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The Iconography of Humiliation: The Depiction and Treatment of Bound Foreigners in New Kingdom Egypt

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THE ICONOGRAPHY OF HUMILIATION: THE DEPICTION AND TREATMENT
OF BOUND FOREIGNERS IN NEW KINGDOM EGYPT

by

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To my wife, Jenna

and my parents, Dave and Sharon,

for all the love and support

references with me. A special thanks is warranted to Kevin L. Johnson and Erika Felig for their contributions.

To all the friends, family, and colleagues whom I have not mentioned, I thank you for the support and encouragement. The patience and technical skills of my brother, Mike, warrant special mention, as he assisted me with numerous formatting issues. Finally, I'm truly blessed to have such a supportive and loving wife and equally supportive parents; to each of them I dedicate this work.

ABSTRACT

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New Kingdom pharaohs were quick to display their dominance over foreign captives in a variety of contexts—reliefs on temple walls, statuary, various artifacts, texts, etc.—using brutal and degrading imagery. Indeed, depictions of foreign captives in humiliating or torturous poses are ubiquitous in Egyptian iconography and reflect the celebratory nature of royal ideology. Three central questions emerge from even a cursory glance at this data. What, ultimately, was the fate of such captives? How do these scenes fit into the broader view of foreigners held by the Egyptians? Lastly, why have Egyptologists been so reluctant to study this material?

Due to the simple fact that such depictions are found most often in religious contexts and make frequent use of ideology, they are often dismissed as lacking historical value. However, the ideological significance of artistic and literary presentations of foreign prisoners must be given its due attention as part of the larger picture of Egyptian views towards foreigners. In many cases, historical specifics emerge even though much of the evidence is rhetorical.

The following study is an analysis of bound foreigners in Egyptian iconographic and literary sources, demonstrating that depictions of bound enemies played a vital role in Egyptian ideology and that the assimilation of enemy prisoners into New Kingdom society was essential to the empire economy. Some captives, particularly enemy leaders, were publicly executed as

important components to Egyptian ritual or state ceremonies and celebrations. Furthermore, this material reveals that the Egyptians had much in common with other ancient societies in their treatment of captured enemies. It is hoped that this work will spark further research and allow Egyptologists to approach these scenes and texts from a different perspective.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ÄAT   Ägypten und Altes Testament. Studien zu Geschichte, Kultur und Religion Ägyptens und des Alten Testaments

AfO   *Archiv für Orientforschung*

ANET   *Ancient Near Eastern Texts relating to the Old Testament.* Edited by J.B. Pritchard. Princeton: 1969, 1974.

ARE   James Henry Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt*. 3 Volumes. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2001 (reprint of 1906).

ASAE   *Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte*

ATP I-II   *The Akhenaten Temple Project*. 2 Volumes. Edited by Donald Redford. Toronto: The Akhenaten Temple Project, 1976 and 1988.

BACE   *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology*

BAR   *Biblical Archaeology Review*

BdE   *Bibliothèque d'Étude*

BES   *Bulletin of the Egyptological Seminar*

BIE   *Bulletin de l'Institute d'Égypt*

BMMA   *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art*

CEDAE   Centre d'Etudes et de Documentation sur l'Ancienne Égypte, Collection Scientifique, Kairo

CGC   Catalogue Général des Antiquitiés Égytpiennes du Musée du Caire, Cairo

CoS   *The Context of Scripture*. 3 Volumes. Edited by William H. Hallo and K. L. Younger. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2003.

DE   *Discussions in Egyptology*

DLE   Lesko, L.H., ed. *A Dictionary of Late Egyptian*. 5 Volumes. Berkeley: B.C. Scribe, 1982-1990.

FT   *Folia theologica*

GHHK I.1   Nelson, Harold H. and William J. Murnane, *The Great Hypostyle Hall at Karnak* vol. 1 part 1. *The Wall Reliefs*. OIP 106. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981.

GM   Göttinger Miszellen

HÄB   *Hildesheimer Ägyptologische Beiträge*

IEJ   *Israel Exploration Journal*

IFAO   Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale

JAOS   *Journal of the American Oriental Society*

JEA   *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*

JEOL   *Jaarbericht van het Vooraziatisch-egyptisch Genootschap Ex Oriente Lux*

JNES   *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*

JSSEA   *Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Archaeology*

KRI   Kitchen, K.A. *Ramesside Inscriptions, Historical and Biographical*. 7 Volumes. Oxford, 1969-1990.

LÄ   *Lexikon der Ägyptlogie*. 7 Volumes. Edited by W. Helck, E. Otto, and W. Westendorf. Wiesbaden, 1975-1992.

MDAIK   *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo*. Cairo

MIFAO   Mémoires publiés par les membres de l'Institut Français d'Archéology Orientale

OIP   Oriental Institute Publications

OLZ   *Orientalistische Literaturzeitung*

PM I-VII   Porter, Bertha and Rosalind L.B. Moss. *Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs, and Paintings*. Oxford, 1927-1952.

PM I-III.2[2]   Porter, Bertha and Rosalind L.B. Moss, Ethel L. Burney & Joromir Málek. *Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs, and Paintings*. 3 Volumes. 2nd Edition. Oxford, 1960-1978)

RdÉ	Revue d'Égyptologie
REE	Revista de Estudios de Egiptologia
RIK	Nelson, Harold .H., et al, *Reliefs and Inscriptions at Karnak*. 4 Volumes. OIP 25, 35, 74, 107. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1936-1954.
RITA	Kitchen, K.A. *Ramesside Inscriptions Translated & Annotated*: *Translations*. 3 Volumes. Oxford: Blackwell, 1993 - 2000.
RITANC	Kitchen, K.A. *Ramesside Inscriptions Translated & Annotated: Notes and Comments*. 2 Volumes. Oxford: Blackwell, 1993 -1996.
SAK	*Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur*
Urk.	Sethe K. and W. Helck. *Urkunden der 18. Dynastie*. 5 Volumes. Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1906-1961.
ZA	*Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und vorderasiatische Archäologie*
ZÄS	*Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde*

INTRODUCTION

Among the many treasures found in the tomb of Tutankhamun was a gilded chariot decorated with scenes of bound captives.[1] Though the chariot itself has received much scholarly interest,[2] the depictions of the captives have not. The prisoners are shown kneeling with their arms tied behind their backs or, for those less fortunate, contorted into more painful poses (see Figure 1, Chapter One). While the survival of spectacular ancient Egyptian objects like Tutankhamen's gold-plated chariot is all too rare, depictions of foreign captives in humiliating or torturous poses are ubiquitous in Egyptian iconography and reflect the triumphalistic and typically vociferous nature of Egyptian royal ideology. Pharaohs went to great lengths to display their dominance over foreign captives in a variety of contexts, often using brutal and degrading imagery. These captives, as foreigners, were the very epitome of Chaos, the primordial opposition to Order (Ma'at).[3] As such, according to Egyptian orthodoxy, they

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[1] On the particulars of the discovery of the tomb see Howard Carter, *The Tomb of Tutankhamen* (Excalibur Books, 1972); and Howard Carter and A.C. Mace, *The Tomb of Tutankhamen Discovered by the Late Earl of Carnarvon and Howard Carter* (Vol. 1, New York: Cooper Square Publishers, Inc., 1963), 86-109.

[2] For an exhaustive study on this chariot and related items from the tomb see M.A. Littauer and J.H. Crouell, *Chariots and Related Equipment from the Tomb of Tut'ankhamun* (Oxford: Griffith Institute, 1985). See also, Nicholas Reeves, *The Complete Tutankhamun* (London: Thames & Hudson, Ltd., 1990), 170.

[3] See the following: Kerry Muhlestein, *Violence in the Service of Order: The Religious Framework for Sanctioned Killing In Ancient Egypt* (BAR International Series 2299. Oxford: Archaeopress, 2011). See also Erik Hornung, *Idea Into Image: Essays on Ancient Egyptian Thought* (Elizabeth Bredeck, trans., Timken Publishers, 1992), 131-146 and "Maat—Gerechtigkeit für Alle? Zur altägyptischen Ethik," *Eranos Jahrbuch* 56 (1987): 385-427; Jan Assmann, *Ma'at: Gerechtigkeit und Unsterblichkeit im alten Ägypten* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1990); and Maulana Karenga, *Maat: The Moral Ideal in Ancient Egypt: A Study of Classical African Ethics* (Los Angeles, CA: University of Sakore Press, 2006.

were suitable targets for this type of treatment. Two central questions emerge

from even a cursory glance at these depictions. First, what do these types of

scenes reveal regarding the actual treatment of bound captives? Second, what

do these scenes betray about Egyptian views towards foreigners? To answer

these questions, a detailed examination of both the iconographic and textual

record is imperative.

The Nature of the Sources and the Types of Sources

      Because of the obvious ideology and propaganda inherent in these

depictions, it is all too easy to dismiss them as banal and historically useless.

While caution must be exercised due to the heavy dosage of pharaonic rhetoric

in the remaining record, specific attention should still be given to depictions of

bound foreigners, as they provide a unique glimpse into the Egyptian mindset

(Chapter One). Many of the representations hail from purely rhetorical contexts

such as those on ceremonial chariots or sandals (Chapter Two). Each of these

rhetorical examples is devoid of specific historical reference — i.e., a regnal year-

date, a reference to a particular military campaign, etc. Rather than directly

historical, the bindings and poses of the captives on these types of objects are

representative of the types of actions the Egyptians deemed appropriate to depict

and possibly take against foreign captives. They speak of potential action.

Because this, and the fact that "iconography of humiliation" is rightly understood

as a type of Egyptian propaganda and echoes conventional Egyptian ideology,

the postures depicted in these scenes have often been overlooked as scholars

focus their attention elsewhere.

On the other hand, depictions of bound foreigners are also inserted into grandiose scenes that do commemorate known historical events, namely chariot battle narrative reliefs. Reliefs of this type show the pharaoh and his army rounding up prisoners either immediately after battle or as they return home from a victorious campaign (Chapters Three and Four). The arms of the captives are bent backward, forward, and even upward into all manner of painful positions. Despite obvious ideological themes inherent in these reliefs, Egyptologists use these scenes in historical reconstructions, seeking to understand the details of the battle and its participants. Were Egyptologists to dismiss these scenes outright due to the presence of ideology, there would be very little to be said of Egyptian military history, particularly from Egyptian sources.[4] That said, the bulk of scholarly attention has been devoted only to the portions of these reliefs and texts detailing the battle itself. Just as above, depictions of bound captives from reliefs like these are equally deserving of analysis and should not be overlooked in emphasizing other aspects of the scenes. If Egyptologists are willing to accept the veracity of one aspect of such reliefs, they must at least be open-minded to the other representations.

The so-called "smiting" scenes, where pharaoh grasps the hair of an enemy (or enemies) with one hand as he prepares to bash their heads with a

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[4] All ancient societies have a similar ideological filter in their respective historical texts. Mention of various gods is particularly common. Cf. Mario Liverani, *Prestige and Interest: International Relations in the Near East ca. 1600-1100 B.C.* (Padova, 1990); Christopher J. Eyre, "Is Egyptian Historical Literature 'historical' or 'literary'?" in *Ancient Egyptian Literature: History and Forms* (Antonio Loprieno, ed. Leiden, New York, & Köln: Brill, 1996), 415-434; Donald B. Redford, "The Writing of the History of Ancient Egypt," in *Egyptology at the Dawn of the Twenty-first Century* (Vol. 2: History and Religion, Zahi Hawass, ed. Cairo and New York: The American University Press, 2000), 1-11.

mace, also deserve attention even though these scenes are often of a very

stereotypical nature (Chapter Six).[5] Scholarly consensus is that these depictions

were meant to serve an ideological purpose rather than represent strict history.[6]

While this assumption has some merit, the potential for ritual execution depicted

in these scenes must be addressed and not simply ignored.[7] While these scenes

and their accompanying texts often contain mythic-religious elements, as

opposed to firm historical data, is it valid to assume that the scenes portray

absolutely no concrete action? Additionally, the Egyptian term for bound captives

literally means, "living smited/slain one,"[8] a term that clearly has ideological

implications regarding the potential treatment of such individuals (Chapter Five).

Research Goals and Methodology

Several additional questions spring to mind when examining the artistic

record. Why would the Egyptians portray bound captives in such a manner?

What purpose did this iconography serve in ancient Egypt? What function did

these captives, or the depictions thereof, accomplish in Egyptian civilization?

Finally, why have Egyptologists been so reluctant to study these images? To

answer these questions, both the iconographic and textual records must be

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[5] Emma Swan Hall, *The Pharaoh Smites his Enemies* (Müncher Ägyptologische Studien 44. München: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1986).

[6] Jan Assmann, *The Mind of Egypt: History and Meaning in the Time of the Pharaohs* (Andrew Jenkins, trans., New York: Henry Hold and Company, 1996), 150ff.

[7] For the potential historicity of these scenes, see Alan R. Schulman, *Ceremonial Execution and Public Reward: Some Historical Scenes on New Kingdom Private Stelae* (Universitätsverlag Freiburg Schweiz Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht Göttingen, 1988). Cf. William Ward, "Review of Ceremonial Execution and Public Rewards," *JNES* 51 (1992): 152-155.

[8] Raymond O. Faulkner, *Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian* (Oxford: Griffith Institute, 1962, reprint 2002), 250.

explored, though both types of data are often highly rhetorical and filtered through a heavily ideological lens. These latter facts must be kept in mind when studying the ancient sources but are not justification for dismissing them altogether. This dissertation will focus on answering these questions by examining both depictions of fettered captives and texts that refer to the treatment of foreign enemies.[9]

There are several reasons for choosing the New Kingdom time period (1550-1100 BC) as the focus for this study. Most importantly, this era provides a remarkable number of monuments and scene-types to study. Monumental architecture, such as the walls and gateways of grand temples, provides sprawling battle narrative scenes, smiting scenes, and hieroglyphic texts to analyze. Both royal and private tombs contain vivid paintings and autobiographical texts to investigate. Additionally, there are depictions and decorations on various artifacts, like those on Tutankhamen's chariot, as well as those from less splendid but equally insightful objects—royal footstools, statues, weaponry, etc. Moreover, New Kingdom pharaohs engaged in aggressive empire building in western Asia to the north and in Nubia to the south with a fervor not attested to in earlier periods. The vigor with which they pursued war and the capture of enemies led to a natural increase in iconographic depictions and textual mentions of foreign captives.

Lastly, the New Kingdom period is highly demonstrative of Egyptian ideology, as New Kingdom pharaohs engaged in more building projects and commissioned

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[9] In some cases both rhetorical texts and iconography survive, but in many instances iconography is the only source remaining. This creates a situation where iconography is the only "fall back" option we have.

reliefs in greater numbers in order to legitimize their rule by displaying their ability

to uphold Order (Ma'at). There was a close link between Ma'at, kingship, and

royal legitimacy throughout Egyptian history;[10] during the New Kingdom this was

expressed with great frequency in the form of scenes showing the pharaoh

dominating and humiliating subjugated enemies. These enemies, as foreigners,

were viewed as elements of Chaos (Isfet), and thus opposed to the Order that

Egyptians rulers sought to establish. By subjugating these foreigners, pharaohs

justified their right to rule and subsequently fulfilled their duty to uphold Order.

Because this ideological foundation was vital to Egyptian society and

kingship, the study of bound enemies must first seek to understand the Egyptian

mindset towards foreigners relative to the concept of Ma'at (Chapter One). From

there, the study will turn to the artifacts (Chapter Two), reliefs (Chapters Three

and Four), and texts (Chapter Five) of the New Kingdom that refer to bound

captives. Specific attention will be given to the humiliating poses the captives are

forced to assume, usually involving their arms. It will also be informative to

analyze the presence and activities of Egyptians in cases where they appear

alongside the captives. Above all, the context of the material must be

emphasized, as the type of information to be gleaned from the different types of

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[10] Emily Teeter, *The Presentation of Maat: Ritual and Legitimacy in Ancient Egypt* (Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilizations 57. Chicago: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 1997), 1. See also, Donald B. Redford, ed., *The Ancient Gods Speak: A Guide to Egyptian Religion* (Oxford University Press, 2002); Vincent A. Tobin. "Ma'at and DIKH: Some Comparative Considerations of Egyptian and Greek Thought," *JARCE* XXIV (1987): 113-121.

sources displays considerable variance.[11]

The final chapter will examine cross-cultural parallels, smiting scenes, and the fact that Egyptologists have tended to shy away from cases where brutal actions are undertaken despite the obvious truth that some captives were treated more brutally than others (Chapter Six). It appears that some prisoners, most likely rulers and chiefs, could be subjected to a type of celebratory "triumph" or execution, [12] which served a dual purpose in not only venerating the pharaoh's victories but also in punishing these rebellious foreigners, possibly in connection to political and religious festivals or ceremonies.[13] On the other hand, a greater number of captives were likely inserted into the Egyptian labor force, whether working for the state or on private estates. The vast majority of enemy captives must have been worth far more alive as forced laborers than as dead political and religious symbols. It will also prove helpful to examine material from other ancient societies to determine if the Egyptians were truly unique in their treatment of enemy prisoners, as many scholars imply. Following that, it is vital to address the tendency among Egyptologists to ignore or dismiss evidence of

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[11] In other words, there is far more historical detail in a relief detailing a particular pharaoh's campaign and the capture of enemies than there is on an object like Tutankhamen's footstool. Both examples must be examined, but the impact of the context of such depictions cannot be over-stated and must be considered in each case.

[12] This is not to say that they executed every foreign ruler or prince. In some cases the children of foreign rulers were held hostage and actually raised as foreign princes at the Egyptian court. After sufficient training they were then sent back to their home regions to rule as vassals. They were, thus, "Egyptianized" and presumed loyal to Egypt.

[13] On the possibility of "human sacrifice" in ancient Egypt and problems of terminology see, Muhlestein, *Violence in the Service of Order*, 10-18. There is no doubt that such celebrations in ancient civilizations could serve both political and religious purposes, as there was essentially no separation between "church and state."

brutality. It is hoped that such a study will open up avenues whereby the conversation can move forward.

Ultimately, a nuanced approach is required: one that recognizes the inherent biases evident in the textual and artistic record yet balances it with a perspective that gives each source its due attention. Factors such as the intended message, the location of the text or relief, its function, its accessibility to the population at large, and finally its anticipated audience must all be given their due weight. But great care must be taken not to confuse the state-sponsored official ideology of foreigners displayed on temple walls and in private tombs with what may or may not have actually happened. Each scene and text must be analyzed on a case-by-case basis. Even objects that exhibit the highest sort of rhetoric, like Tutankhamen's chariot, reflect treatment that was, at least occasionally, meted out to foreign prisoners of war and at the very least provide a glimpse into the mindset of the ancient Egyptians.

Limitations

This study is not without difficult challenges to overcome. To modern minds there is often an inherent contradiction in the sources, which can alternate between reality, metaphor, ideology, and hyperbole from one line to the next, seemingly at the whim of the pharaoh or his court scribes and poets. Thus, the distinction between metaphorical action and real action is not always as clear as it initially

appears.[14] Texts and reliefs are not *ipso facto* ahistorical or fictitious, even if they often contain metaphors, symbolism, and mythic or religious figures. For example, Ramesses III did fight battles with the Libyans, despite the exaggerated claims that every one of them was brought back to Egypt.[15] This well represents the dilemma faced in this study: one simply cannot dismiss material of an ideological or rhetorical flavor because the vast majority of royal texts and monuments are saturated with such ideology and symbolism. Simple, prosaic sources are the exception, not the rule. Similar complexities abound in the artistic record with its preference to repeat depictions and scene-types. The very nature of two-dimensional art also contains limitations (see Chapter Two). In many cases, the artistic records speaks more to the type of imagery the Egyptians found aesthetically pleasing than it does to historical action, though this too has value.

Another unavoidable dilemma, alluded to above, is the simple fact that Egyptologists have been rather reluctant to examine the depictions and treatment of foreign captives because such a study admittedly contains many disquieting,

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[14] One schematic Egyptologists have employed to understand this issue is by following Antonio Loprieno's division between *topos* and *mimesis* in ancient Egyptian literature. In short, *topos* is the idealized view which serves a rhetorical, inherently propagandistic purpose. *Mimesis* echoes the reality of experiences and events, as seen through the eyes of the Egyptian elite. Unfortunately, scholars often take the division between *topos* and *mimesis* to faulty extremes with *topos* being regarded as wholly fictional and *mimesis* as reflecting reality. Cf. Antonio Loprieno, *Topos und Mimesis: Zum Ausländer in der Ägyptischen Literatur* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1988); Stuart Tyson Smith, *Wretched Kush: Ethnic Identities and Boundaries in Egypt's Nubian Empire*. London: Routledge, 2003), 23-25.

[15] Another example comes from line 31 which says that Ramesses III was "terrible and powerful [like] a lion" and line 33 claims he "went forth against them, like a flame…" See *RITA* V: 21. Such metaphors are typical of pharaonic texts but do not diminish their historical value.

unsettling aspects.[16] To some degree, this hesitation is understandable. As Muhlestein puts it, "Scholars cannot avoid filtering their research through the lens of their experiences and values, and modern values crushingly condemn human sacrifice."[17] Egyptologists seem uncomfortable with the idea that the "good, civilized" folk of ancient Egypt could ritually slay their fellow human beings.[18] This type of thinking is very problematic when applied to ancient sources. When modern perspectives lead scholars to ignore certain types of evidence (or the topic altogether), then the ancient record is subject to distortion via a forced silence. The simple fact is that, though explicit, straightforward sources are generally lacking, the Egyptians were not silent about their treatment of foreign captives, and the questions raised above about the treatment of enemy prisoners remain unanswered in current scholarship. A historiographic investigation is then in order; this study must examine the history of modern interpretations of this material and confront the general "squeemishness" of Egyptologists regarding brutal treatment of prisoners.

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[16] O'Connor, "Egypt's Views of 'Others'", 156.

[17] Muhlestein, *Violence in the Service of Order*, 11. Aspects of this topic that touch on torturous practice or ritual slaying are uncomfortable to modern sensibilities, but the denial of these practices in ancient Egypt is a stance that stretches as far back as the ancient Greek historian Herodotus. It is not surprising that many Egyptologists have dismissed the possibility of these practices in ancient Egypt, excepting during the late Prehistoric period of Egyptian history.

[18] Jean Yoyotte, "Héra d' Héliopolis et le Sacrifice Humain," *Annuaire—Ecole pratique des hautes aetudes, Section-sciences religieuses* 89 (1980-81): 36; Muhlestein, *Violence in the Service of Order*, 10. To name but a few, the following works deny the existence of such practices: William Ward, "Review of Ceremonial Execution and Public Rewards," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 51 (1992): 152-155. For much older works see the following: Hermann Junker, *Pyramidenzeit das Wesen der Altägyptischen Religion* (Einseideln: Bewziger, 1949), 51; Samuel B. Mercer, *The Religion of Ancient Egypt* (London: Luzac, 1949), 358; Herman Kees, *Totenglauben und Tenseitsvorstellungen der Alten Ägypter* (Berlin: Akademic Verlag, 1956), 129-130.

Ultimately, it will be demonstrated that prisoners of war served vitals roles in Egyptian society, functioning on several levels. Depictions of them in chaotic or torturous poses serve to reinforce ideological understandings of the pharaoh as conqueror of Chaos. The incorporation of the vast majority of prisoners into the Egyptian workforce provides one of the main factors for economic prosperity and growth in New Kingdom Egypt.[19] Occasional executions served as warnings to potential rebels and may have also contained a ritualistic aspect (see Chapters Five and Six). All of this is in keeping with the central role that the acquisition of foreign captives played in ancient and pre-modern societies the world over.

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[19] See Bernadette Menu, "Captives de guerre et dépendance rurale dans l'Égypte du Nouvel Empire," in *La dépendance rurale dans l'Antiquité égyptienne et proche-orientale* (B. Menu, ed. IFAO, 2005), 187-204.

CHAPTER ONE: MA'AT AND THE IDEOLOGICAL UNDERPINNINGS OF NEW KINGDOM FOREIGN RELATIONS

Throughout their history, ancient Egyptians sought to establish order out of chaos. While this could be expressed in a variety of ways, one of the most common motifs was that of the subjugated enemy prisoner, who was the very epitome of Isfet (Chaos) the primordial opposition to Ma'at (Order).[1] Dominance of foreign captives was displayed in various contexts, often using brutal and humiliating imagery and iconography. This iconography of humiliation is a type of Egyptian propaganda and contains orthodox Egyptian ideology, yet it remains historically valuable. Before turning to depictions of bound foreigners, a brief overview of both the nature of Egyptian sources and role of Ma'at is in order, demonstrating that both textual and iconographic sources are useful grist for the modern historian's mill.

Ma'at and Foreigners: Rhetoric and Ritual

As the Egyptian goddess of cosmic order, truth, and justice, Ma'at has long been recognized as not only a goddess but also one of the foundational

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[1] This ideological understanding has been subject to numerous studies. Most recently see Kerry Muhlestein, *Violence in the Service of Order: The Religious Framework for Sanctioned Killing In Ancient Egypt* (BAR International Series 2299. Oxford: Archaeopress, 2011). See also Erik Hornung, *Idea Into Image: Essays on Ancient Egyptian Thought* (Elizabeth Bredeck, trans., Timken Publishers, 1992), 131-146.

philosophical principles of ancient Egyptian society.[2] As the goddess of truth, Ma'at is connected to daily conduct and righteousness.[3] As a concept, Ma'at is the personification of truth, order, and unity, while as a specific goddess Ma'at is usually identified visually as a woman with a single ostrich feather in her hair.[4] Egypt's remarkable longevity and continuity can at least partially be explained by the sense of tradition and unchanging values emphasized in the concept of Ma'at.[5] In the widely circulated "Tale of the Eloquent Peasant," the peasant is able to continue his quest for justice because of the universally accepted concept of Ma'at:

> "One who obliterates deceit, one who nurtures Ma'at
> One who answers the plea of him who raises his voice…

[2] Ma'at is a topic that has been subjected to limitless scholarly investigations. Among the most important and recent works, see Jan Assmann, *Ma'at: Gerechtigkeit und Unsterblichkeit im alten Ägypten* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1990) and *Maât, L'Égypte Pharaonique et l'idée de justice sociale* (La Maison De Vie, 2003); Erik Hornung, "Maat—Gerechtigkeit für Alle? Zur altägyptischen Ethik," *Eranos Jahrbuch* 56 (1987): 385-427; Miriam Lichtheim, *Maat in Egyptian Autobiographies and Related Studies* (Göttingen: Universitätsverlag FrFeiburg Schweiz Vanden Hoeck & Ruprecht, 1992); Maulana Karenga, *Maat: The Moral Ideal in Ancient Egypt: A Study of Classical African Ethics* (Los Angeles, CA: University of Sakore Press, 2006); Terence DuQuesne, "I Know Ma'et: Counted, Complete, Enduring," *DE* 22 (1992): 79-89; Stephen Quirke, "Translating Ma'at," *JEA* 80 (1994): 219-231.

[3] Emily Teeter, "A Preliminary Report on the Presentation of Maat." *ARCE Newsletter* (1985/6): 3.

[4] Emily Teeter, "Multiple Feathers and Maat." *Bulletin of the Egyptological Seminar* 7 (1985/6): 43. Though the single feather is attested most often, there are examples where Ma'at is depicted wearing multiple feathers (pp. 43-47). Furthermore, the use of the feather may hearken back to Ma'at's association with Shu (for more, see Irene Shirun-Grumach, "Remarks on the Goddess Maat" in *Pharaonic Egypt* [Sarah Israelit-Groll, ed. Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1985]. Shirun-Grumach connects this understanding of Ma'at to her role as a "personal air goddess" (p. 174).

[5] Emily Teeter, *The Presentation of Maat: Ritual and Legitimacy in Ancient Egypt* (Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilizations 57. Chicago: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 1997), 1.

Fulfill Ma'at, O exalted one...[6]

Precisely due to the concept of Ma'at and the social responsibilities

encompassed therein, the peasant believes his quest for justice can be fulfilled.

This inherent justice functioned on an even deeper level, for misfortunes were

not the result of an incensed deity but simply one manifestation of the power of

chaos.[7]

Of greater significance for this study is the connection of Ma'at to kingship

and royal legitimacy.[8] Another Old Kingdom text, "The Teaching for Kagemni,"

connects notions of keeping Ma'at with royal favor:

> Do Maat for the king (for) Maat is what the king loves…
> speak Maat to the king, (for) Maat is what the king loves.[9]

In short, at all periods of political unification in Egypt, kingship was seen as the

"effective power of the order of *ma'at*."[10] The king was bound to a framework of

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[6] V.A. Tobin, "The Tale of the Eloquent Peasant" in *The Literature of Ancient Egypt: An Anthology of Stories, Instructions, Stelae, Autobiographies, and Poetry* (3rd Edition. William Kelly Simpson, ed. New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2003), 29.

[7] Jan Assmann, *The Mind of Egypt: History and Meaning in the Time of the Pharaohs* (Andrew Jenkins, trans. Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2002), 239-240. In this regard, the Egyptian perspective stands in stark contrast to Mesopotamian and biblical views, where misfortunes were caused because the individual angered a deity or sinned in some fashion.

[8] Teeter, *The Presentation of Maat*, 2.

[9] *Urk* I, 195.6-8; Miriam Lichtheim, *Maat in Egyptian Autobiographies*, 61.

[10] Tobin, "Ma'at and DIKH," 115.

actions devoted to upholding order and truth.[11]

As this brief survey reveals, the concept of Ma'at and its all-encompassing role in Egyptian society has received a deservedly high level of scholarly attention, yet the antithesis of Ma'at,[12] Isfet (Chaos), has been somewhat overlooked in comparison. The connection between the re-creation and establishment of Ma'at and the destruction of Isfet is intrinsic — without the destruction of Isfet there can be no establishment of Ma'at.[13] In fact, as one text makes clear, it is for this very purpose that Re has placed the king on earth: "Re has put the king on the land of the living for eternity and infinity so that he may judge mankind, so that he may satisfy the gods, so that he may bring about Ma'at, so that he may destroy Isfet."[14] Because creation continued indefinitely in

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[11] Anthony J. Spalinger, *Icons of Power: A Strategy of Reinterpretation* (Prague: Charles University, Faculty of Arts, 2011), 1-24. In some respects, terms like "truth" are misleading or too simplistic. The Egyptians were less interested in presenting "truth" in the sense of the sequence of events as they happened than they were in presenting "truth" as pertains to their cultural values. To the point, "truth" in this latter usage relates to the ideology of kingship and the latent Egyptian superiority over foreigners. This is not to say that the Egyptians never presented notions of sequence, as clearly Ramesside battle narratives attempt to do so, but that the primary concern of such reliefs was enforcing the long held ideology of foreigners as dangerous agents of chaos who the pharaoh must subdue in fulfilling his role as sun god. The king, ever the focus of such scenes, always triumphs. Even in the most stereotypical of depictions his presence dominates the scene, and his victory is not in question. By the New Kingdom time period, these ideals were already ancient, though the development of the battle narrative genre was not.

[12] That Isfet is the antithesis of Ma'at and not merely the absence of it is an important point. Isfet is more than simply a lack of Order, it is Disorder and Chaos run rampant. Of course, Ma'at is such a massive concept that single one English word accurately conveys its exact opposite. For more, see Assmann, *Ma'at: Gerechtigkeit und Unsterblichkeit*, 213-221; DuQuesne, "I know Ma'et," 90; and Muhlestein, *Violence in the Service of Order*, 2, n. 7.

[13] Harry Smith, "Ma'et and Isfet," *The Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 5 (1994), 67-88.

what Assmann calls "the cosmogonic process," the sun god and king must

constantly "wrest the cosmos from its persistent gravitation toward chaos."[15] This

understanding applies to the orientation of ritual scenes in New Kingdom

temples. Whether the king is attacking human adversaries or hunting, he "usually

faces outward from the rear of the temple…as if defending the 'Lord of Maat'

from the forces of chaos."[16]

All of this is in keeping with the Egyptians' urgent need to return to the era

of Order at the onset of creation before the gods separated themselves and

Chaos entered the world. This was the case throughout all of ancient Egyptian

history, as the king was tasked with bringing about this idyllic first moment of

creation.[17] One Pyramid Text makes the connection between Ma'at, the first

moments of creation, and kingship explicit: "Ma'at is in the presence of Re, on

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[14] Known now as "The King as Sun Priest," this text comes from the Funerary Papyrus of Khay, 'Chief Keeper of the Writings of the Lord of the Two Lands,' housed in the British Museum (9953,B1); For translations, see Jan Assmann, *Der König als Sonnenpriester: Ein kosmographischer Begleittext zur kultischen Sonnenhymnen in thebanischen Tempeln und Gräbern* (Glückstadt: J.J. Augustin, 1970), 19; Muhlestein, *Violence in the Service of Order*, 2. See also, Stephen Quirke, *Owners of Funerary Papyri in the British Museum* (Occasional Paper. London: British Museum Press, 1993). For photographs and museum display information: http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/search_the_collection_database/search_object_image.aspx?objectId=114685&partId=1&orig=%2fresearch%2fsearch_the_collection_database.aspx&numPages=10&currentPage=1&asset_id=981191 (accessed on September 21, 2012).

[15] Jan Assmann, *The Mind of Egypt*, 206.

[16] Henry G. Fischer, *The Orientation of Hieroglyphs. Part I: Reversals* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1977), 46-47. On the apotropaic nature of the battle scenes see also D. Arnold, *Wandrelief und Raumfunktion in ägyptischen Tempeln des neuen Reiches* (Münchner ägyptologische Studien 2, 1962), 1, 109.

[17] Assmann, *Ma'at: Gerechtigkeit und Unsterblichkeit*, 224. See also, Assmann, *The Mind of Egypt*, 206; Muhlestein, *Violence in the Service of Order*, 2-4, 95-96; and James P. Allen, *Genesis in Egypt: The Philosophy of Ancient Egyptian Creation Accounts* (Yale Egyptological Studies. William Kelly Simpson, ed. New Haven, CT: Yale University, 1998), 26.

the festival of the first day of the year. The sky is content, the earth is in joy,

because they have heard that the King put Ma'at in the place of Isfet."[18]

From the Egyptian perspective, one of the greatest sources of Isfet was a

rebellious foreign enemy; such foes were even equated with mythological villains

like Seth and Apophis.[19] As Assmann puts it, "it was the specific task of the

temple cult (and thus the king as well) to thwart the evil designs of Apophis and

so ensure the course of the sun and continuation of creation."[20] Among these

"evil designs" were foreign rebellions or incursions into Egypt. A king who ignored

these subversive agents risked losing all the ordered ideals of society that the

Egyptians held dear. Thus, rebellions had to be exterminated with the utmost

severity in a fashion that ensured the re-establishment of Order and the

eradication of Chaos. This notion applies as well to foreigners who have not yet

rebelled or even been under Egyptian dominion; the potential for rebellion was

sufficient justification for pharaonic aggression.

Not surprisingly in a society so steeped in mythic ideology, annihilation

rituals designed to aid the upholding of Ma'at and impede foreign incursions into

Egypt developed; in one, Seth and Apophis are linked to rebels and told they can

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[18] K. Sethe, *Die altägyptischen Pyramidentexte* (4 vols. Leipzig, 1908-1922. Reprint, 1969), 1774-1776; translated after Muhlestein, *Violence in the Service of Order*, 96.

[19] Georges Posener, "Les Criminels Dépatisés et les Morts sans Noms," *RdÉ* 5 (1946): 53. Posener demonstrated that not only were the condemned criminals associated with Apophis, they were even re-named Apophis in some cases. For ancient near eastern parallels to the Egyptian understanding see also, Mario Liverani, *Prestige and Interest: International Relationship in the Near East ca. 1600-1100 B.C.* Padova, 1990), 126-134.

[20] Assmann, *Mind of Egypt*, 147.

no longer enter Egypt.[21] Archaeological evidence survives from some of these rituals whereby the names of enemy polities are inscribed onto an object, which is then smashed and burned as a way of symbolically defeating the enemy in the so-called execration rites. The texts of these rites could be inscribed on pots or figurines of foreigners, and literally thousands of examples are attested throughout Egyptian history.[22] The figurine could be of wood, stone, wax, or alabaster, and a curse was undoubtedly pronounced before the object was broken and disfigured.[23]

Unlike the smiting scenes, which represent generalized images of foreign foes, the execration rituals are very specific regarding their intended victims.[24] However, much like the smiting scenes, execration texts were concerned with

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[21] *Urk.* IV: 17; Muhlestein, *Violence in the Service of Order*, 96.

[22] Robert Kriech Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice* (Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilizations 54. The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 1993), 136. For a general listing of relevant materials see Georges Posener, *Cinq figurines d'envoûtement* (BdE, vol. 101. Cairo: IFAO), 2-6; Helck, *Beziehungen Ägyptens zu Vordserasien im 3. und 2. Jahrtausend v. Chr.*, 44-67. Posener has published on these texts extensively, including the following useful works, among others: *Prince et pays d'Asie et de Nubie* (Bruxelles: Fondation Égyptologique Reine Élisabeth, 1940); "Ächtungstexte," *LÄ* 1: 67-69; and "Les texts d'envoûtement de Mirgissa," *Syria* 43 (1966): 277-287. For a complete bibliography on the execration texts see also Ritner, *The Mechanics*, 137, no. 611. The work of Posener and Ritner, among others, has done much to catalogue the various execrations that have been uncovered. There is no need to rehash the details of all the execration texts uncovered.

[23] Donald B. Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel Israel in Ancient Times* (Princeton University Press, 1992), 87; Ritner, *The Mechanics*, 140.

[24] Ritner, *The Mechanics*, 136-138. The texts typically begin with a statement concerning chiefs of a particular place and his fellows, before making an all-encompassing statement about Nubians/Asians; for more on their structure see also Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel*, 88-89.

rebellion and were often formulaic in presentation.[25] The curses list the names of chiefs from specific places and their retainers, soldiers, etc. "who may rebel, who may plot, who may fight, who may think of fighting, or who may think of rebelling on this entire earth."[26] In this regard, the execration texts speak of potential rebellion; implicit in this view is the same Egyptian understanding of foreigners and Chaos discussed above. Taken a step further, that such actions were undertaken in case of potential and not yet actual rebellions underscores the importance of both ritual in keeping the status quo and the danger that foreign foes constantly represented.

Vital to understanding the function and importance of execration texts is realizing that it is not the inscribing of the texts themselves that lend power to the curses, but their subjection to *ritual* acts.[27] One of the many forms this ritual took was the binding of foreigners depicted in alabaster, wood, clay and so forth.[28] Examples from Saqqara even reveal holes for binding the arms or suspending the figurines.[29] The connection between these rites and the representations of bound captives is obvious. In dealing with potential rebels, the execration rite was undertaken to bind the enemy; in similar fashion a king would bind captives

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[25] Ritner, *The Mechanics*, 138-139.

[26] K. Sethe, *Die Ächtung feindlicher Fürsten, Völker und Dinge auf altägyptischen Tongefässscherben des Mittleren Reiches* (Berlin: Akademe der Wissenschaften, 1926), 72-73; Ritner, *The Mechanics*, 140.

[27] Ritner, *The Mechanics*, 142.

[28] See Posener, *Cinq figurines d'envoûtement* (BdE, vol. 101. Cairo: IFAO, 1987), 7-10; Sir W.M. Flinders Petrie, *Amulets* (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, Ltd., 1972), 19, pl. 5.

[29] Posener, *Prince et pays d'Asie et de Nubie*, 18-19; Ritner, *The Mechanics*, 143.

after military engagements, depicted in grand fashion during the New Kingdom (more on this in Chapters Three and Four). Ritual acts concluded wars, establishing order whether the act itself was the presentation of captives or the donation of cultic objects like milk vessels.[30]

Archaeological evidence from the Middle Kingdom fortress of Mirgissa illustrates how absolute execration rites could be. Among the finds was a fire pit/furnace, which was used specifically for incinerating figurines of enemies, and breaking of inscribed red pots.[31] Interestingly, there is one crucible each for the classic enemies of Egypt — Asiatics, Nubians, Libyans, rebellious Egyptians, and evil mythological entities.[32] The figurines found were missing heads, feet, eyes, etc., as part of the ritual.[33] All told there were four distinct interments, 197 broken inscribed red vessels, 439 broken non-inscribed red vases, 346 mud figurines, three limestone figurines of bound prisoners, and the head only of a fourth limestone figurine.[34] Eleven meters from the central deposit, figurines of bound prisoners were found, all showing signs of intentional blows to the head.[35] Finally, the presence of a human skull resting atop a broken pot is clear evidence of ritual

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[30] Following the remarks of Pascal Vernus, *Essai sur la conscience de l'Historie dans l'Egypte pharaonique* (Paris: Librairie Honoré Champion, 1995), 156-163.

[31] Ritner, *The Mechanics*, 153-158; Sethe, *Die Ächtung feindlicher Fürsten, Völker und Dinge*; André Vila, "Un ritual d'envoûtement au Moyen Empire Égyptien," in *L'Homme, hier et aujourd'hui Recueil d'études en homage á André Lerio-Gourhan* (Marc Sauter, ed. Paris: Éditions Cujas, 1973), 629.

[32] Ibid., 159.

[33] Vila, "Un ritual d'entoûtement," in *L'Homme*, 635-636.

[34] Ibid., 630; Ritner, *The Mechanics*, 153.

[35] Vila, "Un ritual d'entoûtement," in *L'Homme*, 631; Ritner, *The Mechanics*, 161-162.

sacrifice.[36] An examination of the adjacent skeleton points towards a Nubian

origin for the sacrificial victim.[37] Added to this is the fact that the skull was

surrounded by melted beeswax, dyed red — the remains of a melted wax

figurine.[38] Lying nearby was a flint knife, the traditional weapon for ritual

sacrifice.[39] In summation, the Mirgissa evidence demonstrates that at least

during the Middle Kingdom actual human beings could be involved in the

execration rites, an important point to remember when it comes time to examine

the fate of bound captives during the New Kingdom (Chapter Five).

Ma'at and Foreigners: Polemic vs. Practice

Despite this ubiquitous ideology, the presence of ritual, and a strong

determination to symbolically conquer foreign foes before any encounter was

engaged, Egyptian views towards and practices concerning foreigners were

considerably complex. Antonio Loprieno's distinction between *topos* and *mimesis*

in literature provides a helpful means of understanding this complexity,[40] both in

textual and iconographic sources. The *topos* represents the idealized view made

famous in military texts, reliefs, and other jingoistic sources, while the *mimesis*

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[36] Ibid., 162-163.

[37] Ibid., 162-163.

[38] Vila, "Un ritual d'entoûtement," in *L'Homme*, 631, no. 15.

[39] Ritner, *The Mechanics*, 163.

[40] Antonio Loprieno, *Topos und Mimesis. Zum Ausländer in der ägyptischen Literatur* (Ägyptologische Abhandlungen, Weisbaden: Otto Harrosowitz, 1998, vol. 48). See also Spalinger, *Icons of Power*, 81-90.

reflects the daily experiences of commerce, correspondence, and even marriage.[41]

In both state literature and artistic presentation (*topos*) the foreigner is pictured as a resistant yet hapless rebel against pharaonic superiority.[42] Literary themes present foreigners as barbaric and cowardly on the one hand, but sly and possessing overwhelming numbers on the other hand.[43] This dual understanding is clearly seen in the *Instruction for King Merikare*:

> Lo the miserable Asiatic,
> He is wretched because of the place he's in:
> Short of water, bare of wood,
> Its paths are many and painful because of mountains.
> He does not dwell in one place,
> Food propels his legs,
> He fights since the time of Horus,
> Not conquering nor being conquered,
> He does not announce the day of combat,
> Like a thief who darts about a group…[44]

Scenes from religious contexts also emphasize the negative aspects of the relationship between Egypt and foreigners, highlighting the rebels' identification with Isfet.[45] In addition to the ideology and ritualization discussed above, this was

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[41] Stuart Tyson Smith, *Wretched Kush: Ethnic Identities and Boundaries in Egypt's Nubian Empire* (London: Routledge, 2003), 24.

[42] David O'Connor, "Egypt's View of 'Others,'" in *Never Had the Like Occurred* (John Tait, ed. London: Institute of Archaeology, University College London, 2003), 168-169. The general helplessness of the foreign captive is easily seen in the smiting scenes, for example.

[43] Smith, *Wretched Kush*, 24-25.

[44] Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*: *a Book of Readings*, Volume I: *The Old and Middle Kingdom* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1973), 103-104. See also, J.F. Quack, *Studien zur Lehre für Merikare* (Weisbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1992).

[45] O'Connor, "Egypt's View of 'Others,'" 171. This of course was done in keeping with the temple's meaning and function.

also done for very practical social and political reasons; frequently social unification is accompanied by a presentation of an 'aggressive other.'[46] The price for this unification is usually the spilling of the blood of the 'other' during rituals and celebrations.[47] Extreme violence was doubtless a part of eradicating Chaos as allowing even a sliver of Chaos to survive could prove, ideologically, to be the undoing of the Egyptians.

The smiting scenes might be an example of this type of ritual even though they are highly idealized and stylized presentations. This confusing dynamic is readily apparent in scholarly literature on the topic of smiting scenes, bound prisoners, and ritual slaughtering, as many of them couch their statements in vague generalities. For example, as Wilkinson puts it, "the smiting scene, which was doubtless originally based on the actual execution, seems to have come to be a purely representational device…"[48] One immediately wonders when the shift from actual execution to pure representation would have taken place since Egyptian attitudes towards rebellious foreigners *never* underwent such a radical shift. By claiming that the practice essentially died out, becoming a representational device, Wilkinson appears uncomfortable with the notion of ritual killing. Indeed, it is hard to argue against Muhlestein's point that the more a particular topic touches on an individual's religious and political viewpoints, the

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[46] Walter Burkert, "The Function and Transformation of Ritual Killing," in *Readings in Ritual Studies* (Ronald L. Grimes, ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1996), 62.

[47] Ronald L. Grimes, *Beginnings in Ritual Studies* (New York: University Press of America, 1982), 228. More on the possibility of ritual slayings in Chapter Five.

[48] Richard H. Wilkinson, *Symbol & Magic in Egyptian Art* (London: Thames & Hudson, Ltd., 1994), 194.

more difficult it is to be as objective as possible.[49] Many Egyptologists have denied the practice of ritual killing altogether (more on this in Chapter Six),[50] yet at times it is likely that pharaoh did literally "smite" his captives.[51]

For their part, battle reliefs commemorating the king's victories typically depict him variously as pursuing his enemies by chariot as he fires arrows at them, standing over them wielding a spear or sword, binding them, or seated as his officials parade helpless, bound enemies before him. In all these types of scenes, the king is presented as larger-than-life and indomitable; the purpose being to show that the king "possesses the certain physical characteristics that make him uniquely suited to conquer and rule both Egypt and a wider sphere of influence."[52] The ideology of the conquering king is no more evident than in the simple fact that victory is always guaranteed.

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[49] Muhlestein, *Violence in the Service of Order*, 5. This comment is not intended as a critique of Wilkinson but rather to demonstrate the human dimension of this discussion. Many Westerners view themselves as the inheritors of Egyptian high-culture. This naturally makes it difficult to see the potentially disturbing practices of that culture as reality.

[50] To cite but a few examples: Samuel A.B. Mercer, *The Religion of Ancient Egypt* (London: Luzac, 1949), 358; Hermann Kees, *Totenglauben und Tenseitsvorstellungen der Alten Ägypter* (Berlin: Akademic Verlag, 1956), 129-130; William A. Ward, "Review of Ceremonial Execution and Public Rewards," *JNES* 51 (1992): 152-155.

[51] This is not to say that every smiting scene is literal, rather the potential that these depictions do present a form of execution should be given due weight and not arbitrarily dismissed.

[52] Edward Bleiberg, "Historical Texts as Political Propaganda During the New Kingdom." *BES* 7 (1986): 5-13.

Even the army itself must be assured that enemies really are inferior before setting out on campaigns, another function of the execration texts.[53] The intent was to tip the scales of battle irrevocably in the Egyptians' favor before a single step on the march to war had ever been taken.

Following that, a campaign must of course be initiated, the primary motivation being elimination of rebels:[54]

> "His Person sent a numerous army to Nubia … in order to submit all those rebelling against His Person and hostile to the Lord of Two Lands."[55]

Statements like this are so common they became formulaic; rebellions are often brought to the Pharaoh's attention using the *iw.tw. r ḏd n ḥm.f* formula ("One came to say to His Majesty…").[56] Liverani points out the gap in time between the announcement of rebellion and military action is minimal; as soon as he is aware of the rebellion, the Pharaoh is said to act.[57] This underscores the legitimating value of subjugating foreigners; a good king not only subdues rebels, he does so

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[53] Mario Liverani, *Prestige and Interest*, 126-127; cf., Wolfgang Helck, *Die Beziehungen Ägyptens zu Vordserasien im 3. und 2. Jahrtausend v. Chr.*(2nd edition. Wiesbaden, 1971), 44-63 and Georges Posener, *Cinq figurines d'envoûtement* (BdE, vol. 101. Cairo: IFAO, 1987), 2-6.

[54] Liverani, *Prestige and Interest*, 127.

[55] *Urk.* IV, 140:3-5;

[56] This formula and others have been extensively studied. See Anthony J. Spalinger, *Aspects of the Military Documents of the Ancient Egyptians* (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 1982); Thomas Ritter, *Das Verbalsystem der königlichen und privaten Inscriften. XVIII Dynastie bis einschließlich Amenophis III* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1995). For an exhaustive overview of the textual sources and genres for New Kingdom military history, see also Donald B. Redford, *Pharaonic King-Lists, Annals, and Day-Books: A Contribution to the Study of the Egyptian Sense of History* (SSEA Publications IV. Mississauga: Benben Publications, 1986) and Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel*, 140-143.

[57] Liverani, *Prestige and Interest*, 128.

immediately. After all, why should he not? His victory is already secure. A vacillating king doubts not just himself and his army but his entire society and even his gods. Superiority does not hesitate; it has no need to do so. Thus, pharaoh and his army set out in haste with supreme confidence, ever victorious.

Depictions of enemy captives in bizarre and even torturous poses following battle or presented before the gods back in Egypt emphasize not only their chaotic nature but more importantly provide endpoints to the entire campaign. On the most basic level, the sheer helplessness of the captives is resounding proof that pharaoh's victory, already a mere formality before the campaign, has been emphatically achieved. The enemies of Egypt are not simply defeated; they are humiliated, tortured, and broken.

Even peaceful interactions echo ideological concerns. Foreigners entering Egypt implicitly adopted the Egyptian ideological code, no longer the enemy of pharaoh they now serve him.[58] As Schneider notes, this is made obvious by the fact the comprehensive term for "foreigners," $\underline{h}\beta s.t\acute{\imath}w$, is exclusively used for foreigners outside of Egypt who are "devoid of any opportunity for acculturation."[59] On the other hand, ethnonyms like $\varsigma\beta m$ for "Asiatics" or $n\underline{h}si$ for "Nubians" are used for both non-acculturated groups living outside of Egypt and for assimilated members of Egyptian society.[60]

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[58] Thomas Schneider, "Foreigners in Egypt: Archaeological Evidence and Cultural Context" in *Egyptian Archaeology* (Willeke Wendrich, ed. Oxford and Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 144-145.

[59] Ibid., 144.

[60] Ibid., 144.

Conversely, the *mimesis* of foreigners betrays the truth that foreigners could fulfill numerous roles — trading partners, allies, military units, etc. — as part of the *realpolitik* of ancient times.[61] Furthermore, if acculturated to the norms of Egyptian society, foreigners seem to have been rapidly assimilated into Egyptian society,[62] potentially even in large numbers.[63] Loprieno rightly stressed the importance of the opening up of borders during the New Kingdom, but this surely occurred earlier at border zones.[64] Foreingers, both men and women, were employed by temples and private estates as dancers, doorkeepers, maids, and so on.[65] In one remarkable example, a foreign prisoner of war, Ameniu, captured during one of the campaigns of Thutmose III by the king's barber, Sabastet, is given his freedom in return for marrying Sabastet's invilid niece.[66]

In short, it can be said that programmatic religious presentations, state records, and bombastic texts often tell a different tale of foreigners than their

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[61] David O'Connor, "Egypt's View of 'Others,'" in *Never Had the Like Occurred: Egypt's View of Its Past* (John Tait, ed., London: Institute of Archaeology, University College London, 2003), 158-159.

[62] Ibid., 159, 170-171. In this sense a 'good' foreigner is a submissive one. See also, Edda Bresciani, "Foreigners" in *The Egyptians* (Sergio Donadoni, ed. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1997), 221-254 and Antonio Loprieno, "Slaves" in *The Egyptians*, 185-220.

[63] As evidenced by the thirty-seven Asiatics mentioned at Beni Hasan (mentioned above). See Newberry, *Beni Hasan*, 1:pl. 28, 31.

[64] Loprieno, *Topos und Mimesis*, 23-24, 44-50; see also, Spalinger, *Icons of Power*, 81-90.

[65] Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel*, 77-78. In one case a chieftain is even attested; see also Walter Wreszinski, *Aegyptische Inschiften aus dem Königliche Hofmuseum in Wein* (Leipzig, 1906), 27, no. 32.

[66] *Urk.* IV, 1369: 4-16; Loprieno, "Slaves," 206.

more mundane textual counterparts. The latter incorporate foreigners into peaceful roles within Egyptian society from time to time,[67] a point further strengthened by recent archeological evidence.[68] This is not to say that there is a distinction between negative attitudes towards groups and a positive attitude towards individuals,[69] which is too narrowly simplistic to be valid. Enemy leaders in particular are singled out as especially cowardly and deserving of the harshest treatment. Any valid assessment must acknowledge a complex cultural situation with the *topos* "assigned on the basis of political and ritual roles of a strict model of inclusion and exclusion which combined the existence or lack of acculturation with the notion of territorial authority and power hierarchy."[70] Quite obviously, large numbers of both individuals and groups entered into Egyptian society at various levels of social standing and underwent varying degrees of acculturation.[71] Overall, it is paramount that both the *topos* and *mimesis* of the bound foreigner motif receive due attention in seeking to understand why the Egyptians depicted their enemies in such brutal fashion and the ultimate fate of prisoners of war, which vary considerably due to different historical circumstance and the individual desires of Egyptian kings (more in ch. 5).

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[67] Loprieno, "Slaves," 187.

[68] Smith, *Wretched Kush*, 97-166. As Smith summarizes in the his introduction to the material from Askut specifically, "the presence of Nubian pottery, jewelry, and other artifacts at Askut is interesting and shows that the border was more permeable than the official edicts imply" (97).

[69] As is done in A. Gordon, "Art: Foreingers," in *Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*, Vol. 1 (D.B. Redford, ed. Oxford, 2001), 544-548.

[70] Schneider, "Foreigners in Egypt," 147.

[71] Ibid., 148. For the incorporation of and innovations of foreigners in New Kingdom Egypt see pp. 154-155.

The Case of Kadesh: Propaganda, Ideology, and Compromise

Another simple, unavoidable truth is that many 'historical' sources in ancient times contain political propaganda (i.e., heavily biased), although not all historical sources are designed solely to indoctrinate the masses to a particular political or religious worldview. Propaganda has unfortunately become a "loaded word," and does not necessarily include distortions or falsehoods, despite rather obvious biases. In many cases, "propaganda" for ancient Egyptians was simply a public proclamation or display asserting that which they held to be important or true —ideolgical statements. Specifically, the triumph of the king, and by extension Ma'at, over the forces of chaos need not be solely viewed as a distorted attempted at convincing the masses; rather it is a standardized assertion of the ideological "truth" of the ordered universe, as believed by the Egyptians. In the loosest sense then, monumental inscriptions and reliefs can be said to be political propaganda in that they proclaim the might of king, expressed in a manner in keeping with the Egyptian worldview. However, serving such a purpose does not *ipso facto* make them false or deceptive in some deliberate way. Furthermore, ideological and propagandistic statements develop in response to historical realities, as aptly demonstrated by both Murnane and

Brand.[72] Thus, to understand, and not merely dismiss, such statements, one must first analyze the historical context.

Additionally, some sources are rather banal, such as king-lists, inventory lists, etc. Questions concerning who the intended audience was must be asked before accusations of disingenuous propaganda can be leveled since such propaganda requires a grand display, visible to all. Particularly in the case of texts, the question must be asked, who could have read them or accessed them? If the number of literate individuals is incredibly low, as is almost certainly the case, what does this say about the necessity of combining texts with reliefs? Smith notes that by New Kingdom times Egypt's population numbered approximately 3.5 million and that "if the literate elite range from 3-5 percent of the population, they numbered from 100,000-175,000!"[73]

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[72] William J. Murnane, "The Kingship of the Nineteenth Dynasty: A Study in the Resilience of an Institution," in *Ancient Egyptian Kingship* (David O'Connor and David P. Silverman, eds. Leiden, 1995), 185-220; Peter J. Brand, "Ideology and Politics of the Early Ramesside Kings (13th Century BC): A Historical Approach," in *Prozesse des Wandels in historischen Spannungsfeldrn Nordostafrikas/Westasiens: Akten zum 2. Symposium des SFB 295, Mainz, 15.10.-17.10.2001* (Walter Bisang, et al., eds. Würzburg, 2005), 23-38.

[73] Smith, *Wretched Kush*, 181. Smith's data is based on archaeological evidence and is thus more methodologically sound than the approach adopted by Baines and Eyre who estimated that only 1% of the population was literate during the Old Kingdom, however, they admit that their estimates are "scarcely more than informed guesses"; John Baines, "Literacy and Ancient Egyptian Society," *Man* 18 (1983): 572-599; Baines and C.J. Eyre, "Four Notes on Literacy," *GM* 61 (1983): 65-96. Curious readers will find the following works on literacy helpful: Betsy Bryan, "Evidence for Female Literacy from Theban Tombs of the New Kingdom," BES 6 (1985): 17-32; Jac J. Janssen, "Literacy and Letters at Deir el-Medina," in *Village voices: proceedings of the symposium Texts from Deir el-Medina and their interpretation, Leiden, May 31- June 1, 1991* (R.J. Demaree and A. Egberts, eds. Leiden: Centre of Non-Western Studies, Leiden University, 1992), 80-94; and Leonard H. Lesko, "Literture, Literacy, and Literati," in *Pharaoh's Workers: The Villagers from Deir el-Medina* (L.H. Lesko, ed. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), 131-44. Each of these studies concludes that the literacy rate was higher than that supposed by Baines and Eyre.

Lesko takes matters a step further and argues that levels of literacy varied. He maintains that a much larger group was partially literate, although he acknowledges that the number of writers (i.e., scribes) would have been small.[74] If Lesko is correct, more people would have had at least a partial understanding of monumental texts than previously believed, to say nothing of those who could have been in attendance when the texts were read aloud or performed. Beyond that, iconography, particularly that displayed on temple walls, conveyed a clear message to all who had access, literate or not. Concerning military accounts, which generally appear on the exterior walls or in the first courtyard, public access would *not* have been limited.[75] Social elites were not the sole recipients of the message,[76] which for its part, with its larger-than-life depictions of the conquering king and his agonizingly bound foes, was unreservedly explicit. The Egyptians left no room for errant interpretations of the outcome of the battle.

Such displays provide useful suggestions as to a particular culture's intrinsic values and not just the values of the elites. After all, why go to the trouble of commissioning and carving spectacular battle reliefs complete with numerous depictions of prisoners of war if such themes are not valued on some

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[74] Leonard H. Lesko, "Some Comments on Egyptian Literacy and Literati," in *Studies in Egyptology Presented to Miriam Lichtheim* (Volume 2. S. Israelit-Groll, ed. Jerusalem: Magnes, 1990), 656-667.

[75] Charles Francis Nims, "Popular Religion in Ancient Egyptian Temples," in *Proceedings of the Twenty-Third International Congress of Orientalists* (Denis Sinor, ed. Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons, Ltd., August 21st-28th, 1954), 79-80. More recently, see Brand, "Veils Votives and Marginalia," 51-83.

