (17.13) (*jr zh3.w jw=f sh3 m db<sup>c</sup>=f*) (17.14) *nn mtn.tw z3=f*) As for a scribe who defrauds with his finger, (17.14) his son will not be enrolled’ (see no. 46). That these two couplets expand on vv. 17.7-17.8 is indicated by the use of the term *db<sup>c</sup>*, ‘finger’.

6 (see no. 4)	private individuals (vv. D101, D103-D111).	property to another (vv. D102 and D112).	and D116).	earthly authorities, is sanctioned and instigated by god (v. D100).
<i>Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu</i> , P. Louvre E 4864 recto, section 12 ('long version') (see no. 19)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tax collection fraud (v. 12.1).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confiscation of property and disownment of offspring (vv. 12.3-12.4).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• God (<i>ntr</i>) (v. 12.2).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The punishment is sanctioned but not directly executed by god.</li> </ul>
<i>Instruction of Amenemope</i> , P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 6 (see no. 41)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Displacement of boundary markers (vv. 7.12-7.13, 8.9).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blindness? (v. 8.4).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possibly Thoth.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If this is a divine punishment, it may be related to vv. 7.18-7.19 (see below).</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being fetched by a terror (<i>hry(.t)</i>) (v. 8.10).</li> <li>• Being subjected to the wrath (<i>b3.w</i>) of the Lord who divided the boundaries of the fields (vv. 8.11-8.12).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possibly Thoth.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The terror and the wrath of the Lord are arguably related.</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possibly facial mutilation (v. 8.13).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lord of All (possibly a solar deity) (v. 8.14).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The punishment is not carried out but is sanctioned by the Lord of All.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Swearing false oaths (v. 7.18).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being lassoed by the wrath (<i>b3.w</i>) of the Moon (= Thoth) (v. 7.19).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moon (= Thoth) (v. 7.19).</li> </ul>	
<i>Instruction of Amenemope</i> , P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defrauding a man by falsifying a document (v. 15.20).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not specified.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• God (<i>p3 ntr</i>) (v. 15.21).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To defraud a man is a detestation (<i>bw.t</i>) of the</li> </ul>

13 (see no. 45)				god, which probably entails the punishment of the fraudulent.
<i>Instruction of Amenemope</i> , P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 15 (see no. 46)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Abuse of office through falsification of documents (vv. 17.6-17.8, 17.11, 17.13).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deprivation of nourishment (v. 17.12).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Baboon (= Thoth) (vv. 17.9-17.12)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This type of punishment is also reserved for transgressors in legal decrees concerning other transgressions.</li> </ul>
<i>Instruction of Amenemope</i> , P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 20 (see no. 50)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Giving an unfair trial (vv. 20.21-20.22).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Receiving an unfair trial (vv. 21.5-21.6).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>God (<i>ntr</i>) (v. 21.5).</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Falsification of oracular verdicts to illegally acquire property (vv. 21.13-21.14, 21.17, 21.19).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anticipation of the preassigned time of death (vv. 21.16, 21.20).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shay and Renenet (v. 21.16).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The anticipation of the time of death is materialised by the execution of the fraudulent scribe (v. 21.20).</li> </ul>
<i>Instruction of Amenemope</i> , P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 16 (see no. 47)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unauthorised modification of weighing and measuring instruments used in the assessment of taxes (vv. 17.18-17.19, 18.10).</li> <li>Not using the official measure (vv. 17.20-17.21).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Being afflicted by the troops of the wrath (<i>b3.w</i>) of god (v. 18.5).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>God (<i>ntr</i>) (v. 18.5).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The troops of the wrath (<i>b3.w</i>) of god are probably disease-demons under the control of god.</li> </ul>
<i>Instruction of Amenemope</i> , P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 17 (see no. 48)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tampering with the grain measure (<i>wd3.t</i>) and with the measuring vessel (<i>jp.t</i>) (vv.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Possibly, the formalization of an accusation against the fraudulent grain measurer with</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eye of Re (vv. 18.23, 19.3).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The detestation (<i>bw.t</i>) of the Eye of Re is the thief (v. 19.1).</li> </ul>



	18.15-18.21, 19.2).	the sanction of Re (vv. 19.2- 19.3).		
		• Incurring in wrath ( <i>b3.w</i> ) (v. 19.8).	• Re? The king?	

It emerges from the selection of passages for this category, based on the attestation of divine punishment concerning fraudulent activities and illegal acquisition of wealth, that this topic is much less represented in Middle Kingdom instructions than in the significantly later *Instruction of Amenemope*. There are also differences in the detail of the transgressions and in the mobilisation of divine punishment.

The *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, maxim 6, is not very specific about the transgression reproached, only that it involves living off robbing others, who are not specified, but could be peasants or lower-ranked officials. In this maxim *ntr* will oppose the transgression and it is his order that comes to pass, as opposed to the wrongdoer's schemes. A different setting is found in the *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu*, P. Louvre E 4864 recto, section 12 ('long version'). Here the transgression is specified as tax collection fraud and earthly punishments to it are listed. But *ntr* does not emerge as a punishing agency – although it is implicit that he sanctions the punishments by approving of law-abiding conduct – and plays a minor role in this passage when compared with the other passages selected for this category. Perhaps this indicates a greater sense of reliability on human institutions.

If the topic of fraudulency and illegal acquisition of wealth is not expressive in Middle Kingdom instructions, the situation changes drastically by the late New Kingdom/early Third Intermediate Period with the *Instruction of Amenemope*. The author of this text addresses four specific types of transgressions relating to the topic at hand over six chapters:

1. Displacement of boundary markers in order to appropriate portions of another's fields (chapter 6);
2. Falsification of documents in order to illegally acquire the possessions of private individuals (chapters 13, 15, and 20);

3. Adulteration of weighing and measuring instruments used in tax assessment and collection in order to keep for oneself a part of what is owed to the state;

4. Accepting a bribe from someone powerful to favour him over a weaker contender in court (chapter 20).

As in *Ptahhotep*, maxim 6, in *Amenemope* divine punishments also overlap, to an extent, with existing legal punishments, which may indicate that human institutions were believed to work if a divine entity used it to materialise her punishment. In the last two chapters of *Amenemope* discussed above, 16 and 17, repercussions are almost entirely left to divine agents, a feature which, besides indicating the gravity of the transgressions, suggests the same kind of mistrust towards judicial institutions that was common in the Ramesside Period (see Vernus 2003b, 136-38). And the fact that chapters 15, 16, and 17 use the rare device in the instructions' discourse of associating the finger of the scribe as well as measuring and weighing tools with parts of the body of Thoth and Re in order to signal their protection by these deities, as well as their vigilance of the official's activities, is certainly a further sign of how easy it was for officials to commit fraud and get away with it.

The discrepancy between the explicit presence of this topic in Middle Kingdom instructions and in the *Instruction of Amenemope*<sup>437</sup> may have to do with the high levels of corruption in the late New Kingdom. But the fact that a Middle Kingdom composition, the *Eloquent Peasant* – which is part of the pessimistic wisdom literature –, is entirely dedicated to the topic of corruption in the Egyptian administration shows that this was a concern in the Middle Kingdom as well. However, it may not have been considered significant enough to gain a more prominent place in the Middle Kingdom instructions. It may also be of relevance the fact that, unlike most Middle Kingdom instructions, *Amenemope* addresses an audience of middle-ranked officials who could have felt a greater temptation to engage in lucrative, but illegal activities.

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<sup>437</sup> The *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV* (= P. P. BM EA 10684 verso), vv. 5.2-5.4, also concerns theft of temple property. The *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 18.15-19.1, also addresses the case when a lower-ranked official is cheated by a high official who manages to confiscate his property without the subordinate official being able to fight back.

### 3.1.3 Inflammatory and/or false speech

This category gathers three passages from the *Instruction of Amenemope* (P. BM EA 10474 recto – chapters 8 (see no. 43), 10 (see no. 44), and 24 (see no. 53) – which deal with an important topic in the Egyptian instructions, namely speech that is inflammatory, false, or both.

A distinction is made between these three qualities of speech because one may provoke without necessarily lying (e.g., *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 22, vv. 22.20-22.21 (see no. 52)), lie without provoking (e.g., *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 15.9-15.10), or lie provocatively (a case in point is the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, maxim 23, vv. D350-D352), with several passages falling in the latter (see also Shupak 1993, 131).

Correct, or good speech and its opposite, incorrect speech – which includes the three possibilities just overviewed –, are often mobilised in the Egyptian instructions<sup>438</sup>, as well as in other wisdom literatures and religious traditions<sup>439</sup>. In addition, silence, either in the sense of not reacting to provocations or in the sense of remaining quiet when the circumstances call for it, is also an important value in the Egyptian wisdom literature<sup>440</sup>. The themes of correct and incorrect speech and of silence are seldom mobilised in

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<sup>438</sup> For examples of correct speech see the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, maxim 1, vv. D58-D59, the *Instruction for the King Merikare*, P. Petersburg 1116A verso, vv. 32-34, and the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 15.6-15.9. For examples of incorrect speech see the *Instruction of a Man for His Son*, section 9, O. Michaelides 16 = O. Los Angeles M.80.203.209, section 19, the *Instruction for the King Merikare*, P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, vv. 27-28, and *The Prohibitions*, O. Petrie 11 = O. London UC 39614, v. C2.

<sup>439</sup> For this topic in the biblical wisdom literature see, inter alia, Römhald (1989, 177-80). In the Four Noble Truths presented in the first sermon delivered by the Buddha, ‘right speech’ is one of the eight factors necessary to attain *nirvāṇa* (Keown 2013, 27, 59).

<sup>440</sup> For examples of attestations see the *Instruction for Kagemni*, P. Prisse, vv. 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, the *Instruction of a Man for His Son*, T. Turin 58006, v. 12.1, and the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*, = P. BM EA 10684 verso, vv. 1.3, 5.2. On the topic of silence see Shupak (1993, 158-60; 2009, 246-50), and Vernus (2010a, 28-29). Again, this topic is not exclusive to the ancient Egyptian wisdom literature. On this topic in the *Book of Proverbs* see, briefly, Römhald (1989, 178-81). Albeit in the context of mastering the mind in order to avoid further entanglement in the cycle of reincarnations due to the production of *karma*, the Tibetan translation of an important text of Mahāyāna Buddhism, the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, also advocates the strategic use of silence: ‘And when you feel the wish to move about, / Or even to express yourself in speech, / First examine what is in your mind. / For steadfast ones should act correctly’ (chapter 5 § 47); ‘When the urge arises in your mind / To feelings of desire or angry hate, / Do not act! Be silent, do not speak! / And like a log of wood be sure to stay’ (chapter 5 § 48 (Shāntideva 2006, 68); on *karma* and on Mahāyāna Buddhism see, conveniently, Keown (2013, 32-44, 61-75).

conjunction with a deity in the Middle Kingdom instructions<sup>441</sup>, which is not the case in the New Kingdom instructions, especially in the one of *Amenemope*<sup>442</sup>. This development is probably due to the openness of the discourse of the New Kingdom instructions to the personal piety discourse (Römhald 1989, 167, 170-71, 174, 179; Shupak 2009, 257).

Especially in the instructions of *Ptahhotep* and of *Amenemope*, inflammatory and provocative speech is particularly associated with someone who is hot-tempered<sup>443</sup>. In the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, maxim 23, v. D352 the slanderer is motivated by his anger, or perhaps resentment, and is accordingly dubbed *t3-h.t*<sup>444</sup>, ‘hot-bellied’<sup>445</sup>. In maxim 25, vv. D376-D378, the pupil is told how to react before someone whose speech is inflamed (*md.t m {n}nsr*) and who is *t3-jb*, ‘hot-hearted’<sup>446</sup>.

In the New Kingdom the age-long term *šmm*, ‘heat’, acquires a metaphorical tone<sup>447</sup> and is used in the *Instruction of Amenemope* to designate ‘the hot-tempered man’ (*p3*

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<sup>441</sup> This feature is shared by the *Book of Proverbs* (Römhald 1989, 179), which demonstrates that, while this biblical text was probably influenced by *Amenemope*, it retained its identity notwithstanding. The only passage from a Middle Kingdom instruction associating *ntr* with improper speech is attested in the *Instruction of a Man for His Son*, section 17 (see no. 17), preserved in several fragmentary copies.

<sup>442</sup> See examples in chapter 5, vv. 7.7-7.8 (see no. 40), and chapter 21, vv. 22.7-22.8 (see no. 51).

<sup>443</sup> Nili Shupak (1993, 129) argues that ‘the use of heat as a metaphor for a human type’ has its first attestation in a wisdom instruction in the *Instruction for Kagemni*, P. Prisse, vv. 1.1-1.3, because, in that passage, the opposite of the silent man, *gr*, is the *th-mjtn*, ‘the one who oversteps the path’, who plays a similar role to *p3 šmm* in *Amenemope*. The fact that, as far as it could be established by the present author, *th-mjtn* is only attested in this passage in the universe of the Middle and New Kingdom instructions hardly allows the conclusion that it is semantically similar to *p3 šmm*. However, Shupak points in a useful direction in hinting towards a degree of overlap between the several opposites of the ideal pupil.

<sup>444</sup> According to the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae* this is the only attestation of this expression (lemma no. 851302 in that database).

<sup>445</sup> Bodily heat is associated with anger in several cultures. On a possible explanation for this association see Wilkowski et. al. (2009, 475-76). Despite this cross-cultural association, an increase in bodily heat does not always occur when anger is experienced (475, with references). Interestingly, there is some evidence suggesting anger itself may be increased by external heat (see Anderson 1989), but either this connection was not made by the ancients or, for some reason, did not enter the instructions’ discourse. On the association between heat and anger in Egyptian texts see also Köhler (2016, 115-26).

<sup>446</sup> On this term see Shupak (1993, 129). According to the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae* (see also Rueda 2003, 347) the only other attestation of *t3-jb* is in a New Kingdom copy of the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. BM EA 10509 (= L2), maxim 14, v. D247. In the context of advising the addressee to build a good reputation, which will be tarnished if he follows the impulses of the *jb*-heart, the text states that: *t3 jb hr dd ntr \**, ‘The one of hot *jb*-heart is under the influence of god (lit. under what god gives)’ (Žába 1956, 35, 82; Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 123). This passage is perhaps comparable with the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 25, v. 24.11 (see no. 54). In the versions dating from the Middle Kingdom, *Ptahhotep*’s maxim 14, v. D247, is considerably different: *jw wr jb r dj.w ntr*, ‘The generous is among those given from god’ (P. Prisse) (Rueda 2003, 149; Allen 2015, 187-88; cf. Dils 2014). Notice that in *Ptahhotep* the heat metaphor may apply both to the *h.t* and to the *jb*-heart (see Shupak 1993, 379n102); on the interchange between these two elements in *Ptahhotep* see Silva (2011, 40-42).

<sup>447</sup> See Shupak (1993, 117).

*šmm*<sup>448</sup>), who is contrasted with the true silent man<sup>449</sup> in chapter 4, as will be discussed below. This is the only extant wisdom instruction where the term is attested<sup>450</sup>, as far as the present author could determine, but the related terms *p3 šm.w* and *p3y=k šm.w*, ‘the hot-one’ and ‘your hot-one’ respectively, are attested in a number of magical and literary texts from the Ramesside Period<sup>451</sup>. Interestingly, the instructions of *of Ani* and *of Amennakht* are closer to the Late-Egyptian Miscellanies<sup>452</sup>, but it is the later *Instruction of Amenemope* that shares with the latter<sup>453</sup> an interest on *p3 šmm*<sup>454</sup>, often in direct relation with the mobilisation of a god, for instance Amun-Re-Atum-Horakhty (see P. Chester Beatty IV = P. BM EA 10684 recto, v. 8.4, P. Chester Beatty V = P. BM EA 10685 recto, v. 6.9, P. Anastasi V = P. BM EA 10244, vv. 7.6-7.7), Thoth (e.g., P. Sallier I = P. BM EA 10185 recto, v. 8.6, *Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 2, vv. 4.17-4.19 (see no. 38)), or Khnum (*Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 9, vv. 12.15-12.17).

The identity of the *šmm/šm.w* in *Amenemope* and in several Ramesside texts as the hot-tempered man is not entirely consensual, however, and the ways a deity is mobilised in relation to this figure in *Amenemope* and in those other texts are different as well. Therefore, the divine punishments in the three passages selected for this section will be discussed after an exploration of the identity and of the difference of treatment of the *p3 šmm/šm.w* in *Amenemope* and in texts from the Ramesside period.

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<sup>448</sup> Lemma no. 154900 in the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae*.

<sup>449</sup> In the Nineteenth dynasty block statue of Ray, its owner is described as a *gr.w kbb*, ‘a silent man who is cool’ (Luiselli 2011, 388-89). On *kbb*, which contrasts with the heat of the hot-tempered man, see Shupak (1993, 153-54).

<sup>450</sup> The word is also attested in the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*, = P. BM EA 10684 verso, v. 6.5, but in its primary sense of ‘heat’ (Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 355).

<sup>451</sup> For instance, in the Late-Egyptian Miscellanies (P. Sallier I = P. BM EA 10185 recto, vv. 8.5-8.6, P. Anastasi V = P. BM EA 10244, vv. 6.5, 7.6-8.1 and P. Chester Beatty V = P. BM EA 10685 recto, vv. 6.9-6.12), in lyric poetry (O. Borchardt 1 recto, v. 6), and in literary ostraca bearing on religion and magic (O. DeM 1265 recto, vv. 1.4, 1.6, verso, vv. 2.2, 2.4, 2.6-2.7, 2.9, and O. Leipzig 8, vv. 1 and 7) (see Shupak 1993, 117; Quack 2011, 58-59; Fischer-Elfert 2000a, 125-26; 2005, 92-94, 102-103).

<sup>452</sup> See Moers (2010, 689-90).

<sup>453</sup> More specifically, prayers and hymns collected in the Miscellanies.

<sup>454</sup> Written *šm.w* outside the *Instruction of Amenemope* (see Borghouts 1980, 21, 27n7). O. Leipzig 8 = 1619, vv. 1 and 7, has *šm(.w) r3*, ‘the one of hot mouth’ (Borghouts 1994, 127; Fischer-Elfert 1986, 8).

### 3.1.3.1 The hot-tempered man (*šmm/šm.w*) in the *Instruction of Amenemope* and in texts from the Ramesside Period

Nili Shupak (1993, 129-32; 2009, 250-56) groups the *šmm/šm.w* together with other descriptions of hot-tempered individuals using the adjective *t3*, for instance in *Ptahhotep*<sup>455</sup>, but the discursive emergence of the term *šmm* in its new metaphorical sense during the New Kingdom begs the question as to whether the *šmm/šm.w* is indeed identical with the hot-tempered individuals in texts prior to the New Kingdom or whether it has different semantic and pragmatic boundaries. The identity of the *šmm/šm.w* has been disputed and is complicated by the lack of references to his actions outside the *Instruction of Amenemope*. Before the mobilisation of god in relation to the *šm.w/šmm* is analysed, the identity of this figure will be discussed.

In the Ramesside texts that will be considered here<sup>456</sup> alongside the *Instruction of Amenemope*<sup>457</sup>, it emerges that the *šmm/šm.w* is the ‘adversary of the hero figure’ (Quack 2011, 59) and is restrained, often by a deity, but not much else is told about him, especially outside the *Instruction of Amenemope*. The lack of an introduction to this character indicates he was familiar to the audiences, and the probable provenance of P. Sallier I = P. BM EA 10185 and P. Anastasi V = P. BM EA 10244 from the Memphite necropolis at Saqqara (Quirke 2004, 17-18; Dils 2014) suggests that the *šm.w* was not a literary topic exclusive to Deir el-Medina, the village where the other texts come from<sup>458</sup>. The author of the later *Instruction of Amenemope*, which may have a date of composition between the end

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<sup>455</sup> Perhaps an exception is *p3 t3-r3*, ‘the hot mouth’, in the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 3, v. 5.10 (see no. 39), and chapter 9, v. 12.16, which may be a synonym to *p3 šmm* while harking back to the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* (Laisney 2007, 71; Shupak 1993, 129; 2009, 251 with n. 12). As pointed out by Shupak (1993, 118), the adjective *t3*, ‘hot-tempered man’, does not appear in isolation in the Egyptian instructions – but in conjunction with ‘mouth’, ‘belly’, and ‘*jb*-heart’ –, and is attested only once in the Egyptian speculative-pessimistic wisdom literature (*Admonitions of Ipuwer*, P. Leiden I 344 recto, v. 5.3). As a noun, signifying ‘heat’, *t3* is attested in the *Instruction for the King Merikare* (P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, v. 27), as heat of the ‘multitude’ (*šš*) which the addressee is enjoined to drive away (*dr*). In this context, *t3* does not describe an individual’s trait of character, as in *Ptahhotep*, but instead the agitation of the masses which Tavares (2007, 190-91) takes to be the opposite of the order of Ma’at.

<sup>456</sup> P. Sallier I = P. BM EA 10185 recto, Anastasi V = P. BM EA 10244, P. Chester Beatty V = P. BM EA 10685 recto, P. Chester Beatty IV = P. BM EA 10684 recto, O. DeM 1265, O. Borchardt 1, and O. Leipzig 8 = 1619.

<sup>457</sup> In the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, the term *p3 šmm* is attested between chapters 2 and 12 (more specifically, chapter 2, v. 4.17 (see no. 38), chapter 3, v. 5.15 (see no. 39), chapter 4, v. 6.1, chapter 9, v. 11.13, chapter 10, v. 13.11 (see no. 44), and chapter 12, v. 15.13).

<sup>458</sup> Some of the texts copied there may also have originated elsewhere (see also Hagen 2012, 113).

of the Ramesside Period and the beginning of the Third Intermediate Period<sup>459</sup>, claimed to reside in Middle Egypt, and the language of this instruction does have ties with the Coptic dialect of Akhmim<sup>460</sup>, which may further point to the geographical dissemination of the *šm.w/šmm* figure. It is also relevant to point out that, if the *šmm* of the *Instruction of Amenemope* is identical with the *šm.w* of the other Ramesside texts or at least inspired by the latter, the *Instruction of Amenemope* was influenced by those texts and not the other way around, as a few of those texts predate the later instruction<sup>461</sup>.

A peculiar feature of some of the texts mobilising the *šm.w/šmm* is the use of the expression *p3y=k šm.w/šmm*, ‘your hot-one/hot-tempered’ (P. Chester Beatty V = P. BM EA 10685 recto, v. 6.9, O. DeM 1265 recto, vv. 1.4, 1.9, 1.20<sup>462</sup>, O. Borchardt 1 recto, v. 6, and *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 10, v. 13.11<sup>463</sup>). This expression does not clarify the identity of the *šm.w/šmm*, but it strengthens the idea of his opposition to the protagonist by suggesting some type of relation between the two (Borghouts 1980, 23-24). In the case of the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 10, v. 13.11, it is possible that the *šmm* was the superior of the addressee (Laisney 2007, 137). But other than ‘le sens de “le bouillant auquel tu as affaire”’ (Laisney 2011, 119), the expression *p3y=k šm.w/šmm* does not seem critical to the meaning of the text<sup>464</sup>.

In his enquiry into the identity of *p3(y=k) šm.w* in O. DeM 1265, Borghouts (1980, 22) concludes that he is not a demon, but instead ‘gives the impression of a human being

<sup>459</sup> See Vernus (2010a, 390) and Laisney (2007, 7).

<sup>460</sup> See Vernus (2010a, 418n12) and Laisney (2007, 39 § 2,11).

<sup>461</sup> The following compositions probably date from the Nineteenth dynasty, specifically from the reign of Sety II: P. Sallier I = P. BM EA 10185 recto (Popko 2014), P. Chester Beatty V = P. BM EA 10685 recto (Gardiner 1935, 46; Popko 2014), P. Anastasi V = P. BM EA 10244 (Dils 2014).

<sup>462</sup> Only the first attestation is well preserved. The other two were reconstructed by Fischer-Elfert (2005, 92-93).

<sup>463</sup> P. Stockholm MM 18416 has only *p3 [šmm]* (Peterson 1966, 127, pl. xxxi a), which may indicate the two expressions are interchangeable (see Laisney 2011, 119).

<sup>464</sup> Especially as ancient authors (and presumably audiences as well) seem to have considered it interchangeable with *p3 šm.w/šmm* (Laisney 2011, 119) (see previous note). That *p3y=k šmm* does not have a particularly special status in the *Instruction of Amenemope* is suggested not only by its single attestation, but also by the use of the Late Egyptian possessive adjective with another figure, namely *p3y=k jr.j tttt*, ‘your quarrel partner’ (on which see Shupak (1993, 118-19, 380n107)) (P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 22, v. 22.20 (see no. 52)) (Laisney 2011, 119). Interestingly, while *Amenemope* conceives of a close relation with god, its author does not employ either the possessive adjective or a suffix pronoun with *ntr*.

who is very much alive<sup>465</sup>. In this fragmentary ostrakon, with the title *[t3].w m33 nfr.w m n3 3b.w n(.jw) t3 rnp.t* ('[book] of seeing the epiphany/beauty of the months of the year')<sup>466</sup>, a description is given of eight monthly festivals<sup>467</sup>, with several references made either to the 'hot-one' (*šm.w*) or to 'your hot-one' (*p3y=k šm.w*) in the context of temple festivals. In the recto, the *šm.w* is described as an antagonist who is chased out of the temple precinct with sticks by everyone (*hr-nb*) in the New Year's Day (vv. 1.3-1.4)<sup>468</sup>, seemingly fails at a ritual sacrifice of an *jw3-ox* (vv. 1.6-1.7)<sup>469</sup>, is<sup>470</sup> hit (*hwj*) in his right and left arms/legs (*hpš*) (vv. 1.9-1.10), his<sup>471</sup> *h3.tj*-heart is likened to the wrongdoers (*jzf.tjw*) of his kind (*mj-kd=f*) (v. 11), and is<sup>472</sup> forbidden from entering the avenue of ram-headed sphinxes. From these descriptions, especially the beating of the *šm.w* in the New Year's Day, Borghouts (1994, 128) suggests that the *šm.w* is a witch in the sense the term has in cultural anthropology<sup>473</sup>. However, as Ritner (1993, 12) points out, with the possible exception of the 'evil eye', cases that overlap clearly with the understanding of witchcraft in cultural anthropology do not seem to be attested in the Egyptian ritual discourse, which suggests that Borghout's interpretation, while possible, is best considered tentative. If one follows Borghouts (1980, 23-24) and Fischer-Elfert (2000a, 126; 2005, 29, 114, 118) in assuming that the hot-one is specifically targeted at monthly temple festivals, another possibility is to interpret his treatment, in particular his beating in the New Year's Day (vv. 1.3-1.4) and the

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<sup>465</sup> Borghouts (1980, 22) thinks a wife may be attributed to him in recto, v. 1.20, but the passage is too fragmentary to be sure (see also Fischer-Elfert 2005, 111n11).

<sup>466</sup> See van Walsem (1982, 215) and Fischer-Elfert (2005, 92-94, 115).

<sup>467</sup> The four months of the summer (*šm.w*) are not addressed by name as the other eight months are (Fischer-Elfert 2000a, 124), but it is possible that they are summarized in the II column on the verso (Fischer-Elfert 2005, 103, 111-12, 132). Borghouts (1980, 21) ascribes the absence of these four months to the carelessness of the writer. On the possibility that only the months and not their festivals are mentioned see van Walsem (1982, 216).

<sup>468</sup> See Borghouts (1994, 128) and Fischer-Elfert (2005, 96, 113-14).

<sup>469</sup> See Borghouts (1980, 22; see also Laisney 2011, 119). Fischer-Elfert (2005, 113) takes it to be a ritual sacrifice of the *šm.w* himself.

<sup>470</sup> Assuming the referent is still *p3y=k šm.w*, as a lacuna intervenes.

<sup>471</sup> Again assuming the referent is the *šm.w*.

<sup>472</sup> Although the referent is most probably the *šm.w*, the passage is lacunar.

<sup>473</sup> Essentially, a witch is someone who harms others involuntarily and often unconsciously with his thoughts and emotions (Ferraro and Andreatta 2010, 350). Witchcraft in this sense has profound sociological implications because deviants may be identified as witches (131): 'In societies that believe in witchcraft, a deviant runs the risk of being labeled a witch, and fear of being accused of witchcraft strongly encourages conformity' (332).



possible breaking of his arms (v. 2.3)<sup>474</sup>, as scapegoat-like rituals<sup>475</sup>, such as the Greek *pharmakos*<sup>476</sup>. Assuming this was indeed the case, and depending on the criteria to pick the surrogate victim, it is possible that someone identified as a witch was used in the ritual. But given the text's current uniqueness and fragmentariness, the accuracy of these two interpretations, taken together or separately, is difficult to determine.

The horizon of the possible identity of the *šm.w/šmm* was broadened in a new direction by Fischer-Elfert (2000a, 124-27; 2005, 91-163) who conjectured that he was an epileptic based on his description in the same text studied by Joris Borghouts (1980), O. DeM 1265. On the verso, the *šm.w* comes into relation with one Nakhy<sup>477</sup> (v. 2.2), steps into a polluted area with fish entrails (v. 2.2), and seems to have a fit: he rolls (*sḳrḳr*) from side to side (v. 2.3), his *ḥ3.tj*-heart is dry inside his body like a tree in the desert (v. 2.4), he falls<sup>478</sup> (v. 2.6), and has heat/fever in his *ḥ3.tj*-heart (v. 2.7)<sup>479</sup> (Fischer-Elfert 2000a, 125-26; 2005, 132, 136). Finally, both Khonsu-in-Thebes and the deified Amenhotep I are called to save/exorcise (*šd*)<sup>480</sup> Nakhy (vv. 2.8-2.9), who, according to Fischer-Elfert (2000a, 125), is the person afflicted with epilepsy which is designated as *šm.w*.

It is almost undeniable that P. DeM 1, vv. 1.8-3.2, features two cases of epilepsy whose symptoms are provoked by doomed or restless spirits (*mw.t*) controlled by a lunar god<sup>481</sup> (Fischer-Elfert 2000a, 119-23; Quack 2011, 59). Although not all spiritualist

<sup>474</sup> The text has *ḥ.wt=f jr z[fz]f* and Fischer-Elfert (2005, 102, 105) translates it as 'indem seine Glieder zerbrochen(?) sind'. This rendering would be indicative of a punishment rather than of an illness (cf. Fischer-Elfert 2005, 132), and is perhaps comparable with Psalm 37:17.

<sup>475</sup> On the use of this image see Asad (2000, 39).

<sup>476</sup> The *pharmakos* ritual, probably inspired by its Near Eastern counterparts (Bremmer 2004, 35), was a yearly ritual which involved human victims that were led out of the polis to purify it and protect it from the plague (35-36). It is not clearly known what was done to the victims, but 'in some cases we hear of the scapegoats being chased over the city's border' (36). Despite the similarities, and unless the rescue of Nakhy, who will be discussed in a short while, would somehow be a part of it, it is somewhat difficult to integrate a communal scapegoat ritual with the end of O. DeM 1265 verso (vv. 2.8-2.10).

<sup>477</sup> The precise nature of this relation is complicated by the writing of (*p3*) *šm.w*: on most attestations of the term the determinative A14/Z6 (Gardiner 1957, 443, 537) is used, indicating that the 'hot-one' is meant, but on vv. 2.7 and 2.9 *p3 šm.w* (v. 2.7) and *šm.w* (v. 2.9) have no determinative, which indicates that either 'fever' or simply 'heat' is meant (Fischer-Elfert 2005, 106) – for a convenient list of attestations with and without determinative of (*p3/p3y=k*) *šm.w* in O. DeM 1265 see Laisney (2011, 119).

<sup>478</sup> This hallmark symptom of epilepsy is conspicuously absent in P. DeM 1 where a diagnosis of epilepsy is fairly certain (Fischer-Elfert 2000a, 123).

<sup>479</sup> From v. 2.10 Fischer-Elfert (2005, 136) also adds dilated pupils and unresponsiveness, but his interpretation is debatable (see Quack 2011, 59).

<sup>480</sup> On the interpretation of *šd* as 'exorcise' see Fischer-Elfert (2005, 108, with references).

<sup>481</sup> On the association between lunar phases, especially full moon, and epileptic seizures in ancient cultures see Fischer-Elfert (2000a, 124, 126; 2005, 141, 147). While some recent studies suggest a correlation between

mediums and healers experience epileptic fits<sup>482</sup>, ‘characteristics associated with the temporal lobe conditions such as tremors and epilepsy and paranormal experiences are used in many cultures for selecting shamanistic healers’ (Winkelman 2010, 172).

However, Fischer-Elfert concludes that the epileptic in ancient Egypt had a much different place in society<sup>483</sup>, and this has to do with his proposed aetiology of the condition. In two Late-Egyptian Miscellanies, P. Chester Beatty V = P. BM EA 10685 recto, vv. 6.7-6.10, and P. Anastasi V = P. BM EA 10244, vv. 7.6-7.7, it is said, after the praise of the addressee, that *p3y=k šm.w*, ‘your hot-tempered man’, is *m-mj b3.w n(jw) jmn*, ‘in the manifestation<sup>484</sup> of Amun’ (P. Chester Beatty V = P. BM EA 10685 recto, v. 6.9), and that he is *m bw.t n(jt) r(m)t.w*, ‘the detestation of the people’ (P. Anastasi V = P. BM EA 10244, v. 7.7) (Dils 2014).

From these two Late-Egyptian Miscellanies, Fischer-Elfert (2005, 125-29, 149) infers that epilepsy, designated as *šm.w* (2005, 160), shares the same characteristics of the affliction caused by the manifestation (*b3.w*) of a god: both are a divine punishment resulting from a transgression against a deity. Both texts add that the afflicted person becomes ‘detestable’ (*bw.ty*) to the people<sup>485</sup>, which is a consequence of the divine affliction (2005, 126-27)<sup>486</sup>. From O. DeM 1265 he concludes, however, that this affliction, which pollutes the person to the point she becomes unwelcomed, is not permanent and can be lifted (127, 147). In the view of Fischer-Elfert (2005, 162), if O. DeM 1265 approaches the issue from the standpoint of ritual, the *Instruction of Amenemope* does so from a

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the full moon phase and an increase in seizures (e.g., Polychronopoulos et al. 2006), others do not (e.g., Raison, Klein, and Steckler 1999). Raison, Klein, and Steckler (1999) make the interesting suggestion that in ancient times the increased luminosity of the full moon led to sleep deprivation which in turn increased the frequency of seizures on individuals with conditions like epilepsy.

<sup>482</sup> See Wilson (2013, 65).

<sup>483</sup> The texts considered probably refer only to adult males. In light of Winkelman’s statement quoted above, it is relevant to ask whether temporal lobe conditions played any part in the work of the Ramesside healer known as *b rh.t*, ‘wise woman’. Although she was certainly a medium, to use the spiritualist term, ‘there is no suggestion that she was somehow “inspired”’ (Borghouts 1982, 27), and the answer is therefore probably negative. But it remains an interesting question whether male, female, and children epileptics of different social strata shared the same status in the Egyptian society or not.

<sup>484</sup> ‘Wrath’ is also possible (Quack 2011, 58; Drioton 1957, 278).

<sup>485</sup> In O. DeM 1265 there is no mention of *bw.t*, but the fact that everyone (*hr-nb*) pursues the *šm.w* with sticks is taken by Fischer-Elfert (2005, 125) as evidence that he is detestable to the people.

<sup>486</sup> In the *Instruction of Amenemope*, the *šmm* is neither associated with the *b3.w* of a god nor with *bw.t* (Laisney 2011, 120).

didactic point view. To him the *šmm* not only is identical with the *šm.w* (2005, 115), but his description in *Amenemope* gives further clues about how society reacted to him.

In chapter 2, vv. 4.12-5.6 (see no. 38), a short story is narrated, in which the *šmm*, first described as *p3 jry bjn*, ‘the one who did evil’, on v. 4.12, was shipwrecked and left at the mercy of a magnificent storm and of crocodiles on a river bank (vv. 4.13-4.16). In this story the hot-tempered man is not in conflict with the addressee of the instruction, but is contrasted with him. The latter appears in the story as someone who is nearby on a boat whose skipper (who plays the role of the author of the instruction) asks the god Thoth to allow them to rescue the *šmm*, referred to as *p3 bjn*, ‘the evil one’, and counsels the sailor (who plays the role of the addressee of the instruction) to feed the hot-tempered while leaving him to the god (vv. 5.1-5.6). Fischer-Elfert (2005, 119-21, 128) interprets this story as the exclusion of the *šmm*-epileptic from society due to the unnamed evil he committed, and sees the crew of the boat as the representation of society, who would place him in the arms of the god (v. 5.4) and intercede on his behalf before Thoth, asking for his forgiveness and reintegration<sup>487</sup>: ‘Amenemope zeigt einen Weg zur Rettung des “Heißen” auf, aber dieser Weg muß von der Gemeinschaft der Menschen im Verbund mit der göttlichen Gnade mitbesritten werden’ (121).

Laisney (2011, 120) counterargues that, rather than being reintegrated, the *šmm* is left to Thoth, and that society, while not wanting to punish the *šmm*, is lenient towards him, by feeding him, in order to make him repent and feel ashamed. It is doubtful that the author of *Amenemope* had society in mind, as the focus of the instruction is the audience’s conduct – who is probably constituted by middle-ranked administration workers, and these may

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<sup>487</sup> Fischer-Elfert (2005, 121) sees a parallel between this passage and the exhortation against mocking *z(j) jw=f m-dr.t p3 ntr*, ‘a man who is in the hand of the god’ in chapter 25, v. 24.11 (see no. 54). Both passages would be an acknowledgment that the *šmm* seeks the proximity of god (*Gottesnähe*), and this is why the *šm.w* would keep trying to attend religious festivals in O. DeM 1265. But, unlike the community in *Amenemope*, according to Fischer-Elfert, the community in O. DeM 1265 is hostile to him. However, and as also pointed out by Laisney (2011, 120), there is a considerable gap between both passages, and whereas in chapter 2, v. 5.4, <r> *ˁ.wj p3 ntr* (<on> the arms of the god’) is employed, chapter 25, v. 24.11 uses *m-dr.t p3 ntr* (‘in the hand of the god’). According to Shirun-Grumach (1990, 842, 852), the expression *m-dr.t p3 ntr* is synonymous with being under the influence of a god’s *b3.w*, and, to Fischer-Elfert (2005, 129), the *šmm/šm.w* belongs to the same category as the one who is undergoing punishment under the *b3.w* of a god. However, if the man referred to in chapter 25, v. 24.11, were the *šmm*, one would expect to find this term and not the general designation *m-dr.t p3 ntr*. Furthermore, the ‘man who is in the hand of the god’ is mentioned in association with the blind, the dwarf, and the paralytic (vv. 24.9-24.12), and there is no indication in the text that any of these conditions result from divine punishment. Concerning the ‘man who in the hand of the god’, the text possibly refers to someone who suffers from mental retardation (see Laisney 2007, 214).

have been conceived of individually rather than collectively. Laisney is certainly right in stating that the text recommends leniency towards the *šmm* in order to make him reevaluate his attitude<sup>488</sup> – with the implicit notion that he may rejoin society out of his initiative and with divine approval –, but the text probably envisions an individual, as opposed to collective, interaction with the *šmm*.

In chapter 3 (see no. 39), the *šmm* is referred to as *p3 t3-r3*, ‘the hot mouth’ (v. 5.10), is paralleled with the *rk3*, ‘defier’, and with the *th3*, ‘transgressor’ (v. 5.12), and is also said to be *dʿ prj=f mj h.t m rwy / ... m wnw.t.t=f*, ‘a storm that comes forth as fire hay / ... in his hour’ (vv. 5.14-5.15) (see no. 39). This chapter introduces the inflammatory speech which supports the translation ‘hot-tempered man’. But according to Fischer-Elfert (2005, 132, 135), this is another symptom of epilepsy, namely verbigeration, which is absent from O. DeM 1265 and other texts. Laisney (2011, 119) cogently rejects the identification of the *šmm*’s inflamed words with verbigeration on the grounds that it is a rare symptom of epilepsy<sup>489</sup>. Fischer-Elfert is more convincing in his interpretation of v. 5.17 in which the author of *Amenemope* says to his pupil that *p3 ntr (r) rh ʿn n=f*, ‘the god (will) be able to turn towards him’. In this passage ʿn has often been assumed to stand for the expression ʿn *wšb*<sup>490</sup>, ‘to seek satisfaction (from someone)’, which is attested in situations of conflict in the instructions (*Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 18.16, 20.11, *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 2, v. 4.11). Therefore, it would have the sense of: ‘il faut laisser au dieu le soin de répondre et de punir le méchant’ (Laisney 2007, 71; see also Luiselli 2011, 213). In stark contrast, Fischer-Elfert (2005, 128) presents a different interpretation of this passage, namely that it has nothing to do with punishment but instead with divine mercy towards the *šmm* (see also Adams 2008, 42n95). Fischer-Elfert (2005, 128 with n. 56) bases his argument on the use of ʿn(*n*), lit. ‘to turn around/towards’, in expressions relating to personal piety that denote ‘mercy’, ‘kindness’, ‘compassion’, and ‘forgiveness’ by a deity (Lesko 2002, 67; Luiselli 2011, 321; Gestermann 2008, 20). The fact that ʿn *wšb* is not spelled out clearly opens the possibility explored by Fischer-Elfert,

<sup>488</sup> Compare with Paul’s *Letter to the Romans* (12:20): ‘No, “if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads”’ (Coogan 2010, 1994).

<sup>489</sup> The association of the *šmm* with the *rk3*, ‘defier’, and with the *th3*, ‘transgressor’, also makes it very unlikely that in *Amenemope*’s chapter 3 he is an epileptic.

<sup>490</sup> See, for instance, Dils (2014).

and, in addition, the similarity of *Amenemope*'s passage with a few attestations from texts marked by personal piety further strengthens his case: in S. Ashmolean 1961-232 it is said of Pre *rh ʕnm*, 'who is able to turn around' (Vernus 2003a, 334); in P. Anastasi II = P. BM EA 10243 recto, v. 9.6, the same is said in a hymn to Amun (Gardiner 1937, 18; Dils 2014; Luiselli 2011, 196-97, 321); and, in a votive stela (Kairo CM171) deposited during the Ramesside Period in the tomb of Djefaihapi III in Asyut, the chantress Tajay asks *ʕn n=j wp-wʒ.wt*, 'forgive me (lit. turn towards me), Wepwawet' (Luiselli 2011, 321, 397; see also Wells 2014, 37-38).

Chapter 4 is exceptional, both in the way it presents the topic of the *šmm* and in relation to the rest of the instruction, because, in contrast with the other chapters bar the prologue and chapter 30 (Israeli 1990, 464-65), the author does not list a series of admonitions, but, instead, narrates what may be called the 'parable of the two trees' (Adams 2008, 43). In this chapter, the *šmm* and the *gr mʒʕ*, 'true silent man'<sup>491</sup>, are each compared to a tree and contrasted with each other<sup>492</sup>. The introductory verse (6.1) refers to the *šmm* in the temple<sup>493</sup> (*ḥw.t-ntr*) and that is presumably the place that serves as setting for this chapter (see Shupak 1993, 131; 2009, 254; Fischer-Elfert 2005, 119; see also Grumach 1972, 44-45; Shirun-Grumach 1991, 230nVI.1-a)), although the religious connotations implied by the reference to the temple do not have to entail a cultic context nor preclude the application of this chapter to other spheres of life<sup>494</sup> (Adams 2008, 43n97, 43n99). The *šmm* is compared to a tree that grows in a confined space (v. 6.2)<sup>495</sup>, quickly loses its foliage (v. 6.3), has its end in a carpentry shop (v. 6.4), floats away from its place (v. 6.5), and has in the flame (*stʒ*) its burial (v. 6.6). In contrast, the true silent man thrives (*ʒḥʒḥ*) and doubles his harvest (*šm.w*) (v. 6.9), is before (*m-ḥft-ḥr-n*) his lord (*nb=f*) (v.

<sup>491</sup> The term *gr mʒʕ* is interchanged with the traditional *gr*, 'silent man', in *Amenemope* (compare, for instance, chapter 4, v. 6.7, with chapter 5, v. 7.7 (see no. 40)). The expression *gr mʒʕ* is not limited to the *Instruction of Amenemope*, but is also attested in other texts dating from the New Kingdom and later (see Luiselli 2011, 268; Shupak 1993, 166). It does not seem to be attested before the Eighteenth dynasty (Shupak 1993, 167). Its use in the *Instruction of Amenemope* perhaps indicates a self-conscious awareness of the increased emphasis on the quietist reliance on god in situations of conflict (Römhöld 1989, 167, 170-71; see also Sousa 2006, 82-84).

<sup>492</sup> The only other text where *pʒ gr* and *pʒ šm.w* are contrasted is in the prayer to Thoth in P. Sallier I = P. BM EA 10185 recto, v. 8.6 (Shupak 1993, 131).

<sup>493</sup> Or *of* the temple (see Vernus 2010a, 401; Laisney 2007, 74; Dils 2014). On other interpretations of *ḥw.t-ntr* on v. 6.1 see Grumach (1972, 45) and Shirun-Grumach (1991, 230nVI.1-a)).

<sup>494</sup> Grumach (1972, 45) takes the reference to the temple as a designation of the relationship with god (*Gottesverhältnis*) that includes both the cultic dimension and the dimension of personal piety.

<sup>495</sup> See Adams (2008, 43) and Grumach (1972, 46).

6.10), his fruits are sweet (*bjnr*) and his shadow (*h3b*) pleasant (*ndm*) (v. 6.11), and his end (*ph.wj*) comes in a garden (*mnw*) (v. 6.12). Fischer-Elfert (2005, 117-18) takes as a sign of illness the similarity between the comparison of the *šmm* with a tree growing in a confined area on v. 6.2 and the description of the *šm.w*'s *h3.tj*-heart as dry like a tree alone in the desert in O. DeM 1265 verso, vv. 4-5. However, as Laisney (2011, 120) points out, in O. DeM 1265 it is the *šm.w*'s heart that is compared with a tree and not himself<sup>496</sup> as in *Amenemope*<sup>497</sup>.

According to Nili Shupak (1993, 162; 2009, 255), who rejects Fischer-Elfert's interpretation because the hot-tempered man is discussed in ethical terms (Shupak 2009, 256n22), the Egyptian instruction distinguishes between outward performance and inner devotion: in contrast to the *gr m3c*, the *šmm* openly displays a pious behaviour, but lacks a genuine devotion. Borghouts (1980, 25) sees it differently, and, instead of doubting the piety of the hot-tempered man, considers that he displays it in an excessive way. In his eagerness to show his piety, possibly to rush the assistance he seeks from the deity, he fails to properly interact with the god<sup>498</sup>. Grumach (1972, 45) also sees the difference between the behaviour of the true silent man and of the hot-tempered man as one of agitation or quietist piety before the deity, and compares the behaviour of the hot-tempered man with the behaviour condemned in the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 17.1-17.3, 20.13-20.14, namely yelling in the god's chapel and importuning his statue during processions.

However, the key to the actions of the *šmm* in this chapter may be in chapter 5 (see no. 40): the latter begins with an admonishment against appropriating goods (*dnj.t*) from

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<sup>496</sup> Far from describing a medical condition, the comparison of the hot-tempered man with a tree that grows in a tight space and quickly loses its foliage (vv. 6.2-6.3) quite probably aims at illustrating his fleeting achievements, and this has a parallel in Psalm 37:35-37:37 which asserts the merely temporary success of enemies: 'I have seen the wicked oppressing, and towering like a Cedar of Lebanon. Again I passed by, and they were no more; though I sought them, they could not be found. Mark the blameless, and behold the upright, for there is posterity for the peaceable' (Coogan 2010, 804). For other biblical parallels see Grumach (1972, 45) and Laisney (2007, 79).

<sup>497</sup> Fischer-Elfert (2005, 130) also compares the last verse (6.6) referring to the *šmm*, which states that his end is the flame (*nsr.t*) with a passage from O. DeM 1265 verso, v. 2.5, mentioning the *šm.w* in conjunction with the flame (*nsr.t*), but that passage is fragmentary which makes any conclusion difficult.

<sup>498</sup> This is not a theme developed in *Amenemope*, outside of the prescription to pray in the morning (chapter 7, vv. 10.12-10.13 (see no. 42); see also chapter 27, vv. 25.19-25.20 (see no. 55)). But the topic of how to interact with the deity in ritualised settings is featured in the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 17.1-17.4 (see no. 28) and 20.12-20.17 (see no. 31).

the temple (v. 6.14)<sup>499</sup>, and against assigning a worker at the service of a god (*b3k n(.j) ntr*) to work for another (vv. 6.16-6.17). It then proceeds to reproach the pupil against thinking there will be no consequences in the future (vv. 6.18-7.1), and adds a description of the *mutabilitas mundi*. Finally, the silent man<sup>500</sup> is again reintroduced as a contrast: it is said that every silent man in the temple praises the favour of Re (vv. 7.7-7.8), and that the pupil should follow the example of the silent man, in order to find life and prosper on earth<sup>501</sup> (vv. 7.9-7.10).

Overall, the *šmm* in *Amenemope* does not seem to be discursively constructed as someone who suffers from a medical condition<sup>502</sup>, and his primary trait is inflammatory and false speech, as indicated in chapter 9. This chapter complements chapter 3 in going into more detail about some of the troubles caused by the *šmm*, both to him and to others: one should not hang out with him or converse with him (vv. 11.13-11.14), as he destroys and builds with his tongue (v. 12.3), speaks inappropriately (v. 12.4), gives answers that earn him a beating (vv. 12.5-12.6), spreads words loaded with falsity among everyone (vv. 12.7-12.8), turns people against each other with his indiscretion (vv. 12.9-12.10), repeats to

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<sup>499</sup> On this verse see Dils (2014). That the *šmm* is also a robber is indicated in chapter 12: giving continuity to chapter 11 – which deals with the coveting of the goods of the poor, but does not mention the *šmm* –, chapter 12 addresses the temptation to divert the goods of an official (*sr*) when the pupil was trusted to supervise (*rwd*) them (vv. 15.9-15.12). The author further enjoins the pupil to refrain from robbing (lit. *jrj t3{.wy}*, ‘make a seizing’) with the *šmm* (v. 15.13), and from fraternising with a defiant man (*z(j) rk3*) (v. 15.14) (see Laisney 2007, 149-53; Dils 2014).

<sup>500</sup> This time referred to only as *gr* and not as *gr m3c*.

<sup>501</sup> As Pascal Vernus (2010a, 395) pointed out, the opposition between the (true) silent man and the hot-tempered man is not exclusively ethical, but has also sociological implications, one of them being that the silent man is a conformist that accepts social rules and the way the divinely guided world works. In terms of discourse, the *šm.w/šmm* occupies the position of opponent of the beneficiary of the text. Conversely, it may be argued that the silent man occupies the same position of someone who is favoured. Therefore, it may be added that another sociological implication of this opposition was its possible use to label individuals depending on whether they were considered loyal servants and colleagues or someone who questioned authority. To be sure, in order to garner favour one also had to be a conformist, as ‘critical statements or even murmurs of rebellion (or things which could be so construed) were among the most risky acts for a member of the Egyptian elite’ (Quack 2011, 54-55). This connection is not made in the *Instruction of Amenemope* (the term *hz.wt*, ‘favour’, is only attested in chapter 5, v. 7.8 (see no. 40), and chapter 13, v. 16.11 (see no. 45), none of which mention the hot-tempered man). But this sociological implication is more evident in a lyrical composition in O. Borchardt 1, which states that it is a great favour (*hs.y(.t) 3.t*) for the addresser to see her ‘brother’, that the *šm.w* of the beloved was brought back while he is effective in his office (recto, vv. 6-7), and, further ahead, that *hb3 p3 wts tw*, ‘the one who denounced you was neutralised’ (recto, v. 9-verso, v. 1) (Popko 2014; Quack 2011, 59).

<sup>502</sup> Instead, and as pointed out by Laisney (2011, 120), he is associated with *bt3*, ‘fault’, (chapter 2, v. 4.19 (see no. 38), chapter 9, v. 12.13) a common term across genres during the Ramesside Period (Rutkauskas 2016, 169-84, 188) that may range from a crime in the juridical sense (Laisney 2007, 62) to a moral transgression against a god (Rutkauskas 2016, 173-75, 188; Goedicke 1992, 78).

others what was told to him privately at a meal (12.11-12.12), is compared to a specimen (*ḫ.w*)<sup>503</sup> of wild dogs (*wnš.w*)<sup>504</sup> in a pen who turns an eye against another and causes quarrels between brothers (vv. 12.18-13.1), is like clouds that obscure the sun/sun god (vv. 13.2-13.3), is like a crocodile specimen (*ḫ.w*)<sup>505</sup> who wields his tail at the one he reaches (vv. 13.4-13.5), his lips are said to be sweet while his tongue is bitter (v. 13.6), and fire burns in his belly (v. 13.7). In *Amenemope* it is further clarified that the *šm.w* is *p3 jry bjn*, ‘one who did evil’ (chapter 2, v. 4.12), *p3 bjn*, ‘the evil one’ (chapter 2, v. 5.1), *p3 ḫ-r3*, ‘the hot mouth’ (chapter 3, v. 5.10, chapter 9, v. 12.16), is paralleled with the *rḫ3*, ‘defier’ (chapter 3, v. 5.12, chapter 12, v. 15.14), and with the *th3*, ‘transgressor’ (chapter 3, v. 5.12), is impetuous (chapter 3, vv. 5.14-5.15), that he speaks maliciously and inappropriately (chapter 9, vv. 12.3-12.6), that he is indiscreet (chapter 9, vv. 12.9-12.12), is a schemer (chapter 9, vv. 12.7-12.8, 12.18-13.1), and finally that he is a robber (chapter 12, v. 15.13).

In contrast to the majority of the other texts that mobilise the *šm.w*, the *Instruction of Amenemope* is the most revealing about the type of behaviour that characterises the hot-tempered man, and the complexity of this figure suggests that a difference should be made between the hot-tempered man in the Middle Kingdom and his counterpart in the New Kingdom. However, a few texts also indicate the main trait of the *šm.w* may be false and/or inflammatory speech. In a prayer to Thoth in the Late-Egyptian Miscellany recorded on P. Sallier I = P. BM EA 10185 recto<sup>506</sup>, v. 8.6, it is stated that the *šm.w* has *gmj r3=f*, ‘found his mouth’<sup>507</sup> (Popko 2014; Gardiner 1937, 86). In a hymn to Amun-Re on P. Chester

<sup>503</sup> On this interpretation of *ḫ.w*, ‘young’, see Vernus (2010a, 438).

<sup>504</sup> On the term *wnš* see the note to the translation of v. 7.5 of chapter 5 of the *Instruction of Amenemope* in the appendix (see no. 40).

<sup>505</sup> See again Vernus (2010a, 438).

<sup>506</sup> In this prayer, this deity is asked to enable the beneficiary to go to Hermopolis and to provide for him (v. 8.3). The addresser then hopes to have the support of Thoth when he enters before the lords (*nb.w*) and hopefully emerges justified (*m3<sup>c</sup>-ḫrw*) (vv. 8.3-8.4). This passage has inspired interpretations of this prayer as a request to the god Thoth for protection in the afterlife judgement (e.g., Luiselli 2011, 211), but it seems more probable that the request concerns a more worldly aim, perhaps admission into the administration (Quack 2011, 57). By the end of the prayer, Thoth is equated with a well that is delightful to a thirsty man (*z(j)*) and that is open to *p3 gr*, ‘the silent man’ (vv. 8.5-8.6). Conversely, Thoth is unavailable to the one who found his mouth (v. 8.6), who probably is the *šm.w* referred to in the last sentence (v. 8.6) which seems to state that the *šm.w* is taken, presumably by the god Thoth (see Popko 2014, with references; Quack 2011, 57n11; Gardiner 1937, 86).

<sup>507</sup> As mentioned on the previous note, this passage chronologically antecedes the first reference to the *šm.w* at the end of the text (v. 8.6).



Beatty IV = P. BM EA 10684 recto, vv. 8.3-8.4, it is said that the name of Amun-Re-Atum-Horakhty (v. 7.5) is a body shield for each person, a healthy amulet to the loyal, a rescue (*nḥm*) from the crocodile (*ḥnt.j*), a good (ritual) recitation (*sh3.w*) for the bad times, and that it *nḥm m r3 n(j) šm.w*, ‘rescues from the mouth of the hot-one’ (Popko 2014; Gardiner 1935, 32). And in a magical text in O. Leipzig 8 = 1619, v. 1, the person to be cursed is called *p3 šm.w r3*, ‘the one of hot mouth’<sup>508</sup> (Fischer-Elfert 1986). It is apparent that the reference to the mouth of the *šm.w* has to do with what he says or might say.

There is a strong possibility that the first two sources refer to the same kind of false and inflammatory speech that characterises, to a great extent, the *šmm* in *Amenemope*. In particular, P. Chester Beatty IV = P. BM EA 10684 recto, v. 8.4, may refer to the problems one may get into due to slander in court or slander that eventually leads the beneficiary of the hymn to a wrongful accusation and sentencing in court, since Amun is well known to have been appealed to as a source of justice during the Ramesside Period (e.g., Vernus 2003b, 139-40). ‘The one who found his mouth’ in P. Sallier I = P. BM EA 10185 recto, v. 8.6, may also be a slanderer or someone who constantly gives in to angry speech. The first possibility might be more probable, if one accepts Quack’s (2011, 57) suggestion that the context of this prayer is the eve of an examination determining whether one enters the administration or not – in this case the *šm.w* may be a rival that seeks to discredit or destabilise his colleagues. Angry and defamatory speech may also be the subject matter underlying the expression ‘the one of hot mouth’ in O. Leipzig 8 = 1619, v. 1, but the cursing of this individual may indicate a different possibility: he could have been a sorcerer who needs to be counteracted<sup>509</sup>.

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<sup>508</sup> In this magical text the *šm(.w) r3*, ‘the one of hot mouth’, is ordered to go to the East (v. 1), is relegated to a cool shadow in wintertime and to a hot corner in summertime (vv. 2-5), and it is said four times that he should not be brought back (vv. 2, 6-7) (Fischer-Elfert 1986, 8-9; Borghouts 1994, 127-28; Shupak 2009, 253; Burkard and Thissen 2009, 134).

<sup>509</sup> For obvious reasons magical spells are associated with the mouth (e.g., Ritner 1993, 34), and in a private sorcery text against a potential enemy it is said that: *bn 3ḥ mdw.t=k \* bn sdm.tw=f*, ‘your speech is not effective, it is not heard’ (O. Armytage, spell 2, v. 8) (Shorter 1936, 165, pl. VIII; Stegbauer 2014; see also Borghouts 1982, 60n129). Shorter’s (1936, 168n22) interpretation sounds accurate: ‘By “speech” is probably meant magical utterances which the victim may use on his own behalf, perhaps against the magician’. It is very doubtful that would be the case in *Amenemope*, but in this text it would not be impossible that the thwarting of the *šm.w* was part of a battle of sorcerers, as it were. However, compare with Sirach 28:13: ‘Curse the gossips and the double-tongued, for they destroy the peace of many’ (Coogan 2010, 1495).

As it may be seen from these examples, the Ramesside texts mentioned mobilise a deity against the *šm.w* in a more aggressive way<sup>510</sup> than in *Amenemope*. Unlike in the former texts, and with the possible exception of chapter 4, in *Amenemope* the hot-tempered man is not helplessly dominated. Interestingly, not only is *Amenemope* more lenient towards the hot-tempered man, but it also seems to comment on other texts dealing with the *šm.w* (see table no. 3).

A case in point is the short story about the shipwrecked hot-tempered man in chapter 2 (see no. 38). Many of its core elements – being stranded on a river bank (vv. 4.12-4.13), having a storm falling on him (vv. 4.14-4.16), and being surrounded by crocodiles (v. 4.16) – have a direct parallel in P. Chester Beatty V = P. BM EA 10685 recto, vv. 6.10-6.12, and P. Anastasi V = P. BM EA 10244, vv. 7.7-8.1, as also noted by Fischer-Elfert (1983, 89). In P. Chester Beatty V the *šm.w* is in a similar predicament, and it is said, after the statement that he is under the *b3.w* of Amun (v. 6.9), that the sunlight/sun god will not shine over him, that the Nile flood does not flow for him, that he is like a mouse stranded due to a high flood, that he finds no place to settle down, that the hawk readies itself to get him, and that the crocodile is on to get him. A similar version is attested in P. Anastasi V which misses the hawk, but adds an important element: the *šm.w* is compared to a pinioned bird that cannot escape. It remains an open question who this *šm.w* in these two passages is – Gardiner (1937, 47) suggests he is a soldier suffering from the summer heat, whereas Quack (2011, 51) proposes he is the antagonist of an elite member enjoying his free time in the fields –, but *Amenemope* uses a similar description for the hot-tempered man, albeit with a significant difference: the hot-tempered man is not entirely helpless, as the pupil to whom the instruction is addressed is told to assist him<sup>511</sup> and to *h3c sw <r> c.wj p3 ntr*, ‘leave him <on> the arms of the god’ (v. 5.4). To be sure, the fact that this is an instruction may be a contributing factor to the compassion for the hot-tempered man, but this kind of compassion is largely absent from the other instructions<sup>512</sup>. The concluding verses of chapter 2 are also of great significance: ‘(5.7) (*ky zp nfr m jb n(.j) p3 ntr* (5.8) *wsf3 (r-)h3.t*

<sup>510</sup> The restraint of the *šm.w* is discursively identical with the overthrow of enemies. As Quack (2011, 45-46, 54, 56, 60-61) demonstrates, the latter is a concern across several genres, ranging from letters to prayers for success, and to lyric poetry.

<sup>511</sup> See also Shirun-Grumach (1991, 229nV.1-a)).

<sup>512</sup> As pointed out by Sweeney (1985, 219), another exception is attested in the *Instruction of Papyrus Insinger*, v. 27.9.

*mdwj*) Another thing which is good in the mind (lit. *jb*-heart) of the god: (5.8) to pause before speaking'. With this counsel, the lesson about tolerance comes full circle and it may not be far from Sirach 28:4: 'If one has no mercy toward another like himself, can he then seek pardon for his own sins?' (Coogan 2010, 1494).

With chapters 2, v. 5.4 (see no. 38), and 3, v. 5.17<sup>513</sup> (see no. 39), it becomes clear that the vocabulary used in leaving the hot-tempered man to god, namely *h3c sw <r> c.wj p3 ntr*, 'leave him on the arms of the god'<sup>514</sup>, and *c'n*, 'turn towards', is the same used in prayers relating to personal piety (Shirun-Grumach 1990, 837; Luiselli 2011, 321). Although intercessory prayers were in use (e.g., Luiselli 2011, 286-87; Sweeney 1985, 213-18), the novelty here is that divine tolerance is asked not to oneself, but to an adversary. The reader is never told whether forgiveness is conceded to the hot-tempered by the deity or not, and, at any rate, that is not the concern of the author of *Amenemope*. Instead, his concern is how his audience manages conflicts: to respond in kind is rarely, if ever<sup>515</sup>, advised in the instructions of the Middle and New Kingdoms, but in *Amenemope* there is the addition of leaving it to god whether to punish or not the hot-tempered man. The emotional component of detaching from the insult by leaving the case to the deity, who facilitates forgiveness, is not novel, what is new is considering that the deity may show compassion for a transgressor, which may be an adaptation from personal piety<sup>516</sup>. Important in *Amenemope* as well, is not giving up one's moral commitment over fear<sup>517</sup>.

In chapter 9, vv. 12.15-12.17, leniency towards the hot-tempered man is again showed through an intercessory exhortation to the god Khnum to refashion the *h3.tj*-heart of the hot-tempered man<sup>518</sup>, thereby healing him (Grumach 1972, 82; Laisney 2007, 133) and

<sup>513</sup> See the discussion of this passage above.

<sup>514</sup> As pointed out by Shirun-Grumach (1991, 229nV.4-a)), 'die Umarmung durch die Gottheit bedeutet deren Schutz'.

<sup>515</sup> Cf. the passage of uncertain translation in the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, v. 20.11 (see no. 30).

<sup>516</sup> One may conjecture that the recognition of the possible repentance and forgiveness of the hot-tempered man is thematically close to the blurring of the boundaries between the wise and the fool in the Ptolemaic *Instruction of Papyrus Insinger* (Shupak 1993, 222; 2009 258 with n. 28).

<sup>517</sup> Chapter 10 (see no. 44) possibly deals with the danger of compromising one's morality out of fear of the *šmm*: one should not greet him falsely because one is afraid (vv. 13.13-13.14). This relatively short chapter mobilises *ntr* several times: false speech is a detestation (*bw.t*) of god (vv. 13.15-13.16), coherence between understanding (*h3.tj*) and what one says (lit. *ns*, 'tongue') will keep one safe from the hand of god (vv. 13.17, 14.1), god hates the one who falsifies his speech (v. 14.2), and his detestation (*bw.t*) is inner suffering (v. 14.3), that is, giving in to fear experienced as psychosomatic suffering.

<sup>518</sup> See Laisney (2007, 128, 133).

giving him a chance to amend himself<sup>519</sup>. The idea of starting anew, at the state level, is also attested in the *Prophecy of Neferti* and in the *Admonitions of Ipuwer* (see Vernus 2010a, 426n107), but in *Amenemope* the novelty again is the intercessory character of the appeal to Khnum (Grumach 1972, 82).

Interestingly, *Amenemope* has a very different measure for his pupil: he is frequently warned of punishments, including death (e.g., chapter 20, vv. 21.15-21.16, 21.19-21.20 (see no. 50)). At the end of chapter 9, where compassion is shown towards the hot-tempered man, it is revealingly said: ‘(13.8) (*m-jrj pwy r mh pff*) (13.9) *tm hry(.t) jn.tw=k*) Do not rush to get close to that one (= the hot-tempered man), (13.9) lest a terror takes you away’ (Laisney 2007, 119-20, 342; Dils 2014).

Table no. 3. Mobilisation of a god in relation to the *Sm.w/Smm* in the Instruction of Amenemope and in texts of the Ramesside Period

Text	Mobilised god	God’s action towards the <i>šm.w/šmm</i>
<i>Instruction of Amenemope</i> (P. BM EA 10474 recto)	• Thoth (chapter 2, v. 4.19) (see no. 38)	• Establishes the <i>šmm</i> ’s fault.
	• The god ( <i>p3 ntr</i> ) (chapter 2, v. 5.4) (see no. 38)	• Is asked to accept the <i>šmm</i> in his arms ( <i>ʕ.wy</i> ), possibly to forgive him.
	• The god ( <i>p3 ntr</i> ) (chapter 3, v. 5.17) (see no. 39)	• Will turn ( <i>ʕn(n)</i> ) to the <i>šmm</i> , possibly to forgive him.
	• Khnum (chapter 9, vv. 12.15-12.17)	• Is asked to step in and refashion the <i>h3.tj</i> -heart of the <i>šmm</i> .
Late-Egyptian Miscellany in P. Sallier I= P. BM EA 10185 recto	• Thoth (v. 8.6)	• Is like a well that is closed to the one who found his mouth.
	• Thoth (v. 8.6)	• Takes/controls the <i>šm.w</i> .
Late-Egyptian Miscellany in P. Chester Beatty V = P. BM EA 10685 recto	• Amun (v. 6.9)	• The <i>šm.w</i> is under the <i>b3.w</i> (manifestation or wrath) of the god.
	• Shu (?) (v. 6.10)	• Will not shine for him.
Late-Egyptian Miscellany in P. Anastasi V = P. BM	• Amun (vv. 7.6-7.7)	• The <i>šm.w</i> is under the <i>b3.w</i> (manifestation or

<sup>519</sup> A comparable idea is expressed in Psalm 51:10, in the context of a penitential prayer attributed to king David: ‘Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me’ (Coogan 2010, 815).

EA 10244		wrath) of the god.
	• Shu (?) (v. 7.7)	• Will not shine for the <i>šm.w.</i>
Hymn to Amun-Re in P. Chester Beatty IV = P. BM EA 10684 recto	• Amun-Re-Atum-Horakhty (v. 8.4)	• The god's name is a rescue ( <i>nḥm</i> ) from the mouth of the <i>šm.w.</i>
O. DeM 1265 verso	• Khonsu-in-Thebes and Amenhotep I (vv. 2.8-2.9)	• The gods are asked to throw out ( <i>ḥ3<sup>c</sup></i> ) <i>šm.w</i> (heat(?)/hot one(?)) and save/exorcise a man named Nakhy.

### 3.1.3.2 Divine punishment of inflammatory and/or false speech in the *Instruction of Amenemope*

The previous discussion established the treatment awarded in *Amenemope* to the hot-tempered man, a person mostly associated with provocative and/or false speech in that instruction, and determined that this instruction advocated a different attitude towards him, in stark contrast to the Ramesside texts cited. In *Amenemope* the hot-tempered man is a third party with whom the addressee may come into contact, but whose education is not a concern to the author. Instead, the priority is to shape the conduct of the addressee, who is to be equated with the audiences of the text. It is no doubt for this reason that, in *Amenemope*, leniency is demonstrated towards the hot-tempered man, while the addressee is cautioned with the evocation of punishments. As the transgressions in the three selected passages that will be discussed are committed, or may be committed by the pupil, it is unsurprising that the text cautions that he will incur divine displeasure for speaking in undesirable ways, even if no specific punishment is mobilised.

#### 3.1.3.2.1 *Instruction of Amenemope*, chapter 8

The passage from the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 8 (see no. 43), is close to the end of what may be taken to be the first part of *Amenemope*, between chapters 2 and 10<sup>520</sup>. Laisney (2009, 2-3) argues that this part is dominated by the

<sup>520</sup> See Laisney (2007, 9; 2009, 2-3; see also Fischer-Elfert 1983, 83).

contrast between the hot-tempered man and the true silent man, even if this topic is not addressed in all chapters making up this first part. In fact, the main topic of chapter 6, which lies at the centre of the first part, is illegal acquisition of property, and, as was seen above, this topic is more predominant in *Amenemope*'s second part between chapters 11 and 20 (Laisney 2007, 9; 2009, 3). However, and as pointed out above, chapters 4 and 5, which do mobilise the hot-tempered man and the silent man, may also share in that topic. Chapter 7 (see no. 42) also deals with avarice and theft, probably not by cunning fraudulency but by organised violence (see v. 9.16).

As mentioned above, chapters 2, 3, and 9 deal with the hot-tempered man and recommend an assertive, but lenient attitude towards him. Chapter 10 possibly not only counsels the pupil to be assertive with the hot-tempered man, but also admonishes him against compromising his morality out of fear for the hot-tempered man. As chapter 8 concerns seemly speech, but does not mention the hot-tempered man, it can perhaps be seen as a transition chapter between the topics of fraudulency, avarice, and theft of chapters 6 and 7, and the topics of inflammatory and/or false speech of chapters 9 and 10.

The text from P. BM EA 10474 recto (see no. 43) runs as follows:

(10.16) (*hw.t mh-8.t*) **Chapter 8.**

(10.17) (*jmm nfr=k m h.t n(.jw) r(m)t.w* (10.18) *wšd tw hr-nb.w*) Make people feel you are good (lit. give your goodness in the belly of people), (10.18) so that everyone greets you.

(10.19) (*jrj=tw hn.w n jr<sup>c</sup>.t* (10.20) *pgs r <sup>c</sup>pp*) Make jubilation for Iaret, (10.20) and spit against Apep.

(10.21) (*swd3 ns{.t}=k r mdw(.t) h<sup>c</sup>dj* (11.1) *jrj.y=k mr.wt(j) n(.jw) kwj*) Guard your tongue against words that injure, (11.1) and you will act as beloved of others.

(11.2) (*gmj=k s.t<sup>c</sup>=k m-hnw hw.t-ntr* (11.3) *drp.w=k n p3w.tjw n(.j) nb=k*) You will find your place in the temple, (11.3) and your food from the bread of your lord.

(11.4) (*jrj.yw=k jm3h{h} h3p tw=k db(3).t=k* (11.5) *wd3=k r b3.w n(.jw) ntr*) You will be an *imakhu*, your sarcophagus will conceal you, (11.5) and you will be safe from the wrath of god.

(11.6) (*m-jrj njs bt3.w r r(m)t* (11.7) *h3p p3 shr.w n(j) w<sup>c</sup>r*) Do not call out a wrongdoing against a man, (11.7) (but) conceal the plan of flight.

(11.8) (*jr sdm=k p3 nfr m-r3-pw bjn* (11.9) *j:jrj sw m-rw.t bw sdm=f*) Whether you hear good or bad, (11.9) leave it outside, as it was not heard (by a court?).

(11.10) (*jmm smj nfr hr-tp t3 <m> ns{.t}=k* (11.11) *jw p3 dw.w h3p m h.t=k*) Give a good report upon earth with your tongue, (11.11) while the bad one is concealed in your belly.

The first two verses of this passage touch on the management of one's perception by others, whose social rank and whose relation to the pupil are not specified<sup>521</sup>. The transition between this advice and the injunction against improper speech on vv. 10.21-11.1 is made by the intervening couplet (vv. 10.19-10.20) which instructs the pupil to make jubilation for Iaret and to spit against Apep. The general lack of references to ritual practices in *Amenemope* suggests that the two imperatives are not to be taken literally. They are certainly a reference to a real ritual practice<sup>522</sup>, and the couplet may also be a proverb<sup>523</sup>, or a poetic formulation by the author. Whatever the case, the first verse (10.19) fits well with the previous advice, while the second verse (10.20) prepares the follow-up advice<sup>524</sup>.

The following verse refers to the transgression concerning speech: '(10.21) (*swd3 ns}{.t}=k r mdw(.t) h dj*) Guard your tongue against words that injure'. A number of positive consequences follows between vv. 11.2 and 11.5: on v. 11.2 it is said that the pupil will find his place at the temple, and on v. 11.3 that he will eat from the bread of his lord, who most certainly is a god<sup>525</sup>. On v. 11.4 it is further said that the pupil will become an *imakhu*<sup>526</sup> and that a sarcophagus will conceal him, and the last positive consequence, on v. 11.5, is to be safe from the wrath of god. Not all scholars agree as to what both couplets entail.

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<sup>521</sup> The theme of these verses is also present in the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV* and in the *Instruction of Ani*. In the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*, = P. BM EA 10684 verso, vv. 1.13-2.1 (see no. 34), one is advised against ignoring those one knows out of haughtiness, and one is instead counselled to greet everyone. In the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 19.10-19.12, the pupil is instructed to have good manners with elders and superiors. In an interesting passage towards the end of the same instruction, on vv. 22.10-22.13, the pupil is told to treat well the bailiff of his neighbourhood, both by greeting him and by giving him food, in order to receive leniency from him, and to be protected from raids to the town (see Quack 1994, 185; Vernus 2010a, 338n104). Although this latter passage possibly involves corruption (Quack 1994, 185), it illustrates the instructions' reasoning behind the recommendation to treat others well.

<sup>522</sup> See Laisney (2007, 117n706 with references). On the ritual see Ritner (1993, 85-86).

<sup>523</sup> See Ritner (1993, 85), Römhald (1989, 162), and Laisney (2007, 117).

<sup>524</sup> That advice concerns injurious speech, and Apep is negatively associated with utterances (*d3js*), for instance in the Late Period *Book of Overthrowing Apep*, P. Bremner-Rhind = P. BM 10188, vv. 29.19 and 31.8 (Ritner 1993, 46n219).

<sup>525</sup> See Drioton (1957, 278), Grumach (1972, 73), and Römhald (1989, 162).

<sup>526</sup> Although from the Middle Kingdom onwards it is possible to translate this term as 'honoured' (Strudwick 2005, 30), it is left untranslated here due to its complexity (on which see Jansen-Winkel (1996)).

Laisney (2007, 117) suggests that the pupil will be awarded a work assignment at the temple and be given the bread offered to the gods<sup>527</sup>, a gesture that deepens the pupil's contact with his god. Lange (1925, 61) also takes the first couplet to refer to the context of the living, while the second couplet would concern the context of the deceased. As the first couplet does not evoke a funerary context, Drioton (1957, 277) concludes, about the deposition of a statue of the pupil in the temple, that 'il s'agit bien ici d'une pratique des vivants, inconnue des Égyptiens.' Contrarily, Grumach (1972, 73) and Shirun-Grumach (1991, 234n11.2-a)) take vv. 11.2-11.5 to be a description of the fate (*Shicksal*) of the just in the afterlife: he benefits from the cult and from the offerings to the god by having a statue of him in the temple (vv. 11.2-11.3), benefits from the cult of the dead (v. 11.4), and avoids the divine punishment by succeeding in the afterlife judgement (vv. 11.4-11.5). Römheld (1989, 162) also sees both couplets as concerning the afterlife and as bringing personal piety to this sphere: instead of being taken care of by priests, the deceased pupil is directly attended by his personal god, as, in this passage, the temple is seen by Römheld as 'der Ort der Gottesnähe'.

Laisney (2007, 117) further conjectures that: 'La colère et les châtements du dieu ne se cantonnent pas à la vie présente, on doit aussi les caindre après la mort.' Drioton (1957, 278) also considers that the divine wrath will have effects on the deceased, but in an impersonal way: as it causes calamities, the divine wrath will indirectly promote the desecration of tombs and consequent unrest to the deceased.

It is difficult to say whether vv. 11.2-11.3 refer to the world of the living, as suggested by Laisney, or to the world of the dead, as proposed by Shirun-Grumach, since the text is somewhat ambiguous and the benefit of the bread for the ritual offering can support either interpretation. Assmann (2005, 108) argues that the statue and the mummy were both representations of the deceased in equal standing. Given the close association of the mummy with the sarcophagus, it is conceivable that the author may have played on vv.

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<sup>527</sup> Eating the food offered to gods is not a practice exclusive to ancient Egypt, nor of ancient near eastern societies. In modern South Korea, for instance, household gods are offered *kosa* food especially by women (Kendall 1985, 114-15, 123-24), and the food is later reused: 'The housewife rubs her hands in prayerful supplication, executes a stiff bow from the waist, and quickly petitions the gods: "Please make us rich. Please make this house peaceful. Please make the children turn out well." It is a matter of seconds. The woman leaves the offerings set out for perhaps half an hour, usually in the quiet of the night. Then she cuts up the rice cake and distributes it to family and neighbors"' (115).



11.2 and 11.4 with these two important items in what concerns the afterlife. In this way, v. 11.2 would refer to the statue of the pupil as his representative in the temple, and v. 11.4 to the sarcophagus as the recipient of his bodily representative in the tomb. In further support of the interpretation that v. 11.2 refers to a statue of the pupil in the temple, one may cite the increased aspiration to have one's statue in a temple to benefit from the rituals and festivals performed there during, and also after the New Kingdom<sup>528</sup> (Assmann 2005, 91-92).

The rewards mentioned on v. 11.4 – the state of *imakhu* and a sarcophagus – are more closely associated with death, and Jansen-Winkel (1996, 33) cites this very passage to illustrate the point that the term *imakhu* has 'eine spezifische semantische Nähe zum Status des Toten', as opposed to designating a social position. From this mention of items normally associated with the afterlife it is understandable that scholars may interpret the next passage on v. 11.5 as referring to events after the pupil's death. But that is not necessarily the case, especially in an instruction where the divine punishment normally takes place on earth and not in the afterlife. It is perfectly conceivable that v. 11.5 is thematically unrelated to what precedes it, in the sense that the pupil will gain access to the temple and to the bread for ritual offerings, will be considered an *imakhu* after his passing, will also earn the right to own a sarcophagus, and, parallel to that, will avoid divine punishment. Essentially, v. 11.4 tells the pupil that, by refraining from improper speech, he will have access to what is necessary for a successful afterlife<sup>529</sup>.

To be sure, it could be that the divine punishment on v. 11.5 referred to the negation of the rewards listed between vv. 11.2 and 11.4, but, as far as its attestations go, the god's *b3.w* affects the victim in the form of an affliction, usually mental<sup>530</sup> (e.g., Fischer-Elfert

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<sup>528</sup> The possible representation of the local population (*rh.yt*) at temples (see Hays 2012, 26 with references) was clearly not as effective. The desire to be represented in the tomb after death corresponds to the wish for partaking in religious festivals and processions (on which see Luiselli 2011, 51-58).

<sup>529</sup> As pointed out by Vernus (2010a, 425n94), the negation of a tomb would deny that possibility.

<sup>530</sup> Teeter (2011, 113 with n. 22) mentions two attestations of physical symptoms associated with a god's *b3.w*, on S. BM 589 verso, v. 3, where Neferabu claims that Ptah made him see darkness by day (Kitchen 1980, 772 l. 1; 1999, 292-93; Borghouts 1982, 7, 64n156), and on the lower register of S. Turin 50044, ll. 3-4, where Hui states that the moon god Iah made him see the greatness of his strength (*ph.tj*) (Luiselli 2011, 366; Borghouts 1982, 7). Teeter (2011, 113) identifies this symptom as blindness, while Borghouts (1982, 7) conjectures, about the claim of seeing darkness by day in general, that it may be blindness, albeit of a temporary nature most of the times. Other scholars (Galán 1999, 7, 29-30; Luiselli 2011, 167-68 with references) see this as a metaphor. That is arguably the case, and, observing it from a broader perspective, one may conjecture that this symptom involves spiritual disorientation (see also

2005, 124). On vv. 10.19-10.20 the pupil is advised to avoid offending other persons, and the rewards that are listed next are what follows from sticking to this advice, as the opposite would lead to the creation of enemies that could eventually hamper the pupil's life, including the quality of his access to the afterlife. It is then conceivable that the rewards the text refers to between vv. 11.2 and 11.4 are social and not divine.

The evocation of divine punishment seems to be essentially a reminder that god will uphold the social value of not coming into verbal conflict with others. Inasmuch as the affliction caused by a god's *b3.w* may include feelings of guilt<sup>531</sup>, the discomfort and regret that may arise from openly conflicting with others, and the realisation that that may come at a cost, might be what motivates the mobilisation of this divine punishment in this passage.

### 3.1.3.2.2 *Instruction of Amenemope, chapter 10*

As mentioned at the beginning of the previous subsection, the last chapter of the first part of the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, is chapter 10 (see no. 44). As also mentioned, it is immediately followed by the second part of the instruction (chapters 11-20), and although the hot-tempered man is still mentioned in chapter 12, he is mobilised there in the context of the appropriation of an official's goods. While chapter 9 described the mayhem provoked by the hot-tempered man, and advised the pupil to keep from associating himself with this person (vv. 11.13-11.14 and 13.8), chapter 10 applies to the cases where the pupil cannot avoid interacting with the hot-tempered man<sup>532</sup>, with whom he may have a close relationship<sup>533</sup> as the text refers to him as *p3y=k šmm*, 'your hot-tempered man'. The text from P. BM EA 10474 recto (see no. 44) reads:

(13.10) (*hw.t mh-10.t*) **Chapter 10.**

(13.11) (*m-jrj wšd tw m p3yw=k šmm m gns=k* (13.12) *mtw=k ḥdj jb=k ds=k*) Do not greet your hot-tempered man by forcing yourself, (13.12) nor hurt your own feelings (lit. strike your own *jb*-heart).

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Griffiths 1991, 189), perhaps comparable with the temporary blindness of the Apostle Paul (Acts 9:3-9:9, 9:17-9:18), with the blindfolding in initiations to Mystery cults (see Griffiths 1991, 334), and with the mystical experience described by John of the Cross as the 'dark night of the soul' (on which see Madden (2010, 205-206)). This last comparison was also made by Sweeney (1985, 225n58).

<sup>531</sup> See Borghouts (1982, 8) and Teeter (2011, 112).

<sup>532</sup> Different interpretation in Sousa (2006, 89).

<sup>533</sup> He may be the pupil's superior (Laisney 2007, 137).

(13.13) (*m-jrj dd n=fj3w{t}.tw=k n-<sup>c</sup>d3* (13.14) *jw wn hr.j(t) m h.t=k*) Do not say to him falsely ‘may you be praised’, (13.14) when there is fear in your belly.

(13.15) (*m-jrj mdwj (j)rm r(m)t n-<sup>c</sup>d3* (13.16) *t3 bw.t n(jt) p3 ntr*) Do not argue falsely with a man, (13.16) it is a detestation of the god.

(13.17) (*m-jrj pšn h3.tj=k r ns{.t}=k* (13.18) *hpr šhr.w=k nb(.w) m<sup>c</sup>rj* (13.19) *hpr=<k> dns.t m-b3h t3 k3w3.wj* (14.1) *jw=<k> wd3.tw m-dr.t p3 ntr*) Do not separate your understanding (lit. *h3.tj*-heart) from your tongue, (13.18) and all of your projects will succeed, (13.19) <you> will be important before the others, (14.1) while you are safe from the hand of the god.

(14.2) (*msdj ntr s<sup>c</sup>d3 mdw(.t)* (14.3) *t3y=f bw.t 3 šnn h.t*) God hates the one who falsifies the speech, (14.3) his great detestation is inner suffering.

The text begins by addressing the greetings to one’s hot-tempered man (v. 13.11), later refers to speaking (*mdwj*) with a man (*r(m)t*) (v. 13.15), and afterwards states that sincerity will make one important to the others (*t3 kj.wj*) (v. 13.19). Therefore, it is clear that, even if the hot-tempered man is the pupil’s superior, the text uses the relationship with him to make a point which is valid for virtually all social interactions<sup>534</sup>.

The first two couplets (vv. 13.11-13.14) address sincerity in greetings<sup>535</sup>. It is revealed in the second couplet that the pupil should not greet his hot-tempered man when he is fearful. The fact that the pupil is afraid would seem to be the element that renders the greeting false. Sousa (2006, 89) takes this passage to mean that one should avoid the hot-tempered man, as prescribed in the preceding chapter, even if it means to bypass social conventions, and considers the fear felt by the pupil to be the somatic effects of going against his will for appearances’ sake (90n237). Laisney (2007, 139) proposes a different interpretation: ‘il faut d’abord se calmer en apaisant ses antipathies, et alors peut-on saluer avec sincérité et sans se faire violence.’ Based on chapter 8, vv. 10.17-10.18 which state that the pupil has to be a good person in order to be greeted by others, one could also suggest that the text advises against greeting the hot-tempered man until he corrects his behaviour.