[76] That said, social elites were perhaps the most dangerous threat to any given pharaoh's reign.

level by the society,[77] if said iconography does not serve a particular purpose?[78] Deliberate political (and potentially religious) statements lie behind such depictions. In this regard, they are useful for cultural histories, histories of ideas, studies of comparative religion, and so on, though great care must be exercised when using them to reconstruct historical particulars.

To the point, Ramses II celebrated his encounter with the Hittites at Kadesh, although historians regard it as something of a stalemate.[79] The bias inherent in Ramesses' claims is obviously intended to impress his spectators and reinforce the power of the king, but its presence in various records does not mean the event itself is fictitious. Rather, the event must be understood by unpacking Ramesses' claims and reconstructing what actually happened to whatever degree possible by contrasting the Egyptian evidence with that surviving from Hittite sources and archaeology. In this sense, one is able to

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[77] At the very least, the elites of said society must have placed great value on these depictions.

[78] Though Egyptologists often search for the "personal" religion of commoners, as if to say that personal and official religion were rivals, personal and official religion were complementary;[78] they shared a number of common traits with the scope of official state religion being the primary difference. The same gods were worshipped; the same sites were considered sacred, and so on. Villages like Deir el-Medina show both the personal and official religion existing alongside each other. Ashraf Iskander Sadek, *Popular Religion in Egypt during the New Kingdom* (Hildesheim: Gerstenberg Verlag, 1987), 59-84; 294.

[79] This is a topic that continues to fascinate scholars. Among many exemplary works, see William J. Murnane, *The Road to Kadesh* (2nd edition, revised, Chicago, 1995); Anthony J. Spalinger, "Notes on the Reliefs of the Battle of Kadesh," in *Perspectives on the Battle of Kadesh* (Hans Goedicke, ed. Baltimore, Maryland: Halgo, Inc., 1985), 1-42; T. von der Way, *Textüberlieferung Ramses' II zur Qadeß-Schlact, Analyse und Struktur* (Hildesheim: Gerstenberg, 1984), 386-398; Kenneth A. Kitchen, *Pharaoh Triumphant: The Life and Times of Ramesses II* (Warminster, England: Aris and Phillips, Ltd., 1982); M.C. Kuentz, *La Bataille de Qadech. Les Textes et les Bas-Reliefs* (MIFAO LV, Cairo, 1928 and 1934); and James H. Breasted, *The Battle of Kadesh: A Study in the Earliest Known Military Strategy* (University of Chicago: 1903).

uncover the historical details buried under the avalanche of ideology. Briefly then, the battle of Kadesh was in fact an actual historical event, likely fought by armies of comparable size,[80] although Ramesses II emphasizes his individual triumph in the face overwhelming odds while Hattusili hides behind his army.[81]

Ramesses claims that his army abandoned him in the moment of confrontation, leaving him to face "millions of foreign lands, alone with Victory-in-Thebes and Mut-is-Content, my great chariot horses! They it was, I found to help me when alone, fighting the foreign armies."[82] He even mentions eyewitnesses to this event — his charioteer, shield-bearer and cupbearers.[83] In his subsequent celebrative program, Ramesses focused on the motif of Pharaoh alone destroying the entire Hittite army.[84] This focus was so intense that monumental

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[80] Liverani, *Prestige and Interest*, 118-119; A Kadry, *Officers and Officials in the New Kingdom* (Budapest, 1982), 127-132.

[81] This is of course according to Ramesses II. The Egyptian army often serves only as a foil for the king's valor. Cf. Barry Kemp, "Imperialism and Empire in New Kingdom Egypt (c. 1575-1087 BC)" in *Imperialism in the Ancient World* (P. Garnsey and C. Whittaker, eds., Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 7-57, especially p. 15.

[82] Kenneth A. Kitchen, *Pharaoh Triumphant: The Life and Times of Ramesses II* (Warminster, England: Aris and Phillips, Ltd., 1982), 60-61. For the hieroglyphs of each version of the Kadesh record, see *KRI* II, 1-147, §3; for the entire poem translated, see *RITA* II, 2-14; *RITANC* II, 3-54, §5-46; for the specific text cited above, *RITA* II, 11. Additional translations can be found in several other works, to name but a few: Breasted, *ARE* III, 129-157, §§298-351 (includes reliefs); Miriam Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature. Volume II: The New Kingdom* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), 57-72, especially 65-66; Alan R. Gardiner, *The Kadesh Inscriptions of Ramses II* (Oxford, 1960); B.G. Davies, *Egyptian Historical Inscriptions of the Nineteenth Dynasty* (Documenta Mundi, Aegyptica 2. Jonesered, 1997), 55-96 (P & B); T. von der Way, *Die Textüberliefereng Ramses II. zur Qades-Schlacht* (*HÄB* 22, 1984), 286-366. A complete recording of the hieroglyphs can be found in *KRI* II, 2-147, §3 and M. C. Kuentz, *La Bataille de Qadech. Les Textes et les Bas-Reliefs* (MIFAO LV, Cairo, 1928).

[83] Kitchen, *Pharaoh Triumphant*, 61.

representations of the battle were placed on temple walls at the following locations: Abydos (2), Karnak (2), Luxor (3), the Ramesseum (2) and Abu Simbel (1),[85] for an unmatched ten total representations.

Yet, there must have been numerous individuals — soldiers, officials, etc. — who knew the truth of the situation, namely that the campaign was unsuccessful in terms of conquering territory, and word of this must have spread.[86] In fact, one individual to hear of it was none other than the Hittite king, Muwatallis. Ramesses' celebrative program lasted so long that it overlapped with his later treaty with the Hittites, by which time Muwatallis learned of Ramesses' presentations of the events. He protested in general that Ramesses' claims were against the spirit of brotherhood evident in the treaty and questioned in particular whether Ramesses was really alone in the fight.[87] Ramesses' reply to Muwatallis reaffirms their treaty but remains staunch as to the "truth" of his own accounts.

The question remains, why would Ramesses continue to hold to a patently false version of the accounts when challenged by his Hittite counterpart? By

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[84] Liverani, *Prestige and Interest*, 119. So intense was this focus that monumental representations of the battle were placed on more monuments than any New Kingdom event.

[85] Kitchen, *Pharaoh Triumphant*, 65; Smith, *Wretched Kush*, 172-173. On the texts, see James H. Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt. Volume 3: The Nineteenth Dynasty* (Urbana, IL and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2001 [reprint of University of Chicago Press, 1906]), 296-351; Kuentz, *La Bataille de Qadech*. For the general historical development of these sources and their relationship to one another see the following works by Spalinger: "Remarks on the Kadesh Inscriptions of Ramesses II: The Bulletin" in *Perspectives on the Battle of Kadesh*, 43-75; "Dating the Kadesh Reliefs," in *Five Views on Egypt* (Lingua Aegpytiaca: Studia monographica 6. Göttingen, 2006), 137-173.

[86] Smith, *Wretched Kush*, 172.

[87] Liverani, *Prestige and Interest*, 119-120. See also, G. Fecht, "Ramses II. und die Schlacht bei Qadesh," *GM* 80 (1984): 41-45, 51.

single-handedly fighting off the opposition, Ramesses fulfills the previously

discussed all-important pharaonic role as the sun-god who "dispels the forces of

darkness wherever he appears."[88] Such an important legitimating role requires

an enemy. Mixed in amongst the accounts of Ramesses' individual valor, the

king is duped by the enemies into an ambush from which he barely escapes.[89]

After spending so much energy displaying his valor in grand fashion why would

the king allow an unflattering portrayal of himself to remain alive and well in the

accounts? Liverani suggests that it is because the ambush evidences the

ideological *topos* of the foreigner as a treacherous agent of Isfet. The Hittites and

their Syrian allies were forced to band together and use deceit as their only

chance at victory over the pharaoh, revealing their inferiority,[90] while the brave

pharaoh survives the ambush single-handedly. The distinction between foreigner

and pharaoh could not be more pronounced. Indeed, such villainy makes the

valor of the king even more impressive.[91] In this sense then, Ramesses II is able

to claim that he was successful.

Taken as a whole, Ramesses' accounts of the Battle of Kadesh have been

called a "propaganda campaign of heretofore unknown magnitude."[92] They

involve not only the *topos* of the deceitful foreigner, but also feature the heaping

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[88] Hornung, *Idea Into Image*, 154.

[89] Smith, *Wretched Kush*, 172.

[90] Liverani, *Prestige and Interest*, 121.

[91] Put another way, every compelling story needs a potent villain.

[92] Jan Assmann, "Krieg und Frieden im alten Ägypten: Ramses II. und die Schlacht bei Kadesh," *Mannheimer Forum* 83/84 (1984): 175-231 (translated in Hornung, *Idea Into Image*, 34).

of effusive praise onto the valiant king who overcame insurmountable odds to subdue chaotic foreigners.[93]

Despite all the mental gymnastic required to appreciate the sources, particularly those from the Egyptian perspective, a great number of specific facts about the Battle of Kadesh are known. The battle took place in 1274 B.C., during the fifth year of Ramesses II's reign. Scholars agree that the actual outcome was something of an impasse, but it was still a pivotal turning point for Egypto-Hittite relations, culminating in a later marriage alliance.[94]

In all actuality, biases in texts like those detailing the Egyptian perspective of the Battle of Kadesh can aid in understanding ancient mindsets. As Milliard puts it:

> Recognition of the unconcealed standpoints of many ancient documents has resulted in fuller understanding of their contexts, without any recourse to a devaluation or discrediting of them. The fact that the modern interpreter does not share the beliefs and aims of the writers does not prevent him from respecting them and giving them their due weight.[95]

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[93] Smith, *Wretched Kush*, 172.

[94] Indeed, no ancient Egyptian military campaign has received more scholarly attention than the Battle of Kadesh. To name but few not cited above, see the following: Breasted, *The Battle of Kadesh*; Trevor Bryce, *The Kingdom of the Hittites* (Oxford University Press, 2006), 255-267; Christiane Desroches-Noblecourt, *Grand Temple d'Abou Simbel: La Bataille de Kadesh* (Cairo, 1973); R.O. Faulkner, "The Battle of Kadesh," *MDAIK* 16 (1958): 93-111; B. Ockinga, "On the Interpretation of the Kadesh Record," *CdÉ* 62 (1987): 38-48; A. Rainey, "Reflections on the Battle of Kadesh," *Ugarit-Forschungen* 5 (1973): 280-282; A.R. Schulman, "The Narn at the Battle of Kadesh," *JARCE* 1 (1962): 47-52 and "The Narn and the Battle of Kadesh Once Again," *JSSEA* 11.1 (1981): 7-19; A.J. Spalinger, "Egyptian-Hittite Relations at the Close of the Amarna Age and Some Notes on Hittite Military Strategy in North Syria," *BES* (1979): 55-89.

[95] A.R. Millard, "The Old Testament and History: Some Considerations," *FT* 110 (1983): 41.

Modern hindsight allows scholars to make claims on the veracity of a particular account, and there is certainly a place for this. Nonetheless, in discussing ancient sources of varying accuracy, value can *always* be found in what is learned about the culture itself. It is best to adopt the contextual approach advocated by W.W. Hallo, calling for a comparative/contrastive investigation of the contexts of Near Eastern texts regardless of the culture from whence they come.[96] Ancient material should be critically examined contextually (as well as lexicographically for texts) within its own culture and then compared to similar accounts from other cultures, if applicable.[97] Thus, Egyptian military accounts, both text and iconography, must be examined within their own context and frame of reference, including elements like ideology, kingship and legitimization.[98] The dilemma of historical veracity or reliability should be placed on the academic backburner,[99] for the time being, while focus is instead placed on a "close reading" of the material itself,[100] seeking to understand the Egyptian perspective on the events in question and how it fit within their worldview.

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[96] W. W. Hallo, "Biblical History in its Near Eastern Setting: The Contextual Approach," in *Scripture in Context: Essays on the Comparative Method* (Carl D. Evans, W.W. Hallo, and John B. White, Pittsburgh: 1980), 2.

[97] Employing this broader contextual approach is also important in understanding the treatment of enemy prisoners, as all ancient empires have much in common on this point (more in Chapter Five).

[98] Hasel, *Domination & Resistance*, 20; See also, Liverani, *Prestige and Interest* and "Memorandum on the Approach to Historiographic Texts," *Orientalia* 42 (1973): 178-194.

[99] K.L. Younger, *Ancient Conquest Accounts: A Study in Ancient Near East and Biblical History Writing* (Journal for the Study of the Old Testament, Supplement Series 98. Sheffield: JSOT, 1990), 56.

Liverani's insights into the Battle of Kadesh stem from this exact approach, placing due weight on both Egyptian and Hittite sources. His study gave new insights into questions that had long vexed Egyptologists.[101] While it is logical to assume that the degree of influence or shared traits varied from era to era, there is still much to be gained from this method, as both similarities and differences between the cultures and time periods can be discerned.[102] Specifically for this discussion, we must wrestle with the realities of stereotypical presentations of bound captives — rhetorical scenes and text — versus unique or individual depictions and textual references. The former is helpful in understanding the values of Egyptian society, while the latter is more informative concerning the fate of the captives.

History and Ideology: Context and Limitations in Egyptian Military Sources

As the example from the Battle of Kadesh illustrates, the Egyptian presentation of historical events differs from what modern historiography considers true history

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[100] R. Barthes, *La Plaisir du Texte* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1971), 49, after Hasel, *Domination and Resistance*, 20.

[101] See Liverani, *Prestige and Interest*, 120-126 for cross-cultural examples. Cf., Smith, *Wretched Kush*, 172-173.

[102] Younger, *Ancient Conquest Accounts*, 52-53.

writing,[103] but the Egyptians certainly possessed a well-defined appreciation for the past, in keeping with their cultural values, if not ours. As Younger puts it, "the Egyptians seemed to be aware of their long history and come to terms with it."[104] Redford notes, "…the Egyptians talked about and made use of the past in forms of writing and oral declaration much different from what we would classify as 'history …the events of the *immediate* past was the traditional way of

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[103] Numerous scholars have addressed the question of the Egyptian sense of the past and their history writing or lack thereof. Among the more influential works, see the following: Donald B. Redford, Redford, *Pharaonic King-Lists, Annals, and Day-Books* and "The Historiography of Ancient Egypt," in *Egyptology and the Social Sciences* (Kent R. Weeks, ed. Cairo: The American University Press, 1979); J. Van Seters, *In Search of History: Historiography in the Ancient Near Eastern World and the Origins of Biblical History* (New Haven: Yale University, 1983); John Baines, "Ancient Egyptian Concepts and Uses of the Past: 3rd to 2nd Millennium BC Evidence," in *Who Needs the Past? Indigenous values and archaeology*. Robert Layton, ed. London and New York: Routledge, 1989); J.M. Galán, *Victory and Border: Terminology Related to Egyptian Imperialism in the XVIIIth Dynasty* (Hildesheimer Ägyptologische Beiträge 40. Hildesheim: Gerstenberg, 1995); William J. Murnane, "The Kingship of the Nineteenth Dynasty: A Study in the Resilience of an Institution" in *Ancient Egyptian Kingship* (David O'Connor and David P. Silverman, eds., Leiden, 1995); Christopher J. Eyre, "Is Egyptian Historical Literature 'historical' or 'literary'?," in *Ancient Egyptian Literature: History and Forms* (Antonio Loprieno, ed. Leiden, New York, & Köln: Brill, 1996), 415-433.; Hasel, *Domination & Resistance*, 15-22.

Furthermore, ancient Near East historiography has been the subject of a plethora of studies since the 1950's, especially as it relates to Biblical studies, but Egypt has frequently been altogether dismissed as lacking any sense of historical perspective. Cf., B. Albrektson, *History and the Gods: An Essay on the Idea of Historical Events as Divine Manifestations in the Ancient Near* (Lund: Gleerup, 1967); George W. Coats, *Genesis with an Introduction to Narrative Literature* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1983); R.C. Dentan, *The Idea of History in the Ancient Near East* (New Haven: Yale University, 1955); H. Gese, "Geschichtliches Denken im Alten Orient und im Alten Testament," *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* 55 (1958): 127-145; J. Krecher and H.P. Müller, "Vergangenheitsinteresse in Mesopotamien und Israel," *Saeculum* 26 (1975): 13-44; N. Wyatt, "Some Observations on the Idea of History among the West Semitic Peoples," *Ugarit-Forschungen* 11 (1979): 825-832. See especially Younger, *Ancient Conquest Accounts*, 26-35.

[104] Younger, *Ancient Conquest Accounts*, 67. One of the ways the Egyptians, as well as other ancient societies dealt with the past was through the employment of a system of fabulously long ages and cycles of years based on astronomy, such as the rising of Sothis. For much more see, E.P. Uphill, "The Ancient Egyptian View of World History," in *'Never Had the Like Occurred': Egypt's View of Its Past* (John Tait, ed. London: Institute of Archaeology, University College London, 2003), 15-29.

demonstrating the thoroughly Egyptian tenet of the *continuum* of history.'"[105]

Within this continuum of history is the expectation that pharaoh dominates his

foreign foes (see above).

Though the Egyptians lacked distinct historical genres, this is not

tantamount to a disregard for the past.[106] For that matter, every object, text, or

iconographic scene that survives from the ancient past can be studied from a

purely historical perspective,[107] regardless of whether it is "historical narrative" or

fits tidily into a particular genre to which modern scholars are unnecessarily wed.

Following Eyre,[108] texts may be classified as historical,[109] political,[110] and

literary[111] with considerable overlap between categories. The simple truth is that

each piece of historical evidence was made or written with a specific purpose in

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[105] Donald B. Redford, *Pharaonic King-Lists, Annals, and Day-Books*, xv-xvi, emphasis original.

[106] Redford, *Pharaonic King-Lists, Annals, and Day-Books*, xvi-xvii. Redford rightly criticizes H. Frankfort's view that the Egyptians were essentially disinterested in historical detail. Cf., H. Frankfort, *Ancient Egyptian Religion* (New York, 1948,) 50.

[107] Alan R. Schulman, *Ceremonial Execution and Public Reward: Some Historical Scenes on New Kingdom Private Stelae* (Universitätsverlag Freibur Schweiz Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht Göttingen, 1988), 192-194. This is not to minimize other approaches—art historical, anthropological, etc.—which have been used frequently and with effectiveness on Egyptian sources.

[108] Eyre, "Is Egyptian Historical Literature 'historical' or 'literary'?," 415-433, especially 432-433.

[109] Eyre defines this as texts that either describe the past for those in the present or record the present for posterity (Ibid., 432).

[110] In simplest terms, this refers to texts that urge the present audience to act in a certain way or hold a specific attitude (Ibid., 432). While certainly serving the purposes of pharaoh, data of this type can still serve historical purposes. A text be both politically motivated and historical valuable or accurate.

[111] Texts are literary in so far as they can be appreciated as artistic forms by the audience (Ibid., 432).

mind — political, didactic, autobiographical, legal, economic, entertainment, fashion, etc.[112] These purposes frequently overlap and do not customarily fold neatly into the types of categories to which historians are often slavishly devoted.

As the reliefs themselves attest, this purpose in history writing for the ancient Egyptians was thoroughly linked to the concepts of kingship and royal ideology.[113] Correspondingly, the purpose of record keeping was usually to celebrate the deeds of the king, as was the case throughout the ancient Near East. Indeed, for the Egyptians, the king was the only acceptable subject of historiography.[114]

Demonstrating a mingling of the fantastic with the ordinary, battle iconography portrays the king in the company of the gods as he goes forth into battle.[115] To note but one of a myriad of examples, Thutmose IV rides in his chariot, while the god Montu protects and supports him, enabling him to shoot arrows at the enemy.[116] Additionally, New Kingdom military accounts frequently

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[112] Alan R. Schulman, "The Great Historical Inscription of Merneptah at Karnak: A Partial Reappraisal," *JARCE* XXIV (1987): 21-22.

[113] Michael G. Hasel, *Domination & Resistance*, 16. See also John Baines, "Kingship, Definition of Culture, and Legitimation" in *Ancient Egyptian Kingship* (David O'Connor and David P. Silverman, eds., Leiden, 1995), 3-47.

[114] Siegried Morenz, *Egyptian Religion* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, 1973), 11. See also, Van Seters, *In Search of History*, 129

[115] This is perfectly reasonable in that the reliefs are almost always displayed on temple walls.

[116] Howard Carter and Percy E. Newberry, *The Tomb of Thoutmosis IV* (Catalogue Général des Antiquités Egyptiennes Du Musée du Caire. Westminer: Archibald Constable Co., Ltd., 1904), 24-31. For a clear drawing of the scene see Susanna Constanze Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches: Eine Bildanalyse* (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2001), 236. Heinz's work has proved immeasurably valuable in cataloging the various battle-narrative scenes.

call the king the "Good God" (*nṯr-nfr*) as he proceeds into battle.[117] In a plethora

of examples, "ideology is strongly associated with the military campaign

records."[118] Thus, even in scenes purported to have happened in real space, the

presence of the divine or the mythic is typically evident. Quite simply, "the

recording of historical facts was only incidental to the purpose of royal

documents"[119] or monuments. This creates a complex situation where scholars

must wrestle with the dual realities of information potentially, but not always,

pertaining to the past, presented in sequential form on one hand and an obvious

focus on ideology, rhetoric and belief on the other. As Vernus indicated, one finds

a tension in royal texts from the New Kingdom stemming from a desire to present

the standard (eternally true ideology) with the contingent (actual events

happening in real time).[120]

Furthermore, when historical events are recorded in more than one source

(as is typical for military campaigns), frequent discrepancies in the details

emerge, such as the number of enemies slain, amount of booty captured, etc.

Inconsistencies like these can be incredibly frustrating when viewed from a

purely scientific, historical perspective, requiring convoluted hypotheses on the

part of scholars to harmonize the data. But when these dichotomies are

examined through the lens of "history as the celebration of kingship" and the

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[117] Hasel, *Domination & Resistance*, 17.

[118] Ibid., 17.

[119] Schulman, "The Great Historical Inscription of Merneptah," 22.

[120] Vernus, *Essai sur la conscience*, 161-162; see also Spalinger, *Icons of Power*, 99-105.

powers of individual kings, they are more easily understood.[121] Indeed, any

achievement of the king is apposite for royal mythologizing, none perhaps more

so than the capture, humiliation, and potential slaughter of foreign enemies.

Ideology, rhetoric, divine intervention or commission, and jingoism[122] are ever

present in the surviving record.

Attempts to understand the complex relationship between historiography,

ideology, and the ancient tendency to mythologize has often led to assumptions

that ideology is "false" or a "distortion of reality". Contra many assumptions,

history and ideology are not inevitably at odds with one another, and

"propaganda" need not mean deception. Kemp states, "Ideology requires a past,

a history."[123] There must exist a past against which the present can be measured

for a standard of ideals to emerge. For that matter, the appearance of religious

imagery should not necessarily disqualify ancient materials from being

considered potentially historical. Regarding monuments and reliefs, it must be

remembered that, "kingship is almost always associated with religious values."[124]

This is to be expected with so much material surviving from temples, and with

Egyptian society lacking the concept of "separation of church and state".

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[121] Schulman, "The Great Historical Inscription of Merneptah," 22-23. Thus, impossible total given for booty taken and the like are potentially symbolic or exaggerated in service to glorifying the deeds of the king as much as possible.

[122] Referring here to the Egyptians' view of cultural superiority over their neighbors. Depictions of hapless captives reinforce this mindset in aggressive fashion.

[123] Barry J. Kemp, *Ancient Egypt: Anatomy of a Civilization* (2nd edition. London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 61.

[124] John Baines, "Kingship, Definition of Culture, and Legitimation," 3.

The potential impact of this ubiquitous ideology and pharaonic rhetoric on history is an incredibly complicated issue about which scholars are unlikely to ever reach consensus.[125] But, if one takes Geertz's definition of ideology as being "a schematic image of social order,"[126] then the issue can at least be approached from a point of initial neutrality. Ideology in this loosest sense is not a distortion, though it contains bias; it is a cognizant manner of ordering and presenting events both real and imagined (or embellished) by a society that has developed various conventions and principles to which it typically adheres.

Beyond the presence of gods, confusion regarding the figurative language in texts is often the reason cited for suspicion,[127] but ideological texts contain linguistic and semantic features that are much more complex than initially appears and must be analyzed as well.[128] Additionally, royal ideology was adapted to face various political, historical, and cultural circumstances by various

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[125] For more on ideology and historiography see Younger, *Ancient Conquest Accounts*, 47-52 and Hasel, *Domination & Resistance*, 17-19.

[126] C. Geertz, "Ideology as a Cultural System" in *Ideology and Discontent* (D.L. Apter, eds. London: Free, 1964), 63.

[127] Geertz, "Ideology as a Cultural System," 57.

[128] Hasel, *Domination & Resistance*, 19. These texts will be discussed more thoroughly in Chapter Five.

kings; it did not, indeed it could not, develop entirely apart from historical reality.[129]

Despite ideology and mythic-religious imagery, Egyptian iconography and textual records should be understood as *potentially* pertaining to reality.[130] Understanding the general historical perspectives and the beliefs of Egyptian pharaohs is especially important when analyzing the development of the battle-narrative tradition and the depictions of bound foreigners so common therein, as well as depictions on purely rhetorical objects, to which we now turn.

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[129] Peter J. Brand, "Ideology and Politics of the Early Remesside Kings (13th Century BC): A Historical Approach" in *Prozesse des Wandels in historischen Spannungsfeldern Nordostafrikas/Westasiens: Akten zum 2* (Symposium des SFB 295, Mainz, 15.10.-17.10.2001 Walter Bisang, Thomas Bierschenk, Detlev Kreikenborn, and Ursula Verhoeven, eds, Würzburg, 2005), 24; Murnane, "The Kingship of the Nineteenth Dynasty," 185-188. Ideology, rooted in the past though it may be, was never allowed to be static. Its application must have remained dynamic, in order to address the unique challenges of each particular period of time.

[130] As will be discussed below, not every military scene is based in reality. The point here is that each scene or series of scenes must be studied on an individual basis, rather than dismissed due to perceived genre limitations.

CHAPTER TWO: BOUND FOREIGNERS IN RHETORICAL DEPICTIONS

Risk and Reward: Methodology and the Value of Rhetorical Depictions

As pertains to New Kingdom artifacts, bound captives occur on numerous objects best categorized as purely rhetorical in nature. Whether as part of the décor on a chariot, a footstool, or a piece of jewelry, the presence of foreigners on artifacts expresses the pharaoh's dominance over chaotic forces, just as with battle-narrative reliefs and texts. As such, they are not strictly historical and generally do not refer to specific military campaigns, as opposed to depictions in battle-narrative reliefs (see next chapter).

Because of the obvious ideology and propaganda inherent in rhetorical depictions, they are easily dismissed as banal and historically inadequate.[1] However deficient they may be in historical details, specific attention should still be given to these depictions as they provide a unique glimpse into the Egyptian mindset.[2] In this sense, they are representative of the types of actions the

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[1] On the use of ideology in Egyptian sources, see Jan Assmann, *The Mind of Egypt: History and Meaning in the Time of the Pharaohs* (Andrew Jenkins, trans., New York: Henry Hold and Company, 1996), 150ff and *Ma'at: Gerechtigkeit und Unsterblichkeit im Alten Ägypten* (München: Verlag C.H. Beck, 1990); Stuart Tyson Smith, "State and Empire in the Middle and New Kingdoms," in *Anthropology and Egyptology* (Judith Lustig, ed. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 66-89; Barry J. Kemp, *Ancient Egypt: Anatomy of a Civilization* (2nd Edition. London and New York: Routledge, 2006-2007), 60-69. Such ideologically laden sources remain useful for history writing, as is made clear in Alan R. Schulman, *Ceremonial Execution and Public Reward: Some Historical Scenes on New Kingdom Private Stelae* (Universitätsverlag Freiburg Schweiz Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht Göttingen, 1988). Cf. William Ward, "Review of Ceremonial Execution and Public Rewards," *JNES* 51 (1992): 152-155.

[2] Indeed, this problem is true of virtually every artistic source insofar as they were intended to present the ideal Egyptian worldview, not necessarily reality. See Gay Robins, "Problems in Interpreting Egyptian Art," in *Discussions in Egyptology* 17 (1990): 45.

Egyptians deemed appropriate to take against foreign captives, mainly brutally binding and humiliating them. The lack of historical specificity admittedly forces the discussion into the realm of potential action, as opposed to concrete or recorded action, yet these potential actions remain enlightening for cultural history, if less so for Egyptian military history.

These complications make it all the more important to be ever mindful of the context of each source: the location of the depiction on artifacts or architecture, its intended function, its intended audience and so on. The unfortunate truth is that interpreting Egyptian art is not entirely straightforward. There are no definitive methods for ferreting out the presence of myth, symbolism, or even verbal puns.[3] This is doubly so for scenes of a stereotypical and repetitious nature, like those of bound foreigners. In the absence of historical specifics, there is no clear method for determining the scope of the reality of the action depicted. This discussion is forced to proceed with the assumption that at least on occasion the Egyptians would have bound their enemies in a fashion similar to the depictions of bound captives on rhetorical objects.

As pertains to the Egyptian mindset, the discussion finds much firmer footing. The Egyptians made certain to divulge the importance they placed on this imagery in the elaborate and creative means by which they depicted bound foreigners on a diverse assortment of objects in various, sometimes altogether unique, settings. A rather straightforward distinction can be observed: those that

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[3] Robins, "Problems," 55. Robins concludes her useful study by admitting that perhaps more questions have been raised than answered but that asking the questions allows one to avoid overly simplistic, and therefore misleading, interpretations. Her accurate admission further highlights the ambiguity of the sources.

are wholly rhetorical and non-interactive, e.g., those that portray the king as a

sphinx mauling captives, and those that are interactive — for example, sandals

and footstools which convey the notion of the king trampling the enemies of

Egypt. Purely decorative imagery conveys the might of pharaoh as part of the

artistic *topos* of the subjugated foreigner,[4] usually on objects having a militaristic

theme — chariots, weapon cases, etc.[5] — or on objects like freestanding statues.

Interactive depictions incorporate the bound foreigner motif in context-sensitive

locations on the objects themselves, which are typically of a ceremonial nature,

or in architectural settings like doorjambs. Great creativity is displayed as the

pharaoh further humiliates the bound captive(s) when using the object(s), as is

the case with the ceremonial sandals from the tomb of Tutankhamun (more

below).[6] In this sense then, the use of the object creates potential action against

foreigners — trampling, constricting, strangling, etc. — depending on the object's

purpose. This is in stark contrast to purely decorative depictions where no further

action takes place.

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[4] For this artistic motif in general and for examples from earlier time periods, see Robert K. Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice* (Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilizations 54. The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 1993), 112-136.

[5] This was discussed in the preceding chapter. The term *topos* generally refers to the textual record, to which the iconography serves as an obvious compliment. See also, Antonio Loprieno, *Topos und Mimesis. Zum Ausländer in der ägyptischen Literatur* (Ägyptologische Abhandlungen, Weisbaden: Otto Harrosowitz, 1998, vol. 48); Stuart Tyson Smith, *Wretched Kush: Ethnic Identities and Boundaries in Egypt's Nubian Empire* (London: Routledge, 2003), 24.

[6] That the pharaoh is the user of such objects is a near certainty as the subjugation of foreigners was a royal prerogative shared ideologically with only the gods, making exception for the Amarna period where queens were also incorporated into this iconography.

What follows is an overview of the different types of artifacts containing this motif, emphasizing the position of the captives' bodies and joints, the method by which they were bound, the choice of artifact on which they are represented, and the item's overall function. Because rhetorical depictions contain fewer historical specifics, the material will be approached topically rather than chronologically. Several of the most detailed examples come from the tomb of Tutankhamun, making it an obvious starting point as it provides a large corpus of well preserved objects with unmistakable imagery. Other examples, such as the chariot of Thutmosis IV and various relevant tomb and temple reliefs, will be considered alongside related objects from the tomb. Purely decorative examples will be examined first, followed by interactive ones. Finally, it must be noted that the intention here is not to catalogue every New Kingdom object decorated with a bound foreigner but rather to provide a wide sampling of this motif, highlighting many of the more unique, creative, or best-preserved examples.

Egyptian Artistic Preferences and the Depiction of the Human Body

Before examining examples as extreme as bound captives, it is helpful to first understand the limitations of two-dimensional art in depicting the human body and the preferences of Egyptian artists in dealing with these limitations.[7] The

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[7] Representations of the human body in Egyptian art followed a set of general principles, creating highly stylized imagery. For detailed studies on the proportions of the human body and its various parts in Egyptian art see Erik Iversen, *Canon and Proportions in Egyptian Art* (Warminster, England: Aris and Phillips, Ltd., 1975), 27-59; For the New Kingdom and Amarna Period, see G. Robins, *Proportion and Style in Ancient Egyptian Art* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1994), 87-159; J.A.R. Legon, "The Cubit and the Egyptian Canon of Art," *Discussions in Egyptology* 35 (1996), 62-76. Lepsius was the first to recognize many of these principles; see R. Lepsius, *Denkmäler aus Ägypten und Äthiopien*, Textband I (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1897), 233-238.

simple fact is the majority of the human body is presented from a lateral view with a few notable exceptions.[8] The same holds true for foreign captives, though the Egyptians often show both the arms and hands of captives, because that is where the severity of the bindings is most often evident, and the ideology of the captives as helpless, defeated agents of chaos is most clear.

Limitations in two-dimensional Egyptian art are exceptionally impactful on the presentation of human torsos,[9] of crucial point when analyzing the postures of captives. Typically, the shoulders are viewed frontally, rather than laterally, creating a twisted torso effect. This is especially true of depictions of Egyptians themselves, as the torso turns toward the viewer while the head, face, and limbs remain in profile, as, for example, in the common image of the king firing arrows at his foes.

Concerning depictions of captives, this phenomenon shows considerable variance. In many cases, the entirety of the captive's body remains in profile, as on the footstools from the tomb of Tutankhamun (see below). Some captives are bound so ruthlessly that their upper torsos are contorted to allow the cruelty to be seen — see captive R-2 (figure 1; also discussed below) — giving clear emphasis to the restraints. In others, the captive is depicted laterally, but emphasis is placed on his arms and hands by showing them both, where a strictly lateral depiction would show only one arm — as in captive R-3 on the first state chariot from the tomb of Tutankhamun (below; figure 2). This emphasis is

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[8] For an exhaustive study on the human form in two-dimensional art, see Schäfer, *Principles of Egyptian Art*, 277-309; Gay Robins, *The Art of Ancient Egypt* (Revised Edition. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), 21-23.

[9] Schäfer, *Principles of Egyptian Art*, 280-289.

frequently achieved by showing one arm and a sliver of the other, creating

overlap.[10] Finally, certain elite captives were singled out for an even more unique

depiction — the "showing of the face".[11]

Figure 1: Captives from J.E. 61989 (Burton p0526; Copyright: Griffith Institute, University of Oxford)

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[10] This same phenomenon is visible in numerous examples of smiting scenes, where the pharaoh grasps the head or hair of several captives at once, with only one captive being entirely visible. To cite but a few of the legion of examples, see Emma Swan Hall, *The Pharaoh Smites his Enemies: A Comparative Study* (Müncher Ägyptologische Studien 44. München: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1986), figs. 45-46, 55-56; Epigraphic Survey, *Medinet Habu Volume II: Later Historical Records of Ramses III* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1932), pl. 76; Schäfer, *Principles of Egyptian Art*, 226, fig. 239. For a clear example of this on an ostracon now housed in Brüssels (Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire, no. 7359) see Luc Limme, "56. Ostrakon: Ramses III. schlägt Gefangene nieder" in *Pharao siegt immer: Krieg und Frieden im Alten Ägypten* (Susanne Petschel and Martin von Falck, eds. Bönen, Germany, Druck Verlag Kettler: 2004), 62, pl. 56. For the smiting scene motif in general, in addition to those listed above, see also Jaochim Sliwa, "Some Remarks Concerning Victorious Ruler Representations in Egyptian Art," *Forschungen und Berichte* 16 (1974): 97-117.

[11] For example, see Epigraphic Survey, *Medinet Habu II*, pls. 74 and 77. Examples of this depiction found on glazed tiles and faience inlays will be discussed below. That said, this type of binding is generally reserved for enemies captured directly during battle, possibly to highlight their social status, and will be covered more extensively in the next chapter, which considers depictions in battle reliefs.

For their part, hands and arms follow quite specific patterns in Egyptian art, usually hanging down on either side of the body when at rest. When the hands are in front of the torso, the thumbs face the torso. The inverse is also true; hands dangling behind the body have thumbs facing away from the body.[12] Because of their bindings, the hands of captives are always at rest (i.e., they are not mobile or independently articulated as when performing an action), while the position of their arms varies depending on the type and severity of the restraints. These general rules can be quite helpful when analyzing certain bindings, such as the Asiatic shown above (second captive from the right), where it is not entirely clear based on either the torso or the arms whether the arms are bound behind the back or in front of the torso. In this case, the thumbs face away from the torso, making it clear that the captive's arms are bound behind his back.[13]

However chaotic foreigners and their bindings may be, they typically adhere to the positional order preferred by the Egyptians. That is to say, images and individuals were "not placed haphazardly on the drawing surface, unless there was a deliberate evocation of chaos, but were ordered by a system of registers."[14] A deliberate evocation of chaos is intended in scenes showing the king firing arrows at his foes, such as on the painted box from the tomb of

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[12] Schäfer, *Principles of Egyptian Art*, 296-298.

[13] The captive's shoulders are visible from the dorsal (back) view, not the frontal (chest) view. Additionally, while certainly incredibly uncomfortable, this might simply be exaggerated due to the limitations of two-dimensional art. If so, this particular example portrays a captive with his arms bound tight behind his back and little can be said of the damage to muscles, joints, etc. There is, unfortunately, no clear method for distinguishing between the two possibilities. That said, regardless of artistic preferences or limitations, notions of humiliation and utter vulnerability are clearly intended.

[14] Robins, *The Art of Ancient Egypt*, 21.

Tutankhamun (see below) or in sprawling Ramesside battle reliefs, where the enemies of Egypt, subject to slaughter at the hands of the king, are depicted as a tangled heap.[15] In stark contrast, other depictions of subjugated foreigners are incorporated into the standard system of registers with the captives lined up in orderly rows, as with the depictions of foreigners on the first state chariot from the tomb of Tutankhamun (discussed below; Cairo J.E. 61989) and the presentation of captives before the king or gods in Ramesside reliefs.[16] In these latter examples, the chaos inherent in foreign captives is represented solely in the consequences of their bindings.

Objects from the Tomb of Tutankhamun and Related Objects

Purely Rhetorical Depictions: Decorative Examples

Among the plethora of artifacts found in the tomb of Tutankhamun were a number of objects containing depictions of bound or prone foreigners.[17] While the objects themselves have often received extensive study,[18] the bindings of foreigners on the surface decorations of such objects have not. To keep the

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[15] Walter Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altaegyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, Volume II (Genève and Paris: Slatkine Reprints, 1988 [reprint of Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1923-1936])**,** pls. 50, 66.

[16] Wreszinski, *Atlas*, II, pls. 34, 45.

[17] On the particulars of the discovery of the tomb see Howard Carter, *The Tomb of Tutankhamen* (London: Excalibur Books, 1972); and Howard Carter and A.C. Mace, *The Tomb of Tutankhamen Discovered by the Late Earl of Carnarvon and Howard Carter*, Volume I (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, Inc., 1963), 86-109.

[18] For example, see the following exhaustive studies on various objects from the tomb: M.A. Littauer and J.H. Crouell, *Chariots and Related Equipment from the Tomb of Tut'ankhamun* (Oxford: Griffith Institute, 1985); W. McLeod, *Self Bows and Other Archery Tackle from the Tomb of Tut'ankhamun* (Oxford: Griffith Institute, 1982); W. McLeod, *Composite Bows from the Tomb of Tut'ankhamun* (Oxford: Griffith Institute, 1970).

discussion as straightforward as possible, the rhetorical scenes will be divided

into two large categories: Decorative Examples and Interactive Objects. For

quick reference we may tabulate as follows:[19]

Decorative Examples:
    'First' State Chariot (Cairo J.E. 61989; Carter 120)
    Old Kingdom Statues (MMA 47.2 and MMA 64.260)
    'Second' State Chariot (Cairo J.E. 61990; Carter 122)
    Old Kingdom Statues (MMA 47.2 and MMA 64.260)
    Chariot of Thutmosis IV (Cairo J.E. 46097)
    Gold Plaque of King and Queen (Cairo J.E. 61987)
    Gold Plaque of the King in His Chariot (Cairo J.E. 87847)

King as Sphinx Mauling Captives:
    'First' State Chariot (Cairo J.E. 61989; Carter 120)
    End Panels of the Painted Box (Cairo J.E. 61467; Carter 21)
    Openwork Shield (Cairo J.E. 61577; Carter 379a)
    Bow Case (Cairo J.E. 61502; Carter 335)

Interactive Objects:
    Inlaid Footstool (Cairo J.E. 62045; Carter 378)
    Sandals with Enemy Figures (Cairo J.E. 62685; Carter 397)
    Alabaster Unguent Jar (Cairo J.E. 62119; Carter 211)
    Stick with Libyan Captive (Cairo J.E. 61737; Carter 100a)
    Stick with a Nubian Captive (Cairo J.E. 61733; Carter 48b)
    Stick with Two Captives (Cairo J.E. 61736; Carter 50uu)
    Yokes of 'First' State Chariot (Cairo J.E. 61989; Carter 120)
    Bow with Captives at the Ends (Cairo J.E. 61544; Carter 048i)

The tomb of Tutankhamun yielded a total of six chariots.[20] Four of them,

including the two most elaborately decorated state chariots, were found piled

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[19] Some objects contain scenes of more than one type. This discussion is organized based on the general type of scene; thus, some objects will be covered more than once, as reflected in the outline. The list above is organized in the order the objects will be covered here and is not a comprehensive list of all objects decorated with the bound foreigner motif.

[20] For details on the chariots' components, construction and so forth see Littauer and Crouwel, *Chariots*, 1-23. This is the most exhaustive study on each chariot found in the Tutankhamun's tomb. Shaw notes that despite their frequent depiction in reliefs and paintings, only eleven chariots have survived from ancient Egypt, though he erroneously

atop one another in the Antechamber.[21] For this discussion, Cairo J.E. 61698

(Carter 120) is accepted as the first state chariot, with Cairo J.E. 61990 (Carter

122) being the second chariot.[22]

Focusing then on depictions of bound captives,[23] the gilded decorations

on the interior of Cairo J.E. 61698 contain some of the most intricate and lifelike

depictions of bound captives found on any object from the New Kingdom. Gold

foil embossed with pictorial designs covers the entire surface of the body of the

chariot, with colored inlays adding to the splendor.[24] From top to bottom are the

king's names (repeated), the *sm3-t3wy* ('Unifier of the Two Lands') sign, ⚚, with

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states that four hail from the tomb of Tutankhamun (Ian Shaw, *Egyptian Warfare and Weapons* [Buckinghamshire, UK: Shire Publications, Ltd., 1991], 39-40).

[21] Howard Carter and A.C. Mace, *The Tomb of Tutankhamen: Discovered by the Late Earl of Carnarvon and Howard Carter*, Vol. II (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, Inc., 1963), 55; Nicholas Reeves, *The Complete Tutankhamun* (London: Thames & Hudson, Ltd., 1990), 170.

[22] Unfortunately, there is considerable confusion as to which chariot was designated by Carter as the 'first.' The debate concerns whether the chariot referred to as the 'first state' chariot is Carter 120 is or Carter 122. See Littauer and Crouwel, *Chariots*, 2; Reeves, *The Complete Tutankhamun*, 170; and T.G.H. James, *Tutankhamun: The Eternal Splendour of the Boy Pharaoh* (London/New York: Friedman/Fairfax Publishers, 2000), 274. For Littauer and Crouwel, as well as Reeves, Carter 122 is the first chariot, while Carter 120 is the second. James considers Carter 120 to be the first, which seems the most likely. Carter and Mace clearly refer to Carter 120 as the first chariot in their plates in vol.2 (Plates XVII-XXI; XXXVII-XXXVIII), but their descriptions on pages 55-62 are quite vague. Either way, using the Carter numbers, as opposed to terms like "first," is the best way to avoid unnecessary confusion.

[23] Note: the yoke terminals of the first state chariot will be discussed below in the interactive objects section.

[24] Reeves, *The Complete Tutankhamun*, 171.

kneeling captives to either side, and finally a frieze of foreign captives kneeling

before the triumphant form of Tutankhamun as a sphinx.[25]

Beginning with the middle panel, an Asiatic (Syro-Canaanite) is bound

about the neck with a papyrus plant, symbolic of Lower Egypt, to the left of the

smȝ-tȝwy sign (Figure 1). To the right, a Nubian is constrained in similar fashion,

in this case with the heraldic plant of Upper Egypt, the lotus.[26] Thus, taken as

whole, this middle panel figuratively represents that the entire known world (to

the Egyptians), from the northernmost to the southernmost extremity, has been

brought under Tutankhamun's control. The hairstyle, facial hair, clothing and

jewelry of the captives are all exquisitely rendered, completing the arresting

image and emphasizing that the two captives hail from two distant geographic

regions by contrasting these features.[27] This demonstrates the great care the

Egyptian artisans took when depicting captives,[28] another indication of the motif's

importance. The postures and bindings of the Asiatic and Nubian are

symmetrically complementary. Both are facing away from the *smȝ-tȝwy* sign,

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[25] See Littauer and Crouwel, *Chariots*, pls. XVI – XVIII; XX – XXI.

[26] Though these depictions are stereotyped, and thus not individual portraits, as O'Connor points out, "there is no such thing as a generic foreigner." Every depiction can be identified ethnically to at least some degree. In this sense then, the Egyptians did not depict generic foreigners but rather generic Nubians, Asiatics, Libyans, etc. See David O'Connor, "Egypt's View of "Others'" in *Never Had the Like Occurred: Egypt's View of Its Past* (John Tait, ed. London: Institute of Archaeology, University College London, 2003), 155.

[27] See Christiane Desroches-Noblecourt and Anwar Shoukry, *Tutankhamen: Life and Death of a Pharaoh* (New York Graphic Society, Ltd., 1963), 91 and 298 for more.

[28] These are not individual portraits, but stereotypical representations of each ethnicity. Egyptian preference was to highlight distinct facial features, hairstyle, dress, and so on, making the intended ethnic group clear.

symbolically out towards the foreign lands from whence they came. Each has

one leg bent at the knee, resting on the 'floor,' with the other leg also bent, but

with the knee upright. This is the standard pose for kneeling individuals, whether

Egyptians or foreigners.[29]

Only the outermost arms of each captive are visible. Their shoulders are

forced back, chest thrust forward, elbows bent to the degree that their respective

fists are parallel with their chests and pressed tight against their bodies. Clear

bindings are evident just above the elbow on each captive's arm. Here the detail

is difficult to observe, but it seems that the bindings on the arms would have

been attached to the opposite (not visible) arm, thus immobilizing the captives'

torso. Supposing for a moment that the Egyptians could have potentially

subjected prisoners to these types of bindings, this posture would have placed

strain on the anterior and lateral deltoids, leading to potential muscle tearing and

at the very least acute discomfort, especially if the pose was assumed for any

length of time. The rigid positioning of the shoulders and chest would perhaps

have caused the sternum and ribcage to smother the lungs and breathing cavity,

constricting breathing over time.[30] Finally, this depiction is one of the most

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[29] The ankle joints form an acute angle in both visible cases. This posture would perhaps place incredible pressure on both the ankles and toes of the captives, but as this is the typical method for depicting both kneeling captives and native Egyptians, it is likely that nothing particularly painful is intended.

[30] In fact, all of the depictions on this chariot have the potential to cause asphyxiation, if taken to the utmost severity, which is not necessarily the best interpretation. The depictions below are more likely to cause asphyxiation than the ones in the middle panel, though as is possible in any number of cases, the intended effect could merely be exaggeration.

common types and will heretofore be referred to as the "standard elbows-bent" binding.

This pose is highly reminiscent of that assumed by Old Kingdom statues, exemplified in objects MMA 47.2 and MMA 64.260 from the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.[31] Physical discomfort is indicated on both statues by the "pouchy modeling of the flesh on the chest and abdomen, where the skin is unnaturally stretched to the sides over the rib cage."[32] Much like the captives discussed above, their chest juts forward due to the severity of the restraints. The bindings wrap horizontally around their arms just above their elbows. Vertical lashings loop around the horizontal strands between their elbows, reinforcing the bindings. This also provides a clear three-dimensional example of how such poses were secured behind the captive, a characteristic not readily observable in two-dimensional reliefs. Taken together, these statues not only paint a vivid picture of the pharaoh's majesty and might,[33] but also reveal the captives' complete helplessness.

Functionally, such statues were displayed in long lines in numerous Old Kingdom mortuary temples,[34] and they were "…placed along the causeway and

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[31] Marsha Hill, "173. Kneeling Captive" and "174. Kneeling Captive," in *Egyptian Art in the Age of the Pyramids* (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1999), 440-441; Ambrose Lansing, "An Old Kingdom Captive," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, New Series, Vol. 5, No. 6 (Feb., 1947), 149-152. Slight differences in the poses are evident. The captives on the chariot are depicted as kneeling on one knee; the statues on two. On the statues, the captives' hands are placed along their legs, not their chests. This was mostly likely done to give the objects greater durability.

[32] Hill, "173. Kneeling Captive," 440.

[33] Lansing, "An Old Kingdom Captive," 152.

the *per-weru*…in all places where battle and triumph scenes were depicted."[35]

Such freestanding statues were most likely intended to serve as enduring

replicas of actual enemy chieftains.[36] Complementing the art, they serve as

concrete expressions of the subjugation of foreigners,[37] a motif intended to

provide "security, welfare, and glorification" to the dead.[38]

Turning now to the bottom row of the interior of the first state chariot, there

are two rows of six captives (Figure 1), culminating in each case with a scene of

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[34] The use of large, freestanding captive statues began with reign of Niuserre and continued down to the time of Pepi II. These large statues can be found in the following: Niuserre (Ludwig Borchardt, *Das Grabdenkmal des Königs Ne-user-Re* [Ausgrabungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft in Abusir, 1902-1904, vol.1. Leipzig, 1907], 42); Djedkare-Isesi (Ahmed Fakhry, *The Pyramids* [Chicago: 1961], 180-181); Unis (Audran Labrousse, Jean-Philippe Lauer, and Jean Leclant, *Le temple haut du complexe funéraire du roi Ounas* [Mission Archéologique de Saqqarah 2. Bibliothèque d'étude 73, Cairo: 1977], 131); Teti (Jean-Philippe Lauer and Jean Leclant, *Le temple haut du complexe funerary du roi Téti* [Mission Archéologie de Saqqarah I. Bibliothèque d'étude 51. Cairo: 1972], 84, 98-99); Pepi I (Jean-Philippe Lauer and Jean Leclant, "Découverte de statues de prisonniers au temple de la pyramide de Pepi I," *Rd'É* 21 [1969]: 55-62, John Lauer, "Les statues de prisoners du complex funéraire de Pepi Ier," *BIE* 51 [1969-1970]: 37-45 and pls. 1-3, and John Leclant, *Reserches dans la pyramide et au temple haut du Pharaon Pêpi Ier à Saqqarah* [Scholae Adriani De Buck Memoire Dicatae, vol. 6. Leiden: Neiderlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 1979], 8 and pls. 16-17); Pepi II (Gustave Jequier, *Fouilles à Saqqarah: Les approches du temple.* Vol 3 of *Le monument funéraire de Pepi II* [Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte. Cairo: 1940], 27-29). See also, Hill, "173. Kneeling Captive," 440-441, n. 3; Ritner, *The Mechanics*, 116, n. 555-556; and William C. Hayes, *The Scepter of Egypt: A Background for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities in The Metropolitan Museum of Art*, vol. 1 (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1953), 113-116.

[35] Dieter Arnold, "Royal Cult Complexes of the Old and Middle Kingdoms," in *Temples of Ancient Egypt* (Byron E. Shafer, ed. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997), 73 and 268, n. 128.

[36] Hayes, *The Scepter of Egypt*, vol. 1, 116.

[37] Bernard V. Bothmer, "On Realism in Egyptian Funerary Sculpture of the Old Kingdom," *Expedition* 24 (1982): 27-39; Ritner, *The Mechanics*, 116; Miroslav Verner, "Les statuettes de prisonniers en bois d'Abousir," *RdÉ* 36 (1985): 145-152.

[38] Hayes, *The Scepter of Egypt*, vol. 1, 115. While statues like these display the usual frontality of Egyptian three-dimensional representations which were usually involved in rituals, it is unclear if they were in fact used in such a fashion. For more on frontality in Egyptian art see Robins, *The Art of Ancient Egypt*, 19.

the king as a sphinx trampling foreigners (more below). A label is placed at both ends, which reads, "All lowland and all highland countries."[39] The lowest panel expresses the themes above; in this case representing the pharaoh's dominance of all lands by depicting bound captives in various humiliating and physically damaging positions as they are helplessly funneled into neat rows for the king-sphinx to maul — a much more brutal expression of the motif than simply depicting the captives as bound to the *smȝ-tȝwy* sign.

The captives are again bound by the stalks of the heraldic plants of Upper and Lower Egypt, which are attached to the next captive's neck. The positions of captives' legs and feet in this register are essentially identical to ones described above. However, the position of their arms varies considerably.

Beginning just right of center, there is a Nubian (captive R-1[40]) whose arms are above his head. His right arm is bent back towards the Asiatic to the left (captive L-1), while his left arm is brutally bent forward, resulting in his left hand settling in front of his face. The arms are bound together between the elbows and biceps, directly over his head. If the scene depicted the actual treatment of the prisoner, the position of his arms would likely have required a dislocating of his left shoulder, and his elbow would likely have suffered severe ligament damage. Doubtless, the depiction is one of severe pain, especially concerning his left arm. To make matters even worse, his head is pinned down by his arms at such an

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[39] Littauer and Crouwel, *Chariots*, 20-21. An alternative translation is, "All lands and all foreign countries."

[40] This designation is my own and is intended to make it easier to refer back to various captives. R stands for right side of center, L for left. The numbers count out from center, so R-6 is the captive closest to the king-sphinx.

angle as to cut off blood flow to the head, leading to a potential loss of consciousness, and placing considerable strain on his neck.

The Asiatic to his right (R-2; briefly discussed above) fared no better. His arms are pinned behind his back in manner that is disturbing to behold and physically impossible to duplicate without injury. His shoulders are forced back far enough to allow his elbows to meet at his spine. His arms are then bent back, making an X-shape, with his left and right hands aligning vertically with their respective shoulders. He is bound precisely at the elbow joints, which are bent back in severe fashion. Such a binding would have caused severe damage to the joints and muscles of the shoulders and chests (deltoids and pectorals, respectively), including dislocation of the shoulder, while cruelly injuring his elbows, perhaps shattering them. This type of binding is one of the most humiliating and brutal of all — an unfortunate fellow indeed — but also one of the most common (cf. Table 6, Chapter Four).

By comparison, the next captive, a Nubian (R-3), is as fortunate as any captive depicted on this particular chariot. Like several others, his arms are also bound behind his back but hang in a much more natural fashion, as favored in Egyptian art.[41] This common pose will be referred to as the "arms dangling behind the back" pose hereafter. The next three captives repeat the positions of

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[41] Hands were usually placed in this fashion when depicted dangling behind the back, as discussed above. See Schäfer, *Principles of Egyptian Art*, 297-298.

the previous three (Figure 2). Captive R-4 is in the same pose as captive R-1,[42]

and so on. The fifth and sixth captives are clearly a Nubian (R-5) and an Asiatic

(R-6), respectively. These six captives form a type of picturesque and macabre

visual poetry of humiliation.

Figure 2: Right side of J.E. 61989 (Burton p0528; Copyright: Griffith Institute,
University of Oxford)

Moving on to the six captives to the left of center, an Asiatic (L-1) is first

encountered (Figure 1). His pose is the standard elbows-bent binding, matching

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[42] In general, the features of this captive are considerably less pronounced than
the others. In fact, it is possible that he was simply squeezed in between R-3 and R-5. It
is difficult to tell if he has facial hair, but it does appear that he is wearing a cap and
feather. Due to the presence of one Libyan on the left row of captive, one might safely
speculate that a Libyan in intended here as well.

that of the captives bound to the smA-tAwy sign in the middle register. The arms of the second captive from the left (L-2) are pinned behind the head, bound just under the elbows on the forearms.[43] Again, considerable pressure would be placed on the shoulders. Captive L-3, a Libyan, is wearing an elaborate costume; his bindings are reminiscent of captives R-3 and R-6. As before, the fourth captive (L-4) mirrors the first captive (L-1), while captive L-5 is similar to captives R-2 and R-5. The final captive, L-6, mirrors L-3, again displaying a type of visual symmetry (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Left side of J.E. 61989 (Burton p0524; Copyright: Griffith Institute, University of Oxford)

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[43] For a detailed photograph of captives R-1, L-1, and L-2 see Desroches-Noblecourt and Shoukry, *Tutankhamen: Life and Death of a Pharaoh,* 91.

Out of twelve captives (not including those trampled by the king-sphinx) there are a total of four unique positions, with only one, L-2 (arms bound behind the head), not mirrored on any other captive. This pose, however, is simply a variant of the poses found on R-1, R-4, and L-5 (all of them bound with their arms above their heads). Overall, the iconography is clearly intended to represent a total subjugation and humiliation of foreigners, with these depictions serving as ideal representations of Pharaonic power and dominion over his enemies. Repetition in the poses reinforces this notion and calls attention to not only their rhetorical nature but also sheds light onto the sensibilities of Egyptian elites — namely that they placed great value in depicting their enemies in humiliating and torturous postures using stereotypical poses that varied from individual to individual for artistic balance and diversity. Additionally, one can safely say that of the twelve individual depictions, six of them are particularly brutal, though each pose would have been excruciatingly painful.

Chariot 120 was not the only chariot decorated with the bound foreigner motif. The exterior of the siding of Chariot 122 (Cairo J.E. 61990) contained an additional scene of captives bound to the *sm3-t3wy* sign.[44] Two Nubians and two Asiatics are bound together on either side of the sign. Contra the scenes in Chariot 120, the captives are standing. The torso and arms of the first Nubian are the same as R-2 above (X-shaped pose), while the second Nubian is similar to R-3 (arms dangling behind the back). The torso and arms of the first Asiatic are in the same position as L-1 (standard elbows-bent binding), but the second

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[44] Littauer and Crouwel, *Chariots*, 12, pls. IX and X.

Asiatic is depicted in a new fashion. His arms are bound above his head, but perhaps due to spatial limitations, his limbs are squashed up against the 'roof' of the scene in especially harsh fashion. This makes it very difficult to determine the extent to which his arms would have been damaged, though clearly his elbows would have been badly injured. Rather than the usual side profile, this captive's face is turned out, entirely facing the viewer.[45]

The interior of this chariot displayed a similar scene with a Nubian and an Asiatic standing to either side of the *sm3-t3wy* sign.[46] The Asiatic is in the same pose as L-1 above, while the Nubian is bound identically to R-3. With both scenes on this chariot, the binding of the captives represents all foreign lands, which is a standard rhetorical emphasis. However, in other cases, both captives bound in this fashion are Nubians. Three offering pedestals depicted in the tomb of Huy were all decorated with two standing Nubian captives bound to the *sm3-t3wy* sign.[47] The largest and most of elaborate pedestal contains additional

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[45] This type of depiction occurs in Ramesside battle narratives and appears to be a means of emphasizing the captive. Depictions of this type are of particular importance in scenes of capture and presentation after battle and will be discussed in the following chapter. For an analysis of related depictions from Medinet Habu, see David B. O'Connor, "The Sea Peoples and the Egyptian Sources," in *The Sea Peoples and Their World: A Reassessment* (E.D. Oren, ed., Philadelphia: University Museum, University of Pennsylvania), 85-101.

[46] Littauer and Crouwel, *Chariots*, 13, pls. IX and XI.