The next couplet in chapter 10 (vv. 13.15-13.16) is arguably tied to the previous couplet on vv. 13.13-13.14, as both share the expression *n-<sup>c</sup>d3*, ‘falsely’. The fact that fear

<sup>534</sup> This advice against insincerity does not override the advice in favour of using discretion when necessary; see further the last note to v. 13.17 in the appendix (see no. 44).

<sup>535</sup> As remarked by Laisney (2007, 139), ‘dans l’ancienne Égypte, elle (= salutation) n’était sans doute plus qu’une simple convention comme aujourd’hui.’

in the belly is mentioned on v. 13.14 may indicate that the false speech the text refers to is related to fear. It is not entirely clear from the text whether fear is here mobilised as a subjective feeling<sup>536</sup> that motivates and lies behind the pupil's false speech. If that were the case, perhaps what is at stake on vv. 13.15 and 14.2 is lying to cover up a mistake or hide another fact that would also provoke a negative reaction from the interlocutor, who may be the pupil's superior, as suggested. However, it is also possible that the main point of the text is that fear is not the appropriate content of the belly to be expressed by the pupil<sup>537</sup>. In *Amenemope*, chapter 8, vv. 11.10-11.11<sup>538</sup> (see no. 43), and in the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 20.9-20.10<sup>539</sup> (see no. 30), the belly (*h.t*) is conceptualised as containing both good and bad speeches. In contrast, the passage under discussion distributes them across the belly, where the inappropriate speech lies, and the *ḥ3.tj*-heart, from where the pupil should speak, as made clear on v. 13.17. The polarisation between the belly and the *ḥ3.tj*-heart in *Amenemope*'s chapter 10 would be at odds with the two other passages just mentioned, in that those passages do not involve a polarisation between body parts of the torso<sup>540</sup>, but that polarisation is arguably due to the conceptualisation of the *ḥ3.tj*-heart that will be discussed shortly.

Why the pupil would let out the fear in his belly and speak falsely instead of speaking truthfully from his *ḥ3.tj*-heart does not seem entirely clear, although it is conceivable that fear may play a role in exerting a stronger influence on the pupil. Regardless of the reason behind the pupil's false speech in the text, the fact that god is mobilised in it three times may be an indicator of the importance of this topic in this passage; in comparison, *ntr* is attested only once in chapter 8 (v. 11.5) and in chapter 24 (v. 24.4). Perhaps of even greater relevance may be the fact that there are four attestations of

<sup>536</sup> For a clear attestation of that kind of mobilisation of fear see Nyord (2009a, 414n4063 with references).

<sup>537</sup> On the container image from cognitive linguistics applied to speech and thought conceptualized as coming from inside the body, see Nyord (2012, 162-65).

<sup>538</sup> '(11.10) (*jmm smj nfr hr-tp t3 <m> ns{.t}=k* (11.11) *jw p3 dw.w ḥ3p m h.t=k*) Give a good report upon earth with your tongue, (11.11) while the bad (report) is concealed in your belly.'

<sup>539</sup> '(*jr h.t r(m)t wsh <st> r snw.tj jw=st mht <m> wšb.t nb.t*) **As for the belly of a man, <it> is broader** than the Two-Granaries. It is full <with> every answer. / (20.10) (*j:jrj=k stp t3 nfr {j} <r> dd<=s> {sw} jw t3 b{w}jn.t ddh.t m h.t.t=k*) You should choose the good (answer) <to> say, while the bad (answer) is shut in your belly.'

<sup>540</sup> The overlap between these body parts by the New Kingdom will be addressed below.

the detestation (*bw.t*) of the god in *Amenemope*, and two of them are located in this passage<sup>541</sup>.

Between vv. 13.17 and 14.1 the text uses a strategy similar to the one used in chapter 8, vv. 10.21-11.5: the text also starts with an imperative, and immediately progresses to a list of positive consequences. At the end of that list on v. 14.1, exactly in the same way as in chapter 8, v. 11.5, one finds: *juw=<k> wd3.tw m-dr.t p3 ntr*, ‘while you are safe from the hand of the god.’ While the grammar is slightly different from v. 11.5<sup>542</sup>, the meaning is arguably identical. The similarity between both passages further supports the interpretation that *juw=<k> wd3.tw m-dr.t p3 ntr* means ‘while you are safe from the hand of the god’ and not ‘while you are safe in the hand of the god’<sup>543</sup>. Thus, this is again an implicit reference to divine punishment. Inasmuch as being in the grip of god is similar to being under his *b3.w*, as suggested by Shirun-Grumach (1990, 842, 852), the potential punishment would similarly consist in a psychological affliction<sup>544</sup>.

What could lead to that outcome is the transgression of the imperative on v. 13.17: *m-jrj pšn h3.tj=k r ns {t}=k*, ‘Do not separate your understanding (lit. *h3.tj*-heart) from your tongue’. The fact that the term *h3.tj* is used may not be of great import, as it would be the case in a Middle Kingdom text, since by the time of composition of *Amenemope* the *h3.tj* was in the process of assimilating the characteristics once reserved for the *jb* (Shupak 1993, 297)<sup>545</sup>. It would have been of a greater significance if the term *h.t*, ‘belly’, had been used, as in chapter 8, vv. 11.10-11.11<sup>546</sup>, or as in the *Instruction of Ani*, vv. 20.9-20.10<sup>547</sup>. Although the *h.t* also had a rich metaphorical repertoire and interchanged to a point with the heart ‘organs’<sup>548</sup>, it is never conceptualised in *Amenemope* in the same extended way that

<sup>541</sup> The role of *bw.t* in this passage will be discussed further below.

<sup>542</sup> Which reads: *wd3=k r b3.w n(.juw) ntr*, ‘and you will be safe from the wrath of god.’

<sup>543</sup> See also the note to v. 14.1 in the appendix (see no. 44).

<sup>544</sup> On that affliction provoked by a god’s *b3.w* see Borghouts (1982, 8), Fischer-Elfert (2005, 124), and Teeter (2011, 112).

<sup>545</sup> It even functions as a container of words in chapter 22, v. 22.1 (see no. 52). See also the second note to v. 13.17 in the appendix.

<sup>546</sup> ‘(11.10) (*jmm smj nfr hr-tp t3 <m> ns {t}=k* (11.11) *juw p3 dw.w h3p m h.t=k*) Give a good report upon earth with your tongue, (11.11) while the evil one is concealed in your belly’ (see no. 43).

<sup>547</sup> ‘(20.9) (*jr h.t r(m)t wsh <st> r snw.tj juw=st mht <m> wšb.t nb.t*) **As for the belly of a man, <it> is broader** than the Two-Granaries. It is full <with> every answer. / (20.10) (*j-jrj=k stp t3 nfr {j} <t> dd<=s> {sw} juw t3 b {w}jn.t ddh.t m h.t.t=k*) You should choose the good (answer) <to> say, while the bad (answer) is shut in your belly’ (see no. 30).

<sup>548</sup> See Shupak (1993, 293-95). In *Amenemope* the three body parts were conceptualised as containers: see chapter 1, v. 3.11, for the *jb*-heart, chapter 21, v. 22.11 (see no. 51), for the *h.t*, and chapter 22, v. 22.1 (see

the *ḥ3.tj*-heart is<sup>549</sup>. In particular, and of relevance to the present discussion, is the association between heart, tongue, and god in chapter 18<sup>550</sup>, and the identification of a man's *ḥ3.tj*-heart with the nose of god in chapter 24<sup>551</sup>.

To be sure, these three passages are not close to each other, especially chapter 10 and chapter 24, which makes it conjectural to posit a relation between them, and even more so to assume that that relation was established by the audiences, but it is nonetheless significant that this specialised conceptualisation of the *ḥ3.tj*-heart is present in each of the three parts in which the *Instruction of Amenemope* can be divided, and one can make the case that the text uses the device of picking up at a later stage themes that were addressed before (Laisney 2007, 10). In addition, what Laisney (2007, 9) observes about the topic of the uncertainty about the future can also be applied to the conceptualisation of the *ḥ3.tj*-heart: 'Le thème du "lendemain" est particulier, car il revient une fois dans chaque partie, où il forme une sorte de parenthèse, ce qui le met en évidence. Il est particulièrement développé au chapitre 18, qui forme ainsi le centre du livre et acquiert une importance toute spéciale.'

Accepting that the author intended the three passages to be considered together, one detects an increasing gradation in which the role of the *ḥ3.tj*-heart is revealed bit by bit. In chapter 10, v. 13.17, the *ḥ3.tj*-heart is conceptualised as the proper source for what one says and, accordingly, one should not separate it from one's tongue. In chapter 18, vv. 20.3-20.4, the *ḥ3.tj*-heart is conceptualised together with the *jb*-heart and the same counsel is given, namely that one's tongue should not be kept apart from one's heart<sup>552</sup>. On vv. 20.5-20.6 it

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no. 52), for the *ḥ3.tj*-heart. Interestingly, each of these three terms are attested twelve times in P. BM EA 10474 recto.

<sup>549</sup> A possible exception is chapter 11, v. 14.10, which reads *jw jb=f sh3 m ḥ.t=f*, 'while his *jb*-heart is inverted in his belly' (Laisney 2007, 344; see also Vernus 2010b, 544). In this passage the belly is conceptualised as container of the *jb*-heart which has a divine determinative (G7; see Gardiner (1957, 468)). On the relation between the belly and the *jb*-heart see also Nyord (2009a, 68-69).

<sup>550</sup> '(20.3) (*dns tw m jb=k smn ḥ3.tj=k* (20.4) *m-jrj jrj.y ḥm(w) n ns{.t}=k*) Control your *jb*-heart, bolster your *ḥ3.tj*-heart, (20.4) and do not steer with your tongue. / (20.5) (*jr ns{.t} n(.j) r(m)t ḥm(w) n(.j) jm(w)* (20.6) *nb-r-dr p3y=f jr.j-ḥ3.t*) A man's tongue is the rudder of a boat, (20.6) the Lord of All is its pilot' (see no. 49).

<sup>551</sup> '(24.4) (*jr ḥ3.tj n(.jt) r(m)t fnd n(.j) ntr* (24.5) *z3w tw r mkḥ3=f*) As for the *ḥ3.tj*-heart of man, it is the nose of god; (24.5) beware of neglecting it (lit. turning your back to it)' (see no. 53).

<sup>552</sup> Without mobilising the same implications, the *Instruction of Papyrus Insinger* also condemns insincerity conceptualised as the disconnect between the *ḥ3.tj*-heart and the tongue. On v. 25.21 it is said: *tm šb ls=k (n) ḥ3.tj.t=k ḥn stnj j.jr=w šn.t=k*, 'Do not switch your tongue (for) your *ḥ3.tj*-heart concerning a counsel, when one asks you' (Vittmann 2014; Lichtheim 1983, 223). And vv. 26.18-26.23 read: '(26.18) (*tm šb ḥrw=k ḥn he tm jr gl<sup>c</sup> n p3 ssw db<sup>c</sup>*) Do not change your word (lit. voice) concerning spending, and do not deceive at the time of sealing. / (26.19) (*rmt-rḥ jw=w nḥtε=f t3j=f jwe.t jw=s (n-)dr.t.t=w*) A wise man one trusts, his

is further disclosed that one's tongue is the rudder of the boat and that the Lord of All, possibly a sun god, is its pilot. Understanding the boat as the heart, it is implied that it is the sun god who guides one's speech by being present in one's heart<sup>553</sup>. What was implied by logical reasoning in chapter 18 is spelled out in chapter 24: on v. 24.4 it is stated that one's *ḥ3.tj*-heart is the nose of god, possibly Thoth<sup>554</sup>. It is when one looks back to chapter 10 from chapter 24 that vv. 14.2-14.3 become more meaningful: '(14.2) (*msdj ntr sꜥd3 mdw(.t)*) (14.3) *t3y=f bw.t ꜥ3 šnn ḥ.t*) God hates the one who falsifies the speech, (14.3) his great detestation is inner suffering.'

In the light of the three passages taken together, vv. 13.17 and 14.2-14.3 arguably indicate that the pupil will become incompatible (*bw.t*) with the god in his *ḥ3.tj*-heart by speaking from his belly and not from his *ḥ3.tj*-heart<sup>555</sup>. The latter is indicated by the statement that a false speech is a detestation (*bw.t*) to the god and is hated (*msdj*) by him. Given that appropriate speech comes from the *ḥ3.tj*-heart (v. 13.17), which is revealed later on to be the part of the body through which god guides the life of the pupil (chapter 18, vv. 20.3-20.6, and chapter 24, vv. 24.4-24.5), improper speech, conceptualised in the text through the embodied metaphor of separating the *ḥ3.tj*-heart from the tongue (v. 13.17), would render the pupil incompatible with his god. This interpretation of the passage is further supported by Rune Nyord's discussion of S. Cracow MNK-XI-999, v. 7<sup>556</sup>. There, *bw.t* is associated with *grg*, 'lies', a term that overlaps to an extent with *ꜥd3*, 'falsehood' (Nyord 2003, 89). As pointed out by Nyord (86-87), to tell lies goes beyond the domain of ethics and steps into the domain of 'pollution and impurity' (86). In the stela, the addresser, Merer, would have not been able to benefit from the assistance of Anubis in his transition into the afterlife, had he in fact come into contact with incorrect speech (Nyord 2003, 87). Similarly, in *Amenemope*'s chapter 10 improper speech is not only an ethical transgression,

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assurance is in their hand. / (26.20) (*ḥr jr ḥrw=f ḥn ḥnj.t jwe.t jw mn ꜥnh*) His word (lit. voice) about a matter is an assurance without an oath. / (26.21) (*tm dj.t nj3.t n kj jw wn kt.t (n) ḥ3tj.t=k*) Do not set a date for someone while another (date) is (in) your *ḥ3.tj*-heart. (26.22) (*p3 ntj n ḥ3tj.t (n) rmt-rḥ p3 ntj-jw-jw=w gm.t=f ḥr ls=f*) What is in the *ḥ3.tj*-heart (of) the wise man is what one finds on his tongue. (26.23) (*tm st3.t=k n t3j dd=k m-s3 btw n tm-hp*) Do not withdraw what you said, unless there is unlawful crime/punishment' (Vittmann 2014; Lichtheim 224; Rutkauskas 2016, 275).

<sup>553</sup> On this passage see further Assmann (1999b, 44).

<sup>554</sup> The identity of god does not need to be consistent across chapters. What is important is that the *ḥ3.tj*-heart is presented as the point of contact with one's god.

<sup>555</sup> Regardless of the reason behind this disagreement, it is qualified by the text as *ꜥd3*, a word that recurs elsewhere in this instruction in the context of deliberate deception (e.g., chapters 13 and 20).

<sup>556</sup> 'I did not lie (*grg*) against a living person, (for that is) the *bwt* of Anubis' (Nyord 2003, 73).

but a transgression related to purity as a condition necessary to benefit from divine guidance.

Independently of whether the pupil's false speech is unintentional, perhaps due to fear, or not, the text clearly deems him capable of doing otherwise and holds him responsible for it. To challenge the pupil into changing his conduct by mentioning divine punishment seems, then, to have been the purpose of chapter 10.

### 3.1.3.3 *Instruction of Amenemope, chapter 24*

Chapter 24 from the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto (see no. 53) is located in what can be considered the third, and final part of this instruction between chapters 21 to 29 (Laisney 2007, 9; 2009, 3). As already pointed out, the main theme of this third part can be taken to be the concern with the vulnerable and the feeble, especially from chapter 25 on<sup>557</sup>. But the preceding chapters do not seem to have shared a single thematic unity. Chapters 21 and 22 (see no. 51 and no. 52) counsel the pupil on how to deal with adversaries, and chapter 23 deals with table manners. Chapter 24 gives some continuity to the preceding chapter, inasmuch as it concerns proper conduct at the house of an official, possibly a superior. The text from P. BM EA 10474 recto (see no. 53) reads:

(23.21) (*hw.t mh-24.t*) **Chapter 24.**

(23.22) (*m-jrj sdm wšb.t n(.jt) sr m pr= {j}<f>* (24.1) *mtw=k wħm sw {n=k} <n ky> m-b(n)r*) Do not listen to the answer of an official in <his> house, (24.1) to repeat it <to another> outside.

(24.2) (*m-dy.t jnj.tw r3=k m-b(n)r* (24.3) *tm ħ3.tj=k jkn*) Do not let what you say be brought outside, (24.3) lest your ħ3.tj-heart becomes sour.

(24.4) (*jr ħ3.tj n(.jt) r(m)t fnd n(.j) ntr* (24.5) *z3w tw r mkħ3=f*) As for the ħ3.tj-heart of man, it is the nose of god; (24.5) beware of neglecting it (lit. turning your back to it).

(24.6) (*jr r(m)t jw=f <r>-gs sr* (24.7) *k3y bw rh rn=f*) As for a man who is <at> the side of an official, (24.7) his name is not to be known.

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<sup>557</sup> Chapter 25 (see no. 54) admonishes against mocking and distressing physically and mentally disabled people, chapters 26 and 27 (see no. 55) prescribe the correct treatment of elders, chapter 28 (see no. 56) instructs the addressee to look after the widow, the foreigner, and the poor, and chapter 29 (see no. 57) prescribes humility and protection of the poor.



The context of this passage seems to be formal or informal meetings at the house of a high-ranked official. The pupil would be in those meetings either as an equal or, more probably, in a subordinate capacity, since the instruction is addressed to middle-ranked officials. Regardless of his capacity, he would be present at conversations that could be later used for his personal gaining, probably by turning a third party against the official or by becoming the informant of a rival<sup>558</sup>. But, instead, he should remain discreet. This theme is also addressed in the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 15.9-15.12 and 16.9-16.13: on vv. 15.11-15.12 the pupil who does not follow the advice will become a ‘non-existent’ (*ḵw.tj*), and on v. 16.12 indiscretion is described as *bt3 ʿ3 (n.j) mwt*, ‘great offense (worthy) (of) death’, an expression that probably indicates social reprobation and not a real punishment (Lorton 1977, 39n179). Chapter 24 of *Amenemope* does not mention any consequence other than a harmed relationship with one’s personal god.

As mentioned in the previous discussion, the *ḵ3.tj*-heart is equated with the nose of the god (v. 24.4). The text uses another metaphor to explain how the relationship will be harmed: reproducing the contents of the conversation to third parties will make the *ḵ3.tj*-heart sour (*ḵkn*) (vv. 24.2-24.3). This rarely attested term is only attested here and in chapter 9, v. 13.6<sup>559</sup>. There, a sour tongue is contrasted with sweet lips, meaning that the hot-tempered man speaks in a pleasant and agreeable manner, but with ulterior and nefarious intentions. In chapter 24, instead of describing hidden motivations, this metaphor seems to indicate a bodily pollution<sup>560</sup>, resulting from improper speech, that will make the pupil grow apart from god<sup>561</sup>, in a way similar to what is described in chapter 10. Therefore, to the transgression on vv. 23.22-24.2, which does not concern inflammatory or false speech *sensu stricto* but is nonetheless qualified by the text as inappropriate speech, a related transgression is added, namely the neglect of one’s *ḵ3.tj*-heart through indiscretion.

Jan Assmann (1993, 111; 1995, 195), followed by Sousa (2006, 77), argues that the god smells a person’s heart and that, ‘in everything he does, says or even thinks, man

<sup>558</sup> Whichever the case, this passage is probably best understood in the light of the competition among the elite (see, briefly, Quack 2011, 64).

<sup>559</sup> See Laisney (2007, 130) and Dils (2014).

<sup>560</sup> The *ḵ3.tj*-heart is also qualified as ‘content’ or ‘sweet’ (*ndm*) in chapter 6, v. 9.7 (see no. 41), but *ḵkn* is not contrasted with *ndm* in *Amenemope*, which suggests that chapter 9, v. 13.6, provides the best point of comparison to interpret vv. 24.2-24.3.

<sup>561</sup> Grumach (1972, 155) takes this god to be Thoth due to the similarity with chapter 15, v. 17.7: *ḵr šrj(.t) n(.jt) ḵ3b dbʿ n(.j) zh3.w*, ‘As for the nose of the ibis (= Thoth), it is the finger of the scribe’ (see no. 46).

cannot avoid the effect of smelling good or bad, just or unjust, to the nose of god' (Assmann 1995, 195). Inasmuch as a part of the body of the god related to the olfactory sense is mobilised, Assmann's interpretation is arguably an apt explanation for the choice of this embodied metaphor in particular. But, to the extent that the passages about the *ḥ3.tj*-heart in chapters 10, 18, and 24 may be taken to be related, as mentioned before, and to the extent that the passage on vv. 24.4-24.5 has striking similarities with chapter 15, vv. 17.7-17.8, the interpretation of the passage in chapter 24 can perhaps benefit from taking into consideration these other passages.

The grammatical structure of the passage in chapter 15, vv. 17.7-17.8, is identical to the passage in chapter 24, vv. 24.4-24.5:

- '(17.7) (*jr šrj(.t) n(.jt) ḥ3b db<sup>c</sup> n(.j) zh3.w* (17.8) *z3w tw r rmn.t=f*) As for the nose of the ibis (= Thoth), it is the finger of the scribe; (17.8) beware of deviating it' (see no. 46).
- '(24.4) (*jr ḥ3.tj n(.jt) r(m)t fnd n(.j) ntr* (24.5) *z3w tw r mkḥ3=f*) As for the *ḥ3.tj*-heart of man, it is the nose of god; (24.5) beware of neglecting it (lit. turning your back to it).'

Both passages consist in a topicalised main sentence with *jr* followed by a nominal sentence on the first verse, and of an imperative construction followed by an infinitive with a suffix pronoun as object on the second verse. There are a few differences that concern the content alone<sup>562</sup>. Another important difference is that, in chapter 15 (v. 17.6), the pupil commits a transgression with his finger, while in chapter 24 (vv. 24.2-24.3) the pupil commits a transgression that affects his *ḥ3.tj*-heart. The difference in the quality of the two actions is reflected in the infinitive verbs at the end of vv. 17.8 and 24.5 – 'to deviate' and 'to neglect', respectively. One may now wonder about what these differences may indicate about the role of the divine agent in each passage. As it was determined above<sup>563</sup>, to identify an object or a human body part with a god's body part is to place it under that deity's watchful protection. To be sure, and as argued by Assmann (1993, 111; 1995, 195),

<sup>562</sup> These differences are: 1) the position of man's body part and of the god's body part are inverted from one passage to the other; 2) the term for 'nose' is different in each passage; 3) the divine agent is revealed in one passage as the god Thoth through the reference to one of his sacred animals, while he is kept anonymous in the other passage; 4) the human agent is specified to be a scribe in one passage, and accordingly the focus is on his finger as the symbol of his work, whereas in the other passage the human agent is more generically referred to as man and the focus is on his *ḥ3.tj*-heart as what may be considered his conscience; 5) and in chapter 15 the verb *rmnj* has the sense of misusing the nose-finger, while in chapter 24 the verb *mkḥ3* has the sense of not caring for the heart-nose.

<sup>563</sup> See this chapter, subsection 3.1.2.5.2.

in chapter 24 god is attentive to what the pupil does to his *ḥ3.tj*-heart. In the three passages discussed above<sup>564</sup>, that divine watchfulness certainly entailed some form of punishment in case of misuse, and that is clear in chapter 15 (vv. 17.7-17.8 and 17.11-17.14). Although no explicit punishment is mentioned in chapter 24, it is possible that it is implied by the imperative *z3w tw*, ‘beware’, on v. 24.5, and the harming of the relationship with god can itself be construed as a form of punishment.

As mentioned in the previous discussion about chapter 10, vv. 13.17 and 14.2-14.3<sup>565</sup>, and chapter 18, vv. 20.3-20.6<sup>566</sup>, arguably form a build-up to chapter 24, v. 24.4, where it is revealed that one’s *ḥ3.tj*-heart is the nose of god. Even if each of these passages has a message specific to the chapter in which they are included, these three passages are arguably related and were meant to be considered in relation to each other. Thus, to chapter 10<sup>567</sup> and to chapter 18<sup>568</sup> chapter 24 adds that one should avoid neglecting one’s *ḥ3.tj*-heart, which is equated with a god.

Although Assmann (1993, 111; 1995, 195) is certainly right in interpreting the equivalence of the *ḥ3.tj*-heart with the nose of god as meaning that the god will react to the state of purity or impurity of the pupil’s *ḥ3.tj*-heart, an interpretation that is strengthened by a cross reference to chapter 10, chapter 18 further suggests that god will be able or unable to guide the pupil depending on his conduct.

The *jb*-heart is also elevated to the status of a god in the Eighteenth Dynasty biography of Intef: ‘(22) (*jn jb=j rdj jr.y=j st m sšm=f ḥr=j*) It was my *jb*-heart that made me do it as it guided me ... (24) (*ntr pw m ḥ.t nb.t w3d pw sšm.n=f r w3.t nfr.t n(.j)t jr.t*) it is

<sup>564</sup> See previous note.

<sup>565</sup> ‘(13.17) (*m-jrj pšn ḥ3.tj=k r ns{.t}=k*) Do not separate your understanding (lit. *ḥ3.tj*-heart) from your tongue’. ‘(14.2) (*msdj ntr s<sup>c</sup>d3 mdw(.t)*) (14.3) *t3y=f bw.t s3 šnn ḥ.t*) God hates the one who falsifies the speech, (14.3) his great detestation is inner suffering’ (see no. 44).

<sup>566</sup> ‘(20.3) (*dns tw m jb=k smn ḥ3.tj=k*) (20.4) *m-jrj jrj.y ḥm(w) n ns{.t}=k*) Control your *jb*-heart, bolster your *ḥ3.tj*-heart, (20.4) and do not steer with your tongue. / (20.5) (*jr ns{.t} n(.j) r(m)t ḥm(w) n(.j) jm(w)*) (20.6) *nb-r-dr p3y=f jr.j-ḥ3.t*) A man’s tongue is the rudder of a boat, (20.6) the Lord of All is its pilot’ (see no. 49).

<sup>567</sup> Where improper speech, metaphorically ascribed to the separation of the *ḥ3.tj*-heart from the tongue (v. 13.7), renders one incompatible (*bw.t*) with god (vv. 14.2-14.3).

<sup>568</sup> Which pivotally states that one should not talk mindlessly – here conceptualised as steering with one’s tongue –, but instead talk in accordance to divine guidance, conceptualised as god being the pilot of the heart which is equated with a boat (vv. 20.5-20.6).

a god in each body<sup>569</sup>; the one who is guided to the good way of acting is a fortunate one' (Sethe 1909, 974 ll. 1, 9-10; Lichtheim 1992, 53).

A passage from the Twenty-second Dynasty biography of Nebnetjeru<sup>570</sup> which also has some similarity with *Amenemope*'s v. 24.4 may further support the conceptualisation of god as the proper guide of the heart: *jmn.t hr dbh jmj mtn.wt n šms jb ntr pw jb k3rj=f m r3-jb msh3=f h'w m hb=sn*, 'The West commands: Give rewards to the one who follows the *jb*-heart. The *jb*-heart is a god<sup>571</sup>, its chapel is the stomach<sup>572</sup>, and it rejoices when the limbs are in their festival' (block statue Cairo CG 42225, v. E10) (Jansen-Winkel 2007, 138; Frood 2013, 161; Assmann 2005, 123). Although there are differences in the grammatical construction, in the part of the heart mobilised<sup>573</sup>, and in the fact that the god himself and not a part of his body is mobilised, and although this passage focuses on sensuous celebration even if combined with 'potential ritual settings' (Frood 2013, 171), god is here mobilised to elevate the *jb*-heart to the status of proper guide.

To be sure, the passages from the biographies of Nebnetjeru and Intef are probably more metaphorical, in that they mobilise the conceptualisation of *ntr* to comment on the *jb*-heart alone, whereas *Amenemope* mobilises *ntr* in chapter 10, 18, and 24, as an agent.

From the passages brought into relation with vv. 24.4-24.5 it can then be concluded that, in that passage, god does not only react to the human conduct, but will also be unable to guide the pupil, particularly in his speech. Accordingly, one is advised to avoid neglecting one's *h3.tj*-heart (v. 24.5) by rendering it impure through indiscretion. As pointed out by Rogério Sousa (2006, 77-78), the ritual purification required for temple service progressively gave way, at least in the wisdom literature, to a 'mental' purification as well which became more prominent in the later instructions of *Papyrus Brooklyn* and of

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<sup>569</sup> As argued by Lichtheim (1992, 53), whose opinion was followed here, if *tp-r3*, 'utterance', is not related to what precedes the statement involving *ntr*, it is only god who is mobilised. However, if *tp-r3* is part of the sentence, it has to be translated differently: *tp-r3 ntr pw m h.t nb.t*, 'it is a divine utterance in each body' (see also Meyer 1999, 42).

<sup>570</sup> On the context of Third Intermediate Period biographies see Frood (2013, 154-57).

<sup>571</sup> Shupak (1993, 309) prefers the translation 'the heart is god.'

<sup>572</sup> On *r3-jb* see Nyord (2009a, 57-59, 61-63 with references).

<sup>573</sup> The term *jb* is here used, possibly because of the association with the formula *šms jb* that immediately precedes it.

*Papyrus Insinger*<sup>574</sup>. While the dualistic concept of a ‘mind’ separate from the ‘body’ is alien to the ancient Egyptian culture, in terms of cultural translation it is certainly useful to think of the purification of the heart as ‘mental’ purification<sup>575</sup>.

One may wonder whether this sense is maintained in T. Turin CGT 58005, a copy perhaps slightly earlier than P. BM EA 10474 recto<sup>576</sup>, in which one reads *fk3*, ‘gift’, instead of *fn̄d*, ‘nose’ (see no. 51.3). The term *fk3*<sup>577</sup> is not frequent in the instructions of the Pharaonic period<sup>578</sup>, but it is attested once in P. BM EA 10474 recto (in chapter 20, v. 21.3 (see no. 50)).

In her translation, Lichtheim (1976, 160 with n. 24) opts for the alternative ‘gift’. In contrast, Grumach (1972, 153, 155; also Shirun-Grumach 1991, 246nXXIV.4-a)) prefers the reading *fn̄d*, ‘nose’, and supports her option with the similarities, pointed out above, with chapter 15, v. 17.7 (see also Vernus 2010a, 433n191). Rueda (2003, 129) also rejects the reading *fk3*, ‘gift’.

Assmann (1993, 111n39; 1995, 195n 30) also prefers the reading ‘nose’, as ‘gift is pointless because for Amenemope everything is a gift of god’ (1995, 195n 30). Although the context of chapter 20, v. 21.5, is different, Assmann (2006a, 259-60) does not dismiss in the same way the statement that Ma’at is *ƒ3(.t) ʕ3(.t) n(.jt) ntr*, ‘a great gift of god’ (see no. 50). Additionally, what Mark Taylor remarked about the claim that in certain societies religion is undifferentiated from other cultural aspects, can also be applied here: ‘if everything is divine, then, in a certain sense, nothing is sacred. If structuralism and poststructuralism have taught us anything, it is that identity is inescapably differential: there can be no religion apart from its opposite. Thus, when religion is everywhere, it is nowhere’ (1998, 7). Therefore, it is arguably more useful to take the passage in T. Turin CGT 58005 as having a more specific say.

As pointed out by Vernus (2010a, 433n192) the terms *fn̄d* and *fk3* share the same initial letter, and, implied in his remark, is the possibility of a mistake from one of the

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<sup>574</sup> Perhaps physical purity and mental, or moral, purity are best seen as forming a spectrum, as hinted at by Quack (2013, 152): ‘A possible differentiation of purity in the physical and the moral sense hardly seems possible.’

<sup>575</sup> See Nyord (2009a, 65-66).

<sup>576</sup> See Dils (2014 with references).

<sup>577</sup> Lemma no. 64020 in the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae*.

<sup>578</sup> It is attested in the *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu*, O. Ashmolean 1938.912, v. 6.6, and in the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 20, v. 21.3 (see no. 50).

copyists. Laisney (2007, 209 with n. 1193) also raises the possibility that this passage may be corrupted in either one or the other manuscript.

Without further copies containing this passage it is difficult to assess whether one of the copyists indeed made a mistake or whether one of the two versions is an intentional variation<sup>579</sup>, perhaps as a reinterpretation reflecting a different conceptualisation of the roles of *ntr*. Either way, ‘although production of manuscript originals and copies involves variations, both intentional and by error, ... the reader experiences a single, fixed copy’ (Quirke 2004, 30). In the same line of reasoning, it is useful to recall the suggestion by James Hoch that even the garbled copies of the *Instruction of Khety* would have made sense to the Deir el-Medina audiences copying and reading them (1991-1992, 88).

We must then admit the possibility that the reading *fk3*, ‘gift’, made sense to the copyist and to the receivers of T. Turin CGT 58005. As its origin is not even known<sup>580</sup>, it is currently impossible to determine the milieu in which the manuscript circulated, more specifically if local copies of chapters 10 and 18 corresponded to the content of P. BM EA 10474 recto. Assuming they did, one may put them into relation to the notion of the *h3.tj*-heart as a gift of god.

As argued above, chapters 10, 18, and 24 from P. BM EA 10474 recto may indicate that what one says affects the degree of purity of one’s heart and that, in turn, determines whether one is able to be guided by god or not. That idea does not seem to be fundamentally altered by the version of v. 24.4 from T. Turin CGT 58005, as what the text may imply is that the *h3.tj*-heart that is offered by god does not merely consist of the faculties associated with that organ, but is naturally predisposed according to the divine guidance. Thus, the difference between the metaphors seems to be primarily one of degree: on v. 24.4 of P. BM EA 10474 recto the god is intensely present in the person, albeit probably only as long as conditions of purity are met, whereas on the same passage in T. Turin CGT 58005 the god is available to assist the person, but from a distance. In the latter source god is then mobilised as a provider.

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<sup>579</sup> On which see Quirke (2004, 29 with references).

<sup>580</sup> See Dils (2014 with references).

By making a comparison between v. 24.4 from T. Turin CGT 58005 and chapter 20, v. 21.5<sup>581</sup>, Laisney (2007, 210) suggests that: ‘Le cœur de l’homme doit en effet se régler sur la Maât, et, au jugement des morts, il est pesé avec celle-ci.’ This interpretation has important implications in terms of divine punishment, especially because it involves its eschatological extension, which is rarely attested in the Egyptian instructions. To the extent that actions during life may affect the outcome of one’s judgement after death, it could be argued that this passage might relate to the funerary discourse. However, it is also arguable that ‘the achievement of ethical rationalization of Egyptian religion was reduced by the fact that, in the synthetic view of life, the consequences of human action could be deflected through magic’ (Otto 2004, 93). Although the case can be made that the use of ritual to overcome the judgement of the dead did not lead to a dismissal of ethics<sup>582</sup>, afterlife concerns are not necessarily a priority in the instructions’ discourse. As Adams (2008, 47) remarks about *Amenemope*, ‘public acts are the primary focus’. Contrarily to the *Instruction for the King Merikare*<sup>583</sup>, and to biographies and pictorial depictions in tombs<sup>584</sup>, New Kingdom instructions do not openly address the judgement of the dead. Of course, in what concerns the use of the instructions the matter may have been completely different. From the point of view of audiences, the instructions could have helped one prepare his own judgement in the Confucian sense that one ought to focus on leading a morally good life before wondering about death and what comes after (Keown 2013, 85). The texts certainly left that option available to the audiences, but an explicit concern with the afterlife is not normally part of the discourse of the Egyptian instructions. Therefore, Laisney’s suggestion will not be followed here, as the focus of the passage is on the pragmatic relation with god and with others on earth, and not on the afterlife<sup>585</sup>.

Since the passage in T. Turin CGT 58005 does not indicate a concern with the afterlife, but instead with earthly life, whichever punishment that could be implied on v. 24.5 would have occurred during the pupil’s life. The text in this version does not suggest

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<sup>581</sup> ‘(jr m3<sup>c</sup>(.t) f3(.t) ʿ3(.t) n(.jt) ntr) As for Ma’at, it is a graeft gift of god’ (see no. 50).

<sup>582</sup> See Assmann (2005, 79) and Lichtheim (1992, 125).

<sup>583</sup> P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, vv. 53-57.

<sup>584</sup> See Lichtheim (1992, 97, 119, 121-22).

<sup>585</sup> Interestingly, chapter 30 B of the *Book of the Dead*, which is often associated with the weighing of the heart, may also not refer primarily to that context, but, instead, to the ritual reanimation of the mummy (see Sousa 2011, 40).

any difference from the version in the papyrus in the British Museum, and, as suggested above, the unspecified punishment to the pupil may take the form of uncooperativeness from the deity in response to the offense of neglecting his *ḥ3.tj*-heart.

### 3.1.3.4 Summary and concluding remarks

Table no. 4. Summary of transgressions and respective divine punishments relating to inflammatory and false speech in the *Instruction of Amenemope*.

Text	Transgressions	Punishments	Divine agents	Observations
<i>Instruction of Amenemope</i> , P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 8 (see no. 43)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Saying hurtful words (v. 10.21).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Being afflicted by the god's <i>b3.w</i>-wrath (v. 11.5).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>God (<i>ntr</i>) (v. 11.5).</li> </ul>	
<i>Instruction of Amenemope</i> , P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 10 (see no. 44)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To speak falsely by separating one's <i>ḥ3.tj</i>-heart from one's tongue (v. 13.17).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Being in the grip (lit. hand) of the god (v. 14.1).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>God (<i>p3 ntr</i>) (v. 14.1).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Speaking falsely will further lead to incompatibility (<i>bw.t</i>) with god (vv. 13.16 and 14.3).</li> </ul>
<i>Instruction of Amenemope</i> , P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 24 (see no. 53)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To neglect one's <i>ḥ3.tj</i>-heart by being indiscreet (vv. 24.2-24.5).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Possibly losing god's guidance (v. 24.5).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>God (<i>ntr</i>) (v. 24.5).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The punishment is suggested by the imperative <i>z3w tw</i>, 'beware' (v. 24.5).</li> </ul>

From these three passages, chapters 8 and 10 follow a similar structural pattern and mobilise divine punishments which are synonymic, but otherwise differ importantly. In turn, chapter 24 forms a pattern with chapter 10.

The pattern shared by chapters 8 and 10 lies in the identification of the transgression followed by a list of rewards that the pupil will reap if he refrains from transgressing, and at the end of that list is the assurance that the pupil will avoid divine punishment. This punishment consists in chapter 8 of an affliction provoked by the god's *b3.w*-wrath, and in chapter 10 of being in the grip (lit. hand) of the god. As argued, these two punishments are



synonymous, inasmuch as to be in the hand of the god involves the same kind of affliction, that we would term psychological, as the god's *b3.w*.

Interestingly, the transgressions, while pertaining to the category of improper speech, are not identical and have different motivations. If in chapter 8 what is reproached is rudeness and verbal hostility towards others, in chapter 10 the text rebukes speech that is insincere, possibly because of fear, either of the interlocutor or of breaking the social convention that makes the interaction feel mandatory. It is also relevant that, whereas god is only mentioned once in chapter 8, he is mentioned three times in chapter 10. In the other two attestations it is revealed that false speech, even if motivated by fear and not by an intention to deceive and take advantage of someone, will make the pupil incompatible (*bw.t*) with god.

It is this theme that arguably connects chapter 10 to chapter 24. In the latter, to be indiscreet will negatively affect the pupil's *h3.tj*-heart, identified with the nose of god (P. BM EA 10474 recto) or as a gift of god (T. Turin CGT 58005). Both versions suggest that failing to look after one's *h3.tj*-heart will, like in chapter 10, provoke the alienation of god and suffer, as the consequence that can be construed as a divine punishment, the loss of divine guidance mentioned in chapter 18, vv. 20.5-20.6.

From the transgressions in these three passages, the only one that is exceptional in the broader context of the instructions of the Middle and New Kingdoms is the one of chapter 10 because of the cause underlying it. The mobilisation of god in that passage is also exceptional, in that it seems to have as main motivation the encouragement of the pupil to be self-assertive, even if through fear of being afflicted by and losing support from god. Otherwise, the transgressions mentioned in the three passages discussed are common throughout the instructions. But, as said at the start of this section, the novelty of *Amenemope* is the mobilisation of this topic in association with a deity, which may be due to the incorporation of elements from the personal piety discourse.

#### 3.1.4 Desecration of tombs

The title of this category is tentative and ambiguous because the passage that justifies it – *Instruction for the King Merikare*, P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, vv.

70-71 (see no. 22) – ‘gehört zu den schwierigsten des ganzen Werkes’ (Quack 1992, 43nb)). This passage is at the start of what Blumenthal (1980, 25) considers to be the third part of the text between vv. 68 and 108<sup>586</sup>, which the author designates as “‘historischen Abschnitt’”. This part details the military exploits of the king who is credited with the authorship of the text. The translation of the selected passage from P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso (see no. 22) reads:

(68) (*jw d3m.w* (69) *r 3jr d3m.w* \* *mj sr{.w}.n tp(j).w-<sup>c</sup> r=s* \*) **Recruits** (69) **will drive away recruits**, according to the foretelling of ancestors about it.

(*h3 r km.t* (70) *m hr(.t)-ntr* \* *m 3d jz.w{t} m 3d.t zp.w* \* *jw jr.n=j mj.t(j)t hpr mj.t(j)t* \* *mj jr.t(w) n {n}* (71) *thj{.t} n mj.t(j)t m-<sup>c</sup> ntr* \*) One fought against Egypt (70) in the necropolis, by hacking tombs and through the destruction of deeds. I did the same and the same happened, like is done through god to (71) one who transgresses with the same.

(*m bjn hn<sup>c</sup> -rs.j* \* *jw=k rh.tj sr.n hnw r=s* \*) Do not be evil with Upper Egypt, as you know what the Residence has foretold about it.

(72) (*hpr.n <n>f [mj] hpr<.t> nn* \* *n thj{.t}.n=sn mj dd=sn [r=s* \*) This happened as that will happen. They did not transgress, just as they said about it.

(*hzz=j tnw mkj (?) {j} [\*]* (73) [*t3*]=*s rs.j{.t} r [t3.t (?)]* \* *jtj.n=j s(j) mj gp n(j) mw* \*) I chose (lit. favoured) Thinis and *Mkj (?)* (73), its southern border by [Tjat (?)], and I seized it like a flash flood (lit. cloud of water).

(*n jr s.t* (74) [*mr-jb*]-*R<sup>c</sup> m3<sup>c</sup>-hrw* \* *sfh hr=s n hn{n}<.t>* \* *s[htp hr.t]=s whm htm.w* \*) Meribre, justified, (74) did not do it. Be gentle about it to the governed (?). Satisfy their [needs], renew the agreements (lit. seals).

(75) (*nn w<sup>c</sup>b<.t> rdj sdg3=f* \* *nfr jr.t n m-hr* \*) There is no water current that allows itself to hide. To act for the future is good.

According to the suggested rendering, the transgression consists, first, in fighting in a necropolis and, second, in damaging or pillaging the tombs therein (vv. 68-71). However, the readings ‘necropolis’ and ‘tombs’, as well as the idea of destruction or pillaging of the tombs have been contested<sup>587</sup> (Quack 1992, 43nb), 44nc), 86). But, conceding the

<sup>586</sup> Since v. 106 is rubricated (see no. 23), it can be argued that the next part of the text starts there.

<sup>587</sup> Quack (1992, 43nb) understands *hr.t-ntr* on v. 70 not as ‘necropolis’, but as ‘subjection to god’, and translates the passage accordingly: ‘Wer gegen Ägypten kämpft, verfällt dem Gott (??)’ (1992, 43). He (44nc) also points out that the reading *jz.w*, ‘tombs’, on the same verse requires the emendation of *jz.wt* recorded in the only manuscript with this passage, namely P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, and that the verb *h3* on v. 69 refers only to fighting and not to plundering (1992, 86). Quack (86) further remarks that,

possibility that the text does deal with a necropolis and something that is done to its tombs, Quack (85) compares this passage with vv. 78-79<sup>588</sup> and suggests that the text advises the addressee against reusing stone from other tombs in order to build his own. While this possibility cannot be entirely put aside, the wording of vv. 69-71 seems to refer to a context of war<sup>589</sup> set in the past<sup>590</sup> and to an admission of guilt from the putative author. Particularly the latter feature has prompted several authors to establish a connection between vv. 69-71 and 119-123<sup>591</sup> (e.g., Gardiner 1914, 23; Tavares 2007, 239n114; Lopez 1973, 188-89; Vernus 2010a, 182; Lichtheim 1973, 109n24; Blumenthal 1980, 24, 26). This connection will be discussed further below.

Besides the uncertainty as to whether a necropolis and tombs were involved or not and as to what was done to them, what role *ntr* plays may be debatable as well. To begin with, not all translators take *ntr* on v. 70 to play an active role<sup>592</sup>. Even if an active role is to be understood, as proposed in the translation offered above, not all authors agree with its implications. After acknowledging the challenges posed by the textual transmission of the passage at hand (vv. 69-71), Pascal Vernus (2010a, 199n46) conjectures that: ‘Toutefois, l’idée d’ensemble paraît bel et bien être: “celui qui se sert de l’épée périra par l’épée”; les

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even if the text refers to a fighting in a necropolis and if tombs were used as fortified positions, armies at that time would not have had machinery capable of inflicting heavy damage to the tombs. However, Christian Leitz (1996, 139) points out that Quack (1992, 105, 129-30) mobilises textual evidence suggesting that First Intermediate Period armies were capable of severely damaging stone monuments.

<sup>588</sup> ‘(78) (*m ḥdj mn.w n(.jw) ky \* wh3=k jnr m r3-3w m kd* (79) *jz=k m sšn.yt jr.yt r jrr.t(j)=sj*) Do not damage the monument of another. You should quarry stone from Tura. Do not build (79) your tomb from salvaged material which was made for what it will make’ (P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso) (Quack 1992, 46-47, 180; Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 189).

<sup>589</sup> Quack (1992, 86) is skeptical about the reference to fighting in a necropolis, ‘wo es nichts zu gewinnen und nichts zu verlieren gibt’, and, as mentioned above, preferred an alternate understanding of *hr.t-ntr*.

<sup>590</sup> As opposed to the admonition on vv. 78-79 which, from the standpoint of the author, refers to a transgression that is only hypothetical and not yet materialised. That would also be the case on v. 70 if one were to take the *m* before *3d* and *3d.t* as a negative imperative (see e.g., Tavares 2007, 238n111).

<sup>591</sup> ‘(119) (*m=k zp ḥsj ḥpr m-h3.w=j ʿd.tw* (120) *sp3.wt (?) n(.jw)t tnw ḥpr.n js m jr.t.n=j rh.n<=j>* (121) *st r-s3 jrj.tw(=tw){=j} m=k d3r.w=j ḥnt.j jr[.t].n=j ḥsj pw gr.t <ḥd.jt> nn 3ḥ n=f* (122) *srwd sw[s]t.n=f {shn kd}<kd shn.t.n>=f smnh {sʿn}<sʿsʿ.t>.n=f z33.tj* (123) *r=s db3.tw shj m mj.t(j)t=f md(.t) pw jrr.wt nb.t*) See, a vile event took place in my time: (120) regions of Thinis were hacked. It happened from what I did, (but) <I> learned (about) (121) it after it was done. See, my shortcoming is due to (lit. in front of) that which I did. <Destruction> is thus wretched. It is to no avail (122) to restore what one destroyed, <to rebuild what> one <demolished>, to embellish <what> one <damaged>. Beware (123) of it. A blow is repaid with its equivalent. Everything one does is entangled’ (P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso) (Quack 1992, 70-75, 191-92; Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 193, 210-11).

<sup>592</sup> For instance, Faulkner (1972b, 185) proposes the following rendering: ‘I acted thus and so it happened, just as he who had transgressed likewise did against God’. And, with a few differences, Lichtheim (1973, 102) proposes: ‘As I did it, so it happened, as is done to one who strays from god’s path’.

dieux châtient l’auteur d’une mauvaise action par ce en quoi il a péché; en l’occurrence, la destruction de nécropole est sanctionnée par une action semblable’. Tavares (2007, 238-39) also supports the interpretation that god punishes the king to whom authorship of the text is attributed. However, Quack (1992, 44ne)) draws a very different conclusion: ‘Ferner ist zu beachten, daß *irt n* “handeln zugunsten von” heißt. Folglich ist der Sprecher derjenige, der vom göttlichen Eingriff profitiert, nicht etwa, wie allgemein angenommen, sein Opfer.’ While Quack is right in observing that the grammar indicates the narrator is the beneficiary of the divine action<sup>593</sup>, the context of the passage seems to indicate the opposite, along the lines of the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, v. D100: *hsf ntr m-mj.tt*, ‘God opposes with the same’<sup>594</sup> (see no. 4). Therefore, it will be assumed for the purposes of this discussion that the text does refer to fighting in a necropolis, to resulting damage to the tombs located there, and to divine retribution for that kind of act.

This topic is unique in the context of the Egyptian instructions, though not in the wider context of the Egyptian wisdom literature<sup>595</sup>. Considerations of a reflective, personal, and less pragmatic nature are not common in the private instructions<sup>596</sup>, but are a significant feature of the royal instructions<sup>597</sup> which are themselves unique to the Middle Kingdom<sup>598</sup>. There are a few attestations of *hr.t-ntr*, ‘necropolis’<sup>599</sup>, and *jz*,

<sup>593</sup> Compare with *Sinuhe*, P. Berlin P 3022 + P. Amherst m-q (B), v. 308: *nn šw3.w jr.jy n=f mj.t(j)t*, ‘there is no poor to whom the like was done’ (Allen 2015, 150-51). Compare also with *Merikare*, P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, v. 129: *jr n ntr jr=f n=k mj.t(j)t*, ‘Act for god, so that he does the same for you’ (Quack 1992, 195). To express the opposite, one would expect *jrj r*, ‘act against’ (Allen 2010b, 87).

<sup>594</sup> As mentioned above, Quack is skeptical about a military skirmish in a necropolis which resulted in damaged and/or plundered tombs. Instead, he points out that: ‘In positivem Sinne ist auch E 70 f. zu verstehen, wo *irt n=* ein Handeln zugunsten des Vaters beschreibt. Deshalb ist unwahrscheinlich, daß die weniger klaren vorausgehenden Sätze von einem Frevel des Königs gesprochen haben’ (1992, 86). He also suggests that vv. 68-71 should be understood in reference with the *Prophecy of Neferti* at the end of which just reward or punishment are promised: the transgression on vv. 68-71 from *Merikare* would thus be judged in light of the prophecy of the ancestors (mentioned on v. 69) (1992, 86). Additionally, the king would have been promised that god would act favourably towards him (1992, 86). According to Quack’s interpretation, god would thus play a much different role than the one suggested here.

<sup>595</sup> As mentioned by Gardiner (1914, 28n7), there is a parallel to the reference of hacking of tombs on v. 70 in the *Admonitions of Ipuwer*, P. Leiden I 344 recto, v. 12.10: *n hr t3 [...] wbd{.t} twt 3d jz.wy jr.j*, ‘Did not the land fall? [...] Statues were burned, and the tombs thereof hacked’ (Gardiner 1909, 83; Enmarch 2014); see a different interpretation in Tobin (2003d, 205).

<sup>596</sup> These are ‘dominated by the imperative’ (Quirke 2004, 90). But an exception is chapter 18 of the *Instruction of Amenemope* (see no. 49), as demonstrated by Laisney (2007, 178).

<sup>597</sup> Quirke (2004, 112) describes them, as well as the *Instruction of Khety*, as ‘reflective, dominated by descriptive mode’.

<sup>598</sup> Gnirs (2013, 127n3, 132n32, 141n112, 169, 173-175) suggests they may have been composed in the Eighteenth dynasty (see also Vernus 2010a, 205), but see Hagen (2012, 155 with n. 23).

‘tomb’<sup>600</sup>, across the instructions of the Middle and New Kingdoms, but in different contexts, with only one later attestation in *The Prohibitions* (O. DeM 1632, v. A1<sup>601</sup>) coming close to the passage at hand in *Merikare*. The passage in *The Prohibitions* is not entirely preserved and, while the mostly independent aphorisms may form a textual unity<sup>602</sup>, it does not seem that the verses that follow it and which are themselves fragmentary can further enlighten the context of that passage.

The admission of fallibility on the narrator’s part is also not common in the instructions. To be sure, the narrator of *Ptahhotep* admits he is no longer fit to remain in office due to the ailments of old age (P. Prisse, prologue, vv. D7-D28). Much closer to the tone of *Merikare*, however, is the *Instruction of Amenemhat I*, another royal instruction whose narrator admits to having been unable to prevent his assassination (P. Millingen, vv. 1.5-2.4). In fact, these two texts (*Merikare* and *Amenemhat I*) are often remarked to be part of a different approach to the presentation of the king in the Middle Kingdom. This new approach, which would break from a more distant model of kingship perceived as dominant in the Old Kingdom, involved showing the king as more concerned for and empathic towards his subjects (Ray 2009, 193; Shaw 2012, 32). At the other end of this more humane side of the king would be his fallibility<sup>603</sup>

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<sup>599</sup> The term *hr.t-ntr* (lemma no. 500066 in the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae*) is attested in the context of advice concerning the timely preparation of one’s tomb in the *Instruction of Hordjedef*, O. München 3400, v. H2.2, O. Gardiner 62, v. H6.5 (see no. 1), and in the *Instruction for the King Merikare*, P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, vv. 127-28. The passages in *Hordjedef*, O. München 3400, v. H2.2, and in *Merikare*, vv. 127-28, are similar.

<sup>600</sup> The term *jz* (lemma no. 31010 in the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae*) is attested more times and in more texts: 1) in the *Instruction of Hordjedef*, O. Gardiner 12, v. H4.1, in the context of setting up a cult of the dead in one’s benefit; 2), in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, maxim 19, v. D315, where the audience is warned that the greedy (*ʿwn-jb*) will have no tomb; 3) in the *Instruction of a Man for His Son*, O. Berlin P 14356, section 7, v. 7.7, where it is said that there is no tomb for the one who does not pronounce the name of the king; 4) in the *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu*, S. Cairo CG 20538, section 6 (short version), v. 6.4, in which, it is stated, in a way similar to the previous attestation, that there is no tomb for the one who rebels against the king; 5) in the *Instruction for the King Merikare*, P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, v. 79, where the addressee is advised against reusing the materials of other tombs when building his own tomb; 6) in the *Instruction of Amennakht*, O. Lacau, vv. 36-38, where the pupil addresses his teacher saying that to finish school is better than anointing oil in the tomb; 7) and in *The Prohibitions*, O. DeM 1632, v. A1, where the audience is counselled against damaging (*ḥdj*) a tomb. The term *jz* is also attested in the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, prologue, v. 2.10, in the context of the presentation of the author, who, among other attributes, is described as possessing a tomb in Abydos.

<sup>601</sup> The reading *jz* is uncertain, however (Hagen 2005, 127).

<sup>602</sup> See the cogent arguments advanced by Hagen (2005, 153-54).

<sup>603</sup> See Shaw (2012, 32) and Tavares (2007, 200-202). The humanisation of the king in the Middle Kingdom is observable in statuary as well; see, for instance, the head of a statue of Senuseret III in the Calouste Gulbenkian Museum (Araújo 2006, 67).

which included criticism to the king. Even if it is accepted that marked criticism to the king was not common before the New Kingdom<sup>604</sup>, the passages from the *Instruction for the King Merikare* dealing with the presumable ravaging of a necropolis and consequent admission of guilt are an exception (Griffiths 1991, 169-70).

If one accepts the new discursive way of presenting the king across art and literature, there are a few potential problems one must contend with. As pointed out by John Ray (2009, 194), it is relevant that the narrator of *Merikare*, whose troops ravaged a necropolis, is 'located safely' in the past, 'because a ruling king would not have been free to confess in this way'. Discussing the same text, Roland Enmarch (2010, 673) observes that: 'This rather human, fallible portrayal of kingship contrasts sharply with normative ideology, and it is unclear how Middle Kingdom Egyptians would have interpreted this teaching'. Enmarch tries to conciliate this discrepancy by pointing out that the addressee of *Merikare* and his father belonged to the defeated Herakleopolitan dynasty, but this same explanation cannot account for the shortcoming of Amenemhat I in the instruction with his name. Behind the interpretation of a new strategy that involves presenting the king in a more flattering way in Middle Kingdom literary texts is often the assumption that those texts were either composed in or ordered by the royal court (e.g., Enmarch 2010, 666). But, as already overviewed above<sup>605</sup>, it is not entirely clear whether and in what way the royal court was involved in the production of literary texts. At any rate, if texts like the *Instruction for the King Merikare* were composed by individuals unaffiliated with the royal court, it is not implausible to conceive that the latter would have had to consent to their circulation (see also Baines 1991, 161n104).

Besides the opposition between royal ideology and the recognition of the fallibility of the king, Middle Kingdom literary texts manifest other ambivalences and contrasts, such as the contrast between a certain degree of individualism and one's more or less established role in a hierarchical society (see Parkinson 1996, 150-52). Concerning the latter, Parkinson (1996, 153-55) provides an account of potentially subversive elements in Middle Kingdom literary texts that might be applicable to

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<sup>604</sup> See John Gwyn Griffiths (1991, 168).

<sup>605</sup> See chapter 2, section 2.4.

*Merikare* as well: by addressing the potentially subversive elements openly, literary texts contain their subversive potential because they allow the concern about them to be expressed and recognise their negative implications, while neutralising them in the very literary expression. Applying Parkinson's interpretation to the passage on vv. 69-71 and to the possibly related passage on vv. 119-123 of *Merikare*, one may observe that it is admitted that the king was at fault, which is potentially subversive because it spells out that kings are not necessarily free of mistakes and, consequently, may cause harm to their subjects<sup>606</sup>. But far from leaving this episode dangling and unanswered, which could transmit to the audience the idea that the shortcomings of kings could affect its members without further consequences for the king, the text asserts that the god makes sure that the king will be punished in the same proportion (vv. 70-71). As argued by José Ramos (2011, 16-17), the contrary, namely having no entity ensuring no act is left without a consequence deemed befitting, was a significant source of discomfort and insecurity in the pre-classical cultures.

The conclusion that may be drawn from the above observations is that the divine retribution against the king on vv. 69-71 possibly takes place in the context of a new discursive presentation of the kingship, which lauds its benefits while acknowledging its imperfections, and of a discursive strategy which seeks to neutralise points of dissent by openly addressing them.

On vv. 69-71 the author of *Merikare* not only alerts the addressee to the fact that even an indirect transgression by the king will be punished by god according to the talion principle, but, in keeping with the reflective tone that characterises a significant portion of the royal instructions, he formulates the advice as textbook *Tun-Ergehen-Zusammenhang*<sup>607</sup>: '(*ḥ3 r km.t (70) m hr(jt)-ntr \* m 3d jz.w{t} m 3d.t zp.w \* jw jr.n=j mj.t(j)t hpr mj.t(j)t \* mj jr.t(w) n {n} (71) thj{.t} n mj.t(j)t m-<sup>c</sup> ntr \**) One fought against Egypt (70) in the necropolis, by hacking tombs and through the destruction of deeds. I did the same and the same happened, like is done through god to (71) one who transgresses with the same' (see no. 22). Regardless of whether that passage is related, vv. 119-123

<sup>606</sup> Interestingly, the king's admission of guilt on vv. 119-123 is preceded by considerations on the nature of kingship starting with what was probably intended (and perceived) as an eulogy: *j3w.t pw nfr.t n(j)-sw.yt*, 'The kingship is a beautiful office' (P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, v. 116) (Quack 1992, 70-71, 191).

<sup>607</sup> Tavares (2007, 236n85) prefers the term *Haltung-Ergehen-Zusammenhang*.

reproduce the same act-consequence nexus<sup>608</sup>: '(119) (*m=k zp hsj hpr m-h3.w=j ʿd.tw* (120) *sp3.wt (?) n(jw)t tnw hpr.n js m jr.t.n=j rh.n<=j>* (121) *st r-s3 jrj.tw(=tw){=j} m=k d3r.w=j hnt.j jr[.t].n=j hsj pw gr.t <hd.jt> nn 3h n=f* (122) *srwd sw[s]t.n=f {shn kd}<kd shn.t.n>=f smnh {sʿn}<sʿsʿ.t>.n=f z33.tj* (123) *r=s db3.tw shj m mj.t(j)t=f md(.t) pw jrr.wt nb.t*) See, a vile event took place in my time: (120) regions of Thinis were hacked. It happened from what I did, (but) <I> learned (about) (121) it after it was done. See, my shortcoming is due to (lit. in front of) that which I did. <Destruction> is thus wretched. It is to no avail (122) to restore what one destroyed, <to rebuild what> one <demolished>, to embellish <what> one <damaged>. Beware (123) of it. A blow is repaid with its equivalent. Everything one does is entangled' (P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso) (Quack 1992, 70-75, 191-92; Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 193, 210-11).

As pointed out by Adams (2008, 20) in commenting the latter passage, 'although this statement refers to a specific historical circumstance<sup>609</sup>, the logic behind it surely applies to other situations.' In fact, with the assertions on vv. 70-71 and on v. 123 the author spells out what could be considered a brief reflection on responsibility<sup>610</sup> and retribution. An interesting feature about the retribution evoked by the author is that it may also concern indirect responsibility, because the text has the narrator accepting responsibility (v. 121) for an act he did not learn about until after it was committed (v. 120).

To begin with, the narration recounts events from the sole point of view of the king who authors the instruction. Therefore, even though the actions described were performed by soldiers, it is the king, as their commander-in-chief, who is held accountable for their (apparently) rogue actions. In fact, the soldiers are subsumed in the person of the narrator when he says, both on v. 70 and on v. 120, 'I did' (*jr.n=j* and *jr.t.n=j*, respectively). This 'idea of representation underlying agency is rooted in a paradox: the paradox that who or what is represented is both absent and present at the

<sup>608</sup> Brunner (1963, 104-105) takes this passage to be the clearest formulation of the principle that each action is accorded its respective punishment or recompense, and Blumenthal (1980, 18) also takes it to be a unique formulation about the 'Zusammenhang von Tat und Folge' in the ancient Egyptian history of ideas (*Geschichtsdenken*). While its underlying principle is common in the instructions (see another example in Adams (2008, 20)), its explicit formulation is certainly uncommon.

<sup>609</sup> To be sure, the text refers to an event set in the past, but it is not necessarily historical. Lopez (1973, 188-89) attempted to find evidence of it, but to no avail.

<sup>610</sup> On the genealogy of the term 'responsibility' see Asad (2000, 56n29).



same time' (Asad 2000, 34). This raises questions concerning responsibility<sup>611</sup>, but the text on vv. 70-71 is clear that, regardless of whether the soldiers are also individually held accountable or not, the king is liable before god<sup>612</sup>.

Vv. 69-71 are not clear as to whether the damage to the tombs took place under the king's instructions or not, but, on the possibly related vv. 120-21, the king claims he only learned of the ravaging of regions of Thinis after the fact<sup>613</sup>, as mentioned above. The author thus classifies the incident as an accident and clears the narrating king from any immoral intention. The text is sympathetic towards the king for his lack of intention and awareness<sup>614</sup>, but privileges the infallibility of the act-consequence nexus over any extenuating circumstances.

A final remark may be made about the use of *db3*<sup>615</sup> on v. 123<sup>616</sup>. In the universe of the pharaonic instructions, this term, in the sense of 'to repay' and 'to retribute'<sup>617</sup>, is attested only on this verse and in the Late Period *Instruction of Papyrus Brooklyn*, P. Brooklyn 47.218.135, vv. 3.5 and fragment 29.1 (Dils 2014; Jasnow 1992, 63, 65, 153)<sup>618</sup>. This term, which is also used in the economical sense of 'to (re)pay'<sup>619</sup>, refers to the (certainly) universal perception that actions create debt and imbalance between agents: the debt created by a positive action (normally something that is given or added) requires that a compensation is given back, whereas a negative action (typically something that is taken

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<sup>611</sup> Because of the narrator's viewpoint the text is silent as to whether the soldiers involved were also punished by god or not, and the views of the author as well as of the audiences are inaccessible to us. As pointed out by Muhlestein (2008, 188-96 with references), desecration of tombs was punishable with death at least in the Middle and New Kingdoms. But it would have been impractical, not to mention counterproductive, to execute a whole army.

<sup>612</sup> About v. 123 Jan Assmann (1999c, 231) comments that: 'This kind of connectivity, however, seems to refer, not to divine punishment, but, rather, to a kind of immanent providence which the Egyptians call Ma'at. Ma'at is what one could call "iustitia connectiva": the principle that links actions with consequences.' Since Ma'at is not explicitly mobilised in this passage, one may question whether the text in fact refers to Ma'at, as a principle enforced by other agents (see the discussion above in subsection 3.1.2.4.3), or whether it refers to an automatic act-consequence nexus that runs parallel to it.

<sup>613</sup> P. Carlsberg VI adds a negation to v. 120: *hpr.n n js m jr.t.n=j*, 'It did not happen from what I did' (Quack 1992, 191; Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 193n95). Vernus (2010a, 193n95) conjectures that the copyist added the negation out of shock at the king's admission, but it does not seem to be a significant change, as P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso also states that the king was not aware of the incident.

<sup>614</sup> The two are synonymous to an extent, as argued by Asad (2000, 35).

<sup>615</sup> Lemma no. 183170 in the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae*.

<sup>616</sup> *Db3.tw shj m mj.t(j)t=f*, 'A blow is repaid with its equivalent'.

<sup>617</sup> On this rendering of *db3* see Vernus (1985, 71, 74).

<sup>618</sup> It is also attested in the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV* (= P. BM EA 10684 verso, vv. 2.3-2.4), but not in the context of retribution.

<sup>619</sup> See examples in the Late-Egyptian Miscellany in P. Lansing = P. BM EA 9994 recto, v. 7.1, and in the letter of Tjaroy in P. BN 196.IV, v. 3 (Late Ramesside Letter no. 25).

away or deducted) equally requires a compensation by taking something away, in order to restore a sense of balance between the agents. In contexts where it is accepted that divine agents participate and intervene in human lives, they may effect the required compensations, which is the case at least in the first passage considered (vv. 70-71).

### 3.1.5 **Opposition to the king**

This category deals with the unwillingness to accept the ruler's authority, and possibly even with the active contestation of it, by those who are expected to comply with the royal projects and directives and without whose cooperation government and administration are impossible. This category gathers four passages from four Middle Kingdom instructions<sup>620</sup>: *Instruction for Kagemni*, P. Prisse, vv. 1.12-2.2 (see no. 3), *Instruction of a Man for His Son*, Ostrakon DeM 1665 + Ostrakon Gardiner 1, section 3, v. 3.6 (see no. 14), Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu, S. Cairo CG 20538 ('short version') and O. Ashmolean 1938.912 ('long version'), section 5, and *Instruction for the King Merikare*, P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, vv. 49-50 (see no. 21). Topics involving the king are mostly absent from the New Kingdom instructions<sup>621</sup>, which justifies why New Kingdom passages are not discussed in this section.

#### 3.1.5.1 *Instruction for Kagemni*, vv. 1.12-2.2

It is possible to contextualise the selected passage from the *Instruction for Kagemni*, P. Prisse, vv. 1.12-2.2, only in relation to what has reached us so far, namely the ending of that text. The topics that precede the passage at hand are: the praise of the one who speaks with self-restraint (vv. 1.1-1.3); exhortation to self-restraint when having a meal with others<sup>622</sup> (vv. 1.3-1.7); advice on how to behave when eating with a glutton (*ꜣꜥ*) or drinking with a drunkard (*th.w*) (vv. 1.7-1.12). In the epilogue, which follows immediately after the

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<sup>620</sup> The passage in the *Instruction of Papyrus Ramesseum II*, P. BM EA 10755 verso, v. 1.6, seems to be related to the present topic, but it is not considered here because of its fragmentary state.

<sup>621</sup> As also pointed out by John Gwyn Griffiths (1991, 173-75) and Alexa Wilke (2006, 134).

<sup>622</sup> Described only as a multitude (*ꜥꜣ.t*) (v. 1.3).

selected passage, the pupils are told to study and practice the advice given in this instruction (vv. 2.3-2.9). The passage from P. Prisse (see no. 3) reads:

(1.12) (*jmj prj rn=k* (2.1) *jw gr=k m r3=k njs.t(w)=k*) Cause your name to come forth, (2.1) while being silent with your mouth, as/so that you are called.

(*m 3 jb=k hr hps* (2.2) *m hr(.j)-jb d3m=k*) Do not be arrogant because of strength (2.2) in the midst of your peers.

(*z3w jtn=k n rh.n=tw hpr.t jrr.t ntr hft hsf=f*) Guard against opposing: one cannot know what will happen and/or what the god will do when he punishes.

Since the *Instruction for Kagemni* is known at the present from a single manuscript alone (P. Prisse), and since it is not easy to assess the extension of its missing part (Hagen 2012, 136), whatever one conjectures about its intended purpose and intended audience must be rooted in the extant text. The fact that this instruction may have been ascribed to a vizier (v. 2.3), and the fact that the extant portion bears similarities with the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*<sup>623</sup>, allow us to conjecture that, like *Ptahhotep*, *Kagemni* was intended for an audience of (future?) high officials. That the passage in question involves work as an official and not a learning setting, as does the epilogue (vv. 2.3-2.7), is clear from vv. 1.12-2.1. That work setting seems to be essentially the same as in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, maxim 13 (see no. 7). Both passages (*Kagemni*, vv. 1.12-2.1, and *Ptahhotep*, maxim 13) seem to refer to an initial stage in the official's career<sup>624</sup>.

The transgression in the passage from *Kagemni* involves using one's physical strength to gain some kind of advantage over one's companions<sup>625</sup> (vv. 2.1-2.2). Whether it involves picking fights or, more subtly, imposing oneself on others is not entirely clear, but the expression 3 *jb*, which may also be understood as being 'insolent' (Shupak 1993, 304) or 'proud' (Sousa 2006, 596), unmistakably marks the behaviour as inappropriate. Perhaps the transgression at hand involves, as in the aforementioned maxim 13 of *Ptahhotep*, excessive competition for a promotion or an office.

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<sup>623</sup> See Simpson (2003b, 149) and Vernus (2010a, 90).

<sup>624</sup> In contrast, the *Instruction of Khety*, P. Sallier II = P. BM EA 10182, section 30, vv. 30.2-30.4 (see no. 13), apparently refers to a more advanced stage, since the official there has men at his disposal. See also the note to v. 2.1 of *Kagemni* in the appendix (see no. 3).

<sup>625</sup> For suggestions on who these might be see the note to v. 2.2 in the appendix (see no. 3). Vernus (2010a, 95n26) draws a parallel between vv. 2.1-2.2 and the *Admonitions of Ipuwer*, P. Leiden I 344 recto, v. 1.6, but the latter is too fragmentary to be of assistance.

The text cautions that insolence will be construed as opposition (*jtn*) (v. 2.2), although it is not entirely clear against whom. If this setting concerns competition among (high) officials in the beginning of their careers, it would seem unlikely that the king would be considered the direct target of that opposition<sup>626</sup>. But the fact that the sanction to the misdemeanour may be determined by the king, referred to as *ntr*, implies that the transgression in question is seen as a level of disruption that threatens the elite hierarchy enough to merit royal intervention. However, this interpretation is contingent upon the identity of *ntr* in this passage as the king (v. 2.2), which is not consensual among all commentators, and upon the implications of the term *jtn*.

Dils (2014) hesitates between the king and the god of the wisdom literature. Carreira (2005, 51) conjectures that, as in many other attestations of the Egyptian wisdom literature, this god is the king. Raver (2001, 174) conjectures that *ntr* in this passage refers ‘to a divine principle’. And Fischer-Elfert (1999a, 62) has doubts that the text refers to the ruling king. Perhaps *Ptahhotep*’s maxim 13 may be of further assistance. The audience is informed on v. D229 that it is *ntr* who promotes a position, and on v. D231 that elbowing<sup>627</sup> will result in being assigned no position at all. Given the context of that passage, it is quite probable that the king<sup>628</sup> is meant, as suggested by Vernus (2010a, 158n120) and Žába (1956, 81)<sup>629</sup>. Both the passage from *Kagemni* and the passage from *Ptahhotep* recommend patience and humility when seeking a position in the administration: *Ptahhotep* arguably informs that the king, perhaps represented by an official, will not bow to pressure, while *Kagemni* warns that the king will punish those who attempt to climb the hierarchical ladder by unseemly means.

The terms *jtn*<sup>630</sup>, ‘to oppose’ or ‘contradict’ and *jtn.w*<sup>631</sup>, ‘opponent’, are not attested in the New Kingdom instructions, but are attested in several Middle Kingdom instructions<sup>632</sup>. From the perspective of the receiving end of the power relation, maxim 31

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<sup>626</sup> Kaplony (1968) assumes, however, that the king is the target of the opposition. But his argument (27, 57-58) is unconvincing, as also noted by Vernus (2010a, 95n27).

<sup>627</sup> Perhaps in the metaphorical sense of aggressive competition.

<sup>628</sup> Even if delegating his role of appointing positions on high officials.

<sup>629</sup> But see Junge (2003, 99).

<sup>630</sup> Lemma no. 33130 in the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae*.

<sup>631</sup> Lemma no. 33180 in the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae*.

<sup>632</sup> The term *jtn.w* is only attested in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, maxim 31, vv. D436, maxim 34, v. D485, and maxim 36, v. D498. The same passages in P. BM EA 10371+10435 (= L1) were not taken into

of the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, gives a few indications about what the *jtn*-opposition could involve. This maxim concerns the management of the pupil's relation with his superior (*hr.j-tp*), who is the overseer of the palace (*jmj-r3 n(.j) pr n(.j)-sw.t*) (vv. D441-D442): as the pupil is financially dependent on him (v. D443), he is told to do his bidding (lit. *hms s3=k*, 'bend your back') (v. D441). The contrary, to turn one's superior into an *jtn.w*-opponent (v. D446), is described as a difficulty (*k3sn*) (v. D446) and as: *nh=tw tr n(.j) sf:t=f*, 'one lives for the duration of his leniency' (v. D447) (Allen 2015, 207). This is certainly a reference to the pupil's financial dependency hinted at on v. D443. The same maxim continues to address the *jtn*-opposition, but from a different point of view: if the pupil seizes the property of a neighbour (v. D450), he will be sued (*šnj*) by him (v. D455); this opposition (*jtn*) is also qualified as a difficulty (*k3sn*) (v. D456)<sup>633</sup>.

The association between *jtn* and a litigation or formal accusation is also apparent in maxims 34 and 36 of the same instruction. In maxim 34, the pupil is counselled to freely give<sup>634</sup> the 'bread of sharing' (*t n(.j) psš.t*) (vv. D481-D483). The text further adds that the hungry one (lit. *šw m h.t=f*, 'empty in his belly') will be an accuser (*srh.y*) (v. D484), and that: '(D485) (*hpr jtn.w m s3hh.w* (D486) *m jr sw r tkn jm=k*) Opposition arises in/from the grumbler; (D486) do not make him come after you (lit. be near you)' (P. Prisse) (Dils 2014; Allen 2015, 211). Maxim 36 deals with punishment, possibly of pupils, of underlings, or of both. At the end the text warns of punishments not related to transgressions (v. D497) which *rdj hpr n'y pw m jtn.w*, 'makes the complainer become an opponent' (P. Prisse, v. D498) (Dils 2014; Allen 2015, 212-13).

In the *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu*, O. Ashmolean 1938.912, v. 6.6, *jtn* is mobilised in the context of lack of loyalty to the king: *m jtn hr {ns}<f>k3 n(.j) dd=f*, 'do not oppose because of the gift of what he gives' (Dils 2014). In this case, instead of a

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account. The term *jtn* is attested in the *Instruction of Papyrus Ramesseum II*, P. BM EA 10755 recto, v. 4, P. BM EA 10755 verso, vv. 2.1, 2.2; in the passage under consideration (*Instruction for Kagemni*, P. Prisse, v. 2.2); in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, maxim 31, v. D456; and in the *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu*, O. Ashmolean 1938.912, section 6 ('long version'), v. 6.6. All these passages are attested in manuscripts dating from the Middle Kingdom, except for the latter which is only attested in New Kingdom manuscripts as the one cited here.

<sup>633</sup> If it is the transgression against the neighbour or the neighbour's litigation that is qualified as a difficulty is not entirely clear, as the grammar allows both possibilities (see Dils 2014), but, whichever interpretation one chooses, the text establishes a link between a legal process and the *jtn*-opposition.

<sup>634</sup> See Vernus (2010a, 166n214).

formal accusation *jtn* probably relates to a gesture demonstrating lack of recognition of the king's authority.

Outside the instructions, *jtn* is also attested in *Sinuhe*, P. Berlin 3022 + P. Amherst m-q (= B), v. 184, where it is said that Sinuhe's flight was not originated by an *jtn*-opposition in the counsel of officials (*sh n(.j) sr.w*), and in the late Middle Kingdom stela of Neferhotep I, Cairo JE 6307, vv. 36-37, the king states that: '(36) *nn tpj* (37) *jtn.w=j t3w*), My opponents (37) will not breathe air' (Brose 2014).

In the attestations just overviewed, *jtn* ranges from formal accusations among private individuals to a gesture of disobedience and to accusations from the court or from the king, with serious implications. Among those passages, the only ones that mobilise *jtn*-opposition against the king are the passages from the *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu* and from the stela of Neferhotep I. In the passage from *Kagemni* it is uncertain whether that is the case or not, but the fact that *ntr* responds to the pupil's move, who perhaps aimed at gaining notoriety or getting a higher official ousted, may indicate that the king could see the pupil's transgression as affecting him.

The fact that the king is not unambiguously identified as the object of opposition from the pupil renders the inclusion of the passage from *Kagemni* under discussion in this section tentative. In that case, the opposition (*jtn*) mentioned on v. 2.2 is, at best, directed at the normal procedures of the administration. It is also possible that *ntr* in that passage does refer to god. That would have the implication that not only administration procedures are divinely sanctioned, but also protected against abuses by a divine agent.

It is also noteworthy how *Kagemni* introduces divine/royal punishment: the text starts by acknowledging that one cannot know what will happen and adds<sup>635</sup> that it is also not known how *ntr* will punish. As observed by several authors<sup>636</sup>, the formulation *n rh.n=tw hpr.t*, 'one cannot know what will happen' is repeated *ipsis verbis* in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, maxim 22, v. D343 (see no. 8). Adams (2008, 48) uses the two passages to argue that: 'The appearance of such language in the older instructions demonstrates an early acknowledgement of the unknown in Egypt's wisdom tradition, rather than a later development based on personal piety.' Similarly, Shupak (1993, 218)

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<sup>635</sup> As indicated in the translation, the text may use either a conjunction or a disjunction.

<sup>636</sup> Shupak (1993, 218), Vernus (2010a, 95n28), Adams (2008, 48).

comments that this kind of statement ‘serves to emphasize man’s impotence as compared to the divine omnipotence’. It is certainly true that the formulation in *Kagemni* and *Ptahhotep* betray the uncertainty towards the future, but while the use of the same formulation in both texts may not be accidental, it must be noted that the passage in *Ptahhotep* does not contrast human ignorance of the future with divine prescience, but instead refers to a significantly different context: the assertion that one cannot see into the future comes right after the recommendation for the investment in a support network (vv. D339-D342)<sup>637</sup>. In the *Kagemni* passage, however, the uncertainty about the future relates to what *ntr* may do.

By acknowledging that he does not know what *ntr* will do, the author may: 1) be betraying his actual ignorance of what will follow; 2) intend to say that that kind of transgression never took place before and that its punishment is therefore unknown; or 3) intend to further widen the gap in the power relation between *ntr* and the pupil by casting a shadow of doubt on how the transgression will be retributed. The unspecification of the nature of the divine/royal punishment may also have had the practical effect of making audiences alert to the fact that the punishment could come in any form, which could make them identify any adversity as the promised punishment, perhaps in a way similar to the notion of *karma* in Indian-based religions, according to which sufferings in this life are the consequences of transgressions committed in previous lives even though one is unaware of them. To be sure, what may have counted as the punishment to the audiences certainly depended on their interpretation of *ntr* as either the king or god, as god would have been perceived as abler to punish in more ways than the king.

### 3.1.5.2 *Instruction of a Man for His Son, section 3*

As suggested by Fischer-Elfert (1999a, 275) and Vernus (2010a, 279), the *Instruction of a Man for His Son* may be divided into two parts (sections 1-8 and 9-24). The passage selected from this instruction (see no. 14) falls in the first part which is dominated by loyalist themes. It is preceded by an argument for the benefits of rhetoric (section 1), and by a call to adore the king, with indications of some of the consequences of abiding and of not abiding by that recommendation (section 2). Following the selected passage, section 4

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<sup>637</sup> This passage is much closer to the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 21.4-21.10.

(see no. 15) details how the king can change the life of those who choose to follow him, while section 5 (see no. 16) asserts that the king can effect those changes irrespective of Renenet and of Meskhenet. As it will be argued below, sections 3-5 may be considered to form a string. Section 6 again exhorts the pupil to adore the king, while section 7 instructs the addressee to refrain from blaspheming against the king, and section 8 shifts attention to the power of the king abroad.

Both Renenet and Meskhenet play an important role in section 3, and, as it will be discussed below, it may be argued that their mention in this section combines with their attestation in section 5 to form a contrast between the seemingly fixed nature of one's social position and the king's ability to change it. That contrast is already hinted at in section 3, as its first part suggests the fixity of one's preassigned lifetime and social position (vv. 3.1-3.4)<sup>638</sup>, while its second part stresses the king's power. The text from O. DeM 1665 + O. Gardiner 1 (see no. 14) reads:

(3.1) (*jn jw hrw n(.j) rnn.t hr th3.tw=f*) Can a day of Renenet transgress itself (or: him)?

(3.2) (*jn <jw> w3h.tw hrw [n(.jw)] 'h<sup>c</sup>.w*) Is a day [of] lifetime added?

(3.3) (*j[n jw hb3.tw jm=f r3-pw]*) [Or is it (= a day) removed from it (= lifetime)]?

(3.4) (*ms<sup>h</sup>n.t mj sp tp.j*) **Meskhenet is as the first time.**

(*nn h<sup>d</sup>j š3{<sup>c</sup><(t)> n={=j}<f>*) No one can disobey what was ordained for <him>.

(3.5) (*m=k{j}-js{j} wr hz{j}<w.t> n.t [ntr]*) (3.6) [*š3 hsf=f r3-sj \**] But see: great is the favour of [god], (3.6) [extremely great is his punishment].

(*[wr b3.w=f]*) (3.7) [*m]33.n=j kf3.t<=f>*] [Great is his power], (3.7) for I have seen <his> fame.

(*nn hpr š[p]t=<f> r hh*) Does <his> anger against millions ever happen? (or: <his> anger against millions never happens).

In this passage, *ntr* is mentioned on v. 3.5 without further clarification on this agent's identity. But on some versions of the preceding section, with which the section under discussion shares the theme of loyalism, it is strongly suggested that *ntr* is the king:

<sup>638</sup> Renenet is most often associated with the preassignment of one's material wealth (Quaegebeur 1975, 153; Collombert 2005-7, 22; Miosi 1982, 76), and, while accepting a two-way influence between Shay and Renenet, Quaegebeur (1975, 153) suggests that Renenet's preassignment of one's lifetime was a characteristic acquired from Shay. But on vv. 3.1-3.3 that seems to be already a feature of Renenet. Roth and Roehrig (2002, 136) suggest that Meskhenet's role was to assign one's social position, and that does seem to be the case on vv. 3.4-3.5 (see also Vernus 2010a, 262n100).



‘(2.1) ([*m stn.j jb=k hr ntr*] (2.2) *dw3 n(.j)-sw.t*) [Do not separate your mind from god]<sup>639</sup>, (2.2) praise the king’ (O. DeM 1665 + O. Gardiner 1) (Fischer-Elfert 1999a, 47, 52; 1999b, §§ 2,1-2,2; Dils 2014). In his comment about this passage, Fischer-Elfert argues cogently that: ‘Selbst wenn *nsw.t* in DeM 1665 I + und CGT 54016 nicht die originäre Lesung sein sollte, expliziert sie das Verständnis der antiken Kopisten, die vorgängiges *ntr* eben als “König” interpretiert haben, wie wir Modernen es ja z.T. auch tun’ (1999a, 47).

The term *wr*, ‘great’, is used twice: first on v. 3.5 to qualify the king’s favour (*hzw.t*), and second on v. 3.6 to qualify his *b3.w*-might<sup>640</sup>. A synonymous word, ʕ, ‘great’, is used to qualify the punishment by the king<sup>641</sup> (v. 3.6). These qualifications assert the power relation between *ntr* and the audience on the one hand and between *ntr* and Renenet and Meskhenet on the other: despite the influence of those two deities on one’s lifespan and social position (vv. 3.1-3.4), it is the king who is constructed as the ultimate source of favour, of power (*b3.w*), and, if the audience opts for not pledging him allegiance, of punishment (vv. 3.5-3.7). In fact, this punishment seems to be directed against disloyalty, which is the transgression against the king, identified as *ntr*, in this passage. That this is the transgression at issue is further suggested by the location of this passage, which follows after section 2 with its injunction to adore the king.

Vernus (2010a, 280) conjectures that ‘l’enseignement s’adresse évidemment à l’énorme corps des administrateurs et gestionnaires’<sup>642</sup>, while the *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu* would be aimed at higher elite strata (2010a, 266). Fischer-Elfert (2001a, 441) suggested that the instructions of *Khety*, of *a Man for His Son*, and of *Kairsu* form a triptych covering the official’s advancement from a young pupil (*Instruction of Khety*) to a middle-ranked official (*Instruction of a Man for His Son*) to a high official (*Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu*). The theme of loyalism is marginal at best in the *Instruction of Khety*<sup>643</sup>, but becomes somewhat prominent in the *Instruction of a Man for His Son* and even more so in the *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu*<sup>644</sup>. Accepting Fischer-Elfert’s suggestion of the triptych,

<sup>639</sup> Restored after Leather roll BM EA 10258.

<sup>640</sup> On the king’s *b3.w* see Borghouts (1982, 32).

<sup>641</sup> Both the terms ʕ and *wr* overlap to an extent, but their alternate use may indicate some kind of nuance.

<sup>642</sup> See also Fischer-Elfert (1999a, 315).

<sup>643</sup> See, however, Vernus (2010a, 262n100) on v. 30.1 of that instruction (see no. 13).

<sup>644</sup> Although brief loyalist statements are also present in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, epilogue, vv. D637-D644 (see, however, Parkinson 2002, 267), ‘the genre “loyalistic literature” is represented primarily by

and that the *Instruction of a Man for His Son* was addressed primarily to middle-ranked officials, it becomes apparent that loyalty was expected from these officials even though they did not serve the king directly.

In fact, a further purpose served by the ideology of loyalism is having the elite policing itself, as it could be used to oust rival peers or keep underlings in check<sup>645</sup>. Quack (2011, 64) quotes vv. 3.5-3.6 to make the point that royal disfavour and punishment could be used in power struggles among the elite to gain advantage over rivals<sup>646</sup>.

While the author of *Kagemni* claims on v. 2.2 that it is not known what the king does when he punishes, the author of *a Man for His Son* makes a somewhat different assertion: after stating on v. 3.6 that the punishment by the king is extremely great, he further attests on vv. 3.6-3.7 that the king's power is also great because he witnessed it<sup>647</sup>. Exactly how great is his punishment is not indicated by the author, but there are indications elsewhere in the text: on v. 2.4 (Leather roll 10258) the one who disregards (lit. *mhj*, 'forgets') the king is denied a burial; on v. 6.6 (O. Varille 61), one is warned that the king makes sad (*snm*) the one who turns his back on him<sup>648</sup>; on vv. 7.7-7.8 (O. Berlin P 14356) the one who pronounces the king's name offensively and the one who insults him is denied a tomb (*jz*) and libations (*stj*), respectively<sup>649</sup>.

From the passages on vv. 2.4 and 7.7 it becomes apparent that the royal punishment par excellence in the *Instruction of a Man for His Son* is the negation of a tomb. It is possible that this is also the punishment implicit on v. 3.6, since it would certainly be an

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two texts known as "Loyalistic Instruction" and the "Instruction of a Man to His Son" (Loprieno 1996b, 403).

<sup>645</sup> In a text from Hatshepsut's temple at Deir el-Bahari from the Eighteenth dynasty, the king Thutmose I is recorded as saying, in the context of the appointment of Hatshepsut as his heiress to the throne, that if anyone hears anything concerning the name of Hatshepsut, one is to report it straight away to the king (Sethe 1906, 257 ll. 16-17; Ockinga 2011, 255; see also Müller-Wollermann 2015, 229). To be sure, this injunction refers to opposition to the heiress to the throne, but it nonetheless illustrates well the instigation of an ambience of mutual surveillance among elite members.

<sup>646</sup> See also Gnirs (2000, 145 with references) on the use of defamation in power struggles.

<sup>647</sup> The concluding words on v. 3.7 possibly stress the king's power even further by indicating that, because of the king, there is no political opposition (see Fischer-Elfert 1999a, 65).

<sup>648</sup> See Fischer-Elfert (1999a, 88-89).

<sup>649</sup> In the aforementioned text from Hatshepsut's temple at Deir el-Bahari, a similar transgression, namely conspiring against Hatshepsut by saying 'something bad' (*h.t dw*), is punished with death (Sethe 1906, 257 l. 15; Ockinga 2011, 255). On the transgression of blaspheming against the king see further Müller-Wollermann (2015, 229) and Vernus (2010a, 275n18 with references).

extremely great punishment<sup>650</sup>. However, according to Müller-Wollermann (2015, 229), ‘there is no direct evidence for cases of *lese majesty* and its punishment’ (italics in the original). Therefore, while the reality of the transgressions is evidenced by their attestation, it is difficult to assess which punishments were handed out for transgressions against the king, and whether the punishments just listed from the *Instruction of a Man for His Son* had any real basis.

Negation of a tomb is a fairly conceivable punishment, although it is not entirely clear how it could be materialised. Even though since the Fourth dynasty most officials apparently had to build their tombs out of their own funds, royal clearance to do so was most probably still required (Allen 2006, 14). In commenting section 6 (‘short version’), vv. 6.3-6.5<sup>651</sup>, and section 7 (‘longue version’), vv. 7.1-7.5, from the *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu*, Assmann points out that: ‘In Egypt, the crafts were a royal monopoly, and one could employ artists and craftsmen only with royal authorization. In this way, royalty disposed of the means that, in the eyes of the Egyptians, opened the way to immortality and thus represented a means of salvation of the higher order’ (2005, 181). In discussing whether there were restrictions to the access to burial grounds, Janet Richards (2005, 67) argues that it is possible that ‘different social or economic groups could be denied access to specific burial grounds’. Therefore, the negation of a tomb could be manifested by denying the official clearance to build a tomb, by not allowing him to use the necessary craftsmen, or by prohibiting him from using any burial ground<sup>652</sup>. Those who had already been interred, however, could still be deprived of their tomb by having their name and their depictions chiselled away (Quack 2011, 64).

These possibilities may have been part of the extremely great punishment of *ntr* on v. 3.6. One may further remark that, from an emic perspective, there is an ‘indissoluble

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<sup>650</sup> The negation of a tomb does not deny one’s existence in the afterlife: on the contrary, one would still live on, albeit in a much less satisfying state. By not having a tomb, and, by implication, not being properly prepared for interment, one is not only precluded from becoming transfigured (*akh*) and from participating in the solar journey, but is also excluded from the elite circle in this life, because being able to have a tomb (in the monumental sense) is a social privilege accessible only to the king and to members of the elite.

<sup>651</sup> These verses are attested only in S. Cairo CG 20538 from the Middle Kingdom. They state that there is no tomb for the one who rebels against the king. On this passage see also Lorton (1977, 14 with n. 59).

<sup>652</sup> On v. 8.8 (O. Berlin P 14356) the one who did not oppose (*šnt*) the king rests by the king’s pyramid. If literal, this verse indicates that the tomb the official addressed by this instruction could hope to acquire would be located at the royal necropolis. In the Middle Kingdom this practice is attested especially from the reign of Senuseret III onwards (Dodson 2001, 437).

relationship between tomb and righteousness’ (Assmann 2005, 53). But that ‘righteousness’ does not refer to a philosophical objective notion of what is right: quite on the contrary, it refers to a socially constructed notion of right. In what concerns the relation between the elite and the king, what is right is what interests the king – in the case of the passage under consideration, what the king is interested in is loyalty from his elite subjects. Therefore, a tomb is not a reward for an objectively good conduct, but instead is a compensation for serving the king as expected. As argued by Assmann, the elite’s dependence on the king to have a tomb was a way ‘the Egyptian state had to keep its people under control’<sup>653</sup> (182).

### 3.1.5.3 *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu, section 5*

Like the *Instruction of a Man for His Son*, the *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu* may be divided into two parts: the first part ranges from section 1 to section 8 or 9, and the second part from section 8 or 9 to section 14<sup>654</sup>. The selected passage from this instruction is in the middle, or close to the middle, of the first part which is dominated by the theme of loyalism up to section 7. As remarked in the appendix<sup>655</sup>, not only a significant portion of this instruction is extant in New Kingdom copies alone, but the part of the text attested in the Middle Kingdom was also expanded and modified in the New Kingdom. Therefore, it is useful to be aware of the differences between the ‘short’ and ‘long’ versions<sup>656</sup>.

In the ‘short version’ of S. Cairo CG 20538, the passage discussed here is preceded by four sections: section 1 which introduces the author and states the aims of the instruction; section 2 which calls the audience to adore Amenemhat III<sup>657</sup> (vv. 2.1-2.2) and identifies the king with the god Sia, in that he is in the *h3.tj*-hearts<sup>658</sup> (v. 2.5), and with the god Re, in that he illuminates the Two Lands (vv. 2.9-2.10); and section 3 which states that the king’s (elite) subjects can relax when he is not angry<sup>659</sup> (vv. 3.5-3.6), and that the king will nourish only those who are loyal to him (vv. 3.7-3.8). Still in S. Cairo CG 20538, the

<sup>653</sup> On loyalism to the king in the Twelfth Dynasty see further Assmann (1999b, 37-41).

<sup>654</sup> On the division of this text see Vernus (2010a, 265-66) and Schipper (1998, 162n7).

<sup>655</sup> See the note to the heading of no. 18.

<sup>656</sup> On these terms see the note to the heading of no. 18 in the appendix.

<sup>657</sup> See Vernus (2010a, 275n13) and Allen (2015, 159).

<sup>658</sup> Compare with the biography of Vizier Paser from the Nineteenth dynasty, TT 106, Text 1, v. 2 (see Frood 2004, 52; 2007, 150).

<sup>659</sup> On the metaphor used see Allen (2015, 159).

passage under consideration is followed by section 6 which exhorts the audience to fight in the name of the king (v. 6.1), and is warned that there is no tomb to the one who rebels (*sbj*) against the king (vv. 6.4-6.5)<sup>660</sup>.

The ‘long version’ of section 5 in O. Ashmolean 1938.912 introduces five verses not present in the Middle Kingdom ‘short version’. Therefore, it is useful to take account of both versions. The ‘short version’ from S. Cairo CG 20538 (see no. 18) reads:

(5.1) (*k3 pw nsw.t h3.w pw r3=f*) The king is a *ka*, his mouth is abundance.

(5.2) (*shpr=f pw wnn.t(j)=f(j)*) The one who will become someone is the one he reared.

(5.9) (*hnm.w pw n hf.w nb*) (5.10) *wtt.w shpr rh.yt*) He is a Khnum for each body, (5.10) the begetter who engenders the masses.

(5.11) (*b3s.tt pw hwj.t-t3.wy*) He is Bastet who protects the Two Lands.

(5.12) (*jw dw3 sw r nh.w f=f*) The one who praises him is protected by his arm.

(5.13) (*sh.m.t pw r thj wd.t=f*) He is Sekhmet against the one who transgresses what he decrees.

(5.14) (*jw sf3=f r hr(j) sm3.w*) The one whom he hates will be in distress.

And the ‘long version’ from O. Ashmolean 1938.912 (see no. 18.1) runs as follows’:

(5.1) (*n(j)-sw.t k3.w pw hw pw r3=f\**) The king is nourishment, his mouth is Hu.

(5.2) (*shpr{.wt}=f pw m wnj md.wt\**) He is one he reared (?). Do not neglect my words.

(5.3) (*jw<sup>c</sup>.w{t} pw n(j){t} ntr nb\**) (5.4) *nd.tj km3.w sw\**) He is the heir to each god, (5.4) protector of the ones who fashioned him.

(5.5) (*hww=sn n=f šnt.yw=f\**) (5.6) *jst hm=f<sup>c</sup> nh(.w) (w)d3(.w) s(nb.w) m hf=f<sup>c</sup> nh(.w) (w)d3(.w) s(nb.w)\**) They strike his opposers for him, (5.6) while his majesty, alive, sound, and healthy, is in his palace, alive, sound, and healthy.

(5.7) (*tm.w pw n t(3)s wsr.wt\**) He is Atum to the one who ties on necks.

(5.8) (*jw z3=f r-h3 dd b3.w=f\**) His protection is behind the one who makes known (lit. causes) his power.

(5.9) (*hnm.w pw n hr-nb\**) (5.10) *wtt.jw shpr rh.yt\**) He is Khnum for everyone, (5.10) the begetter who created the masses.

(5.11) (*b3s.tt pw hwj(.t)-t3.wy\**) He is Bastet who protects the Two Lands.

(5.13) (*sh.m.t pw <r> thj m wd.n=f\**) He is Sekhmet <against> the one who transgresses what he decreed.

<sup>660</sup> Section 4 is only included in the ‘long version’ (e.g., P. Rifeh = P. London UC 32781 recto). In this somewhat fragmentary passage, it is said that the king’s *b3.w*-power fights for him (v. 4.1), and that the king is life to the one who adores him (v. 4.7).

(5.14) ( $\{\}$  <jw> *sd3.w=f r hr.j šm3.yw=f \**) The one he makes tremble will be under his *šm3.yw-*demons.

Both versions retain the general tone of the first part of this instruction: the king is presented as a source of nourishment and protection for those who are loyal, and as a source of punishment and torment for those who are not. In the ‘short version’ the transgression is spelled out on v. 5.13 as transgressing (*thj*) what the king decrees. This verse is repeated, with minor variations, in the ‘long version’. Opposers to the king are also mentioned on v. 5.5 of the ‘long version’.

In this passage *ntr* is mobilised only in the ‘long version’, who is part of a collective, first described as ‘each god’ on v. 5.3, and later as ‘they’ on v. 5.5. However, on vv. 5.9, 5.11, and 5.13 of the ‘short version’, the king is identified with three gods: Khnum (v. 5.9), Bastet (v. 5.11), and Sekhmet (v. 5.13). These identifications are repeated in the ‘long version’, and another two are added in the New Kingdom copy: on v. 5.1 the king’s mouth is identified with Hu, and on v. 5.7 the king is identified with Atum. Elsewhere in the text, the king is also identified with Sia on v. 2.5 of both versions, and with Re on v. 2.7 of both versions and on v. 2.9 of the ‘short version’. In all of these identifications the text uses the construction *A pw*.

Parkinson (2002, 267) classifies the identification of the king with several deities as ‘metaphorical presentation’ and draws a comparison with biographical inscriptions from the Middle Kingdom where officials are said to be like (*mj*) or the likeness (*mj.tj*) either of a specific or of an anonymous deity<sup>661</sup>. Concerning the latter, Denise Doxey (1998, 77) argues that ‘the gods to whom officials are likened symbolize a particular skill or attribute of the official’. At least to a point, that is also the case with the identification of the king with a certain god: in the specific case of the *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu* the god with whom the king is identified is unsurprisingly related to the context of the passage.

The identification of the king with specific gods bears some resemblance with the identification of objects and body parts with body parts of gods in the *Instruction of Amenemope* discussed above<sup>662</sup>. It was argued in that discussion that those identifications

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<sup>661</sup> See a convenient list of attestations in Doxey (1998, 78).

<sup>662</sup> See this chapter, subsection 3.1.2.5.2.

may also have a ritual component. Similarly, the identification of the king with certain gods may implicate more than a symbolic metaphor.

It has been noted that the king was similar to statues of gods and to sacred animals, in that, like them, he could be a receptacle to the *b3*-manifestation of a god<sup>663</sup> (Luft 2001, 144; Trigger 1993, 104; see also E. F. Morris 2010, 207). This interpretation is further supported by the conceptual model of the king's two bodies, the 'body politic' (here equatable with each specific god), and the 'body natural' (corresponding here to the king's body)<sup>664</sup>. Assuming that, besides being a priest-king, the Egyptian kings also had mediatory qualities in the sense of a privileged personal connection with the gods, it is then conceivable that the identification of the king with a certain deity does not only imply a metaphorical device<sup>665</sup>, but entails as well a channelling of that deity. In the specific case of v. 5.13, it is not only that the king plays the role of Sekhmet<sup>666</sup>, but that Sekhmet acts through the king as well<sup>667</sup>. Returning to the paradox on which the 'idea of representation underlying agency is rooted' (Asad 2000, 34)<sup>668</sup>, it is probably best to say that neither the king nor the goddess act in isolation, but that the two act in concert.

A more clear-cut case is presented on v. 5.5 of the 'long version':

(5.3) (*jw<sup>c</sup>.w{t} pw n(.j){t} ntr nb \** (5.4) *nd.tj km3.w sw \**) He is the heir to each god, (5.4) protector of the ones who fashioned him.

(5.5) (*hw<sup>w</sup>=sn n=f šnt.yw=f \** (5.6) *jst hm=f <sup>c</sup>nh(.w) (w)d3(.w) s(nb.w) m <sup>c</sup>h=f <sup>c</sup>nh(.w) (w)d3(.w) s(nb.w) \**) They strike his opposers for him, (5.6) while his majesty, alive, sound, and healthy, is in his palace, alive, sound, and healthy.

A relation of reciprocity between the king and each god is established on vv. 5.3-5.6 on the basis of the *do ut des* and *do quia dedisti* principles. The king is first described on v. 5.3 as

<sup>663</sup> On this role of statues see also Teeter (2011, 43-45).

<sup>664</sup> On this conceptual scheme see the brief, but convenient overviews in Riccardo (2005, 5155 with references) and Berghoff (2006, 423 with references).

<sup>665</sup> On metaphor see the discussion above in subsection 3.1.2.5.2.

<sup>666</sup> Shupak (1993, 128 with n. 123) points out that, elsewhere, the king may also play the role of Sekhmet's son.

<sup>667</sup> The opposite seems to happen in the funerary literature from the First Intermediate Period onwards, as the non-royal deceased 'must be elevated to the status of a god' (Frandsen 2008, 56) in order to take part in the solar journey. As noted by Catarina Almeida (2017, 191), the identification of the deceased with Re and Osiris made him exposed to the same risks faced by these deities.

<sup>668</sup> See also subsection 3.1.4 above.

the heir to each god. On the following verse he is said to be his protector, while on v. 5.5 it is each god, now referred to as ‘they’, who strikes his opposers for his benefit<sup>669</sup>. On v. 5.6 this short narrative on the relation between the king and the gods circulates back to the premise asserted on v. 5.3: the king can be in his palace because the gods repress dissension to ensure his right to the throne. In terms of discourse, the king is legitimised by the gods and those who would dare to contest his rule are targeted by the divine punishment. The mention of opposers to the king and of their attack by the gods may be seen as the literary neutralisation of potentially subversive topics (Parkinson 1996, 153-54) and as a deterrent to would-be contesters, but it also serves the purpose of stressing the king’s legitimacy by mobilising an enemy whom the gods oppose unconditionally – thus standing by the side of the king.

The passage on v. 5.5 does not specify how the gods strike the opposers. The same is true for v. 5.13 of the ‘short version’, although the association of Sekhmet with illness may suggest that sort of affliction. Regardless of the punishment the author and audiences may have had in mind concerning that passage, v. 5.14 from the ‘long version’ in O. Ashmolean 1938.912<sup>670</sup> deviates from the ‘short version’ and states that:  $\{3\} <jw> sd3.w=f r hr.j šm3.yw=f *$ , ‘The one he (= the king as Sekhmet) makes tremble will be under his  $šm3.yw$ -demons’. This is no doubt a continuation from the preceding verse, as the  $šm3.yw$ -demons are often controlled by Sekhmet (Lucarelli 2017, 56-57). As these were disease-demons (58), the punishment to those who would transgress what the king decreed would have been a severe illness<sup>671</sup>.

#### 3.1.5.4 *Instruction for the King Merikare, vv. 48-51*

While it does not concern a transgression against the king committed by the addressee, the selected passage from the *Instruction for the King Merikare*, P. Petersburg

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<sup>669</sup> The text is unspecific about what these opposers do. The term  $šnt$  is also attested without further qualification in the *Instruction of a Man for His Son*, O. Berlin P 14356, vv. 7.8 and 8.8, but the same instruction in O. UC 6484, v. 6.4, does elaborate further on it:  $<m> šnt \{h[r.t]\} <h.t> m mr<r.t> \{.n\}=f$ , ‘<Do> not contest <a thing> of what he desires’ (Fischer-Elfert 1999a, 86, 92; 1999b, § 6.4). Possibly the contestation on v. 5.5 involves a more serious threat to the ruling king. For another attestation of  $šnt$  in a somewhat different context see the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, maxim 26, v. D391 (see no. 9).

<sup>670</sup> The one translated here.

<sup>671</sup> On demons see also the discussion in subsection 3.1.2.5.1 above.



Hermitage 1116A verso, vv. 49-50 (see no. 21), is nonetheless of interest, inasmuch as it concerns one of the ways *ntr* could deal with ‘rebels’. The first part of the maxim in which the selected segment is attested concerns the practice of Ma’at through the rightful and generous treatment of those who are vulnerable or whose lives can easily be upturned by the king (vv. 46-48): the widow, the orphan<sup>672</sup>, and officials who may be demoted by the king. The concern with the king’s goodness is also expressed on vv. 36-38 (see no. 20), while the concern with the proper treatment of officials is addressed on vv. 38-42 and 42-46 leading up to the selected passage. The second part of the maxim deals with punishment and its limits (vv. 48-51)<sup>673</sup>. The closing verses (52-53) briefly list the benefits to the *ba* of following the preceding advice. This structure sets up the tone to the following section (vv. 53-57) which deals with the afterlife judgment. From v. 57 on the text shifts attention to strategic and military matters.

The selected passage from P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso (see no. 21) reads as follows:

(48) (*z3w.tj hr hsf m nf*) Guard against punishing wrongfully.

(*m skrj nn st 3h n=k*) Do not execute, when it is not useful to you.

(*hsf=k m hw.yw* (49) *m z3.wij* (?) \*) Punish with beatings (49) and imprisonment.

(*jw t3 pn r grg hr=s \* wpw-[hr s]bj gmj sh=f* \*) This land will then be solid because of that, except [for] the rebel, who devised his plan.

(*jw ntr rh.w h3k.w-jb.w \* (50) hwj ntr sdb=f hr znf* \*) God knows the estranged (lit. ‘resented of *jb*-heart’), (50) and god implants impediments against him in the blood.

(*jn zfn.w [s3w=f] h<sup>c</sup>.w* \*) It is the mild who [prolongs] the lifetime.

(*m sm3m z(j).jw=k rh.tj 3h.w=f* \* (51) *p3.n=k hsj zh3.w hn<sup>c</sup>=f \* šdj m sjp.w [...]* *hr ntr \* wstnj rd m s.t š3.t* \*) Do not kill a man, whose usefulness you know, (51) with whom you sang the writings, who was raised as one who is inspected [...] for (?) god, and has freedom of access in the secret place (= the private places in the palace).

<sup>672</sup> Assuming this is the implication behind the injunction *m nš z(j) hr h.t jt=f*, ‘do not deprive a man from his patrimony’ (v. 47).

<sup>673</sup> Despite the intervention of a lacuna of three squares, a similar concern is expressed on v. 29: *zfn* [...] *hsf=k*, ‘Be mild [...] when you punish’ (Quack 1992, 22-23, 168). The same idea is taken up shortly after on v. 31 which has people saying of the king that he punishes in the adequate proportion.

A specific transgression is not mentioned in this passage. However, the terms *sbj*, ‘rebel’, and *h3k-jb*, ‘estranged’, hint at some form of opposition to the king<sup>674</sup>. In the instructions of the Pharaonic period the noun *sbj* and its grammatical variants are attested almost exclusively in the *Instruction for the King Merikare*<sup>675</sup>. The same is true for the term *h3k-jb*.

Besides v. 49, the noun *sbj*<sup>676</sup> is attested twice in *Merikare*, P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, vv. 26 and 27. The verb *sbj*<sup>677</sup>, ‘to rebel’, is attested once in the same instruction and manuscript, v. 110 (see no. 23), and equally once in the *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu*, S. Cairo CG 20538, v. 6.4. And the noun *sbj.w*<sup>678</sup>, ‘rebellion’, is attested once in *Merikare*, P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, v. 134 (see no. 24), and also once in the Late Period *Instruction of Papyrus Brooklyn*, P. Brooklyn 47.218.135, v. 4.8. In all these attestations, with the exception of the passage from the *Instruction of Papyrus Brooklyn*, the context is political, and the terms refer to some form of antagonism towards central power.

The term *h3k-jb*<sup>679</sup> is attested once in the *Instruction of Papyrus Brooklyn*, P. Brooklyn 47.218.135, v. 4.4, and, besides vv. 49-50, three other times in the *Instruction for the King Merikare*, P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso: 1) on v. 4 in a fragmentary passage (vv. 2-5) that seems to concern rebellion; 2) on v. 87 in the context of a passage (vv. 85-88) that assures the addressee that his territory will suffer no rebellion or famine because of the way workers and officials are organised; 3) on v. 137 (see no. 24) in which god is said to have killed the estranged among mankind.

In *Merikare*, both the *sbj* and the *h3k-jb* are consistently presented as opposers to the king<sup>680</sup> capable of disturbing his rule. The social group they belong to is not always clear and may be different across the range of passages. Perhaps, in this specific passage they fall

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<sup>674</sup> At least in much later evidence, from the early Twenty-fifth dynasty, estrangement (*h3k-jb*) may have been seen as a precondition for rebellion (*sbj*) (see Muhlestein 2011, 79).

<sup>675</sup> As argued by Shupak (1993, 260), this is probably due to the fact that *sbj* ‘belongs originally to the political context, and not to the vocabulary of wisdom’. Interestingly, its Demotic form *s3be* became more prominent in the Demotic instructions, especially in the *Instruction of Papyrus Insinger* where it ‘appears in antithesis to “the man of god” – *rmj ntr*’ (Shupak 1993, 260).

<sup>676</sup> Lemma no. 131530 in the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae*.

<sup>677</sup> Lemma no. 131520 in the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae*.

<sup>678</sup> Lemma no. 131610 in the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae*.

<sup>679</sup> Lemma no. 122640 in the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae*.

<sup>680</sup> The rebellion mentioned on v. 134 may be against god.

under the designation *zj*, ‘man’, introduced on v. 50 and which may indicate a high social standing<sup>681</sup> confirmed by his education with the king and access to restricted areas of the palace (v. 51). The injunction against killing him tallies with the counsel against killing a close associate on vv. 139-40 (see no. 25). It remains unclear whether the ‘rebel’ and the ‘estranged’ shared in an equally high social position or not, but, be that as it may, the text is particularly concerned with exaggerated punishments (vv. 48-49).

Rather than reflecting a humanistic concern, the text Machiavellianly counsels the king to avoid actions that can backfire on him by increasing or creating new opposition to him. Accepting that the audience of royal instructions would not be restricted to future kings and would include, at least, high officials<sup>682</sup>, this passage might be ‘double-coded’<sup>683</sup> in that it tells the audience of (high) officials that there are certain limits concerning them that the king should not overstep. This could be part of the already mentioned new strategy to present the king as more empathic and humane.

It may seem unsurprising that the passage under discussion places limits on the punishment by the king, but not on the retribution by god. However, if one accepts the new strategy of presentation of the king in the Middle Kingdom literature, it is then conceivable that god is mobilised in this passage as part of that strategy. The text mobilises *ntr* as an authoritative and unquestionable third party who has the right to retribute actions as deemed fit. This discursive presentation of *ntr* encourages the audience to perceive him in that way. Therefore, *ntr* may do what the king cannot and, in that way, complements the king’s agency.

Besides his authoritativeness and unquestionability, god has a further advantage in relation to the king: in contrast to the king’s limited knowledge of his enemies<sup>684</sup>, god is fully aware of who they are. In the passage under analysis, this is indicated on v. 49: *jw ntr rh.w h3k.w-jb.w*, ‘God knows the estranged’. God’s knowledge about people is mobilised

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<sup>681</sup> See Parkinson (1996, 141 with references) and Fischer-Elfert (1999a, 299 with references). However, the term *zj* may also designate ‘the lower echelons of the administration’ (Gnirs 2000, 136). A more generic sense for the term *zj* is also possible, as when it is used to refer to Khueninpu in the *Eloquent Peasant*, P. Ramesseum A = P. Berlin P 10499 recto, v. 1.1.

<sup>682</sup> See Parkinson (2002, 238, 240).

<sup>683</sup> This expression is used here to designate statements that are relevant to two different audiences in different ways, but without the postmodern implication of a self-conscious deconstruction (on which see Barker and Jane (2016, 237, 239-40)).

<sup>684</sup> On the contrast between human ignorance and divine knowledge in general, see Shupak (1993, 219).

another four times in this instruction<sup>685</sup>. On vv. 138-139 the text states that god killed the estranged (*h3k.w-jb*) among people, in the same way that a father punishes a son who did something wrong against his brother, because ‘god knows every name’. About this passage, Tavares (2007, 238) comments that: ‘Durch dieses Bild für Gott als Vater, der seine Kinder wohl kennt, so daß er sie angemessen schlägt oder belohnt, versichert man sich der Gerechtigkeit.’ It is undeniable, as argued by Tavares, that the text stresses god’s infallibility in retribution. The attestations of divine knowledge about people are equally double-coded, as they are a reminder to the audience that dissidents may elude earthly authorities but not divine watchfulness.

The divine punishment evoked in the passage under discussion may involve either death or a life-limiting illness<sup>686</sup>:

(49) (*jw ntr rh.w h3k.w-jb.w \** (50) *hwj ntr sdb=f hr znf \**) God knows the estranged (lit. ‘resented of *jb*-heart’), (50) and god implants impediments against him in the blood.

(*jn zfn.w [s3w=f] rh.w \**) It is the mild who [prolongs] the lifetime.

The idea of death or a severe illness is suggested by the last verse of this excerpt which mentions the implantation of impediments in the blood<sup>687</sup> and the prolongation of one’s lifetime. Otherwise, what the term *sdb*<sup>688</sup> implies is not always obvious (Nyord 2009a, 503). Interestingly, this term is not attested in the medical papyri of the Pharaonic period in the database of the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae*. According to the same database, the only other literary text where this term is attested is the *Admonitions of Ipuwer*, P. Leiden I 344 recto, v. 12.2, possibly also in the context of punishment: ‘(12.2) (*h3 rh.w=f bj(3)t=sn m h.t*

<sup>685</sup> On vv. 67, 123, 138 (see no. 24), and 140 (see no. 25)

<sup>686</sup> Muhlestein (2007, 119-20) denies *ntr* any agency, and sees the passage under discussion as an example of the ‘preternaturalization of the political’ (118). According to the author, since it was the king who was admonished against executing on v. 48, on vv. 49-50 it must also be the king who carries out the punishment. Still according to Muhlestein, ‘the language does not have reference to the actions of two different beings, instead it lifts the action of the king to the divine realm, causing his attack to be efficacious in multiple spheres’ (119-20). While in the Egyptian instructions some passages may indeed mobilise a divine punishment that is materialised by judicial authorities, the text does not suggest that it is the case here. In fact, the text consistently mobilises the king and *ntr* as independent agents (see e.g., v. 129 and vv. 140-141 (see no. 25)).

<sup>687</sup> Aside from Muhlestein (2007, 119), with a different interpretation (see previous note), the other translations consulted have a different understanding of v. 50. For a more complete overview of their perspective and for the reasons behind the translation presented here see the note to v. 50 in the appendix (see no. 21).

<sup>688</sup> Lemma no. 150450 in the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae*.

*tp(.j)t k3 ḥwj=f sdb.w d3j=f ʿ r=s sky=f* (12.3) ʿ*w.t jr.j jwʿ{.t}.w=sn*) If only he<sup>689</sup> had perceived their<sup>690</sup> character in the first generation, then he would have implanted impediments<sup>691</sup>, he would have stretched his arm against it (?), and he would have destroyed (12.3) the herd thereof, and their heirs’ (Gardiner 1909, 78; Enmarch 2014; Tobin 2003d, 205).

The term *sdb* is relatively more frequent in the funerary literature, with attestations in the *Pyramid Texts*, *Coffin Texts*, and *Book of the Dead*<sup>692</sup>. While it may at times have an ambiguous sense<sup>693</sup>, when it is conceptualised as something undesirable to the deceased it may designate ‘some sort of sickness or impurity’ (Nyord 2009a, 504) that may come as ‘the punishment to which sinners, enemies of the god, are delivered’ (Zandee 1960, 250).

In the instructions of the Pharaonic period *sdb* is attested only four times in two Middle Kingdom instructions, even if in copies dating from the New Kingdom<sup>694</sup>: once in the *Instruction for the King Merikare*<sup>695</sup>, and thrice in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*<sup>696</sup>. In maxim 26 of *Ptahhotep sdb* seems to refer to impediments or obstacles in the sense of disfavour, as it is mobilised as a negative consequence resulting from angering a superior (*wr*) (v. D388)<sup>697</sup>. And in maxim 12 of the same instruction the purpose behind the mobilisation of *sdb* seems to be the explanation of the behaviour of the deviant son<sup>698</sup>. In all

<sup>689</sup> The sun god Re (see v. 11.11).

<sup>690</sup> The context indicates the referent is mankind.

<sup>691</sup> Tobin (2003d, 205) translates instead as: ‘Then he would have smitten (their) sinfulness’. Because no referent is indicated, it is also plausible that the sense is instead ‘clear the way’; on this sense see below.

<sup>692</sup> See the attestations in the *Pyramid Texts* and in the *Book of the Dead* in the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae*. For attestations in the *Coffin Texts* see, for instance, Nyord (2009a, 503-504).

<sup>693</sup> For example, in the *Coffin Texts*, following the verb *ḥwj* (Nyord 2009a, 503). In the *Pyramid Texts*, however, *ḥwj sdb* could be used as an idiom, ‘to smite obstruction’, in the sense of clearing the way to announce someone, for instance; on this sense of *ḥwj sdb*, and for examples, see Hays (2006, 144 with n. 149, 162-63 with n. 235).

<sup>694</sup> As with the term *sbj*, the term *sdb* resurfaced in the Demotic instructions; see the attestations of *stbe* (lemma no. 5731) in Demotic instructions in the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae*.

<sup>695</sup> In the passage under consideration (v. 50).

<sup>696</sup> In maxim 12, v. D217 (attested in P. Prisse and, with important differences, in P. BM EA 10509 (= L2)) (see nos. 6 and 6.1), and in maxim 26, vv. D391 and D397 (attested in P. Prisse and, with minor variations, in P. BM EA 10371+10435 (= L1) and P. BM EA 10509 (= L2)) (see no. 9).

<sup>697</sup> (D388) (*m ḥsf tw m 3.t wr*) **Do not set yourself against the moment of anger of a great one.** / (D389) (*m ḥdn.w jb n(.j) n.tj 3tp.w* (D391) *ḥpr sdb=f r šnt sw* (D392) *sḥt k3<=f> m mrr sw*) Do not vex the mind (lit. *jb*-heart) of the one who is overwhelmed, (D391) as his impediment comes against the one who opposes him .... / (D395) (*sḥd{r} r=k ḥr m-ḥt nšn* (D397) *jw ḥtp ḥr k3=f jw sdbj ḥr ḥft(.j)*) Turn the face back after the rage, (D397) for contentment is with his *ka* (= providence?), and impediments are with the enemy’ (see no. 9).

<sup>698</sup> (D207) (*jr nmm=f thj=f šhr=k* (D210) *btn.n=f dd.t nb.t* (D211) *šm r3=f m md.t ḥs.t* (D215) *{k}<b>k=k sw r r3=f mj-ḥd=f*) If he errs, disregards your counsel, (D210) disobeys everything said, (D211) and his mouth discourses vile speech, (D215) you should task him according to his mouth completely. / (D216) (*wdj ʿ r=k m*

four attestations, *sdb*, which can be mobilised with or without an agent directing it, has a negative quality. But, of these four attestations, it is only the one in *Merikare*, v. 50, that is distinctly mobilised as divine punishment, as it occurs in a part of the text that deals with punishment.

This passage from *Merikare* has several similarities with a New Kingdom version of *Ptahhotep*, P. BM EA 10509 (= L2), vv. L2 D216- L2 D217 (see no. 6.1), which reads:

(L2 D216) (*w<sup>c</sup> jm pw hbd.n=sn \**) He is one of those whom they hated.

(L2 D217) (*hwj.n ntr sdb.w=fpw m h.t \**) God stroke impediments against him in the belly.

In particular, there are important similarities between v. 50 from P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso and v. L2 D217 from P. BM EA 10509 (= L2): both passages share the verb *hwj*, ‘strike’, share *ntr* as subject, and share *sdb(.w)=f*, ‘impediments against him’, as the object of the verb’s action. A significant difference is that, in the New Kingdom version of *Ptahhotep*, the impediments are placed in the belly of the deviant son, whereas in *Merikare* the impediments are placed in the blood of the estranged. Another important difference is the tense of the verb *hwj*: in the passage from *Ptahhotep* the tense is clearly past, while in the passage from *Merikare* it is potentially present. The past tense in *Ptahhotep*’s passage accords well with the context of the maxim: it is explained to the addressee that his son is incorrigible not because of the education he gave him, but because he was so predisposed by *ntr*. The seemingly present tense from *Merikare*’s passage also fits its context rather well, as it comes in the wake of the ways in which the king should or should not punish, and, as argued above, it also fits the context that *ntr*, unlike the king, knows who the estranged are and is allowed to carry out the violent punishments that the king should eschew. Therefore, despite the similarities between the two passages, it is unlikely that the passage from *Ptahhotep* can enlighten the nature of the punishment in the passage from *Merikare*.

In the instructions from the Pharaonic period the term *znf*, ‘blood’<sup>699</sup>, is only attested on *Merikare*’s v. 50, and in the *Letter of Menna*, O. Chicago 12074 + O. IFAO 2188 recto,

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*hbd.n=sn*) The one who stretches his hand against you is one whom they hated. / (D217) (*wdd sdb n=fpw m h.t*) An impediment is imposed to him in the belly’ (see no. 6).

<sup>699</sup> Lemma no. 137250 in the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae*.

v. 6, possibly in the context of the addressee becoming a blood brother to the Asiatics (Vernus 2010a, 471n10). In the Ptolemaic period there are only two attestations of *znf(e)*<sup>700</sup> in the *Instruction of Papyrus Insinger*, vv. 7.23 and 29.19, in the context of lust for women and of pursuit of vengeance, respectively. These few attestations are, thus, of little assistance in understanding the role of *znf*, ‘blood’, on v. 50 of *Merikare*. Other terms for blood, namely *tr.w*<sup>701</sup> and *dšr.w*<sup>702</sup>, are not attested in the instructions.

Of more assistance might be the attestations of these three terms in the *Coffin Texts*. Nyord (2009a, 328 with references) remarks about *znf* that: ‘The word *znf* is used almost always in contexts of slaughtering or the defeat of enemies.’ While the role played by this term in several spells is not always clear (328), the overall use of this term in the *Coffin Texts* seems to accord with the context of v. 50 of *Merikare*. However, only once in the *Coffin Texts* is one of the three terms for ‘blood’ conceptualised as a container: in spell 94, v. 69a, the *ba* of Osiris is said to be inside (*m-hnw*) the blood (*dšr.w*) of Osiris (Nyord 2009a, 329, 434). The only point of contact with *Merikare*’s v. 50 is the conceptualisation of the two terms as containers, and, other than that, the blood in the passage from spell 94 plays a significantly different role. Another passage, from spell 75, is also of interest inasmuch as it puts impediments (*sdb*) side by side with blood (*dšr.w*), albeit probably not in interrelation: *dr=j sdb=j wh<sup>c</sup>=j sdb.w=j bw.t<=j> pw dšr.w*, ‘I remove my impediment, I loosen my impediments, blood is my detestation’ (S2C, vv. 392b-393a) (Nyord 2009a, 329). This passage has the advantage of pointing out that, for the deceased, and no doubt to the living as well, impediments and blood were things to avoid, but it does not clarify what an interaction between impediments and blood could result in. Perhaps also of interest is the interchangeability of the meanings ‘blood’ and ‘rage’ in the term *dšr.w* (Nyord 2009a, 329, 332 with references). If this interchangeability also applied to *znf*<sup>703</sup>, even if unattested, it is then possible that the impediments could provoke a blind rage that would eventually lead to the demise of the estranged.

From the range of attestations discussed here, one may conjecture that this punishment could have involved anything from the disgrace of the estranged to a form of

<sup>700</sup> Lemma no. 5349 in the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae*.

<sup>701</sup> Lemma no. 176230 in the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae*.

<sup>702</sup> Lemma no. 180870 in the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae*.

<sup>703</sup> This particular word may have been chosen to form a wordplay with the term *znf.w*, ‘mild’, that follows immediately after.

more or less severe illness or even a self-harming blind rage. In terms of social implications of this passage, one may wonder whether high members of the elite that would suddenly fall ill could have been seen as being afflicted by divine punishment and, consequently, labelled traitors.

### 3.1.5.5 Summary and concluding remarks

Table no. 5. Summary of transgressions and respective divine punishments concerning opposition to the king.

Text	Transgressions	Punishments	Divine agents	Observations
<i>Instruction for Kagemni</i> , P. Prisse, vv. 1.12-2.2, (see no. 3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possibly attempting to climb the hierarchical ladder by force, thus creating opposition (vv. 2.1-2.2).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The text claims that it is not known what will happen and how <i>ntr</i> will punish (v. 2.2).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• God (<i>ntr</i>) (probably the king, but possibly god) (v. 2.2).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The context is probably the early stage in an official's career (compare with no. 7).</li> </ul>
<i>Instruction of a Man for His Son</i> , O. DeM 1665 + O. Gardiner 1, section 3, (see no. 14)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disloyalty towards <i>ntr</i> (= king) (v. 3.6; compare with section 2).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possibly negation of a tomb (v. 3.6; compare with section 2, v. 2.4 and with section 7, v. 7.7).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• God (<i>ntr</i>) (= king) (v. 3.5; compare with section 2, v. 2.2).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The punishment is described only as 'extremely great' (v. 3.6).</li> </ul>
<i>Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu</i> , S. Cairo CG 20538 ('short version') and O. Ashmolean 1938.912 ('long version'), section 5 (see nos. 18 and 18.1, respectively)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transgression (<i>thj</i>) of what the king decrees ('short version' and 'long version', v. 5.13).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The king is Sekhmet against the one who transgresses against what he decrees ('short version' and 'long version', v. 5.13).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• King identified with Sekhmet ('short version' and 'long version', v. 5.13).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The king possibly channels the goddess.</li> <li>• In the 'short version', the transgressor will be in distress, and in the 'long version' he will be under <i>šm3.yw</i>-demons (v. 5.14).</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opposition (<i>šnt</i>) to the king ('long version', v. 5.5).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each god strikes the opposers (<i>šnt.yw</i>) of the king ('long version', v. 5.5).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each god (<i>ntr nb</i>), they (=sn) ('long version', vv. 5.3, 5.5).</li> </ul>	
<i>Instruction for the King Merikare</i> , P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, vv. 48-51 (see no. 21)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some form of opposition to the king from the rebel (<i>sbj</i>) and from the estranged (<i>h3k-jb</i>) (v. 49).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implantation of impediments in the blood of the estranged (v. 50).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• God (<i>ntr</i>) (v. 50).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Punishment may involve anything from loss of favour to an illness or death.</li> </ul>

The topic of opposition to the king with a reaction from a deity is only attested in the Middle Kingdom instructions. As mentioned in the introduction to this section, instructions dating from the New Kingdom show little interest in the king. This does not entail that subject matters dealing with the king in sapiential texts were of no interest to New Kingdom audiences, however, as a significant number of copies with passages from the *Instruction of a Man for His Son* and from the *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu* were found at Deir el-Medina<sup>704</sup>.

Among the passages selected, most transgressions are not very detailed and are different from each other. The transgression in the *Instruction for Kagemni*, P. Prisse, vv. 1.12-2.2, may be an attempt to force a promotion or an office. The resulting threat to the normal functioning of the administration is framed as meriting a punishment from *ntr*, who is probably the king (even if by delegating his power on an official). In the *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu*, S. Cairo CG 20538 ('short version') and O. Ashmolean 1938.912 ('long version'), section 5, the transgression is specified as disobeying the king's decrees. The corresponding punishment involves Sekhmet, with whom the king is identified, in both versions. However, in the 'short version' it is said that the disobedient will be in distress, whereas in the 'long version' it is stated that he will be under *šm3.yw*-demons, a gang of disease-demons often related to the goddess Sekhmet, herself associated with disease and

<sup>704</sup> See estimates in Hagen (2012, 84). In contrast, few copies with the *Instruction for the King Merikare* were unearthed there, but, in compensation, this Middle Kingdom instruction is only known from New Kingdom copies.

pestilence. In the *Instruction of a Man for His Son*, O. DeM 1665 + O. Gardiner 1, section 3, the transgression is, implicitly, disloyalty towards the king. And explicitly in the ‘long version’ of the *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu*, v. 5.5, and implicitly in the *Instruction for the King Merikare*, P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, vv. 48-51, the transgression is unspecified opposition to the king.

Interestingly, even though these transgressions are united by a more or less direct opposition to the king, all of them are met with different punishments. These are not always specified and, when they are, they are not always clear:

1- In the *Instruction for Kagemni*, vv. 1.12-2.2, the author states that the punishment by the king, referred to as *ntr*, is not known;

2- In the *Instruction of a Man for His Son*, section 3, it is only mentioned that the punishment of the king, also referred to as *ntr*, is extremely great. Although the punishment is not specified here, it is specified elsewhere in this instruction, and it most often takes the form of negation of a tomb. Therefore, it may be conjectured that that is also the punishment implicit in this passage;

3- In the ‘short version’ of the *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu*, section 5, vv. 5.13-5.14, the punishment comes either from the king metaphorically identified with Sekhmet, or from the goddess herself acting through the king. Given the association of the goddess with illness, it is conceivable that the punishment referred to by the text would be some form of illness. This is further suggested in the ‘long version’ of the text which mobilises the *šm3.yw*-demons who were often described as being controlled by Sekhmet;

4- In the ‘long version’ of *Kairsu*, section 5, v. 5.5, it is only said that the opposers to the king are stricken (*hwj*) by each god;

5- In the *Instruction for the King Merikare*, P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, vv. 48-51, the divine punishment takes the form of implantation of impediments in the blood. This could mean anything from loss of favour to a serious illness.

The second, third and fourth punishments just listed have parallels elsewhere<sup>705</sup>, but the first and fifth are fairly unique in the context of the instructions of the Pharaonic period.

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<sup>705</sup> Even if not used with *ntr*, the verb *hwj* present in the second punishment is still attested elsewhere in the context of punishment; see, for instance, the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 11, v. 15.3. And the third punishment may have a parallel in the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 16, v. 18.5 (see no. 47).

The first in the formulation, and the fifth in the content. Interestingly, the second punishment, if deduced correctly, is the only one that may have been based on a real legal punishment. To be sure, this is not to say that the other punishments were fabrications that fell outside of the audiences' expectations. On the contrary, they may have had significant social implications.

That is especially true of the first, third, and fifth punishments. The fact that the author of *Kagemni* claims that it is not known how *ntr* will punish leaves open the possibility that any adverse event could have been construed as the punishment in question. And, inasmuch as the 'long version' of *Kairsu* and *Merikare* may have referred to a punishment in the form of an illness, at least certain illnesses, in certain contexts, could have been taken as signs of divine punishment and, therefore, of guilt<sup>706</sup>.

### 3.1.6 Execution of courtiers

Because murder was obviously condemnable, because it was not frequent among the intended audiences to be a priority theme, or for yet another reason, the topic of killings was mostly left out of the Middle and New Kingdom instructions. An exception is the *Instruction for the King Merikare*. This royal instruction does not address murder among private individuals, but executions ordered by the king. The passage that will be discussed in this section is P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, vv. 139-140 (see no. 25).

That the topic of executions is dealt with only in a royal instruction is expectable, as officials – the imagined (and certainly intended) audience of the private instructions – could not legitimately order executions. Executions are addressed in *Merikare* from two perspectives: they are either encouraged or discouraged<sup>707</sup>. In P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, v. 23, the addressee is advised to kill (*sm3*) the children of an agitator (*t3h*)<sup>708</sup>. Similarly, in a panegyric on the creator god at the end of the instruction, the god, who delegates a part of his duties on the king (P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, vv. 135-

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<sup>706</sup> This may perhaps be compared with the taboo system among the Inuit society Netselik where 'sickness and misfortune (or lack of game) ... were often interpreted as caused by some malevolent ghost or spirit, usually angered by a breach of taboo' (B. Morris 2006, 30; see also Lambert 2007, 58-59).

<sup>707</sup> On the ambivalent and pragmatic morality of the king see Baines (1991, 160-61).

<sup>708</sup> On this passage see Dils (2014). A similar recommendation seems to be given on vv. 12-13, but the passage is too fragmentary.

136), kills (*sm3*) his enemies and strikes (*hdj*) their children (vv. 133-134), and kills (*sm3*) the estranged (*h3k.w-jb*) among mankind (v. 137)<sup>709</sup> (see no. 24). Conversely, on vv. 50-51 the addressee is counselled to refrain from killing (*sm3*) a man (*z(j)*) whose usefulness he knows and who is familiar to him<sup>710</sup> (see no. 21), and at the closing of the instruction on vv. 139-140 the addressee is also admonished against killing (*sm3*)<sup>711</sup> one who was favoured before by the addressee and who is known by *ntr*. As said at the beginning, the latter passage is the one that will be discussed in this section.

The section between vv. 138 and 144 (see no. 25) ends the *Instruction for the King Merikare*<sup>712</sup>. Therefore, it serves as the text's epilogue. Accordingly, it begins by admonishing the addressee against disregarding the teachings passed on to him (vv. 138-139) and ends by wishing that the addressee will be remembered as a good king (vv. 141-144). The injunction against killing (vv. 139-141) intervenes in between. The passage at hand is located in what Blumenthal (1980, 25) considers to be the fourth part of the text (vv. 108-144<sup>713</sup>). The section between vv. 106 and 116 (see no. 23) deals with the observation of ritual obligations (vv. 109-116) amidst the military preparations (vv. 106-109), presumably in the civil war during the First Intermediate Period. Vv. 116-123 continue the topic of the civil war, but from a different perspective: after reflecting on the nature of kingship (vv. 116-118), the narrator mentions the ravaging of regions of Thisis (vv. 119-121), for which he takes responsibility while denying knowledge that it would take place, and concludes that destruction is pointless, not only because one will have to rebuild afterwards (vv. 121-122), but because each action is met with its proper retribution (v. 123). The next section (vv. 123-130) shifts attention back to the relation with god, with a more descriptive part on the power of god (vv. 123-125) progressively giving way to prescriptions to act, cultically<sup>714</sup>, towards god, so that he will reciprocate (vv. 128-130). The following section (vv. 130-138 (see no. 24)), which precedes the passage under

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<sup>709</sup> Quirke (2015, 163) is of the opinion that the use of vocabulary relating to violence in this passage also aims 'at legitimating sovereign power' (see also Parkinson 2002, 255).

<sup>710</sup> He also seems to be approved of by *ntr*, but this is tentatively suggested by the context, as a lacuna intervenes. That is why this passage is not discussed in more detail in this section.

<sup>711</sup> All six attestations of *sm3* in the *Instruction for the King Merikare* were covered in this brief overview.

<sup>712</sup> A colophon follows after in P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso.

<sup>713</sup> It is arguable, based on the rubrication, that the first section of this part begins at v. 106 and not 108 (see no. 23).

<sup>714</sup> As argued by Tavares (2007, 234n66).

consideration, is exclusively descriptive and consists in an encomium that lists the actions of the creator god in the benefit of mankind. Among these are the already mentioned killings of the enemies of the god (vv. 133-134) and of the estranged among people (v. 137). The references to these killings by the sun god contrast with the discouragement against killing in the section following immediately after.

The passage between vv. 138 and 144 (see no. 25) from P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso reads:

(138) (*jmj=k jrj mn.t nb(.t) <r> r3=j dd shp.w* (139) *nb hr n(.j)-sw.t swn hr=k t3z=k m z(j)*) **You should not make any panning <against> my speech** which gives all the rules of conduct (139) about the king, and opens your eyes (= instructs) so that you may be a leader as a man (of standing).

(*jh ph=k wj nn shr.y=k*) May you then reach me without there being an accuser against you.

(*m sm3m* (140) *w<sup>c</sup> tkn jm=k hsj.n=k sw ntr rh sw*) Do not kill (140) one who is close to you, because you favoured him (before) and god knows him.

(*w<sup>c</sup> jm=sn pw w3d tp t3 ntr.w pw šms.w* (141) *n(.j)-sw.t*) The one who thrives upon the earth is one of them (i.e., a god?); the followers of the (141) king are gods.

(*jmj mrw.t=k n t3-tm.w*) Inspire (lit. cause) love for you to everyone.

(*sh3.w pw kd nfr rnp.wt zbj.w j[m]*) A good character is a memorial, (even after) the years pass.

(142) (*dd.tw=k h4dj rk n(.j) mn jn n.tjw m ph.wj m pr* (143) *H.tj <m3<sup>c</sup>-hrw> m sš3.w jw.t(j)=f(j) mjn*) May you be said to be the one who destroyed the time of suffering, by the successors in the house of (143) Khety, <justified>, in wishing that he will come today.

(*m=k dd.n=j n=k bw-3h* (144) *n(.j) h.t=j jr r=k m grg m hr=k*) See, I have told you what is useful (144) of my core (lit. belly). It is with that in mind that you should act.

This passage is dominated by concerns with the interaction between the ‘body natural’ and ‘body politic’ of the king – in this specific case, how an individual king may affect the perception of kingship among the elite after his death<sup>715</sup>. Those concerns are indicated by the wish that the addressee will heed to the advice in this instruction in order to become a man of standing (vv. 138-139), by the wish that the addressee will have no accuser at the time of his passing<sup>716</sup> (v. 139), by the statement that a good character is a

<sup>715</sup> That the text refers to the death of the addressee is suggested by *jh ph=k wj*, ‘may you then reach me’, on v. 139 (see Dils 2014). However, other interpretations are possible: for instance, Tobin (2003c, 165) renders it as: ‘And then you will equal me’.

<sup>716</sup> See previous note.

memorial over time<sup>717</sup> (v. 141), and by the wish that ‘the successors’ (most probably the elite) will remember the addressee as a messianic-like king (vv. 141-143). This is the setting in which the injunction against killing one close to the addressee, no doubt a courtier<sup>718</sup>, is mobilised.

The four reasons advanced by the text in favour of not killing courtiers can be divided into personal and institutional. The personal reasons are given on vv. 139-140: ‘(m *sm3m* (140) *w<sup>c</sup> tkn jm=k ḥsj.n=k sw ntr rh sw*) Do not kill (140) one who is close to you, because you favoured him (before) and god knows him’. The courtier is 1) an acquaintance of the ruling king, and 2) known by *ntr*. Tavares (2007, 238) argues that the king is ‘empfohlen, keinen zu töten, der ihm nahe steht, weil Gott ihn kennt und selbst ihm vergelten wird.’ In this argument he considers the passage on vv. 139-140 together with the passage from v. 124, in which it is said that there is no one who can repel the arm (i.e., intervention) of the Lord of the Hand. To be sure, the text states on v. 124, right before the passage cited by Tavares, that god knows characters (*kd.w*), and a similar pattern of associating divine knowledge about people with retribution against them is found on vv. 49-50<sup>719</sup> and 137-138<sup>720</sup>. One would therefore expect the same pattern on vv. 139-140, but the latter are probably closer to the positive sense in the passage on v. 67<sup>721</sup>.

The tone of vv. 139-140 and of 140-141, which associate courtiers with gods, also does not suggest that the courtier who lost royal favour will be punished by god. Those verses are further framed by two statements that contradict the idea that the courtier will be punished: ‘(139) (*jh ph=k wj nn shr.y=k*) May you then reach me without there being an accuser against you’, and ‘(141) (*jmj mrw.t=k n t3-tm.w*) inspire (lit. cause) love for you to

<sup>717</sup> A similar point is made in P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, vv. 30-31: ‘(30) (*sm3<sup>c</sup> hrw=k r-gs ntr jh dd r(m)t.w [m-ḥm.t]=k* (31) *hsf=k r-d3.wt [jy.t]=k p.t pw n(jt) z(j) jwn nfr ksn pw shwrj n(j) d[ndn]-jb*). Justify yourself (lit. your voice) before god, so that people may say (to one another) in your [absence]: (31) “You (= King Merikare) punish(es) in the measure of your mischief.” A good character is the heaven of a man. A malediction of the angry is bad’ (Quack 1992, 22-23, 168-69; Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 184; Kammerzell 1997, 100).

<sup>718</sup> See also Parkinson (2002, 256).

<sup>719</sup> ‘(49) (*jw ntr rh.w ḥ3k.w-jb.w* \* (50) *ḥwj ntr sdb=f hr znf* \*) God knows the estranged (lit. ‘resented of jb-heart’), (50) and god implants impediments against him in the blood’ (see no. 21).

<sup>720</sup> ‘(137) (*sm3m.n=f ḥ3k.w-jb mm(j) mj {ḥ}ḥwj{=j}* (138) *z(j) z3=f hr sn=f jw ntr rh.w rn nb*) He killed the estranged among them, as a man (138) strikes his son because of his brother, for god knows every name’ (see no. 24).

<sup>721</sup> In the wake of recommendations to invest in the relationship with the gods through the performance and supply of the cult and through the erection of monuments, the text (P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso) asserts that: ‘(67) (*rh.n ntr m jrr.w n=f* \*) God knows the one who acts for him.’

everyone.’ ‘Love’<sup>722</sup> is often paired with favour (*hzw.t*)<sup>723</sup>, but, perhaps significantly, the king is said to have favoured the courtier (in the past) on v. 140, while the term ‘favour’ is absent in the injunction on v. 141. Perhaps the text intends to pave the way to a diplomatic and courteous relation between king and courtiers who lost royal favour.

The institutional reasons not to kill courtiers are given on vv. 140-141: 3) the courtier is one of them, and 4) the followers of the king are gods. When the text says that the courtier is one of them, it probably means that he is a god, because the previous passage ends with a reference to *ntr*, because the current passage is immediately followed by a reference to *ntr.w*, and because the referent of ‘them’ can be argued to be often the gods<sup>724</sup>. The assertion that the followers of the king are gods has a similar parallel in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, epilogue, vv. D588-D590, which states that a follower of Horus (= the king) will be successful and attain old age and the state of *imakhu*. As it occurs in the context of listing the benefits of listening (and/or obeying), the passage in *Ptahhotep* is arguably conditional: the follower of Horus will achieve success if he behaves accordingly. But because it is mobilised as a reason not to execute a courtier, the passage in *Merikare* seems to refer to an acquired right: the courtier is a god by virtue of being close to the king<sup>725</sup>. One may wonder about what supported the mobilisation of this passage and what it may have hoped to achieve, beyond the stated purpose of getting the king to spare the lives of courtiers who lost royal favour. In fact, one may also ask whether the text was reflecting reality and attempting to change it or whether it had other purposes.

About epithets in elite monumental inscriptions Doxey (1998, 77) comments that: ‘Typically, the monument owners do not actually claim divine status’. In those inscriptions the preposition *mj*, ‘like’, may be used<sup>726</sup>, which, in the context of metaphors equating non-royal humans with gods, is more expectable than the A *pw* B construction used on vv. 140-141. To be sure, the presentation of officials as gods became standard, at least from the

<sup>722</sup> On which see Quack (2011, 44).

<sup>723</sup> On the implications of favour see Jansen-Winkel (2002, 48-49).

<sup>724</sup> A clear example in this instruction is found in the mention of the afterlife court in P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, vv. 53-56. On v. 53 it is stated that: *ḏḏḏ.t wdꜥ sꜥr.yw \* rḥ.n=k tm=sn zfn(.w) \**, ‘**The council that judges (lit. separates) the needy**, you know they are not mild’ (Quack 1992, 34-35, 174; Dils 2014).

<sup>725</sup> Another possible implication is that the text does not only refer to the execution of courtiers, but also to the destruction of their identity, as the term *smꜥ* seems to also entail the ‘second-death’, which can be described as the loss of one’s identity (see Frandsen 2001a, 345-46).

<sup>726</sup> See Doxey (1998, 77-78).

First Intermediate Period on, but in the funerary context. The divinisation of members of the elite in that context required the adoption of royal status and attributes<sup>727</sup>, which could not occur during their lives. That does not mean, however, that they did not partake, to an extent, of kingship: if it is true that the king delegated his priestly obligations on a myriad of priests (e.g., Hays 2009, 17-18), it is also true that he delegated a significant part of his ruling duties on high officials<sup>728</sup>. It is possible that what allows and legitimises the text to have them on the same standing as gods is their representation of the king<sup>729</sup>, by whom they are empowered<sup>730</sup> and who is described as a god in royal ideology<sup>731</sup>.

About the death penalty in the Middle and New Kingdoms, Andrea McDowell (2001, 316) argues that: ‘Literary texts reflect an aversion to capital punishment in general and suggest that this sentence was reserved for rebellion, the ultimate attack on the established order.’ In support of this argument the author quotes the *Instruction for the King Merikare*, P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, vv. 48-50 (see no. 21), which counsels the king against killing (*skr*) when it is not useful to him and to use other forms of punishment instead<sup>732</sup>, and a story from the *Tales of Papyrus Westcar*, P. Berlin P 3033, vv. 8.15-8.17. In the latter, king Khufu asks magician Djedi to sever the head of a prisoner and reattach it to the body right afterwards, to which Djedi replies that one is not allowed to do that to people. In this story the king is arguably humiliated by being corrected, presumably in front of the court, but neither *Papyrus Westcar* nor *Merikare* were dominated by a humanistic turn. Another story in *Papyrus Westcar* is much less scrupulous when it has the king dealing with an adulterous wife: if a literal interpretation of P. Berlin P 3033, vv. 4.9-4.10, is to be made, the king orders her death by burning<sup>733</sup>. And, as mentioned above, in *Merikare*, P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, v. 23, the king is advised to kill (*sm3*) the

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<sup>727</sup> See Frandsen (2008, 56-57).

<sup>728</sup> As pointed out by Ellen Morris (2010, 211), the administration kept running when ‘the king was too young or too old to effectively rule’, or when there was a quick, but smooth, succession of kings.

<sup>729</sup> Kruchten (2001, 280) also argues that: ‘What distinguished the *sr* (connected with the root *w3r*, “powerful” from the “feeble” (*nmhy*) was that the former received “food” (*k3w*) from the king and was thus supposed to partake in his divine “*k3*-substance.”’

<sup>730</sup> On the empowerment of officials by the king see Hays (2009, 20).

<sup>731</sup> The implications of equating high officials with gods will be further discussed below.

<sup>732</sup> Such as incarceration, on which see briefly McDowell (2001, 318).

<sup>733</sup> See Leahy (1984, 199 with n. 2, 202). For a different interpretation see Lorton (1977, 15).



children of an agitator (*t3h*)<sup>734</sup>. From this passage Lorton (1977, 30n133) concludes that ‘capital punishment was under royal jurisdiction at an earlier period’.

The legal process against those who conspired to murder Ramesses III also indicates that, in the Ramesside Period, it was the king who decreed the death penalty (Kruchten 2001a, 281 with references). The attestations in *Merikare* and in *Papyrus Westcar* seem to fall outside a juridical framing, but they agree with the later evidence in that the authority for the death penalty comes from the king, and, therefore, they may reflect an actual Middle Kingdom (if not earlier) practice, or at least its possibility. The *Instruction for the King Merikare* purports to refer to events in the First Intermediate Period, and it would therefore be conceivable that, as a text probably composed in the Middle Kingdom, it could be referring to the treatment of dissidents, either during or after the civil war<sup>735</sup>, and to the fear of the continuation of that practice. It is thus possible that the text attempts to improve the image of the king and preserve the high elite from further bloodshed.

Another possibility is that the text may have mobilised a fictitious setting as a pretext to affirm that high officials partake of a divine status. But, assuming that the text did intend to shape conduct, the identification of courtiers with gods is arguably neither exclusively metaphorical nor literal, but is also ritual, in a way similar to the identification of objects and human body parts with body parts of gods in the *Instruction of Amenemope* discussed above<sup>736</sup>. As in that instruction, the equation of high officials with gods places them under the gods’ protection<sup>737</sup>, since to harm them would be equivalent to harming the gods.

No punishment is specified, and the fact that killing a high official close to the king would be tantamount to attacking a god is alone mobilised as a deterrent. Assuming the text was attempting to discontinue a real practice, this can be considered an informal mechanism akin to modern parliamentary immunity, with the similar function of allowing a courtier to express himself freely without fear of prosecution or execution.

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<sup>734</sup> Lorton (1977, 12-13) suggests that this passage deals with ‘conspiracy directed towards regicide’.

<sup>735</sup> On the persecution of dissidents in the Twelfth dynasty see Wilkinson (2010, 161-62, 541 with references).

<sup>736</sup> See this chapter, subsection 3.1.2.5.2.

<sup>737</sup> This is also explicitly the case in a Ramesside ritual text for protection and purification where the person to be protected is identified with the sun god (P. Chester Beatty IX = BM 10689 verso, v. B 18.5) (Gardiner 1935, 113; Quack 2013, 138-39).

## 3.2 Transgressions against *ntr*

### 3.2.1 Detestation (*bw.t*) of god

This category gathers all the attestations involving *bw.t* in association with a god in the instructions of the New Kingdom. While the term *bw.t* is attested in Middle Kingdom instructions as well, it is never associated with a god, with the exception of a New Kingdom copy of the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*. As far as it is possible to assess from the extant material, the detestation (*bw.t*) of a god emerged discursively only in the New Kingdom. Because this theme is tied to one specific word, *bw.t*, there was no subjective selection of the passages, as happens with most other categories discussed here. The nine passages that will be discussed in this section are attested across four instructions: from the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. BM EA 10509 (= L2), maxim 28, v. L2 D418; from the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto: vv. 15.13 (see no. 26), 17.2 (see no. 28), and 20.13 (see no. 31); from the *Instruction of P. Chester Beatty IV* (= P. BM EA 10684 verso): v. 5.4 (see no. 35); and from the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto: chapter 10, vv. 13.16 and 14.3 (see no. 44), chapter 13, v. 15.21 (see no. 45), chapter 17, vv. 18.23-19.1 (see no. 48), and chapter 29, v. 26.20 (see no. 57).

The term *bw.t*<sup>738</sup> has been associated with the historically and culturally charged notions of ‘taboo’<sup>739</sup>, ‘sin’<sup>740</sup>, ‘evil’<sup>741</sup>, and ‘abomination’<sup>742</sup>. More neutral terms have been used to translate it, such as ‘pollution’ and ‘impurity’<sup>743</sup>, or ‘interdict’<sup>744</sup>. More literally, it may be translated as ‘aversion’<sup>745</sup> or ‘detestation’<sup>746</sup>. It can designate the quality of a substance, like certain foods, in which case the translation ‘interdict’ is more useful, or the

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<sup>738</sup> Lemma no. 55150 in the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae*.

<sup>739</sup> See, for instance, Frandsen (2001a; 1986, 140). For a convenient discussion of the use of this Polynesian term in the early Twentieth century anthropology see Volokhine (2015, 273-75), who sensibly prefers other terms to translate *bw.t*, like the more generic ‘interdict’, and the more specific ‘aversion’ (2015, 278).

<sup>740</sup> See Frandsen (2004, 497-98), Bleeker (1966, 6 with n. 2), and Nyord (2003, 86).

<sup>741</sup> See Frandsen (2001b, 141-42).

<sup>742</sup> See Meeks (1979, 433).

<sup>743</sup> See Frandsen (2004, 498-99).

<sup>744</sup> See Volokhine (2015, 278).

<sup>745</sup> See Volokhine (2015, 278) and Meeks (1979, 434).

<sup>746</sup> See Volokhine (2015, 278), Hays (2012, 52), Meeks (1979, 449), and Almeida (2017, 120).

state of a person after coming into contact with a thing *bw.t*<sup>747</sup>, or doing an action that is *bw.t*<sup>748</sup>, in which case the translation ‘detestation’ is more appropriate (Frandsen 2004, 497-98).

As argued by Frandsen (2001a, 345-46; 2004, 497), the sense of *bw.t* is intertwined with the conceptualisation of the origin of the world in a process of differentiation of the non-existent whose potential is existence. Thus, Ma’at represents the differentiated world, whereas *bw.t* stands for the undifferentiated world which surrounds the differentiated world. This latter ought to be properly maintained in order to eschew non-existence. This kind of conceptualisation is not specific to ancient Egypt, as demonstrated by Bahr’s (2006, 1562) introductory and general remarks about the category of purity: ‘Notions of purity articulate a symbolically ordered world of flourishing religious life. The longing for purity is intimately paired with the yearning for salvation. The conception of “impure,” then, or “unclean,” identifies everything that this symbolical cosmos threatens or calls into question. The condition of purity is either very fragile, or else denotes a future ideal condition worth the striving. The evaluation of “impure” comprehends all of those crafts, activities, places, and elements that endanger or destroy this salutary, ordered condition.’

Bahr’s remark about the link between purity and ‘salvation’ is also applicable to ancient Egypt, as demonstrated, *inter alia*, by Frandsen (2001a, 346; 2001b, 167; 2004, 48). In fact, the first attestations of *bw.t* are found in the funerary discourse, designating what the deceased needed to avoid, namely hunger, thirst, and faeces (2001a, 345-46). In that discourse, things *bw.t* are opposed to things Ma’at<sup>749</sup> (2001a, 345-46; 2001b, 167), probably not in a dichotomy as suggested by Frandsen (2001a, 345), but in a dialectic<sup>750</sup>. If the deceased failed to avoid things *bw.t*, he would fail to meet part of the conditions to achieve the kind of life he hoped for in the afterlife (Frandsen 2001b, 155, 167-68).

If the deceased should refrain from actively coming into contact with things *bw.t*, he should also be preserved from contacting with it through the visitors to his tomb, who should only enter it in a state of ritual purity (Frandsen 2001a, 346; Meeks 1979, 449-50).

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<sup>747</sup> Here in the sense of ‘interdict’.

<sup>748</sup> See previous note.

<sup>749</sup> For examples of pairs of opposites see Frandsen (2001b, 156-57).

<sup>750</sup> As explained by Gardner (2008, 101), ‘the difference is that, whereas a duality is supposed to be complementary, in a dialectic there is the potential for contradiction’ and ‘you cannot have (or be) one without the other’.

To come into contact with anything *bw.t* is not only harmful to the dead, but also to the gods (e.g., Frandsen 2001a, 346; 2001b, 162). That is why the temple space had to be routinely purified and those who worked there also had to observe rules of purification<sup>751</sup> (see Meeks 1979, 448-49; Teeter 2011, 32-34). The similar requirements of purity from the dead and the gods become more understandable when one considers that ‘the realm of the dead ... in Egypt was also the realm of the gods’ (Assmann 2005, 15; see also Meeks 1979, 449; Teeter 2011, 149).

Volokhine (2015, 278-79) characterises things *bw.t* as something that must be kept away from god, and therefore from the temple. From the association between *n m33*, ‘to dislike’ (lit. ‘to not see’), and *bw.t*, Almeida (2017, 120 with n. 387) also suggests that *bw.t* involves a level of dissociation because it is kept away from one’s field of vision. One may also describe *bw.t* as an incompatibility between the object or behaviour that is impure (*bw.t*) and a god or a deceased (see e.g., Nyord 2009a, 74 with n. 336).

As part of the process of extending the range of uses of *bw.t* that took place possibly during the Middle Kingdom, ‘the concept of *bwt* was further used to delimit acceptable moral standards’ (Frandsen 2001a, 346; see also 2001b, 173). It is thus unsurprising that the term *bw.t* is attested in the instructions<sup>752</sup>. But, as mentioned above, and with only one exception, in the instructions of the Middle Kingdom *bw.t* is never associated with *ntr*.

Other than the passage in the *Instruction of Khety*, P. Anastasi VII = P. BM EA 10222, v. 17.3, which states that (smelly?) clothes (*hbs.w*) are the detestation (*bw.t*) of the *stnw.y*-coalman, Middle Kingdom passages mobilising *bw.t* are concentrated in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*. In P. Prisse, from the Middle Kingdom, to stare too much at a superior with whom the pupil is having a meal in maxim 7, v. D125, to turn one high official against another when reproducing a message in maxim 8, v. D160, and to waste the moment (*3.t*) of following one’s *jb*-heart in maxim 11, v. D189, is described, in all three

<sup>751</sup> Other spaces like the palace and private households were also vulnerable to the effects of impurity (see Meeks 1979, 449-50).

<sup>752</sup> In the instructions from the Middle and New Kingdoms, *bw.t* is attested 15 times in the following texts: the *Instruction of Khety*, P. Anastasi VII = P. BM EA 10222, v. 17.3; the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, vv. D125, D160, D189, P. BM EA 10509 (= L2), v. D294; the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 15.13 (see no. 26), 17.2 (see no. 28), 20.13 (see no. 31), 22.1; the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*, P. BM EA 10684 verso, v. 5.4 (see no. 35); the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 10, vv. 13.16, 14.3 (see no. 44), chapter 13, v. 15.21 (see no. 45), chapter 17, v. 19.1 (see no. 48), and chapter 29, v. 26.20 (see no. 57). In the Late Period *Instruction of Papyrus Brooklyn*, P. Brooklyn 47.218.135, the term *bw.t* is attested 7 times on vv. 2.17, 4.16, 5.6, 5.12, and fragment 6.

passages, as *bw.t k3 pw*, ‘it is a detestation of the *ka*’<sup>753</sup>. While this expression is repeated verbatim on v. D125 of P. BM EA 10509 (= L2), this copy from the Eighteenth dynasty mobilises *bw.t* differently in maxim 18: to have intercourse with the wife of someone close is reproached, as in P. Prisse, and further qualified as: *b[w]t ms pw \**, ‘it is indeed a detestation’ (v. D294).

Goedicke (2002b, 42) suggests that: ‘The words *bwt k3 pw*, are similar to the condemnation formula *bwt ntr pw*, “it is god’s abomination” expressing absolute rejection, though not in a legal sense as it does later’<sup>754</sup>. In turn, Shupak (2010, 464) considers that, in the *Instruction of Amenemope*, *bw.t ntr* replaces ““abomination to Ka”” in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*. Both authors are certainly justified in comparing the detestation of the *ka* with the detestation of god, inasmuch as *bw.t* is the common denominator of the two expressions.

But, while it is true that the *ka* is not mobilised in the instructions of the New Kingdom<sup>755</sup>, a time at which it ‘lost much of its importance ..., although the *ka* always remained the recipient of offerings’ (Bolshakov 2001, 216; see also Assmann 2005, 96), that does not necessarily entail that the detestation of god is a direct replacement of the detestation of the *ka*<sup>756</sup>. In other words, the mobilisation of the detestation of god may have been a natural evolution that would take place even if the detestation of the *ka* had never been mobilised in Middle Kingdom instructions.

Although it may be due to accidents of preservation, or to choices in the strategies of the texts, it is also possible that it is a feature of the instructions’ discourse that the detestation of the *ka* is mobilised in instructions of the Middle Kingdom, particularly in

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<sup>753</sup> Later in maxim 7, vv. D139-D143, it is said that it is the *ka* that makes the superior give, and that eating bread is under the counsel of god (*jw wnm t hr shr ntr*) (v. D142) (Allen 2015, 178-79; Dils 2014). In commenting this passage, Vernus (2010a, 155-56n88) suggests that the *ka*, in the role of an aspect of personality, is somewhat close to the modern psychological notion of the ‘unconscious’, and that, inasmuch as the *ka* partakes in the decision process, it is ultimately inspired by the deity; hence eating bread is under the counsel of god. But this implication is not necessarily implied by the text, as *ntr* in that passage seems to play another role, namely to legitimise the pupil’s passivity towards his superior in order to ingratiate him. On this passage see also Goedicke (2002b, 44-45). On the *ka* see also Bolshakov (2001 with references), Assmann (2005, 96-102 with references), and Silva (2010, 51-57 with references).

<sup>754</sup> The author refers to the use of that formula in P. Lee, v. 1.7 (see Goedicke 1963, 78, pl. XI; see also Lorton 1977, 29).

<sup>755</sup> Cf. the *Instruction of Ani*, P. DeM 1 recto, v. 18.15 (= 1.5), where *k3* may have been mistakenly written (see Quack 1994, 128; see also Dils 2014).

<sup>756</sup> The *bw.t k3* was kept in use outside the instructions’ genre. For an example from the Ptolemaic temple of Hathor at Dendera see Frandsen (1998, 991).

*Ptahhotep*, but not in the New Kingdom instructions, and that the detestation of god is mobilised across the New Kingdom instructions, but, with one exception, not in the extant Middle Kingdom instructions<sup>757</sup>. The expression *bw.t ntr* is attested since the Old Kingdom<sup>758</sup>, but it may have remained virtually exclusive to the mortuary discourse for a significant period of time.

The fact that the detestation of god emerged in the instructions' discourse by the New Kingdom suggests that this can be an influence of the wider religious practices of that period. An example from the reign of Seti I is the lintel of the chief sculptor Userhat, Leiden K.9, left jamb of doorway, front face, v. 4: *jw=j rh.kwj bw.t ntr=j*, 'I know the detestation of my god' (Kitchen 1975, 361 ll. 7-8; Lichtheim 1992, 70; Frood 2007, 121). Another example from the reign of Ramesses II can be found in the block stela of Tjia, Cairo JdE 89624, face 4, vv. 4-5: *jw=j rh.kwj (5) bw.t ntr.w*, 'I know the detestation of the gods' (Kitchen 1980, 367 ll. 12-13; Lichtheim 1992, 75; Rutkauskas 2016, 70)<sup>759</sup>. Importantly, this kind of claims seems to be limited to the Ramesside Period, as pointed out by Rutkauskas (2016, 246). This is also the period of the aforementioned P. Lee which concerns the trial of the conspirators who assassinated Ramesses III. Therefore, the detestation of god was mobilised in several discourses during the New Kingdom, but it is possible that its mobilisation in the instructions has its genealogy in the religious discourse, and not necessarily in the legal discourse.

### 3.2.1.1 *Instruction of Ptahhotep, maxim 28, vv. L2 D415-L2 D418*

Maxim 28 of the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* is not well preserved in P. BM EA 10509 (= L2), and therefore will be discussed here only briefly. As far as the present author is aware, this is the only extant copy with this passage in which *ntr* is attested. The term *ntr* is not mobilised in P. Prisse, and may have been attested in P. BM EA 10371 + 10435 (=

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<sup>757</sup> This hypothesis is further supported by the absence of the term *bw.t* in the other Middle Kingdom literary texts.

<sup>758</sup> See, for instance, the *Pyramid Texts*, spell 511, § 1161a.

<sup>759</sup> See other examples from the Ramesside Period in Lichtheim (1992, 113) and in Rutkauskas (2016, 68).

L1)<sup>760</sup>, but that is not entirely certain, as the part of the text where the term may have been attested is not preserved.

Maxim 28 of the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, instructs the pupil on how to behave if, or when, he comes to work at a court<sup>761</sup>. The text is not clear-cut, as it may be interpreted in different ways. Vv. D418-D421 are at the centre of the point it tries to make:

(D418) (*mdy=k m rdj hr gs*) When you speak, do not be partial (lit. give to a side)<sup>762</sup>.

(D419) (*z3w dd=f shr=f*) Beware that he<sup>763</sup> says of his case:

(D420) (*sr.w rdj=f md.t hr gs jrj* (D421) *wdb zp=k r wd<sup>c</sup>.t*) ‘Officials, he is partial (lit. he gives the speech to a side)’; (D421) then your case will turn into a judgement (against you)<sup>764</sup>.

An immediate problem concerns v. D418: it may be interpreted as referring to the pupil, as in the translation presented above, or to the person being judged. For instance, Allen (2015, 205) proposes the translation: ‘When you contest with someone who is biased’. And Junge (2003, 199) offers a similar rendering: ‘Redest du über jemanden, der sich auf eine Seite schlägt’. Given the text’s transmission, it seems that ancient audiences made the first interpretation and understood the text as admonishing the pupil against partiality, instead of teaching him on how to deal with someone who wants to impress on others his biased version of the events. P. BM EA 10371 + 10435 (= L1), v. L1 D418, reads: *m [nm<sup>c</sup>] wpj[=k z(j) 2 ...]*, ‘Do not [be partial]<sup>765</sup> when [you] judge [two men]’<sup>766</sup>. And P. BM EA 10509 (= L2), vv. L2 D415-L2D418, run as follows:

(L2 D415) (*[jr jrj=k z3] z(j) n(j) sdm* \* (D416) *sr n(j) wd<sup>c</sup> [‘š3.t] [...] n(j)t wd<sup>c</sup>.w*) [If you act as a man] of standing (lit. son of man), of hearing<sup>767</sup>, (D416) an official of judging [the multitude] [...<sup>768</sup>] of the judged.

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<sup>760</sup> See Hagen (2012, 191).

<sup>761</sup> ‘(*jr jrj=k z3 z(j) n(j) knb.t*) If you act as a man of standing (lit. son of a man) of the court’ (v. D415) (Allen 2015, 204).

<sup>762</sup> On *rdj hr gs* see Gnirs (2000, 133).

<sup>763</sup> Presumably the person being judged.

<sup>764</sup> See Allen (2015, 204-205), Žába (1956, 49, 94, 154), Dils (2014), Burkard (1991, 212), Jacq (2004, 180), Junge (2003, 199, 247-48), Vernus (2010a, 135), Hagen (2012, 190), Fischer-Elfert (1999a, 170-71), and Gnirs (2000, 139).

<sup>765</sup> On *nm<sup>c</sup>* see Gnirs (2000, 134n60).

<sup>766</sup> See Hagen (2012, 190), Dils (2014), and Žába (1956, 49, 94).

<sup>767</sup> That is, a hearing judge/officer.

<sup>768</sup> Relatively long lacuna (see Dils 2014).

(L2 D418) (*m nm<sup>c</sup> [wpj]=k z(.j) 2 \* bw.t ntr rdj.t [hr gs]*) Do not be partial [when] you [judge] two men; the detestation of god is partiality (lit. to give [to a side])<sup>769</sup>.

Both P. BM EA 10371 + 10435 (= L1) and especially P. BM EA 10509 (= L2) indicate that it is the pupil who may be tempted to be wrongful and give preference to one side of the contenders. The L2 version significantly adds that it is a detestation to god, who may here be the king. This is all the more likely, as the second part of v. L2 D418 is explicitly quoted in the text known as the *Installation of the Vizier* (see Sethe 1909, 1090, ll. 2-3; Hagen 2012, 190). Since no Middle Kingdom manuscript contains this passage, there is no evidence that it goes back to that period, as Hagen (2012, 191) conjectures. If it was composed only in the New Kingdom, it is conceivable that it attempted to match the tenor of the Middle Kingdom text, but it is also plausible that it reflected the interests of the time.

### 3.2.1.2 Detestation of god in the *Instruction of Ani*

As mentioned above, the term *bw.t* is attested four times in the *Instruction of Ani*. Of these four attestations, only one is not associated with *ntr*, but is instead associated with an *akh*. The first attestation in P. Boulaq 4 recto, v. 15.13 (see no. 26), takes place in the context of a conflict with a superior. The second and third attestations on vv. 17.2 (see no. 28) and 20.13 (see no. 31), respectively, occur in the context of ritual prescriptions.

#### 3.2.1.2.1 *Instruction of Ani*, vv. 15.12-15.16

As observed above<sup>770</sup>, there is little sequential connection between the maxims of the *Instruction of Ani*. The section between vv. 15.12-15.16 fits that pattern somewhat. Of the neighbouring sections, the one between vv. 15.6-15.9 is probably the one whose topic comes closest to the theme of vv. 15.12-15.16, as the pupil is advised to talk correctly and refrain from talking back (*wšb*), in order to be sent on a mission<sup>771</sup>. The following section,

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<sup>769</sup> See Dils (2014), Hagen (2012, 190), and Vernus (2010a, 136).

<sup>770</sup> This chapter, subsection 3.1.1.1.

<sup>771</sup> On the importance of being sent on a mission see Vernus (2010a, 32-33, 333n21).



between vv. 15.9-15.12, gives continuity to the preceding topic, but makes a slight change in direction by admonishing the pupil against falsifying (*s<sup>c</sup>d3*) a report (*smj*) to an official (*sr*) (vv. 15.9-15.10), and against indiscretion (vv. 15.10-15.12). Following the passage that will be discussed here is the section between vv. 15.16-16.1 which shifts the focus to another topic, as it advises the pupil to abide by tradition (vv. 15.16-15.17) and to work the field (*sh.t*) during the time of cultivation (*sk3*) (vv. 15.17-15.18). The next section between vv. 16.1-16.3 again changes the topic to the importance of finding a wife and becoming a father early on.

Although the maxims surrounding the passage at hand, especially the ones following it, bear little relation to its topic, namely handling a conflict with one's superior (*hr.j*), this theme is addressed elsewhere in the instruction. Albeit with different contours, vv. 18.15-19.1 advise the pupil to stay away from a high official (*sr 3*) with bad character (*bj3.t bjn.t*), as the pupil risks being incriminated by this official and having his goods confiscated without the ability to appeal. From a somewhat different perspective, vv. 22.7-22.10 instruct the pupil to not talk back to an angry superior (*hr.j knđ*) and, instead, to appease him, in order to avoid being punished by him and to win back his favour.

The maxim on vv. 15.12-15.16 from P. Boulaq 4 recto (see no. 26) runs as follows:

(15.12) (*jmj=k hr.y=k jw (= r) [ky] m h.t=<k> jw=f (hr) {ph.t} <ph> jr=k*) Do not ready yourself against [another] in <your> mind (lit. belly), when he <criticises> you.

(15.13) (*bw.t n(jt) ntr jt.t {j3d.t} <m 3d.w>*) To seize <in anger> is the detestation of god.

(*z3[w] tw n=k jmj=k jrj=f*) Beware, you should not do it.

(*m-jrj swđ* (15.14) *hr(.j)=kwj <n> ntr=kwj bw [jrj=f] sdm*) Do not turn (15.14) your superior over <to> your god. He [does] not listen.

(*[wnn]=k <m> rk.3y jw-hr= {k}=<f> r<sup>c</sup>-nb jw h3.ty=<f>* (15.15) (*hr) rh=sw*) You [will be] <as> his opponent every day, because <his> *h3.tj*-heart (15.15) knows it.

(*sn[mh=k n] hr.y=<k> jw=k nmh.t* (15.16) *r r[đj.t] f3j=[f n=k] m3w[đ]*) Plead [to] your superior, if you are low-ranking, (15.16) so that [he gives you] attention.

This passage is not of clear interpretation and, therefore, it can be understood in different ways. According to the rendering proposed here, the pupil is attacked by another. The term used, *ph*, is also used on v. 21.14 (see no. 33) in a context where the nature of the transgression is unclear. Here too it is unclear how the pupil is attacked. The attacker is

described as *ky*, ‘another’, and, unless the text addresses the same topic in two separate segments, this is the superior (*hr.j*) mentioned on v. 15.14. Thus, it is conceivable that the pupil takes offense at a criticism.