[47] N.G. Davies, *The Tomb of Huy: Viceroy of Nubia in the Reign of Tut'ankhamun* (London: William Clowes and Sons, Ltd., 1926), 22-23, pls. XXIV and XXVI.

captives.[48] At the top of the pedestal rests a golden tray or tabletop, the ends of which terminate in recumbent Nubian captives. In the center, the pyramid-shaped offering and basket pin down two additional Nubian captives. All four of these individuals are lying on their stomachs, arms bound behind their backs at the elbow.

Returning to chariot 122, in the space between the support railings there are carved figures of bound captives, and another *sm3-t3wy* sign (Figure 4). Only five captives on the right side survive but it appears that there was a slot for a sixth captive,[49] and there may also have been captives to the left, none of which survive.[50] If so, much like the lowest register inside Carter 120 there would have been a total of twelve captives. Here the arms of the captives alternate between the representations echoed above in the standard elbows-bent and the arms dangling behind the back poses, once more displaying a type of visual balance. The captives are standing on the tips of their toes with their knees placed forward in an awkward manner. This positioning of the legs would doubtless make walking very difficult, but it is just as likely that this was done to ensure that the

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[48] Davies, *The Tomb of Huy*, 22-23, pl. XXVI. All the captives are Nubians instead of the usual pairing of Nubians and Asiatics is due to the fact that the scenes on this wall are devoted to the homage of Nubian princes. See also, pl. XXVII-XXXII. More on these scenes will be discussed in the following chapter as the depictions of these Nubians are not as purely rhetorical as those on the pedestals and are akin to depictions from battle narratives.

[49] Littauer and Crouwel, *Chariots*, 10.

[50] This is fairly obvious because every other instance of the *sm3-t3wy* sign has captive both to the right and to the left.

feet of each captive reached the bottom rail. This is also how the legs and feet of

several captives on the footstool and sandals are depicted (more below).

Figure 4: Captives on the Railings of J.E. 61990 (Burton p0542; Copyright: Griffith Institute, University of Oxford)

The chariot of Thutmose IV was also decorated with bound foreigners (Cairo J.E. 46097).[51] The two largest scenes on the outside of the body of the chariot are battle scenes portraying the king in his chariot firing arrows at his Asiatic foes.[52] Between those scenes, however, is a central panel containing the

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[51] Howard Carter and Percy Newberry, *The Tomb of Thoutmôsis IV* (London: Duckworth, 2002 [reprint of Archibald Constable & Co., Ltd., 1904), 24-33; Martin Metzger, *Königsthron und Gottesthron*, vol. 2 (Alter Orient und Altes Testament 15. Kevelaer: Verlag Butzon & Bercker, 1985), pl. 40 (fig. 274d).

[52] Carter and Newberry, *The Tomb of Thoutmôsis IV*, 26-30, pls. IX-XI. For clear drawings of this chaotic scenes, see Elio Moschetti and Mario Tosi, *Thutmosi IV: Un sogno all'ombra della sfinge* (Torino, Italy: Ananke, 2004), 86-87, figs. 12 and 13.

name of the king placed above a *sm3-t3wy* sign. Bound to the sign are three

Asiatics, and a Nubian, two to each side.[53] As before, the captives are captured

about the neck and elbows by the emblematic plants of Upper and Lower Egypt.

The arms of three of the four prisoners are tied with standard elbows-bent

binding. The arms of the captive on the far right (an Asiatic) are bound high

behind his back. Each captive kneels with one leg far in front of this other as his

torso juts forward.[54]

It should come as no surprise that chariots were decorated in such

fashion. Seemingly from its moment of inception, the chariot became a prime

icon of royal status and prestige exhibitions.[55] They were literal and figurative

vehicles for displaying the pharaoh's victory over and continuing domination of

foreign enemies. Lightly constructed with an oval-shaped frame, Egyptian

chariots were intended to strike quickly using projectiles,[56] either bow and arrow

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[53] Carter and Newberry, *The Tomb of Thoutmôsis IV*, 25-27, figs.1-2, pl. IX.

[54] This pose will be examined more thoroughly when discussing the Carved Footstool, which contains a more exaggerated version of it. See below.

[55] Shaw points out the chariot became for New Kingdom pharaohs became as powerful a symbol of pharaonic domination as the mace was for Predynastic rulers (Shaw, *Egyptian Warfare*, 40-41). The chariot has been subject to a plethora of important works by Egyptologist. In addition to those previously cited regarding the chariots of Tutankhamen, see M.A. Littauer and J.H Crouwel, *Wheeled Vehicles and Ridden Animals in the Ancient Near East* (Leiden and Köln: E.J. Brill, 1979); three articles by Alan R. Schulman: "Egyptian Representations of Horsemen and Riding in the New Kingdom," *JNES* 16 (1957): 263-271; "The Egyptian Chariotry: A Re-Examination," *JARCE* 2 (1963): 75-98; and "Chariots, Chariotry, and the Hyksos," *JSSEA* 10 (1980): 105-153; James K. Hoffmeier, "The Chariot Scenes," in *The Akhenaton Temple Project*, Vol. 2: *Rwḏ-Mnw and Inscriptions* (Toronto, 1988), 35-45; S. Heinz, *Die Feldzugdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches* (Vienna, 2001); B.I. Sandor, "The Rise and Decline of the Tutankhamun-class Chariot," *Oxford Journal of Archaeology* 23 (2004): 153-175.

or javelins/spears, and were both durable and light, weighing an estimated thirty

kilograms.[57] Chariot teams were typically drawn from the upper class of society.

For example, one particular individual, identified in Papyrus Anastasi III, was

assigned to the chariot force precisely due to his family connections and was

expected to provide his own chariot.[58]

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[56] John Coleman Darnell and Colleen Manassa, *Tutankhamun's Armies: Battle and Conquest during Ancient Egypt's Late 18th Dynasty* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2007), 64; Bridget McDermott, *Warfare in Ancient Egypt* (Thrupp, United Kingdom: Sutton Publishing, 2004), 131. For details on chariot construction and comparisons to other chariots from other ancient societies, see Bela I. Sandor, "The Rise and Decline of the Tutankhamun-Class Chariot," 153-175. The tactical deployments of chariots seem to have been to protect the flanks and rear of infantry, to "mop up" after engagements, and of course to counter enemy chariot forces. For more see Alan R. Schulman, "The Egyptian Chariotry: A Re-Examination," 85-86. See also Wreszinski, *Atlas*, II, pl. 17, which shows the rear and flank of the Egyptian infantry protected by long lines of chariots as they march towards Kadesh.

[57] Darnell and Manassa, *Tutankhamun's Armies*, 78-79, note 167. A recent chariot reconstruction can be found in Susanne Petschel and Martin von Falck, eds. *Pharaoh siegt immer Krieg und Frieden im Alten Ägypten* (Freiburg: Universitätsverlag, 2002). Their weight made transportation to and from battle over varied terrain quite easy. Indeed, it appears at times that one to two men could carry a chariot, as depicted in the tomb of Kairy at Saqqara (J.E. Quibell, *Excavations at Saqqara. Vol. 4: The Monastery of Apa Jeremias* [Cairo: Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 1912], pl. 75); the tomb of Huy (N.G. Davies, *The Rock Tombs of el Amarna. Part III: The Tombs of Huya and Ahmes* [London: Gilbert and Rivington Ltd., 1905], pl. 14); Horemheb's Memphite tomb (Geoffrey Thorndike Martin, *The Memphite Tomb of Horemheb Commander-in-Chief of Tut'ankhamun I: The Reliefs, Inscriptions, and Commentary* [London: EES, 1989], pl. 32, scene 22); and a presentation scene from Medinet Habu (Epigraphic Survey, *Medinet Habu II: The Later Historical Records of Ramses III* [University of Chicago Press, 1932], pl. 75).

[58] Papyrus Anastasi III, verse 6, 3-4. Other examples show that charioteers were also landowners (Stela Berlin 14994). For a full translation of both texts, see Schulman, "The Egyptian Chariotry," 87, n. 72-80.

The chariot team consisted at the very least of a warrior and a shield-bearer.[59] Substantial expertise must have been necessary to effectively use weapons from inside a moving, jostling chariot, requiring diligent practice by professional soldiers.[60] The presence of such wealthy and skilled individuals and the chariot corps in general had a trickledown effect on society overall. Large numbers of specialists — breeders, grooms, trainers, stall workers, craftsmen, etc.[61] — were all necessary to form an effective fighting force. Indeed, these workers were much greater in number than the chariot warriors themselves. Considering the difficulties and resources required in constructing chariots, training both horses and warriors, and the obvious pride individuals took in being a chariot warrior, it is not surprising to find lavishly decorated ceremonial chariots. In fact, gold, silver, and even electrum chariots are mentioned in texts.[62]

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[59] Darnell and Manassa, *Tutankhamun's Armies*, 64; Anthony J. Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt* (Oxford, 2005), 176-177; Shaw, *Egyptian Warfare*, 39-40. For an extensive study on the terms from the individual members of chariot teams, both military and non-military personnel see forces see Schulman, "The Egyptian Chariotry," 87-92 and Table II. These warriors also carried a variety of weapons inside the chariot, such as axes and swords, in case fighting on the ground was required (McDermott, *Warfare in Ancient Egypt*, 130-131).

[60] Darnell and Manassa, *Tutankhamun's Armies*, 63.

[61] For more on the titles and Egyptian terms for many of the non-military personnel, or administration, involved with chariots see Schulman, "The Egyptian Chariotry," 92-95.

[62] For the full text, *Urk*. IV: 625-756; for the gold and silver chariots, 658ff (line 86); recently translated in James K. Hoffmeier, "The Annals of Thutmose III," in *CoS* 2, 7-13, gold and silver chariots on p. 11ff. See also, Donald B. Redford, *Pharaonic King-Lists, Annals, and Day-Books: A Contribution to the Study of the Egyptian Sense of History* (Missassauga: Benben Publications, 1986); Anthony J. Spaligner, *Aspects of the Military Documents of the Ancient Egyptians* (YNER 9. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1982) and "A Critical Analysis of the 'Annals' of Thutmose II," *JARCE* 14 (1977): 41-54.

The chariot's importance is also visible in religious texts during the New Kingdom, which describe the sun god traveling in a chariot.[63] Since Egyptian deities normally are said to travel in sacred barks, which are much slower than chariots,[64] the use of chariots in New Kingdom religious texts highlights how quickly they were adopted. From the moment they appeared, Egyptians recognized the importance of chariots and expressed this in mythic-religious contexts. Most emphatic is a text known as the "Poem on the King's Chariot,[65] which extols the virtues of the king's chariot.[66] Its weapons instill fear in the enemies of Egypt, but even the more mundane components — tail, wheels, etc — display Egyptian superiority.[67] Perhaps of greatest consequence, the very subject matter of this text is unique in Egyptian literature, namely an inanimate object,[68] once more stressing the significance of the chariot in Egyptian society and royal military ideology. Overall, chariots were fitting recipients of splendid

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[63] L. Kakosy, "Bark and Chariot," *Studia Aegyptiaca* 3 (1977): 57-65; Alan Schulman, "The So-Called Poem on the King's Chariot Revisited," *JSSEA* 16 (1986): 28-35, 39-44.

[64] Considering the great distance the sun god must cover, it is reasonable to replace his bark with faster-moving light chariots; Kakosy, "Bark and Chariot," 57.

[65] Schulman, "The So-Called Poem," 47. Schulman believes should be more accurately re-titled to "The Poem on the Chariot of Amun," strengthening the connection between chariots, royalty and divinity.

[66] The chariot was seen as so heroic that no less than the gods themselves oversaw the naming of its various components (Shaw, *Egyptian Warfare*, 41).

[67] For a full translation, grammatical and lexical analysis, see Schulman, "The So-Called Poem," 39-49.

[68] Schulman, "The So-Called Poem," 47.

decoration, and their militaristic context led quite naturally to the placement of images of bound foreigners on some of the most elaborate surviving examples.

Another category of objects containing purely rhetorical depictions of enemy prisoners is the openwork gold plaques or "buckles" from Tutankhamun's tomb.[69] One gold buckle of the king and queen depicts the king casually sitting on his throne, with his feet on a footstool (Cairo J.E. 61987).[70] Underneath the platform of the main scene are a prone Asiatic and prone Nubian. Perhaps this depiction harkens back to the presence of a footstool in this scene. Just as the king's feet tread upon prone captives (see below), the whole scene is placed over prone captives.[71]

Even more intriguing, as it continues the theme connecting dominance over foreigners to chariots and archery, is the Golden Plaque of the King in His Chariot (Cairo J.E. 87847), which is decorated with kneeling and standing

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[69] The purpose of such objects remains unclear. To modern minds, they appear to be buckles but it is probably safer to consider them to be decorative plaques. They could have been attached to various formal equipment or dress (James, *Tutankhamun*, 254). Other plaques were found in the tomb, including one showing a hunting scene (Cairo J.E. 61985) and one showing wild animals attacking a bull (Cairo J.E. 61983). See James, *Tutankhamun*, 256-257. See also A. Wilkinson, *Ancient Egyptian Jewelry* (London: 1971).

[70] James, *Tutankhamun*, 254.

[71] Carter makes a tantalizing comment concerning another prone captives scene: "Opposite the doorway, on the top of the material stacked against the west wall, was a rush-work garden-chair. The seat and back were covered and, and the sides of the under-framework trimmed, with painted papyrus. The painted decoration on back consisted of petals of the lotus-corolla, and on the seat the 'Nine Bows,' i.e. bound Asiatic and African prisoners in elaborate costume," *The Tomb of Tutankhamen*, Volume III (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, Inc., 1963), 114. Unfortunately no further reference is made to this object, and apparently it was never photographed.

captives.[72] In front of the king's chariot, two captives, one Nubian and one

Asiatic, are shown running ahead of the horses.[73] Rather than viewing this as

campaign of unprecedented range, it is simply another heraldic device

emphasizing the common theme that the king has united the entire land.[74] In the

space below the king is another variant of this motif with the captives kneeling;

here again is found the heraldic emblem symbolizing the union of the Two

Lands.[75] The captives' arms are bound with their hands dangling behind their

backs with nothing overly discomforting or unusual taking place. It is also

interesting to note that the placing of captives under the pharaoh finds

expression here as a space-filler.

A gold foil found in the Valley of the Kings enhances the connection

between bound captives and archery. Here the captives are not merely running

in front of the chariot but are bound to the post of an archery target while the

king, in this case Ay,[76] fires arrows from his chariot. The target is reminiscent of

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[72] Desroches and Shoukry, *Tutankhamen: Life and Death of a Pharaoh*, 98 and 299.

[73] James, *Tutankhamun*, 257.

[74] I.E.S. Edwards, *The Treasures of Tutankhamun* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1976), 107.

[75] James, *Tutankhamun*, 25. Desroches-Noblecourt and Shoukry point out that the plants in these correspond with deities protecting the king, rather than the prisoners. See *Tutankhamen: Life and Death of a Pharaoh*, 299.

[76] For a clear reconstruction of the cartouches, see George Daressy, "Catalogue of the Objects Found in an Unknown Tomb, Supposed to be That of Touatânkhamanou," in *The Tombs of Harmhabi and Touatânkhamanou* (Theodore M. Davies, ed. London: Gerald Duckwork & Co. Ltd., 2001 (reprint of 1912), 127. There is no doubt this is Ay. The nomen contains the name "Ay" and the title "god's father;" the prenomen being *kheper-kheperu-Re*.

the hieroglyph for *sti*, to draw or shoot arrows, ⚓ . Behind the king follow a fan-

bearer and a dog, indicating that this is essentially a hunting scene.[77] Above the

captives' heads, the target is filled with four arrows, as the king's shots always

strike true.

The hooves of the horses obscure the face of the captive on the left, but

the hairstyle reveals a Nubian. The foil is greatly damaged in places, and overall

the horses and foreigners are crowded together tightly. The head of the captive

to the right is entirely missing, but he must be Asiatic in keeping with the general

preference to place Nubians on the left and Asiatics on the right when only two

captives are depicted. This latter point is paralleled in another piece of foil from

the same provenance which shows two captives bound to the *sm3-t3wy* sign with

the Nubian to the left and the Asiatic to the right. [78] Two additional foreigners,

clearly a Nubian and an Asiatic, kneel directly under the horse in a state of

supplication. This is also paralleled on a piece of foil containing the cartouches of

Ay. Here, three foreigners, from left to right an Asiatic, a Nubian, and a Libyan,

pay homage to the names of the king.[79]

Returning to the piece of foil with the king firing arrows, the overall

symbolism is clear. Actions taken against the enemies of Egypt are no more

challenging than a hunt. Captured enemies are helplessly bound and

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[77] Daressy, "Catalogue of the Objects," 127. This is one of the earliest depictions of a hunting dog. Usually a lion accompanies the king in such scenes.

[78] For a drawing see, Daressy, "Catalogue of the Objects," 126, figure 2.

[79] Daressy, "Catalogue of the Objects," 129, figure 5.

embarrassed as arrows fly above their heads. With every shot perfectly placed, the only recourse for foreigners not yet captured by the powerful king is to grovel before him, begging for mercy.

The entire scene on this foil is something of a condensed version of a piece of gold found in the tomb of Tutankhamun.[80] Besides the king's names, the following differences are observable: there are six, not four arrows in the target; there are three, not two, bowing foreigners; the horses' hooves do not intrude into the face of the bound Nubian captive, meaning there is more space between the horses and captives; there is no animal following the king; and overall the piece is nearly perfectly preserved. Despite these differences, the general meaning is identical to the foil discussed above. Most significant is the fact that this foil is thought to be from the harness of a horse,[81] linking once more the *topos* of the bound foreigner to the king and his chariot. One must wonder if Ay's golden foil would have been used in a similar fashion.

The King as a Sphinx and/or Lion Iconography

Returning to the bottom panel of the interior of the first state chariot (figures 2 and 3),[82] each side displays the king as a sphinx trampling foreigners.

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[80] Objects like this are often found badly preserved, the gilding being all that survives of the original embossed or gilded leather object. Thus, determining their purpose can be rather difficult. Various fragments have been described as neck-straps, blinkers, decoration for quiver cases, etc. in additional to harness covers. See Littauer and Crouwel, *Chariots*, 87-88, pl. XLV: HH. For a color image, see: http://www.nationalgeographicstock.com/ngsimages/explore/explorecomp.jsf?xsys=SF&id=714611, accessed on 3.17.2012.

[81] Other foils from the tomb show similar themes (Littauer and Crouwel, *Chariots*, pls. XIV: CC, DD, FF; XLV: OO) or smiting scenes (Littauer and Crouwel, *Chariots*, pls. XLIII: AA, Y).

[82] See Littauer and Crouwel, *Chariots*, pls. XX and XXI.

While the details of each scene are difficult to make out, it is clear that king has

utterly mauled and even torn apart these captives. On the far left, the royal

sphinx mangles an Asiatic, his body twisted about, his arms bent awkwardly. Like

a predator shaking his pinioned prey, the royal sphinx grasps the face of Nubian

on the far right. As one paw bends the captive's head back by clawing his eye,

the other front paw pins the captive down.[83] A text describes the king as, "The

Radiant God, Lord of the Two Lands, Nb-$ḫprw$-Re, who gives life."[84] Taken as a

whole, the lower register of state chariot 120 depicts a series of helpless captives

awaiting their grisly fate as the king-sphinx mauls a captive on each side.

Similar scenes were found on one openwork ceremonial shield (Cairo J.E.

61577; Carter 379a),[85] a bow case (Cairo J.E. 61502; Carter 335),[86] on the ends

of the illustrious painted box (Cairo J.E. 61467; Carter 21=),[87] and on various

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[83] This brutality is clear in the detailed close-up picture in Desroches-Noblecourt and Shoukry, *Tutankhamen: Life and Death of a Pharaoh*, 91. There is no doubt that the leading paw of the king-sphinx is pulling the captives head back by grasping him near his eye.

[84] Littauer and Crouwel, *Chariots*, 20.

[85] See Andrea Maria Gnirs, "Prestigious Shield," in *Tutankhamun: The Golden Beyond*. *Tomb Treasures from the Valley of the Kings* (Andre Wiese and Andreas Brodbeck, eds., Art and Exhibition Hall of the Federal Republic of Germany, 4 November 2001 to 1 May 2005. Bonn: 2005), 326-329; Reeves, *The Complete Tutankhamen*, 177. James, *Tutankhamun*, 276-277.

[86] James, *Tutankhamun*, 279. For a photo of the case as it was found in the Treasury, see Reeves, *The Complete Tutankhamen*, 174.

[87] James, *Tutankhamun*, 286; Reeves, *The Complete Tutankhamen*, 189; for the painted box as Carter found it, see Howard Carter, *The Tomb of Tutankhamen* (New York, E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1954), 42; and for the contents of the box, 46-48.

gold appliqués.[88] In each case the captives are shown completely helpless, their

bodies in a variety of broken positions.

Both captives on the shield have black bodies, appearing to be Nubians,

but they wear Egyptian-style kilts.[89] The king-sphinx's pose is very formal, his

paws carefully placed on the faces and thighs of each captive. He wears the

nemes-headdress and the dual crown of Upper and Lower Egypt. The text to the

right reads, "The good god who tramples the foreign lands and smites the great

ones of all foreign lands, possessor of power like the son of Nut, valiant like

Monthu, visiting Thebes."[90] A similar shield found in the tomb of Huy depicts the

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[88] These are observable in the following photos: Littauer and Crouwel, *Chariots*, pls. XLIV: EE, KK; XLVII: NNN.

[89] James, *Tutankhamun*, 276; see also, See Kamal el Mallakh and Arnold C. Brackman, *The Gold of Tutankhamen* (New York: Newsweek Books, 1978), pl. 83. That the captives are in fact Nubians despite their dress is likely, as by New Kingdom times various elements of Nubian society reflected Egyptian influences. This is observable in their material culture, grave goods, tomb layouts, architecture, and the mixture of both Egyptian and Nubian ceramics. See Smith, *Wretched Kush*, 84-90; T. Säve-Söderbergh and L. Troy, *New Kingdom Pharaonic Sites* (Scandinavian Joint Expedition to Sudanese Nubia 5: 2-3. Uppsala, 1991). As early as the First Intermediate period, Nubians mercenaries were depicted on Egyptian funerary stelae in Egyptian dress but with Nubian physiognomy (Henry G. Fischer, "The Nubian Mercenaries of Gebelein during the First Intermediate Period," *Kush* 9 [1961]: 44-80; Smith, *Wretched Kush*, 22-23).
    It seems odd that potentially Egyptanized Nubians would be the objects of trampling or tribute scenes, but Egyptian views of their own superiority were ever celebrated. Thus, one Nubian prince, Heqanefer, is depicted in the tomb of Huy wearing his "barbaric" Nubian attire and groveling before the pharaoh, despite his family having been acculturated for several generations (Davies, *The Tomb of Huy*, pl. XXVII; Smith, *Wretched Kush*, 173, 176, fig. 7.2). However, in his own tomb, Heqanefer portrays himself as thoroughly Egyptian (W.K. Simpson, *Heka-Nefer and the Dynastic Material from Toshka and Arminna* [New Haven and Philadelphia: Peabody Museum and University Museum, University of Pennsylvania, 1963], pl. VII and VIII).
    It should be noted that apparent contradiction in the two depictions of Heqanefer could also be explained by the simple context of each. In his own tomb, Heqanefer used the standard Egyptian decoration, as he held fully Egyptian beliefs. In the context of the durbar presentation before Tutankhamun in the tomb of Huy, his clothing indicated his status as a high-ranking Nubian as part of the pageantry of the presentation scene (see Darnell and Manassa, *Tutankhamun's Armies*, 133-135 and 256, n.163 and 164).

king as a ram-headed sphinx trampling two Nubians.[91] The ram-headed sphinx is a clear reference to the deification of the king as Amun and is a particularly apposite heraldic device to employ against Nubians.[92]

The central scene of the bow case depicts the king hunting in his chariot. On either side of this scene are mirrored representations of the king-sphinx trampling a Nubian on the left and Asiatic on the right, as expected. Once again, the captives are immobilized under the king-sphinx's paws.[93]

Lavishly decorated, the painted box contains the three classical depictions of the valor of the king: battle, hunt, and king as a sphinx. The largest scenes on the two long sides show the king in a chariot firing arrows at his enemies: Asiatics on one side, Nubians on the other.[94] The lid contains two hunting

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[90] James, *Tutankhamun*, 276.

[91] Davies, *The Tomb of Huy*, p. 24.

[92] Darnell and Manassa, *Tutankhamun's Armies*, 128-129, fig. 20 and 256, n. 151.

[93] James uses "harass" for the action of the king against the captives (James, *Tutankhamun*, 279). This is a rather nice way of putting it. The captives are being trampled and mauled, a fate far worse than harassment. Though his work is perhaps the most useful book on the objects from the tomb of Tutankhamun, particularly for his large, colorful images, James' comment here misses the true intention of the decoration. This is symptomatic of a larger problem in Egyptology, where a large number of scholars use imprecise terminology in describing such acts to make the Egyptians or their art seem less violent. In more severe cases, evidence is ignored in favor of subjective feelings that the Egyptians would never do the things present in art or described in texts (more on this topic in Chapter Five).

[94] For detailed images of the battle scenes and glimpses of the lid and one side panel, see Desroches-Noblecourt and Shoukry, *Tutankhamen: Life and Death of a Pharaoh*, 80-81. For the just the battle versus Asiatics, see el Mallakh and Brackman, *The Gold of Tutankhamen*, pl. 80. Since these scenes are precursors to the chariot battle-narrative, more will be said concerning these scenes in the next chapter.

scenes,[95] while the ends of box portray the king as a sphinx in the typical fashion, trampling his enemies. Each side contains two scenes, each scene containing both an Asiatic and a Nubian. Thus, there are a total of eight enemies depicted. The king is both trampling and actively mauling them, as evident in his pulling back of their heads, apparently snapping their necks.[96] As before, these depictions show the king brutalizing his enemies, who are no more capable of self-defense than a lion's prey is.

The vulnerability of such enemies is perhaps most clearly evident on the left side of the inner panels of the body of Thutmose IV's chariot (Cairo 46097; also discussed above).[97] Each of the paws of the king-sphinx tramples a captive, in this case Asiatics. The rear paws are placed upon the same captive; one paw on the foot, the other on the captive's head, grinding his chin into the ground. The captive's back is severely arched, as is often the case; his arm is bent as he attempts to support his weight with his hand. The king's front paws grasp the heads of two enemies. The right paw pulls the captive's head back so that the chin rests on the shoulder. This is essentially another two-dimensional rendition of a predator snapping the neck of its prey. The king's left paw claws at a

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[95] See James, *Tutankhamun*, 293 for details. Both the battle and hunting scenes have recently been examined in Regina Schulz, "Remarks on the Composition of Hunting and Battle Scenes on the Chest of Tutankhamen," in *Proceedings of the First International Symposium: The Wall Paintings of Thera*, vol. I (Piraeus, 2000), 247-266.

[96] Alternatively, he could simply be striding upon their dead bodies, crushing their heads with his feet. See André Weise and Andreas Brodbeck *Tutankhamen, The Golden Beyond: Tomb Treasures from the Valley of Kings* (Basel: Bonn Art and Exhibition Hall and Antikenmuseum, 2004), 322. Regardless, the action is clearly one of decimation, and the king's supreme power is on display.

[97] Carter and Newberry, *The Tomb of Thoutmôsis IV*, 31-32, fig. 7, pl. XII.

captive's eye, pulling the head back. All too humanizing is this hopeless Asiatic's attempt to fend off or shy away from the king's attack as he places his hand under the paw, behind his head. The panel on the right side contains a similar scene with Nubians substituted for Asiatics,[98] retaining the familiar geographical symbolism.

Panels from under the armrest of the throne of Thutmose IV also contain this iconography.[99] One panel (MFA 03.1131) presents a particularly jarring example of the king-sphinx's front paw striking an Asiatic under the chin, snapping his head back violently. Indeed, this kneeling captive's entire torso is bent back, so strong is the force of the sphinx's blow.[100] The limbs of the other captives splay out from their bodies at various angles as the sphinx tramples them, just as in previous examples. The other panel presents in splendid detail the claws of the rear paws gouging into the feet of an unfortunate victim.[101] Such vivid examples not only enforce the importance of the motif itself to the ancient

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[98] Ibid., 31, fig. 8. A leather harness case or trapping from Thutmose IV's tomb contains a partial trampling scene (Cairo J.E. 46105). Only the torso and hindquarters of the king-sphinx and a vague outline of an enemy are visible, so little else can be said about the depiction and treatment of the captive on this object (Ibid., 35, fig. 24).

[99] Ibid., 20-22, pl. VI and VII; James Pritchard, *Ancient Near East Pictures Relating to the Old Testament* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1954), 138 and 295, pl. 393; Metzger, *Königsthron*, 64-65, pl. 32 (231a-c).

[100] For a large black-and-white copy of this photo clearly showing this particular captive, see Pritchard, *Ancient Near East Pictures*, 138, pl. 393. A full color example can be found at: http://www.mfa.org/collections/object/panel-from-arm-of-a-throne-130297, accessed on 9.27.12.

[101] G. Perrot and C. Chipiez, *Historie de l'art dans l'antiquité*, vol. III (Paris: 1885), 700, fig. 545; Metzger, *Königsthron*, 64-65, pl. 32 (fig. 232). William C. Hayes, *The Scepter of Egypt: A Background for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities in The Metropolitan Museum of Art*, vol. 2 (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1959), 150-153, fig. 84.

Egyptians but also exemplify the sheer brutality of much of the surviving artistic record.

Similar throne décor is depicted in various Theban tombs. Reliefs from the tomb of Amenemhat called Surer (TT 48; see n.102 for citations) parallel the scenes found on the side panels of Thutmosis IV's throne. In one scene, Amenhotep III sits upon his throne; the only visible side panel of which is decorated with a king-sphinx trampling foreigners motif.[102] Under the floor upon which the king's throne rests are six panels alternating between the so-called smiting scene and the king-sphinx motif.[103]

Amenhotep III is again portrayed on a throne with side paneling incorporating this theme in tombs of Anen (TT 120) and Khaemat (TT 57; see n. 105). In the former's tomb, the Nubian to the far right of the throne panel is subject to a particularly brutal mauling, as the king-sphinx places one front paw on the Nubian's left shoulder while the other front paw grabs the captive about the mouth or chin and pulls his head back.[104] Below the floor, the Nine Bows is represented, as nine individuals are bound together using the heraldic plants of Upper and Lower Egypt in the classic arms behind the back pose. As usual, they

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[102] T. Säve-Söderbergh, *Private Tombs at Thebes. Volume 1: Four Eighteenth Dynasty Tombs* (Oxford: Griffith Institute, 1957), 36-38, pls. XXX—XXXV; Metzger, *Königsthron*, vol. 2, 66-67, pl. 33 (fig. 234); PM I: 234 (3).

[103] Säve-Söderbergh notes that these six panels depicting the victorious king are "not found elsewhere in the contemporary tombs" (*Four Eighteenth Dynasty Tombs*, 37), though of course the victorious king motif is well-attested.

[104] N.G. Davies, "The Graphic Work of the Expedition," *BMMA*, part II (November, 1928-1929), figs. 1-3; W.S. Smith, *The Art and Architecture of Ancient Egypt* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1958), pl. 107b; Melinda K. Hartwig, *Tomb Painting and Identity in Acneint Thebes, 1419-1372 BCE* (Monumenta Egyptiaca X. Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2004), 236, fig. 35; Metzger, *Königsthron*, vol. 2, 66-67, pl. 33 (fig. 236); PM I: 234 (3).

are a mixture of Nubians, Asiatics, and Libyans. Finally, the king's feet rest on

footstool decorated with prostrate captives (more on this use of the motif below).

The aforementioned king-sphinx scene in the tomb of Khaemat contains

nothing unusual, but the depictions under the throne are notable. Squeezed in

between the back and front legs of the throne, a Nubian (to the left) and an

Asiatic (on the right) are bound standing to the *smꜣ-tꜣwy* sign,[105] conveying the

standard ideology of unity. This emphasizes the utility in the bound foreigner

motif as a preferred space-filler. This phenomenon is also observable on the

north wall of the second court at Medinet Habu, as Ramesses III departs his

palace to join the Feast of Min.[106] Bound foreigners are depicted in miniature on

each side of the frame of the king's palanquin, a Nubian and an Asiatic,

respectively. The pole used to carry the king's palanquin rests upon their heads.

Each captive is standing with his arms bound behind his back in standard

fashion. It is remarkable that in a scene with so many participants and features—

the king, deities, Egyptian workers, lions, etc.—the Egyptians managed to find

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[105] Wreszinski, *Atlas,* II, pl. 88b and 203; Metzer, *Königsthron*, 68-69, pl. 34 (fig. 237 and 238). Similar iconography is used in the tomb of Heqaerneheh (TT 64); see Ali Radwan, *Die Darstellungen des regierenden Königs und seiner Familienangehörigen in den Privatgräbern der 18. Dynastie* (Müncher Ägyptologische Studien 21. Berlin: Bruno Hessling, 1969), pls. XI and XII. An similar example containing a total of four captives comes from the time of Ramesses III (see, Perrot and C. Chipiez, *Historie de l'art dans l'antiquité*, vol. III, 410, pl. 212; Metzger, *Königsthron*, vol. 2, pl. 39 (fig. 271a).

[106] Epigraphic Survey, *Medinet Habu Volume IV: Festival Scenes of Ramses III* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1940), pl. 197; Metzer, *Königsthron*, pl. 39 (fig. 271).

room for the placement of bound foreigners, again underscoring the motif's importance.[107]

Not only were throne rooms depicted in reliefs on tomb walls decorated with the king as a sphinx and lion iconography, but *actual* throne rooms from excavated palaces contained statues of lions mauling kneeling prisoners.[108] Two nearly identical statues from the throne room of Ramesses II's palace at Qantir each depict a lion in the act of biting the back of the heads of an Asiatic and a Nubian (MMA 35.1.23 and 35.1.24). What little remains of the bindings evidences the standard elbows-bent pose. The lions' hind paws constrict the knees of the captives, while their front paws grasp the kneeling captives by the shoulders, thoroughly capturing their prey. Unfortunately the heads of the captives and jaws of the lions have broken off, but the lions' intended action is obvious. A parallel statue from the Egyptian Museum in Cairo (Cairo J.E. 64303) preserves both the head of the captive and the jaws of the lion, making the biting action of the lion clear.[109] Another statue of Ramesses II's from Mit Rahina (Cairo J.E. 37647)

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[107] The same can be said of the use of the king-sphinx trampling foreigners motif as decoration on scared boats/barks in tomb reliefs. For example, see Davies, *The Tomb of Huy*, 15-18, pls. XI and XII.

[108] William C. Hayes, *Glazed Tiles from a Palace of Ramesses II at Kantir* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1937), 19-21, pl. V. Other statues were found there in fragmentary form, often of a smaller size (MMA 35.1.25—35.1.27). These smaller statues would also have been suitable ornamentation for throne rooms, in this case not as freestanding statues but as stairway abutments. See Hayes, *Glazed Tiles*, 20. See also, Gerhard Rühlmann, "Der Löwe im altägyptischen Triumphalbild," *Wissenshaftliche Zeitschrift der Martin-Luther Universität Halle-Wittenberg* 13 (1964): 651-658, pl. 2.

[109] Mahmud Hamza, "Excavations of the Department of Antiquities at Qantîr (Faqûs District) (Season May 21st—July 7th, 1928)," *ASAE* 30 (1930): 46, pl. 1. A related statue was found at Abydos, Hamza, "Excavations," 47, fig. 5. Finally, fragments of a

shows a lion devouring an Asiatic.[110] The lion in this example (and perhaps the

examples from Merneptah's reign) should be interpreted not as a symbolic

representation of the king but as the king's real-life pet lion, which is depicted in

numerous scenes.[111] Most intriguing to this study are two representations of a

lion in smiting scenes at Derr. In one, a text above the lion reads, *Ꜣiw smš Ḥm.f*

smꜣw [////]: "The lion, follower of His Majesty, slayer of [his enemies]".[112] The

second depiction from Derr gives visual evidence to this text, as the lion bites an

Asiatic in the leg while the king prepares to execute his captives.[113]

Subsequent Ramesside kings continued the theme. Ramesses IV is

shown on an ostracon in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo (Cairo J.E. 25124) riding

in his chariot and grasping an Asiatic and Nubian by the hair. In front of the

pharaoh, a lion devours an Asiatic as they run alongside the horses.[114] On

another, Ramesses IV rides in his chariot, spear in hand, while under the horses,

an Asiatic, hands bound behind his back, is being savaged by a lion (Cairo J.E.

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statue similar to the ones found at Qantîr but retaining the statue's base are present at
the Egyptian Museum in Cairo (Cairo J.E. 64312).

[110] Hamza, "Excavations," 48, fig. 6.

[111] The lion stands beside the king's tent in the Ramesseum (Lepsius, *Denkmäler aus Ägypten und Äthiopie, Volume III: Theban* [Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1900] 154-155). At Abu Simbel, he marches with the king (Jean-François Champollion, *Monuments de l'Égypte et de la Nubie* [Paris: Didot, 1835-1845], pl. 15. He flanks Ramesses II's throne at Beit el Wali (Ibid., pl. 61). See also Hamza, "Excavations," 48-51 and Hayes, *Glazed Tiles*, 20-21. Hayes also discussed Twelfth Dynasty wooden statues, which are comparable to those discussed above.

[112] Lepsius, *Denkmäler. III*, 183b; Hamza, "Excavations," 48, fig. 6.

[113] Lepsius, *Denkmäler. III*, 184a; Hamza, "Excavations," 48, fig. 7.

[114] CGC, 25124, pl. XXIV; Hamza, "Excavations," 48-50, fig. 9. This is comparable to the gold foils discussed above, though lacking the archery elements.

25123).[115] It is significant that in each case the captive being attacked by a lion is an Asiatic, as they were the most formidable enemies by Ramesside times.[116]

The bound foreigner motif is conjoined with lion iconography on the linchpins of Ramesses III's chariot from the western wall at Medinet Habu, where a lion bites the head of an Asiatic.[117] In addition, his beard is also caught in the spokes of the wheel, adding to his suffering.[118] As Ritner puts it, "…the pin prefigures the fate of the royal enemy."[119]

Bound captives also appear by themselves as linchpin decoration in Ramesside reliefs. The earliest such example comes from the reliefs of Seti I at Karnak. The bottom register of the eastern half of the north wall portrays the king in his chariot returning home with defeated Shasu. Enemy heads adorn both the linchpin and one of the spokes on the near chariot wheel.[120] Enemy heads also

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[115] CGC, 25123, pl. XXIII; Hamza, "Excavations," 50.

[116] Hamza, "Excavations," 51.

[117] Harold H. Nelson, *Medinet Habu, Volume 1: Earlier Historical Records of Ramesses III* (OIP VIII. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1930), pl. 17; Ritner, *The Mechanics*, 122-125, 130, fig. 10a; Richard S. Ellis, "A Note on Some Ancient Near Eastern Linch Pins," *Berytus* 16 (1966): 41-48. Ritner erroneously ascribes this scene to Ramesses II (Ritner, *The Mechanics*, 122).

[118] Ellis rather inexplicably says the captive and lion look like "teddy-bears," and he fails to note what the décor actually represents (Ellis, "Linch Pins," 43, fig. 4).

[119] Ritner, *The Mechanics*, 125.

[120] The Epigraphic Survey, *Reliefs and Inscriptions at Karnak, Volume IV: The Battle Reliefs of King Sety I* (OIP 107. Chicago: The Oriental Institute, 1986), pls. 2 and 6. The larger heads decorating the chariot the cab in this depiction and in the aftermatch of the batter against Libyans are most likely the heads of slain enemy leaders (more on this in Ch. 3) See also, James K. Hoffmeier, "David's Triumph Over Goliath: 1 Samuel 17:54 and Ancient Near Eastern Analogues," in *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel: History, Imperialism, Ideology and Literature* (S. Bar, D. Kahn and JJ Shirley, eds. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2011), 104-105.

decorate the linchpins of the chariots in Seti's renditions of his campaigns against Libyans,[121] the city-state of Kadesh,[122] and the Hittites.[123]

Never one to be outdone, Ramesses II also used this motif on chariot linchpins. From his account of the battle of Kadesh on the 2nd Pylon of the Ramesseum, is a linchpin decorated with a human head and what Wreszinski and Ellis (following Wreszinski's drawing) consider to be a horned sun disk, "so that the head evidently represented a goddess."[124] Based on the ubiquity of depictions of enemy heads on linchpins, it is more likely that this is in fact symbolizing an enemy chieftain or leader of some sort, hence the confusion

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[121] Epigraphic Survey, *Reliefs and Inscriptions at Karnak, Volume IV*, pls. 9, 10, 27, 28, and 31. This last example shows an additional fourth head; two of them are along the spokes of the wheel, one on the outer rim of the wheel and one on outer rail of the body of the chariot. See also, Ellis, "Linch Pins," 42.

[122] Epigraphic Survey, *Reliefs and Inscriptions at Karnak, Volume IV*, pl. 23.

[123] Ibid., pl. 33 and 35. Interestingly, not all the depictions of the chariot wheels from this campaign have decorated linchpins. Neither the linchpins on the chariot on the right in pl. 33 nor the one in pl. 34 are decorated. These scenes are direct battle scene. It appears that the linchpins are shows as decorated with enemy heads only in scenes after battle, as is the case on the linchpins on the chariot on the left in pl. 33 and on pl. 35.

[124] Ellis, "Linch Pins," 42-43, fig. 1; Wreszinski, *Atlas*, vol. II, pl. 103.

regarding the headdress.[125] Additionally, if one assumes linchpins were installed

by hammering them into the axle of the chariot, then the depiction of deity is

wholly out of place. Conversely, the head of captive would be perfectly suited as

the object of such an action. In other examples from the same location, a linchpin

is quite clearly decorated with the head and torso of a captive bound in the

standard elbows-bent pose.[126] Other examples from Ramesses II's reign can be

found at Abydos,[127] Luxor,[128] and Karnak.[129]

Linchpin- or dagger-like objects were found in the tomb of Tutankhamun in

close proximity to the chariots and chariot equipment (found in the Antechamber

and Treasury; figure 5). Two types of decoration were evident: one grouping

depicted bound, kneeling Nubians, the other a simple knob.[130] Littauer and

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[125] Ellis admits that the presence of goddess on a linchpin does not "indicate a very consistent attitude towards the proper decoration of linch pins" ("Linch Pins, 43). Ritner disagrees claiming that such a depiction ensures the safety of the chariot and driver (Robert K. Ritner, "Unrecognized Linch Pins from the Tombs of Tutankhamen and Amenhotep II," *GM* 94 [1986]: 53-56; 56, note number 16. This is a reasonable view to take if in fact a goddess is intended, which would be somewhat unique compared to the many depictions of bound foreigners on linchpins. What is less reasonable is Ritner's comment that there is nothing particularly undignified about the function of a linchpin. If striking or hammering is involved in the installation a linchpin then it is a wholly inappropriate place for a depiction of a deity, to say nothing of the unheard of aspects of placing of a deity below the king in a place where the goddess would be subjected to a great deal of flying dust and dirt. Regardless, when one considers the Egyptian preference to depict bound and humiliated captives on linchpins, it becomes a less dignified context for depicting deities. Indeed, in certain of the examples discussed above the captives were either mauled by a lion head or trapped and ground by the axle of the wheel.

[126] Wreszinski, *Atlas*, II, pl. 107; Ellis, "Linch Pins," 42-43, fig. 2.

[127] Wreszinski, *Atlas*, vol. II, pls. 24, 25, and 25b.

[128] Ibid., pls. 77, 83-84 and 86.

[129] Ibid., pls. 95.

[130] Ritner, "Unrecognized Linch Pins," 53.

Crouwel designated these object as daggers.[131] Ritner disagrees, claiming that

they are linchpins due to their similarity to the depictions from Ramesside reliefs

discussed above and their close proximity in the tomb to the chariots.[132] While

Ritner's theory is more compelling than Littauer and Crouwel's, there are still

problems with it. Though some of the chariots from the tomb of Tutankhamun are

saturated with bound foreigner iconography (discussed above regarding the body

of the chariots and discussed below concerning the yokes),[133] the objects in

question are thin and tapered, while the holes for linchpins on the chariots are

rectangular.[134] The comments of Darnell and Manassa are also intriguing; they

hypothesize that these objects were hoofpicks.[135] This theory accounts for the

shape of the objects, the fact that the objects do not fit with any chariot, and the

close proximity in the tomb itself of the objects to the chariots. If this is the case,

the bound foreigner iconography is then akin to the walking stick found in the

tomb (see below). The user of the picks would symbolically constrict the captives

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[131] Littauer and Crouwel, *Chariots*, 49-50, 63, and 90, pls. 50 and 60.

[132] Ritner, "Unrecognized Linch Pins," 53; cf. the rejoinder in M.A. Littauer and J.H. Crouwel, "'Unrecognized Linch Pins from the Tombs of Tutankhamen and Amenhotep II': A Reply," *GM* 100 (1987): 57-61. Overall, Littauer and Crouwel's argument is too reliant on questions of practicality, as Ritner points out, which seems hardly relevant when discussing the extravagances of *gilded* ceremonial state chariots. Concerning such chariots, it is safe to say that practicality was not the foremost consideration for the Egyptians. Additionally, one must question the large degree of curvature in the shape of these objects, which is not the typical shape for Egyptian daggers.

[133] This designation was first assigned in Ritner, "Unrecognized Linch Pins," 54.

[134] Littauer and Crowel, "A Reply," 57. Though to this author the dagger argument is unconvincing, the fact that the objects in question do not fit any surviving chariot despite being found in close proximity to them is significant.

[135] Darnell and Manassa, *Tutankhamun's Armies*, 79, 242, number 177.

with his hand. This theory is not without problems, however. If the objects are hoofpicks, they would either represent an otherwise entirely unknown phenomenon in Egyptian art, namely a non-royal person interacting with the bound foreigner motif (making exception for priests involved in execration rites), or one is forced to believe that the king cleans the hoofs of his own horse. That said, it seems to this author that Darnell and Manassa's theory is more likely than Littauer and Crouwel's or Ritner's.
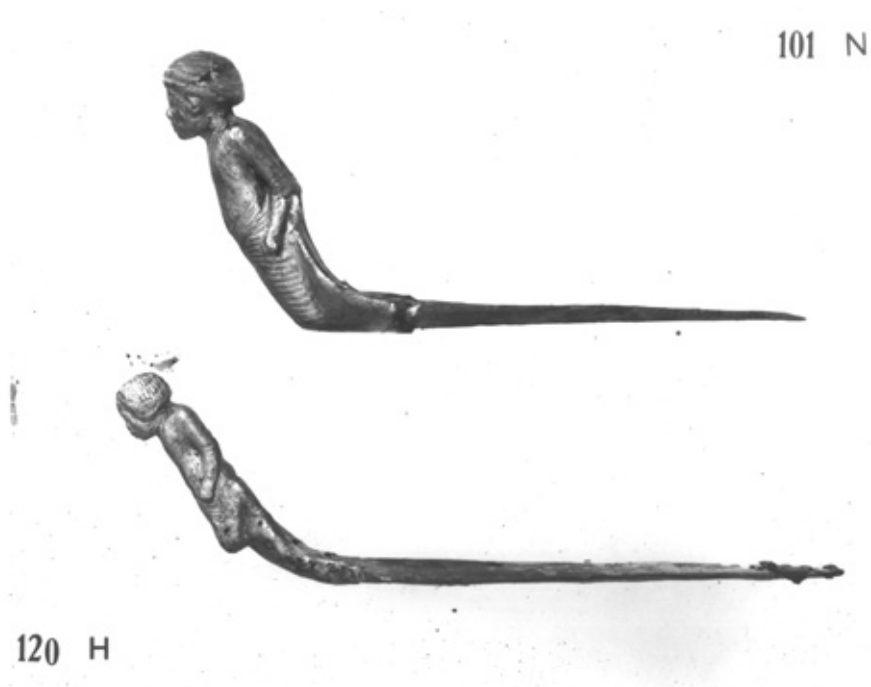
Figure 5: Linch Pins from J.E. 61989 (Burton p0534; Copyright: Griffith Institute, University of Oxford)

Interactive Objects

Captives under the Feet of Pharaoh: Footstools, Sandals, Etc.

Particularly intriguing, this category of objects deals with images of captives that the king symbolically interacts with. That is to say, by using the

object, the user (in all likelihood, the king) also performs a symbolic act of violence against the captive depicted on the object. Numerous examples of interactive depictions involve the feet of pharaoh, as the king symbolically treads upon his foes.

The Carved Footstool, which accompanies of the Cedarwood Chair, depicts eight total captives and ten bows in two registers on its primary surface.[136] This somewhat unusual total manages to imprecisely convey the notion of the Nine Bows by representing all the ethnic groups used to embody the enemies of Egypt — Asiatics, Libyans, and Nubians.[137] Spatial symmetry is no doubt the reason for both the absence of a ninth captive and the presence of a tenth, additional bow. The geography of the captives' homelands is reflected in the placement of the Asiatics and Libyan on the upper register (i.e., "North") and Nubians in the lower one (i.e., "South").

Each captive's arms are bound behind the back with their hands alternating between closed fists and open palms with thumbs facing away from their backs. Most interesting is the simple question: are the captives lying on their sides, their stomachs, or even standing up? It is apparent that the captives are to be understood as lying on their stomachs. The position of their feet, being pointed, indicates that it is unlikely they are standing. Furthermore, the position of their heads, with chins thrust forward, is a clear sign that they are lying on their

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[136] See el Mallakh and Brackman, *The Gold of Tutankhamen*, 302 and 317, pls. 82, 122; Desroches-Noblecourt and Shoukry, *Tutankhamen: Life and Death of a Pharaoh*, 51; and Metzger, *Königsthron*, vol. 2, pl. 40 (fig. 274).

[137] Desroches-Noblecourt and Shoukry, *Tutankhamen: Life and Death of a Pharaoh*, 51 and 296.

stomachs, just as with depictions on certain statue bases (more below). Had they been lying on their sides, their chins would either be tucked or there would be bindings forcing their chins forward. No such bindings are depicted; rather they are looking forward from an uncomfortable prone position on their stomachs with their chins on the (imaginary) ground. Adding to their disgrace is the fact that the king was meant to trample them whenever he used the footstool,[138] grinding the captives into dust.

The decoration on one of the longer supporting sides contains the *smꜣ-tꜣwy* sign and bound captives — two Asiatics to the left, two Nubians to the right.[139] As with the scene from the first state chariot, the captives are bound at the neck and arms using the corresponding plants of the Upper and Lower Egypt, as seen in numerous objects. The arms of the foreigners are bound behind their backs in typical fashion. Unique among the artifacts found in Tutankhamun's tomb is the depiction of the prisoners' legs. Here, each captive has one knee thrust forward with the opposite leg extending back to an uncomfortable degree.[140] In fact, this is very similar to the 'sprinter's stretch,' used by athletes to

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[138] Desroches-Noblecourt and Shoukry, *Tutankhamen: Life and Death of a Pharaoh*, 296.

[139] See Desroches-Noblecourt and Shoukry, *Tutankhamen: Life and Death of a Pharaoh*, 51 (picture) and 296 (description). Another footstool from the tomb is paired with the exquisite gilded throne. While a beautiful example, neither the depictions of the captives nor the overall ideology are different than that of the Carved Footstool; thus, no further comment is required. For more, see el Mallakh and Brackman, *The Gold of Tutankhamen*, 318, pl. 123.

[140] Depictions of this type are common in smiting scenes. For examples, see Martin von Flack, "60. Skarabäus mit Erschlagungsszene," in *Pharao siegt immer*, 65, pl. 60.

stretch the quadriceps muscle (of the rear leg). Taken to the extreme, as in the depiction, this stretch would place tremendous pressure on the quadriceps, groin, hip abductor and hip adductor muscles of the rear leg.[141]

The Inlaid Footstool (Cairo J.E. 62045; figure 6) contains splendid, colorful examples of the bound foreigner motif using the exact ideology as the Carved Footstool. It is "…inlaid with nine bound figures, four reddish and five black, representing the nine traditional enemies of Egypt."[142] The captives are bound as on the footstool above, the only difference being that their heads are shown in a relaxed and level pose with their necks being bound together,[143] perhaps indicating that these captives are lying on their sides. As before, the young pharaoh tramples them.[144] The accompanying text makes this explicit: "All flat lands and all hill countries and the great ones (chiefs) of Retenu (Syria) are

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[141] This is another standard artistic motif. One parallel to this scene has been found by the Akhenaten Temple Project. Plate 27 shows the restoration of fragments which depict female Nubians in precisely the same pose — arms bound behind the back, weight placed on one knee, rear leg stretched back (Donald B. Redford, ed., *The Akhenaten Temple Project*, Volume 1 [Warminster, England: Aris & Phillips Ltd., 1976]), Plates 27-28. For more on Asiatics depicted on the Talatat from the temple see also Donald B. Redford, "Foreigners (Especially Asiatics) in the Talatat" in *The Akhenaten Temple Project*, vol. 2, 13-28. These poses are similar to the scenes of supplication and may simply be conveying the notion of inferiority in status. Additionally, since the people depicted are captives it may safely be assumed that they would be forced into such positions, thereby painful, as discussed above.

[142] Hollis S. Baker, *Furniture in the Ancient World: Origins & Evolution 3100-475 B.C.* (London: The Connoisseur, 1966), 83.

[143] James, *Tutankhamun*, 294.

[144] Baker, *Furniture*, 83.

united as one under your feet, like Re forever."[145] As with the Carved Footstool,

the Inlaid Footstool is paired with a ceremonial throne.[146]
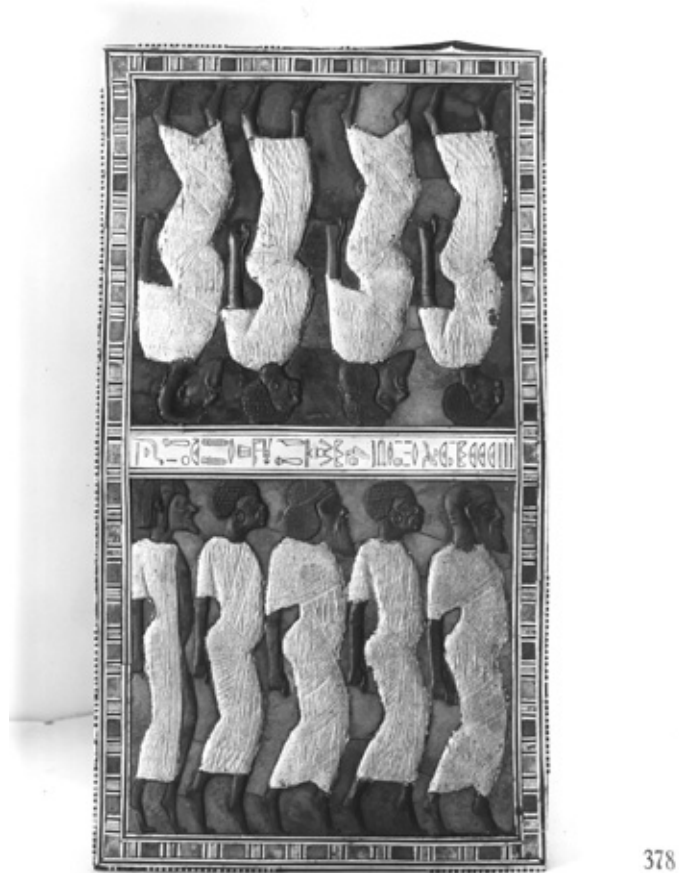
Figure 6: J.E. 62045 (Burton p1290a; Copyright: Griffith Institute, University of Oxford)

Completing the picture of the pharaoh trampling the enemies of Egypt on

a daily basis is the depiction of bound captives on Tutankhamun's sandals (Cairo

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[145] This translation is my own.

[146] For the throne and footstool, see el Mallakh and Brackman, *The Gold of Tutankhamen*, 317, pl. 121; and Reeves, *The Complete Tutankhamen*, 186; Baker, *Furniture*, 81-82, figs. 91-92. Another smaller footstool portray prostrate captives, two on the footstool's top surface, and two apiece on each long side (*contra* Baker, *Furniture*, 83, fig. 93) who says there were only two captives.

J.E. 62685; figure 7).[147] The sandals were made of wood, with decorations made of green leather and gold foil and were perhaps never worn.[148] On each sandal are a Nubian and an Asiatic. As above, the pointing of the feet indicates a prostrate position. All of the captives except the Nubian on the left sandal have their arms bound behind the back as is common. However, this poor Nubian has his arms bound with his elbows broken, similar to R-2 from the first state chariot. Once more the traditional enemies of Egypt are depicted, as evidenced by the presence of the eight bows on each sandal, though there should be nine.[149] That said, the depictions of the Nubian and Asiatic together represent a ninth bow, retaining the usual symbolical flavor of the Nine Bows.

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[147] For photographs, see El Mallakh and Brackman, *The Gold of Tutankhamen*, pl. 151 and the description on p. 326; James, *Tutankhamun*, 195. A drawing can be found in Gerhard Rühlmann, " Deine Fiende fallen unter deine Sohlen," *Wissenshaftliche Zeitschrift der Martin-Luther Universität Halle-Wittenberg* 20 (1971): 61-84, fig. 21.

[148] James, *Tutankhamun*, 195.

[149] James, *Tutankhamun*, 195. For the motif of the Nine Bows represented as literal bows as well as its use in the textual record, see E.J. Uphill, "The Nine Bows," *JEOL* 6 (1967): 393-420; D. Valbelle, *Les neuf arcs* (Paris, 1990), 43-52.

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Figure 7: J.E. 62685 (Burton p1218a; Copyright: Griffith Institute, University of Oxford)

Hölscher found a similar pair of sandals (Cairo J.E. 59738) in the debris of

the western gate at Medinet Habu.[150] Lacking a precise archaeological context,

these sandals must be dated on stylistic considerations, which Ritner uses to

espouse a New Kingdom date.[151] These wooden sandals were each painted with

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[150] These remained unpublished for several decades, but see now Ritner, *The Mechanics*, 122, n. 571 and 124, fig. 7. The motif of the trampled enemy continued down to Roman times, when the iconography was extended into the realm of the dead, as seen on cartonnage foot cases of mummies like that on object number 1971.217 at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. See Edward Brovarski, *A Table of Offerings: 17 Years of Acquisitions of Egyptian and Ancient Near Eastern Art by William Kelly Simpson for the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston* (Boston, MA: Museum of Fine Arts, 1987), 74-75.

[151] Ritner, *The Mechanics*, 124, fig. 7. This is entirely reasonable, especially considering the obvious parallels to the sandals from Tutankhamun's tomb.

a pair of bound prisoners, and though badly damaged, it is clear that each sandal

contained six bows painted in red — three above and three below the captives.

One sandal is too badly damaged to allow for a reliable analysis of the poses of

the captives. On the other sandal, it is clear that unlike the sandals from the tomb

of Tutankhamun, the captives' heads are not aligned. Rather, the head of each

captive is aligned with the feet of the other. On the left is a Nubian bound with his

arms behind the back, his elbows brutally bent, forcing his hands to align with his

shoulder, while a manacle binds his wrists.[152] The Asiatic's arms appear to be

crossed and bound at the stomach or lower back. This is very difficult to

determine because the costume of the Nubian obscures the bindings of the

Asiatic. Regardless, the symbolism is clear and is perfectly analogous to the

examples from Tutankhamun's tomb even if the artistic quality and quality of

preservation suffer in comparison.

A particularly unique example of placing a captive under pharaoh is the

hassock found by Carter in the Annex of Tutankhamun's tomb.[153] Made of rush-

work and linen, the hassock was "enriched with complicated and brilliant

polychrome bead-work, depicting alien captives bound and prone around a

central rosette."[154] Only two captives, a Libyan and an Asiatic, are depicted. The

former's arms are bound behind his back with his elbows bent back in disturbing

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[152] Manacles like this appear more often in battle reliefs and will be discussed more thoroughly in the following chapter.