Since the antagonism towards the superior takes place in the belly of the pupil (v. 15.12), one may ask whether the text refers to an altercation between the pupil and his superior, or to the pupil’s resentment in silence. If Quack (1994, 152) is right in thinking that v. 15.12 has a parallel in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, maxim 6, v. D99<sup>772</sup>, then the latter possibility could be the case. Another indication that that might be the case, is the statement on vv. 15.14-15.15 that the pupil will be perceived as an opponent because the superior’s *h3.tj*-heart knows it. If the text claims that the superior’s *h3.tj*-heart knows the contents of the pupil’s belly<sup>773</sup>, that can be a metaphorical way of stating that the superior picks up on the pupil’s animosity towards him.

Assuming the passage on vv. 15.13-15.14 is correctly interpreted, it can further indicate that the pupil’s attempt at a retaliation takes place outside the setting of a verbal altercation. This passage, in which the pupil attempts to have his personal god punishing his superior, has a parallel on v. 21.14<sup>774</sup>, and, as remarked by Quack (1994, 152), on the much later Demotic instruction on P. Louvre 2414, v. 2.10<sup>775</sup>. If the practice mentioned on v. 15.14 was a ritual practice as in the Demotic example mentioned, it would probably have been performed in private<sup>776</sup>. This is also suggested by the reference to god on v. 15.14 as ‘your god’<sup>777</sup>.

According to the interpretation proposed here, this passage refers to a setting in which the pupil resents his superior for something he said and develops animosity towards him. In the context of the passage, this animosity is still hidden, but, as the text recognizes on v. 15.13, there is the risk of an anger outburst from the pupil<sup>778</sup>. It is this outburst that is qualified as the detestation of god. One may wonder whether the text condemns that

<sup>772</sup> (D99) (*jmj=k jrj hr m r(m)t.w*) **May you not scheme against people!**’ (see no. 4).

<sup>773</sup> For a parallel see Nyord (2012, 162).

<sup>774</sup> (*whm=k sw m-mn.t n p3 ntr*) You should denounce (lit. repeat) him daily to the god’ (see no. 33).

<sup>775</sup> (*m-jr shwj p3j=k hrj m-b3h p3 ntr*) Do not curse your superior before the god’ (Vittmann 2014; Quack 1994, 152).

<sup>776</sup> Perhaps another comparable ritual practice is *ph n(.j) ntr bjn*, ‘evil petitioning of god’, on which see Ritner (1993, 214-17).

<sup>777</sup> On rituals in the context of personal piety see Luiselli (2011, 44-51).

<sup>778</sup> This seems to be the sense of *jtj.t m 3d.w*, ‘to seize in anger’ (see Quack 1994, 152).

behaviour because it sees it as unseemly, because it sees it as unjustified, or because it considers that the pupil should conform to the situation.

Probably the three possibilities apply. In the already mentioned passage on vv. 21.14-21.16 (see no. 33) the text exhorts the addressee to leave retribution to the god<sup>779</sup>, an idea that is not exclusive to the Egyptian wisdom literature but is also found in the Bible<sup>780</sup>. Although the nature of the offense against the pupil is not specified, the text does not seem to find reason to have the superior punished by god (v. 15.14). Consequently, an angry outburst from the pupil against his superior would be even less justified. That the text prefers a solution in which the *status quo* of the power relation is preserved is indicated in the very passage under discussion on vv. 15.15-15.16. In the passage on vv. 22.7-22.10 the pupil should also refrain from reacting against an angry superior (*ḥr.j knd*), and should instead help him to cool down in order to benefit from his favour.

Aside from revealing that a possibly angry altercation is a detestation of god, this passage is also of great relevance, in that it indicates that there are limits to divine assistance. In terms of social implications, this passage points out that one's personal god cannot be used to one's advantage in all situations, and that not all appeals to the deity will be answered<sup>781</sup>. In terms of divine agency, the text also indicates that the personal god is conceived of as having a social awareness, in that he will answer or not answer the appeals to him according to what is appropriate to all involved and not according to the requests of the one who develops a relationship with him.

### 3.2.1.2.2 *Instruction of Ani, vv. 17.1-17.4*

The passage begins on v. 16.17, but here only vv. 17.1-17.4 will be discussed, as vv. 16.17-17.1 probably concern the giving of contradictory versions at court. The passages immediately before and after the passage on vv. 16.17-17.4 bear little relation to it<sup>782</sup>.

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<sup>779</sup> See also John Gwyn Griffiths (1991, 190).

<sup>780</sup> See references in John Gwyn Griffiths (1991, 127).

<sup>781</sup> This idea is also present in Proverbs 1:28.

<sup>782</sup> The passage on vv. 16.9-16.13 concerns proper respect and discretion when in someone else's house, while vv. 16.13-16.17 advise the pupil against getting involved with prostitutes (see, e.g., Laisney 2011, 118). After vv. 16.17-17.4, the passage on vv. 17.4-17.6 exhorts the pupil to pour out a libation to his mother and father after their death, in order to give an example to his own son, while vv. 17.6-17.11 admonish the pupil against getting inebriated.

However, and as is the case with the passage discussed in the previous subsection, the topic of vv. 17.1-17.4, namely a ritual prescription, is addressed two other times in the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto. On vv. 16.3-16.9 (see no. 27) the text prescribes the celebration of the annual feast of one's personal god, and on vv. 20.12-20.17 (see no. 31) it prescribes the proper behaviour to adopt during the procession of the god's statue.

The prescription on vv. 17.1-17.4 address proper behaviour in the temple's chapel and the proper way to pray. This passage from P. Boulaq 4 recto (see no. 28) reads:

(17.1) (*m-jrj jrj hrw{tw}*) (17.2) <m> *hn.w n(j) ntr*) Do not talk (lit. make voice) (17.2) <in> the resting place of god.

(*bw.t.t=fpw {shb} <sbh>.w*) Shouts are his detestation.

(*snmh n=k m jb={j}*) *mrj jw mdw.t.t=f* (17.3) *nb.t jmn*) Pray with a loving *jb*-heart, whose every (17.3) word is hidden.

(*jrj.y=f hr(.t).t=k sdm=fj:dd.t=k szp=f w[d]n(17.4).t=k*) He will provide for your needs, he will hear what you say, he will accept your (17.4) offering.

The transgression in this passage possibly concerns an excessive display of piety at what seems to be the temple's chapels or booths accessible to anyone who wished to pray to the deity<sup>783</sup>. In what may be considered a logical paradox, especially as several votive stelae had ears depicted on them<sup>784</sup>, the text states that the person praying ought not to speak out loud, especially with distressed wailings – which is what the text seems to refer to as 'shouts' –, because that is god's *bw.t* (v. 17.2). Although the text does not use the term *gr*, 'silence'<sup>785</sup>, the fact that the words are to be hidden in the *jb*-heart indicates that, instead of speaking aloud, one should pray silently and inwardly in order to be listened to by the deity<sup>786</sup>.

<sup>783</sup> On the chapels and booths for private prayer at the temples see Teeter (1997, 5 with references; 2011, 77-84), Luiselli (2011, 59-61), and Quack (1994, 158 with references). On the possibility that the text is reproaching an excessive display of piety see Shupak (1993, 162; 2009, 255). If that is the case, perhaps this passage from *Ani* is then comparable with the New Testament passage in Matthew 6:1-6:8.

<sup>784</sup> See, for instance, Luiselli (2013, 24-25, 33).

<sup>785</sup> This verb is indeed mobilised on v. 17.1, but arguably in relation to what precedes the passage quoted above (cf. Frandsen 1998, 985).

<sup>786</sup> On other attestations indicating that inward thoughts could be known by an outside agent, see Nyord (2012, 162). A question concerning everyday practice that one may raise is whether the prescription in *Ani* applies only to more or less formal prayers at a temple's chapel or booth or to spontaneous prayers outside the temple domain as well. As suggested by Luiselli (2011, 238-39), the verb *snmh*, which is the one used in the

If it is true that the ‘border traffic’ between the realm of the dead and the realm of the living was intensely regulated in ancient Egypt (Assmann 2005, 15), that is no less true of the communication with the gods. In a way similar to the use of epithets in Judaism<sup>787</sup>, the ritualisation of the contact with the gods safeguards the position of the gods vis-à-vis the supplicants, as opposed to an unregulated contact with the deities that risks making them seem less authoritative and less worthy of reverential respect<sup>788</sup> (see also Ramos 2010, 237).

As pointed out by Sousa (2009, 159n312), restrictions prescribing quietness in the temple are not exclusive to the *Instruction of Ani*. Several examples from later sources are discussed in Frandsen (1998, 981-84). Being loud of voice (*k3 hrw*) or loud of speech (*k3 mdw*) is often what is forbidden (Frandsen 1998, 984). Significantly, in several late texts that behaviour is also classified as the *bw.t* of the deity’s *ka*<sup>789</sup>. To make voice/noise (*jr hrw*) or to be loud of voice (*k3 hrw*) is not a problem in itself, as pointed out by Frandsen, because these are positive attributes when possessed by a god or by the king (1998, 996). But, as also pointed out by Frandsen (1998, 995-96), despite the possession of these attributes by the gods, when humans speak loudly in certain contexts, like a temple, this associates them with harmful entities like demons and the god Seth. As argued by Shupak (1993, 161), the *Instruction of P. Insinger*, v. 23.10 may indicate the consequence of transgressing that interdict: *jr pj jw mn srg<ḥ> n3j=f ntr.w n3 j.jr bše=f*, ‘In a temple where there is no quietness, its gods have left it’ (Vittmann 2014; Shupak 1993, 161).

Luiselli (2007a, 161) sees in the counsel to pray silently (vv. 17.2-17.3) a reflexion of the instructions’ ideal of the silent man. In turn, Frandsen (1998, 995-96n79) considers that the prohibition, in other texts, of speaking loudly in temples is different from the recommendation of silence in the instructions. It needs to be taken into account that the texts discussed by Frandsen do not recommend total silence during prayer, as seems to be the case in the passage from *Ani*, but instead prohibit the raising of one’s voice. But

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passage under discussion (v. 17.2), may indicate a more formal context, as opposed to the verb *dd* which may indicate a more spontaneous setting.

<sup>787</sup> See Ramos (2010, 237-38 with n. 6).

<sup>788</sup> This applies to the cases in which a person contacts a deity, but not does not necessarily apply to cases where it is the deity who makes contact, for instance to afflict the person or to reveal something to her in a dream or a vision (see e.g., Teeter 2011, 112-15; Szpakowska 2003, 229-33).

<sup>789</sup> See Frandsen (1998, 983-984 with references).

Frandsen's observation can be applied to the conceptualisations of silence in the instructions. As remarked, for instance, by Römheld (1989, 167-71) and Shupak (2009, 257), to the Middle Kingdom ideal of the silent man – who displayed self-restraint, spoke only when appropriate, did not respond to provocations and steered away from conflict –, the New Kingdom texts bearing on personal piety, including the instructions, add a religious dimension that may be qualified as quietism. While this attribute may also be identified in the Middle Kingdom instructions<sup>790</sup>, it becomes more visible in the New Kingdom instructions<sup>791</sup>. Arguably, then, the recommendation of silence on vv. 17.2-17.3 from *Ani* corresponds to the model of silence as quietism<sup>792</sup>, and not necessarily to the older model of silence as management of one's image before others.

### 3.2.1.2.3 *Instruction of Ani*, vv. 20.12-20.17

As with the preceding passage, the passages that come immediately before and immediately after vv. 20.12-20.17 bear little to no relation to them. Coming before the passage under discussion, vv. 20.4-20.7 stress the importance of knowing the writings, and vv. 20.7-20.12 (see no. 30) advise the pupil to avoid being indiscreet with a foreigner, probably during an altercation, so that his words are not used against him. Coming after the passage on vv. 20.12-20.17, vv. 20.17-21.3 (see no. 31) admonish the pupil to look after his mother when she is old and vulnerable, in the same way that she took care of him when he was young, so that she does not complain to the god. Following immediately after, vv. 21.4-21.10 admonish the pupil against being rude and thus compromising social relations that will provide him support during times of adversity.

Like the other two passages discussed so far, the passage on vv. 20.12-20.15 has parallels elsewhere in the text, especially in the passage on vv. 16.3-16.4 (see no. 27). Vv. 20.12-20.17 from P. Boulaq 4 recto (see no. 31) read:

(20.12) (*wdn* <*n*> *ntr=kwj*) Offer <to> your god.

(*z3w tw r* (20.13) {*bt3*} <*bw.t*>.t=f) Beware (20.13) of his <detestation>.

<sup>790</sup> See, for instance, the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*. P. Prisse, maxim 6, vv. D116-D118 (see no. 4).

<sup>791</sup> See, for instance, the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 21.14-21.16, and the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 6, vv. 8.19-8.20 (see no. 41).

<sup>792</sup> See also Sousa (2009, 160).

(*jmj=k ndnd sšm.w=f*) You should not (repeatedly) consult his statue.

(*m-jrj wstn=f m-ht h<sup>c</sup>j=f*) Do not behave casually (lit. walk free) with it when it appears.

(*m-jrj hnhnj=f r* (20.14) {*r*} *fj.t=f*) Do not approach it to (20.14) move (lit. bear) it.

(*jmj=k s<sup>c</sup>s<sup>c</sup> bjȝy.t*) You should not disturb the oracle.

(*zȝw tw j:dj{=f}<=k> hȝ.ww m h<sup>wȝ</sup>.t=f*) Beware, <you> should increase his protection.

(*j:nw <m> jr.t<.t>=k* (20.15) *r pȝy=f šhr.w knd mtw=k {snntj-tw} <sn tȝ> m rn=f*) May your eye watch out (20.15) for his angry disposition, and kiss the earth in his name.

(*sw (hr) dj.t bȝ.w <m> h<sup>h</sup> n(j) jȝrw <r> s<sup>c</sup>ȝj* (20.16) *pȝ n.tj (hr) s<sup>c</sup>ȝj=f*) He gives (his) power <in> million forms <to> make great (20.16) the one who makes him great.

(*jr ntr tȝ pn {n} pȝ šw <m> hr(t) jw nȝy=f twt.wy hr-tp tȝ*) As for the god of this land, (he) is the sun <in> the sky, while his statues are on earth.

(*dd.tj sntrj* (20.17) *m kȝy=st m-mn(t) <r> sȝrd nb{.t}-h<sup>c</sup>*) Incense is given (20.17) (to) them daily as food <to> reinvigorate the Lord of Apparitions.

As indicated in the transliteration, P. Boulaq 4 recto has *btȝ* instead of *bw.t*. Conversely, P. DeM 1 recto has *bw.t*, and this, together with the fact that *btȝ* is written with the fish determinative<sup>793</sup> in P. Boulaq 4 recto, v. 20.13, but not elsewhere in the same manuscript<sup>794</sup>, suggests that the text has *bw.t* instead of *btȝ*. Quack (1994, 58) cites several parallels to argue that the mistake is owed to the similarity between the writing of the two words. However, the confusion, if not deliberate interchange<sup>795</sup>, between the two words may also be due to their semantic overlap, inasmuch as *btȝ* may designate a fault, or a crime, that is reproachable to a deity (Rutkauskas 2016, 247). Perhaps it was in this sense that the audiences of P. Boulaq 4 recto took the term *btȝ* on v. 20.13. At any rate, the text is clear that the pupil should avoid (a) ritual transgression(s). What this/these might be does not seem entirely clear-cut.

From the second half of v. 20.13 on it becomes clear that the context is a festival procession where the god can be reached for oracular consultations. It may be asked, however, whether the first verse has any direct relation to what follows or not. In other words, is the pupil instructed to offer to his personal god during the procession, or is he told to do it in another, quite probably domestic, setting? The text allows the second interpretation, because, as it was seen above, the passage on vv. 16.17-17.4 (see no. 28)

<sup>793</sup> K2 sign (see Gardiner 1957, 476). This determinative is characteristic of *bw.t*.

<sup>794</sup> See the attestations in the note to v. 20.13 in Dils's (2014) translation.

<sup>795</sup> See Rutkauskas (2016, 247) with examples.

uses precisely that approach: although related by the topic of inappropriate speech, vv. 16-17-17.1 and 17.1-17.4 address that topic in two different settings. If the offering was performed at home and not at the procession, it is then possible that the god's *bw.t* refers to the offering in the domestic setting and not to what follows.

Wherever the offering was meant to be performed, vv. 20.16-20.17 indicate that the god's statues were the recipient of the offerings which consisted of incense. Evidence from domestic contexts indicates that the cult to the gods could be performed using incense and representations of the gods which could consist of statues<sup>796</sup> (see Mota 2015, 172, 232-34, 273; Stevens 2011, 728, 731-32). A domestic ritual setting may also be attested on vv. 17.4-17.6, where the pupil is exhorted to make libations to his father and mother<sup>797</sup>, which could further support the interpretation that the v. 20.12 refers to a household context. That may also be the setting of vv. 21.20-22.3 which concern the problems an *akh* will cause unless he is satisfied (*sh̄tp*) (see Mota 2015, 213, 223). Importantly, that passage also cautions the pupil about the *akh*'s detestation<sup>798</sup>. This would also be consistent with the recommendation to beware the god's detestation on vv. 20.12-20.13.

If the offering of incense to the pupil's god took place at the festival procession, however, it is then possible that what follows on vv. 20.13-20.14 is what the text considers to be the god's detestation. Thus, the god's *bw.t* would include: 1) excessive oracular consultation, possibly until the desired answer is obtained (v. 20.13); 2) not being reverential before the god's statue (v. 20.13); 3) the attempt to support, and perhaps commandeer, the bark with the god's statue either to tamper with the oracular consultation or out of enthusiasm and desire to be physically closer to the god's statue (vv. 20.13-20.14); and 4) allowing the attending crowd to disrupt the oracular consultation (v. 20.14).

On vv. 16.3-16.4 the pupil is exhorted to annually celebrate a feast in honour of his god. Failure to do it at the appointed time will trigger the deity's anger: '(*ḳnd ntr (ḥr) th3j.tw=f*) God becomes angry (when) it (= the time) is passed' (v. 16.4) (see no. 27). In light of this passage it is also possible that vv. 20.12-20.13 designate as the god's *bw.t* the

<sup>796</sup> On the cult outside an institutional setting, see Luiselli (2011, 178-79).

<sup>797</sup> See also Mota (2015, 212, 223).

<sup>798</sup> '(22.1) (*w<sup>c</sup>b tw n=f <m> t3y=f bw.t wd3=k r n3y=f wgg.t ḳn.w*) Purify yourself for him <from> his detestation, so that you are safe from his many harms' (Quack 1994, 114-15, 324; Dils 2014).



lack of performance of offerings to the personal god, be it at a domestic or at a processional setting.

Towards the middle of the text (vv. 20.14-20.15), the addressee is told to assist in the protection of the statue during its oracular consultation. Quack (1994, 176) is probably correct in assuming that an excessive crowd surrounding the god's statue might interrupt the oracular consultation<sup>799</sup>, and that the pupil is asked to shelter the god's statue<sup>800</sup> from that confusion<sup>801</sup>. Goedicke, who has a different take on this passage and sees it as concerning the divine judgement of a crime (*bt3*) (1992, 78-79, 83, 85), may also be correct in interpreting the god's angry disposition (*shr.w knd*) as an unfavourable response from his oracle (1992, 81). What might be at issue, however, is not the god's accusation of the consultant, but the giving of bland and random answers (i.e., the god would disconnect from the priests making the bark's movements) or the downright cessation of the oracular dispensation. This could be the consequence of committing a *bw.t* before the statue of the god<sup>802</sup>.

Goedicke (1992, 76, 83) sees on vv. 20.16-20.17 a distinction between an immanent personal god reachable through statues and an 'absolute godhead'. Contrarily to what Goedicke seems to suggest, the text indicates that there is only one god involved<sup>803</sup>. As remarked by Quack (1994, 176), the text explains the relation between the god and his statues by stating that, while the god is not on earth, he is connected to his statues and is able to receive the incense offerings through them. This more descriptive part may have been included in this passage dealing with the offering to the personal god and with the behaviour during the procession and oracular dispensation of the god's statue to assure the pupil that his ritual actions will not be an empty gesture, but that they will produce real

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<sup>799</sup> Probably due to an excess of questions placed to the god at the same time.

<sup>800</sup> This interpretation was integrated into Lichtheim's (1976, 141) translation: 'Be careful, help to protect him'.

<sup>801</sup> Perhaps by inciting the others present to place their questions orderly.

<sup>802</sup> Given the previous reference to the god's angry disposition, Volten (1937, 115) understands the reference to the god's *b3.w* towards the end of v. 20.15 as 'wrath'. Similarly, Goedicke (1992, 81-82) takes it to be a reference to the god's 'punitive power' (81). However, that does not seem to be the case, as the god gives his *b3.w* to *s3j p3 n.tj (hr) s3j=f*, 'make great the one who makes him great' (vv. 20.15-20.16). Therefore, it is best to understand *b3.w* as 'power' or 'manifestation'. Borghouts (1982, 2, 41n7) cites this passage to illustrate the range of meanings of the term *b3.w*. Additionally, it may further support the interpretation that *b3.w* here stands for 'power' and not for 'wrath' the fact that in the votive stela Turin 50045 where *b3.w* would be expectable, one finds *nh.t*, 'power' (see Luiselli 2011, 369).

<sup>803</sup> Goedicke's observation is nonetheless useful if one thinks of a spectrum instead of a distinction: the same personal god is both distanced from earth and close to those who have him as personal god.

effects. This explanation may also incidentally, or perhaps intentionally, account for the need to avoid committing anything *bw.t* to the god before his statue: as the latter is a point of contact through which god makes himself present on earth and is able to receive offerings, anything negative will also reach the god through his statue.

### 3.2.1.3 *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV, vv. 5.2-5.4*

In this instruction from the New Kingdom there is only one attestation of the detestation of god, which takes place in the context of temple theft. This instruction is part of a Late-Egyptian Miscellany recorded in P. Chester Beatty IV = P. BM EA 10684 verso, and, while it differs from the other miscellanies in that it contains an instruction not attested elsewhere<sup>804</sup>, it is interspersed with other elements characteristic of miscellanies. Thus, the section which includes vv. 5.2-5.4, between vv. 4.6-5.6, is preceded by a passage exhorting the addressee to become a scribe (vv. 3.11-4.6), and is followed by a passage denigrating the soldier's condition (vv. 5.6-6.3).

The passage on vv. 4.6-5.6 begins with advice on how one ought to relate with others and act in public (vv. 4.6-4.9). A rubricised formula<sup>805</sup> separates this part from the part that follows and which is centred on religious matters: on vv. 4.10-4.12 (see no. 35) the addressee is exhorted to pray and offer to his personal god, so that he reciprocates; on vv. 4.12-5.2 (see no. 35) the addressee is given advice on how to behave at a god's procession and at the temple; the final part of the passage is also marked by a rubrication, as the text shifts attention to the treatment of and relation with the temple personnel (vv. 5.4-5.6) (see no. 35). As mentioned, the part that will be discussed here concerns temple theft. The text from P. Chester Beatty IV = P. BM EA 10684 verso (see no. 35) reads:

(5.2) (*mrj ntr sgr*) God loves silence.

(*m 3wj ʕ.wj=kj r jt m šnw.t=[f]* (5.3) *h.t m w{j}[d]ʒ=<f>*) Do not stretch your arms towards the grain in [his] granary (5.3) or to goods in <his> warehouse.

<sup>804</sup> See Gardiner (1935, 37) and Vernus (2010a, 345, 347). Other Late-Egyptian Miscellanies also contain excerpts of known instructions: see P. Chester Beatty V = P. BM EA 10685, vv. 2.6-2.11; see also Vernus (2010a, 363).

<sup>805</sup> On which see Vernus (2010a, 364).

(z3w tw hr dp{.t} m h.t=f nb jw bw m3=f m-b3h=f) Beware of enjoying (lit. tasting) any of his goods, because it is not right before him.

(m hntj hr šsr=f nb) Do not be covetous about anything of him.

(bw.t=f (5.4) jt3y h.t=f) His detestation (5.4) is that his goods are stolen.

(m hb3 bnjw p{r}s{t}<n> dsj m jmn.(y)t n-mn.t) Do not remove date-cakes, bread, or a jug from the daily offerings.

The setting of this passage is the temple compound. Presumably the addressee of the text would have access to storage areas and would be able to steal temple property, or aid others steal it, especially food produced at the temple's fields (v. 5.2) and reserved for the offerings to the god (v. 5.4). It is conceivable that the term *h.t*, which is attested twice on v. 5.3, also refers to food produce, as it follows the reference to grain in the first attestation, and the verb *dp*, 'to taste', in the second. Contrariwise, the term *šsr*, attested towards the end of v. 5.3, may refer to other kind of items, perhaps equipment like chisels or vessels<sup>806</sup>. If that was the case, the term *h.t* attested at the beginning of v. 5.4 would refer to the two types of items.

P. Chester Beatty IV = P. BM EA 10684 verso appears to have been written between the late Nineteenth dynasty and the Twentieth dynasty<sup>807</sup>, and theft of temple property, which is *bw.t* to god (vv. 5.3-5.4), is attested in that period (see e.g., Vernus 2003b, 25-30, 98-104; Muhlestein 2011, 60-61; Lorton 1977, 36-37). Although the text does not mention it, royal decrees establish legal sanctions for those who steal any goods from a temple<sup>808</sup>. This transgression is also attested in documents recording legal inquiries and procedures<sup>809</sup>, and T. Turin verso, v. 1.4, attests the theft of grain from the storehouse (*šmm.t*) of the temple of Khnum in Elephantine (see Peet 1924, 122; Gardiner 1941, 62; Vernus 2003b, 102). In O. Nash 1, from Deir el-Medina, it is claimed by the court that lady Herya was found to be in the possession of a chisel stolen from a village workman and of a vessel from the temple of Amun (recto, vv. 2-14). As the lady Herya had first said under oath that she had not stolen the chisel, the judges designate her as: *ʿd3.t ʿ3.t ... š3j n(.j) mwt*,

<sup>806</sup> See, for instance, O. Nash 1 verso, vv. 12-13 (see Kitchen, 1982, 317, ll. 9-10; Neveu 2015, 113).

<sup>807</sup> See Dils (2014) and Gardiner (1935, 28). On the possibility that the text was written by the reign of Ramesses V, see Pestman (1982, 162).

<sup>808</sup> See Müller-Wollermann (2015, 232) and Lorton (1977, 11, 27).

<sup>809</sup> See, for instance, O. Nash 1 and T. Turin 1887.

‘a great wrongdoer ... worthy of death’<sup>810</sup> (verso, vv. 1-3) (Kitchen 1982, 317 ll. 13-14; Neveu 2015, 172; Johnson 1996, 179). From this, Muhlestein (2011, 48-49) considers that the death penalty may have been her punishment, but that was not necessarily the case<sup>811</sup>, especially as her sentence is not known because the text ends with the judges’ deferral to the vizier. More suggestive, as argued by Muhlestein (49), is in the same text, the mention, by the prosecuting judges of a previous case<sup>812</sup> of a woman who stole copper and who was sentenced by the vizier to be taken to the riverbank. As suggested by Muhlestein (2008, 21; 2011, 49), the woman may have been sentenced to death by drowning, although an ordeal involving water may be another possibility<sup>813</sup>. Otherwise, Muhlestein (2011, 56) observes that the Nauri Decree does not contemplate theft of temple property with the death sentence. In theory, theft of temple property was punishable, although not necessarily by death.

In practice, however, punishment was not always enforced<sup>814</sup>, to the point that, ‘under the last Ramessides, the cult equipment of the temple was disappearing on a daily basis’ (Vernus 2003b, 29). Perhaps this lack of accountability explains why the text makes no reference to legal consequences.

It is also interesting that those who rob and who helped to rob the temple were seemingly unaffected by a fear of divine retribution that would appear natural in a society in principle not exposed to atheism or apostasy in the same way that modern, especially ‘Western’, societies are. This may be partly explained by the political and economical circumstances of the late New Kingdom, a time at which Egypt increasingly lost its hold in Syria-Palestine and its prosperity diminished as a result<sup>815</sup>. While for some, perhaps many, the consequent degradation of the institutions led them to a closer relation with their personal god, for others, the decline of Egypt’s might may have been an indication that the gods were weakened or absent and, thus, uninterested in punishing transgressions.

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<sup>810</sup> This formulation is similar to the designation *bt3 ʿ3 n(j) mwt*, ‘great offense worthy of death’, and is probably not literal (see Lorton 1977, 39n179).

<sup>811</sup> See previous note.

<sup>812</sup> Muhlestein (2011, 48) conjectures that this took place in the Eighteenth dynasty, but it is difficult to assess from the text how earlier it might have been.

<sup>813</sup> As argued by John Gwyn Griffiths (1991, 211-13), the idea of an ordeal was present at least in the funerary literature. The ordeals in the initiations to Mystery cults discussed by the same author (332-37) may also provide another point of comparison.

<sup>814</sup> See Vernus (2003b, 29, 107).

<sup>815</sup> See Vernus (2003b, 121-22).

### 3.2.1.4 Detestation of god in the *Instruction of Amenemope*

Whereas in the instructions of *Ptahhotep* and of *Ani*<sup>816</sup> *bw.t* was not always mobilised in association with god, that is not the case in the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, where *bw.t* is always mobilised in relation to a deity. Accepting that the *Instruction of Amenemope* is divided into three parts, each with its dominant theme,<sup>817</sup> the term *bw.t* is attested in all of them: twice in the first part (chapter 10, vv. 13.16 and 14.3 (see no. 44)), twice in the second part (chapter 13, v. 15.21 (see no. 45), and chapter 17, v. 19.1 (see no. 48)), and once in the third part (chapter 29, v. 26.20 (see no. 57)). In the first part, *bw.t* is mobilised in the context of false speech, in the second in the context of fraudulency, and, in the third in the context of social customs.

#### 3.2.1.4.1 *Instruction of Amenemope*, chapter 10

As it was mentioned above<sup>818</sup>, this passage is located at the end of the first part of the *Instruction of Amenemope* and concerns false speech, apparently because what is spoken comes from the belly, which contains fear (*hr.jt*), and not from the *h3.tj*-heart which receives divine inspiration, as indicated by chapters 18 and 24. The cause for this disconnection does not seem entirely clear from the text, but the text clearly deems the pupil capable of changing his conduct. The passage from P. BM EA 10474 recto (see no. 44) reads:

(13.10) (*hw.t mh-10.t*) Chapter 10.

(13.11) (*m-jrj wšd tw m p3yw=k šmm m gns=k* (13.12) *mtw=k hđj jb=k ds=k*) Do not greet your hot-tempered man by forcing yourself, (13.12) nor hurt your own feelings (lit. strike your own *jb*-heart).

(13.13) (*m-jrj đđ n=fj3w{t}.tw=k n-εd3* (13.14) *jw wn hr.j(t) m h.t=k*) Do not say to him falsely ‘may you be praised’, (13.14) when there is fear in your belly.

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<sup>816</sup> P. Boulaq 4 recto, v. 22.1.

<sup>817</sup> The first part ranges from chapter 2-10 and several of its chapters concern the hot-tempered man and how one should react to him, the second part ranges from chapters 11-20 and focuses especially on fraudulency, and the third part, which includes chapters 21-29, devotes attention to the poor and vulnerable, especially from chapter 25 on (see Laisney 2007, 9; 2009, 2-3).

<sup>818</sup> See this chapter, subsection 3.1.3.2.2.

(13.15) (*m-jrj mdwj (j)rm r(m)t n-<sup>c</sup>d3* (13.16) *t3 bw.t n(jt) p3 ntr*) Do not argue falsely with a man, (13.16) it is a detestation of the god.

(13.17) (*m-jrj pšn ḥ3.tj=k r ns {t}=k* (13.18) *ḥpr šhr.w=k nb(.w) m<sup>c</sup>rj* (13.19) *ḥpr=<k> dns.t m-b3ḥ t3 kj.wj* (14.1) *jw=<k> wd3.tw m-dr.t p3 ntr*) Do not separate your understanding (lit. *ḥ3.tj*-heart) from your tongue, (13.18) and all of your projects will succeed, (13.19) <you> will be important before the others, (14.1) while you are safe from the hand of the god.

(14.2) (*msdj ntr s<sup>c</sup>d3 mdw(.t)* (14.3) *t3y=f bw.t ʕ3 šnn ḥ.t*) God hates the one who falsifies the speech, (14.3) his great detestation is inner suffering.

V. 13.16 shows no variation in P. Stockholm MM 18416, which is not the case with v. 14.3: [*t3 b*] *t3 ʕ3 šnn*, ‘the great offense is suffering’ (Peterson 1966, pl. XXXI A; Dils 2014). Instead of *t3y=f bw.t* one finds *t3 bt3*, and *šnn* is not followed by *ḥ.t*. In the light of these differences, one may ask whether any mistakes in the text’s transmission with respect to this passage were committed<sup>819</sup>, whether audiences were aware of them and accepted them as a legitimate variant, or whether one of the manuscripts contains an intentional variant. Even if the latter was the case, there seems to be no substantial change in meaning, especially as *bt3* overlaps to an extent with *bw.t*: the sense is still that to speak falsely is a transgression offensive to and incompatible with god.

It is interesting that on vv. 14.2-14.3 *msdj*, ‘to hate’, and *bw.t*, ‘detestation’, are used synonymously<sup>820</sup>. This certainly had the effect of further emphasising god’s incompatibility with insincerity, be it voluntary or not. Significantly, the transgression does not only concern insincerity when arguing with another person (vv. 13.15-13.16), but, presumably, it also concerns the effects it may have on oneself<sup>821</sup> (v. 14.2).

It is also relevant that, contrarily to the other passages discussed so far, in this passage there is an explicit mention to a punishment, namely to be afflicted by the god<sup>822</sup> (v. 14.1). From the Late-Egyptian Miscellanies in P. Anastasi V = P. BM EA 10244, vv. 7.6-7.7<sup>823</sup>, and P. Chester Beatty V = P. BM EA 10685 recto, vv. 6.9-6.10<sup>824</sup>, Fischer-Elfert

<sup>819</sup> This is the opinion of Peterson (1966, 128).

<sup>820</sup> At least in the *Coffin Texts* the two terms also seem to interchange in expressions relating to the rejection of *jzft*, ‘wrongdoing’ (Almeida 2017, 120, 387).

<sup>821</sup> See Vernus (2010b, 544).

<sup>822</sup> As it was argued above, in subsection 3.1.1.2, to be in the hand of the god is similar to be under his *b3.w*-manifestation.

<sup>823</sup> ‘(7.6) (*jw p3y=k [š]mw* (7.7) *m b3.w n(j) jmn sw m bw.t n(jt) r(m)t.w*) your hot-tempered man (7.7) is in the *b3.w*-manifestation of Amun. He is the detestation of the people’ (Dils 2014).

(2005, 123, 126-27) conjectures that there is a causal relation between *b3.w* and *bw.t*: the condition of *bw.t* is a direct consequence of being afflicted by a god's *b3.w*. Inasmuch as the god's *b3.w* and hand, in the sense of 'grip', are synonymous, one may ask whether this relation would also be present in *Amenemope*'s chapter 10. While the proximity of *b3.w* and *bw.t* in the two Late-Egyptian Miscellanies is certainly suggestive, albeit not conclusive, and while the two texts have the particularity of stating that the hot-tempered man is afflicted by a god and the detestation of the people, in the passage of *Amenemope* there seems to be no causal relation between the god's affliction and the detestation of god. This is not to say, however, that the action *bw.t* and the divine affliction are not connected in the passage from *Amenemope*: instead of causing the state *bw.t*, it is possible that the divine affliction is the punishment to the detestable behaviour.

### 3.2.1.4.2 *Instruction of Amenemope, chapter 13, vv. 15.19-16.3*

This passage, from P. BM EA 10474 recto, vv. 15.19-16.4 (see no. 45), also addresses the theme of falsehood:

(15.19) (*hw.t mh-13.t*) Chapter 13.

(15.20) (*m-jrj sh3 r(m)t <m> r r r(t)*) (15.21) *t3 bw.t n(jt) p3 ntr*) Do not defraud a man <through> the reed pen on the papyrus roll; (15.21) it is a detestation of the god.

(16.1) (*m-jrj jrj.y {mt(r)} <mt(r.t)> n mdw(.t) n(jw) r d3*) (16.2) *mtw=k rmnj ky m ns{.t}=k*) Do not make a testimony with words of falsehood, (16.2) in order to thrust aside another by your tongue.

(16.3) (*m-jrj jrj.y hsb <n> {n}<jw>.tj nkt*) (16.4) *mtw=k s r d3 <m> p3yw=k r*) Do not make a reckoning <with> the one who has nothing, (16.4) in order to falsify <through> your reed pen.

This passage has in common with chapter 10 the terms *r d3* and *s r d3*. As also pointed out by Laisney (2007, 139), another point of contact is the exact same formulation on v. 13.16 and on v. 15.21. Despite the similarities between the two passages, chapter 13 also addresses another, related theme, that of fraudulency, and it is in that context that *bw.t* is mobilised. While in chapter 10 the false speech may have lacked the intent to deceive, that

<sup>824</sup> The sentences are identical: '(6.9) (*jw p3y=k sm.w m-mj b3.w n(j) jmn sw*) (6.10) <m> *bw.t n(jt) r(m)t.w*) your hot-tempered man is in the *b3.w*-manifestation of Amun. He (6.10) <is> the detestation of the people' (Popko 2014).

is not the case on v. 15.20: the transgression here involves defrauding someone by abusing one's power as a scribe and falsifying a document. In chapter 15, vv. 17.11-17.12, the text asserts that the same transgression will be punished by Thoth, but, in chapter 13 no mention to an explicit divine punishment is made.

### 3.2.1.4.3 *Instruction of Amenemope, chapter 17, vv. 18.14-19.3*

The passage, from P. BM EA 10474 recto (see no. 48), runs as follows:

(18.14) (*hw.t mh-17.t*) **Chapter 17.**

(18.15) (*z3w tw r ʿšg3j wd3.t* (18.16) *r sʿd3 n3y=s r3.w*) Beware of forcing the grain measure, (18.16) in order to falsify its parts.

(18.17) (*m-jrj gns n wbn nht* (18.18) *hr m-dy.t šwj=s{w} m h.t=s*) Do not force (it) to a great overflow, (18.18) nor empty it in its interior.

(18.19) (*dj.w=k h3j.y=s mj ʿ3=s{w} ʿkw* (18.20) *jw dr.t=k hʿ3 n mt(j)*) Make it measure as much as it arrived, (18.20) and that your hand empty it with precision.

(18.21) (*m-jrj jrj n=k jp.t n t3j 2.t* (18.22) *j:jrj.w=k jrj n p3 mt(r)*) Do not make a measuring vessel that takes two, (18.22) you make (it) for the flood.

(18.23) (*jr jp.t jr.t rʿ* (19.1) *bw.t=s jtj*) As for the measuring vessel, it is the eye of Re, (19.1) its detestation is the thief.

(19.2) (*jr h3.y jw dj=f ʿš3 sh3* (19.3) *hr dbʿ jr.t=f r=f*) As for a grain measurer who added or subtracted, (19.3) his [= Re's] eye seals against him.

This passage, which also addresses the theme of fraudulency, is the only other passage, among the extant instructions of the Middle and New Kingdoms, that feature the mobilisation of the detestation of a god together with a divine punishment. The transgression concerns the unauthorised modification of the measuring vessel by the pupil in order to enrich unjustly. The passage on v. 18.23 has the peculiarity of identifying the measuring vessel with the eye of Re, an identification that may not only be metaphorical, but also ritual, as it was argued above<sup>825</sup>. In keeping with this identification, the transgressor is not qualified on v. 19.1 as a detestation of the god Re, but of his eye. Because in the Egyptian religious discourse the eye of the sun god can function as his

<sup>825</sup> See this chapter, subsection 3.1.2.5.2.



extension, especially to protect him from enemies and to exact punishments on them, the eye of Re was conceptualised as the punishing agent in the following couplet (vv. 19.2-19.3).

Because the couplet mobilising the *bw.t* to the eye of Re is immediately followed by the couplet mobilising the punishment by the same divine agent, and because the thief on v. 19.1 corresponds to the grain measurer on v. 19.2, there is a strong association between the action that is *bw.t* and the divine punishment.

#### 3.2.1.4.4 *Instruction of Amenemope, chapter 29*

This is the last chapter containing prescriptions in the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, as the next and final chapter functions as the text's epilogue. Like chapters 25 (see no. 54), 27 (see no. 55), and 28 (see no. 56), chapter 29 instructs the addressee on how to deal with vulnerable people. A point of great interest for the knowledge about the Egyptian society is its recommendation that, if needed, one should assist in a physical task, even if one has an elevated social status, and it is in that context that the detestation of the god is mobilised. The text from P. BM EA 10474 recto (see no. 57) reads:

(26.15) (*hw.t mh-29.t*) Chapter 29.

(26.16) (*m-jrj j<s>k3 r(m)t n d3y n jtr.w* (26.17) *jw=k wsdn.t <m> mhn(.t)*) Do not prevent a man from crossing the river, (26.17) when you inspect a ferryboat.

(26.18) (*jr jnj.tw n=k hp(.t) hr-jb p3 mt(r)* (26.19) *jn{tj}k=k c.wy=k <r> t3j=s*) If one brings you an oar in the midst of the flood, (26.19) fold your arms <to> take it.

(26.20) (*mn bw.t m-dr.t p3 ntr* (27.1) *jw bn b<sup>c</sup> hw.t*) There is no detestation to god (27.1) when it is all hands on deck (lit. when a passenger cannot be overlooked).

(27.2) (*m-jrj jrj n=k mhn(.t) hr-tp jtr.w* (27.3) *mtw=k mšp r wh3h t3y=s h3m(.t)*) Do not acquire a ferryboat over the river (27.3) to avidly gain profit (lit. to make an effort to search for the fare).

(27.4) (*šdj h3m(.t) m-dr.t p3 nb wn* (27.5) *mtw=k b<sup>c</sup> p3 {n}<jw>.tj*) Take the fare from the wealthy, (27.5) but overlook (the fare from) the poor.

Between vv. 26.16-27.1 the context of the passage seems to be an inspection to the ferryboat by a scribe<sup>826</sup>, while on vv. 27.2-27.5 the focus is shifted to someone with the means to acquire a ferryboat of his own in order to turn a profit. The scribe inspecting the vessel is instructed to not abuse his power and leave passengers on land, but, interestingly this is not the transgression described as *bw.t*. The transgression at issue is mentioned on vv. 26.20-27.1: it concerns the performance of duties not conforming to one's status and field of work. In this case, it falls outside the scribe's job description to assist in sailing. However, *Amenemope* assures the addressee that, if his help is required (vv. 26.18-26.19), probably because the ship is at risk of sinking, this religious interdict will not apply.

As also pointed out by Grumach (1972, 175), vv. 26.20-27.1 indicate that there was a religious interdict concerning the overstepping of social roles<sup>827</sup>. Under normal circumstances, for a scribe to do the work of a sailor would be a transgression. Under dire conditions, however, apparently it would momentarily be allowed<sup>828</sup>. One may wonder whether this was a common perception, or if it was *Amenemope*'s own take on the god's reaction to the transgression of this social custom out of need. In terms of how god's relation with humans is constructed, this passage indicates that human lives are more important than the strict observation of interdicts. This is probably also the only passage where *Amenemope* shows any leniency to the pupil.

### 3.2.1.5 Summary and concluding remarks

Table no. 6. Summary of transgressions qualified as the detestation (*bw.t*) of god.

Text	Transgressions	Punishments	Divine agents	Observations
<i>Instruction of Ptahhotep</i> , P. BM EA 10509 (= L2), vv. L2 D415-L2 D418	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be partial when acting as a hearing judge/officer (v. L2 D418).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not mentioned.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>God (<i>ntr</i>) (v. L2 D418).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The transgression is qualified as a detestation of god, who may be the king.</li> </ul>

<sup>826</sup> See Grumach (1972, 173) and Shirun-Grumach (1991, 249nXXVII.2-a)).

<sup>827</sup> This is also a feature of the Polynesian taboo (Frandsen 2001a, 345).

<sup>828</sup> This kind of exceptions to religious interdicts are also known from other cultures. A notable example among Jewish communities is the permit to break the Sabbath law in situations of emergency. The degree to which the interdicts may be broken vary from source to source, however (see e.g., Collins 2014, 97-99).

<i>Instruction of Ani</i> , P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 15.12-15.16 (see no. 26)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To act out on one's resentment (v. 15.13).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not mentioned.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>God (<i>ntr</i>) (v. 15.13).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The transgression is qualified as a detestation of god.</li> </ul>
<i>Instruction of Ani</i> , P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 17.1-17.4 (see no. 28)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To pray loudly in a temple's chapel or booth (vv. 17.1-17.2).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Being ignored by the god (vv. 17.1-17.4).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>God (<i>ntr</i>) (v. 17.2).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The transgression is qualified as a detestation of god.</li> </ul>
<i>Instruction of Ani</i> , P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 20.12-20.17 (see no. 31)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To fail to offer to god at his festival procession (v. 20.12)?</li> <li>To do anything <i>bw.t</i> to the god at a domestic or at a festival setting (vv. 20.12-20.13)?</li> <li>To do anything <i>bw.t</i> to the god during the god's procession and oracular consultation (vv. 20.13-20.14)?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cessation of the oracular dispensation (v. 20.15)?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Your god (<i>ntr=kwj</i>) (v. 20.12).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Whichever the transgression, it is qualified as a detestation of god, and may have as consequence the interruption of the oracular consultation.</li> </ul>
<i>Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV</i> , = P. BM EA 10684 verso, vv. 5.2-5.4 (see no. 35)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To steal temple property, especially grain from the granary, food for the offerings, and possibly cult equipment (vv. 5.2-5.4).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not mentioned.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>God (<i>ntr</i>) (vv. 5.2 and 5.3).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The transgression is qualified as a detestation of god.</li> </ul>
<i>Instruction of Amenemope</i> , P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 10 (see no. 44)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To speak falsely (vv. 13.15 and 14.2).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Being in the grip (lit. hand) of the god (v. 14.1).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>God (<i>p3 ntr</i>) (vv. 13.16, 14.1), (<i>ntr</i>) (v. 14.3).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The transgression is qualified as a detestation of god (vv. 13.15 and 14.2), which does not have to be causally related with the punishment.</li> </ul>

<i>Instruction of Amenemope</i> , P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 13 (see no. 45)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defrauding a man by falsifying a document (v. 15.20).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not mentioned.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• God (<i>p3 ntr</i>) (v. 15.21).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The transgression is qualified as a detestation of god.</li> </ul>
<i>Instruction of Amenemope</i> , P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 17 (see no. 48)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Illegal modification of the measuring vessel (v. 18.21).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possibly, the formalization of an accusation against the fraudulent grain measurer with the sanction of Re (vv. 19.2-19.3).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eye of Re (vv. 18.23, 19.3).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The qualification of the transgression as the detestation of the eye of Re and its punishment are closely associated.</li> </ul>
<i>Instruction of Amenemope</i> , P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 29 (see no. 57)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performing duties unseemly to one's social position (vv. 26.20-27.1).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not mentioned.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• God (<i>p3 ntr</i>) (v. 26.20).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Under normal circumstances this transgression would be a transgression to the god, but not in emergencies.</li> </ul>

In the Middle Kingdom instructions *bw.t* was mobilised in relation to actions or objects that affected oneself, and in relation to actions that affected other people. It would also be tempting to use the distinction between personal and professional life, but as the texts do not seem to make that distinction, it will not be used here. The extant passages where *bw.t* qualifies actions or objects that affect only oneself are relatively few and are attested in two instructions:

1. In the *Instruction of Khety*, P. Anastasi VII = P. BM EA 10222, v. 17.3, clothes (*hbs.w*), probably smelly, are the detestation (*bw.t*) of the *stnw.y*-coalman;

2. In the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, maxim 11, v. D189, to shorten the time of following one's *jb*-heart is equally described as the detestation of the *ka*.

In contrast, the passages where *bw.t* designates an action that affects other people are slightly greater in number and are all concentrated in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*:

1. In P. Prisse, maxim 7, v. D125, to bother an official with whom one is having a meal by staring frequently at him is qualified as the detestation of the *ka*;

2. In P. Prisse, maxim 8, v. D160, to turn one official against another when reproducing a message is considered to be the *ka*'s detestation;

3. In P. BM EA 10509 (= L2), maxim 18, v. D294, to have relations with the wife of someone close is simply considered as a detestation;

4. And in P. BM EA 10509 (= L2), maxim 28, v. D418, partiality on the part of a hearing judge/officer is described as the detestation of god.

While the latter passage is only attested in a New Kingdom copy, it may go back to the Middle Kingdom, and, if that is the case, it is the only extant attestation of *bw.t ntr* in a Middle Kingdom instruction. This would demonstrate that the expression *bw.t ntr* was available to the authors and copyists of Middle Kingdom instructions, as opposed to being circumscribed to the mortuary discourse, and could invalidate the suggestion that the *bw.t ntr* of the New Kingdom instructions replaced the *bw.t k3* of the Middle Kingdom instructions<sup>829</sup>. However, it could also be the case that, while available to the Middle Kingdom instructions, *bw.t ntr* stayed rather marginal to them.

A striking feature of *bw.t* in the New Kingdom instructions is its representativity across three of the four texts that make up the corpus discussed here<sup>830</sup>. While it is attested only once in the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*, it is attested four times in the *Instruction of Ani* and five times in the *Instruction of Amenemope*. No less importantly, in nine of these ten attestations *bw.t* is associated with a god. This god is referred to as *ntr* in the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*, twice as *ntr* and once as *ntr=k* in the *Instruction of Ani*, and four times as *p3 ntr* in the *Instruction of Amenemope*; there is only one exception, in the latter instruction, where the divine agent is the eye of Re.

The use of *bw.t* in the New Kingdom instructions gives some continuity to its use in the Middle Kingdom instructions, but its use expanded into new topics. New is the introduction of god as a party that may be directly affected by the transgression considered *bw.t* to him. While it is true that any *bw.t ntr* can be construed as a transgression against god, the deity may be particularly harmed by ritual transgressions (*Instruction of Ani*, P.

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<sup>829</sup> On that suggestion see Shupak (2010, 464).

<sup>830</sup> The term *bw.t* is not attested in *The Prohibitions*.

Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 17.1-17.2, 20.12 (?), 20.13-20.14 (?)), by being deprived of the property in his temple (*Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*, = P. BM EA 10684 verso, vv. 5.2-5.4), and by having an object under its protection tampered with (*Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 17, vv. 18.23-19.2). It is noteworthy that all attestations of *bw.t* involving ritual transgressions are located in the *Instruction of Ani*<sup>831</sup>. Another novelty of the New Kingdom instructions are attestations of *bw.t* relating to theft and fraud which are located only in the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV* and in the *Instruction of Amenemope* (P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 13, v. 15.20, and chapter 17, vv. 18.23-19.2).

Out of ten attestations, only three give continuity to the use of *bw.t* in the Middle Kingdom instructions, as two concern the relation with others (*Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, v. 15.13, and *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 10, v. 13.15) and one concerns the relation with oneself (*Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 10, v. 14.3). This is a significant departure from the Middle Kingdom instructions. Chapter 29, vv. 26.20-27.1, from the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, departs equally from the Middle Kingdom instructions, and also from the instructions of the New Kingdom.

At least in one passage from the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* mobilising *bw.t* there are certainly negative consequences associated to the state of impurity: in P. Prisse, maxim 7, the *ka* is conceptualised as the part of the person that gives to others and, therefore, by importuning the *ka* of the official, the pupil will lose his favour (vv. D135-D140). It is hardly accurate to conclude that this is a punishment from the official's *ka*. Instead, it is preferable to classify it as a reaction to the detestable action. When an action is detestable to god, however, it would be intuitive, probably to ancient as well as modern audiences, that the deity would exact a punishment<sup>832</sup>. This much is suggested by Neferabu's stela recounting his ordeal after swearing falsely in the name of Ptah: '(7) (*dj=f ptr r(m)t.w ntr.w jm=j jw=j*) (8) *mj z(j) jr.y=f bw.t r nb=f*) He made the people and the gods see me (8) as a man who did a detestation against his lord' (S. BM 589 verso, vv. 7-8) (Kitchen 1980, 772 ll. 5-6; Luiselli 2011, 362; Rutkauskas 2016, 247; Assmann 1991, 378).

<sup>831</sup> The transgression in P. Boulaq 4 recto, v. 22.1, may also be of a ritual nature.

<sup>832</sup> See, for instance, Meeks (1979, 450-51).

Punishments to actions classified as *bw.t* to the god in the instructions of the Middle and New Kingdoms are rarely mentioned. Possible exceptions are the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 17.1-17.4 and 20.12-20.17. If the transgression in the latter section (vv. 20.12-20.17) is related to the procession of the god's statue during which an oracular consultation is given, it is conceivable that the punishment would be the cessation of the oracular consultation: presumably, the priest in charge of moving the statue in order to communicate the god's answers would interrupt the consultation to signal the god's displeasure. Similarly, to pray to god in an incorrect way (vv. 17.1-17.4) will make him ignore the pupil.

In the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 10, a punishment, namely an affliction from the god, is mobilised together with two attestations of the detestation of god. Here too, it is possible that the affliction is the divine response to the behaviour classified as detestable.

An even clearer connection between the performance of an action that is *bw.t* and a divine punishment is found in *Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 17, vv. 18.23-19.3. The close association between the couplet mobilising *bw.t* (vv. 18.23-19.1) and the couplet mobilising the divine punishment (vv. 19.2-19.3) indicates that this punishment is a direct consequence of the action that is detestable.

These two cases indicate that actions that were considered detestable to a deity could have consequences beyond and independent of what may have been entailed in the fact of becoming *bw.t* to a god. Since an action can be considered a transgression, and consequently punished by a god, without being marked as *bw.t*, one may conjecture that something else may have been implied by the qualification of an action as *bw.t*, and this is further suggested by the fact that, in the other seven passages mobilising *bw.t ntr*, no specific punishment is mobilised.

As mentioned above, in the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 17.1-17.4, one has to pray correctly in order to be heeded to and have one's needs met by god, with the implicit implication that one will be ignored by god if one prays incorrectly. On vv. 20.12-20.17 of the same text it is also possible that the disturbance of the oracular consultation during a procession will make god disconnect from the oracle. This pattern is also present in maxim 7 of the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse: since it is the *ka* of the superior that

makes him generous (vv. D135-D140), to be rude with the superior (vv. D124-D125) would have the opposite effect. Another parallel is provided by a hymn at the left entrance of the Ramesside tomb of Tjanefer (TT 158), where it is said that the light is the detestation (*bw.t*) of those under the earth and that the sun god does not shine upon them (Seele 1959, pl. 10; Assmann 1991, 252).

As said at the start of this discussion in subsection 3.2.1, the state of *bw.t* involves aversion, incompatibility, and disconnection between agents. Perhaps the reason why most of the passages discussed above mention *bw.t* but no other punishment, is that to do an action that is detestable to a god will render the person incompatible with that deity and, thus, unable to access divine assistance. In this way, to become *bw.t* to a god is a punishment in itself. Because the instructions of the New Kingdom may have adopted the notion of *bw.t ntr* from the personal piety discourse, as argued also in subsection 3.2.1, the nature of this punishment may be considered to be the disruption of the proximity with the deity.

### 3.2.2 Ritual failures and transgressions

#### 3.2.2.1 Preliminary remarks 1: the category of ritual in the academic study of religion and its use in Egyptology

Like ‘religion’, the category of ‘ritual’ is difficult to define. As a category that has its roots in western religious practice and speculation, it is also a western construction that may not be readily useful for a cross-cultural application, in part due to its historical genealogy<sup>833</sup>. Relatively recently, the category of ‘ritual’ has come under the interest of

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<sup>833</sup> As demonstrated by Asad (1993, 56-62), by tracking down the entries on ‘ritual’ and related terms (e.g., ‘rite’) in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* from its first edition in 1771, the term ‘ritual’ did not always have the semantic content and pragmatic use we associate to it today. Citing the first and third editions of the encyclopaedia, from 1771 and 1797, respectively, Asad (56) observes that, by the Eighteenth century, the term ‘ritual’ referred to the book which prescribed religious services and ceremonies – a conception that goes back at least to the early European monasticism of the High Middle Ages (58) –, whereas the complementary term ‘rite’ designated the way religious ceremonies were performed in different countries. The author does not mention whether he consulted sources in other European languages or not. At any rate, the first Portuguese dictionary, *Vocabulario Portuguez e Latino*, from 1712, gives roughly the same definition for ‘ritual’ and ‘rite’. As a result of approaches from British and French anthropologies, the term ‘ritual’ was completely revamped in the eleventh edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* from 1910, referring now to



most, if not all, disciplines engaging with the study of religion (Bell 2006, 399-400), and a plethora of definitions of ‘ritual’ have been produced<sup>834</sup>, some of which even separate ‘ritual’ from ‘religion’ (e.g., Nye 2008, 129-30 with references; see also Verhoeven 2011, 124, 126). As a result of the multiple, and not always complementary (Snoek 2006, 3), definitions of ‘ritual’, some authors opt for not defining it in a strict sense (e.g., Nye 2008, 131), for defining it in an open-ended way (e.g., Snoek 2006, 3, 10-14), or for dropping the category entirely (see e.g., Boudewijnse 2006, 1640).

Even though it is difficult to define ‘ritual’, especially in a universalistic way, in academic disciplines engaging with the study of religion it is generally accepted that ‘rituals’ refer to practices performed according to certain prescriptions concerning especially the times and the ways in which the rituals ought to be performed, as well as who may perform them, and that those rituals may aim at specific purposes, such as eliciting assistance from spiritual or divine agents or transforming human agents (rites<sup>835</sup> of passage are a case in point<sup>836</sup>), or may have no specific purpose beyond the correct performance of the ritual (Schieffelin 2007, 5). Perhaps a convenient and useful working definition of ritual is: ‘*Ritual is embodied, condensed, and prescribed enactment*’ (Grimes 2012, 38; italics in the original). According to Grimes (38), rituals are primarily performed with the body, and not using the mind alone, are condensed because they stand out from everyday activities, ought to be performed in the prescribed ways<sup>837</sup>, and it is useful to describe its action with the verb ‘enactment’ to differentiate it from stage acting and everyday actions. Another important point made by Grimes (39), is that rituals are best not seen in absolutes, but in

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cross-cultural repetitive practices whose symbolism was to be interpreted, and which could be performed outside a religious context as well (Asad 1993, 56-58). This is roughly the contemporary sense of ‘ritual’, but for much of the Twentieth century and in contrast to anthropologists in general, several students in the *Religionswissenschaft* favoured the study of the main religious texts and of ‘belief’ over practice, following the inheritance of the Protestant emphasis on ‘belief’ and devaluation of ‘ritual’ (Bell 2006, 401; Nye 2008, 127, 152; Bremmer 2004, 32).

<sup>834</sup> For general overviews of definitions of ‘ritual’ see Snoek (2006, 6-7) and Bell (2006, 398-406).

<sup>835</sup> On ‘rite’ see below.

<sup>836</sup> Notice that some rituals may confirm a transformation that has already occurred rather than effecting it (Grimes 2012, 36).

<sup>837</sup> The demarcation of rituals may range from more explicit and rigid to more implicit and flexible. An example of the former may be ‘western’ weddings and funerals, whereas a (perhaps extreme) example of the latter may be private rituals which may be performed anywhere and at any time only by thinking *Di-nen-daam*, ‘I will now begin this thought’, among the Native American people Anishnabe (Pitawanakwat and Paper 2006, 57). According to the definition given above, this type of ritual may not always count as such, since the practitioner may get distracted and forget to continue the ritual and end it – something which also goes for meditation, as well as other mind-based practices.

degrees of ritualisation in a continuum between ritual and non-ritual (see also Verhoeven 2011, 123).

Discussing ritual in ancient Egypt, Anna Stevens follows the typology developed by Catherine Bell (1997, 94-136), and divides rituals into the following six types or genres: ‘rites of exchange and communion, rites of affliction, and rites of passage’<sup>838</sup>, as well as ‘calendrical and commemorative rites, rites of feasting and festivals, and political rites’ (Stevens 2011, 727-37)<sup>839</sup>. The first three are further subdivided into: ‘formal exchange at temples’ (728-30) and ‘votive offerings’ both in temple and domestic contexts (730-32), under ‘rites of exchange and communion’; ‘temple cult as rite of affliction’ (734), under ‘rites of affliction’; and ‘birth and life’ (735), and ‘death, burial, and the afterlife’ (736-37), under ‘rites of passage’<sup>840</sup>. Other typologies of rituals are possible<sup>841</sup>, but this one is arguably adequate to form an overall view of the Egyptian material. In the instructions from the Middle and New Kingdoms prescriptions about rituals generally fall under the rites of exchange and communion, calendrical and commemorative rites, or rites of feasting and festivals. Examples come primarily from the instructions of *Hordjedef*<sup>842</sup>, of *Kairsu*<sup>843</sup>, for

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<sup>838</sup> Stevens’s paper focuses on these three types of rituals. Catherine Bell does not seem to distinguish between ‘ritual’ and ‘rite’, which is common in North America (Duntley 2005, 7860). In contrast, the European scholarship tends to distinguish between both terms (Duntley 2005, 7860; Snoek 2006, 9, 13-14). Snoek (2006, 13) is followed here in understanding a ‘rite’ as ‘the performance of an indivisible unit of ritual behavior’. In the designations of ritual types, such as ‘rites of affliction’, ‘rite’ is here used interchangeably with ‘ritual’ following Bell and other authors.

<sup>839</sup> The only category of rituals Stevens does not find useful for the ancient Egyptian context are rites of fasting. Catherine Bell (1997, 120) includes them in the category of rites of feasting and of festivals. Stevens’s reluctance about their practice in ancient Egypt could suggest fasting and feasting should not be grouped under the same category. At the same time, however, considering feasting together with fasting may be useful to remind us how much we do not about private practices (both from elite as well as from the wider society (see e.g., Spalinger 2001, 524)), and of how much may not have entered written records, may have been lost, or is yet to be discovered.

<sup>840</sup> These may be also termed “‘lifecycle’ rites’ (Bell 1997, 94).

<sup>841</sup> See references in Bell (1997, 93, 286n3).

<sup>842</sup> In the *Instruction of Hordjedef*, references to ritual are scanty and contingent upon the translation and interpretation. In O. Gardiner 62, v. H6.4 (see no. 1), the author seems to condemn the one who fails to sacrifice (as part of the cult of the dead?) within the appropriate time, and in O. Louvre E 32928, vv. 7.1-7.9 (= H7.1-H7.6) (see no. 2), the disciple seems to be advised to purify his hands and to be skilful in the preparation of offerings (for a god/the dead?), under penalty of transgressing against *ntr*. V. H6.4 is part of the ‘rituals for the maintenance of the deceased’ (Stevens 2011, 736), which Stevens (736) groups under the rites of passage, whereas vv. 7.1-7.9 (= H7.1-H7.6) may belong to the former, or, if the offerings are for a god, fall under the rites of exchange and communion.

<sup>843</sup> In the *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu*, vv. 14.6-14.11 concern the duty of the heir to assure the funeral of his relatives and, therefore, fall under the category of rites of passages. Inasmuch as it is stated on v. 14.11 that to care for the deceased is more useful to the one who does it, this passage may also be included under the rites of exchange and communion.

*the King Merikare*<sup>844</sup>, of *Ani*<sup>845</sup>, of *Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*<sup>846</sup>, from *The Prohibitions*<sup>847</sup>, and from the *Instruction of Amenemope*<sup>848</sup>.

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<sup>844</sup> In the *Instruction for the King Merikare*, P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, prescriptions about rituals concern either the king's duty in assuring temples have the necessary resources to perform the rituals or his active participation in rituals. On vv. 64-65 he is told to perform the monthly priestly duty, to wear white sandals, to visit the temple, to enter the mysteries, to enter the shrine, and to eat bread in the temple; this prescription falls under calendrical and commemorative rites. On vv. 112-113 (see no. 23) the king is told to show respect to god by supplying the altars, even if he is tired; this enjoinder relates mainly to rites of exchange and communion. On v. 125 it is suggested that the king may honour the god during his procession; this reference may be included both in calendrical and commemorative rites as well as in rites of feasting and festivals. And on vv. 129-130, the king is again enjoined to act for god by supplying the altars with offerings and by setting up inscriptions, so that god acts for the king as well; like the passage on vv. 112-113, this passage relates to rites of exchange and communion.

<sup>845</sup> The *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto gives advice both on what to do and on what to avoid in specific rituals. On vv. 16.3-16.9 (see no. 27) Khonsuhotep is advised to celebrate the festival of his god and to repeat it at the established time, taking note of the first time he made offerings to his god; these ritual prescriptions fall under the calendrical and commemorative rites and under the rites of feasting and festivals, slightly overlapping with the rites of exchange and communion, as the pupil makes offerings to his god (the fact that he is told to record the first time he offered could hint at some sort of rite of passage). On vv. 17.1-17.4 (see no. 28) the pupil is advised against praying to god loudly while in his temple, and is told that god will only listen to and answer his prayer if he prays to himself and with a loving *jb*-heart; assuming that prayers can be considered rituals or rites (the latter meaning smaller components of a ritual), or that they can be ritualised – thus becoming ritual-like practices –, this passage can be taken to fall under rites of exchange and communion – although the ritualised prayer takes place in the temple, it does so in an informal context, as opposed to the context of formal temple rituals. On vv. 17.4-17.6 the addressee is instructed to make libations to his deceased father and mother, a practice that fits the category of rituals concerning death, burial, and the afterlife. On vv. 20.12-20.14 (see no. 31) the pupil is instructed to make offerings to his god, but to beware of his detestation, to avoid asking questions insistently to the god during his procession, and to refrain from stealing the god's statue: assuming v. 20.12 refers to the same procession mentioned on vv. 20.13-20.14, these three verses encompass both the rites of exchange and communion and the calendrical and commemorative rites. And on vv. 21.20-22.1 the pupil is urged to satisfy (*shtp*) the *akh*, perhaps a deceased relative, and to purify (*w<sup>c</sup>b*) himself from the *akh*'s detestation in order to avoid being harmed by him. Inasmuch as this passage seems to be primarily concerned with avoiding the negative effects of a displeased *akh*, it fits under the category of rites of affliction.

<sup>846</sup> The *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*, = P. BM EA 10684 verso, gives advice on rituals to perform and admonishes against certain behaviours during rituals. On v. 4.10 (see no. 35), the disciple is enjoined to praise his god unremittingly, in order to be favoured by the god. On the following verse (4.11) he is exhorted to offer to his god with a loving *jb*-heart (compare with *Ani*, v. 17.2) in order to be nourished and cared for by the god. On vv. 4.12-5.2 the pupil is told to purify himself daily, to refrain from harassing the god with constant questions (presumably at the oracular consultations during the processions), that his statue should not be seen, and that one should not raise one's voice in god's house as he loves silence (similar to *Ani*, vv. 17.1-17.2). Vv. 4.10-4.11, together with v. 5.2 (assuming the context is private prayer, as in *Ani*, vv. 17.1-17.3), belong to the rites of exchange and communion, while vv. 4.12-5.1 belong to the calendrical and commemorative rites and to the rites of feasting and festivals.

<sup>847</sup> *The Prohibitions*, O. Petrie 11= UC 39614, v. C7, may refer to the same kind of festival to one's personal god as the *Instruction of Ani*, vv. 16.3-16.9. The text on v. C7 indicates that this kind of festival was not exclusively private, as the addressee is counselled against celebrating it without his neighbours. Like the ritual prescriptions in the aforementioned passage from *Ani*, the prescription on v. C7 belongs to the categories of calendrical and commemorative rites, of rites of feasting and festivals, and of exchange and communion.

<sup>848</sup> The *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, does not refer to rituals in the familiar sense – with the exception of spitting on Apep in chapter 8, v. 10.20 (see no. 43) (on this kind of rite of affliction see Ritner (1993, 82-88)) –, but instead as prayers which fall under the rites of exchange and communion. The prayers may be prescribed for specific times, namely the sunrise (chapters 7, vv. 10.12-10.13 (see no. 42), and

### 3.2.2.2 Preliminary remarks 2: theoretical overview of ritual failure

Discussions on ritual often focus on the steps, functions, and meanings of rituals, but they frequently presuppose an accurate and correct performance of those rituals, overlooking the fact that their performance can fail or deviate from prescriptions (Schieffelin 2017, 1). It is all the easier to overlook (or to be unable to address) this fact when one studies ancient cultures, since, for instance, ‘in the case of ancient Israel and Egypt, the largely prescriptive character of their ritual texts generally prevents us from seeing how ritual worked in concrete everyday life’<sup>849</sup> (Bremmer 2004, 33). Despite the inaccessibility of the performance of rituals in past cultures, in contrast to contemporary cultures whose ritual performances can be studied by direct observations by social scientists, it is expectable that ritual performances would at times fall short of the norms and prescriptions, or even that these could be transgressed.

To be sure, it may be argued that, from a sociological point of view, what counts as ritual failures and as transgressions is subjectively determined, particularly by those who are in a position to point it out and to react to it if necessary<sup>850</sup> (Schieffelin 2007, 9-10, 16) – failures or deviations of which only the performer is aware will go unnoticed and unchallenged unless the performer publicly admits it<sup>851</sup>. An extreme case is perhaps the expulsion of a spirit medium from a séance in New Guinea due to his unsatisfactory performance which alienated the audience, and probably further propelled by the contrast with the successful performance of the junior medium performing with him (Schieffelin 1996, 77-79). Despite the performer’s debacle, the performance went on successfully. An important conclusion one may derive from episodes like this is that failed performances do

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27, vv. 25.19-25.20 (see no. 55)), or, arguably, for times of need (chapters 21, vv. 22.5-22.8, and 22, vv. 23.9-23.11 (see nos. 51 and 52)). The latter passages may also be considered rites of affliction: although this type of rituals concerns, in a strict definition (Bell 1997, 115), protection against spiritual or demonic agencies, it can be broadened to accommodate protection against other menaces (115), particularly when those rituals yield ‘psychotherapeutic’ results (120). In the case of these particular passages, they not only provide ‘psychotherapeutic’ comfort, but also seek to mobilise the divine agency in overcoming threats posed by other human beings.

<sup>849</sup> For ancient Mesopotamia, however, there are several cuneiform sources dealing with ritual failures (see Ambos 2007).

<sup>850</sup> It is important to notice that it is not always possible to establish for ancient cultures the contemporaries’ reaction to what would seem *prima facie* a ritual failure. For a case in point see Schieffelin (2007, 8).

<sup>851</sup> Some missteps may also go unnoticed to the performers themselves (Hüsken 2007, 354).

not necessarily entail the failure of the ritual (Schieffelin 2007, 7-8). Accordingly, failures or successes of ritual performances are best not seen as absolutes but as degrees in a continuum: failures, or transgressions, may occur without affecting the ritual performance in a catastrophic way. Whether a ritual is considered to fail or not also depends heavily on how rigidly or loosely structured it is (Hüsken 2007, 347): for instance, creativity-driven rituals like séances will tend to be more failure resistant than prescription-driven rituals like a king's coronation.

As ritual performances may also involve power relations, either between pairing performers or between groups with competing agendas, both failed performances as well as deliberate deviations from 'tradition'<sup>852</sup> may cause shifts in those power relations, with one performer standing out over the other, or with the reformation of the ritual according to another group's agenda (Hüsken 2007, 358-59; Schieffelin 2007, 11, 14-15; Ambos 2007, 38).

All prescriptions and norms create the possibility of involuntary and accidental deviation or of open transgression, although this implication is often left implicit. Other prescriptions, however, may directly contemplate both accidental and conscious transgressions. This is the case with a number of passages dealing with ritual in instructions from the Middle and New Kingdoms, making them an important source for the study of ritual failure and deviation, as well as of what was considered proper ritual performances (Hüsken 2007, 337), in ancient Egypt. For the present discussion, they are all the more important inasmuch as they involve *ntr*.

### 3.2.2.3 **Ritual failures and transgressions in the instructions**

The passages that will be discussed in this section are the following: from the *Instruction of Hordjedef*: O. Gardiner 62, vv. H6.4-H6.7 (see no. 1), O. Louvre E 32928, vv. 7.1-7.12 (= H7.1-H8.1) (see no. 2); from the *Instruction for the King Merikare*: P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, vv. 110-112 (see no. 23); from the *Instruction of Ani*: P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 17.1-17.4 (see no. 28), and 20.12-20.14 (see no. 31); and from the

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<sup>852</sup> For an overview of the constructedness of the category of 'tradition' see Engler (2006b, 1907-1909).

*Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*, = P. BM EA 10684 verso, vv. 4.9-5.2 (see no. 35).

### 3.2.2.3.1 *Instruction of Hordjedef*, vv. H6.4-H6.7

Only the beginning of the *Instruction of Hordjedef* is attested, which makes it difficult to assess the full range of topics addressed in this instruction. This text is unusual, in that it contains two sequential passages dealing with ritual transgressions. The first passage that will be discussed is not entirely well preserved, but it seems to concern a ritual transgression at the necropolis. The passage from O. Gardiner 62, vv. H6.4-H6.8 (see no. 1), runs as follows:

(H6.4) (*[jr mwt m z(j) tkn jm=f hr]w th3=f dmd.y[t] n.t jrj n=f \* sft* (H6.5) *jw krs[.tw=f] m hbd.t m hr(j).t-ntr \**) [As for death, a man is near it the day] he transgresses the period of making the sacrifice for him (= a deceased in the necropolis?), (H6.5) and is buried with reprobation in the necropolis.

(H6.6) (*hpr {s3} <s3m.t> m {\*} dw.t <\*>*) Mourning comes to evil:

(H6.7) (*hsf<.t> {=f} pw n.(j)t ntr \* htp.w=f shd hr hw.t=f \**) that is god's punishment. His food offerings fade away due to his wrongdoing.

(H6.8) (*jw m3r [...]*) The needy [...].

From what is possible to make out from the text, it seems that the setting of the passage is the necropolis and that the transgressions involves not making a sacrifice to the benefit of a deceased at the appropriate time<sup>853</sup>. It is unclear to whom the text is referring, whether a relative who ought to make an offering with a certain regularity, or a priest whose job is to make offerings to the dead. Evidence from the Old Kingdom supports both possibilities: in a late Old Kingdom appeal to the living it is detailed that the Ka-priest ought to make invocation-offerings of bread and beer to the benefit of the tomb owner, because he himself had done so for others (Sethe 1933, 217-18 ll. 15-6; Strudwick 2005, 268); in an address to a lector priest from another late Old Kingdom tomb it is said: 'Do not desist from your reading of the transfigurations!' (Strudwick 2005, 218).

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<sup>853</sup> Understanding the text differently, Oréal (2016, 499-501) takes this passage to refer to the public reproach of the deceased at his funeral.

Whichever the case, the punishment appears to be death followed by a burial with reprobation and cessation of offerings. In other words, the transgressor will be killed, buried without the necessary rituals and apparatus, and forgotten. While one may question whether this reflects real practices or not, it is important that this punishment is clearly marked as a punishment from god, who is presumably the god of the necropolis: *hsf<.t> {=f} pw n.(j)t ntr*, ‘that is god’s punishment’ (v. H6.7). This punishment does match promises of punishment in other texts which assure not only death but also the rejection of the transgressor by god, who will not accept his offerings (see Willems 1990, 29, 33 with n. 24).

Interestingly, O. IFAO 1796 offers a different perspective on vv. x+5-x+6 (= H6.6-H6.8): ‘(x+5 (= H6.6)) (*s3m.t hr* (x+6 (= H6.6)) [*s3*]m.t \* (x+6 (= H6.7)) *dw.t hsf{f}(.t) pw ntr \* htp=f shd=f hw.w* \* (x+ 6 (= H6.8)) *jw m3r šd.w*) Mourning upon (x+6 (= H6.6)) mourning; (x+6 (= H6.7)) evil is what god punishes. May he be appeased so that he clears the fault. (= (x+6 (= H6.8)) The needy is saved’ (see Gasse 2005, 43-45; Vernus 2010a, 87). Here it is specified that *dw.t*, ‘evil’, is what *ntr* punishes. Presumably, what is construed as evil is the ritual transgression. Despite clarifying that evil is what god punishes, the copy in O. IFAO 1796 also seems to assert that the transgressor may be forgiven, an idea that is not common in the instructions but is present in the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 2, vv. 5.5-5.6 (see no. 38), and chapter 3, v. 5.17 (see no. 39). This passage is also close to the personal piety texts of the Ramesside Period where faults may be forgiven by the deity. As a Deir el-Medina ostrakon, it is not impossible that the version of the *Instruction of Hordjedef* in O. IFAO 1796 had been infused with personal piety expressions of the time, to the point that it would be best to consider that this passage had been ‘updated’ to the New Kingdom discourse. But the lack of Middle Kingdom versions of this passage makes it impossible for the moment to draw this conclusion with any confidence.

### 3.2.2.3.2 *Instruction of Hordjedef*, vv. 7.1-7.12 (= H7.1-H7.6)

The passage in O. Louvre E 32928, vv. 7.1-7.12 (= H7.1-H7.6) (see no. 2), is the last one that is preserved in this instruction and reads as follows:

(7.1 (= H7.1)) (*stp n=k hnj.t m [r(m)]t=k \**) Select for yourself a work association from your [men].

(7.2 (= H7.2)) (*jmj snd.w[=k hpr] hr.t=k \**) Cause respect of [you], so that [your] possessions [may develop].

(7.3 (= H7.3)) (*w<sup>c</sup>b <sup>c</sup>.wy=ky wdn n=k h.t \**) (7.4 (= H7.3)) *mj r<sup>c</sup> w<sup>c</sup>b n(j)w db<sup>3</sup>.t \** (7.5 (= H7.3)) *wmm rm.w hr <sup>c</sup>b <n(j)> nm.jt \**) Purify your hands, so that goods are offered to you, (7.4 (= H7.3)) as (to) Re, the pure one of the chapel (7.5 (= H7.3)) who eats fish and purified things <of> the (temple) slaughtering block.

(7.6 (= H7.4)) (*t<sup>3</sup>m <sup>c</sup>.wy=ky m-hnw n(j) {hm.t}<jdr>=k \**) (7.7 (= H7.4)) *m d[d=k hrw n=sn] \**) Be humble (lit.: cover your arms inside your <belt>), (7.7 (= H7.4)) while [working] (lit.: in [giving them the day]).

(7.8 (= H7.5)) (*wnn jb=k ph<sup>3</sup> n=s[n] \* [htp.w-ntr] \**) May you be skilful for them, [the offerings].

(7.9 (= H7.6)) (*n gmj.n srh.yw dd[.tj=f] r=k \**) (7.10 (= H7.6)) *dw.t n(j)t ntr*) (Thus), an accuser who will speak against you (7.10 (= H7.6)) a transgression against god (lit. ‘bad things of the god’) will not be found.

(7.11) (*m h[<sup>3</sup>n]rg[<sup>3</sup>] hr h.t dw.t \**) Do not rush to something bad.

(7.12) (*m djdj hft <sup>3</sup>b=k s[w] k<sup>3</sup>p\**) Do not be lustful before what you desire.

This passage<sup>854</sup> is somewhat fragmentary in the versions collected in Helck (1984) and in Roccati (1982)<sup>855</sup>, and the more complete version published by Fischer-Elfert (2009) still presents significant difficulties of interpretation. These difficulties were relatively mitigated by the publication, by Pierre Grandet (2012), of the version translated here, but difficulties of interpretation still subsist. To be sure, individual copies of this passage may in fact have different contents since the known copies date from the New Kingdom or later, which leaves room for the possibility that this passage may have been edited – or misunderstood – by later copyists. Given the already mentioned fragmentary state of the majority of the sources for this passage, the other two copies mentioned are a better starting point for analysis.

From O. Berlin P. 12383 one may get the impression – as Fischer-Elfert (2009, 126) himself did – that the passage in question concerns the relation between an official and his

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<sup>854</sup> Preceding this passage, sections 4 and 5 counsel the disciple to make arrangements to assure his afterlife cult (section 5 is not well preserved, but seems to give continuation to the previous passage) while section 6 makes a transition from the two previous passages to the passage translated above, as it deals with a ritual transgression involving missing the period of offering a funerary sacrifice. It is difficult to say what follows the present passage, as section 8 is poorly preserved and the remainder of the instruction is yet to be unearthed. As Fischer-Elfert (2009, 118) pointed out, it is not even known how long this instruction was.

<sup>855</sup> Pascal Vernus (2010a, 80), for instance, does not translate this entire section. Notice, however, that his translation did not use the ostrakon published by Fischer-Elfert, nor the one published by Grandet.



subordinates<sup>856</sup>. O. Louvre E 32928 suggests a different concern, namely the correct performance of a ritual of purification of offerings. Although one cannot rule out entirely the other interpretation without additional supporting evidence, this latter interpretation seems to be more solid and is therefore the one pursued here.

That this passage deals with a ritual scene is suggested above all by the mention of the need to have purified hands (v. 7.3 (= H7.3)) and to handle the offerings with skill (v. 7.8 (= H7.5)). If the translation presented above is accurate, this passage conjures up a *mise en scène* in which the disciple acts as the head of a group of ritualists (v. 7.1 (= H7.1)), and must both lead by example (v. 7.3 (= H7.3))<sup>857</sup>, be humble (vv. 7.6-7.7 (= H7.4))<sup>858</sup>, and, paramount to the present discussion, be skilful with the offerings. Failure to comply with the latter admonishment may result in one of the ritualists bringing this case to *ntr*. No punishment is directly mentioned, but that scenario is one the disciple would want to avoid.

What the author and audiences may have made of *wnn jb=k ph3* (v. 7.8 (= H7.5)) and *dw.t n(j)t ntr* (v. 7.10 (= H7.6)) merits additional discussion, as the interpretation of these two phrases impacts the overall interpretation of this passage and of how *ntr* is mobilised.

Pierre Grandet (2012, 533) suggests that *wnn jb=k ph3 n=sn htp.w-ntr* refers to getting rid of any mental reservation towards the offerings, so that the pupil is not accused of hypocrisy during his consecration of the offerings. From the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 17.1-17.3 (see no. 28), the *Instruction of Papyrus Insinger*, v. 23.10, and the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*, = P. BM EA 10684 verso, v. 5.1 (see no. 35), Nili Shupak (1993, 162) also claims that a difference is established between the silent man who ‘must ensure that his intention is pure during divine service’ and the hot-tempered man who simply displays external piety without a true devotion.

It is possible that modern interpretations relating to genuineness and devotion in ancient ritual practices owe to the Protestant emphasis on belief, as opposed to practice, which had a significant influence on the academic study of religion (see e.g., Nye 2008,

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<sup>856</sup> Perhaps this particular copy does.

<sup>857</sup> See the note to this verse in the translation in the appendix.

<sup>858</sup> See the corresponding notes in the translation in the appendix.

138; Asad 1993, 58-59)<sup>859</sup>. In the academic study of religion, this bias towards belief and inner motivation has mostly given way either to the analytical separation between belief and practice<sup>860</sup>, with a highlight of the role of practice (Nye 2008, 130; Lewis 1994, 568; Obadia 2007, 46-47), or to the transcendence of that separation, through integrative categories such as performance (Bell 1992, 30-32 57-58n19; 1998, 205; Nye 2008, 124-26, with references).

If the modern scientific debate over belief/thought and practice/action was, to a significant extent, informed by western history, it is then licit to ask whether the authors of the Egyptian instructions shared a similar construct or whether Egyptian history led them through a different venue. Advice against duplicity in general is not absent from several instructions (e.g., *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, maxim 8, vv. D145-D152, epilogue, vv. D608-D609; *Instruction of Khety*, P. Sallier II = P. BM EA 10182, v. 28.1; *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 15.9-15.10, 18.5-18.9), and is a focal point in the *Instruction of Amenemope*: this text urges audiences to match what they think or feel to what they say (e.g., P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 10, vv. 13.13, 13.15, 14.2 (see no. 44), chapter 15, vv. 17.5-17.6 (see no. 46), chapter 19, vv. 20.8-20.9, chapter 20, vv. 21.9-21.10, 21.13 (see no. 50)). This is quite expectable, as duplicity is a liability in any human society, but it is important to bear in mind that what is valid for religion is not necessarily so for daily life<sup>861</sup>. In fact, several instructions' passages dealing with ritual action do not concern

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<sup>859</sup> However, this is not to say that the connection between 'inner motive' and 'outer behavior' (Asad 1993, 64) was not previously a concern to religious institutions: on the contrary, this was, for instance, a concern for Catholic monastic institutions in the High Middle Ages (64-65). Concerning the Protestant contempt for ritual, it is possible that it relates to the perception of the Catholic use of ritual as a way to circumvent the previous ethical rationalisation of Judaism by gaining favour with God while eschewing the effort for ethical betterment (see Bruce 2006, 414, with references; see also Bell 1997, 49).

<sup>860</sup> For instance, and as pointed out by several scholars, one does not necessarily have to believe in the ritual one is performing, as long as one performs it cogently (Bell 1992, 186; 1998, 205-206; Hamayon 2007, 23, 25-29; Lewis 1994, 578). A case in point is the testimony of Kwakiutl shaman Quesalid who, while initially opposing the use of 'tricks' in shamanistic healing rituals, came to acknowledge their role in the effectiveness of those rituals (e.g., Hamayon 2007, 26). This distinction between belief and practice is paramount in the academic study of religion – even if authors like Lance Gharavi (2012, 18) go to the extreme of saying that 'if religion is a performative, it is not the religious faith that precedes the act, but the other way around'. This distinction can also be theologically made (see e.g., Grimes 2012, 34-35), as in the already mentioned cases of medieval monasticism and of Protestantism, although it certainly is not made in all cultures (e.g., Bell 1992, 183-84).

<sup>861</sup> Gilbert Lewis (1994, 574-75) calls attention to the usefulness of contrasting the thought paradigm of magic and witchcraft with the thought paradigm of agriculture, based on 'experiment and deductive reasoning' (184), in African societies, in order to avoid the generalised application of the stereotype of 'logical inconsistency' (572) to those societies.

themselves with one's beliefs or inner motivations (e.g., *Instruction for the King Merikare*, P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, vv. 63-68, 125-30; *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 20.12-20.17 (see no. 31)), but a small number of passages do indeed refer to what might be described with terms like 'faith' or 'devotion'.