[153] Carter, *The Tomb of Tutankhamen*, vol. III, 115, pl. LXIXb; Kate Bosse-Griffiths, "The Use of Disc-Beads in Egyptian Bead Compositions," *JEA* 62 (1975): 117, pl. 17.

[154] Carter, *The Tomb of Tutankhamen*, vol. III, 115.

fashion. The Asiatic's arms are bound at his torso in the typical elbows-bent pose. Their backs are severely bent, as seen in numerous depictions; however, caution is required here as the circular nature of the hassock itself has no doubt led to an increased degree of torso contortion. Just as the footstools were intended for royal feet, perhaps "the hassock meant for the royal knee,"[155] indicative once more of the simple fact that the bound foreigner motif was a royal prerogative.

Under the Feet of Pharaoh: Tomb Paintings, Statues, Architectural Examples

Similar symbolic trampling is echoed on several statue bases. Housed in Fondation Custodia Institut Nèerlandais, Paris (object number 2402a), is the base of a statue sculpted with prostrate captives.[156] Unfortunately, only the feet of the king or god, the captives, and the base survive. Four Asiatics are depicted lying on their stomachs, arms bound at their sides, chins pressed against the slab, gazing forward, while the king stands upon their backs.

More often, heads of captives are sculpted onto statue bases as the subject of the statue (most likely the king) crushes them. For example, a basalt statue base from the late 19th or 20th Dynasty on display in Vienna (Kunsthistorisches Museum, Ägyptisch-Orientalische Sammlung number 44)

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[155] Ibid., 115.

[156] Published with photo and description in R. A. Lunsingh Scheurleer, *Egypte Eender en Anders* (Amsterdam: Allard Pierson Museum, 1984), 73-74.

portrays the heads of three Asiatics under the foot of the king.[157] A faience statue

base from the New Kingdom (location: Heidelberg, Sammlung des ägyptischen

Instituts der Universität, number 213) also contains the heads of three foreigners,

in this case the iconic trio of enemies: a Nubian, a Libyan, and an Asiatic.[158] All

that remains of the king in each statue is a small portion of his left foot, enough to

confidently state that the usual "tramping foreigners" ideology was in mind once

more. The entire bodies of prostrate captives are also attested in similar

statues.[159] A lifelike quality is often given to them as the captives' hands are

pressed against the ground as if to brace themselves against the crushing weight

of pharaoh. Such imagery is not exclusive, however, spending objects or large

statues. Though somewhat later in date, smaller figurines on amulets from Mit

Rahina also display bound and prostrate captives being trampled by the king, as

evident on objects 29-84-512 and 29-84-530 from the Egyptian collection of the

University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology.[160]

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[157] Helmuth Satzinger, "42. Vorderteil einer Statuenbasis mit Darstellung von Gefangenen" in *Pharao siegt immer*, 42, pl. 42; E. Rogge, *Statuen des Neuen Reiches und der Dritten Zwischen-zeit* (Mainz, Germany: Corpus Antiquitatem Aegyptiacarum Kunsthistorisches Museum ,Vienna, Lieferung 6, 1990), 135-140, see especially the phone on p. 139. Unfortunately the origins of this statue are unknown.

[158] Christian Bayer, "Statuettenpodest mit Gefangenenköpfen," in *Pharao siegt immer*, 51, pl. 43. The provenance of this statue is unknown.

[159] Several examples can be found in Dietrich Wildung, "Der König Ägyptens als Herr der Welt: Ein seltener ikonographischer Typus des Neuen Reiches," *AfO* 24 (1973): 108-116, fig. 1-4.

[160] These are recently discussed in J. Roberson, "The Trampled Foe: Two New Examples of a Rare Amuletic Form," *JEA* 96 (2010): 219-221. Regarding the date, see p. 219, n. 3, which uses the notes of the excavator, Henry Fischer, to explain that the figurines were found in the layer just above the "Merneptah layer."

Figures of trussed captives were frequently engraved two-dimensionally, as opposed to sculpted in three-dimensions, into statue bases under the throne of the king or on the throne itself. On two 19th Dynasty examples (Cairo J.E. 552 and Cairo J.E. 557), the captives are carved under the throne and feet of the king and bound using the heraldic plants in the standard elbows behind the back pose.[161] Seven column bases from the First Court of Medinet Habu contain the same symbolism.[162] Here statues are incorporated into the column decoration scheme and stand upon bases engraved with captives flanking the king's names and epithets. All of the captives are kneeling with most of them assuming the standard elbow-bent pose.

Other captives are constrained in far more torturous fashion. Certain prisoners on the second and fourth columns from the left are bound at the elbows with their arms above their heads as their hands hang down in front of their brows. As with the other extreme poses, this would place great pressure on the ligaments and muscles of the shoulders (particularly the anterior and lateral deltoids) and upper arm (triceps). One truly miserable individual (fourth column from the left) is constricted with his upper arms straight in front of him, elbows

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[161] L. Borchardt, *Statuen und Statuetten von Königen und Privatpersonen im Museum von Kairo*, Teil II: Text und Tafeln zu Nr. 381-653 (Berlin: Reichsdruckerei, 1925), 98, pl. 92, number 552; Metzger, *Königsthron*, vol. 2, 46-47, pl. 23 (figs. 162 & 163). A common related motif is the captive name-ring, which is beyond the scope of this present work, but for examples, see Metzger, *Königsthron*, vol. 2, pls. 19 (fig. 117), 25 (fig. 176), 29 (fig. 195),

[162] Uvo Hölscher, *The Excavations of Medinet Habu, Vol. III: The Mortuary Temple of Ramses III, Part 1* (Keith C. Seele, trans. OIP 54. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1941), pls. 15 and 18b.

bent at a ninety-degree angle, hands pointed down towards his knee.[163] This brutal binding is impossible to duplicate without devastating the elbow and shoulder joints (particularly the posterior deltoid muscles). If the intention is to show that the elbows touch, the damage is even more severe and utterly debilitating. Thus, even when the symbolic functional intention of the depiction is to place the captive under the feet of the king or god, brutality can be employed to further the captives' helplessness and humiliation.

New Kingdom tomb reliefs provide intriguing parallels to these objects in placing bound foreigners loosely "under" the king. A scene on the north side of the west wall in the outer hall from the tomb of Kenamun (TT 93) portrays Amenhotep II resting his feet on nine enemies as he sits on the knee of his nurse.[164] These captives overlap considerably; the only means by which the Egyptian artists could fit all nine into the space under the king's feet. Only the first captive is fully visible, but it is obvious that the other captives are depicted with the same binding. The captives are kneeling with their arms bound at the elbow, extending straight behind their backs, thumbs pointed down. They lean forward, heads extending past their knees. The king holds a rope which binds their necks one to another, keeping them in place like a dog on a leash. A related example

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[163] A particular excellent photograph of the this statue base can be found in Smith, *Wretched Kush*, 175, fig. 7.2.

[164] This scene stresses the relationship that Kenamun's mother had to the king; namely, that she was the king's nurse. N.G. Davies, *The Tomb of Ken-Amun at Thebes*, vol. 1 (New York: Arno Press, 1973 [reprint of 1930]), pl. IX and IX, A. Davies notes that five captives hail from "the upper Nile" (Nubia) and four from Syria (i.e., Asiatics). Metzger, *Königsthron*, vol. 2, pl. 40 (fig. 272); Wreszinski, *Atlas* II, pl. 298. See also Rühlmann, " Deine Fiende fallen unter deine Sohlen," 73, fig. 19.

portrays Amenhotep III as boy resting his feet on a throne depicting eight prostrate captives, remarkably similar to the top of the Carved Footstool (discussed above).[165]

Two scenes from the Temple of Seti I at Abydos depict the king sitting on a throne with his feet resting on footstools decorated with nine bows, symbolically placing all the enemies of Egypt under the feet of the king.[166] The clearest parallel to the footstools from the tomb of Tutankhamun found in two-dimensional reliefs comes from the tombs of Hekerneheh (TT 64)[167] and Anen (discussed above). In the tomb of Hekerneheh, the enthroned pharaoh rests his feet on a footstool whose side panel is decorated with two prostrate captives—a Nubian and an Asiatic. Throne bases were also decorated at times with bound captives, as fragments from Medinet Habu attest.[168] On these bases alternating Nubians and Asiatics are bound upright, arms straight behind their backs with their torsos

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[165] Unfortunately, the scene is badly damaged. See C. Vandier, *Manuel d'archéologie égyptienne*. Volume IV: Bas-Reliefs et Peintures Scènes de la vie Quotideinne (Paris: Éditions A. et J. Picard et Cie, 1964), 542, pl. 293; Metzger, *Königsthron*, vol. 2, pl. 40 (fig. 273).

[166] Alan H. Gardiner, *The Temple of Sethos I at Abydos*, vol. II (London and Chicago: The Egypt Exploration Society and The University of Chicago Press, 1935), pl. 32; Metzger, *Königsthron*, vol. 2, pl. 27 (figs. 185 and 186).

[167] Radwan, *Darstellungen*, pl. XII; Hartwig, *Tomb Painting and Identity*, 216, fig. 14.

[168] Hölsher, *The Excavations of Medinet Habu, Vol. III: The Mortuary Temple of Ramses III, Part 1*, 52, fig. 30 and pl. 33e. Hölsher believes these fragments hail from the Second Palace.

bent forcefully, as is ubiquitous in depictions of upright captives.[169]

Bound captives in the form of inlays of furniture have been found at Amarna, one each of a kneeling Nubian and a kneeling Asiatic (UC 1243 and UC 1247).[170] As the back sides of each inlay are flat and glazed, Samson reasonably concludes that they were from a piece of furniture;[171] their miniscule size (2 x 4 cm; 2 x 8 cm) makes a smaller piece of furniture, like a footstool, quite likely.[172]

In other cases, faience objects depicting bound foreigners are better classified as tiles from floors, walls, or door-frames.[173] They are treated alongside other faience objects even though, except in cases where they might come from floor decorations, they are more decorative than interactive. Several splendid and colorful examples were found at Medinet Habu,[174] where each of the three main enemies of Egypt are rendered in exquisite detail. Their hair, facial hair and dress

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[169] Depictions of this sort can also be found in various tombs. The right focal wall of the tomb of Sobekhotep (TT 63) contains a tribute scene. Underneath the king's throne are twelve upright captives. The same number of upright captives, though badly preserved, can also be found under the king's throne in the tomb of Hekerneheh. . See Hartwig, *Tomb Painting and Identity*, 214-216, fig. 12-14.

[170] Julia Samson, *Amarna: City of Akhenaten and Nefertiti* (London: University College, 1972), 88, pl. VI.

[171] Ibid., 88.

[172] Two inlay figures portraying Nubian captives, now housed in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, and thought by Hayes to be of a New Kingdom date are now dated to modern times as an updated publication of Hayes' work will demonstrate (forthcoming, MMA 2013). For Hayes' original treatment, see *The Scepter of Egypt*, vol. 2, 316-318, fig. 200.

[173] Unfortunately, the distinction between floor or wall is nearly impossible to determine as most of these tiles are found badly damaged or hail from unknown provenances.

[174] Uvo Hölscher, *The Excavations of Medinet Habu, Vol. IV: The Mortuary Temple of Ramses III, Part II* (OIP 55. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), pls. 30-34.

provide some of the most intricate depictions available in any artistic source. On such tiles the captives are consistently portrayed as standing, but the positioning of their arms varies. Hölscher organized the tiles by the ethnicity of the captives, and this discussion will follow his order of publication. Two Libyans are portrayed; one is bound in the standard elbows bent pose, while the arms of the other are bent down painfully at the elbow as on the column base from Medinet Habu discussed above.[175]

Demonstrative of the artistic license sometimes taken regarding depictions of foreigners is a Hittite captive who is dressed as a Libyan.[176] This serves as an important reminder that though the bound foreigner motif was extremely important to royal ideology, their chief concern was often not historical accuracy. An oval manacle hanging from an Asiatic's neck binds his wrists together at his sternum.[177] This is one of the best-preserved examples of a manacle in New Kingdom art and will be analyzed in the next chapter as several manacles are used in depictions from battle reliefs and this example will prove helpful in seeking to understand that method of binding. For their part, several Nubians are depicted, many surviving only in fragmentary form.[178] The clearest examples portray a Nubian as bound in the unfortunate arms above the head pose

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[175] Ibid., pl. 30.

[176] Ibid., pl. 31a.

[177] Ibid., pl. 31b.

[178] Ibid., pls. 33 and 34.

discussed above from the column bases at Medinet Habu.[179] As a whole, it is

likely that these tiles flanked the doorway or entranceway to the palace. They

would have been situated under various scenes of the king as a sphinx trampling

foreigners and $r\underline{h}y.t$ birds.[180]

Numerous tile fragments were found at the palace of Ramesses II at

Qantir.[181] Prone or kneeling foreigners offer tribute on tiles from the sides of the

stairways and platforms of the throne room.[182] Bound captives adorn the steps

themselves with obvious symbolic meaning, and each of the floor tiles on the

dais depicts one bow of the standard "Nine Bows."[183] Four other tiles, all

depicting Nubians, most likely hail from the walls of the throne room (MMA

numbers 35.1.28—35.1.31).[184] Additional foreigners are depicted on tiles MMA

35.1.32—35.1.36; these are badly broken but clearly represent a mixture of

Asiatics and Libyans.[185] That these tiles are from a wall is clear from their

standing posture, and that they hail from the same room as the kneeling and

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[179] Ibid., 32a. Additional examples of tiles or inlays can be found in Hans W. Müller, *Ägyptische Kustwerke, Kleinfunde, und Glas in der Sammlung E. und M. Kofler-Truniger, Luzern* (Berlin: Verlag Bruno Hessling, 1964), 99-101, pl. 1.

[180] Following the reconstruction in Hölscher, *Medinet Habu, IV: The Mortuary Temple, Part II*, pl. 5, cf., pl. 28b.

[181] Hayes, *Glazed Tiles*, 10-17, pls. II-V.

[182] Ibid., 11, pl. III. Foreigners offering tribute while groveling before the king will be examined more thoroughly in Chapter Three as pertains to the depictions in the Memphite tomb of Horemheb.

[183] Ibid., 11, pl. II.

[184] Ibid., 21, pl. VI.

[185] For more, see Ibid., 21-22, pls. VI and VII.

prostrate captives is clear due to their stylistic similarities. They are essentially, as Hayes puts it, "the standing counterparts of the prone and kneeling foreigners on the stairway and platform abutments of the throne daises."[186] Approximately one hundred additional fragments of inlay tiles were found at the palace at Qantir and are believed to be from windows, doorways, and/or balconies.[187]

The throne room from the palace of Merneptah at Memphis contains a similar decoration scheme. On the dais were four large panels, each containing a captive: a Nubian, a Libyan, an Asiatic, and one too badly damaged to determine.[188] Between these depictions were smaller panels with bows and $ry\underline{h}.t$ birds, indicating that not only were bound foreigners considered to be under pharaoh, but the general populace of Egypt was as well.[189] The ramp was also decorated with ten captives, perhaps to symbolize the people groups Merneptah claimed to have conquered.[190] A smaller set of steps, used only by the king, was also decorated with the bound foreigner motif.[191] In short, the throne room

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[186] Ibid., 22. For a partial reconstruction showing the prostrate captives, the captives on the steps, and the tiles on the floor decorated with bows, see p. 13, fig. 1.

[187] Ibid., 22-27, pls. VI and VII, fig. 6. Seventy-five of these fragments are now housed in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York with approximately twenty-five of them in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo. See also, Hamza, "Excavations at Qantîr," 51, pl. III.

[188] Clarence S. Fisher, "The Eckley B. Coxe, Jr. Expedition," *The Museum Journal* (University of Pennsylvania) 8/4 (1917): 218, fig. 82.

[189] This connection between captives and $r\underline{h}y.t$ birds can also be seen on statuary and in tomb paintings. See Ritner, *The Mechanics,* 125-127; Wildung, "Der König Ägyptens als Herr der Welt," 112-113, fig. 9.

[190] Fisher, "The Eckley B. Coxe, Jr. Expedition," 218.

[191] Ibid., 218.

presents the king as ruler over all people. As he entered the throne room, the iconography of humiliation was all around him. He crossed a threshold decorated with bound and humiliated foreigners. The stairs he climbed were tiled in the likeness of torturous poses, and he crossed a dais covered in contorted bodies. Even his feet showed contempt for foreign prisoners as he rested them on a footstool covered in degraded enemies.

Expounding on the notion of placing the captives under the king are Window of Appearances scenes. A group of six prisoners are bound to the *smꜣ-tꜣwy* sign (three prisoners on each side) under the Window of Appearances in a scene from the tomb of Parennefer.[192] From left to right, they are as follows: an Asiatic, a Nubian, a Libyan, the *smꜣ-tꜣwy* sign, a Libyan, a Nubian, and an Asiatic. As above, the depiction contains a certain geographical symbolism with this arrangement. Captives hailing from regions closer in proximity to Egypt are bound closer to the *smꜣ-tꜣwy* sign. Another example from the Amarna period involving the Window of Appearances hails from the tomb of Tutu.[193] Here ten total captives are bound to the familiar *smꜣ-tꜣwy* sign, with five to either side of the sign. Nubians are on the left with Asiatics on the right, as usual when only those two ethnicities are present.

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[192] N.G. Davies, *Rock Tombs of el Amarna*, Volume VI: Tombs of Parennefer, Tutu, and Aÿ (Egypt Exploration Fund. London: William Clowes and Sons, Ltd., 1908), pls. IV and IX; Metzger, *Königsthron*, vol. 2, pl. 40 (fig. 274e). Hayes, *Glazed Tiles*, 25, fig. 3.

[193] Davies, *Rock Tombs*, vol. VI, pl. XIX; Metzger, *Königsthron*, vol. 2, pl. 40 (fig. 274f).

Perhaps the most spectacular examples are the sculpted enemy heads found under the Window of Appearances in the façade of the First Palace at Medinet Habu.[194] Here the heads of twenty captives, alternating between Nubian and Asiatic/Libyan, protrude from the wall under the Window of Appearances and its adjacent smiting scenes and presentation of prisoners scenes. As Hölscher notes, "these sculptures give the effect of prisoners lying prone within the wall with only their heads and shoulders protruding."[195] Thus, whenever the king stood at the royal window he trod upon their backs, so also the representation of the king in the smiting scenes. This forms both an entirely symbolic trampling (the depictions of the king in the scenes) and a "living counterpart" (the king himself at the royal window).[196] The symbolic, collective impact is so pronounced that Hölscher referred to it as "self-explanatory" in his initial report.[197] This same effect of captives lying prone with the majority of their body inside the stone is also visible on statuary from Medinet Habu, such as Cairo CG 755,[198] which

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[194] Hölscher, *The Excavations of Medinet Habu, Vol. III: The Mortuary Temple of Ramses III, Part 1*, 40, fig. 18, pls. 3 and 33g. A smaller photo of the same scene is published in Uvo Hölscher, *Excavations at Ancient Thebes 1930/31* (OIC 15. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1932), 24, pl.3. While this example is the most well-preserved and contains the highest total number of captives, it is not entirely unique. A similar usage is found on the high gate of Medinet Habu; cf., The Epigraphic Survey, *Medinet Habu, Vol. VIII: The Eastern High Gate with Translations of Texts* (OIP 94. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), pls. 611 and 613.

[195] Hölscher, *The Excavations of Medinet Habu, Vol. III: The Mortuary Temple of Ramses III, Part 1*, 40.

[196] Ritner, *The Mechanics*, 125.

[197] Hölscher, *Excavations at Ancient Thebes*, 24.

[198] Wildung, "Der König Ägyptens als Herr der Welt," 112-113, fig. 9; Eduard Meyer, *Bericht uber eine Expedition nach Ägypten zur Erforschung der Darstellungen der Fremdvölker, Sitzungsberiche der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Phil.*

depicts protruding heads and hands of a Nubian and Asiatic. The hands of the captives flank their heads and rest on the ledge in front of them, as if they were secured to a stock or pillory.

While Hölscher is of course correct to a certain extent, Ritner rightly observes that the symbolic is far vaster. As the descendents of Old Kingdom free-standing kneeling prisoner statues, these three-dimensional heads are the incorporation of two now ages-old expressions of ritual conquest — the static symbolism observable in reliefs from the earliest periods of Egyptian history and in purely rhetorical depictions (see above),[199] and the more "kinetic" or interactive examples, the earliest of which hail from Hierakonpolis in which the hapless captive's back is ground into dust each time the door pivots.[200] The Window of Appearances functions on an architectural-spatial level as well, placing the king above not only the captives, but also his subjects. The captive heads are situated

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hist. Kl. (Berlin, 1913)**,** pls. 252-254 (photographs); Borchardt, *Statuen und Statuetten* III, number 755.

[199] For one of the earliest depictions of the victorious king in the act of smiting kneeling captives see Helene J. Kantor, "Ägypten," in *Frühe Stufen der Kunst* (Matchteld J. Mellink and Jan Filip, eds. Propyläen Kunstgeschichte 13. Berlin: Propyäen Verlag, 1974), 251-252, fig. 231b; Barry J. Kemp, "Photographs of the Decorated Tomb at Hierakonpolis," *JEA* 59 (1974): 36-64. Add to this the famous and thoroughly researched Narmer Palette originally published in J.E. Quibell, *Hierakonpolis. Part I* (Egyptian Research Account, vol. 4. London: Bernard Quaritch, 1900), pl. 29. More generally, see R.T. Ridley, *The Unification of Egypt* (Deception Bay, Australia: Shield Press, 1973), 47-53; Kemp, *Anatomy of a Civilization*, 78-86; Kathryn A. Bard, *An Introduction to the Archaeology of Ancient Egypt* (London and Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2008), 101-120.

[200] This object is now in the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology in Philadelphia, PA, object number E 3959. This object is observable online as of 3.17.2012 at: http://penn.museum/what-in-the-world-answers.html See also J.E. Quibell, *Hierakonpolis*, 6; Bothmer, "Realism," 37, fig. 26; Ritner, *The Mechanics*, 113-118, 127.

at "about a man's height,"[201] placing them on the same level as the king's audience. This too harkens back to Egyptian Prehistory, as the motif of the subservient Egyptian population developed simultaneously with the bound foreigner motif,[202] possibly because the earliest "enemies" depicted on objects like the Narmer palette were in fact Egyptians. Ultimately, these depictions under the Window of Appearances demonstrate the all-encompassing importance of the bound foreigner motif on royal ideology, as it functions on multiple symbolic levels involving both longstanding Egyptian ritual ideals and the Egyptian populace.[203]

It would be misleading, however, to imply that such scenes are only found in grandiose temple contexts. A Window of Appearances scene is sketched onto an ostracon now housed in the Ägyptisches Museum Berlin (object number 723).[204] In the central scene, the king is visible in his customary location with an

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[201] Hölscher, *The Excavations of Medinet Habu, Vol. III: The Mortuary Temple of Ramses III, Part 1*, 40.

[202] Ritner, *The Mechanics*, 127. The Egyptian population is symbolized by the *rḫy.t* birds and appears in several of the same contexts as bound foreigners, as in throne rooms and their doorways (see above).

[203] An incredible example from the found at Tanis is worth noting. Five lifelike heads were sculpted into a large (3 x 9 x 3 ft) quartzite block (Cairo J.E. 60538). This block was reused by the Twenty-Second Dynasty in a monumental gateway, which also contained both granite blocks from the Sixth Dynasty and an obelisk bearing the names of Ramses II, making the quartzite block's original provenance a mystery. The incredible level of preservation allows one to clearly observe the scarring and general discomfort on the faces of the captives. Bothmer believes the block should be dated to the Old Kingdom, while Montet, the original excavator believed it was a Ramesside era work. For more, see Bothmer, "Realism," 37-38, figs. 27-30; Pierre Montet, "Les de Tanis en 1933 et 1934," Kêmi 5 (1935): 4-7, pls. I-V and *La nécropole royale de Tanis, III, Les constructions et le tombeau de Chéshonq III à Tanis* (Paris, 1960), 37-38, no. 27.

[204] See Werner Kaiser, *Ägyptisches Museum Berlin* (Berlin: Staatliche Museen Berlin, 1967), 64, fig. 723.

Asiatic (left) and Nubian (right) bound to the *sm3-t3wy* sign below him in the usual standing pose. To either side are three registers with *rḥy.t* birds on top, king in the middle, and two kneeling captives apiece. The bindings in this scene are not unusual, but the sketching itself shows the profound significance of the motif, operating on a much smaller scale at a lower level of society than depictions in elite tombs, on royal monuments, or on objects of state and ceremony.

The Alabaster Unguent Jar from the tomb of Tutankhamun (Cairo J.E. 62119) also contains an interactive depiction. Rather than the user interacting with the captives,[205] in this case, it is, but the jar itself, as it rests on top of a supporting crossbar terminating in the heads of foreigners at each corner: two Asiatics and two Nubians.[206] The jar cuts into their heads, no doubt intended to symbolically grind them to dust. A particularly ingenious use of the theme of grinding upon enemy heads is their depiction on the stops for the oars of the bark Amun on reliefs from the Great Enclosure of Amun at Karnak.[207] Each stroke of the oar would therefore strike the captives in the head.[208] Much like depictions on sandals, the action is continually repeated.

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[205] Edwards, *The Treasures of Tutankhamen*, 124-125; Desroches-Noblecourt and Shoukry, *Tutankhamen: Life and Death of a Pharaoh*, 211 and 303.

[206] El Mallakh and Brackman, *The Gold of Tutankhamen*, 324, pl. 141.

[207] The Epigraphic Survey, *Reliefs and Inscriptions at Karnak, Volume II: Ramses III's Temple within the Great Enclosure of Amon, Part II, and Ramses III's Temple in the Precinct of Mut* (OIP 35. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1936), pls. 86-88; See also, Siegfried Schott, "Ein ungewöhliches Symbol des Triumphes über Feinde Aegyptens," *JNES* 14 (1955): 97-99.

[208] Ritner, *The Mechanics*, 125, n. 575.

Captives Intended to be Grasped, Strangled, Etc.:

Not only could bound captives adorn the bases of columns, statues, jars, and so on, but the hands of the kings could also interact them with. In at least one 18th Dynasty example (provenance unknown), the entire lid of a small box is a foreigner (Rijksmuseum von Oudheden, Leiden, inventory number L.IX.25).[209] This prisoner is almost certainly an Asiatic due to his having both a full beard and an ankle-length, closed garment.[210] Lying prostrate on his stomach, the captive holds his head up as he gazes forward — a stark contrast to depictions where symbolic trampling is intended, in which case the captives' chins rest on the ground. The most interesting aspects of this object are the prisoner's detailed hands, which are carved into hollow fists. Thus, the captive grasps the hinge of the box, apparently forcing him upside-down whenever someone opened the box.

In several cases, nearly three-dimensional bound foreigners were carved into wood itself. The posture of the foreigners depicted in this fashion is typically limited to the nature of the objects upon which they are placed. The arms are pinned in close to the body to curtail potential breakage, with only the hands potentially protruding out, as opposed to the reliefs where the captives are placed

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[209] Maartin J. Raven, "Kastendeckel in Form eines Gefangenen" in *Pharao siegt immer*, 52, pl. 45.

[210] The beard rules out his being a Nubian, and the garment appears to be more similar to those worn by Asiatics than the open robe that Libyans are often depicted wearing. Additionally, he does not have the classic Libyan "side lock." While this identification is not as precise as pinpointing a specific ethnicity (Syrian, Hittite, etc.) would be, it is a more specific identification than that given by Raven who says, "eine exakte Identifikation ethnischer Zugehörigkeit ist nicht immer möglich" (Raven, "Kastendeckel," 52).

in a multitude of painful poses — arms bound above the head, behind the back, etc.

The most detailed surviving examples of this type come from four canes, ranging in length from 93.5 cm to 115 cm, found in the Antechamber of the tomb of Tutankhamun.[211] These spectacular walking staves were carved and painted with depictions of, respectively, a Nubian (Cairo J.E. 61733; Carter 48b), a Libyan (Cairo J.E. 61737; Carter 100a),[212] and both an Asiatic and a Nubian (Cairo J.E. 61736; Carter 50uu; Figure 8).[213] The king was either intended to grasp the captives whenever he used the canes,[214] or conversely, were the canes held from the other end, he would then grind his foes into the ground or drag the prisoners through the dust.[215] Perhaps he could have done both. Regardless, the symbolism is clear: each time the king uses the cane the enemies of Egypt are defeated and subjugated to his rule. That said, the incredible state of preservation of these canes makes it likely that their use was

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[211] Reeves, *The Complete Tutankhamen*, 178. Reeves claims there were three such lavishly decorated canes, but there were in fact four.

[212] James considers this captive to be a Libyan, but el Mallakh and Brackman refer to him as "Semitic-looking". For more, see James, *Tutankhamun*, 270-271; el Mallakh and Brackman, *The Gold of Tutankhamen*, 325-326, pls. 148-149.

[213] For photographs of three of the canes (Cairo J.E. numbers: 61735, 61734, and 61732), see James, *Tutankhamen*, 270-271. These large photographs show the immaculate details of the captives' hair and dress. For more photos, including one of the only canes not pictured in James' work, see el Mallakh and Brackman, *The Gold of Tutankhamen*, 325, pls. 148-149. See also, Desroches-Noblecourt and Shoukry, *Tutankhamen: Life and Death of a Pharaoh*, 82 and 298; and Carter, *The Tomb of Tutankhamen*, 93.

[214] For more, see Andrea Maria Gnirs, "Crook with Nubian Captive" in *Tutankhamun: The Golden Beyond*, 326-329.

[215] Mallakh and Brackman, *The Gold of Tutankhamen*, 325.

restricted to ceremonies, that they were not used at all, or that were solely

intended for use in the afterlife, as with nearly all of objects from the tomb.

Figure 8: J.E. 61736 (Burton p0338; Copyright: Griffith Institute, University of Oxford)

A statuette in the Musée de Louvre (Département des Antiquités

Egyptiennes, inventory number E 243) portrays a bound Nubian.[216] The captive

is entirely naked, and his head is turned to the viewer's left. His wrists rest on his

stomach, bound by an oval-shaped manacle. There are small pins under the feet

of the captive which were most likely used to attach him to a small object (now

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[216] For a photograph and description, see Christian Bayer, "Statuette eines nubischen Gefangenen" in *Pharao siegt immer*, 52-53, pl. 46. The statuette is 10.7 cm tall; its provenance is unknown.

lost), converting the statuette into a type of handle.[217] Symbolically, the statuette would have functioned in the exact manner as the captives carved into the canes, being conquered anew each time the king interacted with the object.

At Saqqara, J.E. Quibell found a wooden figure of a captive that most likely derived from a model chair.[218] This entirely naked captive's arms are bound behind his back with his elbows slightly bent. Two holes were drilled into the figure, a large square one just above the buttocks and a smaller one at the back of his head; these were no doubt intended to attach the captive to an object. If Quibell's suspicion that this was part of a model chair is correct, then perhaps this figure was attached to the armrest where symbolic interaction would have been in mind.

One of the most creative uses of the bound foreigner motif comes from the yokes of the first state chariot (Cairo J.E. 61989; Carter 120), the hooked ends of which were carved with a figure of an Asiatic on one end and a Nubian on the other.[219] Thus, when the horse team was attached to the chariot the harness tack wrapped around the captives, symbolically and forcefully restraining and suffocating the carved captives. The Egyptians, it would seem, found no shortage of ways to dominate their defeated enemies.

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[217] Ibid.," 52-53.

[218] J.E. Quibell, *Excavations at Saqqara (1906-1907)* (Cairo: IFAO, 1908), 75, pl. XXV (fig. 3).

[219] Littauer and Crouwel, *Chariots*, 23, pl. XXIII and XXIV. See also Ritner, *The Mechanics*, 125, 129, fig. 10b.

Rivaling the use of the bound foreigner motif on the chariot yokes in sheer

creativity is the double-compound bow found in the Antechamber of

Tutankhamun's tomb (J.E 61544; Carter 48i. The bow was "…terminated at

either end in the carved figure of a captive, so arranged that their necks served

as notches for the string."[220] The Nubian captive has his arms bound behind his

back at the shoulder, while the Asiatic's arms are bound behind his back at the

elbows.[221] These are reminiscent of the poses discussed above. The shoulder-

blades of the captives form the grooves for the string of the bow. The most

fascinating aspect of this bow is that the captives' neck served as the notches for

the bowstring. Thus, every time he drew back the bow, Tutankhamun

symbolically strangled the captives. This is a particularly unique embodiment of

pharaonic conceit and is, to this author, the most unique incorporation of this

motif into an object's inherent purpose.[222]

Notions of "interactive strangling" were not entirely unique to the artifacts

from Tutankhamun's tomb. Hailing from the earliest temple sector at Abydos are

two small stone figurines of kneeling captives, now in the Lucerne collection.[223]

The neck of one captive is drilled to force the captive to hang from a string. Much

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[220] W. McLeod, *Composite Bows from the Tomb of Tut'ankhamun* (Oxford: Griffith Institute, 1970), 12-13, pls. V and XV; Carter and Mace, *The Tomb Tutankhamun*, vol.1, 113; P. Fox, *Tutankhamen's Treasure* (London: Oxford Unversity Press, 1951), 18.

[221] McLeod, *Composite Bows*, 12-13.

[222] Other bows were lavishly decorated with the hunting motif or the names of the king. See Edwards, *Treasures*, plate 49 and McLeod, *Composite Bows*, pls. IV-VII.

[223] Müller, *Ägyptische Kustwerke, Kleinfunde, und Glas*, 38, figs. A54 and A55; Ritner, *The Mechanics*, 116.

like with Tutankhamun's bow, user interaction with this object leads to a type of symbolic strangling. Thus, the theme of subjugation expressed in having one's enemy by the throat is attested from earliest times down to the New Kingdom and beyond.

Conclusion

A few undeniable conclusions can be drawn from this survey of rhetorical depictions. Ancient Egyptian rulers and their officials relentlessly celebrated Pharaoh's dominance over enemy captives as part of the well-known imperative to establish Order over Chaos. What often remains unnoticed, however, is that these foreign prisoners were frequently depicted in humiliating and even torturous poses. In many cases, it is not enough for the pharaoh to simply restrain or subdue the enemy. They must be degraded and utterly defeated, as is evident in the myriad poses that portray the captives' limbs contorted into various disturbing, and in some cases seemingly impossible, poses. These severe bindings are used less often than the standard "arms dangling behind the back" and "elbows-bent binding" poses, but bindings like the one where the captive's arms are bound behind the back in the "X-shape" are so frequent as to be utterly unexceptional. Variety in the depictions is the rule, not the exception. This was most likely done in part due to artistic sensibilities and to provide visual variety, and also because on a fundamental level, enemies must not only be defeated but made to suffer. Such humiliation of foreign entities emphasizes the absolute superiority of the victors in a way that simple victory does not (more in Chapter Six).

Additionally, brutal depictions are too numerous to ignore. It is reasonable to assume that from time to time the Egyptians would bind their enemies either in the standard fashion or in poses with horrifically debilitating results. This is in keeping with the Egyptian worldview of supremacy over other people-groups, a unanimous view shared by other ancient cultures all of which viewed themselves as superior to those around them (more in Chapter Six).

It is also important to note that despite the organization of this discussion into purely decorative examples and interactive ones, nearly all of the depictions themselves are static. Thus, the foreigners bound on the ends of the bow from Tutankhamun's tomb are symbolically defeated regardless of whether the bow was ever used. Usage of the bow furthers their defeat and humiliation, but they are symbolically conquered regardless. Such objects provide value in that they are exemplary of the Egyptian's great creativity, giving enticing evidence to the vitality of the bound foreigner motif. However, there is no functional difference between purely decorative depictions and interactive ones. The symbolic-magical meaning of perpetually defeating enemies is fulfilled in each and every example. Furthermore, the overwhelming presence of the bound foreigner motif on ceremonial and ritualized objects and in tomb and temple reliefs is a clear reminder of their religious function.

Finally, this motif was so important that the king must continuously celebrate his superiority over foreigners and symbolically defeat them as he went about his daily duties. When he sat on his throne, he sat above bound foreigners. He trampled them with his feet as he wore decorated sandals; he rode in chariots

decorated with scenes displaying his triumph over them. He even grasped them while he walked with a cane. In all these examples, enemy prisoners are defeated anew, time and time again. It is somewhat ironic that no less a figure than the king himself was bound to this socio-religious convention.

CHAPTER THREE: BOUND FOREIGNERS IN 18TH DYNASTY RELIEFS

Development of the Battle-Narrative Tradition in the Early 18th Dynasty

Though the Ramesside rulers would have a profound and lasting impact

on battle-narrative reliefs, elements of the genre are visible in earlier time

periods, and there is evidence that Seti's reliefs were not in fact the first battle-

narratives.[1] During the 18th Dynasty, the ritual smiting scene was the artistic

device of choice for representing the might of kings.[2] On either side of the

gateway at Karnak there were smiting scenes showing Thutmose III striking

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[1] The treatment here is but an overview of the development of the genre beginning with the 18th Dynasty. For a more extensive study, including elements found in earlier monuments, see W. Raymond Johnson, *An Asiatic Battle Scene of Tutankhamun from Thebes: A Late Amarna Antecedent of the Ramesside Battle-Narrative Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1992), 83-138. The roots of the battle-narrative genre can perhaps be seen in the war reliefs at Abydos, which portray Ahmose, the founder of the dynasty, firing arrows from a chariot, as reconstructed recently by Harvey (Stephen Harvey, *The Cults of King Ahmose at Abydos* [Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1998], 302-303; 541-550, figs. 88-97). A digital version of Harvey's work is available at: http://repository.upenn.edu/do/search/?q=author_lname%3A%22Harvey%22%20author _fname%3A%22Stephen%20Phillip%22&start=0&context=19929 (accessed November 15th, 2012).

It is unfortunate that several of blocks are very badly damaged, making difficult to say with any certainty if certain of the features reconstructed by Harvey were present or simply extrapolated into his reconstruction on the basis of his familiarity with later developments. Military depictions of Thutmose II from his funerary temple contain a more likely reconstruction of a scene of the king firing arrows from his chariot, which once more is badly damaged. For more, see Harvey, *The Cults of King Ahmose at Abydos*, 357-362. It is possible that these blocks date to the time of Hatshepsut or Thutmose III. Cf. Luc Gabolde, *Monuments décorés en bas relief aux noms de Thoutmosis II et Hatchepsout à Karnak* (Cairo, 2005), 175-176. Regardless, these blocks are indicative of the presence of some of the core thematic elements of the chariot battle-narrative during the heart of the 18th Dynasty. See also Spalinger, *Icons of Power: A Strategy of Interpretation* (Prague: Charles University, Faculty of Arts, 2011), 24-26, 120-125.

[2] Johnson, *An Asiatic Battle Scene of Tutankhamun*, 93.

Asiatics with a mace,[3] in celebration of his victory at Megiddo. On Pylons VI and VII at Karnak, Thutmose III is shown smiting Asiatics and Nubians before the god Amun.[4] Of special interest is the fact that Thutmose combined timeless notions of pharaonic power with specific locations by also including topographical name rings.[5] Additionally, Thutmose appears to have used chariots in smiting scenes as evident from fragments at the Temple of the House of Life in Western Thebes.[6]

The reign of Amenhotep II saw another new development in the tradition of battle-themed art. The king was depicted driving his chariot in a scene on a granite doorjamb at Karnak, near Pylon IV (Cairo J.E. 36360; Figure 9).[7] This

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[3] These smiting scenes could be placed on "pylon entrances of temple complexes, or on either side of main and side doorways, thereby insuring the protection of the cult within" (Emma Swan Hall, *The Pharaoh Smites his Enemies* [Müncher Ägyptologische Studien 44. München: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1986], 17).

[4] PM II², 87-88 (235), 167 (496). In the latter example, 359 name-rings are found below the scene, a rhetorical device used to define the enemies Thutmose III claims to have subdued.

[5] Johnson, *An Asiatic Battle Scene of Tutankhamun*, 94. For more on topographical lists see Helen Jacquet-Gordon, "Fragments of Topographical Lists dating to the Reign of Thuthmosis I," *BIFAO* 81 (1981) Supplement: 41-46.

[6] Bernard Bruyère, *Deir el Médineh Année 1926. Sondage au Temple Funéraire de Thotmes II (Hat Ankh Shesept)* FIFAO 4/4 (Cairo: L'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 1952), 40-42; plates II, III, and IV. These scenes were found in the interior of the columned courtyard toward the entrance. See also Johnson, *An Asiatic Battle Scene of Tutankhamun*, 96-97. This innovation could simply be due to the fact that early monuments did not survive. Regardless, these blocks constitute the earliest depictions of chariots in war scenes. Johnson points out that the fragment of an oversized arm bent at the elbow indicates that the king is in a smiting pose, not an arrow-shooting pose, which requires a straight arm with which to aim (Johnson, *An Asiatic Battle Scene of Tutankhamun*, 96-97.

[7] Abdel Hamid Zayed, "Une Representation Inedite des Campangnes d'Amenophis II," in *Melanges Gamel Eddin Mokhtar* (*BdÉ* 97/1. Cairo: L'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 1985), plates I-II.

scene is significant, for it is the earliest surviving sequential pictorial narrative from the New Kingdom.[8] In the first register, the king, from his chariot, leads bound prisoners; in the second, the prisoners are presented to Amun.[9] Each captive is bound in the standard arms behind the back pose with nothing particularly agonizing taking place. The significance lies in the fact that another stage of the development has taken place, this time adding notions of sequence to ritual narrative. First the prisoners were rounded up and carted off to Egypt before finally being presented to the deity. Behind the presentation scene, the king smites a group of captives while wielding the sickle-shaped *khepesh* sword.

The captives depicted in the return scene are highly individualized,[10] a rarity for the bound foreigner motif. Three captives sit on the king's horse, while two others ride with the king in his chariot. A sixth enemy is sprawled out and tethered to the pole of the chariot, directly under the rear end of the horse. This latter captive is placed in an especially dishonorable position, and he is the only captive who is possibly dead,[11] which may in fact be preferable in this case! If so, this is an example of desecrating the corpse of an enemy, a policy Amenhotep seemed especially fond of (more below). Curiously, some of the captives seem to

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[8] Johnson, *An Asiatic Battle Scene of Tutankhamun*, 97-98.

[9] This is certainly the correct ordering of these scenes, despite Zayed's publication placing the presentation scene above the voyage scene.

[10] Zayed, "Une Representation Inedite des Campangnes d'Amenophis II," pl. II; Spalinger, *Icons of Power*, 121-122.

[11] So concludes James K. Hoffmeier in "David's Triumph Over Goliath: 1 Samuel 17:54 and Ancient Near Eastern Analogues," in *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel: History, Imperialism, Ideology and Literature* (S. Bar, D. Kahn and JJ Shirley, eds. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2011), 104.

occupy places of honor (those in the chariot cab with the king) or at least are

spared from any humiliating treatment (those on the horse).

Figure 9: Amenhotep II's triumphal voyage home and presentation scenes (after Zayed, "Une Representation Inedite des Campangnes d'Amenophis II," pl. I-II).

Alternatively, these depictions may be purely decorative, as in the examples from the battle reliefs of Seti I discussed in Chapter Two. Behind the king's chariot the pharaoh forces a series of bound enemies to march, while those depicted above are shown flat-footed, a rare depiction. As will be seen in Chapter Four, the feet of the captives depicted in battle reliefs are usually shown in motion; as the captives march, they stand on the balls of their feet or even on the ends of their toes (cf. figs. 15-16, 18-19, etc.).

The earliest surviving battle scene where a king shoots arrows at his foes comes from Thutmose IV's chariot, where the king is showing firing arrows into a group of fleeing Asiatics while the god Montu steadies his aim.[12] Below, captives are bound to the *sm3-t3wy* sign, indicating as always that the king has symbolically conquered every foreign foe (see Chapter Two). While this is a conventional scene for use on a chariot (likely ceremonial) and thus does little to

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[12] Carter and Newberry, *The Tomb of Thoutmôsis IV* (London: Duckworth, 2002 [reprint of Archibald Constable & Co., Ltd., 1904), 24-31, pl. XI; Walter Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altaegyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, vol. II (Genève and Paris: Slatkine Reprints, 1988 [reprint of Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1923-1936]), pl. 1. The scene is mirrored on the opposite panel of the chariot with one significant difference. On the right side the king is smiting the foreigners with his mace. See also Susanna Constanze Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches: Eine Bildanalyse* (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Eissenschaften, 2001), 236, I.1-2.

convey history,[13] it does provide an important link to the 18th Dynasty in that a king is inarguably shown shooting arrows from his chariot into a melee of enemies for the first time.

Considering that the 18th Dynasty was an eventful period in Egyptian military history — most notably the expulsion of the Hyksos and Thutmose III's battle at Megiddo — it is somewhat surprising that no complete battle-narrative scenes have been found.[14] On the whole, the kings of this time period were more concerned with presenting the king in his ritual roles, mainly smiting the foreigners in order to fulfill his role as the creator god who enforces order over

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[13] A. Gaballa, *Narrative in Egyptian Art* (Mainz, Germany: Philipp von Zabern, 1976), 48. Gaballa considers scenes on Thutmose IV's chariot to be of less significance because this pharaoh is a relatively late 18th Dynasty ruler. This strikes the present author as strange because Gaballa considers the fallout from the Amarna period as central to the development of the battle-narrative scene, yet this example from the time of Thutmose IV comes from before the Amarna period, showing that this very specific type of war scene existed pre-Amarna even if it was not yet adorning temple walls. This chariot is important in the development of the scene-type even if it had yet to be displayed in grand reliefs. Clearly, 18th Dynasty pharaohs thought it appropriate to display their glory in such a fashion, though to a lesser degree than the Ramessides. Interestingly, this is the type of scene that one might expect to have been displayed in the "Temple of the House of Life" discussed above.

[14] Gaballa, *Narrative Art*, 48. Gaballa rightly notes that there are no reliefs surviving from the funerary temples of Thutmose III, Amenhotep II, and Thutmose IV (99). Gaballa considers the absence of war scenes at Deir el-Bahari, the Festival Hall and two pylons of Thutmose III at Karnak to be sufficient evidence that the battle-narrative genre had not yet developed. Gaballa insists that the Amarna controversy led to the development of this genre (99-100). Though no doubt influential, the Amarna period is not the sole reason for Ramesside policy and should also not be considered the sole reason for the development of the battle-narrative tradition. Furthermore, the absence of evidence from destroyed temples cannot be used to strengthen Gaballa's case since it is still possible that these scenes did exist and simply did not survive. If these funerary temples had been uncovered in a state of good repair and if they then did not contain war scenes, Gaballa's point would carry considerable weight. As it stands now, little can be said either way concerning these mostly destroyed temples. Finally, Gaballa's contention that a sudden change in Egyptian subject matter in temple decoration should not be expected until after the Amarna period may seem accurate at first glance (48-49; 99-101), but one must remember that the Amarna period was hardly the first highly impactful time of crisis.

chaos. However, it is significant that certain key elements in the chariot battle-narrative tradition originate here, including isolated examples of unique treatments of bound foreigners.

Although there are no battle scenes surviving from Akhenaten's reign, the Amarna period,[15] with its emphasis on depicting events in real time,[16] sparked another phase in the development of the battle genre. For the first time, there is a strong sequential dynamic in royal chariot procession scenes.[17] From the *talatat*,[18] eight scenes show the king and his family traveling from one part of the city to another, usually from the palace to the temple.[19] While these are processions and not battles, they do convey a profound sense of "the where-from and the where-to of dramatic action."[20] This nuance is obviously central to the Ramesside chariot battle-narratives with emphasis on sequence and movement.

The greatest influence on the development of the Ramesside battle-narrative tradition comes from the reign of Tutankhamen, just after the Amarna

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[15] Amarna art is entirely centered on smiting scenes when it comes to warfare. See Johnson, *An Asiatic Battle Scene of Tutankhamun*, 104-106.

[16] H.A. Groenewegen-Frankfort, *Arrest & Movement* (Harvard University Press, 1987, reprint of: New York: Belknap, 1978), 87.

[17] This a major motif from Akhenaten's destroyed temple complex at Karnak. See James K. Hoffmeier, "The Chariot Scenes" in *The Akhenaten Temple Project*, vol. 2 (Donald Redford, ed. Toronto: The Akhenaten Temple Project, 1988), 35-47.

[18] The root of this term comes from the Arabic word for "three" hand-lengths long. More precisely, these blocks are roughly 52 by 22 by 26 centimeters. See Johnson, *An Asiatic Battle Scene of Tutankhamen*, 6-7; Ray Winfield Smith and Donald B. Redford, *The Akhenaten Temple Project*. *Volume 1: Initial Discoveries* (Warminster, England: Aris and Phillips, Ltd., 1976), ix.

[19] Hoffmeier, "The Chariot Scenes," 35.

[20] Groenewegen-Frankfort *Arrest & Movement*, 107.

period. Fragmentary blocks from Luxor and raised-relief talatat from Karnak include a wide variety of scenes, including seven blocks from "an elaborate battle scene involving Egyptian and Asiatic chariotry,"[21] containing partial cartouches of Tutankhamen (more below). Johnson is surely correct in identifying these blocks as reused Akhenaten *talatat*, brought from Karnak Temple to Luxor Temple as part of Tutankhamen's restoration program.[22]

Finally, evidence points to the reign of Horemheb as providing a last link between Ramesside battle-narratives and 18th Dynasty motifs. Excavation of Horemheb's mortuary temple revealed an incredibly complex situation, as the temple had undergone a systematic quarrying for reuse in antiquity.[23] The temple was still standing by the time of Ramesses III, who planned the "northwest corner of his own mortuary-temple enclosure wall to accommodate the enclosure wall of the Horemheb complex."[24] Blocks from Horemheb's temple were reused in the Khonsu Temple, which was possibly constructed in its entirety by Ramesses III.[25]

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[21] Johnson, *An Asiatic Battle Scene of Tutankhamun*, 31; see also p. 25-37. Johnson notes that these are blocks 73, 139, 828, 832, 906, 912, and 1275. The depictions of the captives from these blocks will be analyzed below.

[22] Johnson, *An Asiatic Battle Scene of Tutankhamun*, 28-29. This issue of where exactly these blocks were originally used is quite complicated, and it is beyond the scope and intent of this study to solve this problem. For details and a thorough treatment see pages 42-47.

[23] Uvo Hölscher, *The Excavation of Medinet Habu*. *Volume II: The Temples of the Eighteenth Dynasty*. Oriental Institute Publications 41 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939), 63-117.

[24] Johnson, *An Asiatic Battle Scene of Tutankhamun*, 122.

[25] For arguments and bibliography see Hölscher, *The Excavation of Medinet Habu*, 108 and Johnson, *An Asiatic Battle Scene of Tutankhamun*, 123; more on the scenes on these blocks below.

Especially significant for this study is the fact that some of the reused blocks contain scenes of Asiatic and Nubian campaigns where the pharaoh is present in his chariot.[26]

The Ramessides would take the battle-narrative to grander extremes in both presentation and frequency, resulting in the common misunderstanding that they were the sole innovators of this genre.[27] The discussion above demonstrates that the battle-narrative tradition, though presented in its fullest form initially by the Ramessides, was in fact part of a much longer and more central tradition. Various indispensable elements of the battle-narratives were added to classic smiting scenes during the 18th Dynasty.

Pre-cursor to the Ramessides: The Reliefs of Tutankhamun and Horemheb

The Talatat of Tutankhamun

It is a sad and unavoidable fact that fragmentary inscriptions and reliefs have often been relegated to the backburner of scholarship, lying unstudied in heaps in courtyards or collecting dust in dark storage rooms, due to the wealth of largely intact archaeological and epigraphic material that survives from ancient Egypt. Thankfully, this is no longer the case concerning the fragmentary reliefs of

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[26] For full details see Johnson, *An Asiatic Battle Scene of Tutankhamun*, 124-129 and The Epigraphic Survey, *The Temple of Khonsu, Volume 2: Scenes and Inscriptions in the Court and First Hypostyle Hall* (Oriental Institute Publications 103. Chicago: The University of Chicago, 1981).

[27] Not only that, but the Ramessides also made innovations to the smiting scenes, which never faded from pharaonic memory. For example, by seizing the head of the prince or mayor of a town on the ramparts, Seti could then symbolically capture a whole town, and not just a tribe or people-group. Hall, *The Pharaoh Smites his Enemies*, 28

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Tutankhamun from Karnak and Luxor.[28] Raymond Johnson has reconstructed the fragments of a battle scene of Tutankhamen;[29] these blocks were originally the work of Akhenaten.[30] Though the majority of the *talatat* were carved in sunk relief, a fraction of them contained raised relief. It is this latter group of *talatat* that were reused and recarved during the reigns of Tutankhamun and/or Ay.[31] This recarving contained standard elements from New Kingdom iconography — purification scenes, processions, and most importantly for this study, at least one battle scene, complete with enemy captives. Some of the blocks from the Asiatic campaign depict enemies as either trampled underfoot (Johnson catalog no. 17), trampled by the chariot wheel or horse-team (catalog nos. 10, 14-16), or as space-fillers underneath the entire scene (catalog no.8).[32]

A more intriguing example from this campaign is the interaction between a solider and at least two captives during the battle aftermath (catalog no. 34).[33]

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[28] For a summary of the earliest work done at these locations, see Claude Traunecker and Jean-Claude Golvin, *Karnak: Résurrection d'un site* (Fribourg: Office du Livre, 1984) and Labib Habachi, "Clearance of the Area to the East of Luxor Temple and Discovery of Some Objects," *ASAE* 51 (1951): 447-49.

[29] Johnson, *An Asiatic Battle Scene of Tutankhamen*, 48-81.

[30] Ibid., 6-7. This is clear from the unique art style preferred by Akhenaten during his third year. For the history of the excavation, publication and interpretation of this material, see Ibid., 9-25.

[31] Ibid., 7. Four consecutives episodes are represented, two of them are on *talatat*, while two are on large blocks, see p. 48-49.

[32] Ibid., 155-158, catalog nos. 1-2. Though these scenes hail from a more precise historical context than similar depictions described in the previous chapter, their symbolic meaning and function is for all intents and purposes exactly the same and need not be repeated here.

[33] Ibid., 161-162, no. 4.

Though most of the scene is missing, it is clear that an Egyptian soldier,

preserved from shoulder to calf, grasps the tether of a Canaanite whose arms

are bound in the standard arms dangling behind the back pose.[34] Only the elbow

of a second captive is visible (to the left of the first captive), and the rest of the

captives are entirely lost. A section of vertical border text lines the right of the

scene, indicating that this scene was part of a presentation scene. The text reads

"…*wr in nsw[t]*…," referring to a chief defeated by the king.[35] It is likely that they

were part of group of four or five individuals who were presented to the king after

battle. The Egyptian soldier interacts with their bindings in a wholly realistic

fashion. This is precisely the type of activity one would expect between a soldier

and his prisoners of war, a point well worth remembering when considering

material that, due to the frequency of bizarre and exaggerated poses, is all too

easy to dismiss as unrealistic and unreliable. By contrast, when the Egyptian

soldiers are depicted, their actions are completely believable and even mundane,

as will be seen on several Ramesside monuments. The Egyptians by this time

were interested in recording historical events in sequence in a manner that

appealed to both their artistic sensibilities and ideological duties (a larger-than-

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[34] Following ethnic identifiers noted in D. B. Redford, "Foreigners (Especially Asiatics) in the Talatat," in *ATP* II, 20. They are as follows: an Asiatic wearing a fillet and short kilt is a Canaanite/Amorite type (southern); Syrians or Hurrian-Mittannians are identified by a bald or close-cropped hairstyle combined with a beard and a close-fitting, long-sleeved robe (northern). See also Johnson, *An Asiatic Battle Scene of Tutankhamen*, 60 and 69.

[35] Schulman suggests a very reasonable restoration and translation of "[…carrying off the] chief by the […] of the king […]." This is in keeping with Ramesside reliefs, which contain similar depictions accompanied by such texts. See A.R. Schulman, "Hittites, Helmets and Amarna: Akhenaten's First Hittite War," in *ATP* II, 63.

life king, tumultuous heaps of slain enemies, the use of registers and rows for organization, etc.). Another block most likely hailed from the left side of this same presentation scene (catalog no. 29) and contains a very fragmentary depiction of a captive's head as two soldiers lead him before the king.[36] The spear tips of these soldiers are adorned with severed enemy hands.[37]

These depictions and interactions between the soldiers and captives (or slain enemies) are all mirrored in later Ramesside reliefs, but there is one interesting detail from these blocks that is otherwise unattested. From the processional scene, a Syrian chieftain is imprisoned in a cage suspended from the sailyard of the royal barge.[38] This underscores the militaristic and triumphalistic natures of such water processions, as the victories of the king are made known to all in a drastic and impressive fashion as he returns to Thebes.[39] Humiliated and helpless captives or their desecrated bodies would have been

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[36] Johnson, *An Asiatic Battle Scene of Tutankhamen*, 70; 159-160, fig. 3, no. 29.

[37] The same phenomenon can be found on catalogue no. 35, though no captives are visible. See Johnson, *An Asiatic Battle Scene of Tutankhamen*, 161-162, fig. 4, no. 35.

[38] Ibid., 77-77, 163-164, fig. 5, no. 38. See also Henri Chevrier, "Rapport sur les travaux de Karnak 1952-1953," *ASAE* 53 (1955): 11, pl. VII, A and B; Muhammad Abdul-Qader Muhammed, "The Administration of Syro-Palestine During the New Kingdom," *ASAE* 56 (1959): 132, pl. 1, catalogue no. 39. In the latter the block is still *in situ* on the north tower of the Second Pylon. See also, A. Grimm, "Ein Käfig fur Gefangenen in einem Ritual zur Vernichtung von Feinden," *JEA* 73 (1987): 202-206, fig. 2.

[39] Ibid., 203. Grimm connects the depiction of the Syrian in a cage to an object found at Giza, which was previously believed to be a sled for transporting a Ka-Statue. Thus, the holes in the object would have been for hanging a cage and not pulling a sled. Grimm's theory is compelling, but difficult to determine with any certainty. If Grimm is correct then this could be related to human sacrifice at Heliopolis, for which see Jean Yoyette, "Héra d'Héliopolis et le sacrifice humain," *Annuaire École Pratique des Hautes Études* Ve Section, 89 (1980-81): 29-102.

vital to these triumphs, the main purpose of which was to celebrate the power of the king in the most explicit and unforgettable manner possible.

Though the Syrian in a cage is a unique artistic example, Amenhotep II (*ca.* 1426-1420 B.C.E.) claims to done have something similar in attaching captives or their cadavers to his ships in the Amada and Elephantine stele (more in Chapter Five). He returns to Egypt with a "joyful heart" after campaigning and boasts that he himself executed seven rulers and placed their corpses "head downwards" on the prow of his ship. Once he had returned to Thebes, six of these slain rulers were hung on the face of the temple wall, while the seventh was hung on a temple wall in Nubia.[40] Why would Amenhotep II go to the trouble of transporting the corpses of this last enemy some 1500 miles from Thebes? Leaving no room for interpretation, the text states that it was to "cause that the victories of His Majesty been seen forever and ever."[41] Thus, these actions serve both celebratory and political purposes, a point strengthened by the geographical placement of the stele in border regions. Such harsh treatment was an unmistakable signal that rebellion against Egypt had dire consequences.[42]

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[40] For the original hieroglyphs, see *Urk*. IV: 1297, 1-16. To name but a few translations: *ANET*, 248; *ARE* 2, 313; Alan Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs: An Introduction* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961), 199-200; O'Connor, "Egypt's Views of 'Others" in *Never Had the Like Occurred: Egypt's View of Its Past* (John Tait, ed. London: Institute of Archaeology, University College London, 2003), 156-157; Barbara Cumming, *Egyptian Historical Records of the Later Eighteenth Dynasty*, Fascicle 1 (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, Ltd., 1982), 27; Grimm, "Ein Käfig fur Gefangenen," 204; M. Ch. Kuentz, *Deux stèles d'Amenophis II* (Cairo, 1925), 19-20; S. Schott, "Ein ungewöhnliches Symbol des Triumphes über Feinde Aegyptens," *JNES* 14 (1955), 97-99, no. 5. Textual references to similar treatments of enemy prisoners will be discussed much more thoroughly in Ch. 4.