One of those passages (*Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, v. 17.2 (see no. 28)), advises the disciple to *snmḥ n=k m jb{=j} mrj*, 'pray with a loving *jb*-heart' (Quack 1994, 94-95, 289; Dils 2014). The same expression, *m jb mrj*, is also repeated in the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*, P. BM EA 10684 verso, v. 4.11: *wdn n=f m jb mrj.y{=k}*, 'offer unto him<sup>862</sup> with a loving *jb*-heart' (Dils 2014). Curiously, the same counsel of offering to the personal god is given in the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, v. 20.12, but without the catch-phrase *m jb mrj*. However, it could be implied in the counsel, as that phrase was common in the Ramesside Period (Quack 1994, 158), for instance in tomb biographies (see e.g., Kitchen 1982, 130 ll. 2, 16; Frood 2007, 51, 53). It would be tempting to assume this wording entails a coincidence between thought and action, but the texts do not make it explicit<sup>863</sup>, and in *Ani*, vv. 17.1-17.3, the opposite of praying with a loving *jb*-heart is to raise one's voice in the god's chapel. Therefore, whether the expression *m jb mrj* involves inner devotion, as opposed to indifference, will remain an open question.

Given the lack of concrete markers in the text stressing the need for correspondence between thought and action, it will be assumed that the passage in question deals with the preparation of ritual offerings<sup>864</sup>, and that *jb=k ph3* has here the sense of 'being professional' or 'skilful' (*Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae*: 'kundig sein'). In terms of lexical semantics<sup>865</sup>, the *jb*-heart is discursively used as a container. Typically, both the *jb*-heart and the *h.t*-belly/body are containers for speech and thought that may either leave the container or be kept in it (see Nyord 2012, 161-65). However, the *jb*-heart may also contain other elements (Nyord 2009a, 69-78), and in this case it may be ritual knowledge in terms of both words to be spoken and manual dexterity. What would be in question in this passage, then, would not be the pupil's convictions regarding the ritual, but instead his

<sup>862</sup> The referent is *ntr=k*, 'your god' (v. 4.10).

<sup>863</sup> If true, however, this might have been a concern specific to the Ramesside personal piety and, thus, not representative of other periods of Egyptian history.

<sup>864</sup> Possibly funerary, as the preceding passage (H6) warns the disciple of the punishment that will fall upon the one who misses the period to make a funerary sacrifice.

<sup>865</sup> On which see Nyord (2012).

willingness to commit himself in a professional and skilful way to it, thus avoiding the failure either of the ritual, of his performance, or both. If the two final verses of the passage can shed any light on the nature of the reproached transgression(s), they may indicate that, besides lack of professional commitment to the correct performance of the ritual, the pupil may also compromise its efficacy by coveting and stealing either ritual equipment or the offerings themselves.

Whichever interpretation one chooses, the consequence to the disciple presented by the text, in the event of deviation from the given advice, is the same: an accuser, certainly pertaining to the work association (*hnj.t*) mentioned in the first verse, would say ‘bad things of the god’ about him. It is not clear what author, copyists, performers, and audiences would have understood by *dw.t n(.j)t ntr*<sup>866</sup>. It is not impossible that it could be some kind of a spell one could cast on someone<sup>867</sup>, but, perhaps more accurately, this expression may be here synonymous with another well-known expression, *bw.t ntr*, ‘detestation of god’, particularly as it relates to a transgression against a divine agent<sup>868</sup>.

It is significant that it is not stated that *ntr* will react automatically to the failed performance, but that it is a human accuser that reacts to it pointing out the transgression against *ntr*. This leads to three important insights: 1) *ntr* may not be concerned with a good ritual performance to the point he reacts automatically, but is sufficiently concerned to it to make the failure of the ritual and/or performance a transgression against him<sup>869</sup>; 2) it is

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<sup>866</sup> In his translation of this passage in O. Berlin P. 12383, Fischer-Elfert (2009, 125) emended the genitive *n(.j)t* to the dative *n*, but the repetition of *n(.j)t* in O. Louvre E 32928 and in O. Gardiner 335 may indicate this expression involves an indirect genitive and not a dative.

<sup>867</sup> If *dw.t n(.j)t ntr* does refer to some divine affliction the accuser could call upon the disciple, it might then be comparable either to the *b3.w ntr*, ‘manifestation of god’ – which is known to be an affliction either caused by a deity in response to a transgression, or mobilised by a human agent against another person (see Borghouts 1982, 1-3, 8, 19, 32-33) –, or to *ph n(.j) ntr bjn*, ‘evil petitioning of god’ – although *ph-ntr* generally refers to the consultation of a divine oracle, it may also refer to sorcery (in the sense understood by cultural anthropologists; see Ferraro and Andreatta (2010, 350)) or to the use of the oracular consultation in a malignant way (see Ritner 1993, 214-17).

<sup>868</sup> Although a case can be made about similar passages in late Old Kingdom biographies (Fischer-Elfert 2009, 124; Grandet 2012, 533), depending much on whether one understands *n(.j)t* as an indirect genitive or as a dative, *dw.t n(.j)t ntr* seems to be a *hapax legomenon*. But there is at least one attestation that associates *dw.t* with *bw.t*, lending further support to the association between *dw.t n(.j)t ntr* and *bw.t ntr*: *m jr sh3 dw.t bw.t ntr*, ‘do not remember a bad thing, a detestation of god’ (Harpers’ song from TT 359, of Inherkhau; see Rutkauskas (2016, 105)). The terms are used synonymously, but the context is different (on which see e.g., Lichtheim 1945, 207-10; Assmann 2005, 4-5, 119-21).

<sup>869</sup> As no specific punishment is mobilised, one may conjecture that, if there is indeed a synonymy between *dw.t n(.j) ntr* and *bw.t ntr*, then the incompatibility with god may itself be the punishment (see above subsection 3.2.1.5).

possible the accuser, who is in a subordinate position – since he was picked by the disciple to be part of the work association –, immediately points the finger at the disciple who failed at the ritual in order to compete with him<sup>870</sup>; 3) the involvement of *ntr* as an offended party seems to be used by the accuser to reinforce his position as agent and move from a subordinate position to a challenging one.

What Edward Schieffelin (2007, 14) states about the competition between ritualists in contemporary India may also generally apply to this case: ‘Here *accusations* of so-called “ritual mistakes” have nothing to do with the efficacy of ritual (nor are they really mistakes). Rather, in the context of conflict over social status and honours which derive from roles served in rituals in the temple, spotting ritual mistakes provides an excuse for pushing one’s own sectarian interests and discrediting rivals’ (emphasis in original). Schieffelin (13) is referring specifically to competing sects, each with a different approach to the same ritual, but the competition for status through pointing out another’s mistakes is still applicable to the *Hordjedef* passage. In the context of the latter, what lies behind the accusation, and creates the opportunity for social competition, are not different understandings of the performance of the ritual, but, possibly and as suggested above, lack of ‘professionalism’<sup>871</sup> in the performance of the ritual, on the one hand, and theft of ritual equipment<sup>872</sup> or of the offerings.

### 3.2.2.3.3 *Instruction for the King Merikare, vv. 106-116*

The passage from P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, vv. 106-116 (see no. 23), is not easy and, therefore, any interpretation is tentative. The passage in question concerns two ritual transgressions. The text reads:

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<sup>870</sup> It is also possible that the accuser is highlighting the culprit in order to avoid getting caught up in divine retribution, but the context does not seem to support this. Another passage from this instruction demonstrating awareness of social competition is O. Munich 3400, v. H1.3 (see also the note to the translation of v. 7.3 (= H7.3) in the appendix (see no. 2)).

<sup>871</sup> Professional ethics not only stimulates social competition, but is also a ‘form of control’, through peers for instance (Rüpke 1996, 256).

<sup>872</sup> Theft of temple equipment was also a concern in the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*, = P. BM EA 10684 verso, vv. 5.1-5.4 (see no. 35). This seems to be a concern only in the New Kingdom, which may further indicate this passage reflects New Kingdom themes.

(106) (*{sh3}* <*s<sup>c</sup>h3*> *t3š=k r<sup>c</sup>-rs.j pd.t pw* (107) *šzp.t<sup>c</sup>gs.w*) <Make> your frontier against the southern region <ready for combat>, as the bow-people is (107) one who readies for war (lit. seizes the belt<sup>873</sup>).

(*kd hw.wt m t3-mh.w*) Erect buildings<sup>874</sup> in Lower Egypt<sup>875</sup>.

(*nn šrj rn n(.j)* (108) *z(j) m jrj.t.n=f n hđj.n.tw njw.t grg.tj*) A man's name will not diminish (108) by what he has done, and an established town will not be destroyed.

(*kd hw.t [n] tw<t=k>*) Build a chapel [for] <your> statue.

(*jw hrw.y* (109) *mrj=f hđj(.t) jb zp=f hs[j]*) An agitator, (109) when he loves to demoralise the *jb*-heart, his conduct is weak.

(*š3.n H.ty m3<sup>c</sup>-hrw m sb3[.w]*) Khety, justified, determined as teacher:

(110) (*gr.w r šhm-jb hđd [w{3}dh.w] tkk ntr sbj hr r3-pr*) 'The one who is silent in relation to the fearless one who neglects the altars, attacks god and rebels against the temple'.

(*jwj=t(w) hr=[f mj]* (111) *jrr=f st*) **One** (= god?) **will come upon [him according] to (111) what he did.**

(*jw=f r s33 m š3.[t] n=f*) He will experience what was determined for him.

(*šht r=f n jnj=tw hr mw hrw pf n(.j)* (112) *jwj.t*) What he accomplished for him: one (= god?) will not bring the water level on the day of (112) the flood.

(*šhwsj w{3}dh.w trj ntr*) Supply the altars, show respect to god.

(*m dd hsj pw jb*) Do not say: 'The *jb*-heart is weak'.

(*m fh<sup>c</sup>. [wj]=kj*) Do not slacken your action.

(113) (*jr gr {ršw.t} <bdš>=k*) Act even when you <are tired>.

(*hd.t p.t pw rnp.t 100 mnw pw {md3} <wd3>*) One hundred years is a flash in the sky, while death is forever.

(*<j>r rh hrw.y* (114) *nn hđj=f st m-mr.(w)t smnh jrj.t.n=f jn ky jyj.y hr-s3=f*) As for an agitator who knows, (114) he will not ruin it, so that what he has done is bettered by another who comes after him.

(*nn-wn šwj m hrw.y*) (However,) there is no one free from an agitator.

(115) (*rh-h.t pw <n.j> jdb.w n{n} wh3.n nsw.t nb šn.y(t)*) He (= the king) is the wise <of> the Two-Shores, the king, lord of the court, is not fool.

(*s33=f m pr(.w)=f* (116) *n.w h.t*) He is wise from (116) birth<sup>876</sup> (lit. his coming of the womb).

<sup>873</sup> On this expression meaning preparation for war see Goedicke (2002a, 117), Quack (1992, 63 c)), Faulkner (1972b, 189n48), and Vernus (2010, 202n80).

<sup>874</sup> Temples? Fortifications? For proponents of temples see Quack (1992, 65) and Oréal (2000, 149). Of fortifications see Vernus (2010a, 192, 202n81) and Faulkner (1972b, 189). Goedicke (2002a, 117) sees fortifications as excessive, and prefers walled settlements. Helck (1977, 67), Tobin (2003c, 162), and Dils (2014) remain neutral. It is also possible that these buildings are related to commercial or agricultural activities (Vernus 2010a, 202n81; Dils 2014).

<sup>875</sup> See Goedicke (2002a, 117).

<sup>876</sup> This passage reflects royal ideology. The *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, prologue, v. D41, presents the opposite perspective, concerning the non-royal elite, when it has the king saying: *nn msj.y s3.w* 'no one is born wise'.

(*stn.n sw <ntr> hnt.j {t3} <zj> hh.w*) <God> selected him among millions of <men>.

Even if fictional, the setting of this instruction is the civil war of the First Intermediate Period, to which vv. 106-107 make reference, and it is amidst that war context that the topic of ritual is addressed<sup>877</sup>. As commander-in-chief and high priest *par excellence*, the king of the Herakleopolitan dynasty had to combine both roles during the war. This passage seems to address the difficulties of handling both offices.

It is possible that the agitator on vv. 109-110 is an advisor or a general who prefers to deviate resources for the offerings to the soldiers in campaign<sup>878</sup>, which is suggested by the passage urging the king to *shwsj wdḥ.w*, ‘supply the altars’ (v. 112) (see also Goedicke 2002a, 117). If the translation proposed above is correct, the fearless one who attacks the altars is this advisor or general who sees offerings to the god as a waste of resources during wartime, and, if the king accepts this, he will be construed as an opposer to god (v. 110). Apparently, the king will be punished by god according to the act-consequence nexus (vv. 110-111). Interestingly, the text states that the king will *ḵw=f r s33 m š3.[t] n=f*, ‘experience what was determined for him’, namely a low flood (vv. 111-112). Although *š3* is connected to the idea of ‘fate’ (see e.g., Quaegebeur 1975, 129), in this case it certainly indicates that a low flood is the punishment reserved for this specific transgression<sup>879</sup>.

Connected with this transgression, the text mentions another that is attributed to the king’s fatigue (vv. 112-113). Arguably, this is not physical fatigue, but mental weariness due to the clash with the advisor or general who contests him in private but remains silent in public in order to avoid being reproached before others (vv. 113-115). Again, the transgression would be to give in to the pressure and allocate to the soldiers food reserved for the cult.

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<sup>877</sup> See also Adams (2008, 36n73).

<sup>878</sup> The problem would not have been the diversion of food, as it could still be consumed after being offered, but of human resources.

<sup>879</sup> In other words, it is predetermined that to not supply the altar will have as consequence a low flood.

3.2.2.3.4 *Instruction of Ani*, vv. 17.1-17.14, 20.12-20.14, and *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*, vv. 4.9-5.2

The passage in the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*, = P. BM EA 10684 verso, vv. 4.9-5.2 (see no. 35), does not mobilise divine punishment, but makes reference to the two transgressions that are addressed separately in the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 17.1-17.4 (see no. 28) and 20.12-20.17 (see no. 31). It is for that reason that the passage from P. Chester Beatty IV is included in this discussion<sup>880</sup>, and that these three passages are discussed together.

The passage from P. Chester Beatty IV = P. BM EA 10684 verso runs as follows:

(4.9) (*jw swt sšs3=k m zh3.w jw=k c<sub>k</sub>.tj m s<b>3.yt*) **But you are skilled in the writings**, having penetrated the instructions.

(4.10) (*dw3.ww ntr{r}=k nn jr.t 3b.w hsj{.tw}=f <tw> r<sup>c</sup>-nb wd{n}=f ks.w=k jm.j h<sup>c</sup>{.t}.w=k r t3 n(j) hr.j(t)-ntr*) Praise your god without cessation so that he will favour <you> everyday and assign your bones, which are in your body, to the land of the necropolis.

(4.11) (*wdn n=f m jb mrj.y{=k} dj=f n=k k3 n dd=f*) Offer unto him with a loving *jb*-heart so that he gives you the nourishment which he gives.

(*mrj r(m)t{.w} p3 n.tj hr jrj.t n=f ntr pn* (4.12) *m-mj.tt*) A man loves the one who acts for him, and this god (4.12) likewise.

**(w<sup>c</sup>b m jb mrj{=k}) Be purified with a loving *jb*-heart.**

(*twrj tj r<sup>c</sup>-nb*) Purify yourself everyday.

(*m 3wj<sup>c</sup>.wj=kj r h.t m-b3h=f*) Do not stretch your arms towards things before him (= god).

(*z3w tw hr jth* (5.1) *jb*) Beware of enthusing (5.1) the *jb*-heart.

(*m-jrj{.t} nw r s.t [h]m=k*) Do not look at a place you do not know.

(*jm<j>=k ndnd ntr*) You should not (repeatedly) consult god.

(*nn mrj ntr hn<sub>h</sub>n*) God does not like the one who approaches.

(*sw m {mr} <tm> n=f hfy* (5.2) *sšm.w=f*) He is one whose statue (5.2) cannot be seen.

(*z3w tw hr k3 hrw m pr=f*) Beware of being loud of voice in his house.

(*mrj ntr sgr*) God loves silence.

And the two passages from P. Boulaq 4 recto read:

<sup>880</sup> See also the discussions above in subsections 3.2.1.2.2, 3.2.1.2.3, and 3.2.1.3.



(17.1) (*m-jrj jrj hrw{tw}*) (17.2) <*m*> *hn.w n(j) ntr*) Do not talk (lit. make voice) (17.2) <in> the resting place of god.

(*bw.t.t=f pw {shb} <sbh>.w*) Shouts are his detestation.

(*snmh n=k m jb={j} mrj jw mdw.t.t=f*) (17.3) *nb.t jmn*) Pray with a loving *jb*-heart, whose every (17.3) word is hidden.

(*jrj.y=f hr(.t).t=k sdm=f j:dd.t=k szp=f w[d]n(17.4).t=k*) He will provide for your needs, he will hear what you say, he will accept your (17.4) offering.

(20.12) (*wdn <n> ntr=kwj*) Offer <to> your god.

(*z3w tw r*) (20.13) *{bt3} <bw.t>.t=f*) Beware (20.13) of his <detestation>.

(*jmj=k ndnd ssm.w=f*) You should not (repeatedly) consult his statue.

(*m-jrj wstn=f m-ht h\*j=f*) Do not behave casually (lit. walk free) with it when it appears.

(*m-jrj hnhnj=f r*) (20.14) *{r} f3j.t=f*) Do not approach it to (20.14) move (lit. bear) it.

(*jmj=k s\*s b3y.t*) You should not disturb the oracle.

(*z3w tw j:dj{=f}<=k> h3.ww m hw3.t=f*) Beware, <you> should increase his protection.

(*j:nw <m> jr.t.<t>=k*) (20.15) *r p3y=f shr.w knd mtw=k {snntj-tw} <sn t3> m rn=f*) May your eye watch out (20.15) for his angry disposition, and kiss the earth in his name.

(*sw (hr) dj.t b3.w <m> hh n(j) j3rw <r> s3j*) (20.16) *p3 n.tj (hr) s3j=f*) He gives (his) power <in> million forms <to> make great (20.16) the one who makes him great.

(*jr ntr t3 pn {n} p3 šw <m> hr(.t) jw n3y=f twt.wy hr-tp t3*) As for the god of this land, (he) is the sun <in> the sky, while his statues are on earth.

(*dd.tj sntrj*) (20.17) *m k3y=st m-mn(.t) <r> s3rd nb{.t}-h\**) Incense is given (20.17) (to) them daily as food <to> reinvigorate the Lord of Apparitions.

The passage from the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV* lists several rituals: 1) worshipping one's personal god<sup>881</sup> (v. 4.10), 2) making offerings to him (v. 4.11), 3) purifying oneself (v. 4.12), and 3) taking part in oracular consultations during the procession of the god's statue (vv. 5.1-5.2). While the latter may not seem like a ritual because of the more or less controlled contact of the god's statue with the masses attending, the fact that one's behaviour before the god must be ritualised suggests that an oracular consultation with the god's statue during a procession may be considered a ritual.

Interestingly, the text mentions no transgressions concerning the other rituals, namely praising and offering to one's personal god. These two related rituals probably took

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<sup>881</sup> As argued by Luiselli (2011, 33), the worshipping (*Anbetungsakt*) designated by *dw3* can be performed in private ('als Element des persönlichen Kulthandlung'), and this is further suggested by the reference to the personal god ('your god' (v. 4.10)).

place in a domestic setting where conditions were easily controllable and interdicts were perhaps less strict, as an altar at home will inevitably be exposed to the everyday life of its tenants, and will thus be less secluded, making the upholding of the same kind of interdicts required in temples virtually impossible. It was mentioned above<sup>882</sup> that in the *Instruction of Ani*, vv. 20.12-20.13 may alert the pupil to the detestation of god in relation to cult in a domestic setting. While that remains a possibility, it was also conjectured that the god's detestation could instead relate to what follows, and this conjecture may be further strengthened by the lack of references to transgressions against god in a domestic ritual setting in the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*.

In the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*, it is with the ritualised oracular procession that problems arise, which is perhaps unsurprising, given that a significant number of people were attending (Teeter 2011, 105; Quack 1994, 176). Two transgressions, in the sense of disrespect for the god, are identified: 1) constantly asking questions to the god (possibly either about a myriad subjects, or until the desired answer is obtained) (v. 5.1), and 2) coming close to the statue to take a peak (vv. 5.1-5.2).

The *Instruction of Ani* identifies similar problems, and makes two important additions: besides the temptation to constantly ask questions to the god (v. 20.13), the text adds the lack of reverence for the god by casual behaviour (v. 20.13), and the temptation from onlookers, including the pupil, to join the crew holding the statue (vv. 20.13-20.14). It was suggested above<sup>883</sup> that vv. 20.14-20.15 may indicate the cessation of the oracular consultation as a result of the misbehaviour. While there is no such indication in the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*, it is nonetheless plausible that the same consequence is implied in the text, given the similarities between the two passages.

Another similar transgression is identified in the two instructions: in the *Instruction of Ani*, to pray with shouts will lead the god to ignore the supplicant (vv. 17-17.4). While not in a ritual context, a similar remark is made in the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*: one should not raise one's voice in the temple. At least in later evidence (see Frandsen 1998, 983-84, 996-97), the interdict also includes not walking hurriedly inside the temples.

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<sup>882</sup> See subsection 3.2.1.2.3.

<sup>883</sup> See subsection 3.2.1.2.3.

### 3.2.2.4 Summary and concluding remarks

Table no. 7. Summary of ritual transgressions and ritual failures and respective divine punishments.

Text	Transgressions	Punishments	Divine agents	Observations
<i>Instruction of Hordjedef, O.</i> Gardiner 62, vv. H6.4-H6.8 (see no. 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To fail to sacrifice to the benefit of a deceased in the necropolis at the appropriate time (v. H6.4).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Death, burial without the necessary rituals and apparatus, and being forgotten (vv. H6.4-H6.5).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>God (<i>ntr</i>) (v. H6.7).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In O. IFAO 1796 the transgressor apparently may be forgiven.</li> </ul>
<i>Instruction of Hordjedef, O.</i> Louvre E 32928, vv. 7.1-7.12 (= H7.1-H7.6) (see no. 2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Being unprofessional during the performance of offerings (vv. 7.8-7.9 (= H7.5-H7.6)).</li> <li>Possibly theft of ritual equipment or offerings (vv. 7.11-7.12 (= H7.6)).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not mentioned.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>God (<i>ntr</i>) (v. 7.10 (= H7.6)).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The ritual transgression will be against god (lit. ‘bad things of the god’) (vv. 7.9-7.10 (= H7.6)).</li> </ul>
<i>Instruction for the King Merikare, P.</i> Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, vv. 106-116 (see no. 23)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Neglecting the supply of offerings to the god (vv. 110, 112-113).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A low flood (vv. 111-112).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>God (<i>ntr</i>) (v. 110).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The king must resist the pressure to deviate the food for the offerings to the army (vv. 112-115).</li> </ul>
<i>Instruction of Ani, P.</i> Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 17.1-17.4 (see no. 28)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To pray loudly in a temple’s chapel or booth (vv. 17.1-17.2).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Being ignored by the god (vv. 17.1-17.4).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>God (<i>ntr</i>) (v. 17.2).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The transgression is qualified as a detestation of god.</li> </ul>
<i>Instruction of Ani, P.</i> Boulaq 4 recto, vv.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To do anything <i>bw.t</i> to the god at a domestic or at a</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cessation of the oracular dispensation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Your god (<i>ntr=kwj</i>) (v. 20.12).</li> </ul>	

20.12-20.17 (see no. 31)	festival setting (vv. 20.12-20.13)? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To constantly ask questions to the god (v. 20.13).</li> <li>• Lack of reverence for the god (v. 20.13).</li> <li>• To attempt to bear the statue (vv. 20.13-20.14).</li> </ul>	(v. 20.15)?		
<i>Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV</i> , = P. BM EA 10684 verso, vv. 4.9-5.2 (see no. 35)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To constantly ask questions to the god (v. 5.1).</li> <li>• To come close to the statue to take a peak (vv. 5.1-5.2).</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This passage mobilises ritual transgressions against one's personal god (<i>ntr=k</i>), but does not mention any particular punishment.</li> </ul>

Prescriptions about rituals are attested in the extant instructions of the Middle and New Kingdoms. In the instructions of the Middle Kingdom<sup>884</sup>, they are attested in the *Instruction of Hordjedef*<sup>885</sup>, in the *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu*<sup>886</sup>, and in the *Instruction for the King Merikare*<sup>887</sup>. In the instructions of the New Kingdom, ritual prescriptions are attested in the *Instruction of Ani*<sup>888</sup>, in the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*<sup>889</sup>, in *The Prohibitions*<sup>890</sup>, and in the *Instruction of Amenemope*<sup>891</sup>.

Although there are attestations concerning ritual practices in instructions of the Middle Kingdom, they are only attested in a limited number of instructions. In contrast, all of the four instructions from the New Kingdom selected for this study mention some form

<sup>884</sup> See the overview of the passages above, at the end of subsection 3.2.2.1.

<sup>885</sup> In O. Gardiner 62, v. H6.4, and in O. Louvre E 32928, vv. 7.1-7.9 (= H7.1-H7.6).

<sup>886</sup> On vv. 14.6-14.11.

<sup>887</sup> In P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, vv. 64-65, 112-113, 125, and 129-130.

<sup>888</sup> In P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 16.3-16.9, 17.1-17.4, 17.4-17.6, 20.12-20.14, and 21.20-22.1.

<sup>889</sup> In P. Chester Beatty IV = P. BM EA 10684 verso, vv. 4.10-5.2.

<sup>890</sup> In O. Petrie 11= UC 39614, v. C7.

<sup>891</sup> In P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 8, v. 10.20, chapter 7, vv. 10.12-10.13, chapter 21, vv. 22.5-22.8, chapter 22, vv. 23.9-23.11, and chapter 27, vv. 25.19-25.20.

of ritualised practice. To be sure, most of the ritual practices alluded to in those New Kingdom instructions reflect the religious practices of that period, namely practices relating to domestic religion and personal piety<sup>892</sup>. Although the instructions of *Ani* and of *Papyrus Chester Beatty IV* cover both more familiar forms of ritual, such as offerings to the personal god and ritualised behaviour before his processional statue, and prayer<sup>893</sup>, the *Instruction of Amenemope* devotes no attention to rituals like offerings to one's personal god<sup>894</sup> and, instead, specialises on prayers<sup>895</sup>.

In the Middle Kingdom instructions, aside from the rituals evoked in the instructions of *Hordjedef* and of *Kairsu*, which concern mortuary and priestly performances, rituals relating explicitly to the cult of a god are only attested in the *Instruction for the King Merikare*. This pattern of attestations ties in with the less amount of evidence (or visibility) of practices relating to personal piety and to domestic religion in the Middle Kingdom. Given the king's priestly prerogatives and duties, it is not surprising that an instruction addressed to him covers his religious obligations. Importantly, because this royal instruction is set in wartime, most, if not all passages dealing with ritual in this instruction seem to be set against that backdrop.

Inasmuch as ritual failures and transgressions are attested in several instructions, these texts are useful to determine what was considered a ritual failure and a ritual transgression, and what social implications those transgressions may have had. Most ritual transgressions in the instructions of the Middle and New Kingdoms involve some form of divine punishment, but other passages involve other extra-human agents and have different implications. A case in point is the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 21.20-22.3, which explains mishaps as resulting from the failure to satisfy an *akh* and observe his interdict.

In the Middle Kingdom, ritual failures and transgressions are attested in one private instruction, namely of *Hordjedef*, and in one royal instruction, namely *for the King*

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<sup>892</sup> When performed in a domestic setting, the two do not always necessarily relate to each other (see Janico et al. 2018, 581-82). But this is not to say that they cannot overlap. An example of overlap between personal piety and domestic religion may be attested in the passage in *The Prohibitions*, O. Petrie 11= UC 39614, v. C7.

<sup>893</sup> Which is silent and, thus, mental in the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 17.1-17.3.

<sup>894</sup> See also Laisney (2007, 237).

<sup>895</sup> Which can be considered rituals, or at least ritualised acts (see Gill 2005, 7368-69).

*Merikare*. The passages from *Hordjedef* (vv. H6.4-H6.7 and H7.1-H7.6) present significant difficulties of interpretation and other readings are possible. But, according to the translation and interpretation proposed above, the first passage concerns a transgression related to the sacrifice to a deceased, and the second passage concerns failure at properly preparing cultic offerings. If in the first passage the divine punishment consists in death, burial with reprobation, and deprivation of offerings, in the second passage the very incompatibility with god seems to be the punishment. In the two passages there is a significant social dimension: the reprobation mentioned in the first passage as being part of the god's punishment is by the community, and, in the second passage, competition between ritualists is evinced by the fact that god is not said to react of his own accord, but, instead, the incompatibility between god and the ritualist who is at fault is denounced by a fellow officiant.

The passage from the *Instruction for the King Merikare* (vv. 106-116) also presents significant challenges in its translation and interpretation. But, from what it was possible to make out, the passage seems to concern the lack of opposition from the king to an advisor or general who prefers to use resources, otherwise channelled to the cultic offerings, in the civil war that opposed Herakleopolitans and Thebans in the First Intermediate Period. In the text, the king is in a delicate position between his cultic obligations, which would result in a low flood if not met, and his duties as a military leader. Regardless of whether the text reports to a historical situation or not, it is nonetheless of relevance, inasmuch as it brings out a dilemma, as it were, that could present itself to kings in situations when resources were scarce.

From the instructions of the Middle Kingdom to the instructions of the New Kingdom there is a drastic change in the kind of ritual transgressions that the addressee should not commit. In the texts of the latter period they concern especially the contact with the personal god, be it in private or in public, and thus reflect what was more relevant to the audiences of the time. Passages concerning ritual transgressions are concentrated in the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 17.1-17.4 and 20.12-20.14, and in the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*, = P. BM EA 10684 verso, vv. 4.9-5.2.

The two passages from *Ani* cover prayer in private to god, proper conduct at the oracular consultation given during the procession of the god's statue, and, possibly,

offerings to the god at the procession or at home. Interestingly, these two topics are also addressed in the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*, even if with a few nuances. The only clear consequence is stated on vv. 17.1-17.4 of *Ani*, namely that one will be ignored by god if praying in an unseemly manner, because to pray with wailings is *bw.t* to the god. It is possible that a similar consequence is mobilised on vv. 20.12-20.14 of the same text: to behave inappropriately before the god's statue or to prevent the disruption of the oracular consultation by the attendees may result in its cessation. No specific consequences are mentioned in the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*. At any rate, it is significant that in *Ani*, ritual transgressions against god are described as *bw.t* to the deity. Inasmuch as the ritual practices mentioned relate to the proximity to a deity, which is characteristic of the personal piety discourse, the incompatibility with god due to a transgression signifies the disruption of that proximity.

## 4. Divine protection

The instructions of the Middle and New Kingdoms do not only mobilise *ntr* to indicate to their audiences that they will be punished if they commit certain transgressions, but they also mobilise *ntr* as a source of protection. This can be seen as the complementary side to punishment, and this concern of the deity with the safety and well-being of individuals further suggests that, concerning punishment, the instructions construct god not necessarily as an avenger, but as an agent that corrects humans through the experience of pain.

From the extant material, and, again, following a selection that at times cannot avoid to be subjective, three main categories in relation to which divine protection is mobilised can be suggested: 1) protection from conflict; 2) protection from the uncertainty of the future (i.e., protection from what can go wrong and over which the person has no control); and 3) protection from need and want.

The confidence in divine protection seems to be a far cry from the ambiguity towards deities, for instance in the mortuary literature. According to Eckart Otto (2004, 93), a difference between the relationship between deities in myths and deities and men in legal and sapiential texts can be drawn for Mesopotamia, and this interpretation is arguably applicable to Egypt as well:

In mythic narratives the pantheon of gods serves to reconcile phenomena in the sphere of human life that appear contradictory – such as life and death, order and chaos, peace and war, fertility and infertility, man and woman – and to render them comprehensible; this is done by personifying these occurrences as deities whose behavior follows the logic of human interaction. An ethical idealization of gods would have undermined this function of myth. The function of gods in myths must be distinguished from their task in the traditions of wisdom literature and law, where they interact primarily not with one another but with human beings and direct human behavior by establishing a code of values.’

### 4.1 Protection from conflict

In one way or another, the topic of conflict is present in the instructions ranging from the Middle Kingdom to the Ptolemaic Period. A complete spectrum of the types of



conflicts addressed in the instructions is not easy to establish, because what the conflicts involve is not always clear<sup>896</sup>. Nonetheless, it seems to include, above all, cases of verbal altercations<sup>897</sup>, mistreatments from others<sup>898</sup> – especially superiors<sup>899</sup>, brawls<sup>900</sup>, economic fraud<sup>901</sup>, and unfair treatment at court<sup>902</sup>. With the exception of brawls, physical violence does not seem to be mentioned, although this can be implicit in certain passages<sup>903</sup>. The situation is different, and exceptional, in the royal instructions: there conflict also includes assassination<sup>904</sup> and rebellion<sup>905</sup>.

Laisney (2014, 79-80) argues that the private instructions of the Middle and New Kingdoms seldom value strength and assertiveness<sup>906</sup>, unlike the Demotic instructions<sup>907</sup> and royal instructions of the Middle Kingdom<sup>908</sup>. In general, instructions advise the pupil to avoid confrontations<sup>909</sup> (see also Laisney 2014, 80; Vernus 2010a, 294n60). Although in a somewhat different context, the compliance in the response of the pupil Horimin to his teacher<sup>910</sup> in the *Instruction of Amennakht*, O. Lacau recto, vv. 25-38, is described by Vernus (2010a, 370) as an ‘obséquiosité franchement veule’.

Outside a formal or informal educational setting, confrontations, especially with superiors, could have dire consequences. For instance, in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P.

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<sup>896</sup> See a case in point in the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto vv. 21.14-21.16 (see no. 33).

<sup>897</sup> See, for instance, the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, maxims 2-4.

<sup>898</sup> See, for instance, the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 20.7-21.3 (see no. 32).

<sup>899</sup> See, for instance, the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 22.7-22.8.

<sup>900</sup> See, for example, the *Instruction of Khety*, O. DeM 1013, section 23, the *Instruction of a Man for His Son*, O. Moskau 4478 + O. Berlin P 9026 verso, section 24, and the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 21.16-21.20.

<sup>901</sup> See, for instance, the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester IV*, = P. BM EA 10684 verso, vv. 2.2-2.3 (see no. 34), and the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 13, vv. 15.20 and 16.3-16.4 (see no. 45).

<sup>902</sup> See, for example, the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, maxim 28, vv. D418-D420.

<sup>903</sup> See again the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto vv. 21.14-21.16 (see no. 33), and also the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM 10474 recto, chapter 2, vv. 4.10-4.11 (see no. 38).

<sup>904</sup> See the *Instruction of Amenemhat I*, P. Millingen, vv. 1.5-2.4.

<sup>905</sup> See, for example, the *Instruction for the King Merikare*, Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, vv. 49-50 (see no. 21).

<sup>906</sup> Cf. the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, v. 20.11 (see no. 30), and the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 2, v. 4.10 (see no. 38).

<sup>907</sup> See references in Laisney (2014, 80 with n. 17) and cf. the *Instruction of Ankhsheshonqi*, P. BM 10508, v. 19.11.

<sup>908</sup> See, for instance, the *Instruction for the King Merikare*, P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, v. 23.

<sup>909</sup> As pointed out by Jansen-Winkel (2004, 67), this is a point where the discourses of the instructions and of the tomb biographies diverge (see also Vernus 2010a, 294-95n60).

<sup>910</sup> This contrasts with the tone of the response of Khonsuhotep to his father in the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 22.13-22.18.

Prisse, maxim 26, vv. D388-D393 (see no. 9), to annoy a superior who is busy<sup>911</sup> will lead to loss of income<sup>912</sup>. Similarly, in the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 22.7-22.10, to mismanage the relation with an angry superior will result in the pupil getting punished (v. 22.8). Considering these possible consequences, and the certainly intense competition among the members of the elite<sup>913</sup>, it is hardly surprising that the instructions counsel the pupil to avoid any conflict. To be sure, it may be difficult to know to what extent the instructions may be exaggerating or not, but their depiction of reality is certainly plausible.

In the Middle Kingdom instructions, the pupil is simply to avoid getting dragged into confrontations. Divine protection from conflict is attested, but only in relation to officials to the king<sup>914</sup>. In the *Instruction of Kairsu*, O. Ashmolean 1938.912, section 5 ('longue version'), vv. 5.5-5.6 (see no. 18.1), each god strikes the opposers of the king while he is in the palace. And in the *Instruction for the King Merikare*, P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, vv. 49-50 and 134-137. On vv. 49-50 (see no. 21) it is stated that: '(49) (*jw ntr rh.w h3k.w-jb.w* \* (50) *hwj ntr sdb=f hr znf* \*) God knows the estranged (lit. 'resented of *jb*-heart'), (50) and god implants impediments against him in the blood.' As argued above, by stating that god knows the estranged, the text probably means that god has the advantage, which the king does not have, of knowing beforehand who his opponents are and is able to take them down. Thus, the king is arguably protected by *ntr*. But in these two cases the protection seems to be expectable, given the office of the king which was more exposed to threats.

On vv. 134-137 (see no. 24) the divine protection is extended to the entire population:

(134) (*ts.n=f* (135) *k3rj h3=s[n r]mj.w=sn jw=f hr sdm*) He established (135) a chapel around them; when they weep he hears.

(*jrj.n=f n=sn hk3.w [m] stj ts.w* (136) *r tsj.t m [p]s[d] <n.j> s3-5*) For them he created rulers [from] the fragrance, a supporter (136) to support the back <of> the weak.

<sup>911</sup> Presumably this is the sense of *3tp.w*, 'overwhelmed' (lit. loaded).

<sup>912</sup> On this kind of extreme consequences see also Quack (2011, 65).

<sup>913</sup> On which see Quack 2011, 64-65.

<sup>914</sup> In the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, maxim 10, vv. D184-D185 (see no. 5), it is said that god (probably the king) protects (*hsf*) the official in his sleep. It is not clear what the official is protected from, if from any attack by a rival in the future or from loss of his property. The latter seems more probable (see also section 4.3 below).

(*jrj.n=f n=sn hk3.w r ʕh3.w r hsf ʕ* (137) *n(j) hpr.yt rs.wt [hr]=s grh mj hrw*) For them he made magic as a weapon to oppose the blow (lit. arm) (137) of what happens, [over] which one watches day and night.

(*sm3m.n=f h3k.w-jb mm(j) mj {h}hwj{=j}* (138) *z(j) z3=f hr sn=f jw ntr rh.w rn nb*) He killed the estranged among them, as a man (138) strikes his son because of his brother, for god knows every name.

With the exception of the last deed, namely the killing of the estranged (vv. 137-38), all other deeds are indirect ways of offering protection: chapels to allow communication with god<sup>915</sup> (vv. 134-135), rulers to balance power relations (vv. 135-136), and magic to allow people to fend for themselves (vv. 136-137). Assmann (2001, 173) argues that this ‘hymn to the beneficent rule of the god’ (172) is a response to the accusations against the creator god in the *Admonitions of Ipuwer*, which is certainly a possibility. After the crisis of the First Intermediate Period, this hymn would reassert the engagement of the creator god with his creation. But, unlike the instructions of the New Kingdom, in this passage god is not mobilised as a personal god. Instead, and with the exception mentioned, god empowers people to enable them to protect themselves. However, the willingness of god to hear the human afflictions brings this passage closer to the tone of the texts of the New Kingdom<sup>916</sup>, including the instructions, as pointed out by David Lorton (1993, 142-43): ‘In regard to the kind of personal suffering that governmental institutions do not address, people can rely on the god to hear; this can easily be taken as a reference to petitionary prayers, of which our earliest attested examples happen to be from the Ramesside period.’ Prayers, probably in chapels or booths adjacent to temples, are also mentioned in the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 17.1-17.4 (see no. 28).

It is only in the New Kingdom, that, besides being told to avoid confrontations and retaliations, the pupil is at times instructed to surrender the problem to god. Perhaps this is the result of an influence of the religious ambience of the time, of a lack of trust in state institutions, or possibly both reasons. To be sure, passages where god intervenes to balance

<sup>915</sup> Perhaps the personal god, as suggested by Assmann (1980, 31).

<sup>916</sup> The fragmentary passage of the *Instruction of a Man for His Son*, O. OIC 16999, vv. 15.5-15.7, also suggests a context of prayer: ‘([*jw=f g*]r hr mdw.t jr=f \* (15.6) r smj n ntr n(j) njw.t=f \* (15.7) dr nt[y wnn=f r=f m bt3.w] \*) He is silent under the words against him (15.6) to complain to the god of his town, as he is at fault’ (Fischer-Elfert 1999a, 163-64; 1999b, §§ 15x+5-15x+7; Dils 2014). As suggested by Fischer-Elfert (1999a, 164), the setting may be a petition to the god at an oracular consultation during a procession.

a power relation<sup>917</sup> can be construed as a protection of the most vulnerable person, but here only the cases of surrender of the pupil to god will be discussed.

#### 4.1.1 *Instruction of Ani*, vv. 20.7-20.12

This passage from P. Boulaq 4 recto, which is between a passage stressing the importance of knowing the writings (vv. 20.4-20.7) and prescriptions for the correct conduct during the procession of the god's statue (20.12-20.17) (see no. 31), reads as follows (see no. 30):

(20.7) (*jmj=k wts jb=k n p3 z(j) drjdrj r rdj.t* (20.8) *gmj{tw}=f r3=k {r=j} 3s smy sn.nw prj m r3=k wħm {=k}<=f> sw jr.y=k rk3y*) You should not reveal your *jb*-heart to the foreign man, to cause (20.8) him to learn your hasty speech, as a base speech is what comes out of your mouth. He repeats it, and you become an opponent.

(*whn* (20.9) *r(m)t ħr ns{.t}=f z3w tw jr.y=k jk3t (= 3k)*) A man is (20.9) ruined because of his tongue; beware of suffering ruin.

(*jr ħ.t r(m)t wsh <st> r snw.tj jw=st mħt <m> wšb.t nb.t*) **As for the belly of a man, <it> is broader** than the Two-Granaries. It is full <with> every answer.

(20.10) (*j:jrj=k stp t3 nfr {j} <r> dd<=s> {sw} jw t3 b{w}jn.t ddħ.t m ħ.t.t=k*) You should choose the good (answer) <to> say, while the bad (answer) is shut in your belly.

(*wšb.t nħt.t ħt.t <ħr> ħt.wjy*) An aggressive (lit. powerful) answer stands under the staff.

(20.11) (*j:dd m p3 ndm mr.j=tw*) Say the pleasant one which one loves.

(*jy[3] b[n] jw=k m-dj=j r (n)ħħ ħn wšb.t <n> p3 th3.j tw m grg m-s3*) Truly, you will not be here with me forever. Seek retribution <against> one who transgressed against you, but do not lie in the search for it.

(20.12) (*p3 ntr <ħr> wpj.t p3 m3t.j jw p3y=f š3.yt jwj <r> jt3y=f*) The god judges (or: acknowledges) the just when his fate comes to take him.

This passage may mean that god will give the disciple a fair judgment after death (Quack 1994, 175). Dils (2014) is unsure about who is taken by his 'fate', either the just or the transgressor, but both the context and the wording in P. Boulaq 4 recto indicate that it is the just. However, in P. Saqqara EES 75-S 45 = SCA 6319<sup>918</sup> another person is mentioned. Unfortunately, the name following *p3* is missing, but it could be *thj*, 'transgressor'. Vernus

<sup>917</sup> See, for instance, the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 20.17-21.3 (see no. 32), and the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 25 (see no. 54).

<sup>918</sup> See below.

(2010a, 226n80) argues that this passage is similar to v. 21.14 (see no. 33), in that the punishment of the aggressor would be left to the god. An anticipation of death as punishment of the transgressor through the manipulation of *š3.y* by god (which would entail that both the just and the wrongdoer would be taken by their fate, or that the judgment takes place after the two eventually pass away), as argued by Quaegebur (1975, 128) and Lichtheim (1976, 146n12), is unwarranted to Quack (1994, 175). Despite fragmentary, the version in P. Saqqara EES 75-S 45 = SCA 6319 (see no. 30.1) may lend further support to the similarity between this passage and v. 21.14 suggested by Vernus:

(20.11 = 3) (*y3 bn jw[=k {r}]d(j) (r)-nhḥ r ʿn [wšb n (20.11 = 4) p3 thj tw m]-grg*) Truly, [you] will not be here forever, in order to seek [retribution against (20.11 = 4) one who transgressed against you] by lying.

(*spr <n> (20.12 = 4) p3 ntr wpj p3 m3ʿ.tj p[3] [...] [jw p3y=f (20.12 = 5) š3y j]wj r jt3=f*) Plead <to> (20.12 = 4) the god, who judges the just and t[he] [...], [when his (20.12 = 5) fate] comes to take him.

In this version it seems less certain the pupil would plead to the god to receive a fair afterlife judgment, and more probable that he is asking for that judgment to the transgressor. Furthermore, the wording in this version is closer to the wording on v. 21.14 in P. Boulaq 4 recto – *wḥm=k sw m-mn.t n p3 ntr*, ‘You should denounce (lit. repeat) him daily to the god’ (see no. 33) – and in P. Deir el-Medina 1 – *wḥm sw [n] p3 ntr smj sw m-mn.t n ntr šps.j*, ‘Denounce (lit. repeat) him [to] the god, report him daily to the noble god’ (v. 21.14 = 8.3) (Quack 1994, 138-39, 320-21; Dils 2014), which suggests Vernus may be accurate in positing a common theme for vv. 20.12 and 21.14.

#### 4.1.2 *Instruction of Ani, vv. 21.14-21.16*

Between P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 21.10-21.13, which counsel the pupil to have good manners at the house of another man, and vv. 21.16-21.20, which caution the pupil against getting involved with brawls in order to avoid getting arrested by association, the passage on vv. 21.14-21.16 instructs the pupil on how to proceed when someone injures him. The text from P. Boulaq 4 recto (see no. 33) reads:

(21.14) (*{bw} m-jrj shsh <r> ph.ww p3 {ph.tj} ph tw jmm sw n p3 ntr whm=k sw m-mn.t n p3 ntr*  
 (21.15) *jw dw3.ww mj.tj p3-h3rw*) Do not rush <to> attack the one who attacked you. Leave him to the god.  
 You should denounce (lit. repeat) him daily to the god, (21.15) because tomorrow is like today.

(*j:jrj=k ptrj p3 jrj{=j} p3 ntr jw* (21.16) *ht3=f p3 ht3 tw*) When he tears the one who tore you, (21.16) you will see what the god did.

The text is unspecific about the circumstances and nature of the attack on the pupil, and about the person who attacks him. It is not clear whether it is a colleague, a superior, a subordinate, or some other acquaintance. Since on vv. 15.12-15.16 (see no. 26) the pupil is told not to call his personal god against the superior who criticised him, and on vv. 22.7-22.10 the text recommends a different approach to deal with an angry superior, it is unlikely that the text here refers to a superior. As in the previous passage, the offense against the pupil has already been committed. If the pupil were to retaliate by himself, he would engage in a conflict, the consequences of which could be serious, as mentioned above. In order to safeguard the pupil from that outcome, god is here mobilised to retribute in the pupil's stead<sup>919</sup>. Besides being safer for the pupil, since he does not get directly involved, the retribution appears to be juster, as it follows the talionic principle of retributing in the exact same manner<sup>920</sup>.

#### 4.1.3 *Instruction of Amenemope, chapters 21 and 22*

These two passages, which are at the beginning of *Amenemope's* second part<sup>921</sup>, are addressed together because vv. 22.5-22.8 from chapter 21 are repeated verbatim in chapter 22, vv. 23.8-23.11. The texts from P. BM EA 10474 recto (see no. 51 and no. 52) read as follows:

(21.21) (*hw.t mh-21.t*) **Chapter 21.**

(22.1) (*m-jrj dd gmj n=j hr(.j) nht* (22.2) *jw th3=j z(j) m n.jwt=k*) Do not say: 'Find me a high superior', (22.2) because I wronged a man in your city.

<sup>919</sup> Quack (1994, 180) points out that requesting god to retribute the wrongs one has suffered is characteristic of the personal piety discourse.

<sup>920</sup> For parallels in personal piety texts see Quack (1994, 181 with references).

<sup>921</sup> Between chapters 21 and 29 (Laisney 2007, 9; 2009, 3).

(22.3) (*m-jrj dd gmj n=j st3* (22.4) *jw th3=j msdj=j*) Do not say: 'Find me a protector', (22.4) because I wronged the one I hate.

(22.5) (*hr-r3-<sup>c</sup> bw rh=k shr.w n(jw) ntr* (22.6) *tm=k tm <n> dw3w*) In fact, you do not know the plans of god, (22.6) so you do not have to worry [lit. lower your eyes] <because of> tomorrow.

(22.7) (*hmsj n=k r <sup>c</sup>.wj p3 ntr* (22.8) *r p3yw=k gr hdb=w*) Sit on the arms of the god, (22.8) and your silence will overthrow them.

(22.9) (*jr msh jw=f h<sup>c</sup>3 <m> njs* (22.10) *hr jsj šfj.t=f*) As for a crocodile who is deprived <of> cry, (22.10) its respect is long established.

(22.11) (*m-jrj šww h.t=k n-m t3-tmm* (22.12) *mtw=k h<sup>d</sup>j p3yw=k nrj{.t}*) Do not empty your belly before everyone (22.12) to ruin the respect for you.

(22.13) (*m-jrj phr md.wt=k n kwy* (22.14) *mtw=k sns.tj n=k prj-jb*) Do not make your words circle among others, (22.14) nor fraternise with the impetuous.

(22.15) (*3h z(j) jw=f <h3p> smj=f m h.t=f* (22.16) *r p3 dd sw m h<sup>d</sup>*) It is better a man who <hides> his complaint in his belly, (22.16) than one who expresses it unfavourably.

(22.17) (*bw jrj=tw shsh r ph p3 mn<sup>h</sup>* (22.18) *bw jrj=tw km3m r h<sup>d</sup>j.t=f*) One cannot hurry to achieve success, (22.18), one cannot jump to spoil it.

(22.19) (***hw.t mh-22.t***) **Chapter 22.**

(22.20) (*m-jrj štm{.t} n p3yw=k jr.j tttt* (22.21) *mtw=k <dj> dd=f hnw=f (n.j) h3.tjw*) Do not insult your quarrel partner, (22.1) but cause him to say his speech (of) the *h3.tj*-heart.

(22.22) (*m-jrj pwy r <sup>c</sup>k n-hr=f* (23.1) *jw bn m33=k jrj.n=f*) Do not rush (lit. fly) to come before him, (23.1) when you cannot see what he did.

(23.2) (*j:jrj.w=k sj33 h3.t m n3y=f wšb(.t)* (23.3) *mtw=k srfy jyj ph(.wj)=k*) It is first his statement that you should examine, (23.3) and stay quiet to achieve your end.

(23.4) (*h3<sup>c</sup> sj n-hr=f jrj=f šwj h.t=f* (23.5) *rh<sup>h</sup> kdj gmj.tw=f*) Leave him to himself so that he speaks his mind (lit. empties his belly), (23.5) one who knows to remain silent (lit. to sleep) will be respected (lit. recognised).

(23.6) (*t3j rd.wy=f m-jrj h<sup>d</sup>j=f* (23.7) *snd sw m-jrj mkh3=f*) Stay with him, but do not injure him, (23.7) respect him, and do not underestimate him.

(23.8) (*hr-r3-<sup>c</sup> bw rh=k shr.w n(jw) ntr* (23.9) *tm=k tm <n> dw3w*) In fact, you do not know the plans of god, (23.9) so you do not have to worry [lit. lower your eyes] <because of> tomorrow.

(23.10) (*hmsj n=k r <sup>c</sup>.wj p3 ntr* (23.11) *r p<3y>=k gr hdb=w*) Sit on the arms of the god, (23.11) and your silence will overthrow them.

Chapter 21 seems to deal with a conflict in which the pupil has sought to retaliate by himself (vv. 22.1-22.4), and which is not yet over (vv. 22.11-22.18). Especially vv. 22.11-22.18 seem to express anxiety at getting back at the offending party, something that will not

work, probably because the pupil will come off as hot-tempered or because the adversary is too powerful (afterall the pupil needs to find a protector).

In chapter 22 conflict does not yet seem to have erupted, as the pupil may still try to diffuse the antagonism by making his opponent speak from his *ḥ3-tj*-heart (vv. 22.20-22.21). The pupil is instructed to assess the nature of his adversary<sup>922</sup> (vv. 22.22-23.5), with the possibility that he will eventually come to the realisation that his adversary may be a threat to him (v. 23.7).

It is not entirely clear what the setting of the two chapters is. Chapter 21 may be set at a court, but that is hardly the case of chapter 22. At any rate, both chapters concern two adversaries that, in some unspecified way, are a threat to the pupil, and may be more powerful than him. It is in this context that vv. 22.5-22.8 and 23.8-23.11 are mobilised, even if at different positions within their respective chapters. Although the pupil cannot control what will happen in the future, he is to rely on god and allow him to take care of his opponents by being quiet<sup>923</sup> (i.e., detached from the situation), a process one may also consider to be one of empowerment through disempowerment<sup>924</sup>, in the sense that, by disempowering himself by refraining from acting, the pupil is empowered by the god's action in his stead. The implication of doing the opposite is that, by taking matters into his own hands, the pupil will preclude divine assistance<sup>925</sup>.

As pointed out by Laisney (2007, 198), it is not clear who the referent of the suffix pronoun =*w* on vv. 22.8 and 23.11 is, since the preceding *ṛ.wy* is a dual and the other closest plural is *šhr.w* on v. 22.5. In his comment to v. 22.8, Dils (2014) suggests it refers either to the arms of the god or to the adversaries on vv. 22.2 and 22.4. The lack of a clear referent combined with the verbatim repetition of the quatrain in two sequential chapters addressing the topic of divine protection may suggest another interpretation: this quatrain, while inserted in the two chapters, does not refer to anyone in particular, but to any possible adversary the pupil may encounter. Like a Psalm or a *mantra*, especially as it is used

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<sup>922</sup> Compare with the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, maxim 33 (see no. 10).

<sup>923</sup> On the category of quietism, derived from the Christian mysticism, see, for instance, Faure (2015, 424-28).

<sup>924</sup> On disempowerment see Asad (2000, 35-36).

<sup>925</sup> Compare with Psalms 37:5-37:7: '(37:5) Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him, and he will act. / (37:6) He will make your vindication shine like the light, and the justice of your cause like the noonday. / (37:7) Be still before the Lord, and wait patiently for him; do not fret over those who prosper in their way, over those who carry out evil devices' (Coogan 2010, 803).



currently in the West<sup>926</sup>, this quatrain may have been intended to be used as a short prayer for difficult times, and perhaps especially for times when one might be about to give in to the confrontation. Even if this was not the case, these four verses are probably the most explicit attestation in the instructions of the Middle and New Kingdoms of a quietist surrender to god.

#### 4.2 Protection from the uncertainty of the future

According to Brunner (1963, 110-11), the quatrain from the two chapters of *Amenemope* just discussed signal a departure, to some extent, from the previous instructions, inasmuch as man is more dependent on the free will of god, whereas in the previous texts god was associated with the principle of Ma'at. As argued by Adams (2008, 48), however, uncertainty about the future was also mobilised in earlier instructions<sup>927</sup>. But the novelty of the New Kingdom instructions is that god is mobilised in relation with the uncertainty towards the future, an innovation that is most probably owed to the personal piety discourse, since this association is common there (Shirun-Grumach 1991, 242nXIX.13-a) with references).

Besides the two chapters just discussed, this idea is expressed in two passages, one from the *The Prohibitions*, and the other from the *Instruction of Amenemope*. *The Prohibitions* are a collection of aphorisms<sup>928</sup> that, although not sequentially, form different thematic groupings<sup>929</sup> (Hagen 2005, 153). The passage in O. Petrie 11 = UC 39614 recto, v. A9 (see no. 37) reads:

(*jmj=k hr=k m hrw pn r dw3w bw jy.f=nn sf mj p3-hrw hr-ε.wj ntr*) You should not prepare today for tomorrow when it has not yet come, as yesterday is not like today upon the arms of god.

<sup>926</sup> See Gengnagel (2006, 1144).

<sup>927</sup> Adams cites the *Instruction for Kagemni*, P. Prisse, v. 2.2 (see no. 3), and the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, maxim 22, v. D343 (see no. 8). Hagen (2005, 146) also cites the *Eloquent Peasant*, P. Amherst 1 + P. Berlin 3023 (= B1), v. 214.

<sup>928</sup> Possibly composed in the Nineteenth Dynasty (see Hagen 2005, 150).

<sup>929</sup> For instance, uncertainty about the future is addressed, in different parts of the text, in O. Petrie 11 = UC 39614 recto, v. A9, and in O. Petrie 11 = UC 39614 verso, vv. C5-C6.

And the passage from the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 18 (see no. 49), runs as follows:

(19.10) (*ḥw.t mh-18.t*) **Chapter 18.**

(19.11) (*m-jrj sdr tw jw=k (hr) ḥry dw3.w*) Do not sleep with dread of tomorrow.

(19.12) (*ḥd-t3 dw3.w mj-jḥ*) In the morning (lit. the earth brightens), how is tomorrow?

(19.13) (*p3 z(j) (hr) ḥm dw3.w mj-jḥ*) Man ignores how tomorrow will be.

(19.14) (*wn(n) p3 ntr m n3y=f mnḥ*) (19.15) (*jw p3 z(j) m n3y=f wh3*) While the god is in his effectiveness, (19.15) man is in his failure.

(19.16) (*rwj3.tj n3 mdw(.t).j:dd n3 r(m)t*) (19.17) (*rwj3.tw n3 jrj.y p3 ntr*) The words people say are set to one side, (19.17) what the god does is set to another side.

(19.18) (*m-jrj dd mcn (m)-djw=(j) b3.w*) (19.19) (*mtw=k msp r wh3ḥ ḥnwnn*) Do not say: 'I have no faults', (19.19) while you endeavour to seek after trouble.

(19.20) (*jr p3 b3.w n(.j)-s(w) p3 ntr*) (19.20) (*sw ḥtm m dbc=f*) As for wrongdoing, it belongs to the god, (19.21) it is sealed with his finger.

(19.22) (*mcn mnḥ m-dr.t p3 ntr*) (19.23) (*hr mcn wh3 m-b3ḥ=f*) There is no success in the hand of the god, (19.23) and there is no failure before him.

(20.1) (*jr st3=f sw r wh3ḥ p3 mnḥ*) (20.2) (*km 3.t ḥdj=f sw*) If one strives to seek success, (20.2) a while later he will harm himself.

(20.3) (*dns tw m jb=k smn ḥ3.tj=k*) (20.4) (*m-jrj jrj.y ḥm(w) n ns{.t}=k*) Control your *jb*-heart, bolster your *ḥ3.tj*-heart, (20.4) and do not steer with your tongue.

(20.5) (*jr ns{.t} n(.j) r(m)t ḥm(w) n(.j) jm(w)*) (20.6) (*nb-r-dr p3y=f jr.j-ḥ3.t*) A man's tongue is the rudder of a boat, (20.6) the Lord of All is its pilot.

It is in the passage from *Amenemope* that the human limitation concerning knowledge of the future is associated with fear. This is probably related with the social and economic problems of the New Kingdom, although one may ask whether the replacement of the anxiety about the future with the knowledge that a god is responsible for what will happen in the future is a universal phenomenon<sup>930</sup>. One may also ask whether this kind of reliance on a god was relatively consistent throughout Egyptian history or whether it peaked at certain circumstances. Across the ancient Near East the tendency appears to have been mostly to ascribe to the gods what one could not control (see Ramos 2011, 16-17).

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<sup>930</sup> This question may be made about modern spirituality. In certain traditions, like Stoicism and Buddhism, another technique may be used: to simply accept that one has no control over the future.

A feature that is not explicit in the passage from *The Prohibitions*, but which becomes clear in chapter 18, chapter 21, and chapter 22 from *Amenemope*, is that god not only is in charge of what will happen, but is also interested in providing the best outcome. This is evident in the quatrain on vv. 22.5-22.8 and 23.8-23.11, and on vv. 19.14-19.15 and 20.5-20.6. About the much later P. Vienna D 12006, v. 2.5<sup>931</sup>, Laisney (2014, 79) remarks that: ‘ce verset sert à encourager une personne en difficulté’. This dimension of encouragement is certainly also applicable to the passages from *The Prohibitions* and from *Amenemope*.

### 4.3 Protection from need and want

Contrarily to the previous two topics, which were represented especially in the New Kingdom instructions, and with few attestations, this topic, while attested in New Kingdom Instructions, is especially dominant in the Middle Kingdom instructions, albeit almost exclusively in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*.

Although the gift and counter-gift economy<sup>932</sup> is attested in the instructions<sup>933</sup>, there are several passages in which god provides for the needs of the pupil outside that *do ut des* framework. In one passage, however, this should be asked in a prayer<sup>934</sup>. Generally, god provides (surplus) wealth<sup>935</sup> or (basic) goods<sup>936</sup> that either befits one’s social position or warrants one’s subsistence. But the god may also give a position<sup>937</sup>, and offspring<sup>938</sup>.

<sup>931</sup> ‘(m-jr sbk-(n)-h3tj=[t j],jr t3j=t [šf3(.t) hb] w3t hrw w3t p3j=f [jrj]) Do not be fainthearted if your [reputation is demeaned]. Different is one day, different is its [companion]’ (Vittmann 2014; Laisney 2014, 77). Laisney only translates and comments the second part of the verse.

<sup>932</sup> On which see Gudeman (2001, 80-90).

<sup>933</sup> See the *Instruction of Merikare*, P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, v. 129, and the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*, = P. BM EA 10684 verso, v. 4.11 (see no. 35).

<sup>934</sup> See the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 7, vv. 10.12-10.13: ‘(10.12) (j:jj{.tw}=k sm3<sup>c</sup> n p3 jdn jw=f(hr) wbn (10.13) (hr)-dd jmm n=j wd3 snb) It is when he rises that you should pray (lit. make yourself right) to the Aten, (10.13) saying “give me safety (or: prosperity) and health”’ (see no. 42).

<sup>935</sup> See, for instance, *The Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, maxim 30, v. D434.

<sup>936</sup> See, for example, the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, maxim 26, v. D393: ‘(dd k3.w pw hn<sup>c</sup> ntr) He (= the pupil’s superior) is one who gives nourishment together with god’ (see no. 9).

<sup>937</sup> The *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, maxim 13, v. D229, seems to be the only attestation of this: ‘(D229) (jn ntr shnt s.t) It is god who promotes a position’ (see no. 7).

<sup>938</sup> Possibly the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, maxim 9, vv. D161-D162. See also the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 19.8-19.9: ‘(19.8) (dj= {j} ntr=kwj hpr n=k (19.9) ms.w) May your god cause that children (19.9) are granted (lit. come) to you’ (see no. 29).

Exceptionally, the range of what god gives is greatly extended in the *Instruction for the King Merikare*, in a section that may be considered a hymn<sup>939</sup> (Assmann 2001, 172).

With the possible exception from *Merikare*, it is not entirely clear whether the instructions reflect a wide assumption that god provides the needs to each person, and who would receive from god, if any person or only specific persons. The fact that several passages make reference to the divine gifts may suggest that any person could receive goods from god. Why the instructions would mobilise god in this role may be partly answered by maxim 6 of the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* (see no. 4):

(D99) (*jmj=k jrj hr m r(m)t.w*) **May you not scheme against people!**

(D100) (*hsf ntr m-mj.tt*) God opposes with the same.

(D101) (*jw z(j) dd=f nh=(j) jm*) A man says: ‘(I) want to live of that!’

(D102) (*jw=f swj=f m t3 n tp-r3*) But is empty of bread because of a sentence.

(D103) (*jw z(j) dd=f wsr=(j)*) A man says: ‘(I) want to be powerful!’

(D107) (*jw=f dd=f shj=j r=j sj3.t(j)=j*) He says: ‘I will snatch for me whatever I see!’

(D111) (*jw z(j) dd=f hwt<f>= {f}= (j) ky*) A man says: ‘I will rob another!’

(D112) (*jw=f ph=f rdj.t=f n hm.n=f*) But he ends up giving to one he did not know.

(D115) (*n p3 hr n(j) r(m)t.w hpr*) Never has a people’s scheme come to fruition.

(D116) (*wd.t ntr pw hpr.t*) What comes to being is that which god decrees.

(D117) (*k3j nh m-hnw hr.t* (D118) *jjj.y dd.t=sn ds j<r.j>*) Think of living within contentment, (D118) so that what they give comes by itself.

The author of this instruction describes an avid and craving man that is willing to hurt and harm others through robbery in order to guarantee his own subsistence (vv. D99-D111). In order to persuade his audience from engaging in such activities, the author mobilises four deterrents: 1) punishment sanctioned by god (vv. D100, D102, D112); 2) the act-consequence nexus (*Tun-Ergehen-Zusammenhang*)<sup>940</sup>; 3) inability to counteract the divine agency (vv. D115-D116); and 4) divine providence (vv. D117-D118).

Whether the latter deterrent can be considered *sensu stricto* divine providence is, however, uncertain due to the use of the personal suffix pronoun =*sn*, ‘they’. As Frank Miosi (1982, 80) argues, this ‘they’ do not have to be necessarily the gods, but could,

<sup>939</sup> Besides the created world, the god gives to people a chapel, rulers, and magic (P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, vv. 130-138) (see no. 24).

<sup>940</sup> Three parts of this model are detectable: vv. D99-D100, D101-D102, and D103-D112.

instead, be ancestors or other agents. The use of =sn to refer to an institution is also attested, for instance in the *Instruction of Merikare*<sup>941</sup>. While Miosi's call to caution is to be welcomed, the fact that in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep ntr* is mentioned several times as the providing agent (e.g., P. Prisse, maxim 9, vv. D161-D162), thus implying that this is a divine role, can support the interpretation that, at least in this particular passage, =sn refers to divine agents.

But certainly one may ask why the noun *ntr* is left mostly in the singular, while the third person suffix pronoun sometimes shifts to the plural. Unless *ntr* has a collective sense in these uses, akin to our modern use of *man* to refer to the whole mankind<sup>942</sup>, this shift in persons could indeed support Miosi's argument that, in some cases, the referent needs not be the same. Nonetheless, it can also be two distinct ways of referring to the divine in order, perhaps, to bring literary fluidity and variation<sup>943</sup>.

It was stated above that this kind of divine providence generally falls outside a contractual relationship between man and deity. However, it does seem to require human action, albeit a passive one. The action required is a quietist surrender, through which the person entrusts her subsistence to the agents referred to as =sn, thus avoiding a transgression against the deity and benefiting from her protection (cf. Miosi 1982, 82).

Another instance where divine providence seems to be accessed through quietism is to be found in chapter 6 of the *Instruction of Amenemope* (see no. 41):

(7.11) (*hw.t mh-6.t*) Chapter 6.

(7.12) (*m-jrj rmnj wd.y hr t(3)š.jw n(jw) 3h.wt* (7.13) *mtw=k tfjw h3w n(j) nwh*) Do not displace a marker on the boundaries of the fields, (7.13) nor disturb the place (lit. neighbourhood) of the (measuring) rope.

<sup>941</sup> '(53) (*d3d3.t wd<sup>c</sup> s3r.yw \* rh.n=k tm=sn sfn \* hrw pf n(j) wd<sup>c</sup> m3(r) \**) The (divine) tribunal, which judges the needy (= deceased), you know they are not merciful on this day of judging the wretch' (Dils 2014).

<sup>942</sup> Michael V. Fox makes such an argument. Comparing the reference to *ntr* in the Egyptian instructions with the frequent mentions of the *wise man* in the biblical book of *Proverbs*, he states that (1980, 125-26): 'This does not mean that the authors believed in a single Wise Man, a transcendent Wise Man hidden behind all concrete wise men, but it does show that they could abstract and delineate a single role within the complex of social relations. The desire to discover simple structures behind the multiplicity of phenomena is a basic drive of wisdom literature. It is this drive that gives wisdom literature its abstract, transtemporal character, and it is this that underlies the preference for the term (*p3*) *ntr*, which unites the multiplicity of gods without obviating their individuality.'

<sup>943</sup> On this topic of the personal pronouns applied to gods see also Ramos (2010, 238-43).

(7.14) (*m-jrj snk.ty r mh 1 n(.j) 3h.t* (7.15) *mtw=k h3d t(3)š.jw n(.jw) h3rj(.t)*) Do not covet one cubit (= portion?) of arable field, (7.15) nor tamper with the boundaries of a widow.

(7.16) (*dnm n(.j) h3b hb3 n p3 ħ<sup>c</sup>(.w)* (7.17) *p3 ħ<sup>c</sup>g3jw=k sw n sh.wt*) A furrow of labour is a shortening of the lifetime, (7.17) what you took dishonestly belongs to the fields.

(7.18) (*wn(n)=f sht m ħ<sup>c</sup>nh.yw n ħ<sup>c</sup>d3* (7.19) *jw=f sph n-m b3.w n(.j) j<sup>c</sup>h*) If he acquires through false oaths (lit. through oaths of falsehood), (7.19) he will be caught (lit. lassoed) by the wrath of the Moon (= Thoth).

(8.1) (*j:jrj=k sj33 r p3 jry sw hr-tp t3*) You will recognise the one who did this on earth:

(8.2) (*jw=f(m) ħnwty n kb.w (= gb)*) he is a coveter of the weak;

(8.3) (*jw=f(m) ħf(t.y) n whny m-ħ<sup>c</sup>.t=k* (8.4) *jw nħm ħ<sup>c</sup>nh m jr.t=f*) he is an enemy capable of destroying your body, (8.4) life was taken from his eye;

(8.5) (*jw p3y=f pr(m) ħff(t.j) n p3 dmj*) his house is an enemy of (lit. for) the town;

(8.6) (*jw n3yw=f š<sup>c</sup>3.w wg3p.w*) **his silos/granaries were destroyed;**

(8.7) (*jw=w t<sup>c</sup>j 3h.t=f m-dr.t ms.wy=f* (8.8) *dj.tw p3y=f nkt n ky*) his property is taken from his children (8.8) so that it is given to another.

(8.9) (*z3w tw r h3d tš.jw n(.jw) 3h.wt* (8.10) *tm ħry(.t) jn.tw=k*) Beware of tampering with the boundaries of the fields (8.10) so that a terror does not fetch you.

(8.11) (*tw=tw shtp ntr n-m b3.w n(.j) nb* (8.12) *wpj tš.jw n(.jw) 3h.w(t)*) One appeases god through the wrath of the Lord, (8.12) who divided the boundaries of the fields.

(8.13) (*3b r=k swd3 ħ<sup>c</sup>.t=k* (8.14) *z3w tw r nb-r-dr*) Desire then to keep your body sound, (8.14) and beware of the Lord of All.

(8.15) (*m-jrj hbhb dnm n(.j) ky* (8.16) *3h n=k wd3 ħr=sn*) Do not tread on the furrow of labour of another, (8.16) it is better for you to be safe from them.

(8.17) (*sk3 m sh.wt gmj=k ħr.wt=k* (8.18) *šzp=k sn{n.ty}<.w> n(.y) htjw(m)-ħ<sup>c</sup>.t=k*) Plough the fields and you shall find your means of subsistence, (8.18) and you shall collect the bread of your own threshing floor.

(8.19) (*3h jp.t jw dj s(j) n=k p3 ntr* (8.20) *r 5000 m gns*) Better is a measure that the god has given you, (8.20) than 5000 through violence.

(9.1) (*bw jrj=w jrj hrw <m> mħr š<sup>c</sup>3* (9.2) *bw jrj=w jrj ħwj n p3 ħ<sup>c</sup>sjw*) They (= 5000 measures) do not spend (lit. make) a day <in> the barn and/or storehouse, (9.2) they do not produce food for the beer jug.

(9.3) (*km 3.t p3y=w ħ<sup>c</sup>(.w) n t3 šn(w).tj*) A short while is the time they spend in the storehouse (lit. the completion of a moment is their lifetime in the storehouse).

(9.4) (*ħd t3 jw=w df3.w*) when morning comes (lit. the earth brightens) they will have sunk/flown away.

(9.5) (*3h p3 nmħ m-dr.t p3 ntr* (9.6) *r wsr.w m wd3*) Better is poverty from the hand of the god, (9.6) than wealth in the storehouse.

(9.7) (*3h p3w.tj{w} jw h3.tj ndm* (9.8) *r wsr.w hr šnn*) Better is offering bread when the *h3.tj*-heart is content, (9.8) than riches with worrying.

In this chapter the author of the instruction also condemns the fraudulent acquisition of wealth, namely by changing the fields' boundary markers, which were effaced after the flood, in order to get a bigger portion of arable field. Similar devices to the ones in *Ptahhotep*'s maxim 6 are employed in this chapter: there is emphasis on divine punishment<sup>944</sup>, on the principle of the *Tun-Ergehen-Zusammenhang* (vv. 7.16, 7.18-7.19, 8.1-8.8, 8.9-8.10, 8.17-8.18), and on divine providence (vv. 8.19-8.20), although the text contemplates the possibility of poverty<sup>945</sup>. The providence seems to come in the form of the pupil's own honest work (vv. 8.17-8.19).

As in *Ptahhotep*'s maxim 6, there is also in this chapter an appeal to contentment with what one has: on vv. 8.19-8.20, *Amenemope* states that what god gave is better than what can be illicitly acquired, and on vv. 9.5-9.6 and especially 9.7-9.8 the author asserts that it is better to accept poverty from god than to have (stolen) riches with constant worrying about losing them. The same point is made in chapter 7, with an important addition:

(10.6) (*m-jrj ršj n=k <n> wsr.w m-ḥwr<sup>c</sup>* (10.7) *mtw=k jhm n nmḥ*) Do not rejoice because of riches (obtained) by thievery (lit. with violence), (10.7) nor complain because of poverty.

(10.8) (*jr sty{.w} ḥrp šm n-ḥr=f* (10.9) *hr w3ḥ sw t3yw=f dr.t*) As for a chief-archer who (blindly) pushes forward, (10.9) his unit (lit. handful) deserts him.

(10.10) (*sk.tj{=k} n(jt) ḥwn.tj h3<sup>c</sup>.tw <m> h3y(.t)* (10.11) *jw kr n(j) gr <m> m3<sup>c</sup>.w*) The ship of the greedy is abandoned <in> the mud, (10.11) while the skiff of the silent man is <under> (favourable) wind.

(10.12) (*j:jrj{.tw}=k sm3<sup>c</sup> n p3 jdn jw=f (hr) wbn* (10.13) (*hr*)-*dd jmm n=j wd3 snb*) It is when he rises that you should pray (lit. make yourself right) to the Aten, (10.13) saying 'give me safety (or: prosperity) and health'.

(10.14) (*dj=f n=k hr.wt=k n p3 ḥnḥ* (10.15) *jw=k wd3.tw r ḥry(.t)*) May he give you your lifelong sustenance, (10.14) while you are safe from a terror.

<sup>944</sup> See the discussion above in chapter 3, subsection 3.1.2.3.

<sup>945</sup> Accepting this is the sense of the passage, it suggests that divine providence may be reversed or not include everyone.

Besides accepting his lot, the pupil is also counselled to pray, no doubt daily, in order to have the deity granting him his basic needs. This passage introduces the need to pray in order to receive gifts from god, which begs the question as to whether, in *Amenemope*, divine providence was automatic, as it were, was dependent on the relation with god, quite possibly one's personal god, or a mixture of both. The idea that the cultivation of a relation with one's personal god may be necessary is explicit in the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*, = P. BM EA 10684 verso, a text that has thematic similarities with *Amenemope*<sup>946</sup>: '(4.10) (*dw3.ww ntr{r}=k nn jr.t 3b.w ḥsj{.tw}=f <tw> r<sup>c</sup>-nb wd{n}=f ks.w=k jm.j ḥ<sup>c</sup>{.t}.w=k r t3 n(.j) hr.j(t)-ntr*) Praise your god without cessation so that he will favour <you> everyday and assign your bones, which are in your body, to the land of the necropolis' (see no. 35).

In a way similar to the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, the author of the *Instruction of Amenemope* posits a positive expectation on divine providence: as long as audiences conform to their income and accept what god gives them, they should not be found wanting. Irene Grumach (1972, 63) compares v. 8.17 from chapter 6 and v. 10.14 from chapter 7 with the beginning of the ninth maxim of the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, and concludes that, whereas *Ptahhotep* highlights wealth as a gift from god, in *Amenemope* it is still a divine gift but as the means of sustenance aimed at those who are humbler.

It is also interesting to establish a comparison between the 'poor man', *nmḥ*, in *Amenemope*<sup>947</sup> and in texts relating to the personal piety of the Ramesside Period. A couple of passages should suffice to exemplify the latter: 1) in the stela of Nebre from the reign of Ramesses II (Berlin 20377), Amun is called the one *jj ḥr ḥrw nmḥ*, 'who comes at the cry of the poor' (v. 4) (Kitchen 1999, 285-87); and 2) in a graffito inscribed in the temple built by Tuthmosis III at Deir el-Bahri and dating from the reign of Ramesses V, it is said of Amun: '(7) (*jr dj=k dr.t=k {n} m-dr.t p3 ḥzj*), When you set your hand upon the weak, / (*k3 dj=k sni=f p3 tnr*) then you enable him to rival the strong. / (*jr dj=k jr.t=k m-dj p3 nmḥ.w*) When you set your eye (8) upon the poor man, / (*k3 dj=k sni=<f> p3 wsr*) then you enable <him> to rival the rich/powerful' (vv. 7-8) (Kitchen 1999, 307-309). According to the interpretation by Pascal Vernus (2003b, 142-43), in the pious texts of this period the term

<sup>946</sup> Especially in what concerns the protection of the poor (see vv. 2.2-2.4 (see no. 34)).

<sup>947</sup> The adjective 'poor' is attested in chapter 13, v. 16.5 (see no. 45). The verb *nmḥ* is attested in chapter 26, v. 25.12. And the noun poverty is attested in chapter, v. 9.5 (see no. 41), and in chapter 7, v. 10.7 (see no. 42).



*nmḥ* does not refer to actual poverty, but rather to a division of status within the Egyptian elite – which ultimately authored the personal piety texts. He further argues that the declaration of poverty had become a convention for requests (2003b, 143): ‘Whether someone was requesting a favor from a powerful individual in general or a deity in particular, humility was a requisite. A proclamation of impoverishment, even if fictitious, signified total self-abandonment in the face of omnipotence.’ If Vernus’s interpretation is correct, then it is possible that *Amenemope* has drawn on this context in using the term. But in *Amenemope* it forms a dialectic between the poor who accepts his condition and what god gives him<sup>948</sup>, on the one hand, and the poor who transgresses against god<sup>949</sup>, on the other.

Although god is not always mentioned in situations of fraudulent or otherwise illegal and immoral acquisition of wealth/subsistence means<sup>950</sup>, it is arguable, given the didactic and anthropocentric nature of the instructions (Adams 2008, 50), that this was one domain in which the authors could mobilise god. These two phenomena, fraud and wrongful acquisition of goods, are highly prejudicial to societies, either with a complex social hierarchy and bureaucratic system or with a less stratified and bureaucratized organisation, since they hamper trust among individuals and of individuals in institutions, and stimulate social fragmentation (this is why Jan Assmann (2006a, 91) refers to Ma’at as *konnektive Gerechtigkeit*). Some individuals and certain situations seem more prone to fraud and theft, and it is here that divine providence comes into play: the deity is evoked as a buffer against destructive, and disconnective human drives and impulses, such as avidity, by suppressing the reason for stealing or committing fraud. In a fatherly, but also paternalistic and heteronomic manner the message is that there is no need to steal because god will provide what is necessary or befitting one’s social position. In this way, god is mobilised as a helper in the maintenance of social cohesion.

Maxim 10 of the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse (see no. 5), nuances further the mechanisms of divine providence:

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<sup>948</sup> See vv. 8.17-8.19, 9.5-9.6, 10.7 in connection with 10.12-10.14.

<sup>949</sup> See, for instance, vv. 8.9-8.10.

<sup>950</sup> See, for instance, the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, maxim 19 (on avoiding greed), and the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapters 11 (advice against coveting the goods of the poor) and 12 (admonition against coveting the wealth of an official).

(D175) (*jr hzj=k šms z(j) jkr*) **If you are weak, follow a successful man.**

(D176) (*nfr šsm=k nb hr ntr* (D177) *m rh.n=k nds.w hnt.w*) All your conduct will be good before god, (D177) when you have known poor people before.

(D178) (*jmj=k ʿzj jb=k r=f* (D179) *hr rh.t.n=k jm=f hnt.w*) May you not be arrogant in relation to him, (D179) because of what you have learned about him before.

(D180) (*snd n=f hft hpr.t n=f* (D181) *n jyj.y js h.t ds*) Respect him in accordance to what has happened to him, (D181) as things do not come of their own accord.

(D182) (*hp=sn pw n mrr.w=sn*) It is their law for those they love.

(D183) (*jr ttf jw s3k.n=f ds* (D184) *jn ntr jrj jkr=f* (D185) *hsf=f hr=f jw=f sdr(.w)*) As for the inundation, he has gathered (it) himself, (D184) (but) it is the god who makes his success, (D185) and protects him (or: it (= the success)) while he sleeps.

In this maxim a scenario is given where the disciple is seemingly of a lower social standing, probably because he is either beginning his career or was never promoted. In two versions of the text the pupil is advised to serve a wealthier man (D175), but the later L2 version allows the interpretation that he is already working for this person<sup>951</sup> (Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 119; Žába 1956, 78). Be as it may, at the heart of this maxim appears to be the counsel to respect the less wealthy, or less successful past of the master one is serving. But what is of interest for the present discussion is the mechanism by which the wealthy man attained social success.

This is explained between vv. D180 and D185. The disciple is first told that things do not come by themselves, as that is ‘their’ law for the ones ‘they’ love (vv. D181-D182), seemingly in contradiction, or juxtaposition to what was said in maxim 6 (v. D118). He is then told that the wealthy man has gathered from the inundation himself (v. D183), and that the ultimate source of that inundation is god, as ‘it is the god who makes his success’ (v. Prisse D184). Three kinds of agents are thus mentioned: the wealthy man (*zj jkr*), they (=sn)<sup>952</sup>, and god (*ntr*). The *zj jkr* emerges as the object of the providence, whose rules are set by ‘them’, and which ultimately, or perhaps more immediately, derives from god. A particular word used in this maxim deserves further consideration.

On v. D182 it is said that they only give to the one they *love*: assuming ‘they’ are the gods, the use of the verb *mrj* is interesting. Other translations are possible, namely ‘like,

<sup>951</sup> ‘(L2 D175) (*jr šw3=k šms=k z(j) jkr \**) If you are poor, may you serve a successful man’ (see no. 5.1).

<sup>952</sup> The L2 version of the instruction allows a different interpretation; see no. 5.1.

desire, want' (Allen 2010, 155), and thus what we may traditionally understand as love is possibly not what is meant in this specific case<sup>953</sup>. It might also have a sense along the lines of *h<sub>z</sub>j*, 'to favour, to praise', as both verbs often pair up (see Jansen-Winkel 2002, 47; Quack 2011, 44).

This latter verb, *h<sub>z</sub>j*, does occur further ahead in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, maxim 22, and concerns the very topic we are addressing: '(D339) (*sh<sub>tp</sub> k.w=k m h<sub>pr</sub>.t n=k* (D340) ) **Please your friends with what has happened to you**, (D340) (*h<sub>pr</sub>(.w) n h<sub>zz</sub>.w n<sub>tr</sub>*) for it has come to one who is favoured by god' (see no. 8). The central point of maxim 22 is arguably the maintenance of social bonds through the gift exchange economy as understood in anthropology (e.g., Gudeman 2001, 80–92; Ortiz 1994, 893): if one wishes to be able to draw on friends and close acquaintances in dire times (= counter-gift), one must share some of what one has with them first (= gift). And it is here that divine providence comes into play: it is what one receives from a divine agency that one should share as the gift that will create a sense of gratitude and debt in others. This implies that the *n<sub>tr</sub>* may have been regarded as a source of the reciprocity between individuals that is necessary to bind communities together (Gudeman 2001, 80, 89), and it may have been precisely because that excess wealth was construed as received from a divine origin that it should not be stagnantly held, but rather shared. But sharing and giving of one's own wealth is not always gratuitous. In fact, the gift economy may be a way to assert one's superior status, especially when the receiving part is not able to fully reciprocate (Gudeman 2001, 87–89). In the power relation between *n<sub>tr</sub>* and the individuals benefitting from the divine providence this is quite apparent, as persons contemplated with it are not able to reciprocate with a counter-gift of the same status. In this maxim, for instance, the counter-gift to the gift of divine providence is sharing it with one's friends. If this logic also underlies the relationship with the friends seems less clear<sup>954</sup>.

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<sup>953</sup> On a similar point concerning *mr.wt* and *sn<sub>d</sub>* in relation to the king see Frandsen (2008, 49n12).

<sup>954</sup> Interestingly, while in the Middle Kingdom instructions giving seems to be part of a reciprocal process, in the *Instruction of Amenemope*, which introduces the theme of poverty, one should give assistance to the poor without expecting anything in return. This is more in line with the ethical systems of other religions where the self-interest of aiding someone to get something in return is combatted.

### 4.3.1 Possible royal providence

Returning to maxim 10 of the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, it has been noted that the god mentioned in this and other maxims may be the king (e.g., Vernus 2010a, 157n100). And the fact that the terms *mrj* and *hꜣzj* could describe one's relationship with the king further supports that interpretation, regarding for instance, P. Prisse, v. D340. If the agents referred to as 'they' in *Ptahhotep's* maxim 10 are indeed the gods, then there would be two providing agencies, the gods, on the one hand, and the king, on the other. It was already pointed out above that in maxim 10 (P. Prisse, v. D184) *ntr* is described as the ultimate, or at least more immediate, source of providence. If *ntr* is the king, then he could be the main providing agency. The same could hold true to maxim 22, as *ntr* is mobilised as the sole provider.

Building on the bonding features of the relationship between king and subjects, that were mentioned apropos of the implications of the verbs *mrj* and *hꜣzj*, it can be said, if the interpretation of the king as the ultimate providing agency is accurate, that instead of the piety towards god advocated in the *Instruction of Amenemope*, in these two maxims from the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* there would be a call for conformity, and by extension loyalism to the established order and to the king: if one wishes to climb the social ladder one must be loved and favoured by abiding to the rules. The obvious implication is that, if 'grace' is contingent on being appreciated on the one hand, failure to abide by the set rules would lead to 'disgrace' (see Quack 2011, 64-65). The fact that this is not made explicit in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* suggests that it would be an apparent fact to its audience. Providence or lack of it would then depend on whether the pupil would stay inside the sphere of kingly favour and/or social appreciation or outside of it.

So far it is by no means established that the king was either a providing agent or the chief source of providence, but that is a possibility that deserves further enquiry. The *Instruction of a Man for His Son* is another Middle Kingdom instruction suitable to pose this problem, especially sections 3 (see no. 14), 4 (see no. 15), and 5 (see no. 16):

(3.1) (*jn jw hrw n(.j) rnn.t hr th3.tw=f*) Can a day of Renenet transgress itself (or: him)?

(3.2) (*jn <jw> w3h.tw hrw [n(.jw)] ʿhꜣ.w*) Is a day [of] lifetime added?

(3.3) (*j[n jw hb3.tw jm=f r3-pw]*) [Or is it (= a day) removed from it (= lifetime)]?

(3.4) (*mshn.t mj sp tp.j*) **Meskhenet is as the first time.**

(*nn hđj š3{c}<(t)> n={j}<f>*) No one can disobey what was ordained for <him>.

(3.5) (*m=k{j}-js{j} wr hz{j}<w.t> n.t [ntr]*) (3.6) [*3 hsf=f r3-sj \**] But see: great is the favour of [god], (3.6) [extremely great is his punishment].

(*[wr b3.w=f]*) (3.7) [*m33.n=j kf3.t<=f>*] [Great is his power], (3.7) for I have seen <his> fame.

(*nn hpr š[p]t<=f> r hh*) Does <his> anger against millions ever happen? (or: <his> anger against millions never happens).

(4.1) (*jw=f shpr=f<h> m{h} j[w rh]*) He makes the ignorant change into [one who knows].

(4.2) (*[m]s[dd hpr m mr.wt]*) [The one who was hated changed into one who is loved].

(4.3) (*[jw=f dj=f] snj {r} kt{k}t <r> wr.w*) [He causes] that the small one may come close <to> the great ones.

(4.4) (*[hr(j)-ph.wj] m tp.j*) [The one who was last] is (now) the first.

(4.5) (*šwj <m> hr.t m nb hc.w*) **The one who was empty <of> goods is (now) a possessor of wealth.**

(4.6) (*c<d> m nb hnw*) The unimportant is (now) a possessor of a clientele.

(4.7) (*[jw=f dj=f mnj] šwj <m> mnj*) [He causes] the one who is empty <of> mooring [to moor].

(4.8) (*s[wn m nb d]mj.t*) The [destitute is (now) possessor of an] estate.

(4.9) (*jw=f sb3[=fj3]bb r [mdwj.t]*) (4.10) [*swb3=f nh.wj jd.w*] He teaches the mute (how) to [speak], (4.10) [by clearing the ears of the deaf].

(5.1) (*jw nn r-3w m-hnw hc.w \**) All this is within a lifetime,

(5.2a) (*m-{r}rw.tj <hrw> n(j) rnn.t \**) outside of the <day> of Renenet.

(5.2b) (*nn smn mshn.t {tw} r=s \**) (5.3) *wp{t}-hr smn t3w r fnd=f \** Meskhenet cannot establish (anything) against it, (5.3) except to establish the breath for his nose.

(5.4) (*wr n=k m-c=k* 5.5) *jrj.n=k hc.w=k \* m-hnw shr.w ntr=k \** **Greatness belongs (or: will belong) to you, (5.5) as long as you have spent your Lifetime within the plans of your god.**

The third section presents a ‘worldview’ of one’s life being constrained by cosmic forces, namely Renenet and Meskhenet<sup>955</sup>, that, judging from the rhetoric devices and from the set it forms with the next two sections, was intended and/or expected by the author to be taken as ‘traditional’ by the audience (vv. 3.1-3.4). The areas of life normally affected by Renenet and Meskhenet are one’s material wealth<sup>956</sup> and social position<sup>957</sup> respectively, and

<sup>955</sup> John Baines (1994, 39, 41) argues that these forces were also personified, but not exclusively. On Renenet and Meskhenet see also Roth and Roehrig (2002, 136).

<sup>956</sup> See, for instance, Quaegebeur (1975, 153).

these are the areas addressed, and possibly challenged, in the fourth section. Here, *ntr*, who was introduced in the previous section as someone to fear and respect (vv. 3.5-3.7), is arguably described as someone who is able to change one's social status (vv. 4.2-4.4, 4.6-4.7) and level of wealth (vv. 4.5, 4.8) by providing an elite education (vv. 4.1, 4.9-4.10). A possible challenge to the alteration of the span of one's lifetime mentioned on vv. 3.2-3.3 is not explicit, but might be implicit in the fact that someone with better nutrition and access to better healthcare could theoretically live longer.

The possible contrast with the 'traditional worldview', or '*discours standard*' as Pascal Vernus terms it (2010a, 289), is furthered in section 5, as it is revealed that the changes listed in section 4 occur within one's lifetime and outside the sphere of influence of Renenet and Meskhenet (vv. 5.1-5.3), as a return for the investment in obedience and loyal service to the god (vv. 5.4-5.5).

According to Pascal Vernus (2010a, 289, 362n79), these three sections are part of a larger debate going on in several wisdom texts from the Middle and New Kingdoms about whether or not one's life and actions are constrained to the point that one has little or no self-determination. A case in point is the ending of the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*, = P. BM EA 10684 verso, vv. 6.6-6.8 (see no. 35), where the author admonishes his disciple against eschewing improving himself and being receptive to his father's instruction with the excuse of the influence of character and of forces like Shay and Renenet. This same motif occurs at the end of the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 22.14-22.15, where Khonsuhotep resists his father's teachings on the grounds that one's nature is fixed.

Whether one's personality and life events are previously determined or left open is a timeless debate that goes on into our own time. And even today it may be used and instrumentalised by institutions<sup>958</sup>. Given their pragmatic nature, it is arguable that the Egyptian instructions made use of this possible debate for their own purposes as well, as against contributing to it with philosophical speculations.

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<sup>957</sup> See Roth and Roehrig (2002, 136).

<sup>958</sup> One needs only think of the health insurance companies that require a DNA test in order to predict whether an individual is likely to be healthy or not, and of the argument, validated in several court decisions, for genetic predispositions for mental illnesses and consequent non-imputation.

It is also assertible that these different positions did not have to be uniformly used across the several instructions that mention this topic, and that the differences between the Middle and New Kingdoms may have influenced the authors' intentions, and priorities as well. Thus, whereas in the *Instruction of Ani* and the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV* these positions served as a setting to oppose the calls to study from the authors of the instructions to the students' resistance in the form of the fatalistic argument<sup>959</sup>, in the *Instruction of a Man for His Son* it seems to have had a different purpose<sup>960</sup>. Pascal Vernus (2010a, 289, 295n65) argued that it was to affirm the benefits of loyalism to the king, which would allow one to transcend one's preassigned wealth and social status.

Indeed there seems to be a contrast between a life outside divine/royal favour (section 3) and a life within it (section 4), with the probable aim of drumming the need for obedience and conformity into the audience, as the latter was depicted as someone at the mercy of cosmic forces and whom only *ntr* could 'liberate', almost in a messianic, or soteriological, fashion. A similar interpretation was made by Toby Wilkinson (2010, 105) about the famine scenes in the causeway of Unas's pyramid: 'the miserable wretchedness of those living beyond Unas's rule served both as a stark reminder and as a warning to his own subjects'. In both cases power and subjection are at stake: power over the cosmos and over life is a divine and royal prerogative, one that is nonetheless extendable to others, namely those who are loved/favoured. According to the interpretation adopted here, in the *Instruction of a Man for His Son*, power is construed as a sharing with the ruling elite of competences normally held by *ntr*. The fact that what is shared cannot not be reciprocated in equal measure signals further the subjection of the receiving end (Gudeman 2001, 89).

However, other readings of the set formed by sections 3-5 of the *Instruction of a Man for His Son* have been made. Alexa Wilke (2006, 101) argues that the two powers – Renenet and Meskhenet on the one hand, and *ntr* on the other – do not clash against each other, as, even though both influence one's life, they do it at different levels. In turn,

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<sup>959</sup> As noted by Vernus (2010a, 339n109).

<sup>960</sup> It is worth mentioning that, in the New Kingdom, there was a competition between the military on the one hand, and the scribal class on the other for the recruitment of young men from elite families (Vernus 2010, 346). This is clearly visible in P. Chester Beatty IV. The *Satirical Letter* of P. Anastasi I is also expressive of the rivalry between the scribes working in the 'civil administration' and those working for the military.

Antonio Loprieno (1996b, 411) suggests that: ‘Here too, as in *Sinuhe*<sup>961</sup>, the potential conflict between constellative state religion and individual *ntr* is neutralized by keeping the imagery of constellative theology, while at the same time reserving to the *ntr* the control over individual ethical discourse.’

There is a probability that, in several passages, especially from Middle Kingdom instructions, the protection from want and need comes from the king and not from god, as is the case in the New Kingdom instructions. However, the discursive mobilisation of king and god is identical, which is partly due to the term *ntr* which may be common to both god and king, and to the material dependence on the king and, with the development (or increase) of personal piety, on god.

#### 4.4 Concluding remarks

From the three types of protection here discussed it emerges that divine protection from conflict was attested in New Kingdom instructions alone. It also emerges that protection from god in relation to the uncertainty towards the future is attested in New Kingdom instructions, but not in the extant instructions from the Middle Kingdom. The situation is quite different concerning divine protection from need and want: this is evenly attested among New Kingdom instructions, and is also attested in Middle Kingdom instructions, especially in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, where this topic is dominant. Contrarily to the New Kingdom instructions, in the Middle Kingdom instructions, especially the ones of *Ptahhotep* and of a *Man for His Son*, *ntr*, in the role of provider, may have been the king. At any rate, both the king and god are mobilised in similar ways.

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<sup>961</sup> The author (1996b, 406) had previously argued that *Sinuhe*’s ascription of his flight to the/a god, as against assuming his own responsibility, had the purpose of neutralizing potential elements of criticism, in the same vein as the anonymity of the *Instruction of Kairsu* and of the *Instruction of a Man for His Son*.



## Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to enquire into the most significant roles god played in the instructions of the Middle and New Kingdoms, that is, in what ways the authors of these texts mobilised god in order to achieve their aims – namely, to shape the conduct of their audiences.

Because this study intends to be located not only in Egyptology, but also in the history of religions, the first chapter was dedicated to an overview of the academic (or historical and sociological) study of religion. This chapter has the advantage of self-reflexively bringing out the nuances of the academic study of religion, as well as the challenges that are specific to it. In this regard, an overview of the approaches to the study of religion, followed by a discussion of the emergence of the historical and sociological study of religion, was presented. Reservations towards the objectivity of the academic study of religion have been raised, to a great extent due to its genealogical relation to theology, and these have been discussed as well. From the discussion in this chapter it became clear that the specific genealogy of the academic study of religion in the ‘West’ influenced how religions, including ancient religions like the Egyptian, were first studied and approached. In accordance with recent trends in the historical and sociological study of religion, it was decided that no particular definition of religion would be used but, instead, religion would be considered a field of cultural activity which interrelates with the other dimensions of a culture.

It was assumed for a significant time that the instructions’ claim to didacticism reflected their primary purpose of composition and their place in society. However, this assumption, and the perspectives on the available evidence that sustained it, recently began to be questioned. In line with this development, the second chapter enquires into the social setting in which the instructions of the Middle and New Kingdoms were produced, reproduced, and consumed. After a discussion on the instructions’ genre in section 2.1 and on wisdom literature in section 2.2, section 2.3 sets out to clarify the purpose of the instructions, particularly of the Middle Kingdom. A significant challenge to the perspective that Middle Kingdom instructions were composed and consumed in a didactic setting comes from their poetic and aesthetic features, which may bring them closer to other

literary texts more associated with entertainment than with education. In this regard it was proposed that the model from performance studies of the efficacy-entertainment dyad may be of use in the sociological study of the instructions. Text-internal evidence from the instructions pointing towards a didactic setting, including the framework of a father instructing his son, was also overviewed. Attention was then shifted to the material evidence often associated with an educational context – namely, schools themselves, the material supports used to record the instructions, either entirely or partially, and the methods of teaching. In accordance to recent findings and insights from other scholars, it was determined that formal schools are difficult to locate in the archaeological record, that teaching modalities, especially in the New Kingdom, may have been informal, and that neither material supports nor mistakes and corrections are a reliable indicator of whether a copy was made by a student or by a fully trained scribe. Finally, in section 2.4 a discussion was made concerning the institutions that may have required and/or supported the composition of the instructions and concerning the social group in which they may have originated.

It was concluded in the second chapter that it is difficult to assess whether Middle Kingdom instructions were composed at the request of the royal court to educate future officials at schools and whether they were composed by a new, intermediate social group. In the New Kingdom it is also not entirely clear whether Middle Kingdom instructions were preserved for their content or for their value as classics. But for the instructions composed in this period it is possible to have a more complete grasp of the setting in which they circulated. There are indications that they were composed by and for middle-ranked officials, and that they circulated both among scribes for personal use and in teaching settings. But questions concerning their most dominant use, and their position relative to society (more central and mainstream or more marginal and peripheral) remain as yet unanswerable.

A significant challenge to a sociological study centred on these texts, especially the ones composed in the Middle Kingdom, is then the absence of clear indicators as to their place in society, but that does not have to invalidate their claims to didacticism. Instead, this study set out from the premise that it is relevant to analyse what didactic and authoritative texts that are not religious per se have to say about how divine and human

agents relate to each other from the point of view of ethical normativity. In order to undertake this study, discourse analysis – especially in what concerns the notions that texts not only reflect their social ambience but also do things, employ strategies to achieve their goals, attempt to reinforce or establish pathways of action, and attempt to reinforce or change power relations – was the chosen methodology. Because this is a study about a dead culture with an ancient language, philology was also a necessary methodology. As pointed out throughout this study, there are several passages that can be interpreted in different and opposing ways. With the available primary source material and critical literature, the choices that seemed more plausible were made. As also pointed out throughout this work, it is often difficult not only to capture what the author may have intended to say, but also what audiences may have understood – both New Philology and reader-response theory have demonstrated that both are important to get a more complete picture of the impact of texts in a given society and at a given time.

From the selected corpus of instructions from the Middle and New Kingdoms two main roles of god were explored: as punisher and as protector. Accordingly, the two remaining chapters of this work deal with these two roles of god. The discussions were organised around a set of categories that arguably emerge from either a set of passages or individual passages. To be sure, and to the extent that several passages are interpretable in different ways, the proposed categorisation entails a degree of subjectivity. This means, therefore, that the several categories are first and foremost platforms from which to observe the discursive mobilisation of god in the instructions.

In the third chapter selected passages were discussed across two groups of categories based on transgressions punished by a divine agent, particularly *ntr*. The first group lists the following categories relating to transgressions against individuals and against the king/state:

- Mistreatment of other persons;
- Fraudulency and illegal acquisition of wealth;
- Inflammatory and/or false speech;
- Desecration of tombs;
- Opposition to the king;
- Execution of courtiers.

The second group, centred on transgressions against *ntr*, includes two categories:

- Detestation (*bw.t*) of god;
- Ritual failures and transgressions.

The analysis of transgressions and their punishments across a range of categories has the advantage of pointing out the concerns of the extant instructions about human agency. Under each category passages are individually analysed, with a focus on how they may have functioned and on which effects upon the audience the texts may have intended to bring about. At the end of each category the passages were related in order to assess possible patterns and social implications.

It proved useful to analyse texts from the premises that they do things and that god was strategically mobilised in them. Two cases in point are chapters 20 and 25 of the *Instruction of Amenemope*. The passage in chapter 20 stating that Ma'at is a gift of god and that he gives it to whom he loves<sup>962</sup> was often interpreted as signifying that Ma'at had become subsumed under god's free will. While not all authors followed that interpretation, a different analysis is possible when one takes into account the context of that particular passage – namely the reproach of a judge accepting a bribe –, the fact that the purpose of the text is to shape the conduct of the pupil according to a set of principles, and that in *Amenemope* there is a pattern in which the opposite perspective of personal piety is consistently presented. Having this combination of factors in mind, it is possible to conclude that when the text claims that god gives Ma'at to the one he loves, this is a reference to god's role as impartial judge and guarantor of justice in texts relating to personal piety. Implicitly, then, the text indicates that the pupil will not be loved by god if he becomes corrupt and, consequently, that god will deny impartial justice to the pupil if, or when, he comes to be judged. In other words, god will have the pupil treated in the same way as he treats others.

Similarly, chapter 25<sup>963</sup> has been remarked for its description of god's role as creator in contrast to human frailty. However, from the perspective that the instructions are pragmatic texts that intend to shape conduct, it is plausible that that description is part of the text's strategy to achieve its goals. In fact, it follows the admonition against mocking

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<sup>962</sup> P. BM EA 10474 recto, vv. 21.5-21.6 (see no. 50 and subsection 3.1.2.4.3).

<sup>963</sup> P. BM EA 10474 recto (see no. 54 and subsection 3.1.1.2).

those who have some kind of disability or impairment. Those people are clearly vulnerable, and, by informing the pupil that god creates and destroys humans as he wishes and assigns them the social position he deems fit, the text impresses upon the pupil that, before god, he is equally vulnerable. The notion of power relations is of great usefulness in the study of the instructions, and this passage is a clear example of two power relations: between the pupil and vulnerable people, on the one hand, and between the pupil and god, on the other. By evoking god's power over humans, the text is not making a theological digression, but, arguably, is instead cautioning the pupil that god can afflict him with several of the conditions which he mocks.

It is also relevant that several earthly punishments, such as loss of income and negation of inheritance of the transgressor's property by his offspring, are either carried out or sanctioned by god. Interestingly, most transgressions receiving this kind of punishments relate to fraudulency and illegal acquisition of wealth<sup>964</sup>. In relation to this particular kind of transgression, it is possible to conjecture that the texts aimed at reinforcing existing punishments by having a deity overseeing them and assuring their effectiveness. From a sociological point of view, then, and as argued above<sup>965</sup>, this could betray either a lack of effectiveness from authorities or the ease with which that type of transgression could be committed.

In the fourth chapter the role of god as protector and provider was analysed from selected passages across the following three categories:

- Protection from conflict;
- Protection from the uncertainty of the future;
- Protection from need and want.

This divine role was found to be less frequent than its counterpart just discussed, and to have more attestations in New Kingdom instructions, which may be attributed to the permeability of the instructions of that period to the personal piety discourse. To be sure, divine protection to the addressee from attacks by others is attested in the Middle Kingdom,

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<sup>964</sup> See the passages in: *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, maxim 6 (see no. 4 and subsection 3.1.2.1); *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu*, P. Louvre E 4864 recto, section 12 ('long version') (see no. 19 and subsection 3.1.2.2); *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 6, vv. 8.7-8.8, 8.13 (see no. 41 and subsection 3.1.2.3), chapter 15, vv. 17.11-17.12 (see no. 46 and subsection 3.1.2.4.2), and chapter 17, vv. 19.2-19.3 (see no. 48 and subsection 3.1.2.5.2).

<sup>965</sup> See chapter 3, subsection 3.1.2.6.

but in relation to the king. Otherwise, the type of protection that is attested, particularly in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, relates to the protection from want.

In *Ptahhotep* passages involving goods provided by divine agents (referred to as ‘god’ and as ‘them’), and possibly by the king (referred to as *ntr*), do not function only as protection from want, but also as deterrents against avarice. In the New Kingdom, especially in the *Instruction of Amenemope*, which was addressed to a middle-ranked audience, the possibility of the pupil coming to suffer from poverty is presented as real<sup>966</sup>. The text appears to establish a causal nexus between this threat and the temptation to steal<sup>967</sup>. In response, *Amenemope* follows the same strategy as *Ptahhotep* and mobilises divine assistance in order to instil contentment in the pupil and dissuade him from unlawful activities. A clear pattern is then discernible.

However, there are indications of changes from the Middle Kingdom to the New Kingdom: whereas in *Ptahhotep* divine providence appears to be automatic, both in *Amenemope*<sup>968</sup> and in the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*<sup>969</sup> the pupil is instructed to pray in order to receive from god. Inasmuch as prayer was an important element of personal piety, the new development in the New Kingdom instructions may derive from that discourse.

As said above, divine protection from others is attested in relation to the king, but this may correspond to expectations of divine protection to the king due to the challenges entailed by his office. Divine protection from conflict awarded to officials does not seem to become part of the instructions’ discourse before the New Kingdom, which may be again a development owed to the broader discourse of personal piety. The texts indicate that god is willing and able to efficaciously protect the pupil, but, at the same time, they also indicate that protection from conflict is not exactly automatic. Instead, it is required that the pupil steps back and quietistically surrenders to god, in order to allow the divine agent to act in his stead. In the *Instruction of Ani*<sup>970</sup> it is not only a quietist surrender from the pupil that is required, but also that god is repeatedly petitioned to intervene in order to return the wrong done to him to his offender and, presumably, end the conflict. Significantly, this is

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<sup>966</sup> A case in point is P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 6, v. 9.5 (see no. 41 and section 4.3).

<sup>967</sup> See P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 7, vv. 10.6-10.7 (see no. 42 and section 4.3).

<sup>968</sup> P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 7, vv. 10.12-10.13.

<sup>969</sup> P. Chester Beatty IV = P. BM EA 10684 verso, v. 4.10 (see no. 35 and section 4.3).

<sup>970</sup> P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 21.14-21.16 (see no. 33 and subsection 4.1.2).

consistent with two New Kingdom passages where god also has to be petitioned in order to balance a relationship in which the pupil behaves abusively<sup>971</sup>. The idea that god is reachable through prayer and ought to be petitioned to in order to bring about a certain outcome may then be considered to form a pattern across New Kingdom instructions.

The acknowledgement that the future is unpredictable and can change rather drastically is attested in Middle Kingdom instructions, particularly in *Ptahhotep*<sup>972</sup>. But in New Kingdom instructions, probably also due to the influence of personal piety discourse, god is mobilised as being in charge of what will happen and as being interested in bringing about the best outcomes to the pupil.

In subsection 4.3.1 it was argued that, in the Middle Kingdom, several passages where *ntr* is said to provide to the pupil may have the king in the mind and that, if that is indeed the case, both the king and god are mobilised in identical ways. In this regard, it may be added that, in terms of discourse, because the subject position can be occupied by the king and by a god, either anonymous or named, these agents are constructed as discursively similar. The very subject position emerges as being flexible, as opposed to being reserved either to the king or to a specific god alone. This flexibility may account for the receptivity of the New Kingdom instructions to the personal piety discourse.

The two roles discussed in this study are not the only roles that god plays in the instructions of the Middle and New Kingdoms, but are arguably two of the most important. As a punisher that inflicts some level of discomfort in order to correct one's behaviour, god is mobilised as a deterring agent, and as a protector who instils a sense of security and stability, god is mobilised as an encouraging and enabling agent. Inasmuch as these two roles may be considered to complement each other, they may also be considered to form a spectrum. Observed from the notion of agency, these two divine roles are also strategically used by the texts to either reduce or enlarge human agency<sup>973</sup>. The reference to divine punishment aims at taking the pupil along a pathway of action that does not involve unlawful and unethical behaviour. At the other end of the spectrum, divine protection upholds pathways of action that enable the pupil to go about his activities without

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<sup>971</sup> *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 21.2-21.3 (see no. 32 and subsection 3.1.1.1), and *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 27, vv. 25.19-26.1 (see no. 55 and subsection 3.1.1.3).

<sup>972</sup> P. Prisse, maxim 22, v. D343 (see no. 8).

<sup>973</sup> On this notion see Janico et al. (2018, 571).

becoming overwhelmed by distressing situations, as opposed to limiting his scope of action due to fear, for instance. To be sure, while this is arguably a significant part of the discursive world constructed by the instructions, the texts themselves cannot chose for the agents, who retain a level of freedom. As pointed out by Barker and Jane (2016, 281), ‘questions of choice and determination remain at the heart of the debates about agency.’

As mentioned, because the context of production and circulation of the instructions is not entirely known, it is difficult to assess what impact these texts, and particularly their mobilisation of divine agents, may have had upon audiences. Perhaps the mention of punishments overlapping with earthly punishments and the inclusion of elements from the personal piety discourse were part of strategies to enhance the impact upon audiences and, consequently, influence their choices.



# Appendix

## Translation of passages from the Middle Kingdom instructions cited in the main text

### *Instruction of Hordjedef*<sup>974</sup>

#### 1. O. Gardiner 62, vv. H6.4-H6.8

(H6.4) (*[jr mwt m z(j) tkn jm=f hr]w th3=f dmd.y[t] n.t jrj n=f \* sft* (H6.5) *jw krs[.tw=f] m hbd.t m hr(j).t-ntr \**) [As for death, a man is near it the day]<sup>975</sup> he transgresses the period of making the sacrifice for him (= a deceased in the necropolis?), (H6.5) and is buried with reprobation in the necropolis<sup>976</sup>.

(H6.6) (*hpr {s3} <s3m.t> m {\*} dw.t <\*>*) Mourning comes to evil<sup>977</sup>:

(H6.7) (*hsf<.t> {=f} pw n.(j)t ntr \* htp.w=f shd hr hw.t=f \**) that is god's punishment<sup>978</sup>. His food offerings fade away due to his wrongdoing.

(H6.8) (*jw m3r [...]*) The needy [...].

(Dils 2014; Helck 1984, 17-18; Vernus 2010a, 80, 86-87; Rutkauskas 2016, 151)

#### 2. O. Louvre E 32928, vv. 7.1-7.12 (= H7.1-H7.6)

(7.1 (= H7.1))<sup>979</sup> (*stp n=k hnj.t m [r(m)]t=k \**) Select for yourself a work association<sup>980</sup> from your<sup>981</sup> [men].

<sup>974</sup> The verse numbering followed here is Helck's (1984). This is indicated with an *H* preceding each verse number.

<sup>975</sup> Restoration following O. Gardiner 12 (see Dils 2014; Helck 1984, 17).

<sup>976</sup> From O. IFAO 1796, v. x+5, Vernus (2010a, 87) proposes the following translation of v. H6.5: *hpr \* hbd.tw n=f m hr.t-ntr* 'Il se produit qu'on lui marque réprobation dans la nécropole'. A significant lacuna precedes this verse, however (Gasse 2005, 43-45).

<sup>977</sup> O. Gardiner 12 suggests a different meaning: [*hpr s3m.t*] *hr dw.t*, 'Mourning arises due to evil' (Dils 2014). The text in this ostrakon presents several difficulties, and one of them concerns the word division and translation on v. H6.6. Following Peter Dils (2014), the verse point was moved to after *dw.t*, as it arguably makes more sense, rather than it starting a new sentence while leaving the previous sentence, *hpr {s3} <s3m.t> m*, without an object (see also Oréal 2016, 500n25). But this is not the case in O. IFAO 1796, vv. x+5-x+6 (= H6.6-H6.8), which reads: *s3m.t hr [s3]m.t \* dw.t hsf{f}(t) pw ntr \* htp=f shd=f hw.w \* jw m3r šd.w*, 'Mourning upon mourning; evil is what god punishes. May he be appeased so that he clears the fault. The needy is saved' (see Gasse 2005, 43-45; Vernus 2010a, 87).

<sup>978</sup> In O. 1796, v. x+6 (= H6.7), it is specifically mentioned that evil is what god punishes; see previous note.

<sup>979</sup> As in Grandet (2012), Fischer-Elfert's (2009, 119-20) line numbering is followed here, as several lines in O. Berlin P. 12383 and O. Louvre E 32928 were absent in the sources gathered by Helck. However, for the sake of easy referral to Helck's edition, corresponding line numbers to that edition are given in parentheses.

(7.2 (= H7.2)) (*jmj snd.w[=k hpr] hr.t=k \**) Cause respect of [you], so that [your] possessions [may develop]<sup>982</sup>.

(7.3 (= H7.3)) (*w<sup>c</sup>b <sup>c</sup>.wy=ky wdn n=k h.t \** (7.4 (= H7.3)) *mj r<sup>c</sup> w<sup>c</sup>b n(j)w db3.t \** (7.5 (= H7.3)) *wnm rm.w hr <sup>c</sup>b <n(j)> nm.jt \**) Purify your hands, so that goods are offered to you<sup>983</sup>, (7.4 (= H7.3)) as (to) Re, the pure one of the chapel<sup>984</sup> (7.5 (= H7.3)) who eats fish and purified things <of><sup>985</sup> the (temple) slaughtering block<sup>986</sup>.

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<sup>980</sup> The sense of *hnj.t* in this passage may be of a safety network comprised of one's friends and influential people according to Vernus (2010a, 83n31, 87), but cf. v. 7.9 (= H7.6), which mentions an accuser – hardly fitting the context of a safety network –, and see the comment to v. H7.3 in the translation of O. Gardiner 335 by Dils (2014). The meaning 'harem' is also possible, and a parallel with P. Brooklyn 47.218.135, v. 4.8, was suggested (see Quack 1993, 14; Vernus 2010a, 88n17). Fischer-Elfert (2009, 121) takes *hnj.t* (*hnr.t* in his reconstruction) to be here an *Arbeitslager* comprised of temporary workers assigned to compulsory state work and to whom the disciple must inspire respect in the following line. In his turn, Grandet (2012, 531) interprets this passage as advice for the disciple to pick punctual workers who will produce the possessions mentioned in the following line without supervision. Perhaps the *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu*, P. Louvre E 4864 recto, vv. 9.5-9.7, is a comparable passage.

<sup>981</sup> According to Grandet (2012, 531), the pronoun =*k* is probably a late addition and unnecessary in the text. As he mentions, not all copies include it (see O. Gardiner 62 and O. Gardiner 335), but several other copies do (see O. DeM 1604, O. Turin CGT 57416, and O. Berlin P. 12383) (see also the comment to v. H7.1 in the translation of O. Gardiner 335 in Dils (2014)). Since this instruction is only attested in copies dated from the New Kingdom, it may be difficult to say what is or is not a late addition. Be that as it may, the New Kingdom modifications to the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* may very well lend support to the idea that this text may have also been adapted for New Kingdom audiences.

<sup>982</sup> In Grandet's interpretation (2012, 531), the literal meaning is: 'inspire ton respect, et ce qui t'est necessaire adviendra'. For parallels see Fischer-Elfert (2009, 121).

<sup>983</sup> This verse is fragmented in the sources gathered in Roccati (1982, 17) and in Helck (1984, 20). The exception in those sources seems to be O. Gardiner 12 whose two previous verses of this passage are not preserved, and which thus begins with *wdn*. Fischer-Elfert (2009, 119), using O. DeM d. 98.5239 and O. Gardiner 12, reconstitutes the verse in O. Berlin P. 12383 as: [*jmj wdn*] *n=k h.t*, '[Mögen] dir [dargebracht werden] Opfer'; the author does not make any further comment on this verse (on the issues with this reconstitution see Grandet (2012, 531)). To my knowledge, the only copy which preserves this verse in its entirety is the one translated here, O. Louvre E 32928. Grandet (2012, 532) suggests this verse refers to honesty, which will assure prosperity, and translates accordingly: 'garde tes mains propres, et l'on t'offrira des biens' (529). Although the author argues for a ritual context on v. 7.8 (= H7.5), he prefers to avoid the translation 'pure' on v. 7.3 (= H7.3). To be sure, this verse is a continuation of the previous verse which concerns the disciple's attitude before the men he handpicks, but what follows seems to indicate the pupil's participation in a ritual. One may then wonder whether vv. 7.2-7.3 (= H7.2-H7.3) refer to respect and honesty towards the selected workers or to leadership by example. In favour of the latter, one may refer to an earlier passage of this instruction, which also mobilises ritualistic language, where it is said: [*°*] *b tw hft-hr jr.wy<=ky> z3w <sup>c</sup>b.w tw ky*, 'purify yourself before your eyes, lest another purifies you' (O. Munich 3400, v. H1.3; see Helck (1984, 4-5), Lichtheim (1973, 58), and Dils (2014)). If, as several translators agree (Helck 1984, 4-5; Simpson 2003a, 127; Vernus 2010a, 79), <sup>c</sup>*b* has here a broader sense of 'correcting' (Helck), 'emending' (Vernus), or reproaching (Simpson), it is then possible that *w<sup>c</sup>b <sup>c</sup>.wy=ky wdn n=k h.t* has also the sense of not falling behind in one's duties before others and fail to lead by example.

<sup>984</sup> *db3.t* may refer to the temple naos, as pointed out by Grandet (2012, 532).

<sup>985</sup> The indirect genitive is present in O. IFAO 1604 (Helck 1984, 20), and partially visible in O. Berlin P. 12383 (Fischer-Elfert, 120).

<sup>986</sup> On the *nm.t* see Zandee (1960, 166-67). The suggestion that the slaughtering block in question belongs to a temple is Fischer-Elfert's (2009, 122).

(7.6 (= H7.4)) (*t3m ʕ.wy=ky m-hnw n(.j) {hm.t}<jdr>=k* \* (7.7 (= H7.4)) *m d[d=k hrw n=sn]* \*) Be humble (lit. cover your arms inside your <belt>)<sup>987</sup>, (7.7 (= H7.4)) while [working] (lit. in [giving them the day])<sup>988</sup>.

(7.8 (= H7.5)) (*wnn jb=k ph3 n=s[n]* \* [*hṭp.w-ntr* \*]) May you be skilful for them, [the offerings]<sup>989</sup>.

(7.9 (= H7.6)) (*n gmj.n srh.yw dd[.tj=f]* *r=k* \* (7.10 (= H7.6)) *dw.t n(.j)t ntr*) (Thus), an accuser<sup>990</sup> who will speak against you (7.10 (= H7.6)) a transgression against god (lit. ‘bad things of the god’) will not be found<sup>991</sup>.

(7.11) (*m h[3n]rg[3]*<sup>992</sup> *hr h.t dw.t* \*) Do not rush to something bad.

(7.12) (*m djdj hft 3b=k s[w] k3p\**) Do not be lustful<sup>993</sup> before what you desire.

(Fischer-Elfert 2009; see also Roccati 1982; Dils 2014, O. Gardiner 335; Helck 1984, 19-22; Vernus 2010a, 80, 87; Grandet 2012)

<sup>987</sup> Fischer-Elfert (2009, 120) suggests the sign immediately before =k in O. Berlin P. 12383 may be the O 49 sign (Gardiner 1957, 498), whereas Grandet (2012, 532) argues that the sign N 41 (Gardiner 1957, 492) in O. Louvre E 32928 is often confused with the sign V 37 (Gardiner 1957, 527), and that the latter is the correct one in both copies. Accordingly, Grandet (2012, 529) translates the sentence as: ‘Cache tes mains à l’intérieur de {ton épouse} <ta ceinture (?)>’. Since *jdr* may also mean ‘belt’, which seems to provide a better meaning, this was the translation chosen here.

<sup>988</sup> Fischer-Elfert (2009, 123 § 7) argues that the original term *hrw* in this passage in O. Berlin P. 12383 might have had the sense of *hr.t*, ‘quiet’ (*Ruhe*) and not of ‘day’. Grandet (2012, 533) cogently compares this passage with *Sinuhe*, P. Berlin P 10499 (R), v. 41: *rdj.n=j w3.t n [rd.wj]=j*, ‘(after) I had given a path to my [feet] (i.e., walked)’. To give one’s hands the day could mean ‘to work’. The overall advice of vv. 7.6-7.7 (= H7.4), which are a follow-up to the previous counsel of being respectable and leading by example, might be for the disciple to be humble and kept to himself in the performance of his duties.

<sup>989</sup> Fischer-Elfert (2009, 123) takes the *ntr* sign in O. Berlin P. 12383 to be a mistake by the copyist, perhaps by influence of v. H6.7, and translates the sentence as: ‘Dein Herz sei ihnen gegenüber geläutert, auf dass sie zufrieden sind’ (120). However, *hṭp.w-ntr* is also attested in O. Louvre E 32928, and equally between verse points, which led Grandet (2012, 533) to make the interesting suggestion that this could be a later addition to clarify the referent of =sn.

<sup>990</sup> For other attestations of *srh* in literary and funerary texts see Fischer-Elfert (2009, 123-24) and Shupak (1992, 11).

<sup>991</sup> For parallels with Old Kingdom inscriptions see Fischer-Elfert (2009, 124). Fischer-Elfert translates *n gmj[.n].tw [s]rh(.y) m dd=f r=k* \* *m dw.t n(.j)t ntr* in O. Berlin P. 12383 as: ‘Nicht kann (dann) ein *Ankläger* gefunden werden als jemand, der über dich reden könnte in für den Gott negativer Weise’ (120). Grandet (2012, 530) renders the same passage in O. Louvre E 32928 as: *n gm.n srhyw dd[.tj=f]* *r=k* / *dw.t n(.j)t ntr*, ‘et (auc)un accusateur ne pourra rien trouver à dire contre toi / (qui soit) quelque chose que le dieu trouverait mauvais’. In what concerns this passage, there are slight differences between O. Berlin P. 12383 and O. Louvre E 32928 (on the grammatical differences see Grandet (2012, 533)).

<sup>992</sup> Read *hnrg*.

<sup>993</sup> The term *dj dj* was probably not used before the New Kingdom (Fischer-Elfert 2009, 125), which may indicate that this passage was either composed or edited in the New Kingdom.

## *Instruction for Kagemni*

### 3. P. Prisse, vv. 1.12-2.2

(1.12) (*jmj prj rn=k* (2.1) *jw gr=k m r3=k njs.t(w)=k*) Cause your name to come forth, (2.1) while being silent with your mouth, as/so that you are called<sup>994</sup>.

(*m ʕ jb=k hr hpš* (2.2) *m hr(j)-jb d3m=k*) Do not be arrogant because<sup>995</sup> because of strength (2.2) in the midst of your peers<sup>996</sup>.

(*z3w jtn=k n rh.n=tw hpr.t jrr.t ntr hft hsf=f*) Guard against opposing: one cannot know what will happen<sup>997</sup> and/or what the god will do when he punishes.

(Gardiner 1946, 73-74, plate 14; 1951, 109-10; Federn 1950, 50; Allen 2015, 165; Dils 2014; Simpson 2003b, 150; Römheld 1989, 167-68 with n. 83; Vernus 2010a, 92)

## *Instruction of Ptahhotep*<sup>998</sup>

### 4. P. Prisse, maxim 6, vv. D99-D118

(D99) (*jmj=k jrj hr m r(m)t.w*) May you not scheme<sup>999</sup> against<sup>1000</sup> people!

(D100) (*hsf ntr m-mj.tt*) God opposes with the same<sup>1001</sup>.

(D101) (*jw z(j) dd=f ʕnh=(j) jm*) A man says: ‘(I) want to live of that!’

(D102) (*jw=f šwj=f m t3 n tp-r3*) But is empty of bread because of a sentence.

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<sup>994</sup> Gardiner (1946, 73n14) suggests the recipient may be called either ‘to high office or to Court.’ Simpson (2003b, 150n5) also suggests that he is called ‘in order to be promoted or honored.’

<sup>995</sup> On the expression *ʕ jb* see Federn (1950, 50), Sousa (2006, 596) and Shupak (1993, 304).

<sup>996</sup> Gardiner (1946, 74) translates *d3m* as ‘contemporaries’. Dils (2014) translates as ‘*Nachkommen*’, although he also presents the alternative of ‘*junge Soldaten*’. Allen (2015, 165) translates the term as ‘cohort’.

<sup>997</sup> The phrase *n rh.n=tw hpr.t* is also attested in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, D343 (see no. 8 below).

<sup>998</sup> Dils (2014) is followed here in indicating with a *D* the numbering established by Dévaud (1916). When a copy other than P. Prisse is quoted, a *D* will still precede the numbers of the verses that do not differ from their counterparts in P. Prisse. When there are differences, however, the initials of the copy will precede *D* (e.g., L2 D217, referring to P. BM EA 10509 (= L2), v. D217).

<sup>999</sup> Contrarily to the rendering as ‘fear’, for instance in Faulkner (1972a, 162) and in Tobin (2003b, 132), and even though this could be a rare use of that noun, it is quite probable that both on this verse and on v. D115 *hr.w* is the noun ‘scheme’ or ‘(negative) plan’ derived from the verb *hr*, ‘to prepare’. See Junge (2003, 215n99), Allen (2015, 177), and Žába (1956, 120). Žába compares this noun, in the sense of ‘mauvaise intention’, with *hr.j* on v. 13.14 of the *Instruction of Amenemope*, chapter 10 (see no. 44 below). In this latter case it is uncertain, however, whether the noun intended is *hr(.w)*, ‘scheme, (negative) plan’ – in which case *hr.{j}* would be a misspelling –, or *hr.jt*, ‘terror’; see the comments by Laisney (2007, 139 § 13,13-14), and by Dils (2014). Therefore, this comparison, while pertinent, is not of much help.

<sup>1000</sup> Most translators suggest ‘among’ (e.g., Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 115; Burkard 1991, 201), but this may be an instance of the partitive use of the preposition *m* in a way similar to *mdw m*, ‘speak against’ (see Nyord 2010, 35-37).

<sup>1001</sup> In P. BM EA 10509 (= L2): *hsf ntr hr mj.tt \**, ‘God opposes because of the same’ (see Dils 2014).

(D103) (*jw z(j) dd=f wsr=(j)*) A man says: ‘(I) want to be powerful!’  
 (D107) (*jw=f dd=f sht=j r=j sj3.t(j)=j*) He says: ‘I will snatch for me whatever I see!’  
 (D111) (*jw z(j) dd=f hwt<f>={f}=(j) ky*) A man says: ‘I will rob another!’<sup>1002</sup>  
 (D112) (*jw=f ph=f rdj.t=f n hm.n=f*) But he ends up giving to one he did not know<sup>1003</sup>.  
 (D115) (*n p3 hr n(.j) r(m).t.w hpr*) Never has a people’s scheme come to fruition.  
 (D116) (*wd.t ntr pw hpr.t*) What comes to being is that which god decrees<sup>1004</sup>.  
 (D117) (*k3j nḥ m-hnw hr.t* (D118) *yyj.y dd.t=sn ds j<r.j>*) Think of living within contentment,  
 (D118) so that what they<sup>1005</sup> give comes by itself<sup>1006</sup>.  
 (Žába 1956, 24-25, 75, 120-22; Dils 2014; Allen 2015, 177-78; Burkard 1991, 201; Vernus 2010a, 115; Jacq 2004, 129-30; Faulkner 1972a, 162; Junge 2003, 191, 215-16; Tobin 2003b, 132-33; Silva 2010, 95)

## 5. P. Prisse, maxim 10, vv. D175-D185

(D175) (*jr hzj=k šms z(j) jkr*) **If you are weak, follow a successful man.**  
 (D176) (*nfr sšm=k nb hr ntr* (D177) *m rh.n=k nds.w hnt.w*) All your conduct will be good before god<sup>1007</sup>, (D177) when you have known poor people before.  
 (D178) (*jmj=k ʕj jb=k r=f* (D179) *hr rh.t.n=k jm=f hnt.w*) May you not be arrogant in relation to him, (D179) because of what you have learned about him before.  
 (D180) (*snd n=f hft hpr.t n=f* (D181) *n yyj.y js h.t ds*) Respect him in accordance to what has happened to him, (D181) as things do not come of their own accord.  
 (D182) (*hp=sn pw n mrr.w=sn*) It is their<sup>1008</sup> law for those they love.  
 (D183) (*jr ttf jw s3k.n=f ds* (D184) *jn ntr jrj jkr=f* (D185) *hsf=f hr=f jw=f sdr(.w)*) As for the inundation, he has gathered (it) himself, (D184) (but) it is the god who makes his success, (D185) and protects<sup>1009</sup> him (or: it (= the success)<sup>1010</sup>) while he sleeps.

<sup>1002</sup> Compare with v. 8.20 of chapter 6 of the *Instruction of Amenemope* (see no. 41 below).

<sup>1003</sup> Compare with the *Instruction of Amenemope*, chapter 6, vv. 8.7-8.8.

<sup>1004</sup> Compare with the Demotic *Instruction of Ankhsheshonki*, P. BM 10508, v. 22.25.

<sup>1005</sup> Faulkner (1972a, 162) translates as ‘men’. Several translators (e.g., Allen 2015, 178; Tobin 2003b, 133n8; Žába 1956, 122; Burkard 1991, 201n118-a, 203n182-a); Vernus 2010a, 155n83, 158n112) take =*sn*, ‘they’, to refer to the gods, which is a sensible interpretation. But see Miosi (1982, 80).

<sup>1006</sup> This passage in P. BM EA 10509 (= L2) has the same sense but employs a somewhat different grammatical structure and replaces the verb *rdj* with *wd*: *jjw wdd.t=sn ds.w jr.j* ‘(for) what was decreed by them comes by itself’.

<sup>1007</sup> Possibly the king (see Vernus 2010a, 157n100).

<sup>1008</sup> See the first note to maxim 6, v. D118 (see no. 4 above). Faulkner (1972a, 164) renders it as: ‘for property does not come of itself: such is its law for whoever desires it’.

<sup>1009</sup> On *hsf hr* see Junge (2003, 223) and Allen (2015, 183; 2011, 40-41 with n. 36).

<sup>1010</sup> See Žába (1956, 127). However, Pascal Vernus (2010a, 157n102) compares this passage with a hymn to Senusret III (P. London UC 32157 = P. Kahun LV.1, vv. 1.9-1.10) where it is said that the king watches over their subjects while they sleep, which may support the traditional interpretation of this verse.

(Žába 1956, 29,30, 78-79, 126-27; Dils 2014; Allen 2015, 182-83; Jacq 2004, 139-40; Junge 2003, 193, 221-23; Vernus 2010a, 119; Faulkner 1972a, 163-64; Tobin 2003b, 135; Burkard 1991, 203)

### 5.1 P. BM EA 10509 (= L2), maxim 10, vv. D175-D185

(L2 D175) (*jr šwʒ=k šms=k z(j) jkr* \* (L2 D176) *nfr sšm hr ntr* \* (L2 D177) *m rh.n=k ndsw=f dr-<sup>c</sup>* \*) If you are poor, may you serve a successful man<sup>1011</sup>, (L2 D176) who has a good conduct before god, (L2 D177) whose lower condition you have known from early on.

(L2 D178) (*jmj=k fʒj jb=k r=f* \* (D179) *hr rh.t.n=k jm=f hnt(.w)* \*) May you not be arrogant in relation to him, (D179) because of what you have learned about him before.

(D180) (*snd n=f hft hpr.wt<sup>1012</sup> n=f* \* (L2 D181) *n jyj.n js h.t ds=s* \*) Respect him in accordance to what has happened to him, (L2 D181) as things did not come of their own accord.

(L2 D182) (*hp=sn pw n mrr.t=sn* \*) It is their law for the one they love (or: for the one that desires them<sup>1013</sup>).

(L2 D183) (*jr ttf=f jw snd=tw n{=j}<f>* \*) As for his inundation, one respects him because of <it>.

(L2 D184) (*jn ntr jrr jkr* \* (D185) *hsf=f hr=f jw=f sdr.w* \*) It is god that makes success, (D185) and protects him (or: it (= the success)) while he sleeps.

(Žába 1956, 29-30, 78-79, 127; Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 119)

### 6. P. Prisse, maxim 12, vv. D197-D219

(D197) (*jr wnn=k m z(j) jkr* (D198) *jrj=k zʒ n s(j)mʒm ntr*) **If you are a successful man**, (D198) may you have a son to please god.

(D199) (*jr mt(j)=f phr=f n kd=k* (D202) *nwj=f h.t=k r st jr.j* (D203) *jrj n=f bw nb nfr*) If he is precise, serves your character, (D202) and takes care of your property, (D203) then do for him everything good.

(D204) (*zʒ=k pw n(.j) sw stj kʒ=k*) He is your son, he belongs to the ejaculation of your *ka*.

(D205) (*jmj=k jwd jb=k r=f*) You should not separate your mind (lit. *jb*-heart) from him.

(D206) (*jw mtw.t jrj=s šnty*) But a seed can cause enmity.

(D207) (*jr nnm=f thj=f šhr=k* (D210) *btn.n=f dd.t nb.t* (D211) *šm rʒ=f m md.t hs.t* (D215) *{k}<bʒ>k=k sw r rʒ=f mj-kd=f*) If he errs, disregards your counsel, (D210) disobeys everything said, (D211) and his mouth discourses vile speech, (D215) you should task him according to his mouth completely.

(D216) (*wdj <sup>c</sup> r=k m hbd.n=sn*) The one who stretches his hand against you is one whom they hated.

(D217) (*wdd sdb n=f pw m h.t*) An impediment<sup>1014</sup> is imposed<sup>1015</sup> to him in the belly<sup>1016</sup>.

<sup>1011</sup> Or: If you are poor and serving a successful man.

<sup>1012</sup> In the L2 version *hpr.t* is written with plural strokes, which confirms the reading as a perfective active participle used as a noun (see Allen 2010b, 337 §23.12, and Ockinga 2005, 65 § 102).

<sup>1013</sup> See the discussions by Žába (1956, 127) and Junge (2003, 222-23).

(D218) (*n nmm.n sšm=sn* (D219) *n gm.n jw.w=sn d3.t*) The one they guide cannot err<sup>1017</sup>, (D219) but the one they<sup>1018</sup> leave boatless cannot cross<sup>1019</sup> (lit. find a boat).

(Žába 1956, 31-33, 79-80, 129-32; Allen 2015, 184-86; Dils 2014; Junge 2003, 176, 225-26; Burkard 1991, 204; Vernus 2010a, 120-21; Faulkner 1972, 164; Tobin 2003b, 135-36; Silva 2010, 64; Adams 2008, 31)

### 6.1 P. BM EA 10509 (= L2), maxim 12, vv. D216-D217

(L2 D216) (*w<sup>c</sup> jm pw hbd.n=sn \**) He is one of those whom they hated.

(L2 D217) (*hwj.n ntr sdb.w=fpw m h.t \**) God stroke impediments against him<sup>1020</sup> in the belly.

(Žába 1956, 33, 80, 132; Dils 2014; Nyord 2009a, 503n4725; Vernus 2010a, 121)

### 7. P. Prisse, maxim 13, vv. D220-D231

(D220) (*jr wnn=k m rwy.t* (D221) *h<sup>c</sup> hmsj r nmt.w=k* (D222) *wdd n=k hrw tp(j)*) **If you are in the court (of justice?)**<sup>1021</sup>, (D221) **behave**<sup>1022</sup> according to your rank (D222) which was attributed to you on the first day.

(D223) (*m sw3 hpr šn<sup>c</sup>.t(w)=k*) Do not force (the entry), or it will turn out that you will be sent back.

(D224) (*spd hr n(j) k smj(.w)*) Sensible (lit. Sharp of face) is the one who enters summoned.

(D225) (*wsh s.t n.t j3š n=f*) Spacious is the place of the one who was called.

(D227) (*jw rwy.t r tp-hsb* (D228) *shr nb hft h3y*) The court has a correct method, (D228) and every procedure is according to measure<sup>1023</sup>.

(D229) (*jn ntr shnt s.t*) It is god who promotes a position.

(D231) (*n {jrr.w} <jrj.tw> rdj.w k<sup>c</sup>h*) Those who give the elbow are <not appointed>.

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<sup>1014</sup> The term *sdb* is of unclear meaning (Nyord 2009a, 503), although it is certain that it ‘denotes hostile acts’ (503; see also Junge 2003, 226; Jacq 2004, 225n64). Perhaps here the impediment refers to the son’s vile speech (see Nyord 2009a, 504).

<sup>1015</sup> The geminated verb *wdd* is taken here as an imperfective passive participle of *wdj*, and not a perfective passive participle of *wd*, as the expression *wdj sdb* is well attested (see Nyord 2009a, 503 with n. 4712; Žába 1956, 131). That expression, however, is often made with the preposition *r* (Nyord 2009a, 503), and the dative in this passage is misplaced (Žába 1956, 132). For these and other reasons, Žába (131-32) argues for the reading of *wd* and not *wdj*. See also Miosi (1982, 79).

<sup>1016</sup> It is plausible that the impediment is imposed on the son’s belly, rather than on his mother’s womb (Miosi 1982, 79).

<sup>1017</sup> The use of the same verb, *nmm*, is probably intended to explain the son’s behaviour on v. D207.

<sup>1018</sup> See the first note to maxim 6, v. D118 (see no. 4 above), and Faulkner (1972a, 164n19).

<sup>1019</sup> ‘The line means that there is no hope for one whom the gods have abandoned’ (Allen 2015, 186). On the term *d3j* see Jacq (2004, 223n42).

<sup>1020</sup> On the expression of the imposition of impediments with a genitive see Nyord (2009a, 503).

<sup>1021</sup> On *rwy.t* see Jacq (2004, 225n67), Vernus (2010a, 158n116), and Junge (2003, 226 with references).

<sup>1022</sup> See Allen (2015, 166, 187).

<sup>1023</sup> On *h3y* see Jacq (2004, 225n71).

(Žába 1956, 33-34, 80-81, 132-34; Dils 2014; Allen 2015, 186-87; Jacq 2004, 146-47; Faulkner 1972a, 164-65; Vernus 2010a, 122; Burkard 1991, 204-205; Junge 2003, 176, 226-27; Tobin 2003b, 136)

### 7.1 P. BM EA 10509 (= L2), maxim 13, vv. D229-D331

(L2 D229) (*jn ntr jrr jkr \** (L2 D230) *shnt s.t n.t h<sup>c</sup>.w-w3d \**) It is god who makes success, (L2 D230) and promotes the position of the new lads (lit. young bodies).

(L2 D331) (*n jnj=tw m rdj <sup>c</sup>.wj=fj \**) One does not succeed in forcing with (lit. giving) the arms.

(Žába 1956, 34, 81, 133; Dils 2014; Vernus (2010a, 122)

### 8. P. Prisse, maxim 22, vv. D339-D349

(D339) (*sh<sup>tp</sup> <sup>c</sup>k.w=k m hpr.t n=k* (D340) *hpr(.w) n hzz.w ntr*) **Please your friends**<sup>1024</sup> **with what has happened to you**, (D340) for it has come to one who is favoured by god.

(D341) (*jr whh m sh<sup>tp</sup> <sup>c</sup>k.w=f* (D342) *jw dd=tw k3 pw <sup>c</sup>3b(.t)*) As for the one who fails in pleasing his friends, (D342) one says: ‘it is a selfish *ka* (= character)<sup>1025</sup>’.

(D343) (*n rh.n=tw hpr.t sj3=f dw3*) One cannot know what will happen<sup>1026</sup> when he tries to discern tomorrow<sup>1027</sup>.

(D344) (*k3 pw k3 n(.j) mt(j) htp.w jm=f*) The *ka* (= character) of the well-adjusted (lit. righteous, traditional<sup>1028</sup>) is the *ka* (= character) with which one is pleased.

(D346) (*jr hpr sp.w n(.j)w hs.(w)t* (D347) *jn <sup>c</sup>k.w dd jy.wj*) If demonstrations of favour happen, (D347) it is friends<sup>1029</sup> who say: ‘Welcome!’

(D348) (*n jnj.tw htp.t r dmj* (D349) *jw jnj.tw <sup>c</sup>k.w wn 3k*) Contentment cannot be achieved<sup>1030</sup> (lit. be brought to harbour<sup>1031</sup>), (D349) but friends are brought when ruin steps in.

(Žába 1956, 43-44, 88-89/147-48; Dils 2014; Allen 2015, 197-98; Jacq 2004, 167-68; Junge 2003, 197, 238-40; Burkard 1991, 209; Vernus 2010a, 130; Faulkner 1972a, 168; Tobin 2003b, 139; Silva 2010, 54)

<sup>1024</sup> On <sup>c</sup>k.w see Allen (2015, 197) and Junge (2003, 238).

<sup>1025</sup> See Bolshakov (2001, 215).

<sup>1026</sup> Same formulation as in the *Instruction for Kagemni*, P. Prisse, v. 2.2 (see no. 3 above).

<sup>1027</sup> Interestingly, this verse is only attested in P. Prisse.

<sup>1028</sup> See Junge (2003, 239).

<sup>1029</sup> See the note to the first verse of this maxim.

<sup>1030</sup> Burkard (1991, 209) interprets this passage as a reference to the loss of royal favour. Junge (2003, 240) also takes vv. D348-D349 to be related to vv. D346-D347.

<sup>1031</sup> Similar construction in the *Eloquent Peasant*, P. Berlin P 3023 + P. Amherst I (= B1), vv. 355-356. But see the interpretations of Jacq (2004, 168), Vernus (2010a, 130), and Dils (2014).



## 9. P. Prisse, maxim 26, vv. D388-D398

(D388) (*m ḥsf tw m 3.t wr*) Do not set yourself against the moment of anger<sup>1032</sup> of a great one.

(D389) (*m šḥdn.w jb n(.j) n.tj 3tp.w* (D391) *ḥpr sdb=f r šnt sw* (D392) *sḥ k3<=f> m mrr sw*) Do not vex the mind (lit. *jb*-heart) of the one who is overwhelmed, (D391) as his impediment comes against the one who opposes him, (D392) and <his> *ka* (= providence<sup>1033</sup>) separates from the one who loves him.

(D393) (*dd k3.w pw ḥn<sup>c</sup> ntr*) He is one who gives nourishment<sup>1034</sup> together with god<sup>1035</sup>.

(D394) (*mrr.t=f jrr.t n=f*) What he desires is what is done for him.

(D395) (*skd{r} r=k ḥr m-ḥt nšn* (D397) *jw ḥtp ḥr k3=f jw sdbj ḥr ḥft(.j)*) Turn the face back after the rage, (D397) for contentment is with his *ka* (= providence?), and impediments are with the enemy<sup>1036</sup>.

(D398) (*k3.w pw srd mrw.t*) What makes love grow is nourishment.

(Žába 1956, 47, 92-93, 152-53; Dils 2014; Allen 2015, 202; Junge 2003, 198, 244-45; Burkard 1991, 211; Vernus 2010a, 133; Jacq 2004, 176-77; Faulkner 1972a, 169; Tobin 2003b, 141)

## 10. P. Prisse, maxim 33, vv. D463-D480

(D463) (*jr d<sup>r</sup>=k kd n(.j) ḥnms* (D464) *m šnn r=k tkn jm=f*) If you investigate the character of a friend, (D464) do not inquire one who is close to him.

(D465) (*jrj zp ḥn<sup>c</sup>=f w<sup>c</sup>.w* (D466) *r tm.t=k mn ḥr.t=f*) Deal with him alone, (D466) until you no longer suffer with his character.

(D467) (*d3js ḥn<sup>c</sup>=f m-ḥt ḥ<sup>c</sup>.w* (D470) *wšm jb=f m zp n(.j) md.t*) Talk with him after a time, (D470) and test his *jb*-heart in conversation (lit. an occasion of speech).

(D471) (*jr prj m33.t.n=f m-<sup>c</sup>=f* (D472) *jr=f zp šp.t=k ḥr=f* (D473) *ḥnms sw r-pw* (D474) *m jtw ḥr*) If what he has seen comes out of him<sup>1037</sup>, (D472) and he makes something over which you get angered, (D473) befriend him, otherwise (D474) do not turn the face!

(D475) (*s3k.w m wb3 n=f md.t*) Restrain yourself in revealing a matter to him.

(D476) (*m wšb m zp n(.j) šh3*) Do not answer in an angry way.

(D477) (*m wj(3) tw r=f m hb.w sw*) Do not separate yourself from him, and do not humiliate him.

(D479) (*n p3 zp=f tm jwj*) Never has his time<sup>1038</sup> failed to come.

(D480) (*n wh.n=tw m š3 sw*) One cannot escape from the one who ordained it (or: him)<sup>1039</sup>.

<sup>1032</sup> See Allen (2015, 173, 202) and Vernus (2010a, 133).

<sup>1033</sup> See Bolshakov (2001, 215), Allen (2015, 202), and compare with *Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, maxim 7, vv. D136-D137, and maxim 27, v. D404. The following verse (D393) also suggests this meaning.

<sup>1034</sup> Cf. Žába (1956, 92) and Junge (2003, 244-45).

<sup>1035</sup> This verse is only attested in P. Prisse.

<sup>1036</sup> See Nyord (2009a, 504n4731).

<sup>1037</sup> Probably due to indiscretion (e.g., Burkard 1991, 214n471-a)).

<sup>1038</sup> ‘Time’ fits well with the following verse, but *zp* occurs throughout this maxim with other meanings and it is possible that in this verse it means ‘case’ (see Allen 2015, 210; Junge 2003, 254). Allen (2015, 210) suggests the sense of this verse is ‘come up for judgment’ (see also Junge 2003, 254). In P. BM EA 10371 + 10435 (= L1) the text has *ph(.wj)*, ‘end’, instead of *zp*.

(Žába 1956, 52-54, 97-98,156-57; Allen 2015, 209-10; Dils 2014; Junge 2003, 200-201, 252-54; Jacq 2004, 187-98; Vernus 2010a, 139; Burkard 1991, 214; Faulkner 1972a, 171; Tobin 2003b, 143; Silva 2010, 90)

### 11. P. Prisse, epilogue, maxim 39, vv. D543-D554

(D543) (*nfr.wj šzp z3 dd jt=f* (D544) *hpr n=f j3w.t hr=s*) How good when a son receives what his father said, (D544) old age comes to him through it.

(D545) (*mrr.w ntr pw sdm* (D546) *n sdm.n msdd.w ntr*) The one who listens is the one whom god loves; (D546) the one whom god hates cannot listen<sup>1040</sup>.

(D550) (*jn jb shpr nb=f* (D551) *m sdm m tm sdm*) It is the *jb*-heart that makes its possessor (D551) one who listens, or one who does not listen.

(D552) (*ʿnh wd3 snb n z(j) jb=f*) His *jb*-heart is life, soundness, and health for a man.

(D553) (*jn sdm.w sdm dd* (D554) *mrr sdm pw jrr dd.t*) It is the listener who listens to the one who speaks; (D554) the one who does what is said is the one who loves to listen.

(Žába 1956, 58-59, 101,164; Allen 2015, 216-18; Dils 2014; Burkard 1991, 217-18; Vernus 2010a, 143; Jacq 2004, 200-201; Junge 2003, 203, 259; Faulkner 1972a, 173; Tobin 2003b, 146; Silva 2010, 64)

### 12. P. Prisse, epilogue, maxim 45, vv. D628-D637

(D628) (*jrj r dd.t nb=k r=k* (D629) *nfr.wy sb3 n(j) jt=f*) **Act until your lord says about you:** (D629) ‘How good is the teaching of his father.

(D630) (*pr.n=f jm=f hnt hʿ.w=f* (D631) *dd.n=f n=f jw=f m h.t r-3w*) When he came forth from him, from his body<sup>1041</sup>, (D631) he spoke to him when he was entirely in the womb.

(D632) (*wr jr.t.n=f r dd.t n=f*) What he did is greater than what was said to him.

(D633) (*mk z3 nfr n(j) dd ntr* (D634) *rdj h3.w hr dd.t n=f hr nb=f*) See, a good son of god’s giving, (D634) who does more than (lit. ‘puts excess into’) what was said to him by his lord.

(D635) (*jrj=f m3ʿ.t* (D636) *jrj.n jb=f r nmt.(w)t=f*) He did Maʿat (D636) (when) his *jb*-heart acted according to his position<sup>1042</sup>.

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<sup>1039</sup> Or: One cannot be unsuccessful with the one who determined him (Junge 2003, 254). Žába (1956, 157) suggests the one who determines/ordains is god.

<sup>1040</sup> Both verses are attested in P. BM EA 10371+10435 (= L1), but are corrupted and the verbs *mrr.w* and *msdd.w* (assuming those were the words written) are not preserved. On v. D545 the *.w* of *mrr.w*, presumably, is preserved. Therefore, this copy is unfortunately of little help in figuring out the verb forms of *mrr.w* and *msdd.w*. All of the consulted authors, bar Vernus (2010a, 143) concerning v. D545, take them to be imperfective relative *sdm=fs*. As pointed out by Žába (1956, 164), it is possible to interpret them as imperfective active participles and translate the verses as: ‘The one who listens is one who loves god; the one who hates god cannot listen’. But Žába himself recognises that ‘le sens ainsi obtenu est moins satisfasant’. On this subject see further Silva (2010, 67-73).

<sup>1041</sup> See Jacq (2004, 231n142).

<sup>1042</sup> Compare with maxim 13, v. D221.

(Žába 1956, 64, 104-105, 171; Allen 2015, 224-25; Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 147-48; Burkard 1991, 221; Jacq 2004, 214-15; Junge 2003, 205, 265-66; Faulkner 1972a, 175; Tobin 2003b, 148; Silva 2010, 43)

### *Instruction of Khety*

#### 13. P. Sallier II = P. BM EA 10182, section 30, vv. 30.1-30.5

(30.1) (*m=k{y} rnn.t hr w3.t ntr \**) See, Renenet is on the path of god<sup>1043</sup>.

(*rnn.t zh3.w hr kʿh{.t}=f \* hrw n(.j) ms.w(t)=f \**) The Renenet of a scribe is upon his shoulder the day of his birth.

(30.2) (*spr=f r {ny.t} <ʿrr.yt{.w}> \* t3 knb.t jrj n r(m)t \**) When he arrives at the <gate><sup>1044</sup>, the courthouse will send him men.

(30.3) (*m=k{y} nn zh3.w{w} šwj <m> wnm \* <m> 3h.t n.tj pr-ns w ʿnh-(w)d3-s(nb) \**) See, there is no scribe without food or resources of the royal palace, life-prosperity-health.

(30.4) (*mshn.t {w3d.t} <wd.t n> zh3.w \* dd{.yw}=<st> <sw> hr-h3.t knb.t [\*]*) Meskhenet, who <assigns> the scribe, <it> places <him> before the courthouse<sup>1045</sup>.

(30.5) (*{dw3} <dw3> ntr <n> jt=<k> mw.t={f}=<k> \* dd{.yw} <tw> hr w3.t n.t{t} ʿnh.w \**) <Praise> god<sup>1046</sup> <for> <your> father and <your> mother, who placed <you> on the path of the living. (Canhão 2014, 920-22; Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 251; Simpson 2003g, 436-37)

### *Instruction of a Man for His Son*

#### 14. O. DeM 1665 + O. Gardiner 1, section 3, vv. 3.1-3.7

(3.1) (*jn jw hrw n(.j) rnn.t hr th3.tw=f*) Can a day of Renenet transgress itself (or: him)?

(3.2) (*jn <jw> w3h.tw hrw [n(.jw)] ʿhʿ.w*) Is a day [of] lifetime added?

(3.3) (*j[n jw hb3.tw jm=f r3-pw]*) [Or is it (= a day) removed from it (= lifetime)]<sup>1047</sup>?

(3.4) (*mshn.t mj sp tp.j*) **Meskhenet is as the first time.**

(*nn hđj š3{ʿ}<(.t)> n={j}<f>*) No one can disobey<sup>1048</sup> what was ordained for <him><sup>1049</sup>.

<sup>1043</sup> To the knowledge of the present author, all other copies repeat the same formulation with Renenet. The only exception is T. Louvre N 693: *m=k rdj.n=j tw hr w3.t ntr*, ‘See, I put you on the path of god’ (on the interpretation of this verse as a speech act see Canhão (2014, 945n161 with references) and Vernus (2010a, 262n99 with references)). This might be the *lectio difficilior*, but the variation may have made sense to the audiences. Canhão (2014, 945-46n161) conciliates both versions in suggesting that the goddess acts through the human father.

<sup>1044</sup> See Vernus (2010a, 263n102).

<sup>1045</sup> On the professional ‘predestination’ of the scribe see Vernus (2010a, 262-63n100).

<sup>1046</sup> See the first note to v. 4.10 of the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV* (= P. BM EA 10684 verso) (see no. 35 below).

<sup>1047</sup> Verse reconstructed using O. P. 14374 and O. DeM 1266+.

(3.5) ( $m=k\{j\}-js\{j\}$   $wr\ hz\{j\}\langle w.t\rangle\ n.t$  [ $ntr$ ] (3.6) [ $\epsilon_3\ hsf=f\ r3-sj\ *$ ]) But see<sup>1050</sup>: great is the favour of [god]<sup>1051</sup>, (3.6) [extremely great is his punishment]<sup>1052</sup>.

( $[wr\ b3.w=f]$  (3.7) [ $m\{33.n=j\}kf3.t\langle=f\rangle$ ] [Great is his power]<sup>1053</sup>, (3.7) for I have seen <his> fame<sup>1054</sup>.

( $nn\ hpr\ s[p]t\langle=f\rangle\ r\ hh$ ) Does <his> anger against millions<sup>1055</sup> ever happen? (or: <his> anger against millions never happens)<sup>1056</sup>.

(Fischer-Elfert 1999a, 58-65; 1999b; Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 282; Simpson 2003c, 176-77; Fecht 1978, 27-28, 31-32)

## 15. O. DeM 1665 + O. Gardiner 1, section 4, vv. 4.1-4.10

(4.1) ( $jw=f\ shpr=f\ \langle h\rangle\ m\{h\}\ j[w\ rh]$ ) He makes the ignorant change into [one who knows].

(4.2) ( $[m]s[dd\ hpr\ m\ mr.wt]$ ) [The one who was hated changed into one who is loved]<sup>1057</sup>.

(4.3) ( $[jw=f\ dj=f]\ snj\ \{r\}\ kt\{k\}t\ \langle r\rangle\ wr.w$ ) [He causes] that the small one may come close <to> the great ones.

(4.4) ( $[hr(j)-ph.wj]\ m\ tp.j$ ) [The one who was last] is (now) the first.

(4.5) ( $\{šwj\ \langle m\rangle\ hr.t\ m\ nb\ \epsilon_h.w$ ) **The one who was empty <of> goods is (now) a possessor of wealth.**

(4.6) ( $\epsilon_n\ \langle d\rangle\ m\ nb\ hnw$ ) The unimportant is (now) a possessor of a clientele<sup>1058</sup>.

(4.7) ( $[jw=f\ dj=f\ mnj]\ šwj\ \langle m\rangle\ mnj$ ) [He causes] the one who is empty <of> mooring [to moor].

(4.8) ( $s[wn\ m\ nb\ d]mj.t$ ) The [destitute is (now) possessor of an]<sup>1059</sup> estate.

(4.9) ( $jw=f\ sb3[=fj3]bb\ r\ [mdwj.t]$  (4.10) [ $swb3=f\ \epsilon_nh.wj\ jd.w$ ]) He teaches the mute (how) to [speak],

(4.10) [by clearing the ears of the deaf]<sup>1060</sup>.

(Fischer-Elfert 1999a, 68-79; 1999b; Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 282; Simpson 2003c, 177)

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<sup>1048</sup> See Fischer-Elfert (1999a, 60).

<sup>1049</sup> Other readings are possible, namely 1) ‘( $nn\ hdj\ š3\ \epsilon(.t)\{=j\}.n=f$ ) no one can destroy what he began’, and 2) ‘( $nn\ hdj\ š3\ \epsilon(.t).n=f$ ) no one can invalidate what he ordained’; see Fischer-Elfert (1999a, 60) and Dils (2014). See further Fecht (1978, 27-28).

<sup>1050</sup> On  $m=k-js$  see Fischer-Elfert (1999a, 61).

<sup>1051</sup> Restored after O. Gardiner 318.

<sup>1052</sup> Following O. Gardiner 35.

<sup>1053</sup> Following O. Gardiner 35.

<sup>1054</sup> On the possible magical properties of  $kf3.t$  see Fischer-Elfert (1999a, 63).

<sup>1055</sup> The term  $šp.t$  is only attested in O. DeM 1665 + O. Gardiner 1. All other copies where the passage is preserved have  $š3.w$  ( $š3.wt$  in the Leather roll BM EA 10258). That would make  $šp.t$  the *lectio difficilior* as Fischer-Elfert (1999a, 64) points out. The same is true of  $hr=f$  which replaces  $hh$  in O. Gardiner 35. Audiences might have been more exposed to the alternatives, however. For the alternative translations see Vernus (2010a, 282), Fecht (1978, 32), and the comment on this verse in the translation of O. Gardiner 35 in Dils (2014).

<sup>1056</sup> This possibly indicates there is no political opposition because of the king (Fischer-Elfert 1999a, 65), since there is no one to make the king angry.

<sup>1057</sup> Restoration according to O. Gardiner 35.

<sup>1058</sup> On the clientele system see for instance Gnirs (2000, 135-43).

<sup>1059</sup> Restoration according to O. Louvre 23561.

<sup>1060</sup> Restored using O. IFAO OL 416 recto (previously without number).

## 16. O. Louvre 23561, section 5, vv. 5.1-5.5

(5.1) (*jw nn r-3w m-hnw ḥ<sup>c</sup>.w \**) All this is within a lifetime,

(5.2a) (*m-{r}rw.tj <hrw> n(.j) rnn.t \**) outside of the <day> of Renenet.

(5.2b) (*nn smn mshn.t {tw} r=s \**) (5.3) (*wp{t}-hr smn t3w r fnd=f \**) Meskhenet cannot establish (anything) against it, (5.3) except to establish the breath for his nose.

(5.4) (*wr n=k m-<sup>c</sup>=k* 5.5) (*jrj.n=k ḥ<sup>c</sup>.w=k \* m-hnw shr.w ntr=k \**) **Greatness belongs (or: will belong) to you, (5.5) as long as you have spent your Lifetime within the plans of your god**<sup>1061</sup>.

(Fischer-Elfert 1999a, 82-84; 1999b; Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 282; Simpson 2003c, 177)

## 17. O. Berlin P. 11288, section 17, vv. 17.1-17.4

(17.1) (*[m jt m]d.t jn s.t \**) Do not take a word and bring it back<sup>1062</sup>.

(17.2) (*m sdm sdw.t r k<y> \**) Do not listen to slander about another.

(17.3) (*m h{r}nn md.wt [n.jt ḥ<sup>d</sup>]*) Do not approve of the words [of the wrongdoer]<sup>1063</sup>.

(17.4) (*[wd<sup>c</sup> sw ntr m hpr.w=f]*) [God judges him in his form (of ...)]<sup>1064</sup>.

(Fischer-Elfert 1999a, 174-77; 1999b; Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 286)

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<sup>1061</sup> Compare with the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV* (= P. BM EA 10684 verso, v. 5.6) (see no. 35 below).

<sup>1062</sup> This may be a quotation of the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, v. D608, as suggested by Fischer-Elfert (1999a, 174), and the lacuna is restored on that assumption. On the probability that Ptahhotep is the quoted text and not the other way around, see Fischer-Elfert (1999a, 318) and Hagen (2012, 170). On the meaning of the expression see Žába (1956, 169).

<sup>1063</sup> Following the tentative proposal of Fischer-Elfert (1999a, 176).

<sup>1064</sup> Reconstructed from O. DeM 1818 = O. IFAO 2719 verso and O. Gardiner 382. A lacuna follows this verse on all available copies. In the source used here, after v. 17.4 only the final verse (17.7) is preserved.

## *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu*

### 18. S. Cairo CG 20538, section 5 ('short version'<sup>1065</sup>), vv. 5.1-5.2, 5.9-5.14

(5.1) (*k3 pw nsw.t h3.w pw r3=f*) The king is a *ka*, his mouth is abundance.

(5.2) (*shpr=f pw wnn.t(j)=f(j)*) The one who will become someone is the one he reared<sup>1066</sup>.

(5.9) (*hnm.w pw n h<sup>c</sup>.w nb*) (5.10) (*wtt.w shpr rh.yt*) He is a Khnum for each body, (5.10) the begetter who engenders the masses.

(5.11) (*b3s.tt pw hwj.t-t3.wy*) He is Bastet who protects the Two Lands<sup>1067</sup>.

(5.12) (*jw dw3 sw r nh.w <sup>c</sup>=f*) The one who praises him is protected by his arm.

(5.13) (*sh<sup>m</sup>.t pw r thj wd.t=f*) He is Sekhmet against the one who transgresses what he decrees.

(5.14) (*jw s3=f r hr(j) sm3.w*) The one whom he hates will be in distress<sup>1068</sup>.

(Canhão 2014, 845-47; Dils 2014; Allen 2015, 156-57, 159; Vernus 2010a, 269; Simpson 2003d, 173; Schipper 1998, 164)

### 18.1 O. Ashmolean 1938.912, section 5 ('longue version'<sup>1069</sup>), vv. 5.1-5.14

(5.1) (*n(j)-sw.t k3.w pw hw pw r3=f\**) The king is nourishment, his mouth is Hu<sup>1070</sup>.

(5.2) (*shpr{.wt}=f pw m wnj md.wt \**) He is one he reared (?). Do not neglect<sup>1071</sup> my words.

(5.3) (*jw<sup>c</sup>.w{t} pw n(j){t} ntr nb{.t} \**) (5.4) (*nd.tj km3.w sw \**) He is the heir to each god, (5.4) protector of the ones who fashioned him.

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<sup>1065</sup> The *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu* may be divided into two parts: the first part ranges from section 1 to section 9, and the second part from section 9 to section 14 according to Vernus (2010a, 265-66); Schipper (1998, 162n7) notes that the dividing line is disputed between the eighth or ninth section, and indeed section 8 can be seen as smoothing the transition between the two parts. This instruction can be considered as a whole only by joining its only extant attestation from the Middle Kingdom, which preserves the text up to section 6 (roughly its first part), with attestations dating from the New Kingdom, which make up the remaining part of the text and also expand or modify its first part. Vernus (2010a, 265) is followed here in considering the stela of Sehetepibre (Cairo CG 20538) the 'short version', and the New Kingdom copies that expand on it the 'long version'. This distinction has the advantage of conveniently differentiating the only extant Middle Kingdom copy from the New Kingdom copies, but is not meant here as a reference to an *Urtext* which was condensed in the Middle Kingdom and copied in its full extension in the New Kingdom – on that perspective see Vernus (2010a, 265) and Canhão (2014, 831). Instead, the 'long version' may have been created in the early New Kingdom, a time at which the theme of loyalism was again in vogue (Vernus 2010a, 266), rather than copied from earlier Middle Kingdom sources; on this subject see further Allen (2015, 155) and Hagen (2012, 226-27 with references).

<sup>1066</sup> Compare with the *Instruction of a Man for His Son*, O. DeM 1665 + O. Gardiner 1, section 4 (no. 15 above). On this topic see Vernus (2010a, 275n16) and Assmann (1980, 14-15).

<sup>1067</sup> On the mobilisation of Bastet in this passage see Canhão (2014, 864n19).

<sup>1068</sup> Vernus (2010a, 269) suggests 'vagabondage', and Canhão (2014, 847) 'miséria'.

<sup>1069</sup> See the note in the heading of no. 18 above.

<sup>1070</sup> On Hu as the deified word see Vernus (2010a, 275n17) and Sales (1999, 416). See also Assmann (2001, 4) on the combination of abundance and speech in Hu.

<sup>1071</sup> On *wnj* see Shupak (1993, 82).

(5.5) (*hww=sn n=f šnt.yw=f \** (5.6) *jst hm=f ḥnh(.w) (w)d3(.w) s(nb.w) m ḥ=f ḥnh(.w) (w)d3(.w) s(nb.w) \**) They strike his opposers for him, (5.6) while<sup>1072</sup> his majesty, alive, sound, and healthy, is in his palace, alive, sound, and healthy.

(5.7) (*tm.w pw n t(3)s wsr.wt \**) He is Atum to the one who ties on necks<sup>1073</sup>.

(5.8) (*jw z3=f r-ḥ3 dd b3.w=f \**) His protection is behind the one who makes known (lit. causes) his power<sup>1074</sup>.

(5.9) (*hnm.w pw n hr-nb \** (5.10) *wtt.jw shpr rh.yt \**) He is Khnum for everyone, (5.10) the begetter who created the masses.

(5.11) (*b3s.tt pw hwj(.t)-t3.wy \**) He is Bastet who protects the Two Lands.

(5.13) (*sh̄m.t pw <r> thj m wd.n=f \**) He is Sekhmet <against> the one who transgresses what he decreed.

(5.14) (*{3} <jw> sd3.w=f r hr.j šm3.yw=f \**) The one he makes tremble will be under his *šm3.yw*-demons.

(Canhão 2014, 845-46; Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 269-70; Schipper 1998, 167-68)

## 19. P. Louvre E 4864 recto, section 12 (long version)<sup>1075</sup>, vv. 12.1-12.10

(12.1) (*nhb b3k[.w r-d3w.t šmḥ]* (12.2) [*m3ḥ.tj pw] hr jb n(j){.t} ntr \**) **The one who sets tax[es in accordance to barley]**<sup>1076</sup>, (12.2) [is a just one]<sup>1077</sup> in the mind (lit. *jb*-heart) of god<sup>1078</sup>.

(12.3) (*nn [spj].n ḥḥ.w n(j) jzf.tj{w} \** (12.4) *n gmj.n m[s.w=f d3.t=f] [\*]*) The goods of the wrongdoer are not [preserved], (12.4) [his children] will not find [his share].

(12.5) (*[jrj sf̄n.w] ph.wj ḥnh=f \** (12.6) *nn-wn [ms.w]=f tkn jb \**) [The troublemaker] will make the end of his life, (12.6) he will have no [children] close to the *jb*-heart.

(12.7) (*wr mr.wt n.t sw3 hr=[f] [\*]* (12.8) [*nn jwḥ.w n ḥsf ḥ3.tj \**]) Great is the love of the one who goes over [himself]<sup>1079</sup>; [there will be no heirs for the one who opposes the *ḥ3.tj*-heart]<sup>1080</sup>.

<sup>1072</sup> Canhão (2014, 845 with n. 15) translates as ‘now’.

<sup>1073</sup> This may be a euphemism for high officials (Dils 2014 with references). By drawing a comparison with the *Tales of Papyrus Westcar*, P. Berlin P 3033, v. 7.4, and with the *Eloquent Peasant*, P. Berlin P 3023 + P. Amherst I (= B1), vv. 319-321, Canhão (2014, 863n16) cogently argues that the expression ‘to tie necks’, besides having the figurative meaning of ‘to give life’, is a metaphor for the solution of difficult problems, both by the king and by officials. In the present case, Canhão (846, 863n16) takes the expression to apply to the king, and translates accordingly: ‘Ele é Atum porque une pescocös’ (846). The expression *t3s wsr.t* is also used in the funerary literature. On its use in the Coffin Texts see Nyord (2009a, 225).

<sup>1074</sup> Different interpretation in Canhão (2014, 846, 863n17).

<sup>1075</sup> See the note in the heading of no. 18 above

<sup>1076</sup> Reconstruction from T. Carnarvon 2.

<sup>1077</sup> See Dils (2014). Assmann (2006a, 65n26, 94n11) reconstructs the word as Ma’at which would have a parallel in the stela of Neferhotep I (see the following note).

<sup>1078</sup> Compare this passage with the stela of Neferhotep I, Cairo JE 6307, v. 40. The similarity was also noted by Assmann (2006a, 65n26).

<sup>1079</sup> Different sentence in T. Carnarvon 2. See Canhão (2014, 856 with n. 47) and Dils (2014).

<sup>1080</sup> Reconstructed from P. Amherst; see Dils (2014).

(12.9) (*wr šf.yt n.t nb n(j) [hr.t]=f \** (12.10) *šš hrw jzf.t hr jb \**) Great is the respect inspired by the one who has his own [wealth] (lit. who is lord of his goods); (12.10) boast is wrongdoing to the mind (lit. *jb*-heart)<sup>1081</sup>.

(Canhão 2014, 855-57; Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 273, 278; Römheld 1989, 163)

## *Instruction for the King Merikare*

### 20. P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, vv. 35-38

(35) (*snj r jt.w=k [tp(j)w-š.w=k \**) **Emulate your fathers and your ancestors.**

(*bšk=tw [...] m rh[...] \**) One works [...] through knowledge/as a knowledgeable one<sup>1082</sup> [...].

(*m=k mdw.t=sn mn m zhš.w \**) See, their<sup>1083</sup> words are set in stone (lit. established in writing).

(36) (*pgš šdj=k snj=k r rh \* hpr hmw.w m sbbš.yw \**) Unfold (them), so that you read and emulate the knowledge, for an expert comes out of one who is instructed<sup>1084</sup>.

(*m dwj nfr wšh-jb [\*]*) Do not do evil, self-restraint<sup>1085</sup> is good.

(37) (*swšh mn.w=k m mr.wt=k \**) Make the memory of you last through the love of you.

(*sšš [mn.yw] hnm n(j) njw.t \* dwš=tw ntr hr fkš.w \* sbj.w hr [rn]=k [\*]*) Multiply [the workers]<sup>1086</sup> belonging to a town, so that one praises god<sup>1087</sup> over the rewards sent because of your [name].

(38) (*dwš.w hr nfr=k \* nhj snb=k n [ntr.w] [\*]*) One will pray for your goodness, and pray for your health to [the gods].

(Helck 1977, 19-20; Quack 1992, 24-27, 169-70; Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 185; Faulkner 1972b, 182; Tobin 2003c, 155-56; Leitz 1996, 135)

### 21. P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, vv. 46-53

(46) (*jrj (47) mš.t wšh=k tp tš*) **Do Ma'at, so that<sup>1088</sup> you endure upon earth.**

(*sgrj rm.w m šjr hšr.t m nš z(j) hr h.t jt=f m hđj (48) sr.w hr ns.wt=sn*) Quiet the weeper, do not oppress the widow, do not deprive a man from his patrimony (lit. things of his father), and do not demote (48) officials from their seats.