[41] *Urk*. IV: 1297, 1.

[42] Hoffmeier, "David's Triumph Over Goliath, 104

Overall, the Syrian in a cage is indicative of two certainties: once more, the determination of the Egyptians to incorporate the enemy prisoner motif into a variety of contexts and depiction-types is evident, and another brutal form of treatment is visible. One can only imagine the condition of the luckless Syrian upon finally reaching Egypt, having been exposed to the elements for the entire journey.

Returning to the blocks of Tutankhamun, in the space just before the water procession two rows of bound Nubians are preserved.[43] These captives are positioned behind the king, facing right, awaiting presentation to Amun-Re. It is likely that the episodes involving both the Asiatic and Nubian prisoners were originally mirrors of each other flanking a central doorway.[44] Furthermore, it is highly likely that the material from the Nubian campaign would have been located to the left (south) and the Asiatic material to the right (north), revealing the symbolic significance geography played in the depiction of bound foreigners.

Figure 10: Nubians on the *talatat* of Tutankhamun (courtesy of Dr. Peter J. Brand)

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[43] Chevier, "Rapport sur les travaux de Karnak," 11, pl. I A-B; Johnson, *An Asiatic Battle Scene of Tutankhamen*, 79-80, 167-168, fig. 7, no. 47.

[44] Johnson, *An Asiatic Battle Scene of Tutankhamen*, 81.

The bindings of the individual Nubians are the best preserved of any captives from the Tutankhamun *talatat*, allowing details to emerge which did not survive from related depictions of Asiatics (Figure 10). Eight captives total are depicted with four of them in front of the other Nubians whose side profiles are visible, creating the overlap effect so frequently found in presentation and smiting scenes. The captive in the lead (furthest right) is easily recognizable as a Nubian chieftain due to his dual-feathered headdress, while the other captives either have one feather on no feathers in their respective headdresses. Additionally, whereas the other captives are all bound in various poses using rope, this Nubian leader was restrained via an animal-shaped manacle. His wrists rest atop one another at the animal's torso with his left hand dangling and his right hand resting on his left forearm. Unfortunately the head of the animal is somewhat damaged. Johnson's drawing reconstructs this animal as a horse, but a close examination of photographs indicates that a lion-shaped manacle was used, which would be doubly effective as a well-known icon of pharaonic power, as discussed in Chapter Two.[45] This is quite obvious due to the presence of a thick mane of fur near the head of the manacle and the curved, bobbed end of the tail.[46]

The captive behind the chieftain is constricted in the standard elbows-bent binding with rope restraining him directly at the elbows. As is frequently the case

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[45] The head of the lion manacle, though not its tail, is more clearly drawn in Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen*, 239, III.10.

[46] A badly damaged yet potentially similar manacle can be found in Redford, *ATP* II, 18, pl. 13:1 and Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellung*, 240, I.2; discussed also in Shulman, "Hittites, Helmets, and Amarna," 55-63.

with this type of binding, his wrists dangle loosely, as do those of the fourth captive. The latter is bound in a particularly exaggerated version of the X-shaped pose, as indicated by the severe curvature of his spine, pronounced angle of his shoulders (particularly his right one), and the angle of his head as the severity of the bindings force him to look upwards.

The third captive's arms are bound at the wrist above his head with his hands hanging down in front of and behind his head. This reasonable pose is not particularly damaging to any limb or joint but would over time be rather uncomfortable. Keeping in mind the simple truth that artistic preference and spatial limitations and not purely historical accuracy dominated the mindset of ancient Egyptian artisans, it is important to note that depicting this captive in such a fashion served two convenient purposes. First, it provided aesthetic variety in the poses, as from right to left there was a leader bound by a manacle, a captive in the standard elbows-bent pose, a prisoner with arms constricted above the head, and a captive bound in an exaggerated and torturous X-shaped pose. Second, by changing the level of the middle bindings (not counting the unique presentation of the leader), the Egyptians artisans have maximized the available space. Put another way, were the third captive's arms bound at the same level (waist/torso) as the second and fourth captives', the cluttering of so many arms of would be a tangled mess.

This policy of varying the level of the bindings is commonplace,[47] yet the Egyptian desire to display the bindings of the captives in such clear fashion in contrast to their policy of "stacking" captives as a way to show plurality is telling. Overlapping captives as a means to show plurality was only done by showing the captives in partial side-profile. Conversely, the bindings of the front captive in each "stack" are clearly depicted and do not overlap with those on either side to any impactful degree. In short, the manner in which the captives were bound was such a powerful ideological and iconic statement that each initial depiction must be clear, even if the remaining captives' bindings were not visible due to the "stacking" effect.

The Monuments of Horemheb

During the reign of Tutankhamun, General Horemheb commissioned the building of a splendid tomb in Memphis which contained detailed reliefs in the Second Courtyard of tribute scenes that have miraculously escaped the attentions of ancient and modern looters.[48] On the south side of the east wall, Egyptian soldiers guard several lines of unbound prisoners from Libya, Western Asia, and Nubia as they are ushered into the presence of the Commander-in-

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[47] Indeed, this phenomenon is observable in nearly every Ramesside scene with more than four captives and need not be repeated in subsequent treatments of those scenes.

[48] The tomb is well published in two works by Geoffrey Thorndike Martin. For the relevant scenes, see *The Memphite Tomb of Horemheb Commander-in-Chief of Tut'ankhamun I: The Reliefs, Inscriptions, and Commentary* (London: EES, 1989), 75-117, pls. 73-93, 99-105, 113-118 and *The Hidden Tombs of Memphis: New Discoveries from the Time of Tutankhamun and Ramesses the Great* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1991), 65-83, figs. 30-49.

Chief.[49] The soldiers are carved in smaller scale perhaps to show that they were

adolescent recruits or simply smaller than their burly captives.[50] Regardless, the

intent is obvious: so subdued are these enemies in the presence of victorious

Horemheb that neither bindings nor larger Egyptian soldiers are required to keep

them subjugated. Military scribes busily record the events and/or assign the

foreigners to their fates,[51] adding to the incredible sense of realism. Martin

excitedly notes that this scribal scene is "one of the most vivid and informative in

Egyptian art; so realistic is the carving that one can almost see the scribes'

fingers moving over the papyrus."[52]

    Several specific cases show unique, yet wholly believable, types of

humiliation. In the third register, an Egyptian soldier punches a Nubian under the

chin, rocking his foe's head back.[53] A similar treatment is given to a foreigner just

behind the scribes mentioned above, who has perhaps just recently bent the

knee to Horemheb[54] or been informed of his new fate. It is important to note that

such punching is used both before and after a prisoner kneeled before

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[49] Ibid., 67-70, fig. 35.

[50] Ibid., 67.

[51] Ibid., 71, fig. 39; Martin, *Memphite Tomb*, pl. 92.

[52] Martin, *Hidden Tombs*, 69. Martin further speculates that such scenes are hints to the type of detailed record keeping done by the Egyptians. Texts found on stele and in battle reliefs would surely have first been jotted down on papyrus before their final commemoration on New Kingdom monuments. These tantalizing glimpses give evidence to a society that valued accurate record keeping as one step in the process of memorializing the pharaoh's deeds.

[53] Ibid, 70, fig. 35; Martin, *Memphite Tomb*, pl. 90.

[54] Martin, *Hidden Tombs*, 69-72, fig. 40.

Horemheb as a means of asserting Egyptian dominance on an individual level. On this same wall, another soldier pokes a Nubian in the eye,[55] an entirely unique, yet obvious form of humiliation. Martin considers this depiction to be a type of reprimand or admonishment,[56] but this is far too kind, as the Egyptian soldier's finger is directly lined up with the captive's eye in a clear intent to poke (his finger being roughly parallel to the floor). One might expect his finger to be aligned more vertically, i.e., "wagging his finger," if a stern admonishing was in mind. Regardless, all of these individual depictions are kinetic examples of the denigrating attitude Egyptians held towards foreigners, albeit much less severe than depictions of bound prisoners of war in battle reliefs. The soldier in this latter example is at the very least reacting to the action of the foreigner, reflecting the sequential nature and dynamic movement present in the entire scene.

The south wall depicts a series of western Asiatic and Hittite captives bound with the oval-shaped manacle who are led into the presence of the king and general by a length of rope that loops around their necks and attaches to the manacle (Figure 11).[57] Their wives and children follow behind them. A tantalizing textual fragment records the phrase, "regnal year," though unfortunately no actual year date has survived.[58] Regardless, this crucial phrase indicates that the

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[55] Ibid., 71, fig. 41; Martin, *Memphite Tomb*, pls. 84-86.

[56] Ibid., 71-72.

[57] Ibid., 72-78, figs. 44-45. Martin makes an interesting parallel to this type of depiction: the ropes around their necks are reminiscent a method for herding cattle. The main portion of this wall can be reconstructed in incredible detail and can be seen in Leiden. For large, detailed images see also, Martin, *Memphite Tomb*, pls. 99-104 and pl. 105 for a drawing of the entire, large scene.

[58] Martin, *Hidden Tombs*, 72-73.

Egyptians were treating this material as a real historical event, as opposed to a purely symbolic event. To the right of the captives, Tutankhamun and Ankhesenamun honor Horemheb for his faithful service and victories.

Figure 11: Asiatic Prisoners from the Memphite Tomb of Horemheb (courtesy of Dr. Kevin L. Johnson)

On the west wall, foreign ambassadors from Asia, Libya, and Nubia come before the king seeking clemency (Figure 12).[59] An Egyptian official translates their comments to general Horemheb, who then relays the message to the king. The presence of a translator adds a life-like quality to the scene, making it "one of the most revealing examples of narrative art surviving from ancient Egypt…"[60]

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[59] Ibid., 77-80, figs. 48-49; Martin, *Memphite Tomb*, pls. 113-115.

[60] Martin, *Hidden Tombs*, 78.

It is, of course, significant that each of the classic enemies of Egypt appears. Fittingly, there are a total of nine ambassadors, once more giving pictorial presentation to the textual refrain, "the Nine Bows."

Figure 12: Foreign Emissaries from the Memphite Tomb of Horemheb (courtesy of Dr. Kevin L. Johnson)

Most of the emissaries are bowing or standing with their hands raised in the universal pose for supplication or surrender. Two of the captives lay entirely prostrate, one on his stomach and the other on his back. It is as if the artistic portrayal has captured them in the midst of excessive groveling, so desperate are they for the king's forgiveness. In reality, such scenes must have happened from time to time in the courts of pharaohs, as foreigner emissaries were

expected to explicitly demonstrate their submissiveness.[61] From the Amarna

Letters,[62] it is known that foreign vassals emphasized their subordination, even

when reporting disasters or blaming the pharaoh for not sending aid.[63] Tablets

from the ruler of Amurru, such as EA 64 and EA 65, state, "I fall at the feet of my

lord seven times and seven times, both on the stomach and on the back, at the

feet of the king, my lord."[64] In other examples, a similar phrase is found at the

beginning of the letters, as Abdiashirta says in EA 60: "To the king, the Sun, my

lord: [Mess]age of Abdiashirta, your servant, the dirt under your feet. I fall at the

feet of the king, my lord, seven times and seven times."[65] Indeed, such

statements are utterly ubiquitous in the Amarna Letters,[66] and the scene in the

Memphite tomb of Horemheb provides a striking visual parallel.

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[61] For more on this motif in Egypt and the ancient Near East, see Ellen F. Morris, "Bowing and Scraping in the Ancient Near East: An Investigation into Obsequiousness in the Amarna Letters," *JNES* 65.3 (2006): 179-196.

[62] These are a series of cuneiform tablets documenting the correspondence between Egyptian rulers and their vassals in western Asia in the latter half of the fourteenth century, B.C. For background on the archive of administrative documents found at Amarna, see W.L. Moran, *The Amarna Letters* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992). All translations of select phrases in this present work are Moran's as are cited by the EA number itself (EA = El Amarna).

[63] John Coleman Darnell and Colleen Manassa, *Tutankhamun's Armies: Battle and Conquest during Ancient Egypt's Late 18th Dynasty* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2007), 148.

[64] Moran, *The Amarna Letters*, 136; Darnell and Manassa, *Tutankhamun's Armies*, 148.

[65] Moran, *The Amarna Letters*, 131-132; Darnell and Manassa, *Tutankhamun's Armies*, 158.

[66] To whit, see Morris, "Bowing and Scraping," 184-185, table 3. Morris' thorough research yielded six different categories of obsequiousness displayed by falling at the feet of the king, with dozens of examples. Suffice to say, the motif is incredibly well attested in the Amarna Letters and corresponds naturally to the artistic record which portrays even foreigners of high social standing in poses of obeisance.

Once Horemheb finally ascended to the throne he busily went about restoring normalcy to Egypt, which included inaugurating or finishing numerous building projects, some of which contain depictions of enemy prisoners. The largest surviving relief of this type comes from the Tenth Pylon Court at Karnak, originally started by Amenhotep III, but completed by Horemheb. Here the new king portrayed himself in typical, gigantic fashion in the smiting pose above a series of topographic name rings.[67] On the east wall, Horemheb is depicted leading both Asiatic prisoners and peaceful tribute-bearers from Punt before the divine Triad at Thebes (Figure 13).[68] A rhetorical text runs above each register, captioning the entire scene, revealing that it is fear of pharaoh that causes the foreigners to grovel:

> The wretched Great Ones of Hanebu […] before you, it[69] penetrates through to the end of the world, the fear of you in all foreign lands. Each land is afraid of you. The fear of your power is in their hearts [...] and the miserable Great Ones [of Retenu] join in this tribute, they say, 'Hail, how great […] like [...] in their bodies, and the terror [of you] in [her] heart.[70]

While the top register is badly damaged, several individuals are visible. At the far left and closest to the king, an Asiatic envoy kneels in obeisance (Wreszinksi's no. 1), while the captive behind him is bound in the X-shaped pose (2). Enough

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[67] Donald B. Redford, "A Head-smiting Scene from the 10th Pylon," *Fontes atques. Eine Festgabe für Helmut Brunner*, Ägyptologische Abhandlungen 5 (Weisbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1983); PM II², 187 (578-579).

[68] Wreszinski, *Atlas* II, pl. 62; PM II², 183 (551-552); R.A. Schwaller de Lubicz, *Les Temples de Karnak. Contribution à l'étude de la pensée pharaonique*, vol. II (Paris: 1982), pl. 408; Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen*, 242, II.1

[69] Referring to whatever phrase was lost in the lacuna, most likely pharaoh-inspired fear.

[70] See also Wrezsinski, *Atlas* II, pl. 62.

survives of the third captive to determine that his wrists are bound together at his torso just under his collarbone. As usual, his wrists dangle helplessly. The next several captives are too badly damaged to analyze, leading Wreszinski to skip over them in his numerical sequence, continuing with the final two captives in the row. Only the right half of the binding of the fourth captive is visible but it is clear his arms were bound above his head and then bent back.

Most interesting is the presence of what Wreszinski believed to be a female captive at the end of the row (5), presumably due to this captive's long, braided hairstyle and the use of a headband with bow.[71] This would be an otherwise unattested depiction of a female captive in such presentation scenes. It is far more likely that this captive is a Hittite, often depicted with such a hairstyle. As discussed above, Horemheb likely encountered the Hittites during his campaign under Tutankhamen. It is thus quite reasonable that he would later depict a Hittite among those he presents to the Theban Triad.[72] The captive's wrists are tied together just under his xiphoid process, slightly higher on the torso than normal. As for the bindings, a strand of ropes connects them to the loop around his neck which connects to the captive in front of him, as is standard for depictions which show the king leading the captives into the presence of the gods like dogs on a leash.

The bottom register is well preserved and portrays a total of eleven captives (nos. 6-16). The first foreigner (6) kneels and kisses the ground behind

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[71] Heinz's drawing apparently follows Wreszinski's and thus contains the same depiction for this captive, cf. Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen*, 242, II.1.

[72] Horemheb most likely fought against the Hittites, lead by Mursillis II, in Syria while he was pharaoh.

pharaoh, while the next (7) kneels with his hands raised in the standard pose of supplication. Behind him, another man stands with his hands in the same pose. These three foreigners are unbound, most likely to indicate that they came in peace, as emissaries seeking clemency, much like the scene discussed above from the Memphite tomb of Horemheb.

The remaining individuals are all bound, indicating their obvious status as prisoners of war. The fourth (9) is bound in a fashion identical to the captive above him (3). An oval-manacle binds the next captive (10), just as with the Asiatics and Hittites discussed above from Horemheb's tomb in Memphis. The sixth individual (11) is constrained in a particularly torturous pose as his arms are bound behind his back with his wrists tied to his upper arm just under his armpit. Taken to the most literal extreme, this is clearly impossible to duplicate without causing devastating injury to the shoulders. That said, it is possible that this is another example of the limitations of two-dimensional art, intended to show the captive's arms behind in a fashion similar to that used by modern police forces. However, if this were the intention, the captive's hands would be much lower; that they abut the chin of the next captive makes this unlikely. Thus, the most straightforward interpretation is that this pose is one of startling severity intended to highlight the foreigner's inherent chaos.[73]

The next captive (12) is rather fortunate by comparison with his arms bound straight down in front of him. Behind him is a captive whose depiction is badly damaged (13). Captive #14 is the first example of what will become a very

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[73] At the very least, a less exaggerated version of the pose would be incredible painful if assumed for any length of time. This is, of course, true of each of the more torturous poses.

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common Ramesside depiction: the showing of the face as a way to further shame the individual. His arms are above his head, as is always the case with 'face-showing' depictions. Behind him is a captive whose wrists appear to be bound together at waist-level; the amount of weathering on the stone makes this difficult to determine. The final captive is bound in the standard X-shaped pose. Unfortunately, his hands are badly damaged, making it impossible to determine whether his arms are behind his back or in front of his torso.

A Nubian triumph scene has survived from the south end of the west wall of Horemheb's *speos* at Gebel el-Silsila (Figure 14).[74] In the upper left corner, the king rides on an elaborately decorated palanquin, complete with lion iconography, carried by soldiers. As he sits, a series of bound Nubians, labeled as "chiefs of Kush,"[75] are paraded in front of him.

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[74] Andrea-Christina Thiem, *Speos von Gebel es-Silsileh: Analyse der architektonischen und ikonographischen Konzeption im Rahmen des politischen und legitimatorischen Programmes der Nachamarnazeit*, vol. 2 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2000), pl. 8; Wreszinski, *Atlas* II, pl. 162; *PM* 5, 208-213 [34-36]

[75] For a translation of the entire text see Darnell and Manassa, *Tutankhamun's Armies*, 122-124 and Thiem, *Speos*, vol. 1: 141-153, 318-322, pls. 55-61.
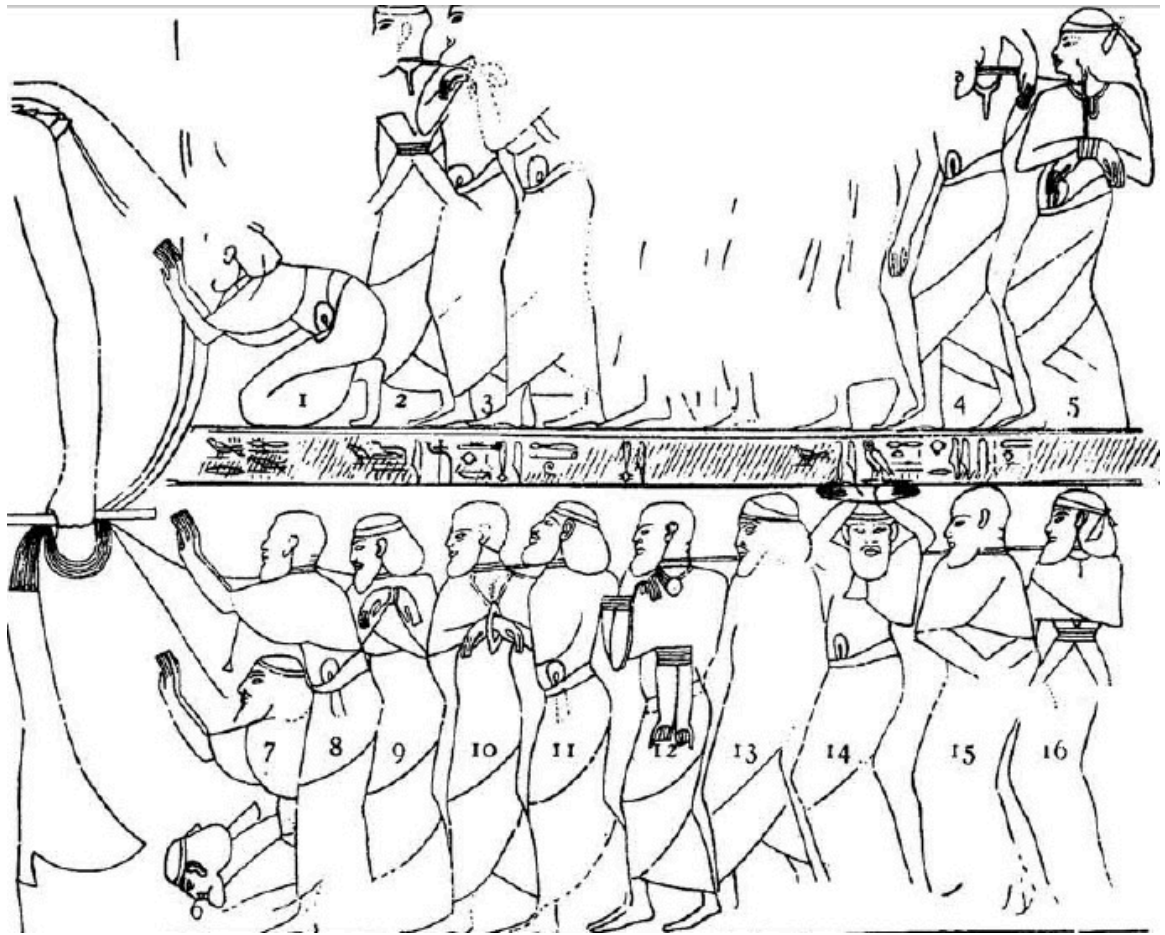
Figure 13: Horemheb, 10th Pylon Court at Karnak (from Wreszinski, *Atlas II*, pl. 62; courtesy of Yare Egyptology)

The surviving captives are depicted in especially tumultuous poses. Their feet alternate between flat-footed and heel-raised, while their chaotic nature is loudly displayed in the splaying of their limbs. From left to right they are bound as follows: a captive with his arms behind his back, elbows bent so severely that his hands are hanging at the same relative height as his ear (though they do not touch); another with his elbows bound above his head, elbows sharply bent as his hands rest at the chest-level; an individual looking behind him with his upper arms out in front of him, parallel to the ground, while his hands rest apparently

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under his armpits, his elbows impossibly bent; a captive in the standard X-shaped binding, though in this case his arms are likely in front of his torso and not behind his back; a lucky individual whose hands are no longer visible but who was certainly bound with his wrists atop each other, probably using the oval-shaped manacle; and finally a particularly unfortunate fellow whose arms are restrained above his head at the elbow, hands spread out wide. This is highly reminiscent of depictions of trussed birds,[76] who are utterly helpless as Egyptians carry them, just as the captive is offers no resistance to the king. Implicit in this comparison are notions of sacrifice, which of course was the fate of such birds. Whether the Egyptians slew the captives as part of a religious ritual or celebratory festival is an important question and will be covered in Chapters Five and Six.

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[76] See Hermann Junker, "Die Feinde auf dem Sockel der Chasechem-Statuen und die Darstellung von geopferten Tieren," in *Ägyptologische Studien* (O. Firchow, ed. Berlin Akademie, 1955), 160-175, especially 168-175, figs. 2-3; Patrick F. Houlihan, *The Birds of Ancient Egypt* (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 1986), p. 21, fig. 25, pp. 71-72, figs. 98 and 100, p. 93, fig. 132; p. 106, fig. 152, p. 120, fig. 171; and Darnell and Manassa, *Tutankhamun's Armies*, 121-123, fig. 19.
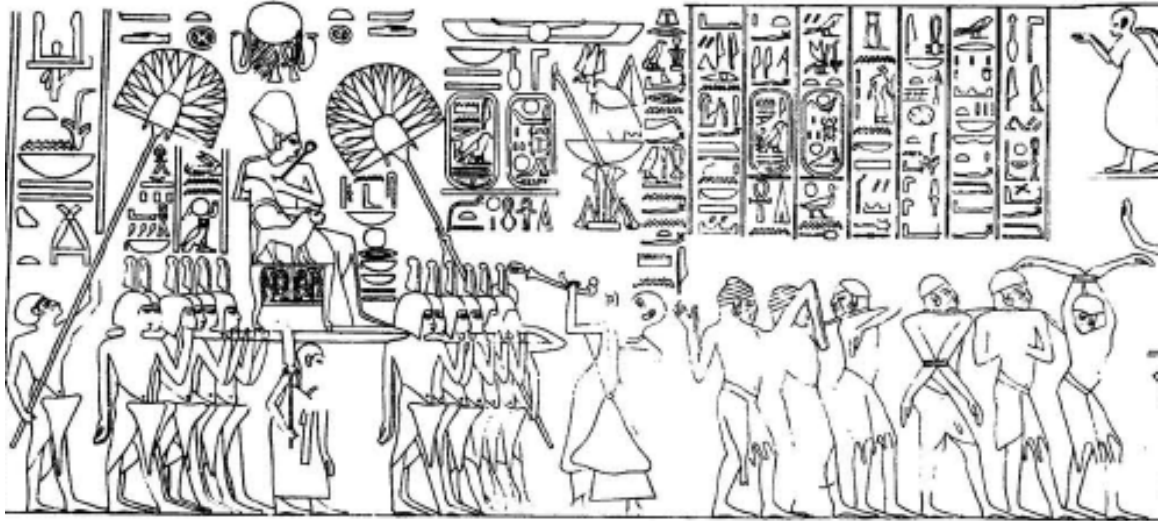
Figure 14: Nubian Captives from Gebel el-Silsila (from Wreszinski, Atlas II, pl. 161; courtesy of Yare Egyptology)

A text above the Nubians, records their praise of the victorious ruler:

> Greetings to you, king of Egypt,
>   Shu[77] for the Nine Bows!
> Your great name is in the land of Kush,
>   your war cry in all of their places!
> It is your power, O good ruler,
>   which has made the foreign lands into heaps of corpses.
> The pharaoh is the light [of the world]![78]

While purely a rhetorical device, it remains possible that such declarations were made as part of a formal ceremony of surrender, as Darnell and Manassa put it,[79] or during a festival of triumph. In the bottom left portion of the scene a Nubian chastises his fellows, calling them children, for being foolish enough to incite the pharaoh's wrath, having previously warned them, saying: "Do not go out, for the

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[77] Referring here to the solar god; thus, a clear reference to the king's duty to uphold Order in keeping with his role in solar religion (see Chapter One).

[78] My translation follows closely after Darnell and Manassa, *Tutankhamun's Armies*, 124, with some minor variations.

[79] Ibid., 124.

lion has already entered into Kush."[80] This textual reference provides a fitting

counterpart to the lion iconography on Horemheb's chair, which as always

conveys notions of supreme predatory power.

Below this scene are two more registers of bound Nubians.[81] The scenes

are badly damaged, but some interesting interactions between captive and

soldier survive in the upper row. One soldier reaches back to slap or punch a

captive in the face. Behind these two, two soldiers each lead a captive along by

the now familiar leash attached to the wrists and necks of the captives. The first

soldier holds a baton, while the last one wields a curved sword. Finally, in the

badly damaged bottom row an especially bizarre depiction survives. This

unfortunate individual has his arms bound in front of his torso with his elbows

bent at a slightly acute angle. His upper arms run roughly parallel to the ground,

smashed up against his head, creating an imaginary triangle if one inserts an

invisible line running from his hands to his shoulders (his elbows being the apex

of the triangle). What is truly unusual about this binding is that his head somehow

faces the opposite direction as he looks up and to the back. In the extreme, this

is physically impossible, but the intent is to show his helplessness by jarring his

head into a disturbing pose.

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[80] Ibid., 124-125.

[81] Thiem, *Speos*, vol. 2: pl. 9. Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen*, 241, I.4; J.-F., Champollion, *Monuments de l'Egytpe et de la Nubie*, vol. II (Paris: 1835-1845), pl. CXIII; K.R. Lepsius, *Denkmaeler aus Aegypten und Aethiopien*, *Volume III: Theban* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1913), 120a; K. R. Lepsius, *Denkmaeler aus Aegypten und Aethiopien, Volume IV: Öberägypten* (Leipzig: Éditions de Belles-Lettres, 1975.), 86(d); PM V: 211 (35); Wreszinski, *Atlas* II, pl. 161f.

The question remains whether all of these scenes are entirely symbolic or refer to some sort of military campaign. It is possible that wars against Nubia and various rebellious vassals in western Asia were fought during Tutankhamun's reign, led by the general at the time and future pharaoh Horemheb. Potential evidence is unfortunately rather indirect but hails from various locations: Tutankhamun's *talatat* from Karnak and his painted box (though highly rhetorical), reliefs from Horemheb's tomb at Memphis (though there is no way to determine if they are related), and the material from Gebel el-Silsila (the closest approximation to a battle relief from a Nubian campaign). If this is true, Tutankhamun was more active in securing Egypt's southern borders than previously believed.[82]

Horemheb also commissioned reliefs detailing battle scenes in his mortuary temple, the blocks of which were later reused in the Temple of Khonsu at Karnak.[83] The Epigraphic Survey published five blocks of these scenes, including one with two partial registers of Nubians contorted into bizarre poses

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[82] For a more extensive and recent examination of this potential campaign, cf. Darnell and Manassa, *Tutankhamun's Armies*, 119-125. Martin also believes much of this evidence (especially the scenes from the tomb in Memphis) implies that a confederation had been formed against Egypt, but failed in the face of Horemheb's campaigns, which were intended to reassert Egypt hegemony in Nubia and western Asia (Martin, *The Hidden Tombs of Memphis*, 79-80).

[83] For more on this phenomenon, as well as the other reused blocks, see L. Borchardt, "Jubilaumsbilder, II, Verbaute Blocke aus dem Chons-Tempel in Karnak," *ZAS* 61 (1926): 37-51; P. Anus, "Un domaine Thebain d'epoque <Amarnienne>," *BIFAO* 69 (1970): 69-88.

nearly identical to those found at Gebel el-Silsila.[84] Johnson has since identified

twelve more battle-themed blocks, including three portraying captives.[85] A series

of Libyans are depicted facing left on catalog no. 57, though the section of the

block containing their bindings has broken off.[86] The bindings of three other

Libyans are visible on catalog no. 65.[87] Two of the three are bound with their

wrists atop one another, one with rope and one with the oval-shaped manacle.

The remaining captive (far left) is bound in unusual fashion with his arms above

his head but his hands at varying levels. Normally, when captives are bound in

this fashion only one hand is visible, indicating that both hands occupy the same

verticality. However, in this case, the captive's right hand extends straight behind

his head in unusual fashion, while his left hangs adjacent to his shoulder, as is

typical of this type of binding. This being the case, his arms were not bound

together at the elbow, though unfortunately no binding is visible.

The most intriguing depiction from this material shows an Egyptian soldier

striking or pushing a Libyan captive under the chin with the handle of his axe.[88]

This captive's arms are in front of him, though the bindings have not survived.

Clearly, the notion here involves forcing the captive to cooperate. Enough

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[84] Epigraphic Survey, *The Temple of Khonsu, Volume 2: Scenes and Inscriptions in the Court and First Hypostyle Hall* (OIP 103. Chicago: The University of Chicago, 1981), pl. 118; Johnson, *An Asiatic Battle Scene of Tutankhamen*, 124-124 and 169-170, catalog no. 51.

[85] Those depicted fallen or slain enemies, such as catalog no. 62 will not be examined here.

[86] Johnson, *An Asiatic Battle Scene of Tutankhamen*, 126 and 175-176, catalog no. 57.

[87] Ibid., 126-127 and 181-182, catalog no. 65.

[88] Ibid., 126 and 175-176, catalog no. 57.

survives of a second captive who is behind him to note the presence once again of the X-shaped, arms behind the back binding. A rope held by the soldier in the same hand as his bow loops around the captive's neck. Thus, this soldier is interacting with both captives as he drags them either before the king or on the march home.

Conclusion

Many elements of the classic Ramesside battle narrative are found on monuments from the 18th Dynasty. Depictions of bound enemies in tumultuous, chaotic, and even torturous or humiliating poses are found in various 18th Dynasty reliefs. Less frequent depictions, like the use of animal-shaped manacles and the showing the face of the captive, have their roots in this time period as well. Though the Ramessides would add many innovations to Egyptian military iconography, the depictions of captives in chariot battle reliefs share much in common with 18th Dynasty examples, particularly those hailing from the latter portion of the 18th Dynasty. The centrality of the bound foreigner motif can be seen throughout the New Kingdom, therefore, and was not solely a Ramesside phenomenon. As with purely rhetorical depictions (Chapter Two), the material discussed here betrays the mindset of the ancient Egyptians as they were fond of presenting the captives in all manner of chaotic and potentially painful poses. Certain unique depictions, such as the captives depicted by Amenhotep II or the Syrian in a cage from Tutankhamun's blocks, showcase the great creativity often involved in these representations. Other examples, like the envoys from Horemheb's Memphite tomb, serve as believable artistic expression

of practices common in the textual record. Overall, the iconography of humiliation in the 18th Dynasty shares much in common with the material from the 19th and 20th Dynasties, the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR: BOUND FOREIGNERS IN RAMESSIDE BATTLE RELIEFS

The remarkable preservation of temples and royal palaces from the Ramesside era period provides an incredible number of battle reliefs ripe for analysis. Specifically, the reign of Seti I marks one of the pinnacles in Egyptian artistic achievement,[1] as well as a shift in military relief sculpture from classic 'smiting' scenes to more specific chariot battle-narratives, which impart more historical details than previous military scenes.[2] Despite obvious ideology, religious themes, and prestige iconography,[3] Egyptologists use these types of scenes in historical reconstructions, focusing their attention on the portions of these reliefs and texts detailing the battle itself.[4] However, the sections portraying bound captives are often glossed over, even though they are equally deserving of analysis and should not be ignored due to the emphasis placed on other aspects of the scenes. This chapter seeks to correct this oversight by

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[1] Peter J. Brand, *The Monuments of Seti I: Epigraphic, Historical and Art Historical Analysis* (Boston: Brill, 2000), 374.

[2] Briefly, these narratives can be summarized as representations of the pharaoh in his chariot conquering foreign foes, often at specific foreign localities. Following the victory, the prisoners are bound and presented to the king before returning to Egypt, where the triumphant pharaoh finally presents his spoils to the gods. The clearest examples of this 'new' art are Seti's scenes on the exterior north wall of the Hypostyle Hall at Karnak, many monuments of Ramesses II, and the spectacular battle scenes on Ramesses III's mortuary temple at Medinet Habu.

[3] Here referring to the presentation of the king as larger-than-life, his unblemished combat record, and his utter invulnerability in battle.

[4] Examples are seemingly unending, including the following studies: R.O. Faulkner, "The Wars of Sethos I," *JEA* 33 (1947): 34-39; Wolfgang Helck, *Die Beziehungen Ägyptens zu Vorderasien im 3. u. 2. Jahrtausend v Chr*. (2nd Edition. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1971); Nicolas Grimal, *Les termes de la propagande royale egyptienne de la XIXe Dynastie a la conquete d'Alexandre* (MAIBL n.s. 6. Paris, 1986); Kenneth A. Kitchen, *Pharaoh Triumphant: The Life and Times of Ramesses II* (Warminster, 1992); William J. Murnane *The Road to Kadesh*[2] (Chicago, 1995); Anthony Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

analyzing the bindings of the captives and their interactions with Egyptian

soldiers or the king.

Politics, Propaganda, and Piety among the Pharaohs and their Subjects

The loud successes of the Ramesside house make it all too easy to forget

that it was founded on unstable ground following on the heels of one of the most

tumultuous periods in Egyptian history. Not only did Ramesses I ascend to the

throne in the wake of the "heretical" rule of Akhenaten, but his ascension also

followed the unusual and less-than-idyllic accessions of Ay and Horemheb.[5]

For his part, Seti went to great lengths to honor both his deceased father

and various individual gods and as a result has been characterized as

exceptionally pious,[6] evident in the frequent portrayal of him bowing, kneeling, or

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[5] Brand, "Ideology and Politics of the Early Ramesside Kings," 24; Murnane, "The Kingship of the Nineteenth Dynasty: A Study in the Resilience of an Institution" in *Ancient Egyptian Kingship* (David O'Connor and David P. Silverman, eds. Leiden, 1995), 186-197; Brand, *The Monuments of Seti I*, 377. Neither Ay of Horemheb could claim direct blood relation to the Thutmosides. In this regard, they are not in all actuality members of the 18th Dynasty. The death of young Tutankhamen left the empire with no true heir. It is safe to say that the early Ramessides faced difficulties not of their own making; primarily, the manner in which the once powerful 18th Dynasty died out. Though Horemheb did much to stabilize the empire, he had no heir which led him to appoint Ramesses I as his successor, perhaps due in part to the fact that Ramesses I already had a son and a grandson, ensuring that a dynasty could rule once more.

In fact, Horemheb may have been the first to seek a separation from the defunct 18th Dynasty. For more see Lanny Bell, "Aspects of the Cult of the Deified Tutankhamun," in *Mélanges Gamal Eddin Mokhtar* 1 (Paule Posener-Kriéger, ed. Cairo: Bibliothèque d'étude, 1985), 31-60; and Murnane, "The Kingship of the Nineteenth Dynasty," 187-188. Additionally, Ramesses I only ruled two years, but he was determined to make a clean break from the later 18th Dynasty. He adopted the prenomen *Men-pehty-Re*, modeling himself after Ahmose, founder of the 18th Dynasty whose prenomen was *Neb-pehty-Re*. See Kenneth A. Kitchen, "The Titularies of the Ramesside Kings as Expression of their Ideal Kingship," *ASAE* 71 (1987): 132.

[6] Brand, *The Monuments of Seti I*, 378. Although some scholars have considered this piety to be a political move, it seems that in Seti's case there was also a strong sense of duty when it came to his predecessor's monuments and the gods of his home region. Cf., Alan H. Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961), 250.

prostrate before the gods.[7] Seti's consummate devoutness was but a drop in the

bucket of the post-Amarna period piousness, as there is an increase of material

manifestations of personal piety among the general populace. This is clearly

evident in the many votive stele and tablets found at the temples of 'God X who

hears' — places where commoners could access the deity without the aid of the

Pharaoh or priests.[8] While the general populace was given very limited access to

the interior of temples, laypeople did have access to the exterior walls of a

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Works at Abydos, Qurna, and Qantara contain Seti's principal works for his father (see Ted Ling, "Ramesside Filial Piety," *BACE* 3 [1992]: 59-63). Dedicatory inscriptions contain fulsome language when describing the relationships between family members. In one such text Ramesses I is moved to rejoicing on account of his being surrounded by his 'beloved brother,' with references also made to other family members — his mother, sisters, etc. — indicating an unusually close and forthcoming royal family. For the text see *KRI* I: 113, 5-7. He also seems to have had a special devotion to his namesake, Seth, as evidenced by his works at Avaris, which was not coincidentally also his hometown. Additionally Seti undertook great building projects at Abydos, Memphis, Heliopolis, and of course Thebes. See also, Labib Habachi, "Sethos I's Devotion to Seth and Avaris," *ZÄS* 100 (1974): 95-102. He also named a division of his army after Seth. See also, Brand, *Monuments of Seti I*, 373; *KRI* I: 15-17; Kitchen, *Pharaoh Triumphant*, 174-175; Nicholas Grimal, *A History of Ancient Egypt* (Ian Shaw, trans., Oxford, 1992), 246-247.

[7] Epigraphic Survey, *Reliefs and Inscriptions at Karnak, Volume IV: The Battle Reliefs of King Sety I* (OIP 107. Chicago: The Oriental Institute,1986), 77-78.

[8] This may be due to a plague that afflicted the whole Near East during the Amarna period. See Murnane, *The Road to Kadesh*[2], 28-30. Murnane notes that this plague surely affected Hatti and was still running rampant some twenty years later. A plague would certainly give the common man ample reason to turn to his gods, especially if he viewed the plague as a potential result of heresy, as one might in the post-Amarna period. For that matter, fear is a common motivating factor for religious renewal, both then and now. For more on post-Amarna general piety see also Jan Assmann, "State and Religion in the New Kingdom," in *Religion and Philosophy in Ancient Egypt* (James P. Allen et al., eds. New Haven, CT: Yale Egyptological Studies 3, 1989) 55-88. See also, Ashraf I. Sadek, *Popular Religion in Egypt during the New Kingdom* (Hildesheim: Gerstenberg Verlag, 1999), 16-20.

temple.[9] The depictions of bound enemies were highly visible, a public display of pharaonic, and by extension Egyptian, dominance.

Remembering that the Ramessides were commoners with military backgrounds who rose to power through appointment,[10] it is not surprising that they were especially devout rulers who provided places of worship for the common person.[11] Scenes on the exterior walls, gateways, first inner courtyards and the like were clearly accessible to commoners and became foci for Ramesside piety.[12] Though the various decorations were primarily intended for the gods' eyes, these types of public areas could contain scenes meant for the eyes of people;[13] thus, they were enticing to the Egyptians as a potential objects

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[9] Peter J. Brand, "Veils Votives and Marginalia: The Use of Sacred Space at Karnak and Luxor," in *Sacred Space and Sacred Function in Ancient Thebes* (Occasional Proceedings of the Theban Workshop, SAOC 61. P. F. Dorman & B. M. Bryan, eds. Chicago, 2007), 60. Additionally, Ramesses II refers to the Hypostyle Hall at Karnak Temple as "a place where the common people extol the name of His Majesty," while his temple at Abydos is called "a place of prayer, of hearing petitions by gods and men" (Charles Francis Nims, "Popular Religion in Ancient Egyptian Temples, " in *Proceedings of the Twenty-Third International Congress of Orientalists* [Denis Sinor, ed. Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons, Ltd., August 21st-28th, 1954], 79). Several generations later at Medinet Habu, Ramesses III made special provisions for 'Ptah of the Great Gateway,' also known as 'Ptah, Hearer of Prayer,' as the presence of three private stele and two scenes indicates (Ibid., 80).

[10] Perhaps the fact that Seti lived most of his life as a non-royal perhaps heightened his desire to show "the same pious humility towards the gods as private individuals did" (Brand, "Ideology and Politics of the Early Remesside Kings," 26).

[11] Sadek, *Popular Religion*, 47. The $rhy.t$ — ordinary people — could "be admitted so far into the outer courts and precinct of even the great temples, to show their devotion to the gods."

[12] Brand, "Veils Votives and Marginalia," 65.

[13] Lanny Bell, "The New Kingdom 'Divine' Temple: The Example of Luxor," in *Temples of Ancient Egypt* (Byron E. Shafer, ed. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), 135.

of veneration.[14] The high degree of accessibility to these monuments is indicative of not only the value placed on this iconography by pharaohs, but also the type of images the populace found entertaining and/or religiously significant. Much as modern scholars and tourists alike find battle reliefs engaging, so too might the Egyptian people have been awed by these displays of pharaonic power.

A Genre Grows: The Reliefs of Seti I

As the splendid reliefs on the northern exterior wall of the Hypostyle Hall at Karnak Temple attest, the battle narrative genre ascended to new heights under Seti I both in artistic quality and in becoming the representational device of choice for recounting the mighty military deeds of pharaoh.[15] These reliefs commemorate a series of campaigns undertaken against Asiatics and Libyans and have been analyzed by a number of historians and art historians seeking to

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[14] Brand, "Veils Votives and Marginalia," 60. Brand is also able to demonstrate that the Ramessides changed the great Theban temples. In the 18th Dynasty, sacred buildings do not have exterior wall reliefs. But starting with Seti I, 19th Dynasty pharaohs used the exterior walls of temples to display their piety (as well as their valor), often in the form of battle scenes (see p. 64-65).

[15] For the location of the scenes, see Harold H. Nelson, *Key Plans Showing Locations of Theban Temple Decorations* (OIP 56. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1941), pl. 4. For the scenes themselves see Epigraphic Survey, *The Battle Reliefs of King Sety I*; *GHHK* I.1; Susanna Constanze Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches: Eine Bildanalyse* (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Eissenschaften, 2001), 242-252; Wreszinski, *Atlas* II, pls. 34, 36-37, 39, 40, 42-43, 45-48, 50-53, 61.

understand the events recorded therein, the geography of the eastern frontier of Egypt, the dress of the king and combatants, and so on.[16]

A plethora of depictions of bound captives have survived, demonstrating once more the prominence of this motif. This discussion will follow the standard ordering of the campaigns, which is as follows based on the enemy people group or locale: Shasu Bedouin,[17] Jenoam,[18] Kadesh/Amurru,[19] Libyans,[20] and

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[16] The issues raised in these treatments lie beyond the scope of this present work, but see the following for a sampling of the scholarly investigation into these important reliefs: Faulkner, "The Wars of Sethos I," 34-39; Gaballa, *Narrative Art*; Helck, *Die Beziehungen*, 189-194; Anthony J. Spalinger, "The Northern Wars of Seti I: An Integrative Study," *JARCE* 16 (1979): 29-46; Clive Broadhurst, "An Artistic Interpretation of Sety I's War Reliefs," *JEA* 75 (1989): 229-234; Murnane *The Road to Kadesh*[2], 39-50; Hassan M. El-Saady, "The Wars of Sety I at Karnak: A New Chronological Structure," *SAK* 19 (1992): 285-294; James K. Hoffmeier, "Tell el-Borg on Egypt's Eastern Frontier: A Preliminary Report on the 2002 and 2004 Seasons," *JARCE* 41 (2004): 85-111; James K. Hoffmeier and Lyla Pinch-Brock, "A New Chariot Scene from Tell el-Borg," *JSSEA* 32 (2005): 81-94; Évelyne Faivre-Martin, "À propos du style ramesside et de la postérité amarnienne," *Égypte: Afrique et Orient* 39 (2005): 35-40; Agnès Degrève, "La campagne asiatique de l'an 1 de Séthy I représentée sur le mur exterior nord de la sale hypostyle du temple d'Amon à Karnak," *RdÉ* 57 (2006): 47-76. For publications pre-dating Faulkner's article, see PM[2] II, 53-57. Additional references can also be found in Murnane, *The Road to Kadesh*[2], 40, n. 8.

[17] Epigraphic Survey, *The Battle Reliefs of King Sety I*, pls. 2-8; Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen*, 242-244, I.1-2, I.4-5; Gaballa, *Narrative Art*, 100-101, fig. 7; R. Giveon, *Les Bédouins Shosou des Documents Égyptiens* (Leiden, 1971), 53ff, pl. V; *KRI* I: 6-12; *RIK* IV: 5ff, pls. 2, 4-6, 8; PM II[2], 35f (166), 54f (167); Wreszinski, *Atlas* II, pl. 34, 36, 39-40, 42-44.

[18] Epigraphic Survey, *The Battle Reliefs of King Sety I*, pls. 9-14; Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen*, 245-246, I.6-11; Gaballa, *Narrative Art*, 101-102, fig. 7; *KRI* I, 13-15; *RIK* IV, 28-45, pls. 9, 11-14, 25B; PM II[2], 53-54 (166-167); Wreszinski, *Atlas* II, pl. 34, 36-37.

[19] Epigraphic Survey, *The Battle Reliefs of King Sety I*, pls. 23-26; Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen*, 247-248, I.12-15; Gaballa, *Narrative Art*, 103; *KRI* I, 24; *RIK* IV, 79-85, 115-116, pl. 23-26; PM II[2], 56-57 (169); Wreszinski, *Atlas* II, pl. 53.

[20] Epigraphic Survey, *The Battle Reliefs of King Sety I*, pls. 28-32; Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen*, 248-250, I.16-20; Gaballa, *Narrative Art*, 102; *KRI* I, 20-24; *RIK* IV, 88-98ff, pls. 27-29, 31-34; PM II[2], 56-57 (169); Wreszinski, *Atlas* II, pl. 50-52.

Hittites.[21] Furthermore, due to the ubiquity of the bound foreigner motif in

Ramesside reliefs, the discussion below will highlight only those depictions which

are considerably unique or bizarre or involve interactions between the king or

soldiers and the captives. Each depiction will be subsequently tabulated,

demonstrating the frequency of various depictions under the different Egyptian

rulers.[22]

Approximately thirty-five captives are depicted in Seti's campaign against

the Shasu Bedouin (Table 1).[23] On the voyage back to Egypt, three registers of

bound enemies march before the king who rides in his chariot as he leads an

additional three captives by a leash (Figure 15). The third captive from the right is

bound with the oval-shaped manacle, and his face is turned toward the viewer,

perhaps indicating that he was a leader of the Shasu. Overall the scene is

incredibly detailed. Seemingly insignificant details — fingers, hair, etc. — are

exquisitely rendered are especially visible in the well-preserved second register.

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[21] Epigraphic Survey, *The Battle Reliefs of King Sety I*, pls. 33-36; Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen*, 250-251, I.21-24; *KRI* I, 17-20; *RIK* IV, 104-11, pls. 33-36; Wreszinski, *Atlas* II, pl. 45-49.

[22] For a useful categorization of the types of bindings used including examples, see also Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen*, 165-169. Heinz categorizes the captives based on the whether their shoulders are in side profile or not and the relationship between their arms and their torsos. As her primary interest lies in the artistic variety displayed, she has very little to say about their potential historical value or the damage to the human body intended in such depictions, nor does she mention which poses are the most common. Nevertheless, her work remains an important contribution to the study of battle narratives, and her attention to the captives is to be applauded.

[23] It is important to note that the total number of captives is often difficult to determine due to the scenes being damaged (weathered, broken off, etc.). In general, I have counted any captive whose arms or face are visible, as either usually provides enough information to theorize about the depiction type. I have not counted captives whose legs are all that remains as in nearly every case the captives are standing or walking, and thus the legs are not informative regarding the types of binding.

In each register, a single captive faces the opposite direction as his fellows. As the bindings vary for each of these captives, it is likely that these are three different captives. The fact that they look back instead of forward was probably done for visual variety, as a way to further show the chaotic nature of the helpless enemies. Upon returning to Egypt, Seti presents two rows of captives to Amun. Nothing unusual is evident in their bindings, which contain the usual assortment of standard bindings alongside bizarre or torturous ones.

Figure 15: Seti I Returning to Egypt with Shasu Captives (courtesy of Dr. Peter J. Brand)

From this time on, pharaohs are regularly depicted as participants in the binding process, as in one scene from Seti's battles against Jenoam.[24] The scene is badly damaged, but several captives are depicted, including two whose faces are shown (one on each side of the king), as the king completes the binding process. It is impossible to say with any certainty whether or not Egyptian

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[24] Epigraphic Survey, *The Battle Reliefs of King Sety I*, pl. 12; Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen*, 156-158 and 245, I.8.

kings were in fact involved in binding vanquished foes, but it seems unlikely that

they would have partaken in such activity considering their elevated status.

Instead, it is far more reasonable to assume that scenes of this type are

rhetorical devices illustrating the king's complete subjugation of enemy forces in

an active way post-battle.

Consulting Table 1, the lion manacle is used only on the return scene from

the battle against Jenoam, appearing in on the second captive in both registers.

This may simply be a matter of artistic variety, but the obvious symbolism of the

lion in pharaonic art leaves open the possibility that these captives are somehow

significant as they are bound by the very might of the king as represented by the

powerful, predatory lion. In other cases, the oval-shaped manacle is preferred,

with one exception: a vague animal depicted in the Shasu presentation scene.

Table 1: Captives from the Wars of Seti I (Karnak Temple)[25]

Campaign, Context (total # of captives)	Standard Binding[26] (A1, C1-3, E1)	X-Shaped Pose (E2)	Painful, Arms Below/ Level with Head[27] (A2-5 A7-11, B1-6, B10-11, E3)	Painful, Arms Above Head (A-6, B7-9, D3-4, E4-7)	Showing the Face of the Captive[28]	Captive Looks Back or Up	Manacle (type) (D1)

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[25] "A1" and the like refer to the catalog found in Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen*, 165-169. Also note that later tables will not repeat this information.

[26] Here referring to any of the following poses: the arms bound straight behind the back or in front of the captive, elbows bent behind the back at roughly a ninety-degree angle with fists adjacent to chest, or elbows slightly bent.

[27] With so many of the depictions likely exaggerated for effect or due to the limitations of two-dimensional art, this category can be somewhat elusive to define. In

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Campaign, Context (total # of captives)	Standard Binding[26] (A1, C1-3, E1)	X-Shaped Pose (E2)	Painful, Arms Below/Level with Head[27] (A2-5 A7-11, B1-6, B10-11, E3)	Painful, Arms Above Head (A-6, B7-9, D3-4, E4-7)	Showing the Face of the Captive[28]	Captive Looks Back or Up	Manacle (type) (D1)
Shasu, Return (24)	9	1	8	3	1	3	3 (oval)
Shasu, Presentation (11)	3	2	2	2	0		1 (oval); 1 (animal)
Jenoam, post-Battle (3)	1	0	2	0	2	0	0
Jenoam, Return Trip (10)	4	0	2	2		1	2 (lion)
Jenoam, Presentation to Gods (15)	4	2	0	5	0	0	4 (oval)
Kadesh/Amurru, Return Trip (3)	2	1	0	0	0	0	0
Kadesh/Amurru, Presentation (7)	4	1	1	1	0	0	0
Libyan, Return Trip (23)	6	7	3	2	0	0	4 (oval)
Libyan, Presentation (13)	6	4	2	2	0	0	4 (oval)
Hittite, Return (25)	6	5	2	5	0	0	5 (oval)
Hittite, Presentation (13)	4	2	3	3	0	2	1 (oval)
TOTALS:	**49**	**25**	**25**	**25**	**3**	**6**	**22 (oval) 2 (lion) 1 (animal)**

simplest terms, these are bindings that immediately bring to mind notions of extreme discomfort, debilitating injury, or give the impression that such a pose would be physically impossible. Another way to describe these poses is that they are chaotic to the extreme.

[28] This category and the one that follows overlap with several others and should not be used to calculate the total number of captives. Subsequent tables will follow this numbering convention.

Even more interesting, in the return from Jenoam scene, Seti I physically carries four captives as he walks along behind his empty chariot (Figure 16). Such a literally impossible depiction speaks once more to the great creativity of the Egyptians in showing the pharaoh's dominance over captives. They are as squabbling children in the arms of an indignant father, so futile is their resistance to the all-powerful king. Seti even manages all this while carrying two icons of kingship (crook and flail) and the reigns of his horse team.

Figure 16: Seti Returning to Egypt Carrying Captive from Jenoam (Courtesy of Dr. Peter J. Brand)

The blocks containing captives from Seti's campaign against Kadesh/ Amurru are badly damaged and do not contain any noteworthy depictions. The captives depicted from Seti's Libyan wars are numerous, containing many painful

poses. Each pose has been previously discussed (Chapters Two and Three),

requiring no further comment here. That said, it is important to note several

aspects of this campaign. First, Seti duels a Libyan leader. Here the presence of

the sickle sword speaks not only to Seti's victory, which was never in doubt, but

also provides a focus for ritual activity. An apparent ritual spearing of a Libyan

leader after battle follows in the next scene.[29] In the return scene, the Libyans are

located in front of the king's chariot, just as with the Bedouin (the least

technologically advanced foe), and in contrast to their locations in return scenes

from the other campaigns. This might be to emphasize that the Libyans are even

more incompetent than Seti's other non-Bedouin foes. Finally, Seti's chariot is

decorated with Libyan heads, which cannot be said of the other campaigns (see

Chapter Two).

The scene detailing the return to Egypt from Seti's campaign against the

Hittites does, however, contain several unique depictions (Figure 17). This is

fitting, as with the Hittites, Seti has reached the pinnacle of Egyptian enemies.

With one foot on the ground and one in his chariot, Seti reaches back, leading

three groups of captives by a rope, while two rows of captives march before the

king. This conveys a profound sense of movement and shows his prowess, as he

is able to control the captives even as he climbs into the cab of his chariot. The

entire composition is a "study in the balancing of opposing elements."[30] Even as

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[29] It is likely this is a second Libyan leader, with the first having submitted and
been subsequently executed during battle. See Anthony J. Spalinger, *Icons of Power: A
Strategy of Reinterpretation* (Prague: Charles University, Faculty of Arts, 2011), 41-45
for more. The notion of ritual slaying will be examined in the following chapter.

[30] Epigraphic Survey, *The Battle Reliefs of King Sety I*, 107.

the captives and Seti's horses and chariot face left, the king himself faces right, highlighting his centrality to the entire tableau. The first group of captives evidences three different bindings; two are quite clear: an oval manacle and a severe elbows-bent, hands parallel with the shoulders pose. Though it is difficult to ascertain, it appears the middle captive was bound in the 'X-shaped' pose. Unfortunately, the portion of the reliefs containing the individual's hands has broken off, making it difficult to determine if his arms were bound behind his back (most likely) or in front of his torso (possible but less likely).

Behind this group are two registers, each containing two captives riding in a single chariot for a total of four individuals. In each case, one captive is bound in painful fashion with his arms above his head while the others' arms are at torso-level: one bound with the oval-shaped manacle, the other in the 'X-shaped' pose. This last captive (bottom right) may provide a clue to the damaged bindings of the middle prisoner from the group of three mentioned above. Due to his thumbs facing his body, this 'X-shaped' pose is in fact in front of his torso and not behind his back, as is more common. It may be that the middle captive would have been bound in a similar fashion. The javelin containers in each chariot are naturally empty, a further indication of the captives' submission. Finally, the use of their own chariots for the transportation of the captives emphasizes Seti's victory over opponents with comparable abilities and technology as the Egyptians. Seti has essentially kept any naysayers from claiming the pharaoh won by superior technology.
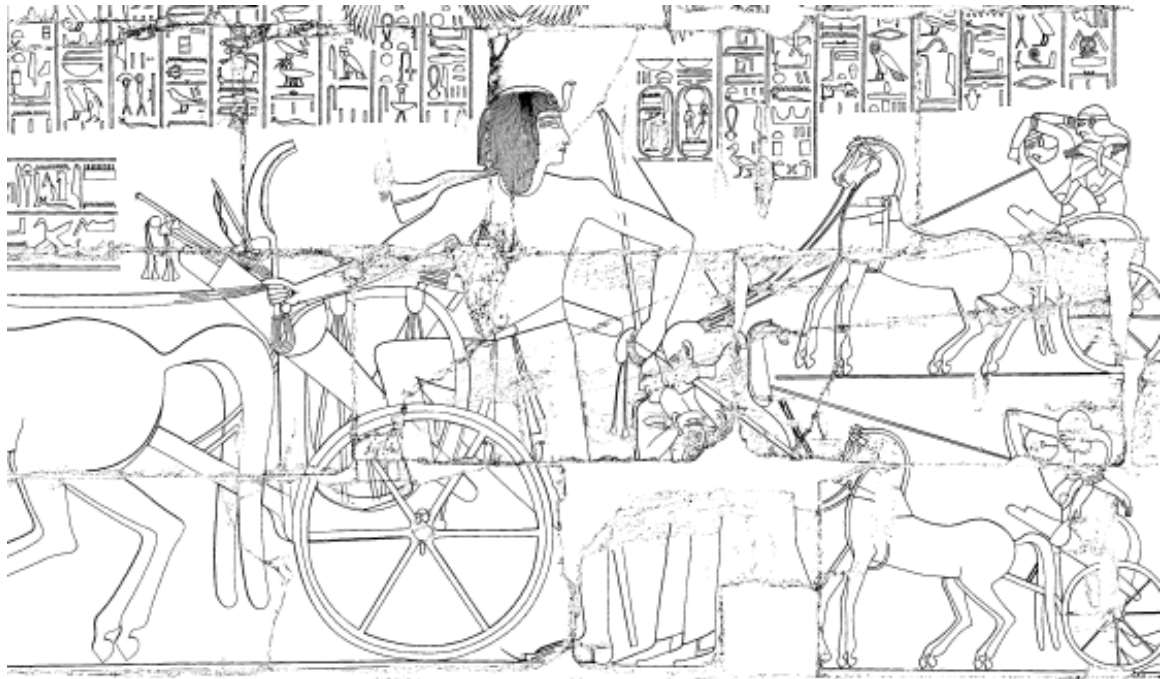
Figure 17: Seti Returns with Hittites (after Epigraphic Survey, The Battle Reliefs of King Sety I, pl. 35)

Returning to Table 1, it is curious that many more captives are displayed in post-battle and return scenes than presentation scenes (88 vs. 65). This may be a clue that more captives from the wars of Seti I were brought back to Egypt than were presented to the gods. It could also be due to the allocation of space on the wall, as the presentation scene requires space for the gods as well as the captives and king. Additionally, it is telling that slightly more torturous poses (75 total) are evidenced than standard bindings (74).[31] That said, for all intents and purposes and keeping in mind the difficulty of determining bindings for

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[31] Torturous poses are calculated by adding up the number of depictions for the following categories: Arms Bound in X-Shaped Pose, and Elbows Disjointed columns, but not Showing the Face, and Looking Back or Up due to the aforementioned overlap. I have considered standard bindings and the use of manacles to be non-torturous, straightforward bindings.

fragmentary portions, the totals are essentially identical. At the very least this demonstrates that with Seti's reliefs there was an equal fondness for painful or chaotic poses and straightforward bindings. It must be stressed that depictions of captives in battle reliefs do not directly correlate to the actual number of enemies captured. Still, such data remains informative regarding the artistic patterns and cultural values of the ancient Egyptians.