<sup>1081</sup> Meaning that the one who boasts about what he does not have is not taken seriously.

<sup>1082</sup> See Dils (2014).

<sup>1083</sup> Although a lacuna intervenes, it seems plausible that the reference is to the *tpj.w-š.w*.

<sup>1084</sup> See Shupak (1993, 228).

<sup>1085</sup> See Rueda (2003, 178, 337).

<sup>1086</sup> See Helck (1977, 20).

<sup>1087</sup> Not everyone agrees with the type of construction intended. Quack (1992, 26-27) interprets it as *dwš tw ntr* and renders the passage as 'Gott wird dich preisen'. Faulkner (1972b, 182) interprets it as *dwš.tw ntr* and translates 'then will god be praised'. See also the comment by Dils (2014). On *dwš ntr* see also the first note to v. 4.10 of the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV* (= P. BM EA 10684 verso) (see no. 35 below).

<sup>1088</sup> The translation 'while' is also possible (e.g., Helck 1977, 27), but a clause of purpose (e.g., Quack 1992, 33) is justified by the recurrent logic in this instruction of the *Tun-Ergehen-Zusammenhang*.



(z3w.tj hr hsf m nf) Guard against punishing wrongfully<sup>1089</sup>.

(m skrj nn st 3h n=k) Do not execute, when it is not useful to you.

(hsf=k m hw.yw (49) m z3.wtj (?) \*) Punish with beatings (49) and imprisonment.

(jw b pn r grg hr=s \* wpw-[hr s]bj gmj sh=f\*) This land will then be solid because of that, except [for] the rebel, who devised his plan.

(jw ntr rh.w h3k.w-jb.w \* (50) hwj ntr sdb=f hr znf\*) God knows the estranged (lit. ‘resented of jb-heart’<sup>1090</sup>), (50) and god implants impediments against him in the blood<sup>1091</sup>.

(jn zfn.w [s3w=f]<sup>1092</sup> h<sup>c</sup>.w \*) It is the mild<sup>1093</sup> who [prolongs] the lifetime.

(m sm3m z(j) jw=k rh.tj 3h.w=f\* (51) p3.n=k hsj zh3.w hn<sup>c</sup>=f\* šdj m sjp.w [...] <sup>1094</sup> hr ntr \* wstnj rd m s.t šb3.t \*) Do not kill a man, whose usefulness<sup>1095</sup> you know, (51) with whom you sang the writings, who was raised as one who is inspected [...] <sup>1096</sup> for (?) god, and has freedom of access in the secret place (= the private places in the palace)<sup>1097</sup>.

(52) (jwj b3 r s.t rh.w.n=f\* n thj{t}.n=f w3.wt=f n.t sf\*) The<sup>1098</sup> ba comes to the place it knows, without diverging from its days of yesterday.

(n hsf.n sw hk3.w nb \* spr=f r dd.yw (53) mw=f\*) No magic can stop it from reaching the ones who give him (53) water.

(Quack 1992, 32-35, 172-74; Dils 2014; Helck 1977, 27-30; Vernus 2010a, 186-87, 206; Tobin 2003c, 157; Faulkner 1972b, 183)

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<sup>1089</sup> Compare with v. 31.

<sup>1090</sup> Allen (2010b, 467) suggests instead ‘truncated of heart’.

<sup>1091</sup> Quack (1992, 33nc)) argues that the preposition *hr* (also present in P. Moskau 4658) indicates the motive of the punishment (also Tavares 2007, 238n104; Dils 2014). Vernus (2010a, 186) takes the passage to mean, literally, that god strikes the estranged man’s subjugation at the price of blood (similarly Quirke 2004, 114). Helck (1977, 29) takes it to mean that god strikes with blood (similarly Faulkner 1972b, 183; Tobin 2003c, 157). However, the preposition *hr* is taken here to mean where the impediment is implanted (similarly Muhlestein 2007, 119), because *hwj sdb* followed by a preposition, usually *r*, or no preposition at all, seems to be an expression indicating the implantation of impediments (Nyord 2009a, 503). In addition, the genitive, in this case indicated by the suffix pronoun attached to *sdb*, has the sense of impediments against the subject evoked (503). Although blood is not frequently described as a container, at least in the *Coffin Texts* (Nyord 2009a, 332), in the *Coffin Texts* spell 94, 69a, another term for ‘blood’, *dšr.w*, is described as a container: *jnk b3 m-hnw dšr.w=f*, ‘I am the *ba* within his blood’ (Nyord 2009a, 434). In light of this use of the term, it is conceivable that *ntr* implants the impediment in the blood of the rebels in the passage from *Merikare* under consideration. However, what would this mean is not entirely clear, although one may conjecture a punishment ranging from a physical disease to a blind rage leading to (potentially fatal) mistakes – assuming that the association between *dšr.w* and rage (Nyord 2009a, 328-29) may be extrapolated to *znf*.

<sup>1092</sup> Restoration according to Helck (1977, 28), but overlooked by Quack (see Leitz 1996, 135).

<sup>1093</sup> There is clearly a wordplay between *znf* in the previous sentence and *zfn* in the present one.

<sup>1094</sup> Two squares lacuna.

<sup>1095</sup> Pascal Vernus (2010a, 51, 206) takes *3h.w* in this context to mean ‘talents’. But ‘usefulness’ (to the king) seems to fit the context better (see also Dils 2014; Quack 1992, 33).

<sup>1096</sup> Two squares lacuna (see Quack 1992, 174).

<sup>1097</sup> Compare this passage with *The Prohibitions*, O. DeM 1633 and O. Petrie 11 recto = UC 39614, v. A15 (see Hagen 2005, 144, 148). See also Vernus (2010a, 387n10).

<sup>1098</sup> What follows probably describes the benefits of following the counsel in this section (see also Vernus 2010a, 198n35).

## 22. P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, vv. 68-75

(68) (*jw d3m.w* (69) *r 3jr d3m.w* \* *mj sr{.w}.n tp(.j).w-<sup>c</sup> r=s* \*) **Recruits** (69) **will drive away recruits**, according to the foretelling of ancestors about it.

(*h3 r km.t* (70) *m hr(.jt)-ntr* \* *m 3d jz.w{t} m 3d.t zp.w* \* *jw jr.n=j mj.t(j)t hpr mj.t(j)t* \* *mj jr.t(w) n {n}* (71) *thj{.t} n mj.t(j)t m-<sup>c</sup> ntr* \*) One fought against Egypt<sup>1099</sup> (70) in the necropolis<sup>1100</sup>, by hacking tombs<sup>1101</sup> and through the destruction<sup>1102</sup> of deeds<sup>1103</sup>. I did the same and the same happened, like is done through god<sup>1104</sup> to (71) one who transgresses with the same.

(*m bjn hn<sup>c</sup> -rs.j* \* *jw=k rh.tj sr.n hnw r=s* \*) Do not be evil with Upper Egypt, as you know what the Residence has foretold about it<sup>1105</sup>.

(72) (*hpr.n <n>f [mj] hpr<.t> nm* \* *n thj{.t}.n=sn mj dd=sn [r=s* \*) This happened as that will happen. They<sup>1106</sup> did not transgress, just as they said about it.

(*hzz=j tnw mkj (?) {j} [\*]* (73) [*B*]*s=s rs.j{.t} r [t3.t (?)* \* *jtj.n=j s(j) mj gp n(.j) mw* \*) I chose (lit. favoured) Thinis and *Mkj (?)*<sup>1107</sup> (73), its southern border by [Tjat (?)], and I seized it like a flash flood (lit. cloud of water).

<sup>1099</sup> In P. Moscow 4658 the preposition *r* is absent, which leads several translators to emend the passage in P. Petersburg 1116A (e.g., Dils 2014). Quack (1992, 43nb)) rejects that reading.

<sup>1100</sup> Quack (1992, 42-43 with n. b)) takes *hr(.jt)-ntr* to mean that those who would fight against Egypt would be subjugated by *ntr* (*dem Gott unterworfen*). However, unless the text is corrupted as suggested by Quack (1992, 85-86), the writing of *hr(.jt)-ntr* on v. 70 (see Quack 1992, 178) is consistent with the usual and expected writing for ‘necropolis’ (see Faulkner 1962, 204).

<sup>1101</sup> Dils (2014), Lopez (1973, 181), Helck (1977, 42), Tobin (2003c, 159), and Tavares (2007, 238 with n. 111), emend *jz.wt* to *jz.w*, ‘tombs’. As pointed out by Quack (1992, 44nc)), who leaves this passage untranslated because of the difficulty in producing a more convincing rendering, the reading ‘tombs’ is not possible without emendation and is therefore debatable. Faulkner (1972b, 185), Leitz (1996, 138), and Vernus (2010a, 189) prefer the more neutral ‘ancient buildings’. Even if the text does indeed refer to tombs, Quack (1992, 86) rejects the idea that tombs were plundered, because the verb *h<sup>c</sup>* used at the beginning of the passage refers only to military fighting and not to tomb robbing. He further argues that, in case of fightings in a necropolis, no weapons capable of destroying tombs would be used. Instead, he (85) conjectures that the text may refer to the reutilisation of stone from previous tombs in order to build the current king’s tomb, as is explicitly reproached on vv. 78-79.

<sup>1102</sup> According to Quack (1992, 44nc)), *h<sup>c</sup>d* and *3d.t* cannot be the same verb because their determinatives are different. For Leitz (1996, 138), who takes them to be the same verb, this discrepancy ‘scheint nicht so gravierend’.

<sup>1103</sup> The term *zp.w* may also refer to bodily remains from the tombs or to survivors from the battle (see Dils 2014, with references). For an alternative rendering see for instance Tavares (2007, 238n111): ‘Schände keine Gräber, schände sie ja nicht!’

<sup>1104</sup> For alternative renderings see the translation of and comment to this verse by Dils (2014); see also Lichtheim (1973, 102), Faulkner (1972b, 185) and Tobin (2003c, 159). According to Quack (1992, 44ne)), the speaker is the beneficiary of god’s action, since *jr.tw n* indicates an action in favour of someone. This opinion is not shared by the other translators consulted (see e.g., Vernus 2010a, 199n46; Tavares 2007, 239).

<sup>1105</sup> Both this passage and the one on v. 69 may allude to the *Prophecy of Neferti* (see Vernus 2010a, 207 with references). On the ‘Prophecy of the Residence’ see also Quack (1992, 87-88) and Fischer-Elfert (2000b, 265).

<sup>1106</sup> ‘They’ might refer to the ancestors who made the ‘Prophecy of the Residence’ (compare vv. 68-69 with v. 71), to the Egyptians from the southern districts, or to the gods (see Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 199n47).

(*n jr s.t* (74) [*mr-jb*]-*R<sup>c</sup> m<sup>3</sup>c-hrw \* sfn hr=s n hn{n}<.t> \* s[htp hr.t]=s whm htm.w \**) Meribre<sup>1108</sup>, justified, (74) did not do it. Be gentle about it to the governed (?). Satisfy their [needs], renew the agreements (lit. seals).

(75) (*nn w<sup>c</sup>b<.t> rdj sdg<sup>3</sup>=f\* nfr jr.t n m-ht \**) There is no water current that allows itself to hide. To act for the future is good.

(Dils 2014; Helck 1977, 41-45; Quack 1992, 42-45, 178-79; Vernus 2010a, 188-89, 207; Faulkner 1972b, 185-86; Tobin 2003c, 159; Leitz 1996, 138; Tavares 2007, 239)

### 23. P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, vv. 106-116

(106) (*{sh3} <s<sup>c</sup>h3> t3š=k r <sup>c</sup>-rs.j pd.t pw* (107) *šzp.t <sup>c</sup>3gs.w <Make>*<sup>1109</sup> **your frontier** against the southern region<sup>1110</sup> **<ready for combat>**, as the bow-people<sup>1111</sup> is (107) one who readies for war (lit. seizes the belt<sup>1112</sup>).

(*kd hw.wt m t3-mh.w*) Erect buildings<sup>1113</sup> in Lower Egypt<sup>1114</sup>.

(*nn šrj rn n(.j)* (108) *z(j) m jrj.t.n=f n hdj.n.tw njw.t grg.tj*) A man's name will not diminish (108) by what he has done<sup>1115</sup>, and an established town will not be destroyed.

(*kd hw.t [n] tw<t=k>*) Build a chapel [for] <your> statue<sup>1116</sup>.

(*jw hrw.y* (109) *mrj=f hdj(.t) jb zp=f hs[j]*) An agitator, (109) when he loves to demoralise the *jb*-heart<sup>1117</sup>, his conduct is weak<sup>1118</sup>.

<sup>1107</sup> See Quack (1992, 45n)) and Dils (2014).

<sup>1108</sup> See Faulkner (1972b, 186n26).

<sup>1109</sup> The passage comprised by vv. 106-116 is one of the most difficult and obscure of this instruction, as also pointed out by Goedicke (2002a, 117) and Oréal (2000, 141). This section arguably begins here, as the first part of this verse is rubricised, and not on v. 108 as suggested by Blumenthal (1980, 25, 27).

<sup>1110</sup> More specifically, 'the Theban part of Upper Egypt, which had broken away from the Herakleopolitans' (Goedicke 2002a, 116).

<sup>1111</sup> These are foreign infantry soldiers (Goedicke 2002a, 117), possibly Nubian mercenaries hired by the Thebans.

<sup>1112</sup> On this expression meaning preparation for war see Goedicke (2002a, 117), Quack (1992, 63 c)), Faulkner (1972b, 189n48), and Vernus (2010a, 202n80).

<sup>1113</sup> Temples? Fortifications? For proponents of temples see Quack (1992, 65) and Oréal (2000, 149). Of fortifications see Vernus (2010a, 192, 202n81) and Faulkner (1972b, 189). Goedicke (2002a, 117) sees fortifications as excessive, and prefers walled settlements. Helck (1977, 67), Tobin (2003c, 162), and Dils (2014) remain neutral. It is also possible that these buildings are related to commercial or agricultural activities (Vernus 2010a, 202n81; Dils 2014).

<sup>1114</sup> See Goedicke (2002a, 117).

<sup>1115</sup> Meaning that the sort of actions recommended to the recipient of the instruction will extend the memory of his name into the future (see also Nyord 2012, 167-68). For a New Kingdom parallel, albeit from the context of a royal inscription, see Oréal (2000, 144).

<sup>1116</sup> On the ideological and pragmatic purposes of setting up statues of the king at the frontier and abroad see Vernus (2010a, 202n82). About the role of the statue as a memorial see also Goedicke (2002a, 117). On an alternative way to render this passage see the comment to this passage by Dils (2014).

<sup>1117</sup> Elsa Oréal (2000, 152) makes the interesting suggestion that the expression *hd-jb*, associated here with the agitator, is to be opposed to the notion of *šmh-jb*, 'to entertain the heart', which is to constructively use one's free time, similarly to the Greco-Roman notion of *otium*. Accordingly, the agitator in this passage who shatters 'cet élan vital' (152) (cf. the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, maxim 11), not only opposes the king

(š3.n H.ty m3<sup>c</sup>-hrw m sb3[w]) Khety, justified, determined as teacher:

(110) (gr.w r šhm-jb ḥdd [w{3}dh.w]<sup>1119</sup> tkk ntr sbj hr r3-pr) ‘The one who is silent in relation to the fearless one who neglects the altars<sup>1120</sup>, attacks god and rebels against the temple’<sup>1121</sup>.

(jwj=t(w) hr=[f mj] (111) jrr=f st) **One** (= god?) **will come upon [him according] to (111) what he did**<sup>1122</sup>.

(jw=f r s33 m š3.[t] n=f) He will experience what was determined for him.

(sh̄t r=f n jnj=tw hr mw hrw pf n(j) (112) jwj.t) What he accomplished for him: one (= god?) will not bring the water level on the day of (112) the flood<sup>1123</sup>.

(sh̄wsj w{3}dh.w trj ntr) Supply<sup>1124</sup> the altars, show respect to god.

(m dd ḥsj pw jb) Do not say: ‘The jb-heart is weak’.

(m fh ʿ.[wj]=kj) Do not slacken your action<sup>1125</sup>.

(113) (jr gr {ršw.t}<bdš>=k) Act even when you <are tired><sup>1126</sup>.

(ḥd.t p.t pw rnp.t 100 mnw pw {mḏ3} <wḏ3>) One hundred years is a flash in the sky<sup>1127</sup>, while death is forever<sup>1128</sup>.

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and god (see below vv. 110-111, 114-115), but is also heading for oblivion, as his actions are not memorable. However, in light of the historical and political circumstances that – genuinely or fictionally – inform the text, namely the civil war between the factions rooted at Herakleopolis and at Thebes, ḥd-jb seems to refer more to an attempt by the Theban elite to demoralise the Herakleopolitan faction, and not so much to oppose šhmh-jb. On the influence of the historical and political background on this passage see Goedicke (2002a, 117). On the sense of ḥd-jb as ‘wear down the heart’ see Rueda (2003, 343).

<sup>1118</sup> Probably meaning that the enemy’s attempts at demoralising the Herakleopolitan side will not work because of the confidence provided by the proper strengthening of the border. Alternatively, this may be an advisor who wants to deviate resources, namely food, from the cult to military operations.

<sup>1119</sup> Read wdh.w. The restoration is based on P. Carlsberg 6, v. 3.6.

<sup>1120</sup> The sense of ḥdd wdh.w seems to be ‘the ceasing of supplying the altars’ (Goedicke 2002a, 118; see also Oréal 2000, 142).

<sup>1121</sup> In this passage, the silent one, gr.w, is either on the side of god or against him. An example of the former interpretation is the tentative rendering given by Quack (1992, 65): ‘Der Schweiger wird zum Gewalttätigen, / wenn die Altäre geschädigt werden’. An example of the latter interpretation is the translation by Helck (1977, 69): ‘Wer gegenüber einem Gewalttätigen schweigt, schädigt die Altäre’; Nili Shupak (1993, 151) also takes this passage to be a ‘condemnation of silence, when silence implies non-performance of positive acts’. As pointed out by Oréal (2000, 142), it is not mandatory that tkk ntr is an action performed by god, but instead tkk can be taken as a participle having ntr as object. A different alternative was proposed by Ricardo Tavares (2007, 190, 238) who takes the silent one to be god himself: ‘Der Schweigende (= Gott) wird zum Gewalttätigen, wenn die Opfertische zerstört werden, idem Gott den angreift, der gegen das Heiligtum frevelt’ (238). In this sense, this role of god is taken by Tavares to be the model (*Vorbild*) of the silent one (*Weisheitsideal des Schweigenden*) to the king (190).

<sup>1122</sup> This rubrication does not necessarily indicate the start of a new section, and probably just underlines the statement (Goedicke 2002a, 119).

<sup>1123</sup> On this passage see Goedicke (2002a, 116, 119) and Oréal (2000, 145-46). Several translators take hrw pf n(j) jwj.t to refer either to death or to the afterlife judgement (e.g., Vernus 2010a, 202n87; Oréal 2000, 145).

<sup>1124</sup> ‘Protect’ (s{t}hwj) in P. Carlsberg 6.

<sup>1125</sup> On this metaphor see Nyord (2012, 153n32).

<sup>1126</sup> On this passage see Oréal (2000, 146) and the comment by Dils (2014).

<sup>1127</sup> Cf. the analysis by the gods of a long life as if it were only an hour in P. Hermitage 1116A verso, v. 55.

<sup>1128</sup> According to this interpretation by Oréal (2000, 149), this passage is still part of the injunctions to act for the benefit of the gods.

(<j>r rh hrw.y (114) nn hđj=f st m-nr.(w)t smnh jrj.t.n=f jn ky jyj.y hr-s3=f) As for an agitator who knows, (114) he will not ruin it, so that what he has done is bettered by another who comes after him<sup>1129</sup>.

(nn-wn šwj m hrw.y) (However,) there is no one free from an agitator<sup>1130</sup>.

(115) (rh-h.t pw <n.j> jdb.w n{n} wh3.n nsw.t nb šn.y(t)) He (= the king) is the wise <of> the Two-Shores, the king, lord of the court, is not fool.

(s33=f m pr(.w)=f (116) n.w h.t) He is wise from (116) birth<sup>1131</sup> (lit. his coming of the womb).

(stn.n sw <ntr> hnt.j {t3} <zj> hh.w) <God> selected him among millions of <men>.

(Quack 1992, 63-71, 188-91; Helck 1977, 68-73; Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 192-93; Oréal 2000; Goedicke 2002a; Faulkner 1972b, 189-90; Tobin 2003c, 162-63)

## 24. P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, vv. 130-138

(130) (hn (131) r(m)t.w c.w.t n(j)t ntr) People (131), the cattle of god, are protected<sup>1132</sup>.

(jrj.n=f p.t t3 n-jb=sn dr.n=f snk n(j) mw) For their sake he (= god) created heaven and earth, after he repelled the greed of the water.

(jrj.n=f t3w jb cnh (132) {sfn} <fnd>.w=sn snn.w=f pw prj.w m hc.w=f) He created the breath of the jb-heart, (132) so that their <noses> may live, for they are his images which came forth from his body.

(wbn=f m p.t n-jb=sn) For their sake he shines in the sky.

(jrj.n=f (133) n=sn sm.w c.w.t 3pd.w rm.w <r> snm.[t] st) For them (133) he created plants and cattle, and birds and fish <to> nourish them.

(sm3m=f hft.jw=[f h]đj=f ms.w=f (134) hr k(3).t=sn m jrj.t [sb]j(.w)) He kills [his] enemies and destroys<sup>1133</sup> his children (134) because of their thoughts of doing rebellion<sup>1134</sup>.

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<sup>1129</sup> This verse is considered by several translators to be an intrusion from v. 118 (e.g., Quack 1992, 69). However, Goedicke (2002a, 121 with n. 36) takes this to be the correct placement of the phrase and sees its repetition on v. 118 as the intrusion. But it is possible that the author intentionally repeated the phrase, as there is no discrepancy between P. Hermitage 1116A verso and P. Carlsberg 6 (cf. also the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, where vv. 22.5-22.8 are repeated verbatim on vv. 23.8-23.11 (see nos. 51 and 52)).

<sup>1130</sup> This is possibly an advisor who would contest Merikare's investment in the cult, as opposed to engaging the Theban side. Although Merikare would never be free from being contested, an educated advisor would know better than advise the king against performing his religious duties only to lose face before those who sustain the importance of that task.

<sup>1131</sup> This passage reflects royal ideology. The *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, prologue, v. D41, presents the opposite perspective, concerning the non-royal elite, when it has the king saying: *nn msj.y s3.w* 'no one is born wise'.

<sup>1132</sup> This verse is rubricised in P. Moskau 4658 and in P. Carlsberg VI. In the latter only *ntr* is not rubricised. On the grammar of *hn* see Quack (1992, 79 with n. a)).

<sup>1133</sup> P. Moskau 4658 and P. Carlsberg VI have *sm3m.n=f* and *hđj.n=f*. Tobin (2003c, 165n30) suggests this is a reference to the myth of the destruction of mankind – Assmann (1991, 836n137-a) makes the same suggestion about vv. 137-38 below. However, Lorton (1993, 141) presents cogent reserves to that identification and instead suggests this passage (vv. 133-34) refers to the myth of 'the revolt of the Children of Re' (1993, 155). Be that as it may, it is not impossible that the text refers to present events, as also acknowledged by Quack (1992, 80nd)), and therefore the verb form is left unaltered.

<sup>1134</sup> On *sbj* see Lorton (1993, 132n24).

(*jrr=f sšp n-jb.w=sn {skdd=f} <skdd=f> r [m]33=st*) For their sake **he creates light**, and <travels><sup>1135</sup> to see them<sup>1136</sup>.

(*ts.n=f (135) k3rj h3=s[n r]mj.w=sn jw=f hr sdm*) He established (135) a chapel around them; when they weep he hears<sup>1137</sup>.

(*jrj.n=f n=sn hk3.w [m] stj ts.w (136) r tsj.t m [p]s[d] <n.j> s3-ʿ*) For them he created rulers [from] the fragrance<sup>1138</sup>, a supporter<sup>1139</sup> (136) to support the back <of> the weak.

(*jrj.n=f n=sn hk3.w r ʿh3.w r hsf ʿ (137) n(j) hpr.yt rs.wt [hr]=s grh mj hrw*) For them he made magic as a weapon to oppose the blow (lit. arm) (137) of what happens, [over] which one watches day and night<sup>1140</sup>.

(*sm3m.n=f h3k.w-jb mm(j) mj {h}hwj{=j} (138) z(j) z3=f hr sn=f jw ntr rh.w rn nb*) He killed the estranged among them, as a man (138) strikes his son because of his brother, for god knows every name<sup>1141</sup>.

(Quack 1992, 195-98; Leitz 1996, 136; Helck 1977, 83-88; Dils 2014; Lorton 1993, 131-32; Vernus 2010a, 194-95; Faulkner 1972b, 191-92; Tobin 2003c, 164-65; Römheld 1989, 141-42; Assmann 1991, 835-36)

## 25. P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, vv. 138-44

(138) (*jmj=k jrj mn.t nb(.t) <r> r3=j dd shp.w (139) nb hr n(j)-sw.t swn hr=k t3z=k m z(j)*) **You should not make any panning <against> my speech**<sup>1142</sup> which gives all the rules of conduct (139) about the king, and opens your eyes (= instructs) so that you may be a leader as a man (of standing<sup>1143</sup>).

(*jh ph=k wj nn shr.y=k*) May you then reach me without there being an accuser against you.

(*m sm3m (140) wʿ tkn jm=k hsj.n=k sw ntr rh sw*) Do not kill (140) one who is close to you, because you favoured him (before) and god knows him<sup>1144</sup>.

(*wʿ jm=sn pw w3d tp t3 ntr.w pw šms.w (141) n(j)-sw.t*) The one who thrives upon the earth is one of them<sup>1145</sup> (i.e., a god?); the followers of the (141) king are gods.

(*jmj mrw.t=k n t3-tm.w*) Inspire<sup>1146</sup> (lit. cause) love for you to everyone.

(*sh3.w pw kd nfr rnp.wt zbj.w j[m]*) A good character is a memorial, (even after) the years pass<sup>1147</sup>.

<sup>1135</sup> The determinative used belongs to *skdj*, ‘protect’, and not *skdj*, ‘travel’.

<sup>1136</sup> Cf. Helck (1977, 88).

<sup>1137</sup> See Assmann (1980, 30-31).

<sup>1138</sup> In P. Moskau 4658 *swh.t*, ‘egg’. See also Fischer-Elfert (2000b, 265).

<sup>1139</sup> Assmann (1991, 836; 2001, 172) interprets *tz.w* as ‘superiors’ (2001, 172). See also the comment by Dils (2014).

<sup>1140</sup> Cf. Assmann (1991, 836; 2001, 173; 2004, 22) who suggests that god watches over people.

<sup>1141</sup> Cf. Faulkner (1972b, 191-92).

<sup>1142</sup> Faulkner (1972b, 192n72) suggests the sense may be: ‘even if my rules for governance are hard, do not get unduly upset by them.’

<sup>1143</sup> See Fischer-Elfert (1999a, 300).

<sup>1144</sup> Cf. Quack (1992, 83nc)).

<sup>1145</sup> Cf. Vernus (2010a, 195).

<sup>1146</sup> Cf. Quack (2011, 44).

(142) (*dd.tw=k ḥdj rk n(.j) mn jn n.tjw m ph.wj m pr* (143) *H.tj <m<sup>3c</sup>-ḥrw> m sš3.w jw.t(j)=f(j) mjn*)  
 May you be said to be the one who destroyed the time of suffering, by the successors<sup>1148</sup> in the house of (143)  
 Khety<sup>1149</sup>, <justified>, in wishing<sup>1150</sup> that he will come today.

(*m=k dd.n=j n=k bw-3ḥ* (144) *n(.j) ḥ.t=j jr r=k m grg m ḥr=k*) See, I have told you what is useful  
 (144) of my core (lit. belly). It is with that in mind that you should act.

(Quack 1992, 82-84, 198-200; Helck 1977, 88-92; Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 195, 211; Faulkner 1972b, 192; Tobin 2003c, 165)

## Translation of passages from the New Kingdom instructions cited in the main text

### *Instruction of Ani*

#### 26. P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 15.12-15.16

(15.12) (*jmj=k ḥr.y=k jw (= r)<sup>1151</sup> [ky] m ḥ.t=<k> jw=f (ḥr) {pḥtj.t} <ph> jr=k*) Do not ready  
 yourself against [another] in <your> mind (lit. belly), when he <criticises> you.

(15.13) (*bw.t<sup>1152</sup> n(.j)t ntr.jt.t {j3d.t} <m 3d.w>*) To seize <in anger> is the detestation<sup>1153</sup> of god.

(*z3[w] tw n=k jmj=k jrj=f*) Beware, you should not do it.

(*m-jrj swd* (15.14) *ḥr(.j)=kwj <n> ntr=kwj bw [jrj=f] sdm*) Do not turn (15.14) your superior over  
 <to> your god<sup>1154</sup>. He [does] not listen.

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<sup>1147</sup> Compare with the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, vv. D487-D488, D494, and with the *Loyalist Instruction of Kairsu*, P. Louvre E 4864 recto, v. 13.3.

<sup>1148</sup> Faulkner (1972b, 192n75) suggests, instead, that the ones ‘who are at the rear’ are the servants and supporters of the king.

<sup>1149</sup> On the ‘House of Khety’ as a probable designation for a territory see Quack (1992, 84nf).

<sup>1150</sup> See Vernus (2010a, 165n201, 204n119).

<sup>1151</sup> See Junge (2003, 38).

<sup>1152</sup> In P. Boulaq 4 recto, the writing of *bw.t* is consistently *b.tw* (vv. 15.13, 17.2, 22.1), except on v. 20.13 where *bt3* was mistakenly written, but the word is normally written in the other extant copies (O. DeM 1659 (oD7) and O. DeM 1063 (oD1), v. 15.13; P. Louvre E 30144 = P. Guidmet 16959, v. 22.1), except in P. DeM 1, v. 20.13. On the confusion, or perhaps interchangeability, between *bw.t* and *bt3* see Quack (1994, 58) and Rutkauskas (2016, 247).

<sup>1153</sup> *Bw.t* is translated here as ‘detestation’ following Harold Hays (2012, e.g., 52).

<sup>1154</sup> Vernus (2010a, 316) suggests a similar translation, ‘ne dénonce pas ton supérieur à ton dieu’. Quack’s (1994, 89) ‘zeige deinen Vorgesetzten nicht deinem Gott an’ (similarly Dils, 2014) also expresses well the idea that seems to lie in the use of the verb *swd*. This is one of the few causatives with a different meaning from its root verb (Allen 2010, 157). It has the very specific meaning of handing over or bequeathing property, but, in this case, it seems to be used metaphorically. One may ask how ancient audiences would have understood this use of the verb.

([w<sub>nn</sub>]=k <m> rk.3y jw-hr= {k}= <f> r<sup>c</sup>-nb jw h3.ty= <f> (15.15) (hr) rh=sw) You [will be] <as> his opponent every day, because <his> h3.tj-heart (15.15) knows it.

(sn[mh=k n] hr.y= <k> jw=k nmh.t (15.16) r r[dj.t] f3j=[f n=k] m3w[d]) Plead<sup>1155</sup> [to] your superior, if you are low-ranking<sup>1156</sup>, (15.16) so that [he gives you] attention.

(Quack 1994, 88-89, 152, 283-84; Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 316)

## 27. P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 16.3-16.9

(16.3) (jrj h(3)b <n> ntr=kwj) Celebrate a feast<sup>1157</sup> <for> your god<sup>1158</sup>.

(16.4) (wh3m[=k sw] <r> trj.t=f) Repeat [it] <at> its (annual) time<sup>1159</sup>.

(knd ntr (hr) th3j.tw=f) God becomes angry (when) it (= the time) is passed.

(s<sup>c</sup>h<sup>c</sup> mtr.w (16.5) m-h<sub>t</sub> w[dn]=k {sw} <m> spj tp(j) n(j) p3 jrj=f) Assemble witnesses (16.5) when<sup>1160</sup> you offer, <at> the first time you do it (lit. of the doing of it)<sup>1161</sup>.

(tw=tw jwj r wh3h šnw(16.6)=k) One came to seek your (16.6) list<sup>1162?</sup>

(jm[m] sw <r> <r> dj.t h3j.y=k hr r.wj) Give it, so that you are registered on the roll<sup>1163</sup>.

(p3 nw jwj tw=tw (16.7) (hr) wh3h šzp=k {jw=st} <r> s{t}k3j b3.w=f) The time arrived and one (16.7) seeks your receipt<sup>1164</sup> to extoll his (= the god's) power.

(hpr hsj h<sup>c</sup>bj (16.8) sntrj m k3.y=f šzp {snntj} <sn-t3> m 3h.t.t=f) Chanting, dancing, (16.8) and incense become his nourishment; proskynesis is received as his offering.

(16.9) (j:jrj sw p3 ntr r s<sup>c</sup>3j rn=f jw r(m)t p3 n.tj thj) The god does it to magnify his name, while man is the one who is drunk<sup>1165</sup>.

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<sup>1155</sup> On *snmh* see the second note to v. 17.2 (see no. 28 below).

<sup>1156</sup> On *nmh* designating low-ranking officials by the New Kingdom see David (2011,75). In the Ramesside Period the *nmh* could also be someone with sufficient economical power to be independent (75-76), but that does not seem to be the case here.

<sup>1157</sup> On the implications of *hb* see Quirke 2015, 97.

<sup>1158</sup> At least in Deir el-Medina workers were allowed to miss work to perform this private ceremony (Luiselli 2014, 109), which would have had an impact on the economy (Quack 1994, 154 with references).

<sup>1159</sup> It is possible that this personal feast in honour of one's god is the same feast mentioned in *The Prohibitions*, O. Petrie 11= UC 39614, v. C7: *jmj=k jrj.t h(3)b=k nn s3h.w=k phrw=sn n=k nhwj.w hrw krs*, 'you should not celebrate your feast without those close to you, so that they surround you and mourn you the day of burial' (Hagen 2005, 136, 144, 149; Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 386). It is relevant that in this passage one is advised to involve close relatives and friends (assuming this extended sense in *s3h.w*), perhaps in a similar way to modern birthday parties.

<sup>1160</sup> See Quack (1994, 41).

<sup>1161</sup> As remarked by Quack (1994, 155), this no longer concerns the private feast to one's personal god, but a festival at a temple.

<sup>1162</sup> On *šnw* see Gardiner (1959, 14-15) and Quack (1994, 91n17).

<sup>1163</sup> This important passage indicates participation on the festival was contingent upon the mandatory contribution to the offerings to the god (see Quack 1994, 155; Gardiner 1959, 15).

<sup>1164</sup> The exact meaning of *šzp* here is doubtful – see a brief discussion in the comment by Dils (2014) –, but it refers to a proof that one paid for the offerings to the deity (Lichtheim 1976, 146n4). Vernus (2010a, 333n33) points out the similarity of this passage with the *Instruction for the King Merikare*, P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, vv. 129-130.



(Quack 1994, 90-91, 154-55, 285-87; Gardiner 1959; Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 317; Lichtheim 1976, 136; Gestermann 2008, 29; Volten 1937, 62-70; Eyre 2013, 203)

## 28. P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 16.17-17.4

(16.17) (*jmj=k š(m) ʕk r knb.t tm rn=k hnš hpr šhd*) You should not exit and enter the court, lest your name stinks and an interdiction comes.

(17.1) (*m-dy.t ʕš3 mdw.t*) Do not multiply words.

(*gr tw hpr=k m nfr*) Be silent, so that it goes well with you.

(*m-jrj jrj hrw{tw}*) (17.2) <*m*> *hn.w n(j) ntr*) Do not talk (lit. make voice) (17.2) <in> the resting place<sup>1166</sup> of god.

(*bw.t.t=f pw {shb} <sbh>.w*) Shouts are his detestation.

(*snmh n=k m jb={j} mrj jw mdw.t.t=f*) (17.3) *nb.t jmn*) Pray<sup>1167</sup> with<sup>1168</sup> a loving *jb*-heart<sup>1169</sup>, whose every (17.3) word is hidden.

(*jrj.y=f hr(t).t=k sdm=fj:dd.t=k szp=f w[d]n(17.4).t=k*) He will provide for your needs, he will hear what you say, he will accept your (17.4) offering.

(Quack 1994, 94-95, 158, 289; Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 318; Lichtheim 1976, 137; Fischer-Elfert 1997, 24; Luiselli 2007a, 161; 2011, 239-40)

## 29. P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 19.4-19.10

(19.4) (*m-jrj* (19.5) *mh jb=k <m> {3}<j>h.t k3y*) Do not<sup>1170</sup> count<sup>1171</sup> <on> the goods of another.

(*z3w tw jrj.y=k n=k*) Be sure to acquire for yourself.

(*m-jrj h3n=k <hr> nkt k3(19.6)y bw jrj.y=f tsj m pr=k*) Do not rely on the things of another (19.6), lest he acts as master in your house.

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<sup>1165</sup> Significant variation in O. DeM 1658, v. 16.9 (= x+2-x+3): *jr=f n ntr r sʕ3j [rn=f jw] p3 ntr hr dm rn[=f]*, ‘the one who does it for god to magnify [his name, then] the god will pronounce his name’ (Quack 1994, 91n23, 286-87; Dils 2014). This formulation is even closer to *Merikare*, P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, vv. 129-130. As Vernus (2010a, 333n34) observes, the last remark in the passage in P. Boulaq 4 recto is not innocent. Perhaps the author ironically expresses his disappointment at the human enjoyment in an event in honour of a god. Although the altered states of consciousness induced by alcohol intoxication during religious festivals played an important role in contacting deities (see Szpakowska 2003, 228-29 with references), the author probably refers to the consequences he warns against on vv. 17.4-17.6.

<sup>1166</sup> On this possible chapel see Quack (1994, 158 with references). The term *hn.w* is related to the verb *hnj*, which has the sense of ‘to alight’, ‘to rest’, and ‘to stop’ in the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae* (lemma no. 117680).

<sup>1167</sup> On *snmh* as lowering oneself in the context of ritual action see Adrom (2005, 20 with n. 86) and Luiselli (2011, 85).

<sup>1168</sup> Or ‘from’ (see Vernus 2010a, 318).

<sup>1169</sup> This expression is also attested in the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*, = P. BM EA 10684 verso, vv. 4.11-4.12 (see no. 35 below).

<sup>1170</sup> Quack (1994, 103) and Volten (1937, 93) take this to be the start of a new section, while Vernus (2010a, 321) begins the new section below with v. 19.6. That verse is rubricised in P. DeM 1 recto, but, in the opinion of the present author, what precedes it fits better with the current topic.

<sup>1171</sup> On *mh-jb* see Rueda (2003, 58) and Sousa (2006, 2:609).

(j:kḏ{nwjw} n=k pr gmj=k jn{n}.w) Build yourself a house, so that you find increase.

(ms(19.7)dd {mtmt} <drdr>) Dislike the <other> (lit. foreigner)<sup>1172</sup>.

(m-jrj dd wn pr m-dy.t jt mw.t m pr n(j) p3 {mn.t} <mn> ḥ{n}<r>=w) Do not say: ‘There is a house of father and mother, it is the house of so and so, they say’.

(h3j.y(19.8)=k m p(s)s{nw} r-ḥn<sup>c</sup> sn=k jw p3y=k m-dj=k {wd3.t} <wd3>) May (19.8) you enter a share together with your brother, while yours is <wholly> in your possession.

(dj= {j} ntr=kwj ḥpr n=k (19.9) ms.w) May your god<sup>1173</sup> cause that children (19.9) are granted (lit. come) to you.

([pr] jt= {k}=<n> {rh} <hr>=sn) [The house] of <our> father, they <say>.

(hr ḥk{n}<r> z(j) hr s3j=f m pr=f mtw= {j} n3y=f jn(19.10)by ḥ3p=f) Whether a man hungers or is sated in his house, its walls (19.10) protect him.

(jnj=k jrj jw.tj ḥ3.tj= {k}=f jw dj ntr=kwj wn) Do not act foolishly (lit. as one who does not have his ḥ3.tj-heart)<sup>1174</sup>, if your god gave wealth.

(Quack 1994, 102-105, 170, 300-302; Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 321-22; Lichtheim 1976, 139; Fischer-Elfert 1997, 25; Luiselli 2011, 239-40; Volten 1937, 93-102)

### 30. P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 20.7-20.12

(20.7) (jnj=k wts jb=k n p3 z(j) drjdrj r rdj.t (20.8) gmj{tw}=f r3=k {r=j} 3s smy sn.nw prj m r3=k whm {=k}<=f> sw jr.y=k rk3y) You should not reveal your jb-heart to the foreign man, to cause (20.8) him to learn your hasty speech, as a base speech is what comes out of your mouth. He repeats it, and you become an opponent.

(whn (20.9) r(m)t hr ns{.t}=f z3w tw jr.y=k jk3t (= 3k)) A man is (20.9) ruined because of his tongue; beware of suffering ruin<sup>1175</sup>.

(jr ḥ.t r(m)t wsh <st> r snw.tj jw=st mht <m> wšb.t nb.t) **As for the belly of a man, <it> is broader than the Two-Granaries.** It is full <with> every answer.

(20.10) (j:jrj=k stp t3 nfr {j} <r> dd<=s> {sw} jw t3 b{w}jn.t ddḥ.t m ḥ.t.t=k) You should choose the good (answer) <to> say, while the bad (answer) is shut in your belly<sup>1176</sup>.

(wšb.t nht.t ḥ<sup>c</sup>.t <hr> ḥ<sup>c</sup>.wjy) An aggressive (lit. powerful) answer stands <under> the staff.

(20.11) (j:dd m p3 ndm mr.j=tw) Say the pleasant one which one loves<sup>1177</sup>.

<sup>1172</sup> See Quack (1994, 103n68). Vernus (2010a, 335n57) is probably right in conjecturing that this is an admonition against wanting to live at the expense of a protector.

<sup>1173</sup> On this verse and on v. 19.10 god is referred to as ntr=kwy, ‘your god’. In P. DeM 1 recto, however, both passages (vv. 3.2 and 3.3, respectively) have only ntr, ‘god’. Vernus (2010a, 335n59) comments that: ‘cette différence de formulation reflète des nuances dans le rapport de l’individu à la divinité’.

<sup>1174</sup> On jw.tj ḥ3.tj see Sousa (2006, 2:612 with references) and Shupak (1993, 186-87).

<sup>1175</sup> Cf. Lichtheim (1976, 140).

<sup>1176</sup> Compare with the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, v. D618, and with the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 8, vv. 11.10-11.11 (see no. 43 below).

<sup>1177</sup> The version in P. Deir el-Medina 1, vv. 20.9-20.10 (= 5.2-5.5), elaborates more on the metaphorical description of the ḥ.t as the reservoir of both good and bad thoughts and instincts which cannot all be known

(jy[3] b[n] jw=k m-dj=j r (n)hḥ ḥn wšb.t <n> p3 th3.j tw m grg m-s3) Truly, you will not be here with me forever. Seek retribution<sup>1178</sup> <against> one who transgressed against you<sup>1179</sup>, but do not lie in the search for it<sup>1180</sup>.

(20.12) (p3 ntr <hr> wpj.t p3 m3ḥ.t<sup>1181</sup> jw p3y=f š3.yt jwj <r> jḥy=f) The god judges (or: acknowledges) the just when his fate comes to take him<sup>1182</sup>.

(Dils 2014; Quack 1994, 106-109, 307-10; Vernus 2010a, 323; Lichtheim 1976, 140-41; Fischer-Elfert 1997, 25-26)

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and are apparently filtered by the h3.tj-heart. On this passage and the agricultural metaphors it mobilises, see Quack (1994, 134-35, 153) and Fischer-Elfert (1997, 28).

<sup>1178</sup> Or: ‘so that you may seek retribution’ (see Dils 2014; Fischer-Elfert 1997, 26). Or, by emending to ḥn<k>: ‘Do you seek retribution against one who transgressed against you? Do not lie about it’ (Vernus 2010a, 336n78). The expression ḥn n=f wšb is attested three times in the instructions. Besides the passage under consideration, it is attested in the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, v. 18.16, and in the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 2, v. 4.11 (see no. 38 below). In all these three attestations, the agent seeking retribution is human. The core meaning of the expression ḥn n=f wšb is ‘to return an answer’ (Laisney 2014, 88; see also Junge 2005, 265; Vernus 2010a, 261n79). Other meanings are: ‘to give an answer, reply; call someone to account for something’ (Junge 2005, 326). Parallel to these meanings, this expression may also have a more aggressive connotation: ‘Le sens en néo-égyptien de l’expression ḥn n=f wšb.t est “se venger”’ (Laisney 2007, 60; see also Junge 2005, 264). It is also possible to render it as ‘intercede/stand up for someone’, in the sense of seeking retribution from another agent, as in the *Blinding of Truth* (P. Chester Beatty II = P. BM EA 10682, vv. 6.6, 6.7-7.1, 10.6, 11.14). From this range of meanings, something between ‘take revenge against someone’ and ‘call someone to account for something’ seems to be the most adequate for the contexts in which ḥn n=f wšb is attested in the New Kingdom instructions. Hence the translation above ‘seek retribution’.

<sup>1179</sup> Cf. the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474, vv. 4.10-4.11 (see also Laisney 2007, 60; Grumach 1972, 34). Irene Grumach (1972, 34) translates: jy[3]j jw=k m-dj r (n)hḥ ḥn wšb.t [n] p3 th3.j tw, ‘Mögest du in Ewigkeit dem Angreifer nicht antworten’ (see also Lichtheim 1976, 140). An immediate problem to this translation is that in P. Boulaq 4 the negative imperative is normally m-jrj (see Dils’s comment to this verse (2014)).

<sup>1180</sup> For the problems in the translation of this verse see the comments by Peter Dils (2014).

<sup>1181</sup> m3ḥ.tj in P. Saqqara EES 75-S 45 = SCA 6319.

<sup>1182</sup> Meaning that the god will give the disciple a fair judgment after death (Quack 1994, 175). Dils (2014) is unsure about who is taken by his ‘fate’, either the just or the transgressor, but both the context and the wording in P. Boulaq 4 recto indicate that it is the just. However, in P. Saqqara EES 75-S 45 = SCA 6319 another person is mentioned. Unfortunately, the name following p3 is missing, but it could be thj, ‘transgressor’. Vernus (2010a, 226n80) argues that this passage is similar to v. 21.14 in that the punishment of the aggressor would be left to the god. An anticipation of death as punishment of the transgressor through the manipulation of š3.y by god (which would entail that both the just and the wrongdoer would be taken by their ‘fate’, or that the judgment takes place after the two eventually pass away), as argued by Quaegebur (1975, 128) and Lichtheim (1976, 146n12), is unwarranted to Quack (1994, 175). Despite fragmentary, the version in P. Saqqara EES 75-S 45 = SCA 6319 (see no. 30.1 below) may lend further support to the similarity between this passage and v. 21.14 suggested by Vernus. In this passage it seems less certain the disciple would plead to the god to receive a fair afterlife judgment, and more probable that he is asking for that judgment to the transgressor. Furthermore, the wording in this version is closer to the wording on v. 21.14 in P. Boulaq 4, recto – whm=k sw m-mn.t n p3 ntr, ‘You should denounce (lit. repeat) him daily to the god’ (Quack 1994, 114-15, 320-21; Dils 2014) – and in P. Deir el-Medina 1 – (21.14 = 8.3) whm sw [n] p3 ntr smj sw m-mn.t n ntr šps.j, ‘Denounce (lit. repeat) him [to] the god, report him daily to the noble god’ (Quack 1994, 138-39, 320-21; Dils 2014), which suggests Vernus may be accurate in positing a common theme for vv. 20.12 and 21.14.

### 30.1 P. Saqqara EES 75-S 45 = SCA 6319, vv. 20.11-20.12 (= 3-5)

(20.11 = 3) (*y3 bn jw[=k {r}-]d(j) (r)-nhh r ʕn [wšb n (20.11 = 4) p3 thj tw m]-grg*) Truly, [you] will not be here forever, in order to seek [retribution against (20.11 = 4) one who transgressed against you] by lying.

(*spr <n> (20.12 = 4) p3 ntr wpj p3 m3ʕ.tj p[3] [...] [jw p3y=f] (20.12 = 5) [š3y.j]wj r jtʕ=f*) Plead <to> (20.12 = 4) the god, who judges the just and t[he] [...], [when his (20.12 = 5) fate] comes to take him.

(Dils 2014)

### 31. P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 20.12-20.17

(20.12) (*wdn <n> ntr=kwj*) Offer <to> your god<sup>1183</sup>.

(*z3w tw r (20.13) {bt3} <bw.t>.t=f*) Beware (20.13) of his <detestation><sup>1184</sup>.

(*jmj=k ndnd sšm.w=f*) You should not (repeatedly) consult his statue<sup>1185</sup>.

(*m-jrj wstn=f m-ht hʕj=f*) Do not behave casually (lit. walk free) with it when<sup>1186</sup> it appears<sup>1187</sup>.

(*m-jrj hnhnj=f r (20.14) {r} f3j.t=f*) Do not approach it to (20.14) move (lit. bear) it<sup>1188</sup>.

(*jmj=k sʕsʕ bj3y.t*) You should not disturb<sup>1189</sup> the oracle.

(*z3w tw j:dj{=f}<=k> h3.w w m hw3.t=f*) Beware, <you><sup>1190</sup> should increase his protection.

<sup>1183</sup> Goedicke (1992, 77) argues for the interpretation of a secondary meaning of *wdn*, namely ‘to appoint’ or ‘set up in writing’. But that this verse relates to an offering to one’s personal god is further suggested by P. DeM 1 recto and P. Saqqara EES 75-S 45 = SCA 6319 where the dative *n* follows the imperative *wdn*.

<sup>1184</sup> Correction suggested by P. DeM 1 recto and by the fish determinative in P. Boulaq 4 recto (see Dils 2014; see also Quack 1994, 58). If one were to keep *bt3*, its sense would be similar to the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, v. 19.20: *jr p3 bt3.w n(j)-s(w) p3 ntr*, ‘As for wrongdoing, it belongs to the god’ (see no. 49 below).

<sup>1185</sup> This sense is also suggested by Goedicke (1992, 79). To repeatedly consult the divine oracle could be to ask again and again, with slight variations, until the desired answer is given; on disappointments with the answers of oracles see Teeter (2011, 108, 111). Vernus (2010a, 337n82) suggests that this passage is an admonition against enquiring about the god’s image, which is also a plausible interpretation, particularly if the god’s statue were veiled or concealed in a booth; on the latter see Teeter (2011, 106-107) and Kruchten (2001b, 610). But it makes more sense that this passage concerns the god’s processional statue which gives oracles rather than the god’s hidden form (Quack 1994, 176). A similar passage is attested in the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV* (= P. BM EA 10684 verso, v. 5.1) (see no. 35 below).

<sup>1186</sup> See Quack (1994, 41).

<sup>1187</sup> For an *ad hoc* consultation of a divine oracle see P. Nevill (Luiselli 2011, 301-302; Teeter 2011, 107-108).

<sup>1188</sup> As also suggested by Goedicke (1992, 80) this is an admonition against interfering in the oracle process by joining the other bearers. Presumably one could do that to change the result in one’s favour, or against a rival, by commanding the movements of the bark, or out of enthusiasm to get closer to the god’s statue (on the latter see also Volten (1937, 112)). A similar passage is attested in the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*, = P. BM EA 10684 verso, v. 5.1 (see no. 35 below).

<sup>1189</sup> P. DeM 1 recto, v. 20.14 (= 5.6-5.7), reads *jmj=k sʕ3j h3m.w bj3.jt jrj.n=f*, ‘you should not magnify the one who holds the oracle that he gave’ (Quack 1994, 136-37, 311-12; Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 337n83). What Goedicke (1992, 80) proposes for P. Boulaq 4 recto probably holds true for this variant, namely that it continues the previous admonition of not forcing the movements of the bearers of the statue of the god. P. Saqqara EES 75-S 45 = SCA 6319, v. 20.14 (= 8), points in a different direction, however: *jmj=k shr-ʕjw [bj3.yt]*, ‘you should not disregard the [oracle]’ (Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 337n83).

<sup>1190</sup> Both P. DeM 1 recto and P. Saqqara EES 75-S 45 = SCA 6319 have ‘you’.

(j:nw <m> jr.t<.t>=k (20.15) r p3y=f shr.w knd mtw=k {snntj-tw} <sn t3> m rn=f) May your eye watch out (20.15) for his angry disposition<sup>1191</sup>, and kiss the earth in his name.

(sw (hr) dj.t b3.w <m> h3 n(.j) j3rw <r> s3j (20.16) p3 n.tj (hr) s3j=f) He gives (his) power<sup>1192</sup> <in> million forms <to> make great (20.16) the one who makes him great<sup>1193</sup>.

(jr ntr t3 pn {n} p3 šw <m> hr(.t) jw n3y=f twt.wy hr-tp t3) As for the god of this land, (he) is the sun <in> the sky, while his statues are on earth.

(dd.tj sntrj (20.17) m k3y=st m-mn(.t) <r> s3rd nb{.t}-h3) Incense is given (20.17) (to) them daily as food <to> reinvigorate the Lord of Apparitions.

(Quack 1994, 108-109, 175-76, 311-14; Dils 2014; Goedicke 1992, 75-85; Vernus 2010a, 323-24; Lichtheim 1976, 141; Volten 1937, 110-16)

### 32. P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 20.17-21.3

(20.17) (j:k(3)b p3 3k.j:dj={j} n=k mw.t=k) Double the bread your mother has given you<sup>1194</sup>.

(f3j sw mj f3j=(20.18)sw tw) Carry her as she (20.18) carried you.

(jrj.y=st knw 3tp.t m-j<m>=k jw bw <dd>=sw w3h n=j) She did a lot and carried you (while pregnant), without <having said>: ‘stop it for me’!

(tw=k msj.t m-ht 3bdw.t=k) You were born after your months<sup>1195</sup>.

(nhb=st (20.19) sw m-r3-3) She restrained (20.19) herself again.

(mndjdj=st m r=k m 3 rnp.t jw=<st> r(w)d.t) Her breast was in your mouth for three years, while <she> endured.

(f{3n}<t> hs=k bw f{3n}<t> jb (r) dd jrj.y=j (20.20) jh) Your excrement was disgusting, but the jb-heart was not disgusted by saying: ‘What (20.20) can I do?’.

(dj{.tw}=sw <tw> r 3.t-sb3y m-ht sb3y.tw=k r zh3.ww jw=st mn.t r-hr(j)=kwj m-mn.t hrj 3k.w (21.1) hn3(.t) m pr=st) She brought <you> to school, when you were acquainted with the writings, and stood by you daily with bread and (21.1) beer from her house.

(tw=k <m> mn3 jrj.y=k n=k hm.t) Are you a bachelor? Then get a wife for yourself.

(tw=k grg.t m pr=k) Are you established in your (own) house?

(jmm jr.t.t=k (21.2) n p3 msj.t{n}=k p3 šdj=k nb{.t} m-my.tj jrj mw.t=k) Then pay attention (21.2) to the birthing of you and likewise to your complete rearing which your mother did<sup>1196</sup>.

<sup>1191</sup> Goedicke (1992, 81) takes this and the previous verse to form a contrast between a positive and supportive answer by the divine oracle, indicated by *hw.t*, on the one hand, and a negative answer and divine anger, on the other.

<sup>1192</sup> In his interpretation of *b3.w* in this specific passage, Volten (1937, 115) argues for the sense of ‘wrath’.

<sup>1193</sup> Compare with the *Oxford Wisdom Text*, T. Ashmolean 1964.489, v. A2, and with the *Instruction for the King Merikare*, P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, v. 129.

<sup>1194</sup> Compare this maxim with *The Prohibitions*, O. Petrie 11 recto = O. UC 39614, v. A11 (see Hagen 2005, 143, 147).

<sup>1195</sup> That is, after the nine months of pregnancy.

<sup>1196</sup> Cf. Lichtheim (1976, 141).

(*m-dy.t t3y=st n=k* (21.3) *mtw=st tm f3j ʕ.wj=st n p3 ntr mtw=f sdm sbh=st*) Do not give her reason to reproach you, (21.3) nor to raise her arms towards the god, and that he hears her cry.

(Quack 1994, 108-111, 176-77, 314-17; Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 234-25, 342; Lichtheim 1976, 141)

### 32.1 P. DeM 1 recto, vv. 21.2-21.3 (= 7.1)

(*m-dy.t sw{3}d{.tw}=sw <tw> n ntr=st mtw=f sdm j:dd=sw*) Do not give her reason to denounce <you> to her god, and that he listens to what she says.

(Quack 1994, 136-37, 316-17; Dils 2014; Sauneron 1962, 61)

### 33. P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 21.14-21.16

(21.14) (*{bw} m-jrj shsh <r> ph.ww p3 {ph.tj} ph tw jmm sw n p3 ntr whm=k sw m-mn.t n p3 ntr* (21.15) *jw dw3.ww mj.tj p3-h3rw*) Do not rush <to> attack the one who attacked you. Leave him to the god<sup>1197</sup>. You should denounce (lit. repeat) him daily<sup>1198</sup> to the god, (21.15) because tomorrow is like today.

(*j:jrj=k ptrj p3 jrj{=j} p3 ntr jw* (21.16) *ht3=f p3 ht3 tw*) When he tears the one who tore you, (21.16) you will see what the god did.<sup>1199</sup>

(Quack 1994, 112-15, 180-81, 320-21; Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 326; Lichtheim 1976, 142; 1997, 30; Brunner 1963, 107)

## *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*

### 34. P. Chester Beatty IV = P. BM EA 10684 verso, vv. 1.13-2.5

(1.13) (*jr wsr=k hpr n=k* (2.1) *ph.tj jw kd tw ntr{r}=k m jrj hm hr r(m)t.w rh=k*) **If you are powerful<sup>1200</sup> and vigour came to you** (2.1) because your god built you, do not ignore (lit. play ignorant with) a man you know.

(*wšd n.tj nb*) Greet everyone.

(*whʕ ky jw gmj=k sw* (2.2) *snh*) Release another when you found him (2.2) restrained<sup>1201</sup>.

<sup>1197</sup> Compare with the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 2, vv. 4.10-4.11 (see no. 38 below), and chapter 21, vv. 22.1-22.8 (see no. 51 below).

<sup>1198</sup> See the second note to v. 4.10 of the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*, = P. BM EA 10684 verso (see no. 35 below).

<sup>1199</sup> See Borghouts (1982, 57n104).

<sup>1200</sup> As noticed by Vernus (2010a, 357n24), this introductory formula is also used in the beginning of maxim 25 of the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, v. D370. This may be a deliberate citation of *Ptahhotep*.

<sup>1201</sup> This passage is better understood in light of the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 21.16-21.20. The author of *Ani* advises his addressee against passing near a tumultuous horde so that he is not identified as one of the defiers (*rky*) and sued in court accordingly (vv. 21.16-21.20) – similar advice is also given in the *Instruction of a Man for His Son*, O. Moskau 4478 + O. Berlin P 9026, vv. 24.1-24.7 (see Dils 2014; see also Vernus 2010a, 294n59). In providing further evidence for the effectiveness of his advice, the author of *Ani*

(*jrj nh.w n(j) j3d{.t}*) Act as the protector of the destitute<sup>1202</sup>.

(*dd=tw nfr r p3 n.tj bn sw hr jrj.t hm sp-2*) One says ‘one who is good’ about the one who does not habitually feign ignorance<sup>1203</sup>.

(*jr spr n=k* (2.3) *nmh g3b jw ky m-s3=f g(s)3=f sw p3j.y n=f jmm n=f h.t*) **If a miserable poor petitions to you** (2.3) because another is after him to ruin him, rush (lit. fly)<sup>1204</sup> to him, give him goods.

(*db3 hr=f* (2.4) *sdj jw wnn=f nfr.w hr jb n(j) ntr jw r(m)t.w hr hsj.t=f*) Pay<sup>1205</sup> in his stead<sup>1206</sup>, (2.4) so that he is saved, because, inasmuch as it will be good on the *jb*-heart of the god, people will praise it.

(*jr z(j) kd sw ntr{r}=f hr s<sup>c</sup>nh{n}=f* (2.5) *kn.w*) As for a man, his god built him and he (consequently) ought to protect (2.5) many<sup>1207</sup>.

(Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 349; Gardiner 1935, 38; Römheld 1989, 90, 92)

### 35. P. Chester Beatty IV = P. BM EA 10684 verso, vv. 4.9-5.6

(4.9) (*jw swt s3s3=k m zh3.w jw=k c<sup>k</sup>.tj m s<b>3.yt*) **But you are skilled in the writings**, having penetrated the instructions.

(4.10) (*dw3.ww ntr{r}=k nn jr.t 3b.w hsj{.tw}=f <tw> r<sup>c</sup>-nb wd{n}=f ks.w=k jm.j h<sup>c</sup>{.t}.w=k r t3 n(j) hr.j(t)-ntr*) Praise your god<sup>1208</sup> without cessation<sup>1209</sup> so that he will favour <you> everyday and assign your bones, which are in your body, to the land of the necropolis<sup>1210</sup>.

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states that: *bw t3y.tw ky r t3 knb.t bw snh.tw bw-rh=j*, ‘another is not brought to the court, one who is not known is not shackled’ (v. 21.20) (Quack 1994, 114-15, 323-24). Two terms are common to the passage in P. Chester Beatty IV verso, namely *ky* and *snh*. In *Ani* the other (*ky*) is the one who is not involved with the quarrelers (Vernus 2010a, 326). It is plausible that in P. Chester Beatty IV verso the same situation is evoked but, contrarily to what is predicted in *Ani*, the innocent was taken to court. The advice given to the addressee is then to correct that wrong.

<sup>1202</sup> The term *j3d* is also attested in the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 2, v. 4.4 (see no. 38 below), and chapter 20, v. 21.8 (see no. 50 below). On this term see Laisney (2007, 57 § 4.4).

<sup>1203</sup> See Vernus (2010a, 357n29).

<sup>1204</sup> See Laisney (2007, 130 with n. 800).

<sup>1205</sup> See the comment by Dils (2014 with references).

<sup>1206</sup> Perhaps comparable to the *Instruction of Amenemope*, chapter 13, vv. 16.5-16.7 (see no. 45 below).

<sup>1207</sup> On this passage see Vernus (2010a, 358n31), Assmann (1980, 6n19) and Dils (2014). The sense is perhaps similar to the New Testament passage in Luke 12:48: ‘From everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required’ (Coogan 2010, 1855).

<sup>1208</sup> The expression *dw3 ntr* is also attested in Middle Kingdom instructions, namely the *Instruction of Khety* (P. Sallier II = P. BM EA 10182, section 30, v. 30.5) and the *Instruction for the King Merikare* (Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, v. 37), although in these two examples it has the sense of thanking the deity for something (see also Sweeney 1985, 216-17) – for a Middle Kingdom attestation in a cultic context see Luiselli (2011, 43; 2013, 18 with n. 28). The term *dw3* is related to a ‘kultischen Anbetungsakt’ (Luiselli 2011; 33; see also 2007b, 90-91, 94). Therefore, this passage may pertain to the same discourse of the celebration of a private feast to one’s personal god in the *Instruction of Ani* (P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 16.3-16.4 (see no. 27 above)).

<sup>1209</sup> The idea of repeatedly contacting a deity is also expressed in the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, v. 21.14: *w<sup>h</sup>m=k sw m-mn.t n p3 n ntr*, ‘you should denounce (lit. repeat) him daily to the god’ (see no. 33 above). It is equally expressed in the introductory formulae of letters; an example is found in P. Robert Mond I, vv. 2-3: *m=k wj dy hr dd n p3 jtn c<sup>h</sup>nh-wd3-s(nb) m 3h.t-jtn c<sup>h</sup>nh-wd3-s(nb) jmj snb[=k] tnw hrw*, ‘I am speaking to the Aten, life-prosperity-health, in Akhetaten, life-prosperity-health, so that he gives you health each day’ (Hafemann 2014; Bickel 2003, 40). See another example in P. Turin 1971, vv. 6-7: (6) *c<sup>h</sup>k m*

(4.11) (*wdn n=f m jb mrj.y{=k} dj=f n=k k3 n dd=f*) Offer unto him with<sup>1211</sup> a loving *jb*-heart<sup>1212</sup> so that he gives you the nourishment which he gives.

(*mrj r(m)t{.w} p3 n.tj hr jrj.t n=f ntr pn* (4.12) *m-mj.tt*) A man loves the one who acts for him, and this god (4.12) likewise<sup>1213</sup>.

**(w<sup>c</sup>b m jb mrj{=k}) Be purified with<sup>1214</sup> a loving *jb*-heart<sup>1215</sup>.**

(*twrj tj r<sup>c</sup>-nb*) Purify yourself everyday.

(*m 3wj<sup>c</sup>.wj=kj r h.t m-b3h=f*) Do not stretch your arms towards things before him (= god).

(*z3w tw hr jth* (5.1) *jb*) Beware of enthusing (5.1) the *jb*-heart<sup>1216</sup>.

(*m-jrj{.t} nw r s.t [h]m=k*) Do not look at a place you do not know<sup>1217</sup>.

(*jm<j>=k ndnd ntr*) You should not (repeatedly) consult god<sup>1218</sup>.

(*nn mrj ntr hn<sup>h</sup>n*) God does not like the one who approaches<sup>1219</sup>.

(*sw m {mr} <tm> n=f hfy* (5.2) *sšm.w=f*) He is one whose statue (5.2) cannot be seen<sup>1220</sup>.

(*z3w tw hr k3 hrw m pr=f*) Beware of being loud of voice in his house<sup>1221</sup>.

(*mrj ntr sgr*) God loves silence<sup>1222</sup>.

(*m 3wj<sup>c</sup>.wj=kj r jt m šnw.t=[f]* (5.3) *h.t m w{j}[d]ž=<f>*) Do not stretch your arms towards the grain in [his] granary (5.3) or to goods in <his> warehouse.

(*z3w tw hr dp{.t} m h.t=f nb jw bw m3<sup>c</sup>=f m-b3h=f*) Beware of enjoying (lit. tasting) any of his goods, because it is not right before him.

(*m hntj hr šs=f nb*) Do not be covetous about anything of him.

(*bw.t=f* (5.4) *jt3y h.t=f*) His detestation (5.4) is that his goods are stolen<sup>1223</sup>.

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*p3y=f* (7) *wb3 m-mn.t jw bw jri=j knn jw=j sm3<sup>c</sup> m rn=w*, ‘when I stand in his (7) forecourt, daily, without growing weary, and pray in their name (= of the gods mentioned earlier)’ (Hafemann 2014; Luiselli 2011, 298).

<sup>1210</sup> Compare with section 8 of the *Instruction of a Man for His Son*, P. Berlin P 14356.

<sup>1211</sup> Or ‘from’ (see Dils 2014; Rueda 2003, 187).

<sup>1212</sup> This expression is also attested in v. 4.12 and in the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, v. 17.2 (see no. 28 above).

<sup>1213</sup> Compare with the *Eloquent Peasant*, P. Berlin P 3023 + P. Amherst I (= B1), vv. 140-141.

<sup>1214</sup> Or ‘from’ (see Dils 2014).

<sup>1215</sup> Sousa (2006, 77) understands the sentence differently: ‘Sê puro de coração’.

<sup>1216</sup> Following Dils (2014). Rueda (2003, 187) suggests ‘einschüchtern’. On other interpretations of this *hapax legomenon* see Dils (2014). The context points towards an inappropriate interest towards temple property.

<sup>1217</sup> Probably a restricted area of the temple.

<sup>1218</sup> Similar to v. 20.13 of the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto (see no. 31 above). See the second note to that verse.

<sup>1219</sup> Similar attestation in the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, v. 20.13 (see no. 31 above). There the admonition is against approaching the bark of the god to bear it. From the parallel in *Ani* it is clear that this and the previous verse concern divine oracles during the god’s procession.

<sup>1220</sup> This may refer to the statue in the processional bark (Quack 1994, 200) or the statue in the *naos* (Vernus 2010a, 361-62n76).

<sup>1221</sup> Similar passage, but with different wording, in the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 17.1-17.2 (see no. 28 above). Instead of *hnw*, as in *Ani*, the text has *pr*. This term and the parallel in *Ani* indicate the context has shifted from the procession of the statue of the god to the temple, perhaps more specifically to a chapel as in *Ani*. On *k3 hrw* see Lichtheim (1992, 70).

<sup>1222</sup> On the opposition between *k3 hrw* and *sgr* see Shupak (1993, 152, 163).



(*m ḥb3 bnjw p{r}s{t}<n> dsj m jmn.(y)t n-mn.t*) Do not remove date-cakes, bread, or a jug from the daily offerings.

(*jmm ḥr{=j} n ḥm{.t}<.w> n(j) pr=f*) **Give attention to the servants of his house.**

(*mrr=f*(5.5) *st r dm rn=f*) He loves (5.5) it more than the uttering of his name.

(*z3w [t]w ḥr=sn r sw3d wnn(.w) msdr n=sn*) Heed to them, in order to make prosper the ones to whom belongs the ear<sup>1224</sup>.

(*jr sw3d {n} b3k(j) n(j) ntr* (5.6) *mj {rm.w} <rm.w> n my(w)*) As for the one who makes prosper the worker of god<sup>1225</sup>, (5.6) it is like fish<sup>1226</sup> to a cat.

(*jr r(w)d=k m šms bj3{.t}=f mnjw=k ḥr.j ḥs(.wt)=f*) If you are firm in following his preferences, then you will land<sup>1227</sup> under his favour<sup>1228</sup>.

(Dils 2014; Gardiner 1935, 42; Vernus 2010a, 353-54; Rueda 2003, 187)

### 36. P. Chester Beatty IV = P. BM EA 10684 verso, vv. 6.5-6.9

(6.5) (*z3w* (6.6) *ḏd=k z(j) nb r bj3.t=f ḥm.w rh.yw m-sp-w<sup>c</sup>*) **Beware (6.6) of saying:** ‘Every man is according to his character, both ignorant ones and wise men (lit. ignorant ones and knowledgeable ones together).

(*š3y.t rnn.t ḥ<ṯ>.y* (6.7) *ḥr bj3.t m zh3.w ntr ds=f*) Shay<sup>1229</sup> and Renenet are carved (6.7) on the character, in the writing of god himself.

(*jw z(j) nb {r} jrj=f ḥ<sup>c</sup>.w=f m-ḥnw wnw.t*) Every man passes his lifetime<sup>1230</sup> within an hour<sup>1231</sup>.

(*nfr sb3* (6.8) *nn wrd.w jm=f*) It is good to be taught, (6.8) without weariness from it.

(*wšb{.t} z3 m t(3)s.w jt=f*) A son should answer with the sayings of his father<sup>1232</sup>.

(*ḏj=j rh=k bw-m3<sup>c</sup> m jb=k j:jrj=[k m p]3* (6.9) *ḥk3 n-ḥr=k*) I let you know rectitude in your *jb*-heart so that [you] will do what seems (6.9) correct to you.

<sup>1223</sup> Very similar to the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 17, v. 19.1 (see no. 48 below).

<sup>1224</sup> On the ears of a god in the context of personal piety see Luiselli (2013, 24-25).

<sup>1225</sup> Concern with the *b3k n(j) ntr* is also expressed in the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 5, vv. 6.16-6.17 (see no. 40), although from a different perspective.

<sup>1226</sup> The original ‘weeping’ is probably a mistake (see also Vernus 2010a, 362n78). As in vv. 4.11-4.12, the sense probably is that it is pleasing to the god that one sees to the well-being of his workers.

<sup>1227</sup> On *mnj* as referring to death see Jacq (2004, 223n42).

<sup>1228</sup> Compare with the *Instruction of a Man for His Son*, P. Louvre 23561, section 5, vv. 5.4-5.5 (see no. 16 above), and with the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 25, vv. 24.19-24.20 (see no. 54 below).

<sup>1229</sup> On the ending *.t* see Quaegebur (1975, 52).

<sup>1230</sup> Cf. Lichtheim (1997, 32).

<sup>1231</sup> As pointed out by Gardiner (1935, 43n4) and Vernus (2010a, 362n80), the point is that human life is too short to change one’s innate predispositions. It should be taken into account that, while people in modern developed countries can expect to live up to seventy or more years, life expectancy in ancient Egypt was dramatically shorter, between thirty and forty years. From the point of view of the gods, human life is also described as lasting one hour in the *Instruction for the King Merikare*, P. Petersburg Hermitage 1116A verso, v. 55.

<sup>1232</sup> On *t3z* see Shupak (1993, 63).

## *The Prohibitions*

### 37. O. Petrie 11 = UC 39614 recto, v. A9

(*jmj=k hr=k m hrw pn r dw3w bw jy.t=f nn sf mj p3-hrw hr-<sup>c</sup>.wj ntr*) You should not prepare today for tomorrow when it has not yet come, as yesterday is not like today upon the arms of god<sup>1233</sup>.

(Hagen 2005, 128-29, 143, 145-46; Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 385; Lichtheim 1983, 7-9; Grumach 1972, 126; Laisney 2007, 200n1155)

## *Instruction of Amenemope*

### 38. P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 2, vv. 4.3-5.8

(4.3) (*hw.t mh-2.t*) Chapter 2.

(4.4) (*z3w tw r hwr<sup>c</sup> j3d*) (4.5) *r n<sup>c</sup>s.jw s3w-<sup>c</sup>*) Beware of robbing a destitute<sup>1234</sup>, (4.5) and of assaulting<sup>1235</sup> the weak.

(4.6) (*m-jrj 3wj dr.t=k r tkn j3(w)*) (4.7) *mtw=k t3j r3 n(j) <sup>c</sup>3*) Do not stretch your hand<sup>1236</sup> to attack an elder, (4.7) nor cut the speech of a great one<sup>1237</sup>.

(4.8) (*m-dy.t h3b.tw=k m wp(.w)t n3h3*) (4.9) *mtw=k 3bw p3 jry sw*) Do not let yourself be sent on an unpleasant mission<sup>1238</sup>, (4.9) nor envy the one who did it<sup>1239</sup>.

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<sup>1233</sup> The second part of this passage means that the future did not turn out to be what one anticipated. On the topic of this passage see Hagen (2005, 146 with references), and Lichtheim (1983, 8). Compare this passage with the *Instruction of Amenemope*, P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 18, vv. 19.11-19.13 (see no. 49 below), chapter 21, vv. 22.5-22.6 (repeated in chapter 22, vv. 23.8-23.9) (see no. 51 and no. 52 below), and the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 21.9.21.10.

<sup>1234</sup> On *j3d* see Laisney (2007, 57). Concern for the *j3d* is also expressed in the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*, = P. BM EA 10684 verso, v. 2.2 (see no. 34 above).

<sup>1235</sup> Grumach (1972, 32-33) suggests that *n<sup>c</sup>s* here may relate to inheritance, as in the *Instruction for the King Merikare*: *m nš z(j) hr h.t jt=f*, ‘do not deprive a man from his patrimony (lit. things of his father)’ (see no. 21). However, the contexts are very different: the *Instruction for the King Merikare* addresses a king, who has much more powers than the subaltern official who, according to Laisney (2007, 64, 234), is the target of the *Instruction of Amenemope*.

<sup>1236</sup> The expression *3wj dr.t=k* is also attested in the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, v. 21.4, but in a different context: there it refers to offering the bread one is having to another who is standing (see Quack 1994, 178).

<sup>1237</sup> Grumach (1972, 30) translates this verse as ‘und habe keinen Anteil an einem Großen’, and interprets the passage as an admonition against getting along with people of higher rank, as that could lead to loss of integrity and corruption (33). While that may be so in chapter 26, as pointed out by Grumach (see also Vernus 2010a, 421n49, 434n198), her translation, and consequent interpretation, is not without problems (see Laisney 2007, 58n292). This is an interesting idea, however, especially as it runs counter to what is advised in other instructions (e.g., *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, maxims 7, 27, 31, and *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 19.11-19.15). One may wonder whether the problems of corruption mentioned in the *Instruction of Amenemope* and in other contemporary texts led the author to advise differently.

(4.10) (*m-jrj jry bg3.jw r p3 th3=k* (4.11) *mtw=k ʿn n=f wšb.t hr ds=k*) Do not be weak against the one you oppose, (4.11) nor seek satisfaction from him<sup>1240</sup> by yourself<sup>1241</sup>.

(4.12) (*p3 jry bjn h3ʿ sw mry* (4.13) *t3yw=f h3y(.t) jn={f}<s> sw*) The one who did evil, the river rejects him, (4.13) and its (= the river's) bank<sup>1242</sup>, <it> stranded him (= the evildoer).

(4.14) (*t3 mh(.yt) h3j.y.t skm=s wnw.t.t=f* (4.15) *dmj=s r p3 phph*) The north wind descends to end his hour (= activity<sup>1243</sup>), (4.15) and joins with the storm.

(4.16) (*p3 krjw hy n3 msh.w bjn* (4.17) *p3 šmm tw=k mj jh*) The storm is formidable, the crocodiles are nasty, (4.17) o hot tempered man, how do you fare?

(4.18) (*sw sbh hrw=f r hr.t*) He cries out, his voice reaches heaven.

(4.19) (*jʿh sʿhʿ bt3.t=f* (5.1) *j:jry hm d3y={n}n p3 bjn* (5.2) *jw bn jry={n}n mj-kd.t=f*) O Moon, who establishes his fault<sup>1244</sup>, (5.1) steer, so that we ferry the evil one<sup>1245</sup>, (5.2) without us acting like him<sup>1246</sup>.

(5.3) (*tz sw jmm n=f dr.t=k* (5.4) *h3ʿ sw <r> ʿ.wj p3 ntr*) Raise him up, give him your hand, (5.4) leave him on<sup>1247</sup> the arms of the god.

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<sup>1238</sup> Laisney (2007, 59) argues that *nh3* has also the sense of ‘ferocious’ and ‘savage’, and translates *wp.wt nh3* as ‘mission d’insultes’. Vernus (2010b, 540) prefers to render it as ‘mission rebutante’; his interpretation is followed here.

<sup>1239</sup> According to Leonard Lesko’s interpretation (2006, 66-67) of spell 175 of the *Book of the Dead*, Osiris, as archetype of the deceased, seems to envy Seth’s success, a sentiment which Atum seemingly curbs by restraining Seth’s soul in the solar bark, in order to frighten Osiris. In Psalms 37.1-37.2 one is also advised against envying the (fleeting) success of wrongdoers.

<sup>1240</sup> Cf. the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, v. 20.11.

<sup>1241</sup> The three preceding couplets advise against several offenses that are probably the hallmark of the *šmm*, ‘hot-tempered man’, to be introduced below. This couplet (vv. 4.10-4.11) marks the transition to the second part of this chapter and presents a spectrum of how one may act before the hot one: one may be against him and yet fear him (thus doing nothing) or try to harm him (if openly or on the quiet is not specified).

<sup>1242</sup> Fischer-Elfert (1983, 89 with n. 21) takes it to be *h3y*, ‘mud’, in which the hot-tempered man is sinking, as the term reoccurs on v. 10.10. Be that as it may, the sense is that the hot-tempered man is trapped in dire circumstances.

<sup>1243</sup> See Grumach (1972, 37 with n. 78; cf. Laisney 2007, 65, 70). The term *wnw.t* in the sense of activity is repeated in the next chapter, v. 5.15.

<sup>1244</sup> On the grammar of this verse see Vernus (2010a, 422n52), Laisney (2007, 62), and the comment to this verse by Dils (2014).

<sup>1245</sup> Cf. Römheld (1989, 177n130).

<sup>1246</sup> According to Laisney (2007, 65), the imperatives in the story are spoken by the skipper of the rescuing ship. Presumably he is addressing a (younger?) member of the crew, mimicking the instruction’s framework of a father addressing his son, but especially on vv. 5.1-5.6 seems to break the fourth wall, as it were, and merge his voice with the author’s in making ‘eine Aufforderung an die Leser den Bösen durch Freundlichkeit auf den guten Weg zu bringen’ (Lange 1925, 37). According to Lange (37, 39), Grumach (1972, 35, 41), Fischer-Elfert (1983, 89), and Sweeney (1985, 217-18, 227n87, 228n87), vv. 4.19-5.2 are a prayer to Thoth to allow the rescuing party to reach and ferry the stranded hot-tempered man. Lange (1925, 39) and Sweeney (1985, 228n87) rightfully doubt the prayer goes any further than v. 5.2, as on v. 5.4 he urges the addressee to leave the hot-tempered man on the arms of the god. It makes sense that the skipper would ask Thoth for permission to reach the hot-tempered man in order to avoid being affected by his punishment. Perhaps this reflects a real concern about helping someone who is thought to be undergoing punishment by a god.

<sup>1247</sup> Laisney (2007, 63) proposes the insertion of the preposition *m* and Fischer-Elfert (2005, 120) the preposition *r*, which is probably the best choice since *r ʿ.wj p3 ntr* reoccurs, albeit in a different context, in chapter 21, v. 22.7 (see no. 51 below), and chapter 22, v. 23.10 (see no. 52 below).

(5.5) (*mḥ h.t=f m t3 m-djw=k* (5.6) *s3wj=f mtw=f tm*) Fill his belly with your bread, (5.6) so that he becomes sated and ashamed<sup>1248</sup>.

(5.7) (*ky zp nfr m jb n(.j) p3 ntr* (5.8) *wsḥ3 (r-)ḥ3.t mdwj*) Another thing which is good in the mind (lit. *jb*-heart) of the god: (5.8) to pause before speaking.

(Laisney 2007, 54-67, 329-30; Grumach 1972, 30-37; Shirun-Grumach 1991, 228-29; Lange 1925, 34-39; Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 400-401; 2010b, 540; Simpson 2003e, 226-27; Römheld 1989, 176-77; Fischer-Elfert 2005, 120)

### 39. P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 3, vv. 5.9-5.19

(5.9) (*ḥw.t mḥ-3.t*) Chapter 3.

(5.10) (*m-jrj nḥb t(t)t jrm p3 t3-r3* (5.11) *mtw=k-dbdb=f n md.wt*) Do not cause a strife with the burning mouth, (5.11) nor attack him with words.

(5.12) (*wsḥ3 (r-)ḥ3.t rk3 ḥ3b tw n th3* (5.13) *sdr (r-)ḥ3.t mdwj*) Do nothing before a defier, bow to a transgressor<sup>1249</sup>; (5.13) take a break (lit. sleep) before speaking.

(5.14) (*d<sup>c</sup> prj=f mj ḥ.t m rwy* (5.15) *p3 šmm m wnw.t.t=f*) A storm<sup>1250</sup> that comes forth as fire hay: (5.15) so is the hot-tempered in his hour<sup>1251</sup>.

(5.16) (*tw3h3 tw=k (r-)ḥ3.t=f ḥ3<sup>c</sup> s(w) n-ḥr=f*) Retreat yourself before him, leave him to himself.

(5.17) (*r p3 ntr (r) rh<sup>c</sup> n n=f*) The god (will) be able<sup>1252</sup> to turn towards him<sup>1253</sup>.

(5.18) (*jr jrj.yw=k ḥ3w=k jw nn m jb=k* (5.19) *r n3yw=k ms.wj (r) ptr=w*) If you pass your time, while this is in your mind (lit. *jb*-heart), (5.19) your children will observe them.

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<sup>1248</sup> As argued by Grumach (1972, 35), Laisney (2007, 65 § 4,19), and Lange (1925, 37), this chapter postulates the possibility of rehabilitation and divine forgiveness of the hot-tempered man. This theme is probably unique in the Egyptian instructions. The author was probably not concerned with the ‘fate’ of the hot-tempered man as such, but instead with the conduct of his addressee. The novelty is that the author introduced a scenario in which his disciple is confronted with someone one should normally avoid but that is in a distressful situation (signalled by his impending doom in the short story). By doing so, the *Instruction of Amenemope* develops a topic present in other ethical and religious traditions as well: how to deal with evildoers? *Amenemope*’s answer is to help them and treat them well. Similarly, Lao Tzu wrote in the *Daodejing* (§ 49) that: ‘I treat those who are good with goodness, and I also treat those who are not good with goodness. Thus goodness is attained. I am honest to those who are honest, and I am also honest to those who are not honest. Thus honesty is attained’ (Pei-jung 1992, 66). One may wonder, however, whether the author of *Amenemope* would make his counsel universal to all situations of mishandling, as Lao Tzu did, or whether he would restrict it to extreme cases.

<sup>1249</sup> According to Grumach (1972, 40), the figure of the *th3* was taken from the *Instruction of Ani*.

<sup>1250</sup> Compare with chapter 1, v. 3.15.

<sup>1251</sup> See the note to v. 4.14 above (no. 38).

<sup>1252</sup> Literally ‘know’. On the translation of the verb *rh* given above see also Shupak (1993, 218, 221).

<sup>1253</sup> Dils (2014) suggests *n* may be an abbreviation for *n-wšb*. Nili Shupak (1993, 219) points out that, in contrast to human ignorance (for instance of the future), god is frequently depicted as knowledgeable, and in this case god ‘is acquainted with “the heated man”, “the foe”’. However, this particular instance may not necessarily be a case of human ignorance versus divine knowledge. Grumach (1972, 41) suggests this verse may also be a complement to v. 4.11 in chapter 2. However, Fischer-Elfert (2005, 128) suggests that *n* has here the same sense it has in texts relating to personal piety, namely of divine mercy and forgiveness.

(Laisney 2007, 67-71, 331; Dils 2014; Grumach 1972, 38-42; Shirun-Grumach 1991, 229; Lange 1925, 39-41; Vernus 2010a, 401; 2010b, 540; Simpson 2003e, 227; Römheld 1989, 162-64; Fischer-Elfert 2005, 128)

#### 40. P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 5, vv. 6.14-7.10

(6.14) (*m-jrj* *šg dnj.t n(.jt) ḥw.t-ntr* (6.15) *m-jrj ʕffj gmj=k p3 ḥ3ww*) Do not extort the share of the temple, (6.15) do not be avaricious, and you will find the surplus<sup>1254</sup>.

(6.16) (*m-jrj rmn b3kj n(.j) ntr* (6.17) *r jrj 3ḥ(t) n ky*) Do not move a worker of god (6.17) to be useful to another.