Ramesses II: Egypt's Prolific Builder Captures Multitudes

The Beit el-Wali Reliefs of Ramesses II and Other Miscellaneous Reliefs

Egypt's most prolific builder not surprisingly depicted a plethora of captives. This discussion will consider the small temples of Ramesses II first, followed by miscellaneous reliefs from Karnak Temple and Luxor Temple, before finally addressing the multitudes captured after the Battle of Kadesh.

Despite its relatively small size, the temple of Ramesses II at Beit el-Wali contains reliefs depicting each of the three classic enemies of Egypt—Nubians,[32]

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[32] Gaballa, *Narrative Art*, 112; Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen*, 261, V.6-7; *KRI* II, 198-199; PM VII, 23 (6)-(7); Herbert Ricke, George R. Hughes, and Edward F. Wente, *The Beit el-Wali Temple of Ramesses II* (The University of Chicago Press, 1967), 10-13, pls. 8-9; *RITA*, 61-62; G. Roeder, *Der Felsentempel von Beit el Wali* (Les Temples Immergés. Cairo, 1938), 24ff, 31ff, pls. 25ff, 30ff; Anthony J. Spalinger, "Historical Observations on the Military Reliefs of Abu Simbel and Other Ramesside Temples in Nubia," *JEA* 66 (1980), 89; Wreszinski, *Atlas* II, pls. 165-166.

Asiatics,[33] and Libyans.[34] On the south wall are two scenes devoted to Nubians, who flee from the pharaoh in one scene and present tribute in the other. Unlike Ramesses' other foes, the disorganized Nubians put up no resistance, and no leader emerges to rival Ramesses II.[35] They are utterly routed, fleeing for their homes with the king in pursuit. One Nubian is even tended to by a woman with two children. Thus, they are so incompetent that they have even led the king to their homes and families, a particularly apposite reflection of the Egyptians' *topos* perception of the incompetence of Nubians (see Chapter Two).

The second scene is a tribute scene,[36] rather than a return scene or presentation to the gods, another difference between the Nubian and Asiatic campaigns. Ramesses himself occupies both registers as he sits on his throne. His son leads the procession, but gestures backward to the victorious viceroy of Kush, Amenemope (son of Paser) who is rewarded with gold collars. Behind and below him come the exotic spoils of war, including lions, monkeys, children, and prisoners. Only two prisoners are depicted (Figure 18); the other Nubians are unbound. These two prisoners are each led by an Egyptian soldier. The first is

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[33] Gaballa, *Narrative Art*, 112; Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen*, 259-260, V.2-5; *KRI* II, 195-197; PM VII, 23-24 (8)-(9); Ricke et al., *The Beit el-Wali Temple of Ramesses II*, 13-14, 16-17, pls. 10-13, 15; *RITA*, 59-61; G. Roeder, *Der Felsentempel von Beit el Wali*, 8ff, pls. 15ff, 23ff; Spalinger, "Ramesside Temples in Nubia," 90; Wreszinski, *Atlas* II, pls. 163-164.

[34] Gaballa, *Narrative Art*, 112; Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen*, 259, V.1; *KRI* II, 196-197; PM VII, 23-24 (8)-(9); Ricke et al., *The Beit el-Wali Temple of Ramesses II*, 14-15, pls. 10, 14; *RITA*, 60; G. Roeder, *Der Felsentempel von Beit el Wali*, 16ff, pls. 22; Spalinger, "Ramesside Temples in Nubia," 90; Wreszinski, *Atlas* II, pls. 164a.

[35] Ricke et al., *The Beit el-Wali Temple of Ramesses II*, pl. 8; Spalinger, *Icons of Power*, 28-30.

[36] Ricke et al., *The Beit el-Wali Temple of Ramesses II*, pl. 9.

restrained in an otherwise not attested manner. Though badly damaged, it is clear that a wooden catchpole of some sort was clasped around his neck with his wrist also inserted into the device at approximately the same height as his throat. This unique treatment is perhaps meant to emphasize this captive as an enemy chieftain. If so, it is curious that no leader is present in the previous scene. It is possible, in keeping with Egyptian ideology relating to Nubians, that this was done to highlight the cowardliness of the leader. Though he was afraid to face the king in battle, the Egyptians will drag him into Ramesses' presence via an unusually restrictive device. The other captive is bound with the standard oval manacle. The solider responsible for him turns back towards the captive with his hand raised in an instructive, or perhaps threatening, gesture. Finally, the presence of monkeys and children is perhaps ideologically significant, reflecting the Egyptian view that the Nubians are as unruly and disorganized as children or even animals.[37] The children and monkeys are depicted in various states of activity, as the ever-chaotic Nubians are seemingly incapable of attaining control over their children and pets.

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[37] This view is set forth in Spalinger, *Icons of Power*, 30. Of course, monkeys were common in this region and could thus be expected as part of an exotic tribute scene.

Figure 18: Nubian Captives from Beit el-Wali (courtesy of Dr. Peter J. Brand)

Five scenes depicting the king in various states of activity against Asiatics and Libyans adorn the north wall of the entrance hall.[38] The westernmost scene depicts three captives being led before the king (Figure 19).[39] They walk tip-toed as the king drags them forward. The bindings are clear on only the center captive who is bound with a lion-shaped manacle, which the Egyptian soldier grasps. The right arm of the captive to the left is partially visible and mimics the angle of the center captive, so it can safely be assumed he was also bound by a manacle, likely another lion-shaped one. The captive at the rear appears to be constrained in some sort of elbows disjointed pose with his arms below his head. His left shoulder is fully visible, but not his arms. Thus, he cannot have been bound in

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[38] Ricke et al., *The Beit el-Wali Temple of Ramesses II*, pl 10. Determining the relationship of these to one another is difficult and goes beyond the scope of this study. That said, it seems likely that these scenes can be equated with reliefs elsewhere. connected to Seti I's campaigns discussed above. For more see, Spalinger, "Ramesside Temples in Nubia," 88-90; William J. Murnane, *Ancient Egyptian Coregencies* (Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization 40, Chicago: University of Chicago, 1977), 60-61.

[39] Ricke et al., *The Beit el-Wali Temple of Ramesses II*, 16, pl. 15.

the standard elbows bent, X-shaped bindings, or with a manacle which always shows the torso in a fully frontal view (though not the face). Finally, the king's pet lion rests passively at his feet.

To the right of this scene, Ramesses grasps a Libyan leader by the hair with one hand as his other hand wields the sickle sword.[40] Rather than having his arm raised high, as is typical of smiting scenes, Ramesses has already brought the sword down to the level of the captive's forehead. Thus, the king is about to decapitate this Libyan instigator. A small dog bites the Libyan's buttock, another form of humiliation. Against more fearsome opponents, the king's lion or lioness might be expected to take part in a similar fashion, but perhaps against this powerless Libyan, a small canine will do. Finally, the presence of the dog brings to mind hunting scenes, which also demonstrate the king's victory over chaos.

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[40] Ibid., pl. 14.

Figure 19: Asiatics Captives from Beit el-Wali (courtesy of Dr. Peter J. Brand)

It should also be noted that just as with the reliefs of Seti I at Karnak, the king is not shown fighting Libyans from his chariot. Instead, there is a duel of sorts, which of course the Egyptian king wins. This is in fact a common New Kingdom method of representation for battle against Libyans; often no chariot is

needed. The slaughter of the Libyan leader symbolizes the defeat of his entire

force, yet in a highly individualized manner. In this same fashion, the Great

Karnak Inscription of Merenptah speaks of a personal perspective in the defeat of

the Libyan chief Mery, who has an emotional breakdown and collapses on the

field of battle upon realizing his defeat is imminent.[41] In both word and image,

one can observe an apotropaic rite, disempowering the foe. Finally, all of this

contributes to the minimizing of the Libyan threat. They are of less power than

pharaoh's northern foes.

In the center of the wall are two scenes which show the king attacking

Asiatics. In one he grasps two by their hair, wielding the sickle sword high above

them, as he rides in his chariot.[42] Enemies flee from his chariot, and several are

trampled. Their headdresses and lack of armor suggest that they are Bedouin. In

the second scene, Ramesses II attacks a Syrian city or fortress in the classic

smiting scene pose.[43] Defenders beg for mercy and topple from the walls.

The final scene depicts the triumph of Ramesses II over northern foes and

one Libyan (Figure 20).[44] This composition is a post-battle presentation of

captives to the victorious king, a culmination of his northern wars. Spatial

constraints kept the artisans from showing a similar scene with Ramesses

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[41] Colleen Manassa, *The Great Karnak Inscription of Merneptah: Grand Strategy in the 13th Century BC* (Yale Egyptological Studies 5. New Haven, CT: The Yale Egyptological Seminar, 2003), 47-48. See also, Lopreino, *Topos und Mimesis*, 35-40; Spalinger, *Icons of Power*, 82-83.

[42] Ricke et al., *The Beit el-Wali Temple of Ramesses II*, pl. 13.

[43] Ibid., pl. 12.

[44] Ibid., pl. 14.

presenting his spoils to the gods. Instead, here it is the king's son who leads four captives into Ramesses' presence. The first captive is a Libyan bound with his elbows bent sharply behind his back, his wrists tied to his arm just under his armpit. The second captive assumes the standard elbows bent pose with a minor variant of his elbows being slightly higher than usual, as his torso leans further forward than is typical. The third is shown in full frontal position with his arms bound in the familiar X-shaped pose. This is another example where the Egyptians have broken convention regarding the direction the thumbs face. Only the legs of the final captive are visible.

For his part, Ramesses stands on a board placed on top of two prostrate captives, an Asiatic and a Libyan. He holds an axe in one hand, peacefully resting it against his shoulder. His other hand holds a bow while he grasps the heads of three kneeling enemies. Two of these captives are bound in standard fashion, while the third has his arms straight out in front of him with his elbows bent at approximately a ninety-degree angle; his fists nearly touch his knees.

Figure 20: Ramesses II Triumphs over Asiatics & Libyans (courtesy of Peter J. Brand)

Though the reliefs from Beit el-Wali do not contain a large quantity of depictions of captives, the great variety in the types of depictions and the unique treatment of select foreigners points once more to the great flexibility and creativity the Egyptians used when portraying enemy prisoners. As with the reliefs of Seti I, notions of sequence, movement, and real-life interaction between Egyptians and enemies are co-mingled with iconic, stereotypical and ideological images of pharaonic power.

In addition to his works at Luxor Temple, Karnak Temple, and at various locations concerning the Battle of Kadesh (discussed below), Ramesses also

commissioned battle reliefs at the Great Temple at Abu Simbel,[45] the Temple to Seti I at Abydos,[46] Aksha,[47] Amara,[48] and Derr.[49] Depictions of bound foreigners from these locations (and Beit el-Wali) are tabulated as follows in Table 2, with comments on certain unique bindings to follow:

Table 2: Captives in the Miscellaneous Works of Ramesses II

Location, Campaign, Context (total # of captives)	Standard Binding	X-Shaped Pose	Painful, Arms Below/Level with Head	Painful, Arms Above Head	Showing the Face of the Captive	Captive Looks Back or Up	Manacle (type)
Abu Simbel, Nubian, Return (14)	6	3	5	4	0	4	0
Abu Simbel, Nubian Pres.	5	0	6	2	0	4	1 (oval)

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[45] Gaballa, *Narrative Art*, 113; Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen*, 252, I.1-4; *KRI* II, 206-208; PM VII, 102-104 (39)-(40), (43); *RITA*, 67-68; Spalinger, "Ramesside Temples in Nubia," 86-87; Wreszinski, *Atlas* II, pls. 180-183.

[46] A. Rosalie David, *Religious Ritual at Abydos* (London: Warminster, 1973), 12-17; Gaballa, *Narrative Art*, 113, 143; E.B. Ghazouli, "The Palace and Magazines Attached to the Temple of Sety I at Abydos and the Façade of this Temple," *ASAE* 58 (1964): 172-186, pls. XXIXA-B, XXXA; Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen*, 253-255, II.1-12; *KRI* II, 188-191; PM VI, 1 (3)-(6); *RITA* 54-56; Wreszinski, *Atlas* II, pls. 25a-c.

[47] P. Fuscaldo, "Aksha (Serra West): La datación del sitio," *REE* 3 (1992): 5-34, figs. 16, 18; pls. XVIII-XIX; Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen*, 256-257, III.1-8; J. Vercoutter, "Preliminary Report of the Excavation at Aksha by the F.A.A.E. 1961," *Kush* 10 (1962): 101-116.

[48] H.W. Fairman, "The Recent Excavations at Amarah West," *The Connoisseur* 103 (1939): 322-328; Gaballa, *Narrative Art*, 107-108; Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen*, 257-258, IV.1-IV.5; *KRI* I, 213, 221-222; PM VII, 161, (29)-(31), 164; *RITA*, 72-73, 77; P. Spencer, *Amara West I. The Architectural Report* (London, 1997), 18-19, 39, pls. 11-12, 36c-d.

[49] A.M. Blackman, "Preliminary Report on the Excavations at Sesebi, Northern Province, Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, 1936-37," *JEA* 23 (1937), 145-151, pls. III-V, XIII-XV; Gaballa, *Narrative Art*, 112; Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen*, 262-264, VI.1-10; *KRI* II, 202-204; PM VII, 85 (2)-(5); *RITA* 64-65; Spalinger, "Ramesside Temples in Nubia," 93-94, 98; Wreszinski, *Atlas* II, pl. 168a.

Location, Campaign, Context (total # of captives)	Standard Binding	X-Shaped Pose	Painful, Arms Below/Level with Head	Painful, Arms Above Head	Showing the Face of the Captive	Captive Looks Back or Up	Manacle (type)
Abydos, Asiatic, Return (10)[50]	6	1	1	3	1	0	1 (oval)
Aksha, Asiatic (?), Unknown (3)[51]	1	0	1	0	0	0	1 (oval)
Amara, Nubian, Return (3)	2	0	1	0	0	0	0
Beit el-Wali,[52] *Asiatic, Celebration* (6)	4	1	1	0	0	0	0
Beit el-Wali, Asiatic, Presentation (3)	0	0	1	0	0	0	1 (lion) 1 (?[53])
Beit el-Wali, Nubian, Presentation (2)	0	0	0	0	0	0	1 (oval) 1 (catchpole)
Derr, Asiatic, Presentation (4)	0	1	1	2	0	0	0
Derr, Nubian, Battle (4)	2	1	0	0	0	0	1 (oval)
TOTALS:	**28**	**7**	**17**	**11**	**1**	**8**	**5 (oval) 1 (lion) 1(?) 1(catch-pole)**

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[50] Not included are the purely rhetorical depictions of captives under the feet of the king from battle scene against Asiatics. All of these prisoners are bound using the standard elbows bent binding. Nor are the captives from the presentation scene included as only their legs and feet survive, so no bindings are existent.

[51] Of these very fragmentary depictions only the arms and torso survive, making it possible to catalog the binding-type but providing no ethnic markers nor post-battle context. Heinz's suggestion that they come from a victory celebration, while vague, is most likely accurate as that is the expected context for the use of the manacle (Heinz, *Die Feldszugsdarstellungen*, 257, III.8.

[52] No scenes with smiting scene iconography are included since none of the enemies are bound. Also, this scene contains a depiction of one Libyan. Finally, as before, the prostrate captives under the king's feet are not included in the total.

[53] Due to the overlapping-captives effect, only the outer arm of the captive is visible. The angle suggests a manacle device, but since the manacle is not depicted it could be either a lion or the standard oval.

Much like with the reliefs of Seti I, in these smaller temples, Ramesses II depicted captives in chaotic or torturous poses at roughly the same frequeny as standard bindings (36 to 38, respectively). Due to spatial limitations, most of the scenes contain only a handful of captives, yet great variety in their bindings is still evident. Not included in the table is a badly damaged scene from Abydos, which appears to show an Egyptian soldier leading a sole captive, bound with an oval manacle. Below them, several feet and horse hooves survive, most likely hinting at a return scene.

Finally, though only one clear lion manacle is used, the king's lion appears in three scenes. He sits idly while Asiatics are presented to Ramesses II at Beit el-Wali, but in both the Asiatic return scene from Abydos and the Nubian return scene at Abu Simbel, he happily bounds along behind the captives, under the king's chariot. His tongue even lolls in the scene from Abu Simbel, giving him a joyful expression. The obvious nature of these scenes explains the lion's activity or lack thereof. When the king is in motion, as in the return scenes, the lion is as well. When the king sits, so does the lion; as with the king, so with his avatar and pet.

Ramesses II's Miscellaneous Reliefs from Karnak, Luxor, and the Ramesseum

On the exterior south wall of the Great Hypostyle Hall at Karnak Temple are a series of undated war reliefs against an Asiatic polity.[54] West of the doorway, Ramesses fires arrows as per usual against a fortified settlement. In the next registers, the king stands on two captives while he prepares to behead a third as he attacks the town. Thus the action has moved from the king in his chariot to the king on foot. The king then returns to his chariot, attacking a town once more. A presentation scene occupies the fourth register. The captives here are bound in standard fashion with but one exception (Table 3).

Further along the wall, the king once again attacks from his chariot; this time preparing to slaughter a bow-wielding foe. The second register portrays the king as he steps into his chariot to depart for Egypt while grasping two captives who are bound in standard fashion with their arms straight behind their backs.[55] Ramesses' pose here echoes the pose of Seti I discussed above (Hittites scene). Two rows of captives, bound in identical fashion, march in front of the king and in the third register are presented to Amun-Re. The complete lack of variety in their bindings is noteworthy. Multiplicity is evident in the use once more of the overlap

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[54] Peter J. Brand, "The Date of Battle Reliefs on the South Wall of the Great Hypostyle Hall and the West Wall of the Cour de la Cachette at Karnak and the History of the Later Nineteenth Dynasty," in M. Collier and S. Snape (eds.), *Ramesside Studies in Honour of K.A. Kitchen*, (Bolton: Rutherford Press Limited, 2009), 51-84; Gaballa, *Narrative Art*, 108, fig. 8a; Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen*, 268, VII.10-13; *KRI* II, 152-154; PM II², 57-58 (171); *RITA*, 30-31; Schwaller de Lubicz, *Karnak* I, 126ff, pl. 50; Wreszinski, *Atlas* II, pls. 55-56a.

[55] A similar scene can be found at Luxor Temple, Forecourt. See, Gaballa, *Narrative Art*, 110; Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen*, 272, VIII.6; K.A. Kitchen, "Some New Light on the Asiatic Wars of Ramesses II," *JEA* 50 (1964): 51ff, pl. IV, Fig. 1,3; *KRI* II, 180-181; PM II², 334-335 (215); *RITA*, 50

effect. Repetitious bindings are generally repeated on the east side of this same

wall and in various reliefs detailing the Battle of Kadesh (more below).[56] These

repetitive captives form a constant visual reminder linking these scenes

together.[57] Finally, their highly standardized nature suggests the use of an artistic

template ideally suited to quickly representing multiplicity.[58]

Considerably more variety is on display in a series of reliefs from the First

Courtyard at Luxor,[59] though just as with Karnak the actions of the king are quite

diverse.[60] On the exterior of the west wall, north of the entrance, are three

scenes depicting a plethora of captives (lower register 1st - 3rd scenes from the

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[56] Gaballa, *Narrative Art*, 108-109, fig. 8a and "Minor War Scenes of Ramesses II at Karnak," *JEA* 55 (1969): 86-88, pl. XX; Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen*, 270, VII.17-18; *KRI* II, 158-159; PM II², 58-59 (174)-(175); *RITA*, 34; Schwaller de Lubicz, *Karnak* I, 126ff, pl. 50; Wreszinski, *Atlas* II, pls. 56-56a. This wall also shows the king attacking an enemy fortification both from his chariot and on foot before depicting scenes of return and presentation. Slightly more variety is evident in the bindings here. Several captives are bound in the standard elbows bent pose instead of solely in the arms straight pose. Three captives are restrained with their elbows disjointed, arms dangling in front of their torsos. That said, considering the sheer number of captives (see Table 3), it is safe to say very little variety is displayed.

[57] These scenes are difficult to arrange sequentially, and their exact historical order remains unclear. If the theory that the repetitive poses of the captive provides a visual link between the scenes, then it could be argued that all these reliefs refer to one campaign, even though there are two distinct presentation scenes. Solving such dilemmas goes beyond the scope of this work. For more, see Spalinger, *Icons of Power*, 48-53.

[58] This is not to say the reliefs are of a lesser overall quality, as has been often claimed concerning the works of Ramesses II. Additionally, spatial limitations are often a factor in such scenes. Using the overlap effect allowed the artisans to depict more captives in the available space.

[59] Gaballa, *Narrative Art*, 109-11, fig. 8b; Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen*, 271-277, VIII.1-18; Kitchen, "Asiatic Wars of Ramesses II," 47-70; *KRI* II, 172-176, 180-183; PM II², 333-334 (202)-(204), (215); *RITA*, 45-52; Wreszinski, *Atlas* II, pls. 65-67,72-73, 77-78.

[60] Spalinger, *Icons of Power*, 64-67. Each of these scenes shows the king in different locations and wielding different weapons.

north).[61] At the extreme north of the lower register, Ramesses II, standing atop defeated foes, fires arrows at the defenders of a city located in the "land of Qode." As is typical, various defenders beg for mercy while others topple off of the ramparts. At the bottom of the scene, prisoners are brought before the king, a unique incorporation of the bound foreigner motif into the battle scene itself.

The subsequent scene of celebration is rendered in great detail with numerous noteworthy aspects (Figure 21). First, the king's sons are prominent as they lead captives into the king's presence. Additionally, several Egyptian soldiers are present, striking the captives in the back or head. The soldier in the middle row turns around to speak to the group of captives behind him. As before, the overlap effect is used repeatedly, and while most of the captives are bound in standard poses, there is considerably more variety than the depictions from Karnak.

Of particular note is the captive in the bottom row whose face is shown. He is bound in the X-shaped pose, and just as before when this pose is used to "show the face", the Egyptians have broken their usual convention regarding the relationship between thumbs and the placement of the arms. The captive to his left (right of the shield-bearing soldier) is bound with the same pose, but his thumbs follow convention. Finally, the captive showing his face is not subject to the overlap effect; in fact, none of the captives in that group are. The only manacle used is in this group as well.

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[61] Gaballa, *Narrative Art*, 110, fig. 8; Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen*, 275, VIII.13-14; *KRI* II, 171-172; PM II², 333 (202)-(203); *RITA*, 44-45; Wreszinski, *Atlas* II, pls. 73, 75.

Figure 21: Ramesses II Celebrating Victory at Luxor (after Wreszinski, Atlas II, pl. 73; courtesy of Yare Egyptology)

Following the celebration, Ramesses returns to Egypt with a host of captives (Figure 22). Egyptian soldiers are also present, some of whom ride in chariots behind the captives. Again, Ramesses makes extensive use of the overlap effect, but in this case there is much more variety in the poses, including a high number of torturous poses. For the first time regarding these miscellaneous reliefs, prisoners are bound with their arms above their heads (Table 3).
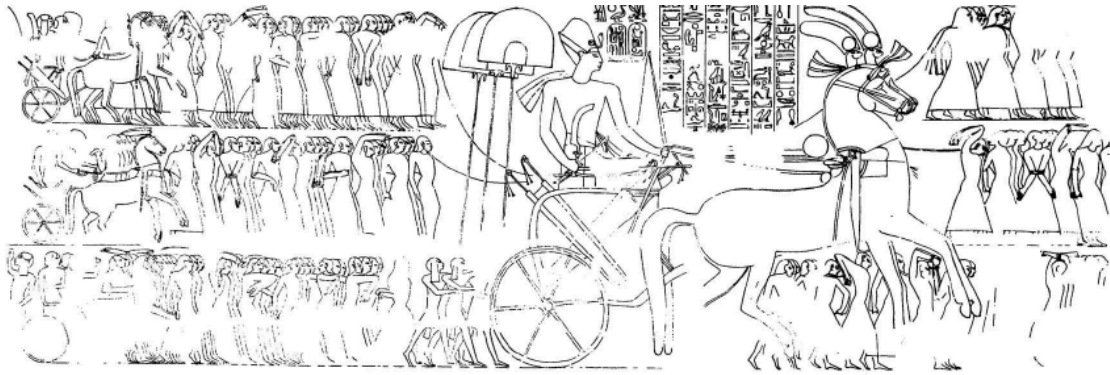
Figure 22: Ramesses II Returns to Egypt, Luxor (Wreszinski, *Atlas* II, pl. 75; courtesy of Yare Publishing)

The battle scenes from Luxor find a parallel at the Ramesseum where the king attacks the city of Dapur.[62] Below the king's chariot, a soldier cuts off the hand of an enemy (more below and in Chapter Six), while another soldier mimics a smiting scene. Another relief from the Ramesseum depicts groups of captives being ushered out of several different Syrian cities.[63] All manner of bindings are used except the manacle (Table 3). Egyptian soldiers alternate between leading the captives by a rope and wielding a baton. In many cases, the soldier raises the baton to strike the captive, another wholly believable type of harsh interaction between captor and captive.

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[62] *KRI* II, 148, 173-174; PM II², 438 (18); *RITA*, 46-47; Wreszinski, *Atlas* II, pl. 107ff; A.-H. Youssef, Ch. Lebanc, and M. Maher, *Le Ramesseum IV. Les Batailles de Tounip et de Dapour* (CEDAE. Cairo, 1977), pl. VIII.

[63] Gaballa, *Narrative Art*, 111-112; Helck, *Beziehungen*², 219-220; KRI II, 148-149; PM II², 432 (2); *RITA*, 46-47; Wreszinski, *Atlas* II, pl. 90.

Table 3: Captives in Miscellaneous Reliefs from Karnak, Luxor and the Ramesseum

Location, Campaign, Context (total # of captives)	Standard Binding	Arms X-Shaped Pose	Painful, Arms Below/Level with Head	Painful, Arms Above Head	Showing the Face of the Captive	Captive Looks Back or Up	Manacle (type)
Karnak, Hypostyle Hall, S. wall, W. side, Asiatic, Post-Battle (4)[64]	2	0	2	0	0	1	0
Karnak, Hypostyle Hall, S. wall, W. side, Asiatic, Presentation (6)	5	0	1	0	0	0	0
Karnak, Hypostyle Hall, S. wall, W. side, Asiatic, Departure (23)[65]	23	0	0	0	0	0	0
Karnak, Hypostyle Hall, S. wall, W. side, Asiatic, Return (20)	20	0	0	0	0	2	0
Karnak, Hypostyle Hall, S. wall, W. side, Asiatic, Presentation (20)	20	0	0	0	0	0	0
Karnak, Hypostyle Hall, S. wall, E. side, Asiatic, Return (27)	24	0	3	0	0	2	0
Karnak, Hypostyle Hall, S. wall, E. side, Asiatic, Presentation (18)	18	0	0	0	0	0	0
Luxor, 1st Courtyard, E. Wall, Departure, Asiatic (2)	2	0	0	0	0	0	0

[64] Three additional foreigners beg the king for mercy, while he stands on the prostrate body of a fourth. As these individuals are unbound, they are not added to Table 3.

[65] Due to both weathering and Ramesses' strong preference to stack captives in this scene, it is difficult to determine a precise number or surviving bindings. This applies to the next two categories below, as well as those from the western wall of the 1st Courtyard at Luxor Temple.

Location, Campaign, Context (total # of captives)	Standard Binding	Arms X-Shaped Pose	Painful, Arms Below/Level with Head	Painful, Arms Above Head	Showing the Face of the Captive	Captive Looks Back or Up	Manacle (type)
Luxor, 1st Courtyard, W. Wall, Battle, Asiatic (3)[66]	0	1	2	0	0	0	0
Luxor, 1st Courtyard, W. Wall, Celebration, Asiatic (14)[67]	11	2	0	0	1	1[68]	1 (oval)
Luxor, 1st Courtyard, W. Wall, Asiatic (45)[69]	16	3	7	12	0	3	0
Ramesseum, 1st Pylon, W. Wall, Captured Cities, Asiatic (25)[70]	15	0	2	8	2	0	0
TOTALS:	**163**	**6**	**15**	**20**	**3**	**9**	**1 (oval)**

Even the most cursory of glances at Table 3 reveals a strong preference among these works for standard bindings. This is of course due to the use of the overlap effect in the miscellaneous reliefs from Karnak and is not evidence that Egyptian artistic sensibilities underwent any sort of change. In several examples, the usual mix of poses occurs. Ramesses II's tendency to overlap standard bindings in some scenes while showing the usual mix of standard and disjointed

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[66] Several more captives are extant, but their bindings are not visible.

[67] Once more the overlap effect is prominent, yielding a total of approximately forty captives, most of whose bindings are not visible.

[68] Here hypothesizing that the leftmost portion of this captive is an arm bound straight down in front of him in a standard pose, yielding an eleventh standard binding.

[69] This incredibly high total does not include a plethora of captives whose bindings are obscured due to the stacking phenomenon. There are approximately eighty-five captives overall.

[70] There are over thirty captives depicted, but unfortunately several are too badly damaged to discern their bindings.

poses in others is more visible in the many reliefs recounting the Battle of

Kadesh.

The Battle of Kadesh: Ubiquity, Variety, and Brutality

Ramesses II celebrated his "victory" at the Battle of Kadesh with

unprecedented vigor, even though most scholars regard it as at best a stalemate

for the Egyptians.[71] Scenes recounting the battle or presentation of spoils of war

appear at the following locations: Abu Simbel (1),[72] Abydos (2),[73] Karnak (2),[74]

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[71] For the historical particulars, see Murnane, *The Road to Kadesh*; Mario Liverani, *Prestige and Interest: International Relationship in the Near East ca. 1600-1100 B.C.* Padova, 1990); Anthony J. Spalinger, "Notes on the Reliefs of the Battle of Kadesh," in *Perspectives on the Battle of Kadesh* (Hans Goedicke, ed. Baltimore, Maryland: Halgo, Inc., 1985), 1-42; Kenneth A. Kitchen, *Pharaoh Triumphant*; M.C. Kuentz, *La Bataille de Qadech. Les Textes et les Bas-Reliefs* (MIFAO LV, Cairo, 1928 and 1934); James H. Breasted, *The Battle of Kadesh: A Study in the Earliest Known Military Strategy* (University of Chicago: 1903).

[72] Breasted, *Battle of Kadesh*, pl. VI; Christiane Desroches-Noblecourt, S. Donadoni, E. Edel, *Grand Temple d'Abou Simbel. La Bataille de Qadech*, Vo. II (CEDAE, Collection scientifique 47. Cairo, 1971); Gaballa, *Narrative Art*, 113-114, fig. 9; Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen*, 281, I.1-2; *KRI* II, 102-147; Kuentz, *Bataille de Qadech*, 183-198, pl. XLII; PM VIII, 103-104 (41)-(44); Spalinger, "Notes on the Reliefs," 9-10, 14, 17, 20, 23ff; Wreszinski, *Atlas* II, pls. 169-178.

[73] Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen*, 282-284, II.1; *KRI* II, 3-147; Kuentz, *Bataille de Qadech*, 1-20, pls. XVII-XXIV; PM VI, 39ff (75)-(88); Spalinger, "Notes on the Reliefs," 17, 21, 25, 27; Wreszinski, *Atlas* II, pls. 16-25.

[74] R. Anthes, "Die Vorführung der gefangenen Feinde vor den König," *ZÄS* 65 (1930), 26-35; Breasted, *Battle of Kadesh*, pl. VII; Gaballa, *Narrative Art*, 114; Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen*, 285-286, III.1-2; *KRI* II, 3-101, 125, 143-147; Kuentz, *Bataille de Qadech*, 21-66, pls. VIIf, XXIV-XXV, XXVII-XXXI; PM II^2, 57-58 (171)-(172), (174), 133 (495) 179 (535)-(537); Wreszinski, *Atlas* II, pls. 68-70, 76.

Luxor (3),[75] and the Ramesseum (2),[76] for an unmatched ten total

representations.[77]

Much the same as the works previously discussed, the king is placed in a

variety of poses: firing arrows from his chariot, seated and receiving the spoils of

war, and standing before the gods with captives in tow. Kadesh itself naturally

figures prominently in the reliefs, as does the Orontes River. Indeed, the river is a

central artistic feature, drawing the eye of the viewer in a way matched only by

the larger-than-life figure of Ramesses. Nearly all the action of the battle occurs

alongside the river. Fleeing enemies throw themselves into the river, clearly

illustrated in reliefs from Abu Simbel and the Ramesseum and echoed in the

textual record (more in Chapter Five).

Ramesses' depictions of the prisoners captured in this most famous of

battles vary considerably, from the purely stereotyped and repetitive examples in

the presentation scene from Karnak to the incredible mixture of both standard

and torturous poses from the scene of celebration at Abydos (Table 4). A minor

snapshot of this variety is evidenced in the presentation scene at Abydos. Here

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[75] Breasted, *Battle of Kadesh*, pls. IV-V; Gaballa, *Narrative Art*, 114; Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen*, 287-290, IV.1-5; *KRI* II, 3-140; Kuentz, *Bataille de Qadech*, 67-113, 144-153, pls. XXXV-XXXIII; PM II², 304-305 (13)-(14), 334 (205)-(207); Wreszinski, *Atlas* II, pls. 68-70, 76; Spalinger, "Notes on the Reliefs," 7-20, 24-27; Wreszinski, *Atlas* II, pls. 63-64, 81-89.

[76] There are no captives depicted at the Ramesseum. Breasted, *Battle of Kadesh*, pls. I-III; Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen*, 291-293, V.1-6; *KRI* II, 102-140; Kuentz, *Bataille de Qadech*, 155-169, 173-181, pls. XVI, XXXIX-XLI; PM II², 433 (3)-(4), 434 (10); Spalinger, "Notes on the Reliefs," 8-26; Wreszinski, *Atlas* II, pls. 92-106.

[77] Kitchen, *Pharaoh Triumphant*, 65; Stuart Tyson Smith, *Wretched Kush: Ethnic Identities and Boundaries in Egypt's Nubian Empire* (London: Routledge, 2003), 172-173.

five captives are bound in a straightforward pose (including one oval manacle), while four are bound in more painful fashion. However, even the prisoners fortunate enough to be bound in a straightforward manner are shown with their backs severely arched, torsos awkwardly thrust forward, as they walk on the tips of their toes. While this pose is not unique, it is highly exaggerated in this scene.

To this author, the most captivating emphasis of the Kadesh reliefs is their frequent focus on the actions of Egyptian soldiers outside of combat. In several cases, such as Figure 23, the soldiers cut a hand off a captive. This form of grisly trophy taking was common in the ancient world and was a means to count the number of defeated (dead) enemies (more in Chapter Six). In the scene from Abydos, however, one captive is clearly still alive. As he kneels, his left arm

Figure 23: Egyptian Soldiers Cut off the Hands of Enemies, Abydos (courtesy of Dr. Peter J. Brand)

wraps around the Egyptian soldier's waist. The soldier grasps the enemy's right hand at the wrist with one arm while the other is poised to strike (now broken off). Just to the left an Egyptian soldier cuts a hand off of a prostrate captive, who is likely dead. Thus, in this small snapshot, one finds soldiers cutting off the hands of both living and dead captives. One can only speculate at the fate of the living captive, who, having been subjected to such a brutal treatment, would have little value as a slave. The prisoners behind this scene are clearly being executed, so it seems likely that this captive suffered a similar fate. Another clue can be found at Karnak, where a similar scene occurs.[78] In this case, a loop of rope wraps around neck of the captive as the soldier cuts off his hand. This is a clear indication that the captive was alive and bound when the violence occurred. Were the enemy already slain in battle, the rope would serve no purpose. To the right of this captive an Egyptian stabs a prisoner in the neck, further demonstrating the harsh reality of ancient war and suggesting a similar fate for the recent amputee. Though these actions appear alongside battle, the captives are helpless.

At Abydos, several soldiers interact with prisoners of war on the march back to Egypt (Figure 24). In each case, the soldier strikes or pushes the captive in the head or back to force them to walk. The row of captives marches to the left, where Egyptian scribes are counting piles of hands.

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[78] See Wreszinski, *Atlas* II, pl. 68.

Similar scenes are found at Karnak and Luxor. [79] At Karnak, several

soldiers wear armbands or carry rings from which enemy hands dangle,

emblematic of the foes slain by each individual (Figure 25). Rather than leading

the captives by a rope, two of the soldiers grasp captives by their hair. Finally, in

the return scenes from all three locations, there are generally three or four

captive per group with an Egyptian soldier between each group. While one must

be careful to avoid the dangers of over-interpreting such stereotyped

representation, this attention to highly organized groups of prisoners, as well as

realistic interactions between soldier and prisoner and scribal record keeping,

could reflect actual Egyptian policy.
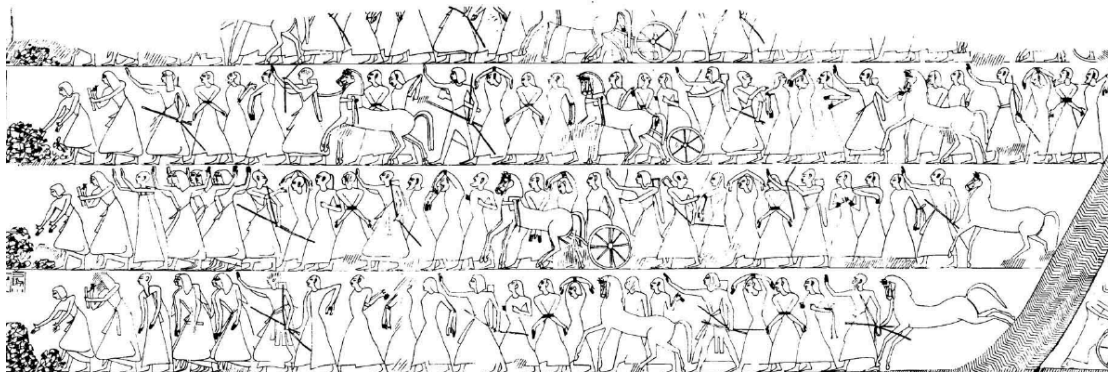
Figure 24: Return to Egypt, Battle of Kadesh, Abydos (Wreszinski, Atlas II, pl. 25; courtesy of Yare Egyptology)

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[79] For the scenes see Wreszinski, *Atlas* II, pls. 63-64 (Luxor) and 68-70 (Karnak).

Figure 25: Return to Egypt, Battle of Kadesh, Karnak (Wreszinski, Atlas II, pl. 70;
courtesy of Yare Egyptology)

One last scene concerning the Battle of Kadesh deserves attention. The
presentation scene from Karnak depicts an essentially limitless amount of
captives. The overlap effect is heavily used as the captives are neatly arranged
into groups led by the sons of Ramesses II. The king himself leads the entire
panoply before the Theban triad. Each captive is bound in identical, standard
fashion, reminiscent of the scenes from Karnak discussed above. It appears
Ramesses' main concern was to show as many captives as possible in the
available space while also including his sons.

Summarizing Table 4, the total for "Standard Bindings" is obviously
dominated by the presentation scene from Karnak. If one leaves that unique
scene out of the discussion, then once again the totals for painful, torturous
bindings (61) are slightly higher than for standard bindings (47). If the Karnak
presentation scene is included without counting the captives that overlap (thus,
counting only the captives who are fully visible), then the totals for surviving
depictions are close to equal. It should also be noted that the vast majority of
painful poses come from the celebration scene at Abydos, which trails only the
presentation scene from Karnak in total captives.

Table 4: Captives in Reliefs Recounting the Battle of Kadesh

Location, Campaign, Context (total # of captives)	Standard Binding	X-Shaped Pose	Painful, Arms Below/ Level with Head	Painful, Arms Above Head	Showing the Face of the Captive	Captive Looks Back or Up	Manacle (type)
Abu Simbel, Great Temple, 1st Hall, N. Wall (15)	11	1	0	1	0	0	2 (oval)
Abu Simbel, Great Temple, 1st Hall, N. Wall, Presentation (9)[80]	4	0	3	1	0	0	1 (oval)
Abydos, W. Wall & W. Half of N. Wall, Celebration (47)	10	12	15	9	0	4	1 (oval)
Karnak, Hypostyle Hall, Ext. S. Wall, E. of Court de la Cachette, Presentation (150+)[81]	150+	0	0	0	0	0	0
Karnak, Hypostyle Hall, between 8th & 9th Pylons, W. Wall, Celebration (23)[82]	8	1	5	9	2	0	0
Luxor, Colonnade W. Wall & 2nd Courtyard N. Wall, Celebration (10)	5	1	2	2	0	0	0
TOTALS:	**193[83]**	**15**	**24**	**22**	**2**	**4**	**4 (oval**

[80] Though two of the captives in the upper row are badly damaged, their hands and lower bodies survive. This is enough to safely hypothesize that one standard binding and one elbows disjointed below the head binding are evident.

[81] As before at Karnak, Ramesses II makes extensive use of the overlap effect using only the standard arms straight binding.

[82] This total is difficult to determine due to weathering and general damage. Again more feet of the captives are visible than bindings.

[83] This number is obviously inflated by the incredibly high total of standard bindings in the presentation scene at Karnak.

Overall, the many reliefs celebrating the Battle of Kadesh demonstrate a strong preference for unique depictions and interactions between soldiers and captives. Additionally, horses and chariots figure prominently in the reliefs, indicating the status of Ramesses' fiercest foes. All of this enhances the might of the king in a more profound manner than defeating lesser foes (to the Egyptian mindset), like Nubians and Libyans, could; thus, more specific treatment is meted out in many cases including the increased presence of Egyptian soldiers, the grouping of the captives, and so on.

Merenptah: Variety at the Cour de la Cachette at Karnak

The west wall of the Cour de la Cachette at Karnak is inscribed with war scenes that have sparked considerable debate among Egyptologists. For several decades, they were assumed to be the work of Ramesses II,[84] but a series of articles by Frank Yurco convincingly argued that Merenptah made these reliefs instead.[85] Seeking to find the first pictorial representation of Israelites in ancient art, Yurco connected these reliefs to the so-called Israel Stela of Merenptah which is famous for making the first extra-biblical mention of Israel. This led to a somewhat unfortunate situation where the reliefs themselves were embroiled in

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[84] Generally following Kenneth A. Kitchen, "Some New Light on the Asiatic Wars of Ramesses II," *JEA* 50 (1964): 47-70. As Brand notes, Kitchen was close to concluding that these reliefs were the work of Merenptah but could not commit to this theory due to the presence of Prince Khaemwaset. For more, see Brand, "The Date of Battle Reliefs," 51.

[85] F.J. Yurco, "Merenptah's Palestinian Campaign," *JSSEA* (1978): 70; F.J. Yurco, "Merenptah's Canaanite Campaign," *JARCE* 23 (1986): 189-215; F.J. Yurco, "3,200 Year-Old Picture of Israelites Found in Egypt," *BAR* 16 (1990): 20-38; F.J. Yurco, "Merenptah's Canaanite Campaign and Israel's Origins," in *Exodus: The Egyptian Evidence* (E.S. Frerichs and L.H. Lesko, eds., Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns 1997), 28-53.

the often contentious debate about Israelite origins.[86] The recent epigraphic work

of Brand has for all intents and purposes conclusively demonstrated that the

reliefs were commissioned and completed by Merenptah, [87] though he leaves

aside the Israelite question.[88]

Three scenes provide Asiatic captives to analyze: a binding scene,[89] a

return scene,[90] and one of presentation.[91] A fourth scene, badly damaged,

recounts another return to Egypt, but only the legs of the captives survive.[92] That

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[86] Yurco's conclusions were quickly accepted with various modifications by the following: *RITANC* II, 72-78; K.A. Kitchen, "L'Égypte Ancienne et l'Ancien Testament: Aperçus noveaux," *BSFE* 12 (1993): 21; A.F. Rainey, "Israel in Merenptah's Inscriptions and Reliefs," *IEJ* 51 (2001): 57-75; L.E. Stager, "Merenptah, Israel, and the Sea Peoples: New Light on an Old Relief," *Eretz-Israel* 18 (1985), 56-64. Conversely several scholars disagreed, continuing to believe the reliefs were made by Ramesses II: S. Iskander, *The Reign of Merenptah* (PhD Thesis, New York University, 2002); D.B. Redford, "The Ashkelon Relief at Karnak and the Israel Stela," *IEJ* 36 (1986): 188-200; H. Sourouzian, *Les Monuments du roi Merenptah* (SDAIK 22. Mainz, 1989), 150.

[87] Brand, "The Date of Battle Reliefs," 53-72. Brand's arguments are so compelling precisely due his painstaking analysis of the reliefs themselves, in addition to those of Ramesses II. Too often the debate has centered on secondary sources (or personal confessional statements of faith or the lack thereof) and not analysis of the reliefs.

[88] As will I, focusing this discussion on the poses of captives and not whether or not they are intended to be Israelites.

[89] Gaballa, *Narrative Art*, 109; Giveon, *Les Bédouins Shosou*, 93-94; pl. VIII; Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen*, 295, I.3; *KRI* II, 166; PM II^2, 133 (494), *RITA* 40; Wreszinski, *Atlas* II, pl. 58b; Yurco, "Merenptah's Canaanite Campaign," 189-215, figs. 1b, 6, 16.

[90] Gaballa, *Narrative Art*, 109; Giveon, *Les Bédouins Shosou*, 93-94; pl. VIII; Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen*, 295, I.4; *KRI* II, 166; PM II^2, 133 (494), *RITA* 40-41; Wreszinski, *Atlas* II, pl. 58b; Yurco, "Merenptah's Canaanite Campaign," 189-215, figs. 1b, 8.

[91]Giveon, *Les Bédouins Shosou*, 93-94; pl. VIII; Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen*, 295, I.5; *KRI* II, 167; PM II2, 133 (494), *RITA* 41; Wreszinski, *Atlas* II, pl. 58b; Yurco, "Merenptah's Canaanite Campaign," 189-215, figs. 1b, 9, 17.

[92] *KRI* II, 167; PM II^2, 133 (494), *RITA* 41; Wreszinski, *Atlas* II, pl. 58b; Yurco, "Merenptah's Canaanite Campaign," 189-215, figs. 1b, 7.

said, it is likely that the king carried a few captives in this scene due to the presence of four small feet adjacent to his thigh (the only portion of the king's figure to survive).

In the binding scene, Merenptah wields the familiar sickle sword with one hand while restraining two captives at the elbow with the other. Behind the king are three badly damaged captives (obvious due to the number of feet). Enough survives of them to firmly suggest that one was bound in the X-shaped pose and another with his elbows behind his head, hand(s) dangling in front of his face.

Walking in front of the king's chariot and even under the horses in the return scene are two rows of captives who are bound in all manner of poses (Figure 26). Each of the bindings previously discussed are evident: standard poses, X-shape, elbows disjointed above and below the head, manacles (oval), showing the face, and looking up or back. Two especially painful bindings can be found on the captives on the far right of the top row, and the second captive from the horses' head on the bottom row. The former is bound with his arms above his head, one hand hangs down in front of his face as is typical with poses like this, but his other arm extends behind him and upwards forming a roughly straight line with his other arm. The captive below also has his arms bound above his head. Each arm extends out straight from the top of his head, instead of at the usual angle (the captive above). This pose would of course create great discomfort, and likely injury, in the joints and muscles of the shoulder.

Figure 26: Return and Presentations Scenes, Merenptah (Wreszinski, Atlas II, pl. 58; courtesy of Yare Egyptology)

The presentation scene is also badly damaged, yet the bindings of five captives are clear (bottom right of Figure 26). From left to right the enemies are bound as follows:

1. Elbows disjointed behind the back, below the head; severe damage to elbows.
2. Elbows disjointed in front of the torso, below the head; some damage to elbows, shoulder discomfort.
3. Oval manacle; no obvious damage or discomfort.
4. Standard arms behind the back binding; no obvious damage or discomfort.
5. X-Shape in front of torso due to the placement of thumbs; obvious damage to deltoid and pectoral muscles or shoulders and chest, respectively, possible elbow discomfort.

Overall, Merenptah's reliefs display great variety in the poses, even though a relatively small number of depictions of bound foreigners have survived. In particular, two of the most bizarre or torturous bindings hail from these reliefs. Finally, unlike his father, Merenptah tended to avoid repetition in his bindings and makes no use of the overlap effect for captives except in the binding scene.

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Ramesses III: New Foes and New Bindings

The plethora of reliefs on the well-preserved mortuary temple of
Ramesses III at Medinet Habu contains an incredible mixture of detailed battles
and unique treatments of enemy prisoners. As Spalinger puts it they are
"sumptuous and full of new details."[93] The bindings of the prisoners are at times
comically bizarre at best or entirely sadistic at worst. All the usual victims are on
display – Nubians,[94] Libyans,[95] Asiatics[96] – while for the first time the Sea
People[97] are depicted and receive similar treatment. Among these victims, three
definite campaigns are attested — Year 5 against the Libyans, Year 8 concerning

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[93] Spalinger, *Icons of Power*, 190. Note also that the textual record will be discussed in the next chapter.

[94] William F. Edgerton, and John A. Wilson, *Historical Records of Ramses III: TheTexts in Medinet Habu*. Vol. 2 (CEDAE. University of Chicago Press, 1936), 1-4; Epigraphic Survey, *Medinet Habu Volume I: Earlier Historical Records of Ramses III*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1930), pls. 8-11; Gaballa, *Narrative Art*, 120; Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen*, 298-29, I.1-3; KRI V, 8-9; PM II^2, 522 (194).

[95] Two campaigns against Libyans were recorded. For the first see the following: Edgerton and Wilson, *Historical Records*, 4-17; Epigraphic Survey, *Medinet Habu I*, pls. 12-26; Gaballa, *Narrative Art*, 120-122, figs. 10b & 11a; Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen*, 301-305, I.4-13; *KRI* V, 10-20; PM II^2, 498ff (93)-(95), 517-518 (187), 521-522 (193); Wreszinski, *Atlas* II, pls. 127-128. For the second Libyan campaign, see: Edgerton and Wilson, *Historical Records*, 59-64; Epigraphic Survey, *Medinet Habu II*, pls. 62, 67b, 71-78; Gaballa, *Narrative Art*, 124-125, figs. 11b; Giveon, *Les Bédouins Shosou*, 143; Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen*, 309-312, I.21-30; *KRI* V, 43-52; PM II^2, 492-493 (63)-(64), 520-521 (190)-(192); Wreszinski, *Atlas* II, pls. 134-144.

[96] Edgerton and Wilson, *Historical Records*, 95-105; Epigraphic Survey, *Medinet Habu Volume II: Later Historical Records of Ramses III* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1932), 87-100; Gaballa, *Narrative Art*, 122-123, figs. 11c; Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen*, 313-317, I.31-40*KRI* V, 78-86; PM II^2, 520-521 (190)-(192); Wreszinski, *Atlas* II, pls. 145-156.

[97] Edgerton and Wilson, *Historical Records*, 35-48; Epigraphic Survey, *Medinet Habu I*, pls. 29-44; Gaballa, *Narrative Art*, 122-123, figs. 10c; Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen*, 305-309, I.14-21; *KRI* V, 27-38; PM II^2, 496 (83), 518-520 (187)-(188); Wreszinski, *Atlas* II, pls. 110-119.

the Sea Peoples, and Year 11 against the Libyans once more. Additionally, material from Karnak — Ramesses III's small temple in the district of the temple of Mut and his temple to Amun — contain additional information on a potential fourth campaign in western Asia, probably after Year 11.[98]

Before examining the individual depictions it is important to understand the compositional structure of these highly organized reliefs. Becoming familiar with the layout of the temple complex is the natural starting point. In brief, the core aspects are: the temple itself, the forecourt or 2nd Courtyard, the attached palace (see Chapter Two for depictions of foreigners here) with its courtyard (also referred to as the 1st Courtyard), and the outer walls for the entire structure. The roofed portion of the temple focuses on ritual scenes and offerings, as always in New Kingdom temples. In the more public locations — the exterior walls and courtyards — war reliefs were carved. The only exception is the southern wall which includes Ramesses offering to the gods, a calendar of religious events and festivals, etc.[99] With the exception of the Nubian campaign, which occurs only on the southern portion of the exterior of the west wall, the other campaigns occur both on the outer faces and on the walls of the courts.

At first glance this may seem repetitious, but O'Connor makes an important distinction: "Essentially the exterior program emphasizes the actual course of each war in pictorial form; while the interior part emphasizes more the

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[98] Gaballa, *Narrative Art*, 120.

[99] For more, see David O'Connor, "The Sea Peoples and the Egyptian Sources," in *The Sea Peoples and Their World* (E. Oren, ed. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), 86-90.

ceremonial aftermath of each, namely the formal presentation of spoil and prisoners to Amun-Re and the public celebration of pharaoh's success."[100] The repetition of presentation scenes was a necessary component to pharaonic triumph. Each war must culminate in scenes of presentation in gratitude to the gods for victory. It is significant that these scenes occur on walls adjacent to the palace, a perfect location for semi-public celebrations of the king's victories. Here the king would stand at the window of appearances in his palace atop figurative enemy captives (see Chapter Two), while onlookers could bask in the glory of the presentation scenes.

Further significance is revealed in the simple fact that the depictions on the outer walls correspond to the Egyptian geographical worldview. Thus, Nubians are located on the southern portion of the west wall, Libyans on the northern half of the same wall and around the corner on the north wall, which itself is dominated by the accounts of battle against the Sea Peoples. The reliefs of the 1st Libyan war flow seamlessly into the battle with the Sea Peoples, and they even share a presentation scene next to the pylon of the 2nd Courtyard, which for the purposes of this discussion will be covered with the Sea Peoples material. Moving from events in years 5 (1st Libyan), 8 (Sea Peoples), and 11 (2nd Libyan) in sequence "suggests a concern with historical accuracy, even though actual events (the years 5, 8, 11 wars) may be intermingled with fictitious ones (the Levantine and Nubian ones, perhaps)."[101]

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[100] Ibid., 86.

[101] Ibid., 88.

This complex relationship between real and possibly imagined events need not be automatically viewed a tendentious alteration of the reported events, as Cifola does.[102] Rather, the events must be understood primarily as relating to the prevailing, urgent need to protect the temple, and thus the entire cosmos, from chaotic forces. Further, scenes of foreign wars represent not only the lands which pharaoh has exercised his god-given dominion over (or in some case his repelling of invasions against), but also the dangers that afflict the sun god on his journey through the netherworld. All of this is in keeping with the inescapable mandate that the king defeat the chaotic forces that attempt to upset the solar cycle. This in no way diminishes the historical value of depictions giving historical specifics—year dates, full textual reports, etc.—as with the Years 5, 8, and 11 campaigns (see Chapter One).[103] Instead, it demands a careful reading of the material that incorporates both the compositional and conceptual complexities and allows for a co-mingling of historical details and ideological themes,[104] just as the Egyptians presented it. Overall, the war reliefs at Medinet Habu show an incredible amount of geographical organization, narrative structure, and historical detailing alongside important celebratory and religious functions, all of which must be kept in mind when analyzing the reliefs.

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[102] Barbara Cifola, "Ramses III and the Sea Peoples: A Structural Analysis of the Medinet Habu Inscriptions," *Orientalia* 57 (1988): 275-279. Cifola rightly points out the difficulties of the material due to the rhetorical language, literary structure, etc., but she introduces a false dichotomy in claiming that propaganda must lead to distortion.

[103] The textual reports of these wars will be discussed in the following chapter.

[104] O'Connor, *Sea People*, 94.

The Nubian and 1st Libyan Campaigns

Beginning with the Nubian campaign, the captives depicted in the return

scene display the usual assortment of variety, including another example of an

unfortunate fellow whose bindings are akin to trussed fowl (see Chapter

Three).[105] The same holds true for the presentation scene, which adds a few

other noteworthy features. In each register, a single captive looks back at his

fellows, one of them bound with an animal-shaped manacle, perhaps a snake or

reptile of some sort.[106] Much as in the return scene, a single captive is bound like

a sacrificial bird. This could be a method of showing the same individual twice. It

is also interesting that in both cases the captive is on the lowest register. Finally,

in the presentation scene several Nubians bow in supplication before the king,

reminiscent of Horemheb's scene from the 10th Pylon at Karnak Temple.[107]

As usual, the treatment received by Libyans seems harsher. The four

scenes containing captives from the First Libyan war depict nearly twice as many

captives bound in painful or torturous positions as they do the more standard

binding types (see Table 5).[108] Two celebration scenes can be found recounting

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[105] Epigraphic Survey, *Medinet Habu I*, pl. 10.

[106] For a detailed drawing of this unclear manacle see Ibid., pl. 11.

[107] The conventional nature of these reliefs has led scholars to conclude that they have no bearing on historical reality (Gaballa, *Narrative Art*, 20). Certainly, they lack the historical specificity of later campaigns, but it is still possible that Ramesses III fought a fairly easy campaign against Nubians early in his reign. There is simply no definitive method for determining the historical value of these reliefs.

[108] Adding up the captives from these three scenes in the "Standard Binding" and "Manacle (type)" categories compared to those from the "X-Shaped Pose," "Painful Arms Below" and "Painful Arms Above" categories. The exact total is 57 painful poses to 33 standard ones.

the king's successful Year 5 campaign: one on the exterior of the north wall,[109] the other adjoining the Return and Presentation scenes in the 2nd Courtyard.[110] Both celebration scenes show Egyptian soldiers and scribes interacting with captives as they count the hands and phalli of the slain enemies. Most of the interactions between soldier and captive are identical to previously discussed depictions of the soldier pushing or striking the captive in the head or back. However, in one example on the top register of the celebration scene from the north wall a solider clearly turns around and punches a prisoner in the face, again akin to Horemheb's scenes.

The three scenes in the 2nd Courtyard all contain a single captive trussed like a bird, just as with the Nubian scenes. In this case, the captives' hairstyles change so it is not likely to be the same individual. This is perhaps informative regarding the similar depictions from the Nubian scene. If the Egyptians were fond of repeating a particular individual captive, one would expect them to operate under the same principles regardless of the enemies. That such a strikingly unique pose could be repeated on captives who are clearly not intended to be the same individual (Libyan material) then it is logical to assume that a different person is being depicted (Nubian scenes). Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that the repetition of these otherwise uncommon poses reflects Egyptian orthodoxy regarding the chaos inherent in foreigners.

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[109] Epigraphic Survey, *Medinet Habu I*, pls. 21-22.

[110] Ibid., pls. 23-26.

The captives in the presentation scene from the 2nd Courtyard are detailed in exquisite fashion.[111] Their dress, hairstyle, and even tattooing and scarring are all impressively rendered. In fact, this level of detail is unmatched in battle reliefs,[112] and highlights the great attention the Egyptians paid to their enemies, even on sacred space. This fact must be juxtaposed with the simple truth that individual enemies are not generally depicted. Enemies receive attention on a collective, not individual, level with rare exceptions. That said, the Egyptians went to great lengths to make certain distinctions between different people groups clear, as with the Sea Peoples. These exterior depictions are highly detailed and extremely well organized, creating an effective, united narrative alongside the usual religious symbolism adorning temple walls, as the king subjugates chaotic forces time and time again. As a unit, this account connects with the material covering the conflict with the Sea Peoples three years later.[113]

The Sea Peoples Invasion

These most famous of Ramesses III's reliefs occupy the exterior north wall, while a lengthy inscription occupies the east face of the north wing of the second pylon.[114] The Sea Peoples were a displaced Mediterranean people, who

[111] Ibid., pl. 26.

[112] In terms of sheer detail, these depictions equal those on the first state chariot of Tutankhamun (see Chapter Two).

[113] It may be that this was due to the Libyan and Sea People coalition that Merenptah defeated. Perhaps Ramesses III wanted to stress that he too defeated both groups even though three years separated the events in question.

[114] Translated in Edgerton and Wilson, *Historical Records*, 49-58; see also Epigraphic Survey, *Medinet Habu I*, pl. 46. Papyrus Harris also recounts the Sea Peoples invasion; see *ARE* 3, §403.

have generated an incredible amount of scholarly literature as a result of their failed invasion and subsequent settling of the Levantine Coastal Plain, and their equally famous presence in the Hebrew Bible (Philistines). As this discussion focuses on the captives themselves, only a short summary is needed here. Composed of several tribes — Sherden, Lukka, Tursha, Shekelesh, Ahhiyawa, Peleset, Tjekker, Denyen, and Weshesh — the Sea Peoples were known to the Egyptians before the time of Ramesses III. The Sherden fought with Ramesses II at Kadesh and were incorporated into the Egyptian army. Merenptah defeated a force of certain members of the Sea People (Sherden, Lukka, Tursha, Shekelesh, and Ahhiyawa) and Libyans in his fifth regnal year.[115] No surviving reliefs detail this event, so the reliefs of Ramesses III have been the focal point for understanding many aspects of the Sea Peoples — their ships, clothing, headdress, weaponry, etc. — and at the very least are informative as to how the Egyptians perceived these people.[116] Of particular significance for this study is the simple fact that members of the Sea Peoples are distinguishable by their headdresses. Sherden and probably the Shekelesh wear horned helmets, while a "feathered or reed helmet" is found on the Peleset, Tjekker, Denyen, and Weshesh.[117] Thus, once again the iconography presents historically useful details.

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[115] For more, see Donald B. Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Times* (Princeton University Press, 1992), 241-256.

[116] O'Connor, *Sea People*, 85-86.

[117] Ibid., 85.

The reliefs are highly structured and somewhat uniquely organized, as the

naval scrum is depicted directly above a portion of the celebration scene, which

continues, king included, to the east. The entire campaign flanks a scene of the

king hunting lions.[118] As O'Connor puts it, "the Sea Peoples' narrative is also a

major composition in its own right, a sub-set of the larger sub-set."[119]

As for the captives themselves, several require further comment. In the

celebration scene, which begins just below the naval scrum, a centrally located

captive is bound with an oval-shaped manacle with his face depicted frontally.[120]

Thus, he is likely a leader of the enemy forces. O'Connor believes this individual

is depicted again below in the second row of captives and bound in the same

manner (Figure 27), before appearing before the king as well. In this latter

depiction the captive is now in side-profile and at the back of the group of

prisoners, perhaps to highlight his loss of status.[121] In this latter depiction

O'Connor refers to him as the "prisoner with lion-shaped manacles,"[122] which is

true of the first depiction, but not the last. As is clear from Figure 13, the manacle

employed here is quite obviously a fish. This fact went unnoticed by the

Epigraphic Survey and has subsequently not been noted by later

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[118] See Epigraphic Survey, *Medinet Habu I*, pl. 35.

[119] O'Connor, *Sea People*, 90; for more on the structure and the lion hunt see also, p. 90-94 and figs. 5.4-5.5.

[120] Epigraphic Survey, *Medinet Habu I*, pls. 36-41.

[121] O'Connor, *Sea People*, 90.

[122] Ibid., 99.

Egyptologists.[123] This unique manacle surely mocks the captive, who is, in the mind of the Egyptians, said to be from the sea. He is now as helpless as a fish out of water.

Figure 27: Sea Peoples leader bound with fish manacle (courtesy of Peter J. Brand)

In the second of O'Connor's three depictions, the prisoner is bound by oval-shaped manacle, which is clearly not a lion (see Figure 28; lowest row). The drawing by the Epigraphic Survey makes this clear.[124] The depiction is unfortunately badly damaged, but as the fish-shaped manacle discussed above

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[123] Epigraphic Survey, *Medinet Habu I*, pl. 42.

[124] Epigraphic Survey, *Medinet Habu I*, pl. 37.

is obviously oval in shape, it is quite possible that this is another fish-shaped

manacle.

Figure 28: Sea Peoples Naval Scrum and Celebration (courtesy of Dr. Peter J. Brand)

If so, there is one captive bound with a lion-shaped manacle, and two

bound with fish-shaped manacles. Despite this, O'Connor's analysis proves to be

incredibly beneficial in countering the claims of those who believe these reliefs

are misleading and do not represent a coherent enemy force.[125] Clearly there

was at least one leader depicted, and possible two or even three leaders. To this

author, two is most likely, in keeping with the simple fact that Egyptians defeated

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[125] For example, Barbara Cifola, "Ramses III and the Sea Peoples,"; idem., "The Terminology of Ramesses III's Historical Records with a Formal Analysis of the War Scenes," *Orientalia* 60 (1991): 9-57.

the Sea Peoples both on land and at sea; thus, two enemy leaders might be expected. The subtle visual clues indicated *solely* in the restraints employed to subdue the captives are unlikely to receive attention from scholars who are so quick to dismiss the artistic record and who tend to completely gloss over depictions of the captives and especially their bindings. Clearly, Egyptian iconography, while incredibly biased and ideologically-laden, is still ripe for historical harvest.

Other depictions just below the naval scrum present the captives in the usual assortment of haphazard poses with all of them standing on their tip-toes except those interacting with Egyptian soldier. One is depicted akin to trussed fowl, and in each row a captive is forced to kneel while a soldier raises high his curved sword while a standing captive is restrained by another soldier (see Figure 28). The upper row culminates in a hand-counting scene, while on the far left of the bottom row, a group of passively subdued, unrestrained prisoners are branded and counted by Egyptians scribes (Figure 29).[126] The prisoners sit in ordered groups, a visual and symbolic illustration that their once chaotic nature has been brought to heel. Such scenes are important reminders that despite the prevalence of bizarre or torturous bindings, the Egyptians had specific purposes in mind for foreign prisoners. Additionally, the presence of scribes is a clear indication of record-keeping and organization.

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[126] Epigraphic Survey, *Medinet Habu I*, pl. 42. More on the notion of branding in the following chapter. Briefly, this obvious mark of ownership implies that the fate of the captives is forced labor.

Figure 29: Sea Peoples Prisoners & Egyptian Scribes (courtesy of Dr. Peter J. Brand)

Upon returning to Thebes, Ramesses presented captives to the Theban Triad on the north wall[127] and to Amun-Re and Mut on the 2nd Pylon.[128] The usual assortment of poses is on display (see Table 5) in both scenes, including a single captive "showing the face" in each scene. As above, this is likely done to distinguish him as a particularly important captive, an enemy leader singled out for further shaming. On the scene from the north wall, Libyans are included as well, making the scene a tidy summary of the entire wall even though three years separate the events. This was also probably done due to spatial limitations. The last captive from the Sea Peoples is bound with a lion-shaped manacle. Finally, the famished state of the hapless captives is apparent in the visible depictions of their ribs.

Focusing on the scene of the 2nd Pylon, several features stand out. The ribs of the middle captive on the top row are visible. The last captive in the middle row is bound in a wholly unique fashion. His upper arms are straight behind his

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[127] Ibid., pl. 43.

[128] Ibid., pl. 44.

back, while his elbow is bent severely, his wrists at shoulder height. This is a fairly common pose. What is truly unique is that his hands point towards his head instead of dangling loosely behind him, making his pose even more bizarre than the most exaggerated poses. Finally, unlike the presentation scene on the north wall, when manacles are used in this scene, each is an oval.

Confusion stemming from these two scenes is easily mitigated when the context of each wall is considered. On the north wall, the scene functions as an end point to grandiose scenes of victory covering two campaigns. To ultimately fulfill his role and protect the temple, Ramesses III brought each of the enemy groups involved into a single scene of presentation before the gods. Meanwhile, the presentation scene on the 2nd Pylon is adjacent to the king's palace and thus would be incorporated in public celebrations and royal appearances.[129] There is no reason whatsoever to consider such dual-purposed depictions misleading or false; rather, they fit naturally into the Egyptian worldview and functional intent of military iconography.

2nd Libyan War and Possible Asiatic Campaign

In the eleventh year of his reign, Ramesses III once again fended off an attempted invasion by the Libyans,[130] as depicted on both the exterior north wall

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[129] For a useful drawing of the layout of the temple and palace at Medinet Habu see O'Connor, *Sea People*, 87, fig. 5.1.

[130] OnLibyan society see David O'Connor, "The Nature of Tjemhu (Libyan) Society in the Later New Kingdom," in *Libya and Egypt c1300-750 BC* (Anthony Leahy, ed. Centre of Near and Middle Eastern Studies, School of Oriental and African Studies. London: University of London, 1990), 29-114, especially pp. 37-45. For the emergence of the Libyans as a growing power in the 19th-20th Dynasties see also K.A. Kitchen, "The Arrival of the Libyans in Late New Kingdom Egypt," in *Libya and Egypt*, 15-27.

between the 1st and 2nd pylons and around the corner on the 1st pylon itself as well as in the 1st Courtyard, just as with his victories over the Sea Peoples. As usual, the vast majority of the captives occur in scenes of celebration,[131] return,[132] and presentation,[133] but two other scenes are noteworthy. In the battle scene from the 1st Pylon, Ramesses has exited his chariot and stands upon a captive while binding two others.[134] To the left of these captives, two pairs of enemies await the king's attention. Curiously, these captives are already depicted in painful, chaotic poses though they have yet to be bound. Ideologically speaking, their very nature is so chaotic and fearful that they have already assumed bizarre poses. On the north wall, as Ramesses III departs the field of battle he grasps the heads of two captives, likely chieftains, as one foot rests on the ground, the other in his chariot.[135] In short, he assumes an identical pose as Seti I did at Karnak.

Focusing now solely on the scenes from the north wall, one can see the continuation of several themes previously discussed:

1. Overall a greater percentage of Libyans are depicted in painful poses than other people groups.

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[131] Epigraphic Survey, *Medinet Habu II*, pl. 74

[132] Ibid., pl. 77.

[133] Ibid., pl. 78.

[134] Ibid., pls. 67-68.

[135] Ibid., pl. 73.

2. Only one captive "shows the face" in each scene, and each scene has one such depiction. Again, this is perhaps a mark of status or leadership.

3. In both the celebration and return scenes, Egyptian soldiers can be seen interacting with the captives in wholly believable fashion. Particularly intriguing is the interaction between an axe-wielding soldier and the lead captive on the bottom row of the celebration scene. Here the soldier controls the captive by pulling on the rope with which the prisoner is bound while threatening him with the axe.

4. Finally, a single captive in the presentation is restrained using a lion-shaped manacle (lead captive on the bottom row). This is also likely a sign of social status.

Bound Libyans from this war appear in the celebration scene from the 1st Courtyard.[136] Certain Egyptian officials bring prisoners before Ramesses, as others pile and count enemy hands and phalli. Another axe-wielding soldier is present as he threatens the captive in front of him. Unfortunately a large portion of the scene is badly damaged, but to the right of this damage Libyans are forced to carry chariots (see also Chapter Two). Only Nubians and Libyans are ever shown doing this, indicating a distinction in the type of treatment prisoners from these groups receive compared to the more technologically advanced enemies from western Asia and Anatolia. In fact, when chariots are depicted in such

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[136] Ibid., pl. 75.

scenes involving the Hittites, they are bound but ride their own chariots. This is in stark contrast to depictions of the Libyans, a society lacking chariots, being forced to carry the Egyptians' chariots.

Unlike the two Libyan campaigns and the Sea Peoples war, the depictions of battle against Asiatics contain no surviving year date,[137] making it much more difficult to determine their historical value. Regardless, the intent of this discussion is to better understand depictions of bound foreigners and their function in New Kingdom society and not to determine the historical value of each depiction. As before, great variety can be found in the bindings of enemy prisoners, and Egyptian soldiers frequently interact with the prisoners leading the captives by a rope or pushing/striking them in the back/head.[138]

Much like with the 2nd Libyan campaign, this war is detailed on both the exterior of the north wall and 1st Pylon as well as in the 1st Courtyard. In all of the scenes from the north wall and 1st Pylon, only Asiatics are depicted, but in the return and presentation scenes from 1st Courtyard, Libyans and Sea Peoples are added to the scenes. This is not necessarily proof of an imaginary campaign, but it is consistent with the celebratory function of the scenes in the 1st Courtyard (see above). What could be more fitting for such a celebration than incorporating

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[137] For numerous drawings and select photos, see Ibid., pls. 88-100.

[138] Both the 2nd Libyan campaign and battles with Asiatics are depicted at Karnak as well. Overall, the bindings of captives show the same variety one has come to expect. Thus, they require no further comment here. They are, however, included in Table 5. For more see the following: Gaballa, *Narrative Art*, 125-127; Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen*, 318-322, II.1-5, III.1-8; *KRI* V, 55-56, 87-88; PM II2, 34 (120), 273 (3), 274 (10); *RIK* II, pls. 114-120; Wreszinski, *Atlas* II, pls. 62a-c.

three enemies from Ramesses' wars into both scenes? Ramesses' great might is

proven by his conquering not one, not two, but three different groups.

Table 5: Captives in War Reliefs from Medinet Habu and Karnak[139]

Location, Campaign, Context (total # of captives)	Standard Binding	X-Shaped Pose	Painful, Arms Below/ Level with Head	Painful, Arms Above Head	Showing the Face of the Captive	Captive Looks Back or Up	Manacle (type)
Ext. N. Wall, Nubian, Return (13)	2	1	4	4	0	0	2 (oval)
Ext. W. Wall, Nubian, Presentation (18)[140]	2	3	6	4	0	3 (back)	3 (oval)
Ext. N. Wall, 1st Libyan, Celebration (26)[141]	10	3	10	1	0	0	0
2nd Courtyard, S. Wall, 1st Libyan, Celebration (33)	7	1	14	9	0	4 (back) 4 (up)	2 (oval)
2nd Courtyard, E. Wall, 1st Libyan, Return (13)[142]	6	1	4	2	0	0	0
2nd Courtyard, E. Wall, 1st Libyans, Presentatio	4	1	4	5	1	0	1 (oval)

[139] Unless noted "Karnak" the material here is from Medinet Habu.

[140] Several additional Nubians are unbound as they supplicate themselves before pharaoh.

[141] Where overlap occurs in this scene, it is clear that the captives were bound in identical fashion. The totals reflect this understanding.

[142] Fifteen captives are depicted, matching the total in the presentation scene. Two of these captives are not reflected in this table because their bindings have not survived.

Location, Campaign, Context (total # of captives)	Standard Binding	X-Shaped Pose	Painful, Arms Below/ Level with Head	Painful, Arms Above Head	Showing the Face of the Captive	Captive Looks Back or Up	Manacle (type)
n (15)							
Ext. N. Wall, Sea Peoples, Celebration (50)	14	3	22	3	3	2 (back) 16 (up)[143]	3 (oval) 2 (fish)
Ext. N. Wall, Sea Peoples,[144] Presentation (9)	1	1	2	4	1	1 (back)	1 (lion)
2nd Pylon, E. Wall, Sea Peoples, Presentation (25)	3	1	8	7	1	2 (back)	4 (oval)
N. Wall, between 1st & 2nd Pylon, 2nd Libyan, Celebration (20)	4	2	9	5	1	2 (up)	0
N. Wall, between 1st & 2nd Pylon, 2nd Libyan, Return (14)	1	2	5	6	2	1 (up) 1 (back	0
1st Courtyard, E. Wall, 2nd Libyan, Celebration (6)	1	0	3	0	0	0	2 (oval)
N. Wall, between 1st & 2nd Pylon, Asiatic, Celebration (18)	6	2	7	3	0	0	0
N. Wall, between 1st & 2nd Pylon, Asiatic, Return (14)	0	2	5	6	1	1 (up)	1 (oval)
1st Courtyard, N. Wall, Asiatic, Celebration	8	1	7	1	0	1 (back)	0

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[143] This is due to the severity of several of the bindings in the "Painful" category, which also has an unusually high total.

[144] Also depicted are Libyans in the bottom register.

Location, Campaign, Context (total # of captives)	Standard Binding	X-Shaped Pose	Painful, Arms Below/ Level with Head	Painful, Arms Above Head	Showing the Face of the Captive	Captive Looks Back or Up	Manacle (type)
(17)							
1st Courtyard, N. Wall, Asiatic, Return (14)	5	2	5	2	0	0	0
1st Courtyard, N. Wall, Asiatic Presentation (10)	2	1	4	1	0	1 (up)	1 (oval)
Karnak, Amun District, W. Wall, 2nd Libyan, Celebration (2)	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Karnak, Amun District, W. Wall, Asiatic, Return (5)145	2	1	1	0	1	0	1 (oval)
Karnak, Mut District, W. Wall, 2nd Libyan, Celebration (2)	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
Karnak, Mut District, W. Wall, 2nd Libyan, Return (13)	7	0	4	2	0	0	0
Karnak, Mut District, W. Wall, 2nd Libyan, Presentation (10)	5	1	3	1	0	0	0
Karnak, Mut District, W. Wall, Asiatic, Celebration (6)	0	2	3	1	0	0	0
TOTALS:	**93**	**32**	**136**	**62**	**12**	**39**	**20 (oval) 2 (fish) 1 (lion)**

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[145] Note the presence of a single Libyan captive closest to the king.

Overall, Ramesses III had a great fondness for bizarre and torturous poses (230) over standard bindings (116), as Table 5 demonstrates. Additionally, the presence of a sole captive either bound with a manacle or "showing his face" in several rows of captives likely demonstrates a concerted effort to show enemy leadership, as well as visual variety, as discussed above especially concerning the Sea Peoples invasion.

Conclusion

There can no doubt at this point that despite a tendency among Egyptologists to gloss over depictions of prisoners of war, these depictions contain a wealth of information valuable for both historical reconstructions and understanding the Egyptian worldview and conceptualization of sacred space and kingship. It is telling that so much sacred architectural real estate was devoted to enemy figures. Certainly the primary function of such depictions was two-fold: to celebrate the might and victories of the conquering king and to provide a form of apotropaic protection for the temple and cosmos against chaotic forces.

Additionally, on a more simplistic level, it is quite possible that variety in the poses was also valued on some level by Egyptian society as a form of sheer entertainment. Torturous poses can certainly be disturbing to behold, but they are often caricature-like or even comedic in their exaggerated form. Humiliating enemy rebels was a form of celebratory entertainment in other ancient empires (see Chapter Six), and there is no reason to assume the Egyptians were any different considering the ubiquity of the bound foreigner motif. There is no

contradiction in this dual understanding of the religious-political function of the iconography and the simple, everyday public value of the depictions.

Added to this understanding is the simple fact that torturous or bizarre poses are used nearly as often as standard ones (601 standard bindings, 459 painful ones;[146] see Table 6). These totals include the unusual scene of Ramesses II at Karnak that shows 150+ captives in the same standard binding. Removing this scene, of course, brings the numbers to a difference of just eight, which is rather remarkable. At the very least, this demonstrates that the Egyptians were far less squeamish about such matters than scholars holding to overly romanticized ideals about the Egyptians and the brutal realities of warfare and the treatment of enemy prisoners.

Another marker of the value of representations of enemy captives is their highly structured presentation. Rather than proof of their lack of historical value, this fact underscores the importance of the material. The Egyptians took great care to include bound enemies in scenes of celebration, return, and presentation for a simple reason: such contexts are precisely where realistic interactions between king and prisoner should occur. Several important questions remain, however:

1. What was the fate of the captives?

2. What does it mean to be "presented to the gods"?

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[146] To be clear, this total is reached by adding up the totals for the "Standard Bindings" and "Manacle" categories, while painful poses are calculated with the "X-Shaped Pose," "Painful Arms Below/Level with Head," and "Painful, Arms Above Head" categories. The other two categories are not tabulated as they overlap with the others.

3. Is there a difference in the treatment of enemy leaders since the artistic record at times highlights them?

To answer these questions, this discussion must now focus on the textual record, which despite the overwhelming presence of rhetorical language provides numerous answers.

Table 6: Total Number of Well-Preserved Captives from Ramesside Reliefs

Campaign, Context (total # of captives)	Standard Binding	X-Shaped Pose	Painful, Arms Below/ Level with Head	Painful, Arms Above Head	Showing the Face of the Captive	Captive Looks Back or Up	Manacle (type) (D1)
Seti I at Karnak (Table 1)	49	25	25	25	3	6	22 (oval) 2 (lion) 1(animal)
Misc. Works of Ramesses II (Table 2)	28	7	17	11	1	5	5 (oval) 1 (lion) 1 (?) 1 (catchpole)
Ramesses II at Karnak and Luxor (Table 3)	163	6	15	20	3	9	1 (oval)
Kadesh (Table 4)	193	15	24	22	2	4	4 (oval)
Merenptah (no Table)	11	6	5	6	1	1	4 (oval)
Ramesses III (Table 5)	93	32	136	62	12	39	20 (oval) 2 (fish) 1 (lion)
TOTALS:	**537**	**91**	**222**	**146**	**22**	**64**	**56 (oval) 4 (lion) 2 (fish) 1 (catchpole) 1 (?)**

CHAPTER FIVE: THE TEXTUAL RECORD AND THE FATE OF PRISONERS OF WAR

Though New Kingdom iconography provides several intriguing details

regarding the bindings of prisoners of war and often showcases the great

creativity of the Egyptians (see Chapters Two-Four), one must consult the textual

record to determine the ultimate disposition of foreign captives. Details of the

fates of enemy captives are found in three primary contexts: royal monuments

and inscriptions, tomb biographies or stele of officials and military leaders, and

on administrative papyri. Many of the royal inscriptions use highly rhetorical,

figurative language in heaping effusive praise on the pharaoh. Such phrasing is

for the most part uninformative regarding the fate of the captives, its purpose

being to glorify the king as the sole actor. Texts also include booty lists, which

mention captives; however, the reported number of captives brought to Egypt is

often difficult to accept as literal. Biographical texts are generally more

straightforward and at times note that the king rewarded a particular individual for

his service by giving him foreign prisoners to work on his private estate. Stelae of

officials, erected to commemorate a building project, sometimes specifically note

that captives were used in the project, while administrative papyri provide unique

details regarding the incorporation of enemy prisoners into New Kingdom society

(examples below).

Before discussing specific examples, a brief overview is in order. Quite

simply, two primary outcomes are evident: 1. forced labor for the majority of the

prisoners; and, 2. execution, particularly for the leaders. It is also possible that

foreign slaves could eventually earn their freedom, as will be discussed below.

The discussion that follows will initially address the material topically and then chronologically, beginning with the fate of forced labor and concluding with examples of public, ceremonial execution. This is necessary in order to determine if the various types of treatment of foreign prisoners underwent any changes during the New Kingdom or if any rulers can be said to be an exception in the severity of their dealings with enemy prisoners. Before examining this material, it is helpful to first examine the Egyptian terms typically translated as "captive" or "prisoners of war."[1]

Egyptian Terms for "Captive"

The most common term for "captive" or "prisoner of war" is $s\underline{k}r$-$^{c}n\underline{h}$, which literally means, "living smited/struck one."[2] When singular in number, it is nearly always written with the bound captive determinative (⸢𓀋𓈖𓊪𓋹𓀨⸣, Gardiner A13[3]).[4] The verb $s\underline{k}r$ (written variously: ⸢𓀋𓎡⸣, ⸢𓀋𓈖𓏌⸣, ⸢𓀋𓈖𓂧⸣, etc.) has a wide array of meanings, ranging from to "strike the head, strike down foes" in

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[1] Discussing these terms before analyzing specific texts and examples allows the discussion of those specific texts to focus on the fate of the captives with the meaning of terms like $s\underline{k}r$-$^{c}n\underline{h}$ and $h\exists k$ having been already established.

[2] Raymond O. Faulkner, *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian* (Oxford: Griffith Institute, 2002 [reprint of 1962]), 250. The term is found as far back as the Old Kingdom, where it appears in Weni's report. For more see David Lorton, "Terminology Related to the Laws of Warfare in Dynasty XVIII," *JARCE* 11 (1974): 55. See also, W. Vycichl, "Die ägyptische Bezeichnung für den 'Kriegsgefangenen' ($s\underline{k}r$-$^{c}n\underline{h}$)," *GM* 2 (1972): 43-46.

[3] Alan R. Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar* (3rd edition, revised. Oxford: Griffith Institute, Ashmolean Museum, 1957).

[4] For examples, see *Urk*. IV: 4.4; 780.11; 809.5; 895.5. The plural is written with the standard seated man and woman determinatives and three plural strokes.

obvious military contexts to "to work metal, clap hands, kneed dough".[5] When

written as a noun with the knife determinative, *sk̲r* means a "wound, injury."[6]

Quite obviously the root *sk̲r* and its cognates involve striking with a tool or

weapon or the consequences thereof. The term *sk̲r-ꜥnḫ* extends this

understanding metaphorically; prisoners are those who have been "struck" by

warfare yet remain alive. The term could also extend to captured messengers,

who had not seen battle,[7] meaning the Egyptians displayed considerable

flexibility with this term.

The precise status of *sk̲r-ꜥnḫ* has long vexed scholars. The most

important question is, does this term convey a particular fate, whether slavery or

execution? Grapow originally penned the meaning, "living person to be killed."[8]

For Vikentiev, *sk̲r-ꜥnḫ* were "immolated living,"[9] while Helck considered them to

be "gebundene zu erschlagende,"[10] meaning "bound to be slain." David Lorton

understood the term more literally making the *sk̲r-ꜥnḫ* a soldier who was

wounded but survived (*ꜥnḫ*) the blow (*sk̲r*), becoming by default a prisoner of

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[5] Faulkner, *Dictionary*, 250.

[6] Ibid., 250.

[7] H. Goedicke, "Amenophis II in Samaria," *SAK* 19 (1992): 135, n. 14 and 145-146; Andras Fazekas, "Amenhotep II. und die Kriegsgefangenen," *Acta antiqa Academiae Scientiarun Hungaricae* 46 (2006): 61-62.

[8] Wb. IV, 307.1-3. Much of this material is conveniently summarized in Fazekas, "Amenhotep II. und die Kriegsgefangenen," 59-64.

[9] V. Vikentiev, "La Taversée de L'Oronte. La Chasse et La Veillée de Nuit du Pharaon Aménophis II, D' Après La Grande Stéle de Mit-Rahineh," *BIE* 30 (1949): 290-294.

[10] W. Helck in *LÄ* III, 786-788.

war.[11] For Fazekas, the binding itself is an indicator of social status, changing a captive from someone to be executed to a *sḳr-ꜥnḫ*, who is excluded from capital punishment.[12]

While it is tempting to connect *sḳr-ꜥnḫ* to any of these meaning, they all fail to take into account the variety of people said to be *sḳr-ꜥnḫ*: soldiers (most typical), messengers (see above, footnote no. 7), and even the wives and children of enemies.[13] Egyptian texts are quite clear that it is normally enemy rulers who are executed (much more below), so the wives and children of enemies were almost certainly put to work and not executed. Individuals classified as *sḳr-ꜥnḫ* were also subject to harsh executions. For example, *sḳr-ꜥnḫ* is used in the Buhen Stela, which records Akhenaten's impaling of allegedly 225 Nubians (more below).[14] Thus, *sḳrw-ꜥnḫw* are neither exempt from executions as Fazekas believes, nor certain to be executed as earlier scholars opined.

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[11] Lorton, "Terminology Related to the Laws of Warfare," 53-55.

[12] Fazekas, "Amenhotep II. und die Kriegsgefangenen," 63-64.

[13] For example, see the Memphis Stela of Amenhotep II, *Urk.* IV: 1307; Barbara Cumming, *Egyptian Historical Records of the Later Eighteenth Dynasty*, Fascicle I (Warminister: Aris & Phillips, Ltd., 1984), 31; Fazekas, "Amenhotep II. und die Kriegsgefangenen," 61-62.

[14] The stela was first published in H.S. Smith, *The Fortress of Buhen: the Inscriptions* (London: Egypt Exploration Society, 1976), 124-125, pl. 29. See also, Alan R. Schulman, "The Nubian War of Ahkenaton," in *L'Égyptologie en 1979: Axes prioritaires de recherches* (Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, vol. 2, 1982), 301-302.

Another term used often for "captive" was ḥ3ḳ.w/ḥ3ḳ.t (𓍑𓎡𓀏, 𓍑𓎡𓃰 𓏥), which also carries more generally the meaning of "plunder, spoils, things carried off."[15] It seems that this term was used for that which was the outcome of warfare or fighting, namely plunder.[16] Most often ḥ3ḳ.w/ḥ3ḳ.t refers to human captives,[17] but it could also refer to spoils like copper swords.[18] As a verb, ḥ3ḳ means "to plunder, capture towns, carry off captives, make prisoner."[19] It can be used to capture specific people, like the Shasu, Asiatics or Meshwesh,[20] enemy possessions,[21] or, more generically, foreign lands.[22] Overall, the term implies plundering with economic motivations as it was in the best interests of the

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[15] *DLE* II, 97; Faulkner, *Dictionary*, 163. Michael Hasel has compiled each of the usages, citing *KRI*. There is no reason to repeat his work here. His treatment is exhaustive and is an excellent research tool. For more see, Michael G. Hasel, *Domination and Resistance: Egyptian Military Activity in the Southern Levant, ca. 1300-1185 B.C.* (Leiden, Boston & Köln: Brill, 1998), 73

[16] Lorton, "Terminology Related to the Laws of Warfare," 56.

[17] *Urk*. IV: 4.10-13; *KRI* I: 16.5; 41,4; *KRI* II: 11.9; 36.7-8; *KRI* IV: 6.11; 8.2; 22.1. See also Hasel, *Domination and Resistance*, 73 and Lorton, "Terminology Related to the Laws of Warfare," 56.

[18] *KRI* IV: 9.4. Hasel notes one interesting example from the reign of Ramesses III, which refers to a storage room filled with ḥ3ḳ.w (*KRI* V: 26,13; Hasel, *Domination and Resistance*, 73).

[19] *DLE* II, 97; Faulkner, *Dictionary*, 163. For the frequency of use, see Hasel, *Domination and Resistance*, 71-72.

[20] A few examples: *KRI* I: 7.2; *KRI* II: 300.2 and 304.14; *KRI* V: 21.14; 35.11; 37.10 and 57.13.

[21] *KRI* IV: 9.7.

[22] *KRI* II: 289.11,16.

Egyptians to bring goods and defeated people back to Egypt to redistribute them into palace and temple economies.[23]

The act of bringing back prisoner was most often accomplished using the verb *ini* ( ), which means variously "to bring, carry off, fetch, bring back, return, obtain."[24] Most significantly for this discussion, Hasel notes that the "most common contextual setting for the verb *ini* in Egyptian military records is the 'carry off of prisoners' (*tp-ʿnḫ* or *sḳr-ʿnḫ*)."[25] This can include chiefs, wives, children, brothers, and so on.[26] This verb is also used for the carrying off of body parts, either phalli (*ḥnny*) or hands.[27] As a noun *inw* has been typically translated as "tribute, deliveries, gifts, produce."[28] This broad range of meanings reflects the

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[23] Hasel, *Domination and Resistance*, 72-73. See also, James K. Hoffmeier, "Reconsidering Egypt's Part in the Termination of the Middle Bronze Age in Palestine," *Levant* 21 (1989): 181-193.

[24] *DLE* I, 36; Faulkner, *Dictionary*, 22; Hasel, *Domination and Resistance*, 65-66.

[25] Ibid., 66. W. Vycichl, "Eine weitere Bezeichnung für den 'Kriegsgefangenen,'" *GM* 54 (1982): 75-76. Examples can be found in *KRI* I: 14.10 and 15; 15.12; *KRI* II: 161.8; 163.11; 177.6, etc.

[26] For *KRI* references, see Hasel, *Domination and Resistance*, 66.

[27] For phalli, see *KRI* IV: 8.6; 22.11-12. For hands, *KRI* IV: 8.12.

[28] *DLE* I, 37; Faulkner, *Dictionary*, 22.

simple fact that the precise meaning of *ỉnw* is widely debated.[29] Hasel and

Bleiberg claim that *ỉnw* is "more a sign of a return to normal relations at the end

of war" than the result of war.[30] This is stark contrast to terms like *ḥȝḳw* and *kfˁ*

(see footnote nos. 77-79), which are unquestionably captives, or their goods,

taken as a direct result of warfare.

Forced Labor: The Usual Fate

Regardless of the terms used for a particular captive, one common fate for

captured enemies was forced labor. The Egyptians had several terms which

convey the notion of forced labor: *mry.t* ("dependents"), *ḏ.t* ("personnel"), *ḥsb.w*

("forced laborers, workmen"), *bȝk.w* ("workers"), *ḥm.w* ("servants, slaves"),

ḥm.w-nzw ("royal servants"), *ˁȝmw.w* ("Asiatics"), and even *sḳr.w-ˁnḫ.w*

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[29] For a convenient summary of the debate, see David A. Warburton, *State and Economy in Ancient Egypt: Fiscal Vocabulary of the New Kingdom* (Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 151, University Press Fribourg, Switzerland: Vandenheck & Ruprecht Göttingen, 1997), 221-236 and Hasel, *Domination and Resistance*, 69-70. See also three works by Edward Bleiberg, "Commodity Exchange in the Annals of Thutmose III," *JSSEA* 11 (1981): 107-110 and "The King's Privy Purse During the New Kingdom: an Examination of *INW*," *JARCE* 21 (1984): 155-167, and *The official gift in Ancient Egypt* (Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1996). Bleiberg argues that "tribute" is only rarely the proper translation, and he disagrees with Liverani's notion that *ỉnw* was a type of reciprical royal trade. Cf. Mario Liverani, "Memorandum on the Approach to Historiographic Texts," *Orientalia* 42 (1973): 191-193. More recently Liverani writes that the goods are labeled as *bȝkwt*, *ỉnw* or *bỉȝyt* based on the status of the supplying countries and its relationship to the Egyptian empire (*International relations in the Ancient Near East, 1600-1100 BC* [New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002], 176-178). Though the discussion of *ỉnw* is ultimately tangential to the topic of bound foreigners, Warburton's conclusion that *ỉnw* had a variety of meanings relating to both tribute paid to Pharaoh or non-royal temple estates and reciprocal trade is best as it appears the Egyptians used the term with considerable flexibility (*State and Economy in Ancient Egypt*, 233-236).

[30] Edward Bleiberg, "The King's Privy Purse During the New Kingdom: an Examination of *INW*," *JARCE* 21 (1984): 160; Hasel, *Domination and Resistance*, 69-70.

("prisoners of war").[31] Because the Egyptians themselves did not discuss the status of slavery in any official context it is difficult to determine which of these terms refer to slavery. It is telling that no existing texts explain the legal status of slaves in a society that was so thorough in its written documentation, especially compared to other ancient societies.[32] The texts discussed below are illuminating regarding the fate of particular *individuals* but nothing exists which codifies the status of slaves or forced laborers on the whole.

The problem is one of terminology and language. The Egyptians were considerably flexible with language, and Loprieno correctly points out that interpreting the social structures of one culture using "paradigms of reference (including linguistic ones) of another is always, from a hermeneutic viewpoint, a spurious activity."[33] To be sure, the use of the term "slavery" to encompass all the terms listed above is too simplistic and carries with it the unfortunate side effect of modern notions of slavery influenced by colonial era slavery with all its evils. Caution is clearly required. In some respects, the term "dependent" might be more fitting, as foreign prisoners could eventually earn wages and pay taxes, had

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[31] Antonio Loprieno, "Slaves" in *The Egyptians* (Sergio Donadoni, ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 185-186.

[32] Ibid., 185.

[33] Ibid., 185-186.

some judicial rights, could marry and start families, and even keep their original names.[34]

Egyptologists have typically used the translation "slave, servant" to understand two Egyptian terms: *ḥm* (masculine: 𓀀𓀢; feminine: 𓀀𓏏𓀼) and *bꜣk* (masculine: 𓅡𓏤𓀢; feminine: 𓅡𓏏𓀼).[35] Unfortunately, the human condition of each role is never defined in the textual record, even though professions corresponded to social standing, as individuals were identified with the work they did.[36] One Middle Kingdom text, the "Satire of the Trades,"[37] outlines the dangers and misfortunes that accompany seemingly every occupation but that of the scribe. Noticeably absent is the role of slavery, which Loprieno reasonably believes was not a clearly defined social group during this time.[38] Various phrases referring to a type of forced labor are, however, found in

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[34] For more, see Bernadette Menu, "Captives de guerre et dépendance rurale dans l'Égypte du Nouvel Empire," in *La dépendance rurale dans l'Antiquité égyptienne et proche-orientale* (B. Menu, ed. IFAO, 2005), 187-204. Furthemore, the entire system of labor might better be classified as a hybrid between corvée labor and chattel slavery.

[35] See Faulkner, *Dictionary*, 169 (*ḥm*) and 79 (*bꜣk*).

[36] Lopreino, "Slaves," 188-189. In many respects, this latter understanding is shared by modern societies. Social functions often center on careers and the first question people often ask each other when meeting for the first time is simply, "what do you do/where do you work?"

[37] For full translations see William Kelly Simpson, "The Satire on the Trades: The Instruction of Dua-Khety," in *The Literature of Ancient Egypt* (3rd Edition. William Kelly Simpson, ed. New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2003), 431-437; W. Helck, *Die Lehre des ḏwꜣ-Ḫtjj* (2 parts. Wiesbaden, 1970); James E. Hoch, "The Teaching of Dua-Kheti: A New Look at the Satire of the Trades," *JSSEA* 21-22 (1991-1992): 88-100; John L. Foster, "Some Comments on 'Satire of the Trades,'" in *Gold of Praise: Studies Presented in Honor of Edward F. Wente* (Emily Teeter and John A. Larson, eds. SAOC 20. Chicago, 2000), 121-129.

[38] Loprieno, "Slaves," 188-189.

the Satire: *nḥm.w ḥr b3k.f* ("drawn/made to work"), *nḥm.w ḥr b3k.f mni.ti* ("made to work in the fields"), *ḥwi.tw.f m šsm 50* ("beaten with 50 lashes" for a day's absence), etc. The term *ḥm* is found in another Middle Kingdom text to describe two individuals in the Westcar Papyrus: "It was lying down on a mat at the threshold of his house that he found him, a servant (slave) at his head massaging him and another wiping his feet."[39] It is also significant that the status of slave appears to be restricted to foreigners. Egyptians who gave up their legal freedoms (due to famine, debt, etc.) were usually referred to as servants (*b3k.w*) not slaves (*ḥm.w*).[40] With so many terms for individuals classified as "slaves, servants, dependents," it is vital to examine specific examples in order to better understand the relationship between these terms and those discussed above and foreign captives.

Ahmose, Son of Ibana: An Ancient Marine Well-Rewarded

The importance of prisoners of war as laborers during the New Kingdom is seen from the onset of the empire period. The autobiographical text of Ahmose son of Ibana provides a detailed account of the emergence of the Eighteenth Dynasty and paints a picture of the appearance of foreign slavery.[41] The

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[39] Ibid., 189; William Kelly Simpson, "King Cheops and the Magicians," in *The Literature of Ancient Egypt*, 19.

[40] Loprieno, "Slaves," 209.

[41] Most recently see James K. Hoffmeier, "The Tomb Biography of Ahmose of Nekheb (2.1)," in *CoS* II: 5-7; *ANET*, 233-234; Hans Goedicke, "Some Remarks Concerning the Inscription of Ahmose, Son of Ebana," *JARCE* 11 (1974): 31-41; Miriam Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature: a book of readings. Volume II. The New Kingdom* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), 12-15. For the historical events recorded in the inscriptions, see Claude Vandersleyen, *Les Guerres d'Amosis* (Monographies

equivalent of an ancient marine, battling on land and at sea, Ahmose served

under three successive kings: Ahmose I, Amenhotep I, and Thutmose I. His

autobiography remains the only contemporary source for the expulsion of the

Hyksos and combines with the biography of Ahmose-Pen-Nekhbet as the most

important sources for the wars of the early Eighteenth Dynasty.[42]

Ahmose immediately boasts of his rewards in the first few lines of his

autobiography: "I was rewarded with gold seven times…and (given) male and

female servants likewise."[43] During King Ahmose's war against the Hyksos, he

claims to have "carried off a hand which was reported to the Royal Herald,"[44] a

clear textual reference to slaying an enemy and cutting off his hand. This trophy

taking echoes Ramesside reliefs, which show Egyptian soldiers and scribes

counting the hands (or phalli) of slain enemies. Following this, Ahmose captured

a prisoner of war ($s\underline{k}r$-$^{c}n\underline{h}$) in fighting to the south of Egypt.[45] After Egyptian

victory at Avaris (repelling the Hyksos), he carried off four individuals and "his

majesty gave them to me as servants."[46]

During a campaign against Nubia, Ahmose once again demonstrated his

valor by capturing two men and cutting off three hands. As before, he was given

Reine Élisabeth I. Bruxelles, 1971); *ARE* 2: 1-9, 17-18, 33-35. For the hieroglyphs, see *Urk*. IV: 1-11.

[42] *ARE* 2: 3-4.

[43] Hoffmeier, "Ahmose," in *CoS* II: 5; *ARE* 2: 7. The word used for "servant" here is $\underline{h}m$.

[44] Ibid., 5. *Urk*. IV: 3.13-14.

[45] Line 12; *Urk*. IV: 4.12.

[46] Hoffmeier, "Ahmose," in *CoS* II, 6; *ARE* 2: 7; *Urk*. IV: 4.13.

gold and in this case two maid-servants.[47] Ahmose claims that the king

specifically captured the enemy ruler, while Ahmose carried off two more Nubian

warriors from the ruler's boat.[48] Following the successful campaign, each solider

was given five "heads" and a field of five *stt*.[49] A counterpoint to the idiomatic use

of "hands", the use of "heads" (*tp*) here refers to living captives,[50] not to be

confused with decapitated heads. Three more people (*tp*) and five *stt* were given

to Ahmose after the rebel Tetian was defeated.[51]

Ahmose son of Ibana continued his exemplary military service under

Amenhotep I. After a victory over Nubian tribesmen, he brags that, "they were

carried off in neck constraints, without losing one of them."[52] The Egyptian term

for "neck constraints" is *gw3w3* (⬛ 𓏤 𓏤 𓏤), which Faulkner translates as

"strangle-hold."[53] Hoffmeier's translation is thus entirely reasonable and conveys

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[47] Hoffmeier, "Ahmose," in *CoS* II, 6; *ARE* 2: 8; *Urk*. IV: 5.8-11.

[48] Hoffmeier, "Ahmose," in *CoS* II: 6, n. 23. The Egyptian terms used to describe these warriors is *Mgˁ*, which Hoffmeier notes, following Schulman, were a specific military unit. See also, Alan R. Schulman, *Military Rank, Title and Organization in the Egyptian New Kingdom* (MÄS 6. Berlin: Verlag Bruno Hessling, 1964), 22-25. Breasted notes that this word can be "rendered tolerably certain by a scene in the tomb of Harmhab...where it bears the determinative of shooting, and stands over a man with a bow…" (*ARE* 2: 9, note a).

[49] Hoffmeier notes that 5 *stt* are approximately 3.3 acres. Hoffmeier, "Ahmose," in *CoS* II: 6, n. 24; *Urk*. IV: 6.7-8; see also *ARE* 2: 8-9.

[50] This is actually a Middle Kingdom term and in this usage in fairly translated as "persons" or "people". See Loprieno, "Slaves," 202-203 and L. Habachi, "An Inscription at Aswan Referring to Six Obelisks," JEA 36 (1950): 13-18.

[51] *Urk*. IV: 6.15.

[52] Hoffmeier, "Ahmose," in *CoS* II: 6; *Urk.* IV: 7.4.

[53] Faulkner, *Dictionary*, 288.

a nuance that is lacking in Breasted's treatment of the terms as simply

"prisoners."[54] The verb *gw3*, (𓎼𓄿𓅬𓎡𓂡) means to "pull tight" or "be

choked;" it was also used idiomatically to "besiege a city."[55] Ahmose's comment

is a textual parallel to the common artistic depiction of captives bound in groups

and attached to one another by neck constraints. It may also refer to the unusual

device depicted by Ramesses II at Beit el-Wali (see Chapter Four).[56] During this

same campaign, Ahmose again carried off two hands as trophies and a prisoner

of war (*sḳr-ʿnḫ*),[57] all of which he presented to the king. Ahmose also states that

he "carried off two maid servants as plunder, besides these which I had

presented to him (the king)."[58]

After Thutmose I succeeded Amenhotep I, Ahmose son Ibana transported

the king to Nubia. Unsurprisingly, Ahmose brags of his naval acumen as he

guided the vessel through rapids. His report of the results of this campaign is far

more rhetorical, using language akin to the royal monuments. The king rages like

a panther, the enemies are routed, etc. A vague statement that "their subjects

were carried off as prisoners of war" is all that Ahmose notes concerning

prisoners. Most intriguing is his mention that the enemy leader "was hung upside

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[54] Cf. *ARE* 2: 17.

[55] Faulkner, *Dictionary*, 288

[56] Herbert Ricke, George R. Hughes, and Edward F. Wente, *The Beit el-Wali Temple of Ramesses II* (The University of Chicago Press, 1967), pl. 9.

[57] Hoffmeier, "Ahmose," in *CoS* II: 6-7; *Urk*. IV: 7.10-15.

[58] Hoffmeier, "Ahmose," in *CoS* II: 7.

down at the bow of his majesty's boat."[59] Ahmose partook of one final campaign: Thutmose I's journey to the Euphrates River. Again rhetorical language dominates his summary, noting simply that countless prisoners were taken. Specifically, Ahmose boasts of his bravery in capturing a chariot, horse, and rider as a prisoner of war.[60]

The biography of Ahmose son of Ibana demonstrates the prominence of captives as rewards for high-ranking military officials. Several times Ahmose notes that he was promoted and given gold and servants as rewards for his service. This is in contrast to the rewards given another soldier, Ahmose-Pen-Nekhbet, who was given various pieces of jewelry and weapons but never prisoners, even though he captured living prisoners and a chariot rider.[61] It seems likely that this is because he was not of high enough rank to receive the presumably highest reward: captives. Finally, the summaries of Ahmose provide interesting parallels to Egyptian iconography, specifically the taking of hands as trophies and the use of neck restraints for captives.

Forced Labor in the Eighteenth Dynasty: Booty, Property, and Human Rights

The military successes and commercial interests of the Eighteenth Dynasty in the Levant brought many Asiatics into Egypt, either as booty from campaigns or as purchased slaves.[62] Though the first three Eighteenth Dynasty

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[59] Ibid., 7; *Urk*. IV: 8.4-9.6. More on this practice below.

[60] Hoffmeier, "Ahmose," in *CoS* II: 7; *Urk* IV: 9.16-10.2.

[61] Cf., *ARE* 2: 10-12, 35.

[62] Loprieno, "Slaves," 202-203.

rulers were primarily concerned with establishing their hegemony in Nubia,[63] Thutmose I campaigned in western Asia as far as the Euphrates River, as reflected in the biographies discussed above, though no official record of the campaign has survived.[64] Some of the earliest depictions of northern captives potentially come from this campaign.[65]

Captives are mentioned in a few sources from the generally poorly attested reign of Thutmose II. Following the usual successes over Nubians, the Aswan Inscription records that one of the children of the defeated chief was captured along with other Nubians. They were all then brought in before the enthroned king and "placed under the feet of the Good God."[66] Such a triumphalistic act brings to mind the Roman Triumph though the text here does not describe the fate of the prisoners (see Chapter Six).

The many wars of Thutmose III and Amenhotep II led to ubiquitous mention of captives as booty. The most famous corpus of texts from this type, the

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[63] Donald B. Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Times* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), 149. Redford notes that Egyptian activity in Asia during the early 18th Dynasty was "modest and in many respects 'traditional" (*The Wars in Syria and Palestine of Thutmose III* [Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2003], 185-186.

[64] Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel*, 153. See also Helck, Wolfgang. *Die Beziehungen Ägyptens zu Vordserasien im 3. und 2. Jahrtausend v. Chr.* (2nd edition, Wiesbaden, 1971), 115-116.

[65] See N. de G. Davies, *Private Tombs at Thebes IV* (London, 1963), pl. 22. This is doubtless the case for the wife of Senimose, Thutmose I's guardsman, who is referred to as the "Hazorite." See, Helck *Beziehungen*, 380, nos. 27-36; Redford, *The Wars in Syria and Palestine of Thutmose III* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 188-189, no. 18; and Anthony J. Spalinger, "The Will of Senimose," in *Studien zu Sprache und Religion Aegyptens* (FS Westendorf: Göttingen, 1984), 631-650.

[66] *ARE* 2: 50; *Urk*. IV: 137-141, especially 137.6-16.

Annals of Thutmose III,[67] refers to captives in several booty lists using various

terms, from those discussed above to specific ethnic terms like "Asiatics,"

"Syrians" or by terms relating to the captives' status like "Maryannu," "chief," etc.

Following the victory at Megiddo, prisoners of war ($skrw$-^cnhw) are presented to

the king alongside other plunder: hands, horses, chariots of gold and silver, etc.[68]

Most intriguing is the use of a fish idiom to describe the state of the

defeated army as the plunder is counted: "Their troo[ps] were lying on their backs

like fish in a net as his majesty's victorious army counted their possessions."[69]

This description of defeated enemies as hapless as fish in a net echoes the

depiction of a particular member of the Sea People on the walls of Medinet

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[67] *Urk*. IV: 625-756. These texts are among Egypt's most famous. Partial translations can be found in "James K. Hoffmeier, "The Annals of Thutmose III (2.2A) in *CoS* II: 7-13; *ANET*, 234-238. A full translation can be found in *ARE* 2: 163-227. Carved on the walls of the bark shrine of Amun at Karnak, the Annals have been widely studied by scholars focusing primarily on historical, geographical, and military aspects. For early examples, see M. Noth, "Die Annalen Thutmose III. als Geschictesquelle," *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins* 66 (1943): 156-174 and H. Grapow, *Studien zu den Annalen Thutmosis des Dritten und zu ihnen verwandten historischen Berichten des Neuen Reiches* (Abhandlungen der Deutschen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin. Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1947). More recently, three works by Anthony J. Spalinger: "Some Notes on the on the Battle of Megiddo and Reflections on Egyptian Military Writing," *MDAIK* 30: 221-229, "A Critical Analysis of the 'Annals' of Thutmose III (Stücke V-VI)," *JARCE* 14 (1977): 41-54, and *Aspects of the Military Documents of the Ancient Egyptians* (YNER 9. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1982); Patrick Lundh, *Actor and Event: Military Activity in Ancient Egyptian Narrative Texts from Tuthmosis II to Merenptah* (Uppsala, 2002). Finally, the most exhaustive treatments are found in two books by Redford: *Pharaonic King-Lists, Annals, and Day-Books: A Contribution to the Study of the Egyptian Sense of History* (SSEA Publications IV. Mississauga:Benben Publications, 1986) and *The Wars in Syria and Palestine*. Useful translations of other important texts from the reign of Thutmose III can also be found in and Cumming, *Egyptian Historical Records*, Fascicle I*, 1-19.

[68] Hoffmeier, "Annals," in *CoS* II: 11; *ARE* 2: 185. *Urk.* IV: 659.14-16.

[69] *Urk* IV: 659.3-5. This translation is my own. See also Hoffmeier, "Annals," in *CoS* II: 11; *ARE* II. 184-185.

Habu,[70] another potential indication of a type of general synchronism between text and icon in Egyptian thought concerning bound captives. Among the many spoils of war were 340 prisoners, eighty-three hands, thirty-eight Maryannu (elite chariot warriors), 1796 male and female servants ($ḥm.w/ḥm.w.t$) and their children, etc.[71] The reliability of the totals is less important for this particular discussion than the simple fact that various captives are noted using several different terms to distinguish their social standing.[72] The Annals make it clear that the children of enemy rulers were taken back to Egypt as hostages and eventually returned to their homelands as replacement rulers for their fathers: "Now, whoever died among these chiefs, His Majesty will cause his son to go to take his place. List of the children of chieftains brought in this year: 36 persons; 181 male and female slaves…"[73] The Annals also make specific mention of the incorporation of the captives into the Egyptian workforce as part of temple estates where they worked as weavers and farmers, among other tasks.[74]

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[70] Epigraphic Survey, *Medinet Habu Volume I: Earlier Historical Records of Ramses III.* Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1930), pl. 42. See pages 205-207, Figure 27 of the present work for more.

[71] *Urk*. IV: 663-664. Hoffmeier, "Annals," in *CoS* II: 12; *ARE* 2: 187-188. Hoffmeier lists 3400 prisoners of war, clearly an extra zero was added by mistake.

[72] See the various works cited in note 71 for more on the reliability of the totals given. Additionally, there is little to be gained in this discussion in repeating similar lists. Similar issues can be cited for texts from Amenhotep II's reign and need not be addressed here. Curious readers can find more in the following: Menu, "Captifs de guerre," 190, especially note no. 15; J.J. Janssen, "Eine Beuteliste von Amenophis II und das Problem der Slaverei im alten Aegypten," *JEOL* 17 (1963), 141-147; P. Der Manuelian, *Studies in the Reign of Amenophis II* (HÄB. Hildesheim, 1987).

[73] *Urk*. IV: 690.2-10; Abd el-Mohsen Bakir, *Slavery in Pharaonic Egypt* (Supplement aux ASE. Cairo: L'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 1952), 111.

[74] *Urk*. IV: 742.11-16; Menu, "Captifs de guerre," 189.

A less common term for prisoners of war is used following Thutmose III's longest campaign (Year 33).[75] The king claims to have captured three princes, their wives, eighty "men in captivity" (; *rmṯ.w kfꜥ*), 606 male and female slaves (*ḥm.w/ḥm.w.t*) and their children.[76] The root *kfꜥ* means "to make captures, take booty, plunder" or even simply to "grasp" and is also used in one term referring to warriors, *kfꜥw*.[77] In this sense then, a warrior is "one who captures," highlighting the importance of seizing captives as defining trait of warfare.[78] Another 513 male and female slaves are listed as part of the tribute from Syria.[79] Unless noted otherwise, it is safe to assume that these "living prisoners of war" and specific people groups (Maryannu, etc.) were incorporated into the Egyptian work force. The vast majority of these individuals were given over to the temple estates.[80] This was common practice by at least the time of Amenhotep II, as a text from his mortuary temple makes clear: "The lake (of the temple) was high because of the great inundation…his work place was filled with male and female slaves (*ḥm.w/ḥm.w.t*), the children of princes in all foreign

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[75] *Urk.* IV: 696-703; *ARE* 2: 201-205.

[76] *Urk.* IV: 698.4-7; *ARE* 2: 203.

[77] *DLE* IV: 39; Faulkner, *Dictionary*, 285. For examples, see *Urk.* IV: 898.17, 899.9.

[78] See two articles by E. Bleiberg, "The Redistributive Economy in New Kingdom Egypt: An Examination of *Bꜣkw(t)*," *JARCE* 25 (1988): 157-168 and "The King's Privy Purse," 155-167.

[79] *Urk.* IV: 699; *ARE* 2: 203.

[80] Loprieno, "Slaves," 203. Cf. *Urk.* IV: 172.5, 207.9, 742.14, 1102.

lands, the spoils of his majesty."[81] A dedicatory stelae from the reign of

Amenhotep III records his building activities at Karnak, Luxor, and Soleb and

mentions that the workshop of the monument Millions of Years is filled with male

and females slaves (*ḥm/ḥmt*) and the children of foreign rulers.[82]

When captives were not given to the temple estates, it appears rulers

retained the right to give captive as rewards to loyal soldiers and officials

throughout the Eighteenth Dynasty. This conclusion is bolstered by private texts,

which also contain insightful details on the rights of slaves and their opportunities

for freedom. The "soldier" and Lieutenant-General, Amenemheb, notes several

captures made during his service to Thutmose III.[83] From the Negev, he captured

three Asiatics (*ʿȝmw*) as prisoners of war, which he then presented to the king.

Following this, he captured thirteen men (again *ʿȝmw*) as prisoners of war from

the region of Aleppo. He also captured prisoners from the region of Carchemish,

but unfortunately, the text is damaged where the total number would be. From

the country of *Sn-n-ḏʿr*,[84] Amenemheb made another capture and notes that he

brought back a hand there as well. Amenemheb was then rewarded with gold

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[81] *Urk*. IV: 1649.6-9; after Loprieno, "Slaves," 203-204.

[82] *Urk* IV: 1669.1-2; Menu, "Captifs du guerre," 190.

[83] The texts are from TT 85; *Urk*. IV: 890-897. For more, see the following: Redford, *The Wars in Syria and Palestine*, 167-172; B. Bryan, "The Egyptian Perspective on Mittani," in *Amarna Diplomacy* (R. Cohen and R. Westbrook, eds. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), 74; R. Stadelmann, "Deutsches archaeologischen Institut: Aufnahme und Publikation thebanischer Beamtengraeber," in *Thebanischen Beamtennekropolen. Neuen Perspektiven archaeolg. Forschung* (Heidelberg, 1995), 11, n. 17; P.-M. Chevereau, *Prosopographie des cadres militaries égyptiens du Nouvel Empire* (Paris, 1994), 35.

[84] Redford notes that this is most likely Kala'at Sejar on the Orontes River between Niya and Tunip (*The Wars in Syria and Palestine*, 168, n. 17).

and jewelry. He also participated in Thutmose III's campaigns against Takhsy,[85] the famous elephant hunt (where he claims to have cut off the trunk of an elephant), and a siege at Kadesh. At Takhsy, he again captured three Asiatics ($ʿ3mw$) and was rewarded with one male and one female servant, among other things. At Kadesh, Amenemheb claims he was the leader of the elite unit who breached the ramparts and that he caught two Maryannu as prisoners of war. Again the king rewarded him, although in this case he does not list the rewards.

As Redford explains, Amenemheb's text has undeniable value for the reconstruction of Thutmose III's campaigns.[86] While attempting such a reconstruction is unnecessary for this discussion, it is important to note the centrality of the recording of capturing and rewards. This would have presumably only been done at the conclusion of each campaign. Structurally, the phrase "I made a capture" ($ḫfʿ/kf3$) introduces his summaries of the first three battles, where he makes the majority of his captures. For the other campaigns, he begins the sections with a variation of "I witnessed the victories/prowess/etc. of the king…" Thus, for Amenemheb, the capture of prisoners of war was equally worthy of boasting as witnessing the might of the king.

The king's use of captives as rewards for officials continued during the later Eighteenth Dynasty. The treasurer under Horemheb, Maia, records in his tomb: "…a demonstration of the king's favor to … Maia, the vindicated, among

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[85] In the northern Beka'a Valley, south of Kadesh. See P. Der Manuelian, *Studies in the Reign of Amenophis II*, 51-53 and Redford, *The Wars in Syria and Palestine*, 169-171.