(6.18) (*m-jrj dd p3-hrw {n-}mj dw3.w* (6.19) *ph nn mj-jḥ*) Do not say: ‘today is like tomorrow’, (6.19) how to achieve this<sup>1255</sup>?

(7.1) (*dw3.w jwj.w p3-hrw n-snj* (7.2) *p3 mt(r) ḥpr(.w) m r3 n(.j) ḥ3n.t*) Tomorrow came, today passed (quickly); (7.2) the flood turned into sandbank<sup>1256</sup>.

(7.3) (*n3 mšḥ.w kf3(.w) n3 dby.w ḥr šww* (7.4) *n3 rm.w mšḥf*) The crocodiles are exposed, the hippopotami are on dry land, (7.4) the fish are surrounded<sup>1257</sup>.

(7.5) (*n3 wns.w s3wj(.w) n3 3pd.w m ḥ(3)b* (7.6) *n3 mkmr.wt ḥḥ3(.w)*) The wild dogs<sup>1258</sup> are sated, birds are in festival, (7.6) the (fish)nets are empty.

(7.7) (*jr gr nb n(.j) ḥw.t-ntr* (7.8) *st (hr)-dd wr ḥs(.wt) rḥ*) As for any silent man of the temple, (7.8) they say: ‘great is the favour of Re’<sup>1259</sup>.

(7.9) (*j:mḥ tw n gr gmj=k p3 ḥnh* (7.10) *wḍ3 ḥḥ.t=k ḥr-tp t3*) Stick to (lit. seize) the silent man: you will find life (lit. the life), (7.10) and your body will be safe upon earth.

(Laisney 2007, 79-87, 332-33; Dils 2014; Grumach 1972, 49-55; Shirun-Grumach 1991, 230; Lange 1925, 44-47; Vernus 2010a, 402, 438; 2010b, 541; Hannig 1995, 181; Drioton 1957, 269-70; Römheld 1989, 155; Simpson 2003e, 228; Adams 2008, 45)

<sup>1254</sup> Cf. Dils (2014).

<sup>1255</sup> Although the referent of *nn* is not entirely clear (Laisney 2007, 83), it is probable that it refers to the idea of predictability of the future (Vernus 2010a, 402).

<sup>1256</sup> On the parallel with the Middle Kingdom *Prophecy of Neferti* see Laisney (2007, 86).

<sup>1257</sup> On the *hapax legomenon* *mšḥf* see Laisney (2007, 83-84) and Dils (2014).

<sup>1258</sup> The term *wnš* is often translated as ‘jackal’, which is the translation given in the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae* and preferred by Vernus (2010a, 438, 440n10, with references) and Laisney (2007, 84 with n. 481 with references). Not all authors agree with the existence of jackals in ancient Egypt, however, and prefer the term ‘wild dogs’ (see Araújo 2001a, 177).

<sup>1259</sup> See Shirun-Grumach (1991, 231nVII.8-a)).

#### 41. P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 6, vv. 7.11-9.8

(7.11) (*ḥw.t mḥ-6.t*) Chapter 6.

(7.12) (*m-jrj rmnj wd.y ḥr t(3)š.jw n(.jw) 3ḥ.wt* (7.13) *mtw=k tfjw h3w n(.j) nwh*) Do not displace a marker on the boundaries of the fields, (7.13) nor disturb the place (lit. neighbourhood) of the (measuring) rope.

(7.14) (*m-jrj snk.ty r mḥ I*<sup>1260</sup> *n(.j) 3ḥ.t* (7.15) *mtw=k h3d t(3)š.jw n(.jw) ḥ3rj(.t)*) Do not covet one cubit (= portion?) of arable field, (7.15) nor tamper with the boundaries of a widow.

(7.16) (*dnm n(.j) h3b ḥb3 n(.j) p3 ḥ(.w)* (7.17) *p3 ḥg3jw=k sw n(.j) sh.wt*) A furrow of labour<sup>1261</sup> is a shortening of the lifetime, (7.17) what you took dishonestly belongs to the fields<sup>1262</sup>.

(7.18) (*wn(n)=f sh*<sup>1263</sup> *m ḥ.yw n(.jw) ḥd3* (7.19) *jw=f sph n-m b3.w n(.j) jḥ*) If he acquires through false oaths (lit. through oaths of falsehood), (7.19) he will be caught (lit. lassoed) by the wrath<sup>1264</sup> of the Moon (= Thoth).

(8.1) (*j:jrj=k sj33 r p3 jry sw ḥr-tp t3*) You will recognise the one who did this on earth:

(8.2) (*jw=f(m) ḥnwty n kb.w (= gb)*) he is a coveter of the weak;

(8.3) (*jw=f(m) ḥf(t.y) n whny m-ḥ.t=k* (8.4) *jw nḥm*<sup>1265</sup> *ḥnḥ m jr.t=f*) he is an enemy capable of destroying your body<sup>1266</sup>, (8.4) life was taken from his eye;<sup>1267</sup>

<sup>1260</sup> The reading *I* is debatable. See Laisney (2007, 89 with n. 503) and Dils (2014).

<sup>1261</sup> Irene Grumach points out the wordplay between *hb.w* (translated by her as ‘Treten’) and *hb.y*, Ibis (= Thoth), and suggests that the reading ‘furrow of the Ibis’ is also possible (1972, 61). Indeed, the words *hb*, written *h3b.w*, ‘labour’ (v. 7.16) and ‘Ibis’ (v. 17.17) are identically written, apart from the determinatives (plough (U13 (see Gardiner 1957, 517)) on v. 7.16 and ibis (G26\* (see Gardiner 1957, 470)) on v. 17.7), and occur each only once in this instruction. Despite the clarity of the determinative of *h3b.w* on v. 7.16, at least the wordplay is probably present. On v. 17.7 Thoth appears, as in other instances in this instruction, as the god of the scribes. This would explain the wordplay, since the cautionary advice against stepping on the fields of another (possibly to acquire them by force of use as suggested by Grumach (1972, 61)) is addressed to the officials measuring the fields after the waters had receded and not to fieldworkers (Grumach 1972, 61).

<sup>1262</sup> About the grammatical problems posed by this verse see Dils (2014) and Laisney (2007, 92).

<sup>1263</sup> Both Dils (2014) and Grumach (1972, 57) add the preposition *ḥr*. Grumach understands the clause as a ‘*wmn=f ḥr sdm* im Sinne einer futurischen Aussage’ (1972, 57). Laisney, however, understands the construction as a conditional verb (= *wmn=f*) followed by *jw=f* which starts the next verse (2007, 92). The latter interpretation is followed here.

<sup>1264</sup> For the sense of *b3.w* as ‘wrath’, see Volten (1937, 115 with references), Laisney (2007, 115 § 11,5 with n. 691), and Borghouts (1982, 2). For another example see the stela of Nebre, Berlin 20377, v. 8, (Kitchen 1999, 288-89).

<sup>1265</sup> Grumach argues for the need of an *.w* indicating the passive voice (1972, 58). However, cf. Laisney (2007, 93 with n. 537).

<sup>1266</sup> Cf. Laisney (2007, 93n536).

<sup>1267</sup> This verse may refer to the probably universal theme of the evil eye (about which see Meslin (2005, 2941-42) and Laisney (2007, 99 § 8,4)). In Portugal, and perhaps especially in Brazil, envy can also be referred to as ‘olho gordo’ (lit. ‘fat eye’). Laisney (2007, 99) argues that the life taken away is a reference to the death penalty, perhaps due to the crimes to which avarice may incite, and since the capital punishment is indeed mentioned elsewhere in this instruction – namely in chapter 20, vv. 21.9-21.10 (see no. 50 below), and possibly even on vv. 7.16 and 7.19 in the chapter under consideration –, this is a plausible suggestion. However, it is also possible that this passage might allude not to death in a literal sense, but in the metaphorical sense of missing out on life due to envy. A similar description is made by psychologist Paul

(8.5) (*jw p3y=f pr (m) hff(t.j) n p3 dmj*) his house is an enemy of (lit. for) the town;

(8.6) (*jw n3yw=f šc3.w wgp.w*) **his silos/granaries were destroyed**<sup>1268</sup>;

(8.7) (*jw=w t3j 3h.t=f m-dr.t ms.wy=f* (8.8) *dj.tw*<sup>1269</sup> *p3y=f nkt n ky*) his property is taken from his children (8.8) so that it is given to another<sup>1270</sup>.

(8.9) (*z3w tw r h3d tš.jw n(jw) 3h.wt* (8.10) *tm hry(.t) jn.tw=k*) Beware of tampering with the boundaries of the fields (8.10) so that a terror<sup>1271</sup> does not fetch you.

(8.11) (*tw=tw shtp ntr n-m b3.w n(.j) nb* (8.12) *wpj tš.jw n(jw) 3h.w(t)*) One appeases god through the wrath of the Lord<sup>1272</sup>, (8.12) who divided the boundaries of the fields.

(8.13) (*3b r=k swd3 hç.t=k* (8.14) *z3w tw r nb-r-dr*) Desire then to keep your body sound, (8.14) and beware of the Lord of All<sup>1273</sup>.

(8.15) (*m-jrj hbhb dnm n(.j) ky* (8.16) *3h n=k wd3 hr=sn*) Do not tread on the furrow of labour of another, (8.16) it is better for you to be safe from them<sup>1274</sup>.

(8.17) (*sk3 m sh.wt gmj=k hr.wt=k* (8.18) *šzp=k sn{n.ty}<.w> n(.y) htjw (m)-hç.t=k*) Plough the fields and you shall find your means of subsistence, (8.18) and you shall collect the bread<sup>1275</sup> of your own threshing floor.

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Ekman, in a conversation with the Dalai Lama, about resentment (2008, 127): ‘Resentment can fester. When it festers, it takes over your mind, and then it is never out of your mind. You think about it all the time, every day, every hour of the day. You try to think of something else, you read a book, and it invades your thoughts. That is festering resentment.’ The author of the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* points out as well that sadness will also make one miss out on life: ‘(D380) (*mnš-<jb> n hrw r-3w=f*) the one who is sullen of *jb*-heart (= sad?) all day long, / (381) (*nn jrj.n=f 3.t nfr.t*) he cannot attain a good moment’ (see Dils 2014; Jacq 2004, 174). Dils (2014) dismisses this line of interpretation as ‘vielleicht eine moderne Redewendung’. Shirun-Grumach (1991, 232n4-a) translates v. 8.4 as ‘das Leben ist aus seinem Auge geraubt’ and understands it as the blindness due to divine punishment that is part of the Egyptian personal piety (see Luiselli 2011, 162-68). In Grumach (1972, 62) a further comparison is made with the theme of divine punishment through (literal or metaphorical) blindness in the tomb inscriptions of the Nineteenth Dynasty (see also Shirun-Grumach 1991, 232nVIII.4-a). As Grumach (1972, 62) argues, the misery of the greedy on vv. 8.1-8.6 shows similarities with the divine punishments in the Nineteenth Dynasty mortuary texts.

<sup>1268</sup> For interpretations on the reasons behind the rubrication of this verse, see Laisney (2007, 90). See also Dils (2014) and Vernus (2010a, 424n79).

<sup>1269</sup> The text has *djdj*, which is, according to Laisney (2007, 93 with n. 541), a writing for *dj.tw*.

<sup>1270</sup> Compare the last two verses with the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, vv. D111-D112. For biblical parallels see Drioton (1957, 268).

<sup>1271</sup> Although it is not explicitly stated that the referred terror is of divine origin, the same word, *hry.t*, occurs at the end of chapter 7, v. 10.15 (see no. 42 below), apparently in connection to divine punishment, and the same sentence, *tm hry.t jn.tw=k*, is reprised at the end of chapter 9, v. 13.9. On this terror as divine punishment see Laisney (2007, 99) and Vernus (2010a, 424n81).

<sup>1272</sup> According to Laisney (2007, 93-94 with nn. 544-46), the Lord (which is accompanied by a divine determinative) refers to Thoth, whereas *ntr* refers to the supreme god who is named *nb-r-d*, ‘Lord of All’, below on v. 8.14.

<sup>1273</sup> For references on the identity of the Lord of All see Simpson (2003e, 229).

<sup>1274</sup> The referent of *=sn* is not entirely clear. Laisney (2007 94) suggests that the suffix pronoun refers to the furrows of the preceding verse which are not, as the author also remarks, in the plural. Irene Grumach (1972, 58) suggests that it refers to the *b3.w n(jw) nb* of v. 8.11, and compares it to v. 11.5 of chapter 8, which reads: *wd3=k r b3.w n(jw) ntr*, ‘and you will be safe from the wrath of god’ (see no. 43 below) (Laisney 2007, 113; Dils 2014). Laisney (2007, 94) counterargues that the verses are somewhat distant.

(8.19) (*3ḥ jp.t jw dj s(j) n=k p3 ntr* (8.20) *r 5000 m gns*) Better is a measure that the god has given you, (8.20) than 5000 through violence<sup>1276</sup>.

(9.1) (*bw jrj=w jrj hrw <m> mhr šꜥ3* (9.2) *bw jrj=w jrj ḥwj n p3 ʿšjw*) They (= 5000 measures) do not spend (lit. make) a day <in> the barn and/or storehouse, (9.2) they do not produce food for the beer jug<sup>1277</sup>.

(9.3) (*km 3.t p3y=w ʿḥꜥ(.w) n t3 šn(w).tj*) A short while is the time they spend in the storehouse (lit. the completion of a moment is their lifetime in the storehouse).

(9.4) (*ḥd t3 jw=w dfβ.w*) when morning comes (lit. the earth brightens) they will have sunk/flown away<sup>1278</sup>.

(9.5) (*3ḥ p3 nmḥ*<sup>1279</sup> *m-dr.t p3 ntr* (9.6) *r wsr.w m wd3*) Better is poverty from the hand of the god<sup>1280</sup>, (9.6) than wealth in the storehouse.

(9.7) (*3ḥ p3w.tj{w} jw ḥ3.tj ndm* (9.8) *r wsr.w hr šnn*) Better is offering bread when the ḥ3.tj-heart is content, (9.8) than riches with worrying<sup>1281</sup>.

(Laisney 2007, 87-102, 333-36; Dils 2014; Grumach 1972, 56-63; Shirun-Grumach 1991, 231-33; Vernus 2010a, 402-403; 2010b, 541-42; Römheld 1989, 135, 160-61, 164; Lange 1925, 51-54; Drioton 1957, 265-68; Simpson 2003e, 228-29; Adams 2008, 45)

## 42. P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 7, vv. 9.9-10.15

(9.9) (*ḥw.t mh-7.t*) Chapter 7.

(9.10) (*m-jrj km3m jb=k m-s3 wsr.w* (9.11) *nn ḥm š3y.t rnn.t*) Do not throw your *jb*-heart after riches: (9.11) there is no one who ignores Shay<sup>1282</sup> and Renenet<sup>1283</sup>.

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<sup>1275</sup> That this is not the offering but everyday bread is convincingly argued by Laisney (2007, 94n557).

<sup>1276</sup> The term *gns* occurs rarely in Egyptian texts (Grumach 1972, 58; Laisney 2007, 95 with n. 562). For its meaning see Grumach (1972, 58), Laisney (2007, 95), and Vernus (2010a 424n82). Compare this verse with maxim 6 of the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, vv. D99, D107-D111 (see no. 4 above).

<sup>1277</sup> ‘Ce verset signifie donc que l’on a tout juste l’orge nécessaire pour manger et que l’on ne peut se permettre d’en mettre de côté pour préparer de la bière’ (Laisney 2007, 95).

<sup>1278</sup> Whether the verb *dfβ.w* is a form of the verb *dfj*, ‘to sink’, or a verb *dfβ*, ‘to fly away’ is uncertain, especially given the bird determinative (Laisney 2007, 96; Dils 2014). Be as it may, the sense is the same of the next chapter, especially vv. 9.16-10.1 (see no. 42 below): wrongfully acquired riches will be quickly lost (Vernus 2010a, 424 n. 83).

<sup>1279</sup> It may be of relevance that this is the term often used to describe the ‘poor’ that addresses the deity in some of the texts that make part of the phenomenon known as personal piety during the Ramesside Period. For an interpretation of this word in that context see Vernus (2003b, 142-43).

<sup>1280</sup> See Shirun-Grumach (1990, 848-52). Here ‘ist *m-dr.t* reine Präposition’ (852) and is to be distinguished from its extended use in the expression *m-dr.t p3 ntr* on chapter 10, v. 14.1 (see no. 44 below), and on chapter 25, vv. 24.11 and 24.20 (see no. 25 below). About that expression see the comments on v. 9.5 in Laisney (2007, 96, 101), and see also below the note to chapter 10, v. 14.1.

<sup>1281</sup> Compare these last four verses with Proverbs 28.6 (see also Römheld 1989, 180). Vv. 9.7-9.8 are repeated at the end of chapter 13, vv. 16.13-16.14 (see no. 45 below).

<sup>1282</sup> On the ending *.t* see Quaegebur (1975, 52).

<sup>1283</sup> Also possible: ‘there is no one whom Shay and Renenet ignore’ (see Dils 2014).



(9.12) (*m-jrj h3<sup>c</sup> n=k h3.tj=k m-rw(tj)*) (9.13) *z(.j) nb n(.j) t3yw=f wnw.t*) Do not abandon your *h3.tj*-heart outside<sup>1284</sup>: (9.13) each man belongs to his hour.

(9.14) (*m-jrj mšp r wh3h h3.ww*) (9.15) *wd3 n=k hr.wt=k*) Do not exert yourself to seek surplus, (9.15) so that your sustenance is assured.

(9.16) (*jr jnj.tw n=k wsr.w m-hwr<sup>c</sup>*) (9.17) *nn sdr=w m-djw=k*) If riches are brought to you by thievery (lit. with violence), (9.17) they will not spend the night next to you.

(9.18) (*hd t3 bn st m pr=k*) (9.19) *ptr=w t3y=w s.t hr bn st*) In the morning (lit. the earth brightens) they are not in your house: (9.19) one may see their place, but they are no (more).

(9.20) (*wn p3 jwdn r3=f k(3)=f sw m=f sw*) (10.1) *m-djw=f hrp=w m dw3.t*) The ground opened its mouth, it straightened them, and swallowed them: (10.1) in his possession they sunk into the Duat.

(10.2) (*jrj.y=w n=w b3y(.t) ʕ3 m d3r=w*) (10.3) *st hrp.w n p3 šn<sup>c</sup>*) They made for themselves a great hole according to their proportion, (10.3) and they sunk into the underworld.

(10.4) (*jrj.y=w n=w dnḥ.wy mj r3.wj*) (10.5) *st pwy r t3 p.t*) They made for themselves wings like geese, (10.5) and they flew to the sky.

(10.6) (*m-jrj ršj n=k <n> wsr.w m-hwr<sup>c</sup>*) (10.7) *mtw=k jhm n nmḥ*) Do not rejoice because of riches (obtained) by thievery (lit. with violence), (10.7) nor complain because of poverty.

(10.8) (*jr sty{.w} hrp šm n-hr=f*) (10.9) *hr w3h sw t3yw=f dr.t*) As for a chief-archer who (blindly) pushes forward, (10.9) his unit (lit. handful)<sup>1285</sup> deserts him.

(10.10) (*sk.tj{=k} n(.jt) ʕwn.tj h3<sup>c</sup>.tw <m> h3y(.t)*) (10.11) *jw kr n(.j) gr <m> m3<sup>c</sup>.w*) The ship of the greedy is abandoned <in> the mud, (10.11) while the skiff of the silent man is <under> (favourable) wind<sup>1286</sup>.

(10.12) (*j:jrj{.tw}=k sm3<sup>c</sup> n p3 jdn jw=f (hr) wbn*) (10.13) (*(hr)-dd jmm n=j wd3 snb*) It is when he rises that you should pray (lit. make yourself right)<sup>1287</sup> to the Aten, (10.13) saying ‘give me safety (or: prosperity) and health’.

(10.14) (*dj=f n=k hr.wt=k n p3 ʕnh*) (10.15) *jw=k wd3.tw r hry(.t)*) May he give you your lifelong sustenance, (10.14) while you are safe from a terror.

(Laisney 2007, 102-12, 336-37; Dils 2014; Grumach 1972, 64-69; Shirun-Grumach 1991, 233-34; Vernus 2010a, 403-404; Römheld 1989, 27, 174; Drioton 1957, 269; Lange 1925, 54-59; Simpson 2003e, 230; Quaegebeur 1975, 127; Adams 2008, 43-44)

<sup>1284</sup> A free translation could be ‘do not be mindless’. Laisney (2007, 109) takes this verse to be synonymous with v. 9.10.

<sup>1285</sup> See Laisney (2007, 108) and Dils (2014).

<sup>1286</sup> On the play with *gr m3<sup>c</sup>* see Laisney (2007, 108).

<sup>1287</sup> Grumach (1972, 68).

43. **P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 8, vv. 10.16-11.11**

(10.16) (*hw.t mh-8.t*) Chapter 8.

(10.17) (*jmm nfr=k m h.t n(jw) r(m)t.w* (10.18) *wšd tw hr-nb.w*) Make people feel you are good (lit. give your goodness in the belly of people), (10.18) so that everyone greets you.

(10.19) (*jrj=tw hn.w n j<sup>c</sup>r<sup>c</sup>.t* (10.20) *pgs r ʿpp*) Make jubilation for Iaret, (10.20) and spit against Apep<sup>1288</sup>.

(10.21) (*swd3 ns{.t}=k r mdw(.t) h<sup>d</sup>j* (11.1) *jrj.y=k mr.wt(j) n(.jw) kwj*) Guard your tongue against words that injure, (11.1) and you will act as beloved of others.

(11.2) (*gmj=k s.t=k m-hnw hw.t-ntr* (11.3) *drp.w=k n p3w.tjw n(.j) nb=k*) You will find your place in the temple, (11.3) and your food from the bread<sup>1289</sup> of your lord.

(11.4) (*jrj.yw=k jm3h{h} h3p tw=k db(3).t=k* (11.5) *wd3=k r b3.w n(.jw) ntr*) You will be an *imakhu*, your sarcophagus will conceal you, (11.5) and you will be safe<sup>1290</sup> from the wrath of god.

(11.6) (*m-jrj njs bt3.w r r(m)t* (11.7) *h3p p3 shr.w n(j) w<sup>c</sup>r*) Do not call out<sup>1291</sup> a wrongdoing against a man, (11.7) (but) conceal the plan of flight<sup>1292</sup>.

(11.8) (*jr sdm=k p3 nfr m-r3-pw bjn* (11.9) *j:jrj sw m-rw(.t) bw sdm=f*) Whether you hear good or bad, (11.9) leave it outside, as it was not heard (by a court?)<sup>1293</sup>.

(11.10) (*jmm smj nfr hr-tp t3 <m> ns{.t}=k* (11.11) *jw p3 dw.w h3p m h.t=k*) Give a good report upon earth with your tongue, (11.11) while the bad (report) is concealed in your belly<sup>1294</sup>.

<sup>1288</sup> See Vernus (2010a, 425n93) and Ritner (1993, 82-88).

<sup>1289</sup> As pointed out by Drioton (1957, 277), the term employed designates only the bread used in ritual offerings.

<sup>1290</sup> The terms *swd3* on v. 10.21 and *wd3* on this verse probably form a wordplay.

<sup>1291</sup> On the legal sense of *njs* see Shupak (1992, 11).

<sup>1292</sup> Römhald (1989, 91, 92n72 § f) interprets *h3p* as an active participle and translates this couplet thus: ‘Klage nicht eine Missetat an bei einem Mann, / der die Umstände (seiner) Flucht verborgen hat!’. Shirun-Grumach (1991, 234) interprets the second verse differently: ‘Rüfe nicht “Sünde” gegen einen Menschen; / die Umstände der Flucht sind verborgen.’ It is also possible to take *h3p* to be an imperative, which is the interpretation proposed here (see also Laisney 2007, 115; Dils 2014).

<sup>1293</sup> Regarding the advice given on vv. 11.6-11.7, several translators and commentators (e.g., Vernus 2010a, 425n95; Laisney 2007, 118) point out that its sense is close to the counsel given in *Ptahhotep*’s maxim 23, namely that one should not heed to, or reproduce hearsay. Irene Grumach (1972, 73) speculates that the term *shr* is an allusion to Sinuhe’s flight *jw mj shr ntr*, ‘as the plan of (a) god’, indicating that the man in question in chapter 8 is being steered by god, and that the term *bt3* refers not to a crime per se, but to a dysfunctional relationship with god. This interpretation may be unwarranted, as the gist of these two verses seems to be that one should not denounce a colleague, and even remain silent about what one has heard about his alleged crime, until one is certain about the veracity of the accusations against him (see also Laisney 2007, 118). It is also possible that this passage has similarities to *Ptahhotep*’s twenty-fifth maxim which advises one to be mild and forget about *zp hpr.w*, ‘a matter that happened’ (P. Prisse, D422), provided the man in question will not relapse (Vernus 2010a, 165n199; Dils 2014). Of a similar tenor are *The Prohibitions*, O. Petrie 11 verso, vv. 3-4, according to which one should not denounce a transgression as it will become smaller (see Grumach 1972, 71-72; Römhald 1989, 90; Laisney 2007, 118n709). In this alternative sense, vv. 11.6-11.7 are not so much about not heeding to unfounded rumours, but about giving someone a second chance.

<sup>1294</sup> Compare with the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 20.9-20.10 (see no. 30 above).

(Laisney 2007, 112-18, 337-39; Dils 2014; Grumach 1972, 70-74; Shirun-Grumach 1991, 234; Lange 1925, 59-62; Vernus 2010a, 404-405; Vernus 2010b, 542-43; Drioton 1957, 271, 277-78; Simpson 2003e, 230-31; Römheld 1989, 161-62)

#### 44. P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 10, vv. 13.10-14.3

(13.10) (*ḥw.t mḥ-10.t*) Chapter 10.

(13.11) (*m-jrj wšd tw m p3yw=k šmm m gns=k* (13.12) *mtw=k ḥdj jb=k ds=k*) Do not greet your hot-tempered man<sup>1295</sup> by forcing yourself, (13.12) nor hurt your own feelings (lit. strike your own *jb*-heart)<sup>1296</sup>.

(13.13) (*m-jrj dd n=fj3w{t}.tw=k n-ᶜd3* (13.14) *jw wn ḥr.j(t) m ḥ.t=k*) Do not say to him falsely ‘may you be praised’, (13.14) when there is fear in your belly<sup>1297</sup>.

(13.15) (*m-jrj mdwj (j)rm r(m)t n-ᶜd3* (13.16) *t3 bw.t n(jt) p3 ntr*) Do not argue<sup>1298</sup> falsely with a man, (13.16) it is a detestation of the god.

(13.17) (*m-jrj pšn ḥ3.tj=k r ns{.t}=k* (13.18) *ḥpr šhr.w=k nb(.w) mᶜrj* (13.19) *ḥpr=<k> dns.t m-b3ḥ t3 kj.wj* (14.1) *jw=<k> wd3.tw m-dr.t p3 ntr*) Do not separate your understanding<sup>1299</sup> (lit. *ḥ3.tj*-heart)<sup>1300</sup> from

<sup>1295</sup> Irene Grumach (1972, 84), followed by Römheld (1989, 173n108), corrects ‘your hot-tempered’ to ‘hot-tempered’ according to P. Stockholm MM 18416 which has only *p3 [šmm]* (Peterson 1966, 127, pl. xxxi a). Although P. BM EA 10474 recto may be ‘carelessly written’ (1966, 120), this does not necessarily entail that any discrepancy between this and another copy is a mistake – in fact, the writing in P. Stockholm MM 18416 may itself be either incorrect or derive from a reinterpretation of the passage. Accepting *p3y=k šmm* in P. BM EA 10474 recto as correct and intentional, it is important to point out that this expression occurs in other New Kingdom texts, such as O. DeM 1265, v. 1.4 (Borghouts 1980, 23). According to Joris Borghouts (1980, 23), the expression indicates some kind of relationship between the hot-tempered and the other person mentioned (23), which in the present case is the instruction’s addressee. Laisney (2007, 137) suggests the hot-tempered in this passage may be a superior who is in conflict with the pupil. The *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4, vv. 22.7-22.10, also gives advice on how to deal with an irate superior (*ḥr.j knd*), but differs to a significant extent from the present passage.

<sup>1296</sup> See Vernus (2010b, 543). A similar phrase, *m-jrj ḥd jb ḥr ds=k*, is attested in the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, v. 22.9. The sense there seems to be ‘do not take it personally’ (see Quack 1994, 119; Vernus 2010a, 328).

<sup>1297</sup> It is not absolutely certain whether the author/copyist meant *ḥr.yt*, ‘terror’, or *ḥr*, ‘plot’. Vernus (2010a, 427n115) and Peterson (1966, 128, with references) argue for the latter, and that would indeed fit the context of acting in a duplicitous way. However, the writing of the word is the same as on v. 13.9 where *ḥr.y(t)* is clearly meant. This reading has the advantage of clarifying why the pupil would be acting duplicitously (e.g., Lange 1925, 70). Laisney (2007, 139) points out correctly that in the other attestations of the word (chapter 6, v. 8.10 (see no. 41), chapter 7, v. 10.15 (see no. 42), and chapter 9, v. 13.9), *ḥr.yt* refers to something one would want to avoid, most probably a divine punishment or otherwise a divine intervention in the likes of a *b3.w ntr* (Shirun-Grumach 1990, 842-43), ‘manifestation of god’ (on which see, e.g., Teeter (2011, 112-13) and Borghouts (1982; 1994, 129)). In fact, Shirun-Grumach (1990, 848; 1991, 236n14.1-a) takes *ḥr.jt* here to refer, if not to divine possession, to some kind of affliction of the soul. But in this case *ḥr.jt* seems closer to the verb *ḥr.j* on chapter 18, v. 19.11 (see no. 49 below), in the sense of fear of someone, possibly the hot-tempered.

<sup>1298</sup> On the sense of *mdwj jrm* as ‘to argue’ or ‘to contend’ see Dils (2014, with references).

<sup>1299</sup> See Rueda (2003, 118-19, 206, 342).

<sup>1300</sup> In this chapter the *jb*-heart and the *ḥ3.tj*-heart seem to be interchangeable, or perhaps complementary as seems to be the case in chapter 18, v. 20.3 (see no. 49 below), which is to be expected, given that, since the New Kingdom, the *ḥ3.tj*-heart increasingly acquired the metaphorical attributes previously reserved almost

your tongue<sup>1301</sup>, (13.18) and all of your projects will succeed, (13.19) <you> will be important<sup>1302</sup> before the others, (14.1) while you are safe from the hand of the god<sup>1303</sup>.

(14.2) (*msdj ntr sꜥdꜥ mdw(.t)*) (14.3) *tꜣy=f bw.t ꜥ ꜥ šnn h.t*) God hates the one who falsifies the speech, (14.3) his great detestation is inner suffering<sup>1304</sup>.

(Laisney 2007, 135-42; 342-43; Lange 1925, 69-70; Dils 2014; Grumach 1972, 84-87; Shirun-Grumach 1991, 236-37; Vernus 2010a, 406; 2010b, 543-44; Simpson 2003e, 232-33; Römheld 1989, 173; Peterson 1966, 122, 127-28, pl. xxxi a)

#### 45. P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 13, vv. 15.19-16.14

(15.19) (*hw.t mh-13.t*) Chapter 13.

(15.20) (*m-jrj shꜥ r(m)ꜥ <m> ꜥr r ꜥr(.t)*) (15.21) *tꜣ bw.t n(jt) pꜥ ntr*) Do not defraud<sup>1305</sup> a man <through> the reed pen on the papyrus roll; (15.21) it is a detestation of the god<sup>1306</sup>.

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exclusively to its counterpart, the *jb*-heart (see e.g., Nyord 2009b, 67 with n. 18). Distinct roles for each heart term may have been kept in the funerary discourse, however (see Sousa 2011, 44-45).

<sup>1301</sup> While the focus of this chapter is on sincerity, chapter 21, vv. 22.11-22.18 (see no. 51 below), offers an interesting contrast by shifting the perspective to an indiscretion that can be used against the pupil, and advising the pupil on vv. 22.11-22.16 against saying everything he thinks. Besides the different contexts, it is perhaps relevant that in the chapter under consideration, especially v. 13.17, the speech comes from the *hꜥtj*-heart, whereas in chapter 21, v. 22.11, it comes from the belly.

<sup>1302</sup> See Laisney (2007, 138 with n. 835).

<sup>1303</sup> See Shirun-Grumach (1990, 847). The expression *wdꜥ m-dr.t pꜥ ntr* is attested here and in chapter 25, v. 24.20 (see no. 54 below). Several translators (e.g., Simpson 2003e, 233; Vernus 2010a, 406) take it to mean ‘in the hand of the god’ and to have a positive connotation, namely of protection. However, Shirun-Grumach (1990, 843-47) makes the case that *wdꜥ m-dr.t pꜥ ntr* has the sense of ‘safe from the hand/grip of the god’. The fact that in chapter 8, v. 11.5, *wdꜥ=k r bꜥ.w n(jw) ntr*, ‘you will be safe from the wrath of god’ (see no. 43), is used in a similar way to *wdꜥ m-dr.t pꜥ ntr* in the passage at hand, further supports Shirun-Grumach’s interpretation of this passage. For a formulation similar to *wdꜥ m-dr.t pꜥ ntr* see *Coffin Texts* spell 165: *wdꜥ.kwj m-ꜥ sdb nb*, ‘I am safe from any impediment’ (de Buck 1947, § III, 7b; Nyord 2009a, 504).

<sup>1304</sup> Although recognising it has a ‘sens plus fort’, Laisney (2007, 138) translates *šnn-h.t* as ‘souffrance du corps’. Vernus (2010b, 543-44) rejects this reading of a physical ailment, and prefers to understand it as psychological turmoil that arises from the contradiction of saying what one does not really want to say. It is well known that psychological hurt has often consequences on the body. Above (v. 13.14) the author mentions fear in the *h.t*, which is perhaps best translated as ‘belly’, since fear is felt in this part of the body. What the psychiatric discourse designates as ‘anxiety’ is also frequently accompanied by gastrointestinal symptoms. It is thus possible that both Laisney and Vernus are right, and the suffering described has both a psychological and physical component. It is also interesting that this passage might be not only a reproach of hypocrisy, but actually a call to courage and assertiveness, as the problem seems to be the pupil giving in to his fear (v. 13.14) which seems to be what god hates (vv. 14.2-14.3). Nili Shupak (1993, 263) comments that, in the biblical wisdom literature, foolishness was considered a precondition for wickedness, and the author of *Amenemope* seems to share a similar concern, more specifically that fear may compromise one’s morality.

<sup>1305</sup> In the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae* *shꜥ* (lemma no. 140050) is translated as ‘umkehren’, ‘verkehren’, and as ‘betrügen’. It is the latter translation that is used here. Its literal meaning is ‘to cause to go down’ (Laisney 2007, 143 § 14,10), but the determinative with the legs walking in the opposite direction (G55 (see Gardiner 1957, 457)) indicates a specialised meaning. Its basic sense has to do with inversion, perversion, or confusion (on the noun *shꜥ* see Shupak (1993, 121)). Laisney (2007, 143n858) remarks that this verb is seldom attested outside *Amenemope*, and uses v. 19.2 of chapter 17 (see no. 48 below) to explain the origin of its specialised sense as ‘tromper en abaissant un des plateaux de la balance’ (2007, 144 § 14,10). The fraud mentioned on the verse under consideration also occurs in the context of falsification, but of a document, as indicated on the

(16.1) (*m-jrj jrj.y {mt(r)} <mt(r.t)> n mdw(.t) n(.jw) ʕd3* (16.2) *mtw=k rmnj ky m ns{.t}=k*) Do not make a testimony with <words> of falsehood, (16.2) in order to thrust aside another by your tongue<sup>1307</sup>.

(16.3) (*m-jrj jrj.y ḥsb <n> {n}<jw>.tj nkt* (16.4) *mtw=k sʕd3 <m> p3yw=k ʕr*) Do not make a reckoning <with> the one who has nothing<sup>1308</sup>, (16.4) in order to falsify<sup>1309</sup> <through> your reed pen.

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previous verse. This document may be a list of taxes (Lange 1925, 81; Laisney 2007, 156), but what does the fraud consist in is not entirely clear, as also recognised by Laisney (2007, 156). Altenmüller (1983, 15-17) suggests that vv. 15.20-16.2 are foreign to the text and that they are an edited treatment of a traditional theme presented in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, maxim 8, vv. D159-D160. In his turn, Laisney (2007, 156) proposes that the transgression involves the reduction of the taxes of those protected by the scribe at the expense of their increase for the peasants, without the total sum of taxes owed the state being changed (this seems to be also the suggestion by Grumach (1972, 102)). Vv. 6.16-6.17 of chapter 5 (see no. 40 above) show that the illegalities reproached by the author were not committed for the exclusive benefit of the scribe, which may lend further support to Laisney's suggestion. On *sh3* see further the discussion in chapter 3, subsection 3.1.2.4.

<sup>1306</sup> As pointed out by Altenmüller (1983, 15-17), these two verses have a parallel in the *Instruction of Ptahhotep*, P. Prisse, maxim 8, vv. D159-D160.

<sup>1307</sup> Lange (1925, 80-81) hints at land dispossession from a tenant. Laisney (2007, 156) suggests that, as a consequence of the falsification of the tax list on v. 15.20, the farmer could complain about the fraudulent scribe who should not bear false testimony against the farmer.

<sup>1308</sup> The term *nkt*, 'thing', is also attested in chapter 11, vv. 14.5 and 14.7, where the pupil is advised against coveting the *nkt* of the *tw3*-subordinates. In that context, *nkt* most probably has the sense of 'goods' or 'property'. However, *nkt* may also have the sense of 'bribe', as demonstrated by Vernus (2003b, 152), and that might be the case on v. 16.3. In that case, the man in question would not be a man who has literally nothing, but instead a man who has nothing with which to bribe the scribe and thus prevent the fraud against him.

<sup>1309</sup> All translations consulted take *sʕd3* to refer to an act of falsification. Even in his alternative translation, Vernus (2003b, 135 with n. 72) renders the couplet as: 'if you impose a fee on one who has nothing, do not falsify your pen' (see also Vernus 2010a, 408). This couplet may be interpreted as relating to what precedes it or to what follows it. Altenmüller (1983, 12-13) takes vv. 15.20-16.2 to form a unit and vv. 16.3-16.7 to form a different unit. In his interpretation, the former group deals with the unjust treatment of people in general, whereas the latter group deals with the treatment of the poor and destitute (13). However, Altenmüller (11) also points out that vv. 15.20-16.4 deal with three types of transgression and three types of people and that the three couplets are framed by the term *ʕr*, 'reed pen', on vv. 15.20 and 16.4. Laisney (2007, 156n924) takes issue with Altenmüller's interpretation of the three couplets, and considers these as making up the first part of the chapter, while the second part would begin with v. 16.5 through the grammatical shift from the negative imperative *m-jrj* to the conditional *jr*. Laisney (156) also considers v. 16.4 the logical conclusion of the preceding verse 'car, c'est en faisant un faux, que l'on peut inscrire des impôts à celui qui n'a (presque) rien.' Similarly, Grumach (1972, 102) considers that the term *ʕr* connects vv. 15.20 and 16.4 and that *sʕd3* on v. 16.4 has the same sense of *sh3* on v. 15.20. The fact that the man in question is described as having nothing could mean that the scribe could have no possible interest in defrauding him. However, as argued in the previous note, it could also be that, instead of having nothing, the man would in fact lack the means to bribe the fraudulent scribe. About the fraudulent activities addressed in chapter 13 of *Amenemope*, Laisney (2007, 158) suggests that 'la manière de s'enrichir est indirecte, en favorisant des clients.' Accepting this premise, one may conjecture that the interest in indebting the destitute or the one who cannot afford a bribe would lie not in what he could pay but in how he would have to do it. In questioning himself about the sources of labour force of 'private entrepreneurs' who exploited the fields of temples and of institutions, Moreno García (2008, 110-11, 128 with n. 109, 135-36) suggests that indebted peasants would make up one of those sources. Assuming this could be the context, one may conclude that, by indebting the man 'who has nothing' through the falsification of the tax list, the scribe would provide his clients with cheap labour. According to this interpretation, *sʕd3* in this passage does refer to an act of falsification. But, as mentioned, this passage may be taken to relate to what follows it. In this sense, vv. 16.3-16.4 would form a unit together with vv. 16.5-16.7 on the correct treatment of the very poor, as suggested by Altenmüller (1983, 12-13). Although it is plausible to

(16.5) (*jr gmj=k wd3(.t) ʕ3(.t) n(.j) nmḥ* (16.6) *j:jrj.w sw m 3 dnj.t* (16.7) *ḥ3ʕ 2.t jmm mn{w} wʕ*) If you find a large remainder of a poor, (16.6) turn it into three parts: (16.7) drop two, and cause one to remain<sup>1310</sup>.

(16.8) (*gmj=k sw mj w3.t* (or: *<m> mj.t*) *n(.j) ʕnh*) You will find it is like a way of life (or: You will find it is the way<sup>1311</sup> of life)<sup>1312</sup>.

(16.9) (*sdr=k swḥ3ḥ{.tw}=k {mj} <r> dw3.w*) You will sleep and pass the night <until> morning (that is: sleep soundly).

(16.10) (*gmj=k sw mj smj nfr*) You will find it to be like a good reputation.

(16.11) (*3ḥ ḥs(.wt) m mrj(.y)* (or: *mr(.wt)*) *n(.jw) r(m)ḥ.w*) (16.12) *r wsr m wd3*) Better is praise as one beloved of people (or: in the love of people), (16.12) than riches in the granary.

(16.13) (*3ḥ p3w.tj{w} jw ḥ3.tj ndm* (16.14) *r wsr.w hr šnn*) Better is offering-bread when the *ḥ3.tj*-heart is content, (16.14) than riches with worrying<sup>1313</sup>.

(Laisney 2007, 153-58, 346; Dils 2014; Grumach 1972, 100-103; Shirun-Grumach 1991, 238-39; Lange 1925, 79-82; Vernus 2010a, 408; Altenmüller 1983, 1-2; Eyre 2013, 128; Simpson 2003e, 234-35)

#### 46. P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 15, vv. 17.4-17.16

(17.4) (*ḥw.t mh-15.t*) Chapter 15.

(17.5) (*j:jrj nfr pḥ=k wn.w* (17.6) *m-jrj g3y ʕrw r th3*) Do good to achieve material comfort, (17.6) and do not ink the reed pen to transgress.

(17.7) (*jr šrj(.t) n(.jt) ḥ3b ḏbʕ n(.j) zh3.w* (17.8) *z3w tw r rmn.t=f*) As for the nose of the ibis (= Thoth), it is the finger of the scribe; (17.8) beware of deviating<sup>1314</sup> it.

(17.9) (*ḥmsj p3 jʕnj j<sup>1315</sup> pr-ḥmn.wj* (17.10) *jw jr.t=f pḥr t3.wy*) The baboon (= Thoth) sits in the House of the Eight, (17.10) but his eye circles the Two Lands.

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interpret *sʕḏ3* as referring to a fraud against the destitute or the one who cannot protect himself against it with a bribe, it is also possible that this term refers not to a fraudulent scheme, but to the injustice of taxing the very poor. In this light, *sʕḏ3* in this passage would be more aptly translated as ‘commit an injustice’. However, the facts that vv. 16.3-16.4 share with the preceding verses the negative imperative *m-jrj* (vv. 15.20, 16.1), the term *ʕr* (v. 15.20), the root *ʕḏ3* (v. 16.1), and that the term *sʕḏ3* is attested above all between chapters 11 and 20, many of which deal with fraudulency and unlawful acquisition of wealth, suggest that *sʕḏ3* on v. 16.4 refers to fraudulency.

<sup>1310</sup> Compare perhaps with the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*, = P. BM EA 10684 verso, vv. 2.2-2.4 (see no. 34 above).

<sup>1311</sup> In the demotic instructions *p3* or *t3 mj.t* is used (see examples in Laisney 2014, 80-81), which may support the reading *mj.t* in this passage. But if *w3.t* was the intended reading, it may have contributed to a possible wordplay between *jr gmj=k wd3(.t) ʕ3(.t) n(.j) nmḥ* on v. 16.5 and *gmj=k sw mj w3.t n(.j) ʕnh* on v. 16.8.

<sup>1312</sup> Grumach (1972, 10, 14, 103) argues that in the *Instruction of Amenemope* the ‘way of life’ is also ‘the way of god’.

<sup>1313</sup> This couplet is also present at the end of chapter 6, vv. 9.7-9.8 (see no. 41 above).

<sup>1314</sup> The term *rmmj* means literally ‘to carry’. Dils (2014) has doubts as to whether it has as object the scribe’s finger or the beak of the ibis. Laisney (2007, 163) is certain that ‘le suffixe =f se rapporte à *ḏbʕ*, “doigt”.’

<sup>1315</sup> Read *r*.

(17.11) (*jr jw=f nw r p3 sh3 m db<sup>c</sup>=f* (17.12) *sw t3j drp=f n p3 mt(r)*) If he glimpses at the one who defrauds with his finger, (17.12) he seizes his food<sup>1316</sup> through the flood<sup>1317</sup>.

(17.13) (*jr zh3.w jw=f sh3 m db<sup>c</sup>=f* (17.14) *nn mtn.tw z3=f*) As for a scribe who defrauds with his finger, (17.14) his son will not be enrolled.

(17.15) (*jr jrj.yw=k h3w=k jw nn m jb=k* (17.16) *r n3yw=k ms.wj (r) ptr=w*) If you pass your time, while this is in your mind (lit. *jb*-heart), (17.16) your children (will) observe them.

(Laisney 2007, 162-65 347-48; Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 409; Grumach 1972, 108-13; Shirun-Grumach 1991, 240; Lange 1925, 85-87; Drioton 1957, 272-73; Simpson 2003e, 235-36)

#### 47. P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 16, vv. 17.17-18.13

(17.17) (*hw.t mh-16.t*) Chapter 16.

(17.18) (*m-jrj rmnj jws.w mtw=k s<sup>c</sup>d3 kdj.w* (17.19) *mtw=k hdj r3.w dbh.w*) Do not move the scales nor falsify the *kite*-weights, (17.19) nor diminish the measuring parts.

(17.20) (*m-jrj j3bj dbh n(j) sh.wt* (17.21) *mtw=k h3<sup>c</sup> n3(-n) pr-hd*) Do not prefer the field measure, (17.21) nor discard the one of the Treasury.

(17.22) (*hmsj p3 j<sup>c</sup>njj r-gs t3 mh3y.t* (18.1) *jw p3y=f jb m dhj (= th)*) The baboon sits beside the scales, (18.1) while his *jb*-heart is as the plummet.

(18.2) (*jt ntr mj <sup>c</sup>3 dhwtj* (18.3) *p3 jrj gmj nn r jrj=w*) Which god is like the greatness<sup>1318</sup> of Thoth, (18.3) the one who found these (things) to use them?

(18.4) (*m-jrj jrj n=k kd.w m hd* (18.5) *st <sup>c</sup>s3 mš<sup>c</sup> n(j)-m b3.w n(j) ntr*) Do not use diminished *kite*-weights, (18.5) they are rich in troops of the wrath of god<sup>1319</sup>.

(18.6) (*jr ptr=k ky jw=f sh3* (18.7) *j:jrj.w=k sw3 n=f m-w3.w*) If you see another who defrauds, (18.7) give him a wide berth (lit. pass him afar).

(18.8) (*m-jrj snk.tj n tjhs.t* (18.9) *msdj šm<sup>c</sup> nfr*) Do not be greedy for bronze (?), (18.9) and hate fine linen.

(18.10) (*jw=f n-jhj swhw m<sup>c</sup>k* (18.11) *jw=f sh3 m-b3h p3 ntr*) What will loincloth and fabric be good for, (18.11) when one defrauds before the god?

(18.12) (*jr <sup>c</sup>sg.tw nbw r ktm.t* (18.13) *hd t3 jw=f n dhjt*) If gold is forced into fine gold, (18.13) in the morning (lit. the earth brightens) it will be lead.

(Laisney 2007, 165-71, 348-49; Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 409-10; Grumach 1972, 114-18; Shirun-Grumach 1991, 240-41; Drioton 1957, 273-74; Lange 1925,87-89; Simpson 2003e, 236)

<sup>1316</sup> See Drioton (1957, 272).

<sup>1317</sup> Compare with chapter 5, vv. 6.14-7.2 (see no. 40 above).

<sup>1318</sup> Following Laisney (2007, 167). The rendering 'which god is great as Thoth' is also possible.

<sup>1319</sup> An alternative translation is indicated by Vernus (2010a, 429n143): 'Ils sont nombreux, ceux qui se lamentent de la colère du dieu'.

#### 48. P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 17, vv. 18.14-19.9

(18.14) (*ḥw.t mḥ-17.t*) Chapter 17.

(18.15) (*z3w tw r ʿšg3j wd3.t* (18.16) *r sʿd3 n3y=s r3.w*) Beware of forcing the grain measure<sup>1320</sup>, (18.16) in order to falsify its parts.

(18.17) (*m-jrj gns n wbn nḥt* (18.18) *ḥr m-dy.t šwj=s{w} m ḥ.t=s*) Do not force<sup>1321</sup> (it) to a great overflow<sup>1322</sup>, (18.18) nor empty it in its interior.

(18.19) (*dj.w=k ḥ3j.y=s mj ʿ3=s{w} ʿkw* (18.20) *jw dr.t=k ḥʿ3 n mt(j)*) Make it measure as much as it arrived, (18.20) and that your hand empty<sup>1323</sup> it with precision.

(18.21) (*m-jrj jrj n=k jp.t n t3j 2.t* (18.22) *j:jrj.w=k jrj n p3 mt(r)*) Do not make a measuring vessel that takes two, (18.22) you make (it) for the flood<sup>1324</sup>.

(18.23) (*jr jp.t jr.t rʿ* (19.1) *bw.t=s jtj*) As for the measuring vessel, it is the eye of Re, (19.1) its detestation is the thief<sup>1325</sup>.

(19.2) (*jr ḥ3.y jw dj=f ʿš3 šh3* (19.3) *ḥr dbʿ jr.t=f r=f*) As for a grain measurer who added or subtracted<sup>1326</sup>, (19.3) his [= Re's] eye seals against him.

(19.4) (*m-jrj šzp šmm n(j) ʿḥ.wwtj* (19.5) *mtw=k m3wr ʿr(t) j:r=f th3.tw=f*) Do not receive the harvest of a peasant<sup>1327</sup>, (19.5) and then write a roll against him, so that he is injured.

(19.6) (*m-jrj jrj wʿ (j)rm p3 ḥ3.y* (19.7) *mtw=k ḥbʿ ts ḥnw*) Do not associate with the grain measurer, (19.7) to toy with the taxes of the Residence.

(19.8) (*ʿ3 b3.w dnw n jt* (19.9) *r ʿnḥ.y s.t-wr.t*) Greater is the wrath (over) the threshing floor for barley, (19.9) than (over) the oath to the Great Throne<sup>1328</sup>.

(Laisney 2007, 172-77, 349-50; Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 410; 2010b, 547; Eyre 2013, 190; Grumach 1972, 119-23; Shirun-Grumach 1991, 241-42; Lange 1925, 91-97; Drioton 1957, 271; Simpson 2003e, 236-37)

<sup>1320</sup> On this term see Vernus (2010a, 429n144).

<sup>1321</sup> For references on *gns* see above the note to chapter 6, v. 8.20.

<sup>1322</sup> See Vernus (2010a, 429) and Laisney (2007, 175).

<sup>1323</sup> See Laisney (2007, 173).

<sup>1324</sup> Vernus (2010a, 429n147) takes this verse to mean the transgressor will have no tomb, but it sounds more probable that it means the falsified vessel will be taken away, as food in chapter 15, v. 17.2 (see Laisney 2007, 175), or five thousand stolen measures in chapter 6, vv. 9.1-9.3.

<sup>1325</sup> See a close parallel in the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV* (P. BM EA 10684 verso, vv. 5.3-5.4) (see no. 35 above).

<sup>1326</sup> Reference to vv. 18.17-18.18.

<sup>1327</sup> On the *ʿḥ.wwtj* see Moreno García (2008, 123-29).

<sup>1328</sup> See a different rendering of this couplet in Allen (2001, 161).



#### 49. P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 18, vv. 19.10-20.6

(19.10) (*hw.t mh-18.t*) Chapter 18.

(19.11) (*m-jrj sdr tw jw=k (hr) hry dw3.w*) Do not sleep with dread of tomorrow.

(19.12) (*hd-t3 dw3.w mj-jh*) In the morning (lit. the earth brightens), how is tomorrow?

(19.13) (*p3 z(j) (hr) hm dw3.w mj-jh*) Man ignores how tomorrow will be<sup>1329</sup>.

(19.14) (*wn(n) p3 ntr m n3y=f mnh* (19.15) *jw p3 z(j) m n3y=f wh3*) While the god is in his effectiveness, (19.15) man is in his failure<sup>1330</sup>.

(19.16) (*rwj3.tj n3 mdw(.t) j:dd n3 r(m)t* (19.17) *rwj3.tw n3 jrj.y p3 ntr*) The words people say are set to one side, (19.17) what the god does is set to another side.

(19.18) (*m-jrj dd m<sup>c</sup>n (m)-djw=(j) b3.w* (19.19) *mtw=k mšp r wh3h hnwnn*) Do not say: 'I have no faults'<sup>1331</sup>, (19.19) while you endeavour to seek after trouble.

(19.20) (*jr p3 b3.w n(.j)-s(w) p3 ntr* (19.20) *sw htm m db<sup>c</sup>=f*) As for wrongdoing, it belongs to the god, (19.21) it is sealed with his finger<sup>1332</sup>.

(19.22) (*m<sup>c</sup>n mnh m-dr.t p3 ntr* (19.23) *hr m<sup>c</sup>n wh3 m-b3h=f*) There is no success in the hand of the god, (19.23) and there is no failure before him<sup>1333</sup>.

(20.1) (*jr st3=f sw r wh3h p3 mnh* (20.2) *km 3.t hdj=f sw*) If one<sup>1334</sup> strives to seek success, (20.2) a while later he will harm himself<sup>1335</sup>.

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<sup>1329</sup> The idea that the future is in the hand of god is also frequent in the discourse of personal piety (Shirun-Grumach 1991, 242n13-a). The advice that one should not worry about tomorrow is also given in the demotic wisdom text of P. Insinger (v. 20.14), in the first century AD oracle of P. Vienna D 12006 (v. II.5), and in the New Testament (Mt 6:34) (see Laisney 2014, 78-79). This is arguably the only verse that is isolated instead of being part of a distich like all the others (Laisney 2007, 181 with n. 1057), which might be a way to emphasize man's unknowingness about the future (Vernus 2010a, 391).

<sup>1330</sup> According to Laisney (2007, 181), this is a pessimistic and resigned take on humanity from the point of view of the deity.

<sup>1331</sup> There is a similar passage in chapter 125 of the *Book of the Dead* of Nu (P. London BM EA 10477, v. 69): *m=tn wj jy.kw hr=tn nn jzf.t=j nn hbn.t=j nn dw.t=j nn mtr.w=j*, 'see, I come before you without falsehood, without guilt, without badness, without witnesses (against) me' (Backes 2014).

<sup>1332</sup> Laisney (2007, 183) suggests this may mean that people should leave the punishment of wrongdoings to god.

<sup>1333</sup> Meaning that goodness or badness are not what establishes a human's worth before god (Shirun-Grumach 1991, 242n22-a). Römhald (1989, 132 with n. 3) has a different interpretation and translates the passage as: 'Es gibt keinen Erfolg (für den Menschen) in der Hand des Gottes, / es gibt nur Versagen vor ihm'.

<sup>1334</sup> The suffix pronoun =f arguably refers to 'man', although other referents are grammatically possible, namely *p3 ntr*, 'the god', and *wh3* 'failure' (see Laisney 2007, 180 with n. 1053; Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 411, 430n156; Lange 1925, 101). Moers (2010, 693) claims the referent is the hot-tempered man (*šmm*), but that does not seem probable, as the term *šmm* is last attested in chapter 12, v. 15.13.

<sup>1335</sup> The author of the *Instruction of Ptahhotep* also addresses the issue of human limitations (P. Prisse, maxim 1, vv. D55-D56), by saying that: (D55) *n jn.tw dr.w hmw.t*, 'the limit of craft is not reached', (D56) *nn hmw.w ĉpr 3h.wt=f*, 'there is no craftsman with his full potential (lit. equipped of effectiveness)' (Allen 2015, 170-71; Dils 2014). The case the author of *Ptahhotep* intends to make is that one should therefore be humble and learn from anyone (see vv. D52-D54 and D58-D59). But *Amenemope* takes this topic to a whole new level: its author does not focus on human limitations in order to advise his audience to be humble so that they may keep learning, but in order to advise them to trust in the deity instead of obsessing about what will happen in the future and about what god will do, as that is beyond human comprehension.

(20.3) (*dns tw m jb=k smn ḥ3.tj=k* (20.4) *m-jrj jrj.y ḥm(w) n ns{.t}=k*) Control your *jb*-heart<sup>1336</sup>, bolster your *ḥ3.tj*-heart, (20.4) and do not steer with your tongue.

(20.5) (*jr ns{.t} n(j) r(m)t ḥm(w) n(j) jm(w)* (20.6) *nb-r-dr p3y=f jr.j-ḥ3.t*) A man's tongue is the rudder of a boat, (20.6) the Lord of All<sup>1337</sup> is its pilot<sup>1338</sup>.

(Laisney 2007, 350-51; Dils 2014; Grumach 1972, 124-28; Shirun-Grumach 1991, 242-43; Lange 1925, 97-101; Vernus 2010a, 410-11; 2010b, 547-48; Römheld 1989, 131-32; Simpson 2003e, 237-40)

## 50. P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 20, vv. 20.20-21.20

(20.20) (*ḥw.t mḥ-20.t*) Chapter 20.

(20.21) (*m-jrj sh3 r(m)t n t3 ḥnb.t* (20.22) *mtw=k rmnj p3 m3c.t(y)*) Do not defraud a person in court, (20.22) nor set aside the just.

(21.1) (*m dj<sup>1339</sup> hr=k n sd.w wbh* (21.2) *mtw=k b<sup>c</sup> sw <m> ḥt3y*) Do not set your sight on a bright garment, (21.2) nor reject him when <in> rags.

(21.3) (*m-jrj šzp fḥ3 (nj) nḥt* (21.4) *mtw=k g{3}w3 n=f s3w-<sup>c</sup>*) Do not accept a gift (from) a powerful, (21.4) to dismiss the weak for him.

(21.5) (*jr m3c(t) β(t) 3(t) n(j)t ntr* (21.6) *dj=f sw n mrj=f*) As for Ma'at, it is a greaft gift<sup>1340</sup> of god, (21.6) he gives it to one he loves.

(21.7) (*jr t3 ph.tj n(j)t p3 n.tj m-mj-ḥd.t=f* (21.8) *sw šdj j3d m n3y=f ḥnḥn*) As for the strength of the one who is like him, (21.8) it gets the poor away from his beatings.

(21.9) (*m-jrj jrj n=k h{3}rw(.ywt) n-<sup>c</sup>d3* (21.10) *st (m) štm 3 n(j) m(w)t*) Do not make false reports, (21.10) it (is) a great injury<sup>1341</sup> worthy of death (lit. of death)<sup>1342</sup>.

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<sup>1336</sup> In the sense of controlling and restraining one's senses (Shupak 1993, 305; see also Römheld 1989, 132), and of not revealing one's thoughts (Nyord 2012, 165).

<sup>1337</sup> In the Middle and New Kingdoms the divine epithet 'Lord of All' was usually applied to the sun god Re and other deities that formed a syncretistic relationship with him (Hornung 1982, 234-35), and Shirun-Grumach (1991, 243n3-a) takes this attestation of the Lord of All to refer to the sun god as well.

<sup>1338</sup> The reading *jr.j-ḥ3.tj*, 'the one to whom the *ḥ3.tj*-heart belongs', is also possible (Grumach 1972, 128), but the context does not support that reading. The implication of vv. 20.3-20.6 is that the heart, which guides speech, should be guided by god (see also Grumach 1972, 128). This is thus a stark expression of pessimism towards human autonomy, as the author advises his audience to surrender it to god, since one speaks and acts best when guided by the Lord of All. As pointed out by Eckart Otto (2004, 89), left to itself, the human heart would follow its egotistic drives, thus requiring state intervention in upholding Ma'at, and, in this case, requiring divine guidance. Shirun-Grumach (1991, 243n3-a) argues that this notion of surrendering one's guidance (*Führung*) to god is one of the highlights of this instruction. In Grumach (1972, 128), the author also remarked that, despite his transcendence, god remains merciful and available to a personal relationship with man.

<sup>1339</sup> Written *m dr.t*; see Laisney (2007, 58 § 4,8).

<sup>1340</sup> See the comment by Dils (2014) and Grumach (1972, 135). Here *fḥ3* has the extended sense of 'bribe' (Vernus 2003b, 137, 152-53).

<sup>1341</sup> On the term *štm* see Laisney (2007, 191-92) and Vernus (2010b, 549).

<sup>1342</sup> This expression is similar to the more common expression *bt3 3 n(j) mwt*, 'great crime worthy of death' (on which see McDowell 2001, 318; Lorton 1977, 29, 32n143, 39n179). Like the more common expression, the expression *štm 3 n(j) m(w)t* is probably not to be taken literally.

(21.11) (*st <n.j> ʿnh.yw ʿ3 n(j) sḏḏ-tr* (21.12) *st n(j) smtr(r) n(j) wḥm*) It <involves> the great oath of loyalty<sup>1343</sup>, (21.12) it involves the interrogation<sup>1344</sup> by the herald.

(21.13) (*m-jrj sʿd3 bj3.t hr ʿr(t)* (21.14) *mtw=k ḥḏj šhr.w n(jw) ntr*) Do not falsify an oracle on a papyrus roll, (21.14) nor change the plans of god.

(21.15) (*m-jrj gmj n=k b3.w n(j) ntr ḏs=k* (21.16) *jw bn š3y.t rmn.t*) Do not use for your own advantage a manifestation of god, (21.16) as if there were no Shay<sup>1345</sup> and Renenet.

(21.17) (*swḏ jh.t m n3y=w nb{n}.w* (21.18) *mtw=k wḥ3 n=k p3 ʿnh*) Hand over the goods to their owners, (21.18) and seek life for yourself.

(21.19) (*m-dy.t ḳd ḥ3.tj=k m pr=w* (21.20) *jw p3yw=k ḳs n nmj.t*) Do not allow your ḥ3.tj-heart to covet [lit. build in] their house<sup>1346</sup>, (21.20) as your bones are for the execution block.

(Laisney 2007, 188-95; 352-54; Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 412; 2010b, 548-49; Eyre 2013, 128; Grumach 1972, 134-39; Shirun-Grumach 1991, 243-44; Lange 1925, 104-109; Römheld 1989, 132-33; Simpson 2003e, 238-39; Quaegebur 1975, 107; Gnirs 2000, 148)

## 51. P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 21, vv. 21.21-22.18

(21.21) (*ḥw.t mh-21.t*) Chapter 21.

(22.1) (*m-jrj ḏḏ gmj n=j hr(j) nḥt* (22.2) *jw th3=j z(j) m n.jwt=k*) Do not say: ‘Find me a high superior’, (22.2) because I wronged a man in your city.

(22.3) (*m-jrj ḏḏ gmj n=j st3* (22.4) *jw th3=j msdj=j*) Do not say: ‘Find me a protector’, (22.4) because I wronged the one I hate<sup>1347</sup>.

(22.5) (*hr-r3-ʿ bw rh=k šhr.w n(jw) ntr* (22.6) *tm=k tm <n> dw3w*) In fact, you do not know the plans of god, (22.6) so you do not have to worry [lit. lower your eyes<sup>1348</sup>] <because of> tomorrow.

(22.7) (*ḥmsj n=k r ʿ.wj p3 ntr* (22.8) *r p3yw=k gr ḥḏb=w*) Sit on the arms of the god<sup>1349</sup>, (22.8) and your silence will overthrow them<sup>1350</sup>.

<sup>1343</sup> On this oath see Laisney (2007, 192).

<sup>1344</sup> The term *smtr* may also refer to interrogations using torture (Müller-Wollermann 2015, 234).

<sup>1345</sup> On the ending *.t* see Quaegebur (1975, 52).

<sup>1346</sup> On the otherwise unattested expression *ḳd ḥ3.tj* see Dils (2014, with references) and Laisney (2007, 195).

<sup>1347</sup> It is possible to translate v. 22.2 as *jw th3 <w>j z(j) m n.jwt=k* ‘because a man in your city wronged me’, and v. 22.4 as *jw th3 <w>j msdj <w>j* ‘because the one who hates me wronged me’; see references in Dils (2014). The translation proposed above follows Laisney (2007, 196), who argues cogently that this is in an admonition against revenge (199).

<sup>1348</sup> See Laisney (2007, 63 with nn. 345-46, 198). Vernus (2010b, 551) rejects this literal rendering and argues instead for a translation like ‘deplore’.

<sup>1349</sup> For a parallel see the backside of the statue Berlin 6910, v. 5 (Kitchen 1975, 387 l. 15; 1999, 274-75; Luiselli 2011, 354-55).

<sup>1350</sup> Grumach (1972, 140-41), Shirun-Grumach (1991, 245), and Römheld (1989, 172 with n. 105) suggest instead ‘and your silence will open them’, having as referent the arms of the god. Laisney (2007, 198) rightly questions who the referent of the suffix pronoun =w is, since ʿ.wj on the preceding verse is a dual and the other closest plural is *šhr.w* on v. 22.5, while in his comment to this verse (22.8) Dils (2014) suggests it refers either to the arms of the god or to the adversaries on vv. 22.2, 22.4 – it may actually be the same person on the two verses. The lack of a clear referent combined with the repetition of the quatrain in the following chapter –

(22.9) (*jr msh jw=f h<sup>c3</sup> <m> njs* (22.10) *hr jsj šfj.t=f*) As for a crocodile who is deprived <of> cry, (22.10) its respect is long established<sup>1351</sup>.

(22.11) (*m-jrj šww h.t=k n-m t3-tmm* (22.12) *mtw=k hđj p3yw=k nrj{.t}*) Do not empty your belly before everyone<sup>1352</sup> (22.12) to ruin the respect for you.

(22.13) (*m-jrj phr md.wt=k n kwy* (22.14) *mtw=k sns.n.tj n=k prj-jb*) Do not make your words circle among others, (22.14) nor fraternise with the impetuous<sup>1353</sup>.

(22.15) (*3h z(j) jw=f <h3p> smj=f m h.t=f* (22.16) *r p3 dd sw m hđ*) It is better a man who <hides> his complaint in his belly, (22.16) than one who expresses it unfavourably.

(22.17) (*bw jrj=tw shsh r ph p3 mnđ* (22.18) *bw jrj=tw km3m r hđj.t=f*) One cannot hurry to achieve success, (22.18), one cannot jump to spoil it<sup>1354</sup>.

(Laisney 2007, 196-201, 354-55; Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 412-13, 439; 2010b, 549-52; Römheld 1989, 133, 170; Grumach 1972, 140-44; Shirun-Grumach 1991, 244-45; Lange 1925, 109-12; Simpson 2003e, 239-40)

## 52. P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 22, vv. 22.19-23.11

(22.19) (*hw.t mh-22.t*) **Chapter 22.**

(22.20) (*m-jrj štm{.t} n p3yw=k jr.j tttt* (22.21) *mtw=k <dj> dd=f hnw=f (n.j) h3.tjw*) Do not insult<sup>1355</sup> your quarrel partner<sup>1356</sup>, (22.1) but<sup>1357</sup> cause him to say his speech (of) the *h3.tj*-heart<sup>1358</sup>.

(22.22) (*m-jrj pwy r k n-hr=f* (23.1) *jw bn m33=k jrj.n=f*) Do not rush (lit. fly)<sup>1359</sup> to come before him, (23.1) when you cannot see what he did.

(23.2) (*j:jrj.w=k sj33 h3.t m n3y=f wšb(.t)* (23.3) *mtw=k srfy jyj ph(.wj)=k*) It is first his statement that you should examine, (23.3) and stay quiet to achieve your end.

(23.4) (*h3<sup>c</sup> sj n-hr=f jrj=f šwj h.t=f* (23.5) *rđ kdj gmj.tw=f*) Leave him to himself so that he speaks his mind (lit. empties his belly), (23.5) one who knows to remain silent (lit. to sleep) will be respected (lit. recognised)<sup>1360</sup>.

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where the referent is also not entirely clear (Laisney 2007, 203) – may suggest a different interpretation: these four verses do not refer to anyone in particular, but to any possible adversary one may encounter. In this way, this quatrain may have been intended, and used, as a short prayer, or even *mantra*, in the modern colloquial sense, in any situation of conflict. At any rate, this passage ties in with other texts where one wishes to have one's enemies overthrown (see Quack 2011, 45-46, 54, 56, 60-61).

<sup>1351</sup> Meaning that quietism will not harm one's dignity.

<sup>1352</sup> See the third note to v. 13.17 of chapter 10 (see no. 44 above).

<sup>1353</sup> See Rueda (2003, 208).

<sup>1354</sup> Compare with the end of *Ptahhotep*'s maxim 6 (see no. 4 above).

<sup>1355</sup> For references on the term *štm* see the note to chapter 20, v. 21.10.

<sup>1356</sup> On this figure see Shupak (1993, 118-19, 380n107).

<sup>1357</sup> Or 'to'; on both possibilities see Vernus (2010a, 419n19).

<sup>1358</sup> The conceptualization of the *h3.tj* as a container is not frequent (see Nyord 2009, 68, 75 with n. 350).

<sup>1359</sup> See Laisney (2007, 130 with n. 800).

<sup>1360</sup> For a different interpretation of this verse see Shirun-Grumach (1991, 245 with n. XXIII.5-a) and Römheld (171 with n. 104).

(23.6) (*t3j rd.wy=f m-jrj ḥdj=f* (23.7) *snd sw m-jrj mkh3=f*) Stay with him, but do not injure him, (23.7) respect him, and do not underestimate him<sup>1361</sup>.

(23.8) (*ḥr-r3-ᶜ bw rh=k shr.w n(.jw) ntr* (23.9) *tm=k tm <n> dw3w*) In fact, you do not know the plans of god, (23.9) so you do not have to worry [lit. lower your eyes<sup>1362</sup>] <because of> tomorrow.

(23.10) (*ḥmsj n=k r ᶜ.wj p3 ntr* (23.11) *r p<3y>=k gr ḥdb=w*) Sit on the arms of the god<sup>1363</sup>, (23.11) and your silence will overthrow them<sup>1364</sup>.

(Laisney 2007, 201-204, 355-56; Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 413, 439; 2010b, 552-53; Grumach 1972, 145-47; Shirun-Grumach 1991, 245-46; Römheld 1989, 171-72; Lange 1925, 112-15; Simpson 2003e, 240)

### 53. P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 24, vv. 23.21-24.7

(23.21) (*ḥw.t mh-24.t*) Chapter 24.

(23.22) (*m-jrj sdm wšb.t n(.jt) sr m pr={j}<f>* (24.1) *mtw=k whm sw {n=k} <n ky>*<sup>1365</sup> *m-b(n)r*) Do not listen to the answer of an official in <his> house, (24.1) to repeat it <to another> outside<sup>1366</sup>.

(24.2) (*m-dy.t*<sup>1367</sup> *jnj.tw r3=k m-b(n)r* (24.3) *tm ḥ3.tj=k jkn*) Do not let what you say be brought outside, (24.3) lest your *ḥ3.tj*-heart becomes sour<sup>1368</sup>.

(24.4) (*jr ḥ3.tj n(.jt) r(m)t fnd n(.j) ntr* (24.5) *z3w tw r mkh3=f*) As for the *ḥ3.tj*-heart of man, it is the nose of god; (24.5) beware of neglecting it (lit. turning your back to it<sup>1369</sup>).

(24.6) (*jr r(m)t jw=f <r>-gs sr* (24.7) *k3y bw rh rn=f*) As for a man who is <at> the side of an official, (24.7) his name is not to be known<sup>1370</sup>.

(Laisney 2007, 208-210, 356-57; Dils 2014; Grumach 1972, 153-56; Shirun-Grumach 1991, 246-47; Lange 1925, 117-18; Vernus 2010a, 414; 2010b, 553; Sauneron 1962, 63; Simpson 2003e, 241)

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<sup>1361</sup> Laisney (2007, 204) is probably right in suggesting a change in the context of this passages: these two verses seem to concern a situation where, after calmly listening to the other person, it becomes clear she has no good intentions towards the pupil.

<sup>1362</sup> See the note to chapter 21, v. 22.6 (see no. 51 above).

<sup>1363</sup> See the note to chapter 21, v. 22.7.

<sup>1364</sup> See the note to chapter 21, v. 22.8.

<sup>1365</sup> Correction suggested by T. Turin CGT 58005.

<sup>1366</sup> As noted by Vernus (2010a, 414; 2010b, 553), the intention behind repeating to another the learned information would be personal gaining. These two verses are comparable to vv. 15.10 and 16.11-16.12 of the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto (Laisney 2007, 210; Vernus 2010a, 433; Grumach 1972, 154).

<sup>1367</sup> See Laisney (2007, 58 § 4,8).

<sup>1368</sup> The word *jkn* is not attested elsewhere, but it probably is a variant of *knj* (Lange 1925, 69 § 13.6). The contrast with *bnr*, ‘sweet’, in chapter 9, v. 13.6, is what suggests the rendering of *jkn* as ‘sour’ (Lange 1925, 69; Laisney 2007, 130 § 13.6; Peterson 1966, 127). See also Rueda (2003, 137-38). That contrast is possibly repeated in the passage at hand through the wordplay with *m-bnr*, ‘outside’, on the preceding verse.

<sup>1369</sup> See Faulkner (1962, 119).

<sup>1370</sup> These two verses probably concern discretion about other officials who come to meet the official at whose house the pupil is working (see Laisney 2007, 210), but it is also possible that it is the pupil who must remain discreet and unbenknownst to others (see Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 433n193).

### 53.1 T. Turin CGT 58005, chapter 24, vv. 24.4-24.5 (= 2.12-2.13)

(24.4 (= 2.12)) (*jr ḥ3.tj n(.jt) r(m)t fḥ[3] n(.j) [ntr]*) (24.5 (= 2.13)) *z3w tw r mkḥ3=f*) As for the ḥ3.tj-heart of man, it is a gift of god, (24.5 (= 2.13)) beware of neglecting it (lit. turning your back to it).

(Laisney 2007, 357; Dils 2014)

### 54. P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 25, vv. 24.8-24.20

(24.8) (*ḥw.t mḥ-25.t*) Chapter 25.

(24.9) (*m-jrj sbj3 n k3mn mtw=k pjt3 nmj*) (24.10) *mtw=k ḥdj šhr.w n ḳbkḳ*) Do not laugh at a blind man nor mock a dwarf, (24.10) and do not worsen the condition of a paralytic<sup>1371</sup>.

(24.11) (*m-jrj pjt3 z(j) jw=f m-dr.t p3 ntr*) (24.12) *mtw=k ḥs<3>-ḥr j:r=f th3<.tw>=f*) Do not mock a man who is in the hand of the god, (24.12) nor make an angry face at him so that he runs away.

(24.13) (*jr r(m)t ʕmʕ(.t) dḥ3*) (24.14) *p3 ntr p3y=f ḳd*) As for man, (he) is clay and straw, (24.14) and the god is his builder<sup>1372</sup>.

(24.15) (*sw whnj sw ḳd m-mn(.t)*) He destroys and builds daily;

(24.16) (*sw jrj ḥ3 n(.j) tw3 n mrj=f*) he makes a thousand *tw3*-subordinates<sup>1373</sup> as he desires;

(24.17) (*sw jrj r(m)t.w ḥ3 n ḥy*) (24.18) *jw=f n t3y=f wnw.t n(.jt) ʕnh*) he makes a thousand men supervisors, (24.18) when he is in his hour of life.

(24.19) (*ršj.wj3 sw p3 jrj ph jmn.t(j)t*) (24.20) *jw=f wd3 m-dr.t p3 ntr*) How he rejoices, the one who reaches the West (24.20) when he is safe from the hand of the god<sup>1374</sup>.

(Laisney 2007, 210-15, 357-58; Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 414-15; Grumach 1972, 157-60; Shirun-Grumach 1991, 247; 1990, 841-44; Römheld 1989, 157; Lange 1925, 119-22; Sauneron 1962, 60; Simpson 2003e, 241)

<sup>1371</sup> Grumach (1972, 159n166) and Laisney (2007, 213) proposed that, within the Egyptian tradition, the admonition against mocking and teasing disabled people has a parallel in the *Satirical Letter* of P. Anastasi I = P. BM EA 10247, vv. 8.7-10.9 – the author resents being called a ‘weakling lacking vigor’ (vv. 8.7-8.8) (Wente 1990, 102) and goes on to recount several cases of officials with limitations that were well-off notwithstanding –, and in *The Prohibitions*, O. Petrie 11 = O. London UC 39614, v. A10 – this passage concerns disrespect towards old people (Hagen 2005, 130, 143). A praise of the blind and of the paralytic as protected by god is also included in the demotic *Instruction of Papyrus Insinger*, vv. 11.24-12.1 (Laisney 2007, 213 with n. 1215). Parallels to *Amenemope*’s passage are also found in the Old and New Testaments; see the references in Laisney (2007, 213-214).

<sup>1372</sup> On biblical parallels and on the possibility of the dependence of some of them on this passage see Carreira (2005, 159 with references).

<sup>1373</sup> On the *tw3* see Laisney (2007, 142 § 14,5) and Iversen (1996, 44n17).

<sup>1374</sup> See the note to chapter 10, v. 14.1 (see no. 44 above). Compare this couplet with v. 5.6 of the *Instruction of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*, = P. BM EA 10684 verso (see no. 35 above).

## 55. P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 27, vv. 25.16-26.7

(25.16) (*ḥw.t mḥ-27.t*) Chapter 27.

(25.17) (*m-jr šḥwr ʿ3 j.r=k* (25.18) *jw ptr=f p(3)-rʿ r-ḥ3.t=k*) Do not vilify one who is older than you<sup>1375</sup>, (25.18) as he saw Pre/the sun ahead of you.

(25.19) (*m-dr.tj*<sup>1376</sup> *smj=f tw=k n p3 jdn m wbn=f* (25.20) (*ḥr-dd jrj ky šrj šḥwr ʿ3*) Do not give him reason to report you to the Aten when he rises, (25.20) (by) saying: ‘a younger one vilified an elder’.

(25.21) (*mr zp m-b3ḥ p3-rʿ* (26.1) *šrj jw=f šḥwr ʿ3*) The affair is painful before Pre, (26.1) a young man who vilifies an elder<sup>1377</sup>.

(26.2) (*jmj jrj=f knkn=k jw dr.t=k m kn(j)=k*) Let him beat you, while your hand is on your chest.

(26.3) (*jmj jrj=f šḥwr=k jw=k gr.tw*) Let him reproach you, while you remain silent.

(26.4) (*jr mj-dw3w spr=k m-b3ḥ=f* (26.5) *dj=f n=k ʿk.w m-wsdn*) When you arrive in the morning before him, (26.5) he will give you bread in abundance<sup>1378</sup>.

(26.6) (*jr ʿk.w tsm{.t} n(.j) nb=f* (26.7) *sw whwh r p3 dj st*) About bread: a dog of his owner, (26.7) he barks to the one who gave it<sup>1379</sup>.

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<sup>1375</sup> Laisney (2007, 221) and Drioton (1957, 270) are followed here in rendering ʿ3 as ‘elder’ instead of ‘superior’. For a brief discussion on this term in this passage see Vernus (2010a, 435n206). Grumach (1972, 166) takes the word to mean ‘superior’ and not ‘elder’; this translation was reiterated in Shirun-Grumach (1991, 248).

<sup>1376</sup> Read *m-dy.t*.

<sup>1377</sup> Irene Grumach (1972, 168-69) takes the setting of this chapter to be a morning prayer made to the sun god by a subordinate together with a superior in the temple. The pupil, who is in the discursive position of the subordinate, is not only advised against insulting the superior official, but is especially advised against complaining about his lot vis-à-vis the superior’s lot, since one’s position in life is ascribed by the deity (168). Since this same deity is a provider of what one needs, and will provide for the needs of the subordinate, the latter ought to quietly surrender to the god’s will (169). The educational purpose of the mobilisation of god as a provider in this passage would be for the pupil to be reconciled with his less privileged social position (169). This interpretation is very interesting and certainly in tune with *ntr*’s role as provider in the instructions in general (see chapter 4, section 4.3). But god’s role in this passage does not seem to be one of provider, but instead one of deterrence. For instance, while it is said that one should avoid prompting an elder, or a superior, to complain about one’s offence in his morning prayer to the sun god, it is not explicitly said that god will provide for the pupil’s needs. The only possible exception would be vv. 26.6-26.7, although these are somewhat cryptic and appear to be a metaphor involving only the pupil and the elder/superior. The conjecture about the setting of this passage as a morning prayer performed by the subordinate and by the superior is also debatable. That (some) people not pertaining to the temple staff (assuming this was the case in this passage) could pray in the temple is suggested in the *Instruction of Ani*, P. Boulaq 4 recto, vv. 17.1-17.4, but this is hardly the case on v. 25.18 above which seems to be a qualifier of the ʿ3’s age and not of his actions. For these reasons, Grumach’s interpretation of this passage is not followed here.

<sup>1378</sup> Laisney (2007, 223 with n. 1260) suggests that the change in the elder’s attitude may be divinely motivated, but that is not certain, and may instead be ascribed to the pupil’s improved behaviour towards him. Römhald (1989, 157n37) also argues that it was the elder’s quietism and reliance on god, to whom offences are entrusted on vv. 4.10-5.4 (see no. 38), 5.12-5.17 (see no. 39), and 22.20-23.11 (see no. 52), as pointed out by Römhald, that changed his mind. But if this were the case, one would expect the elder to provide for the pupil regardless of the latter’s deviant behaviour, which is certainly not the case here.

<sup>1379</sup> The sense of this metaphor, or proverb, is not entirely clear. On this passage see Laisney (2007, 223; 2014, 80), Shirun-Grumach (1991, 248 n. XXVI.6 a)), Grumach (1972, 167, 169), Lange (1925, 129), Vernus (2010a, 394), and Iversen (1996, 45).

(Laisney 2007, 220-23, 360-61; Dils 2014; Vernus 2010, 415-16; Grumach 1972, 166-69; Shirun-Grumach 1991, 248; Lange 1925, 127-29; Drioton 1957, 270-71; Simpson 2003e, 242)

## 56. P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 28, vv. 26.8-26.14

(26.8) (*ḥw.t mḥ-28.t*) Chapter 28.

(26.9) (*m-jrj gmj ḥ3r(.t) jw ḥ(3)m=k sw m sh.wt* (26.10) *mtw=k tm w3ḥ n=k r wšb=s*) If you have anything to do with a widow you caught in the fields, (26.10) do not refrain from interceding for her.

(26.11) (*m-jrj wnj drjdrj n t3yw=k mdḳ.t* (26.12) *k(3)b s(j) ḥ3.t sn.w=k*) Do not deny a foreigner your jug, (26.12) double it before your brothers.

(26.13) (*mrj.n ntr w(3)š {t}šw3* (26.14) *r tr bw3.y*) God loves the one who reveres a poor, (26.14) more than the one who respects a noble.

(Laisney 2007, 223-25, 361; Vernus 2010a, 416; 2010b, 554-555; Grumach 1972, 170-72; Shirun-Grumach 1991, 249; Iversen 1986, 41-42; Lange 1925, 129-31; Simpson 2003e, 242-43)

## 57. P. BM EA 10474 recto, chapter 29, vv. 26.15-27.5

(26.15) (*ḥw.t mḥ-29.t*) Chapter 29.

(26.16) (*m-jrj j<s>k3 r(m)t n d3y n jtr.w* (26.17) *jw=k wsdn.t <m> mhn(.t)*) Do not prevent a man from crossing the river, (26.17) when you inspect<sup>1380</sup> a ferryboat.

(26.18) (*jr jnj.tw n=k hp(.t) ḥr-jb p3 mt(r)* (26.19) *jn{tj}k=k ʿ.wy=k <r> t3j=s*) If one brings you an oar in the midst of the flood, (26.19) fold your arms <to> take it<sup>1381</sup>.

(26.20) (*mn bw.t m-dr.t p3 ntr* (27.1) *jw bn bʿ hw.t*) There is no detestation to god (27.1) when it is all hands on deck (lit. when a passenger cannot be overlooked).

(27.2) (*m-jrj jrj n=k mhn(.t) ḥr-tp jtr.w* (27.3) *mtw=k mšp r wḥ3ḥ t3y=s ḥ3m(.t)*) Do not acquire a ferryboat over the river (27.3) to avidly gain profit (lit. to make an effort to search for the fare)<sup>1382</sup>.

(27.4) (*šdj ḥ3m(.t) m-dr.t p3 nb wn* (27.5) *mtw=k bʿ p3 {n}<jw>.tj*) Take the fare from the wealthy, (27.5) but overlook (the fare from) the poor<sup>1383</sup>.

(Laisney 2007, 225-28, 361-62; Dils 2014; Vernus 2010a, 416; 2010b, 555-56; Grumach 1972, 173-76; Shirun-Grumach 1991, 249; Lange 1925, 131-34; Simpson 2003e, 243)

<sup>1380</sup> The addressee probably has the job of inspecting the vessel (Grumach 1972, 173; Shirun-Grumach 1991, 249nXXVII.2-a)).

<sup>1381</sup> On the sense of these two verses see Shirun-Grumach (1991, 249nXXVI.18-a)) and Laisney (2007, 227).

<sup>1382</sup> Shirun-Grumach (1991, 249nXXVI.18-a)) suggests that this couplet admonishes the scribe inspecting the ferryboat against collecting fares. While interesting, this interpretation is at odds with what follows. It seems more probable that the text shifts its focus to someone who acquires a ferryboat of his own.

<sup>1383</sup> See also Sauneron (1962, 64).



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