[86] Ibid., 170-172; Helck, *Beziehungen*, 141-143, J. Vandier, *L'Égypte* (Paris, 1962), 403-404, 444-445.

the prisoners taken as spoils by His Majesty among the Asiatics. The king said: 'Take them!'"[87] Just as with the claims of Ahmose son of Ibana and Amenemheb, the king is able to reward his official as he sees fit. The captives are initially the property of the king, and at times given later to the soldier who has captured them. Sabastet, barber of Thutmose III makes a similar claim, "My slave, a man of my property called Ameniu, whom I had captured with my own arm when I accompanied the king…"[88] The text goes on to explain how Ameniu, who had never been struck or imprisoned, and was thus an exemplary servant, was awarded his freedom in exchange for marrying Sabastet's invalid niece.

Slaves could also be freed through adoption, as was the case for the children of the slave girl Dienihatiri, whose owner adopted her children (a boy and two girls), he having no children of his own. One of the girls, Taimennut, married the overseer of the stables, Pendiu. Any children between Pendiu and Taimennut would thus be free citizens.[89] Another path to freedom was to be purified (sw^cb) by the king himself, leading to the individual entering into temple service as a free person. The most famous and clearest example of this practice is Tutankhamun's Restoration Stela, where the king purifies slaves—both men and women—as a reward for their work done in the royal palace. He declares

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[87] *Urk.* IV: 2163.7-11; after Loprieno, "Slaves," 205. See also, Redford, *The Wars in Syria and Palestine*, 165-166.

[88] *Urk.* IV: 1369.4-16. This translation is my own; see also Loprieno, "Slaves," 206 and Redford, *The Wars in Syria and Palestine*, 165-166.

[89] Adoption Papyrus, 16r-1v; cf. Loprieno, "Slaves," 206-207.

them exempt from future slavery and reserves them for service to the "father of all gods" (i.e., the temple of Amun).[90]

Forced Labor in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasties: Branding and Building

Ramesside rulers largely continued the practices of their predecessors concerning the use of foreign captives as laborers, with one potential difference. In contrast to the earlier New Kingdom sources, Ramesside sources do not highlight the use captives as a reward for service, though this is of course not evidence that the practice died out. Giving away captives as rewards could still have happened, but the nature of Ramesside autobiographical texts (less emphasis on individuals actively participating in campaigns with the king) led to the omission of any mention of such rewards.

What is known is that the state took responsibility for the prisoners and assigned them to various tasks.[91] During this period, captives adorn the walls of temples as part of the sequential presentation of the king's victories (see Chapter Four). Rather than appearing in booty lists, captives are generally identified by caption texts as "chiefs" ($wr.w$), by the terms discussed above, or by their ethnicity.[92] These captions simply serve to complement the iconography but provide some details as to the fate of the captives amid sweeping rhetorical

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[90] *Urk*. IV: 2030.1-11.

[91] Redford, *The Wars in Syria and Palestine*, 166.

[92] Examples are legion. To name but a few, see *RITA* I: 12, 16, 18; *RITA* II: 23-26, 30-32, 40-41; A.J. Peden, *Egyptian Historical Inscriptions of the Twentieth Dynasty* (Jonsered: Paul Aströms förlag, 1994), 2-3, 10-13, 64-67. Many of these texts refer also to the king "trampling" foreign lands or chiefs, a common refrain in Egyptian military documents which provides a parallel to sandals, footstools, tiles and so on which depict foreigners and the Nine Bows to be trampled upon (see Chapter Two).

statements. For example, Ramesses II says of prisoners from the Battle of Kadesh: "Their dependents are brought as prisoners, to fill the workshops of his father Amun."[93] Seti I made a similar claim on the stela he erected at the Temple of Ptah in Karnak after his first campaign: "Their chiefs are brought in as prisoners, their tribute on their backs, he presenting them to his august father Amun and his Conclave of Gods, to fill the workshops with slaves male and female, as the plunder from every foreign land."[94] Here a clear link is visible between presentation to the gods and forced labor as the captives' fate.

Lengthier texts explain certain Egyptian practices concerning the treatment of foreign captives during this time, mentioning branding, stamping, and tattooing the name of the king onto the captives. One particularly intriguing passage of Papyrus Harris I contains several hints to the treatment of captives after battle and back in Egypt:

> "I have brought back in great numbers those that my sword has spared, with their hands tied behind their backs before my horses, and their wives and children in tens of thousands, and their live-stock in hundreds of thousands. I have imprisoned their leaders in fortresses bearing my name, and I have added to them chief archers and tribal chiefs, branded and enslaved, tattooed with my name, and their wives and children have been treated the same way" (Papyrus Harris I, 77.4-6).[95]

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[93] *RITA* II: 24.

[94] *RITA* I: 33; *KRI* I: 40-41, §20. See also *ARE* 3: 41-42, §82; PM II², 198 (8); Peter J. Brand, *The Monuments of Seti: Epigraphic, Historical and Art Historical Analysis* (Leiden, Boston, & Köln: Brill, 2000), 221.

[95] Translated in Loprieno, "Slaves," 204-205; see also Bakir, *Slavery*, 109-110. For the hieroglyphs see W. Erichsen, *Papyrus Harris I: Hieroglyphische Transkription* (Bibliotheca Aegyptiaca V. Bruxelles: 1933), 93-94.

Several aspects of this passage deserve further comment. First, it provides a textual parallel to the numerous depictions of bound captives marching alongside or in front of Egyptian soldiers and chariots (see Chapter Four). Second, it clearly explains that not all the people captured were soldiers, as women and children are taken as well, much as recorded in Eighteenth Dynasty booty lists. Third, as usual the leaders are singled out for special mention, even though here they are not treated differently than their families. Fourth, apparently one of the functions of New Kingdom fortresses was to serve as a sort of prison for foreign groups. One can only speculate, but this must be where they were kept until they could be organized, branded, and assigned to their various work camps. Finally, all the captives are branded and tattooed with the king's name, including women and children. Ramesses III also mentions branding at Medinet Habu. After describing the king's victories over the Libyans, the text records that, "their leaders were made into family groups after the triumph and branded with the great name of His Majesty."[96]

Papyrus Harris I contains another insightful passage which explains that captives are the property of the king:

> "The victory is attained, and the captives ($p\mathfrak{3}$ $h\mathfrak{3}\underline{k}$) and tribespeople destined for Egypt are handed over to His Majesty. The foreign woman has fainted through marching and is placed upon the soldier's neck" (10.3-5).[97]

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[96] This translation is my own but see also William F. Edgerton and John A. Wilson, *Historical Records of Ramses III: The Texts in Medinet Habu Volumes I and II* (CEDAE, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1936), 27; Peden, *Egyptian Historical Inscriptions of the Twentieth Dynasty*, 14-15. For the hieroglyphs, see *KRI* V: 24, line 40.

The final line adds a poignant human dimension to the realities of captivity. It is interesting that no iconographic parallel exists. Such a statement also exposes the importance of captives, implying that those unfit for marching could apparently receive assistance from soldiers and were not simply left to die.

Unsurprisingly, captivity often involved manual labor, but a variety of other tasks were also doled out to foreign slaves. Work in the temple estates entailed plowing fields, planting and harvesting crops, tending cattle, and working with textiles (manufacturing, washing, etc.).[98] Slaves could also serve as butlers, beer-makers, fan-bearers, shield-bearers, and mercenaries.[99] For example, Papyrus Anastasi IV lists the items and people that must be prepared for the arrival of Pharaoh, including foreign slaves: "…Slaves of Kerke and striplings from the priestly *phyle* fit to be butlers of his Majesty….Canaanite slaves of Khor, fine striplings and fine Nubians of Cush fit to give shelter with the fan" (16.2-5).[100] Ramesses II used Sherden warriors, who were previously captured by the king, in Battle of Kadesh as personal guardsmen.[101]

Typically, however, foreign captives worked in temple estates and on monumental building projects. Serving as Viceroy of Nubia under both Seti I and

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[97] Translated in Richard A. Caminos, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies* (Brown Egyptological Studies I. London: Oxford University Press, 1954), 401-402, commentary on p. 408; cf. Lopreino, "Slaves," 205.

[98] Bakir, *Slavery*, 26, 114-115; *Urk*. IV: 742-743.

[99] Bakir, *Slavery*, 114-115.

[100] Caminos, *Late-Egyptian*, 200; Lopreino, "Slaves," 205.

[101] *RITA* II, 3.

Ramesses II, Setau used foreign laborers captured during the wars of Ramesses

II, were used to construct and work at the temple at the Wadi es-Sebua:

> "His Majesty decreed that the…Viceroy Setau…should take
> captives (in) the land of Libya (Tjemehu), to build in the
> Temple of Ramesses II in the House of Amun, together with
> ordering the *sk*-officer Ramose…"[102]

> "Then, I worked on ("made") the Temple of Ramesses II,
> in the House of Amun, being excavated in the Western (?)
> Mountain…(it) being filled with numerous people from the
> captures of His Majesty…I (rebuilt all the temples of this
> land of Kush entirely…"[103]

This provides a clue to Egyptian policy regarding foreign workers. Rather than

using Nubians to construct a temple in Nubia, they apparently used Libyans. This

must have been done to minimize the likelihood of runaways. A Nubian stationed

in Nubia could more easily concoct a scheme to escape than a Libyan. Another

motivation for this policy was the presence of offspring of captured rulers who

were also incorporated into the temple economy, as recorded in the Stela of Seti

I at Nauri, roughly thirty-five kilometers north of the Third Cataract of the Nile.

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[102] *RITA* III: 66. This text comes from Stela IX, Cairo J.E. 41403, also known as the Stela of the Sek-Officer, Ramose. For details on the stela, its discovery, and an additional translation, see Elizabeth Frood, *Biographical Texts from Ramessid Egypt* (Oxford: Society of Biblical Literature, 2007), 211-212.

[103] *RITA* III: 65. This text comes from Stela VII, Cairo J.E. 41395, 41397 (lintel) and 41398 (jamb). For the hieroglyphs, see *KRI* III: 93. Further commentary on Setau can be found in *RITANC* II: 133. For more on the temple at Wadi es-Sebua, see Lorna Oakes and Lucia Gahlin, *Ancient Egypt: An illustrated reference to the myths, religions, pyramids and temples of the land of the pharaohs* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 2006 [reprint of Anness Publishing, Ltd, 2002]), 212-213. Setau had a rather remarkable career; serving as viceroy for at least twenty-five years, he is mentioned in over one hundred sources throughout Egypt. For more, see Christiane Raedler, "Zur Repräsentation und Verwirklichung pharaonischer Macht in Nubien: Der Vizekönig Setau," in *Das Königtum der Ramessidenzeit: Vorassetzungen – Verwirklichung – Vermächtnis, Akten des 3. Symposiums zur ägyptischen Königsideologie in Bonn 7.–9.6.2001* (Rolf Gundlach and Ursula Rössler-Köhler. ÄAT 36, Beiträge zur Altägyptischen Königsidelogie 3. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2003), 140-145.

Referring to storehouse of the Seti's temple at Abydos, the text states, "The slaves there are the offspring of chiefs whom he brought from Retenu (Syria); every man is made to know his duties, in the rules of purity."[104] Here captives from Syria were made to work in Upper Egypt, including their children.

Clearly the Egyptian implementation of slavery varies in profound ways from Colonial American conceptions, though some aspects are understandably disconcerting to modern minds. Such is doubtless the case with the "houses of female slaves" which were, as Loprieno puts it, "devoted to the 'industrial production' of children."[105] Papyrus Harris I (47.8-9) refers to an "all-women settlement," whose purpose seems to have been production of slave labor for the temple of Ptah.[106]

Before concluding this section on forced labor, it is important to note that , several avenues to emancipation existed for foreign slaves during the New Kingdom, as discussed above, and that they had certain legal rights. While most foreign captives were engaged in manual labor (construction projects or agrarian tasks), some slaves were able to attain high-status occupations in close proximity to the king (butler, cup-bearer, etc.). Overall, considerable variance existed in the roles assumed for foreign captives, as to be expected in society as complex as New Kingdom Egypt, and there was a direct link between Egyptian economic

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[104] *KRI* I: 48.15-49:1; *RITA* I: 42. The entire text is translated in Ibid., 38-50, §24. For the complete hieroglyphs, see *KRI* I: 45-58, §24. See also PM VII, 174 and Brand, *The Monuments of Seti*, 294.

[105] Loprieno, "Slaves," 208.

[106] Ibid., 208-209; Erichsen, *Papyrus Harris I*, 52.

prosperity and the incorporation of foreigners into the Egyptian workforce.[107]

Procuring captives for labor was essentially an added benefit of military

campaigns in Nubian and western Asia.

Executions: Death by Fire, on Water, and Worse

As the rulers of the New Kingdom expanded Egypt's domain to previously

unreached lengths, they found ample reason to execute defeated enemies.

Ideology, as always, formed the core justification for these deeds in the official

record (see Chapter One), but executions are recorded or depicted several times

in royal inscriptions and in the tombs of military and administrative officials.

Death and Humiliation on Water

One of the most curious developments during this time is the mention of

the treatment of enemy rulers in conjunction with water processions. Ahmose son

of Ibana makes the first mention of this practice, noting that Thutmose I hung a

defeated Nubian upside down from the bow of the king's ship.[108] Amenhotep II,

ever quick to boast of his martial prowess, boasts that he slew seven chieftains

($wr.w$) from Tachsi with his own mace and then hung them "head downwards" on

the prow of his ship at the culmination of a campaign during his third year of

reign.[109] Six of them were hung on the ramparts at Thebes, while the seventh

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[107] Menu, "Captifs du guerre," 187.

[108] *Urk*. 4: 1-11, lines 35-36.

[109] Mythologically speaking, hanging the enemies head downwards mimics the backwardness and chaotic nature of enemies in the afterlife. See J. Zandee, *Death as an Enemy according to Egyptian Conceptions* (Leiden: Brill, 1960): 73-78.

was hung from the walls at Napata in Nubia.[110] That these actions serve

celebratory and political purposes regarding the consequences of rebellion is

beyond any doubt. But other questions can be fairly raised; most importantly, did

Amenhotep II truly travel all the way from northern Syria with decomposing

corpses on the prow of his ship? It is hard to imagine that such a journey would

leave the corpses in any kind of condition to be hung from the walls of Thebes

and Napata.

There is, however, an alternative understanding of these events. The

tenses of the verbs from this passage are rather ambiguous. As Muhlestein

points out, any of them could be pluperfect, changing the chronological order of

the events, leading to the following translation:

> "His majesty returned with great joy to his father Amun. He
> slew the seven princes with his mace himself. They were
> from the area of Tachsi and had been given upside down to
> the prow of the King's ship…"[111]

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[110] The same text can be found on both the Amada and Elephantine stele. For the original hieroglyphs, *Urk*. IV: 1-16**.** To name but a few translations: *ANET*, 248; *ARE* 2, 313; Alan Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs: An Introduction* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961), 199-200; O'Connor, "Egypt's Views of 'Others'," 156-157; Barbara Cumming, *Egyptian Historical Records of the Later Eighteenth Dynasty*, fascicle 1 (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, ltd, 1982), 27; Grimm, "Ein Käfig fur Gefangenenin einem Ritual zur Vernichtung von Feinden," *JEA* 73 (1987): 204," ; M. Ch. Kuentz, *Deux stèles d'Amenophis II* (Cairo, 1925), 19-20; S. Schott, "Ein ungewöhnliches Symbol des Triumphes über Feinde Aegyptens," *JNES* 14 (1955), 97-99, no. 5. See also Chapter Three of this work. Tachsi has been identified as an area between Kadesh and the Orontes. See Rainer Hannig, *Grosses Handwörterbuch Ägyptisch-Deutsch: (2800-950 v. Chr.): die Sprache der Pharaonen* (Kulturgeschichte der antiken Welt, Bd. 64, Mainz: P. von Zabern, 1995), 1404.

[111] Kerry Muhlestein, *Violence in the Service of Order: The Religious Framework for Sanctioned Killing in Ancient Egypt* (BAR International Series 2299, Oxford: Archaeopress, 2011), 47.

This understanding leads Muhlestein to suggest that the defeated enemies were hung from the ship while they were still alive and then slain upon returning to Egypt.[112] If so, then these rulers were killed, not only to make an obvious political statement, but also as part of ritual. The act of turning ones foes upside down was also a powerful symbol of the full alienness or enmity of rebellious foreigners and their utter defeat.[113]

It is quite likely that Tutankhamen engaged in a similar action, as evidenced by the Syrian in a cage hanging from the sailyard of his ship (see Chapter Three).[114] Of course, the presence of a cage makes it clear that the prisoner was alive. For the examples from the reigns of Thutmose I and Amenhotep II, it is possible that the time of the slaying varied: in some cases the prisoners may have been executed before returning to Egypt, while in other they were kept alive until returning to Egypt. To the present author, the latter is more likely, but in the absence of direct evidence, either is possible.

Depictions from royal ships, which show the king in the classic smiting pose (more in Chapter Six), form a less direct type of evidence that nonetheless

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[112] Ibid., 74. Other scholars independently reached a similar conclusion: Alberto Green, *The Role of Human Sacrifice in the Ancient Near East* (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1975), 126-128; and Nigel Davies, *Human Sacrifice in History and Today* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1981), 36.

[113] For more see, M. Chegodaev, "Lest One Be Turned Upside Down," *DE* 40 (1998): 67-80 and J. Zandee, *Death as an Enemy according to Egyptian Conceptions* (Leiden: Brill, 1960): 73-78.

[114] See again, Johnson, *An Asiatic Battle Scene of Tutankhamen*, 77-77, 163-164, fig. 5, no. 38. See also Henri Chevrier, "Rapport sur les travaux de Karnak 1952-1953," *ASAE* 53 (1955): 11, pl. VII, A and B; M. Abdul-Qader Muhammed, "The Administration of Syro-Palestine During the New Kingdom," *ASAE* 56 (1959): 132, pl. 1, catalogue no. 39; A. Grimm, "Ein Käfig fur Gefangenen in einem Ritual zur Vernichtung von Feinden," *JEA* 73 (1987): 202-206, fig. 2.

connects potential executions to water processions. Such scenes can be found for Akhenaten, Nefertiti, Ramesses III, and Herihor.[115] All told, connections between executions and water processions are evident from the early-, mid-, and late-Eighteenth Dynasty to the Twentieth Dynasty. Regardless of when the prisoner was slain, transportation of the victim via royal barque was a prominent factor.

Decapitation, Impaling and Burning: Brutality in Each New Kingdom Dynasty

Among the harshest treatments of enemy prisoners were decapitation, impaling, and immolation. Such actions fit readily into the Egyptian worldview as a final, emphatic defeat of Chaos. Examples of these actions can be found throughout the New Kingdom, although two important distinctions concerning these grisly fates should be noted: 1. It appears that only rebellious enemy leaders were subjected to these actions and 2. Such fates are far less frequent than the fate of slavery.

The tomb of Amenemheb (see above) preserves one account of the ascension of Amenhotep II, which may have involved decapitation. Though the text is badly damaged, it is clear that Amenhotep "cut off the heads of their chiefs" (*dm.n.f tpw srw.sn*).[116] The generally accepted interpretation is that these

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[115] Emma Swan Hall, *The Pharaoh Smites his Enemies: A Comparative Study* (Müncher Ägyptologische Studien 44, München: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1986), 25-26, 36, figs. 39-40, 66, and 82; Muhlestein, *Violence in the Service of Order*, 90, n. 78.

[116] *Urk.* IV: 1408-1413; Georg Ebers, "Das Grab und die Biographie des Feldhauptmanns Amen em heb," *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* (1876), pl. 3.

are the same rulers of Tachsi discussed above.[117] Muhlestein points out two

important objections to this interpretation.[118] First, on the Amada and Elephantine

stelae Amenhotep II used a mace, as noted above, yet Amenemheb claims the

heads were cut off. Second, the rulers of Tachsi were executed at the

culmination of a campaign in the king's third regnal year. Why would Amenhotep

wait so long to celebrate his ascension? The simplest answer is that he would

not wait, so these must be separate events. Finally, Muhlestein is no doubt

correct when questioning whether Amenhotep II would engage in a previously

unattested rite at an event so important as his ascension.[119] It is quite possible

that similar executions occurred at other ascensions, the evidence for which is

now lost.

Perhaps the most controversial example of the execution of enemy

prisoners is the possible burning of a large group of captives by Amenhotep II

during his Year 9 campaign, recorded in the Memphis Stela. After listing the

booty captured from his campaign in Samaria, the text says, "After his Majesty

had viewed the large amount of booty they were made into living prisoners ($s\underline{k}r$-

$\ulcorner n\underline{h}$). Two ditches were made around them and he filled them with fire ($\underline{h}t$)."[120]

The text continues by noting that Amenhotep II personally watched over them, by

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[117] For example, *ARE* 2: 319, note b; Green, *The Role of Human Sacrifice*, 126-128.

[118] Muhlestein, *Violence in the Service of Order*, 47-48.

[119] Ibid., 48.

[120] This translation is my own. For the hieroglyphs see *Urk*. IV: 1307,10-13. Translations can be found in Cumming, *Egyptian Historical Records*, Fascicle I*,* 31; Fazekas, "Amenhotep II. und die Kriegsgefangenen," 60.

himself, until daybreak. The question this passage raises is obvious: did Amenhotep burn the prisoners or merely entrap them in fence of fire, for lack of a better term. This action has been called a "fiery holocaust of the prisoners,"[121] connected to the Canaanite *herem*-ritual,[122] or considered a more general burning alive of the prisoners.[123] On the other hand, Fazekas and Helck opt for an enclosed wall of fire, whereby the captives survive and are brought back to Egypt.[124]

However, Fazekas bases his interpretation on a faulty understanding of the term *sḳr-ꜥnḫ* where the status of the prisoners excludes them from executions (see above). The passage is doubtless problematic. If an execution is in mind, why then does the text say that Amenhotep II stood watch over them through the night? The only possible reason is because he delighted in their horror, which is also telling regarding the brutality of at least this particular monarch.

One solution is that this phrase is easily understood as rhetorical due to its emphasis on the king's being entirely alone (a common expression in military

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[121] Sh. Yeivin, "Amenophis II's Asiatic Campaigns," *JARCE* 6 (1967): 119-128, especially 127, n. 84.

[122] Vikentiev, "La Taversée de L'Oronte," 251-307, especially 295-297.

[123] For example, see the following: Mario Liverani, *Prestige and Interest: International Relationship in the Near East ca. 1600-1100 B.C.* (Padova, 1990), 129, n. 18; Anthony J. Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 141-142; P. Der Manuelian, *Studies in the Reign of Amenophis II*, (HÄB 26 Gerstenbeg Verlag, Hildesheim, 1987), 68-73, 222-227.

[124] Fazekas, "Amenhotep II. und die Kriegsgefangenen," 63-64; Helck *Beziehungen*, 161.

texts which emphasize that it was the king who solely brought about victory),

which was surely not the case. If imprisonment is intended, why did the

Egyptians go to the trouble of using fire as the fence? Such a practice would be

otherwise unattested. Keeping in mind that Amenhotep II bragged several times

of his harsh treatment of captured enemies, death by burning is certainly feasible

and is the more probable interpretation.

Additionally, the use of fire to kill captives is attested from the reign of

Merenptah (see below), and fire is employed frequently as a metaphor to speak

of the king's annihilation of his foes (see also Chapter Six, pages 302-304

concerning the Temple of Tod Inscriptions of Senusret I). While campaigning

against the Hittites, Seti I is described as one "who enters among them like a

fiery flame (*sḏt*) reducing them to non-existence."[125] He is also called "a flame

(*ẖt*) in its shooting forth, unchecked by water."[126] Similar language describes

Ramesses II as a "flame at its time of devouring."[127] The importance of fire as a

metaphor is seen in its connecting the king to the Sun (Re), as a part of the

king's role to uphold Ma'at (see Chapter One). For example, Ramesses is like

the sun rising at dawn on the day of battle: "My uraeus-serpent overthrew for me

(my) enemies and gave forth its fiery blaze (*hh*) in a flame (*nswt*) in the face of

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[125] *RITA* I: 15; Hasel, *Domination and Resistance*, 84. For the hieroglyphs, see *KRI* I: 18.1.

[126] *RITA* I: 19; Hasel, *Domination and Resistance*, 84. For the hieroglyphs, see *KRI* I: 23.9.

[127] J.A. Wilson, "The Battle of Kadesh," *American Journal of Semitic Langues and Literatures* 43 (1927): 276; Hasel, *Domination and Resistance*, 84. For the hieroglyphs, see *KRI* II: 7.7.

my foe…I was like Re in his rising at dawn, and my rays burned (*wbd*) the flesh

of my emeny."[128] Not to be outdone, Ramesses III uses fire as his heat (*wbd*)

burns the Nine Bows, and their villages and even their flesh or bodies.[129] While

each of these examples is purely rhetorical, in the context of military action the

use of fire is wholly believable as a punishment for rebellious enemies. Thus,

much like the vast majority of rhetorical depictions, these rhetorical phrases

speak to potential action (see Chapter Two).

Returning to the use of fire by Amenhotep II, it is clear that a select group

of prisoners were subject to a humiliating and possibly torturous treatment; one

done long after the battle was decided. A readily observable sequence took place

from the battle to the presentation of booty (including the now fully subjugated

captives), to the treatment involving fire. A final possible clue is found in the

events following the fire incident. The next day, Amenhotep II plundered

Anaharath and Giboa-Saman.[130] Again a list of booty is given and the king finally

returned to Memphis. The text concludes by emphasizing that the rulers of

Naharin, Hatti and Babylon (the largest contemporary civilizations) heard all that

Amenhotep II did and begged for peace. Thus, it is possible that specific mention

of subjecting captives to fire was intended primarily to highlight the deeds of the

king as particularly severe, impressing upon his contemporaries the need to sue

for peace. An execution, and not merely imprisonment, by fire would doubtless

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[128] Wilson, "The Battle of Kadesh," 276; Hasel, *Domination and Resistance*, 84. For the hieroglyphs, see *KRI* II: 86.10.

[129] *KRI* V: 13.8, 17.12, 30.12, 69.10; Hasel, *Domination and Resistance*, 85.

[130] *Urk*. IV: 1308-1309.

best serve this purpose. Finally, if the deed was conducted in Canaan, it would serve as an immediate reminder to the local rulers, some of whom Amenhotep II was about to encounter, of the Pharaoh's intolerance of rebellion.

Akhenaten dealt harshly with foreign enemies as well. The Buhen Stela records the results of a Kushite rebellion: 145 of them were taken as "living captives" (*skr.w ꜥnḫ.w*) and 225 of them "became those who were impaled" (*ntyw ḥr ḫt* = literally "those upon wood/sticks").[131] While these numbers are likely exaggerated, it is clear that a brutal, post-battle impaling took place. Less overt is Akhenaten's threat to a vassal of questionable loyalty that he and his entire family would die by the king's ax if he did not correct his behavior (EA 162, lines 33-38).[132] Such a threat would lose all meaning if foreign emissaries and vassals knew the king never carried out such acts.

Impaling also took place under Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasty pharaohs. According to an inscription on the walls at Amada, Merenptah slew many Libyans in battle and following his victory. Line 5 records that "the remainder were put on the top of stakes…"[133] The key phrase, *diw ḥr tp ḫt*, is followed by a determinative which leaves no doubt that the intended meaning of such idioms is impaling ( ). Such actions are not only vociferous statements

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[131] Smith, *The Fortress of Buhen*, 124-125, pl. 29; Schulman, "The Nubian War of Ahkenaton," 301-302.

[132] W.L. Moran, *The Amarna Letters* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992) 248-249; Muhlestein, *Violence in the Service of Order*, 48.

[133] Ibid., 54; see also Ahmad Abdel-Hamid Youssef, "Merneptah's Fourth Year Text at Amada," *ASAE* 58 (1964): 274-275, pl. 1. For the hieroglyphs, see *KRI* IV: 1.

of punishment and a dire warning to future rebels but also take place *after* battle

by their very time-consuming nature. A level of brutality is evident beyond

violence of the field of battle. Furthermore, Amada is located between the first

and second cataracts in Nubia and is the same location discussed above

regarding Amenhotep II. Surely Merenptah fought the Libyans closer to Libya,

but his post-battle deeds were deemed both significant and prohibitive enough to

record at Amada. So concerned were the Egyptians with making grisly political

statements such as these in Nubia, it did not matter if the victims were Nubians

nor if the deed itself, in this case impaling, actually happened in Nubia.

The text continues, recording another excessively harsh treatment of

captured enemies, this time involving enemies more geographically relevant to

Amada: Kushites. One group of Medjay prisoners were apparently burned, the

best translation for *ḫꜣi ḫt*, meaning literally "to throw fire on."[134] This is a much

clearer example of death by fire than the Memphis Stela of Amenhotep II, and its

existence should be kept in mind when attempting to determine what Amenhotep

II did to his captives. That fire was used by Merenptah proves that this

excessively harsh form of punishment was part of the pharaonic repertoire. Other

prisoners from this campaign were mutilated, their hands or ears cut off or their

eyes plucked out. The end game of this barbarity was again an unmistakable

statement of the consequences of rebellion as piles of them were made in the

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[134] *KRI* IV: 1, line 87; E. Hornung, *Altägyptische Höllenvorstellungen. Mit 7 Lichtdrucktafeln und 6 Abbildungen im Text* (Abhandlungen der Sächsicshe Akademie der Wissenshaften zu Leipzig, Philologisch-historische Klass Bd. 59, Heft 3. Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1968), 27; Youssef, "Merneptah's Fourth Year Text at Amada," 276; Muhlestein, *Violence in the Service of Order*, 54.

"towns of Kush."[135] Another simple truth must be emphasized: "all of this was done *after* the prisoners were brought to Egypt" (emphasis original).[136] Overall the texts at Amada make it perfectly clear that Merenptah slew or dismembered fully subdued prisoners of war on at least two separate occasions.

Though the majority of Ramesses III's captives were incorporated into the Egyptian workforce (see above), he too humiliated captives: "their leaders were carried off and killed. They were cast down and made as pinioned ones (*ini.w n3 h3wt sm3.w ḥdb.w swt iriw m ḏnḥ*)."[137] This could apparently occur before the royal Window of Appearances: "All remaining ones were brought as captive to Egypt…and pinioned before the royal window of appearances (*s[p nb] in m ḥ3ḳ r Kmt…dnḥ ḫr p3 sšd*)."[138] More vague is the mention of enemy leaders being "pinioned (*dnḥ*) like birds before the falcon,"[139] with the falcon obviously referring to the king himself. As before, this is unquestionably an action taken after battle. Finally, the use of *ḏnḥ* has sacrificial implications,[140] equating the enemy leaders

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[135] *KRI* IV: 1, line 8; Youssef, "Merneptah's Fourth Year Text at Amada," 276; Muhlestein, *Violence in the Service of Order*, 54.

[136] Ibid., 54.

[137] This translation is my own. For the hieroglyphs, see *KRI* V: 25, line 54. See also, Edgerton and Wilson, *Historical Records of Ramses III: The Texts in Medinet Volumes I and II*, pls. 27-28; Muhlestein, *Violence in the Service of Order*, 55; Peden, *Egyptian Historical Inscriptions of the Twentieth Dynasty*, 14-15.

[138] This translation is my own. For the hieroglyphs, see *KRI* V: 23, line 37. See also, Peden, *Egyptian Historical Inscriptions of the Twentieth Dynasty*, 14-15.

[139] After Peden, *Egyptian Historical Inscriptions of the Twentieth Dynasty*, 58-59. For the hieroglyphs, see *KRI* V: 69, line 22.

[140] Muhlestein, *Violence in the Service of Order*, 55.

with sacrificial birds, a theme reinforced by various bindings depicted in battle reliefs (see Chapter Three and Four).

Strangulation: The Curious Case of the Tomb of Mentuherkhepeshef

Among the most unusual depictions of executions is the strangling scene from the tomb of Mentuherkhepeshef.[141] Two Nubians kneel with a cord wrapped around each of their necks, while two other prostrate Nubians appear to await the same fate. As Davies describes it, "…the ends of [the chords] are in each case in the hands of two men ('strong ones') who stand on opposite sides, and thus can in a moment throttle their prisoner."[142] Davies' description is accurate in all but one case: throttling is not the action of a rope. Batons, clubs, and the like can be used to throttle; ropes and cords restrict or suffocate.

The prisoners are described as Nubians, and above their heads are two harpoon glyphs (𓐍𓐍) surrounded by an name-ring, indicating that the place from which these captives hail has been captured. The strangulation of the two Nubians reaffirms the defeat of the chaotic elements associated with the initial capture.[143] Further significance is revealed by the placement of this scene in the context of an official's preparation for burial. This symbolic defeat of chaos ensures the deceased's safety against the various dangers in the afterlife. As

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[141] Norman de Garis Davies, *Five Theban Tombs (being those of Mentuherkhepeshef, User, Daga, Nehemawäy, and Tati* (Archaeological Survey of Egypt 21, London: Egypt Exploration Fund, 1913), pl. viii.

[142] Ibid., 15.

[143] Ibid., 15; John Gwyn Griffiths, "The Tekenu, the Nubians and the Butic Burials," *Kush* 6 (1958): 107-108: Muhlestein, *Violence in the Service of Order*, 34-35.

Muhlestein notes, these particular Nubians must have been chosen by

Mentuherkhepeshef because they were quite simply available to him and were

"his *de facto* representation of Chaos" (emphasis original).[144] It is possible that

Mentuherkhepeshef participated in a military campaign against this town, though

nothing in his titles, Fan-Bearer and Mayor, suggests this. It is more likely that as

a reward for his years of service, he was at some point given Nubian servants,

who he then executed for their value as symbolic representations of the defeat of

Chaos. To be fair, it is impossible to say for certain than an execution is intended,

as pointed out by both Davies and Griffiths.[145] Still, the presence of soldiers on

both ends of the cords implies a final strangulation, and there is simply no better

alternative interpretation. Why else are two kneeling captives restricted about the

neck by a rope with soldiers on either end of them holding the ends of rope in

opposite directions?

Conclusion

Clearly the fate of foreign captives in New Kingdom Egypt varied

considerably. All prisoners of war and their families were initially considered the

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[144] Ibid., 35.

[145] Davies, *Five Theban Tombs*, 15; Griffiths, "The Tekenu," 108. This point was largely made due to the general lack of archaeological evidence for ritual slaying/executions available at the time of writing for each author, though Griffiths acknowledged the possibility. This position is increasingly untenable in light of recent archeological discoveries (more in Chapter Six). Another common depiction from this tomb, the *tekenu* rite, may also refer to a ritual slaying. This is still debated by Egyptologists and, as there is no clear indication that the individuals depicted in such scenes are foreign captives, need not be discussed any further here. Curious readers should consult, in addition to the works of Davies and Griffiths, two excellent recent works: Muhlestein, *Violence in the Service of Order*, 35-37, 46 and Jose M. Serano Delgado, "A Contribution to the Study of the *tekenu* and its Role in Egyptian Funerary Ritual," *ZÄS* 138 (2011): 150-162.

property of pharaoh. Most were subsequently incorporated into the Egyptian work force in temple estates and agricultural and construction projects. Several were given as rewards to military and administrative officials to work in their private estates. Slaves could also hold positions like butler and fan-bearer which carried a certain prestige in that those serving in such capacities were in close proximity to Pharaoh himself. In some cases, the captives were able to earn their freedom via adoption, marriage, or other legal arrangements, evidence of a great deal of flexibility in Egyptian thought concerning the status of slaves and the permanence (or lack thereof) of slavery.

Several examples of executions of enemy leaders are attested as well, including particularly harsh treatments like impaling, decapitation, and burning. Degrading treatment is also corroborated as prisoners, or their corpses, could be hung from the prow or sailyard of the king's ship as well as on the walls of towns or fortresses. Overall, there is no reason to assume that any particular pharaoh deviated from standard policy (i.e., Amenhotep II), as the harshest treatments are attested throughout the New Kingdom. With these truths in mind, this discussion now turns to data from other civilizations, seeking to determine if the Egyptian treatment of foreign captives is as unique as some Egyptologists believe.

CHAPTER SIX: CROSS-CULTURAL PARALLELS AND EGYPTOLOGICAL SQUEAMISHNESS

The preceding chapters have outlined the Egyptian sources on the depiction and treatment of foreign prisoners of war, such as they are: heavily biased, ideologically inspired and often purely rhetorical. Still, they are highly detailed in many cases and useful for historical reconstructions, completing a complicated picture of Egyptian conceptualizations of foreigner captives and their incorporation into society. Brutality is evident in the bindings of many of the captives, and grisly trophy taking in the form of counting human body parts (hands or phalli) occurred as well. Though not the most common fate for enemy captives, they were at times publically executed. At this point, it is necessary to observe data from other ancient empires, seeking to understand whether Egyptian practices were unique or not.

To that end, data from the most contemporary ancient Near Eastern civilization, the Neo-Assyrian empire, will be examined first, followed by an overview of the Roman celebratory Triumph. Data from Mesoamerica will also be consulted, demonstrating that harsh treatment of captured enemies, especially their leaders, was the norm for ancient societies the world over. Finally, the tendency among Egyptologists to shirk away from brutality in Egyptian sources will be confronted with the goal of understanding the origins of this mindset and what must be done to move the conversation forward in a productive manner.

A few limitations to this approach must be mentioned. Quite simply, no parallel is perfect. Geographical and chronological distances from New Kingdom

Egypt exist in even the closest parallels.[1] Additionally, exploring topics with such a broad scope necessitates a form of generalizing. Cultural practice in even the most inert civilization was not entirely static. Different rulers would of course respond differently to various challenges and circumstances. Rather than attempting to analyze every individual encounter between empires and "rebellious" vassals or enemies, this discussion seeks to understand the overall attitudes and policies of ancient empires regarding war, brutality, and the treatment of captured enemy rulers and combatants. Finally, it is important to note that ancient art served various purposes and assumed different forms in ancient civilizations.[2] Certain features were shared: the centrality of the king and gods, capturing the event in snapshot form, the presence of tribute, etc. Others vary considerably: the political or religious intent, function, private or public display, etc.

These limitations and differences are important to note but do not invalidate the information gleaned from cross-cultural examinations. As discussed in Chapter One, the contextual approach advocated by W.W. Hallo is

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[1] This is countered by the simple fact that mindsets of these cultures share more in common with each other than they do with modern cultures. Cautious comparisons can thus prove to be enlightening. For more on this contextual approach see Chapter One.

[2] This of course applies to the textual record as well, as genres can differ between civilizations which still share much in common (i.e., military records of the campaigns of kings, dedicatory inscriptions, etc.). For more on the religious function, intended audience, and the originators of ancient art, see Winfred Orthmann, "Aspects of the Interpretation of Ancient Near Eastern Art as Visual Communication," in *Proceedings of the 4th International Congress of the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East, 29 March – 3 April 2004, Freie Universität Berlin* (Hartmut Kühne, et al, eds. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 2008), 243-254.

preferred.[3] Such critical investigations allow both similarities and differences to emerge, completing the overall picture of the treatment of enemy prisoners by ancient societies.

<div align="center">***Ancient Parallels: War, Torture, and Triumph***</div>

Mesopotamia: Brutality Made Explicit

From the dawn of civilization, mankind has had the unfortunate habit of celebrating warfare in various forms. No civilization was as forthcoming in its commemoration of warfare as the Assyrians, whose perspective originates from earlier Mesopotamian societies, especially the Sumerians and the Akkadians. For the Sumerians, the gods handed down war and other cultural norms as hallmarks of civilization.[4] As Bahrani summarizes, "…the arts of war, plunder, and taking booty were all aspects of civilized behavior."[5] At first glance, this seems jarring to modern sensibilities. How can a civilization that is largely heralded as one of the ancestors of modern Western culture consider war to be an art? In the Sumerian myth "Enki and Inanna," the tools of war are listed

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[3] W. W. Hallo, "Biblical History in its Near Eastern Setting: The Contextual Approach," in *Scripture in Context: Essays on the Comparative Method* (Carl D. Evans, W.W. Hallo, and John B. White, Pittsburgh: 1980), 2.

[4] This concept is often referred to by scholars as the "ME," the Sumerian term (*parsu* in Akkadian). These cultural norms are basis of Sumerian civilization and all aspects of life. For more see, G. Farber, *Der Mythos Inanna und Enki unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Liste der me* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1973); Bahrani, *Rituals of War*, 9-10.

[5] Bahrani, *Rituals of War*, 10.

alongside cultural achievements like kingship, metallurgy, and writing:[6]

> "'In the name of my power…I will give them all to my daughter,
> the radiant Inanna…sword and club….the standard, the quiver,
> love making, kissing, prostitution, running…the craft of the
> carpenter, the craft of the copper-smith, the art of the scribe...'"[7]

War was recognized as a form of organization directly linked to the development of cities, and eventually states. In other words, war was an unavoidable outcome of civilization.

One of the earliest commemorative artifacts concerning warfare is the Victory Stele of Naramsin (2254-2218 BC), which depicts an Akkadian victory over the Lullubi people, who lived in the Zagros Mountains.[8] Since the stele's discovery in 1898, scholars have recognized its dual nature: a historical record utilizing visual illustration while also an ideological image of the king meant to

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[6] For a complete edition of the text, see Farber, *Der Mythos Inanna und Enki*. For the first identification of the text, see S.N. Kramer, *Sumerian Mythology* (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1944). Additional discussions of this important text can be found in the following: G. Farber, "'Inanna and Enki' in Geneva: a Sumerian Myth Revisted," *JNES* 54 (1995): 287-292; S.N. Kramer and J. Maier, *Myths of Enki, the Crafty God* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989); H. Waetzoldt, "Review of Farber 1973," *BiOr* 32 (1975): 382-384; and B. Alster, "On the Interpretation of the Sumerian Myth 'Inanna and Enki,'" *ZA* 64 (1974): 20-34. For more on Mesopotamian material culture, metal work, writing and so on, see D.T. Potts, *Mesopotamian Civilization: The Material Foundations* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1997), especially pp. 164-185, 236-253.

[7] G. Farber, "Inanna and Enki (1.161), in *CoS* 1, 523.

[8] Bahrani, *Rituals of War*, 101, fig. 4.1. See also Pierre Amiet*, L'Art d'Agadé au musée du Louvre* (Paris: Edition de la Réunion des musées nationaux, 1976), 29-32, 93-95, 128 and "Victory Stele of Naramsin," in *The Royal City of Susa: Treasures from the Louvre Museum* (Oliver Harpet et al, eds. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1992), 166-168; Dominique Collon, *Ancient Near Eastern Art* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 76; The stele was first published in Jacques de Morgan, *Mémoires, I* (Paris, 1900) 106, 144, pl. X. It is now on display in the Musée du Louvre and is available at http://www.louvre.fr/en/node/38993 (accessed 10.23.12).

bring him glory.[9] It is widely considered to be the pinnacle of Akkadian

sculpture.[10] Naram-Sin is naturally the focus of the composition. All eyes are

turned toward him as he strides upon fallen enemies, leading his armies to the

top of the mountain. A kneeling enemy attempts to dislodge the spear piercing

his throat, while the enemy leader begs for mercy. All the dead enemies are

naked, a pre-cursor to the Assyrian tendency to depict naked enemies, whether

bound or dead. Overall, the monument is an early example of power expressed

over the bodies of others, a theme the Neo-Assyrians will expound upon.[11]

    Such examples proved foundational for the Assyrian Empire, which

inherited much from earlier Sumerian, Akkadian, and Babylonian cultures.[12]

Based in northern Iraq, the Assyrians initially expanded west and east in the first

half of the ninth century BC, controlling an area stretching from the Euphrates

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[9] Amiet, "Victory Stele of Naramsin," 166.

[10] Henri Frankfort, *The Art and Architecture of the Ancient Orient* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996 [reprint of 1954]), 86-87. This is true in part because no Akkadian architecture survives.

[11] Bahrani's statement that this stele is the earliest example of a sovereign ruler trampling the bodies of his enemies is untrue, claiming that even in ancient Egypt "no such images exist from this time." (*Rituals of War*, 114). In fact, images of trampling exist even earlier than Naram-Sin's stela. From Egypt's Second Dynasty (ca. 2800 B.C.) comes a statue base carved in the likeness of enemy heads. The statue of king would have then stood atop the enemy heads, trampling them for all time. Now housed in München (ÄS 6300), a photo and description can be found in Sylvia Schoske, "6. Unter Pharaos Sohlen," in *Pharao: Kunst und Herrschaft im alten Ägypten* (A. Grimm et al, eds. Berlin: Klinkhardt & Biermann, 1997), 21. For more on this motif, see also Chapter Two of the present work.

[12] In addition to an emphasis on warfare as a mandate of the gods, the Assyrians inherited aspects like language, religion, political structure, legal codes, etc. from earlier Mesopotamians. See Julian Reade, *Assyrian Sculpture* (London: British Museum Press, 1983), 18-19.

River to the central Zagros Mountains.[13] Another series of expansions by military

conquest occurred a century later, leading their eventual control of nearly all

lands from the eastern coast of the Mediterranean to the Persian Gulf.[14] This

latter stage of expansion displayed a "systematic approach toward the formation

of a unified empire."[15] Controlling such a large empire was no small task, and

Assyrian foreign policy often relied on force of reputation to keep rebellious

vassals in line, in addition to a large, effective army.[16] This is why they are

"thought of in relation to war and violence more often than most ancient

cultures."[17] Even in ancient times, their military efficacy and brutality was

renowned.[18]

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[13] Works on the history of the Assyrian empire are legion. For recent, useful general histories, see Marc Van de Mieroop, *A History of the Ancient Near East, ca. 3000-323 BC* (Malden, MA and Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 216-252; William W. Hallo and William K. Simpson, *The Ancient Near East: A History*, 2nd Edition (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning, 1998); Amélie Kurht, The Ancient Near East c. 3000-330 BC (London and New York: Routledge, 1995); A. Leo Oppenheim, *Ancient Mesopotamia*, 2nd edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977).

[14] On the rise of Assyria, its world domination and incredibly effective military, see the following: Ephraim Stern, *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible. Volume 2: The Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian Periods, 732-322 bce* (New York: Doubleday, 2001), 3-57; Frederick Mario Fales, "Preparing for War in Assyria," in *Économie antique: La guerre dans les economies antiques* (Jean Andreau, Pierre Briant, and Raymond Descat, eds. Entretiens d'archéologie et d'historie, 5, Saint-Bertrand-de-Comminges: Musée archéologique départemental, 2000), 35-62; Simo Parpola and R.M. Whiting, eds., *Assyria 1995* (Helsinki: Helsinki University Press, 1997); J. N. Postgate, "The Land of Assur and the Yoke of Assur," *World Archaeology* 23 (1992), 247-263; and Mario Liverani, "The Growth of the Assyrian Empire in the Habur/Middle Euphrates Area: A New Paradigm," *State Archives of Assyria Bulletin* 2 (1988): 81-98.

[15] Van de Mieroop, *A History*, 216. For a useful review of earlier scholarship, see Liverani, "The Growth of the Assyrian Empire," 81-85.

[16] On the latter, see Fales, "Preparing for War," 51-53.

[17] Bahrani, *Rituals of War*, 14.

Despite the longstanding perspective of war as a foundational aspect of Mesopotamian civilization, Assyrians sought to explain it as a necessary act. Even when the primary economic motivation for war was the procurement of natural resources and imperial expansion, ideological justifications provided the official impetus for war.[19] Even though Assyriologists widely agree that economic and security exigencies motivated Assyrian expansion, these profits of war are never openly cited in Assyrian texts as the impetus for warfare.[20] For that matter, it is interesting that there are no words for "empire" or "imperialism" in Assyrian vernacular; however, both words are entirely appropriate descriptions of Assyrian dominance. As G. Lichtheim wrote in his seminal work on imperialism:

> "What we mean when we speak of empire or imperialism is the relationship of a hegemonial state to peoples or nations under its control…What counts is the relationship of domination and subjection, which is the essence of every imperial regime."[21]

Assyrian royal inscriptions did not admit such factors because they would not have allowed the Assyrians to defend their wars as just or necessary as the punishment rebels and wrong doers.[22]

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[18] Cf. Isaiah 5:26-29 and 10:6. See also Fales, "Preparing for War," 35; and P. Machinist, "Assyrian and Its Image in the First Isaiah," *JAOS* 103 (1983): 719-737.

[19] Julian Reade, "Ideology and Propaganda in Assyrian Art," in *Power and Propaganda: A Symposium on Ancient Empires* (Mogens Trolle Larsen, ed. Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, 1979), 329-343; Bahrani, *Rituals of War*, 13-14. See also, Zainab Bahrani, "Assualt and Abduction: The Fate of the Royal Image in the Ancient Near East," *Art History* 18 (1995): 363-382. Turning to the gods for justification for war was common throughout the ancient world. Cf., B. Albrektson, *History and the Gods: An Essay on the Idea of Historical Events as Divine Manifestations in the Ancient Near East* (Lund: Gleerup, 1967).

[20] Bustenay Oded, *War, Peace and Empire: Justification for War in Assyrian Royal Inscriptions* (Wiesbaden: Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlag, 1992), 2-4.

[21] G. Litchtheim, *Imperialism* (New York, 1971), 5, 9.

Just as with the Egyptians, Assyrian kings were tasked with protecting the realm, and, by extension, the realm of the god Ashur, from chaotic forces.[23] Where the king ruled, there was peace and tranquility; where he did not rule, all was chaos.[24] Evildoers must be punished; injustices must be made right.[25] Officially, the king did not attack innocent or peaceful people, and they even justified their attacks by saying as much. Ashurbanipal claims that Urtaku, king of Elam, was not provoked into attacking the Assyrians by any Assyrian crime; thus Ashurbanipal was justified in retaliating.[26] In another case, Tikulti-Ninurta I went to great lengths to preserve peace with the Babylonian king, Kashtiliash, who Tikulti-Ninurta claims attacked Assyria first.[27] According to the official record, the king "only reacts against illegitimate acts perpetuated by the sinister enemy…the enemy is the assailant, the Assyrian king the defender."[28] This insistence on defensive wars is also politically expedient. Vassals are obligated to come to the aid of the Assyrian, who has broken no oaths.[29] Additionally, the official ideology must have been aimed at the whole of the Assyrian population and not just the

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[22] Oded, *War, Peace and Empire*, 3; K.W. Whitelam, "The Symbolic Power," *BA* 49 (1986): 166-167.

[23] Reade, "Ideology and Propaganda in Assyrian Art," 332.

[24] Van de Mieroop, *A History*, 242-243.

[25] Oded, *War, Peace and Empire*, 29-37.

[26] R. F. Harper, Assyrian and Babylonian Letters (Chicago, 1892-1914), 548.

[27] P. Machinist, "Literature as Politics," *CBQ* 38 (1976): 455-482.

[28] Oded, *War, Peace and Empire*, 54.

[29] Ibid., 55-56.

elites, else they would have proved incapable of justifying imperialism.[30] All of

this demonstrates that not only were Assyrian kings able to ideologically justify

their wars, much like Egyptian pharaohs, but they were also capable of executing

suave political tactics both at home and abroad. Their famous brutality often

overshadows their tactical and political genius.

Assyrian artists also played a role in the spinning of the ideological

machine: recording the spoils of war with vim and vigor.[31] The gods rejoiced at

the king's triumph. The king is ever victorious; another feature shared with Egypt,

although in Assyrian art the king is not typically larger-than-life.[32] The king's foes

vary from utterly incapable of standing against him to incredibly dangerous,

enhancing his inevitable victory,[33] much like the differences between depictions

of Libyans (hapless) and Hittites (dangerous) in Egyptian art (see Chapter Four).

Magnificent sculptures were carved on huge panels of gypsum and limestone by

numerous Assyrian kings at royal centers,[34] particularly palaces, as new kings

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[30] Mario Liverani, "The Ideology of the Assyrian Empire," in *Power and Propaganda: A Symposium on Ancient Empires*, 297-300. Liverani correctly notes the importance of the entirety of Assyrian society accepting the ideology, as the lower classes must not be allowed to see themselves as similarly marginalized as conquered foreign people groups.

[31] On the development of Assyrian art and the obscurity of the early record, see Frankfort, *The Art and Architecture of the Ancient*, 131-142.

[32] Reade, "Ideology and Propaganda in Assyrian Art," 331-332.

[33] Ibid., 331-333.

[34] Paul Collins, *Assyrian Palace Sculptures* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2008), 10.

frequently moved the capital to a fresh location complete with a new palace.[35]

Collins rightly notes that Assyrian reliefs are compelling because they present a "very believable world; conflict is not masked by treating it as set in mythological time and place as in the imagery of classical Greece."[36] This believability is often expressed in the atrocities of warfare. No gruesome detail of violence is spared in their glorification of kingship, the gods, and empire.[37] This is in many respects an Assyrian innovation. While bound and dead prisoners are known from earlier periods (i.e., Uruk cylinder-seal carvings), depicting acts of torture is "unknown for most of Mesopotamian history."[38]

Thus, one complex distinction emerges between Assyrian art and Egyptian art. The Assyrians did not posses the same sense of decorum as the Egyptians, who would often mention specifics in the textual record that are somewhat ambiguously depicted (execution of enemy leaders) or not depicted at all (impaling, branding slaves, etc.) in the artistic record. This, however, does not mean the Egyptians were fundamentally opposed to dealing harshly with prisoners of war, just that their artistic record is less overtly explicit than the Assyrians'. As the previous chapters have made abundantly clear, the Egyptians

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[35] For a summary of this phenomenon, see Reade, "Ideology and Propaganda in Assyrian Art," 330-331.

[36] Collins, *Assyrian Palace Sculptures*, 9.

[37] Bahrani, *Rituals of War*, 14. For an incredible example of the details of an attack on a fortress see Collins, *Assyrian Palace Sculptures*, 47. Among the marvelous details are the following: water pours from pipes of the siege to quench fire dropped from the battlements, Assyrians fight to remove the chains defenders attempt to use to dislodge the battering ram, and Assyrian sappers busy themselves undermining the enemy walls.

[38] Bahrani, *Rituals of War*, 154-155.

could be brutal towards enemy prisoners, especially leaders, at various times. That said, the general preference for the Egyptians was to put captured combatants to work on building projects and in temple and private estates. Finally, they do not seem to have practiced the same sort of mass deportation that the Assyrians frequently engaged in.

Despite these differences, Frankfurt's claim that "one has to go to the columns of Trajan and Marcus Aurelius in Rome to find a parallel for the Assyrian reliefs" is misleading.[39] He appears to base this assertion on his belief that Egyptian reliefs record victory in so generalized a form as to refer to any battle and not a particular historical event.[40] As previous chapters have demonstrated, this is simply untrue. While the so-called "smiting" scenes can often be understood as a generalized form of victory, Ramesside battle reliefs frequently refer to specific encounters at fixed places (i.e., Levantine city-states) with various levels of detail. In that the Egyptian king is commissioned by the gods, sets off to battle in his chariot, conquers unanimously, is presented the spoils of war (including tribute scenes, which are ubiquitous in Assyrian art as well), and ultimately expresses thanks to the gods, New Kingdom reliefs are a parallel to Assyrian reliefs.[41]

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[39] Frankfort, *The Art and Architecture of the Ancient Orient*, 168.

[40] Ibid., 168.

[41] As will be discussed below, Roman examples provide important parallels as well. It is simply important at this point to note the numerous similarities between New Kingdom and Neo-Assyrian battle reliefs. Despite their differences, they remain analogous.

Assyrian foreign relations also share similarities with Egyptian understandings. Foreign people groups fall into various categories: approximate equals even if eventually conquered (Egypt, Babylon), fringe elements (nomads), tributary states (numerous city-states), etc.[42] Specifically pertinent to this discussion is the swift and vicious treatment Assyrians meted out to rebellious tributary states and entities considered to be hostile to civilization itself (nomads, Arab pastoralists, hill tribes, etc.).[43] The same essential understanding existed in Egypt. Each foreign enemy was potentially rebellious, whether the Egyptians had previously established hegemony over them or not. All potential rebellions threatened the order of the created world and must be dealt with harshly (see Chapter One).

To that end, Assyrian practices fit their worldview, as with any civilization. Though often accused of being overly brutal, the practices of the Assyrians in celebrating war and its iconic images were little different than other civilizations, ancient and modern.[44] Violence was not done simply for violence's sake; it was a means to ensuring order. For that matter, aggressive imperial expansion is hardly exceptional; it is the detailed record keeping of war and torture that makes the Assyrians so remarkable. Various forms of physical torture appear in the battle reliefs of Assyria—decapitation, flaying, impaling, etc. Indeed, "these

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[42] Understanding all the nuances of Assyrian foreign relations goes beyond the scope of this work. Certainly foreign policies were adapted to face various geo-political realities, and the various categories were flexible. For more, see Reade, "Ideology and Propaganda in Assyrian Art," 332-335.

[43] Ibid., 334-335.

[44] This truth is articulated well in Collins, *Assyrian Palace Sculptures*, 9-10.

images of violence to the enemy's body became so common in scenes of victory that torture itself can be read as a narrative means of signaling the conquest of the other."[45] Thus, victory and torture are two sides of the same coin. It is important to note that such acts of torture were not depicted in earlier Mesopotamian sources, though bound and slain enemies are found on Uruk cylinder-seal carvings.[46] It is also significant that the king does not partake of these deeds; it is always the Assyrian soldier who is responsible for these horrendous acts. For his part, the king celebrates the actions by memorializing them, but he is not an active participant in torture.

The textual record shares this specificity regarding torture and violence. As early as the reign of Tiglath-pileser (1114-1076 BC), a new genre of royal inscriptions developed: the royal annals.[47] These accounts provide detailed chronologies of the military campaigns of kings. They describe year-by-year where the king campaigned, whom he defeated, the booty he captured, people deported, etc.[48] By the late Assyrian period an enormous corpus of these texts was left by Assyrian kings.[49] They were written on clay tablets and cylinders or

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[45] Bahrani, *Rituals of War*, 19-20.

[46] Ibid., 154-155.

[47] Van de Mieroop, *A History*, 170.

[48] Indeed, as Fales points out, the sheer scope of these annals, summarizing campaigns in depth, covering every ruler's reign, every available enemy and topography, while mentioning various specific details despite being by its very nature an "auto-celebration," make them unique in Antiquity. For more, see Fales, "Preparing for War," 35-36.

[49] The annals were often incorporated into building projects, providing a chronology for building projects as well. See Ibid.,170.

inscribed on walls and stele. Their abundance of detail has proven to be especially illuminating concerning Assyrian military practice, providing obvious relevance for this discussion.

As the first Assyrian to extensively decorate his palace with reliefs, Ashurnasirpal II (883-589 BC) is a logical place to start examining Neo-Assyrian art.[50] Ashurnasirpal II inherited an already dominant empire and eventually moved his capital to Kalhu (modern Nimrud), located near the junctions of the Tigris and Greater Zab rivers.[51] Warfare provides one of the key reasons for this move: Kalhu was a better site to launch campaigns to the north and west than the ancient capital of Ashur.[52]

Iconic images of kingship were found closest to the throne in the Northwest Palace.[53] In the lowest registers, a 'culminating' scene relating to the scenes above was carved, which included lines of prisoners carrying booty.[54]

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[50] Collins, *Assyrian Palace Sculptures*, 29; see also Julian Reade, "Narrative Composition in Assyrian Sculpture," *Baghdader Mittelungen* 10 (1979): 57-62.

[51] Paul Collins, *From Egypt to Babylon: The International Age 1550-500 BC* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), 132. This site is known as Calah in the Bible. On the circumstances of the discovery of the palace and the fascinating scope of Layard's excavations at Nimrud, see Mogens Trolle Larsen, *The Conquest of Assyria: Excavations in an Antique Land 1840-1860* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994, 70-132. See also Reade, *Assyrian Sculpture*, 33-37.

[52] Collins, *From Egypt to Babylon*, 132-133. On Ashur and its discovery, see A. K. Grayson, "The Resurrection of Ashur: A History of Assyrian Studies," in *Assyria 1995: Proceedings of the 10th Anniversary Symposium of the Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, Helsinki, September 7-11, 1995* (S. Parpola and R.M. Whiting, eds. Helsinki, 1997), 105-114.

[53] For the non-military images see Samuel M. Paley, *King of the World: Ashur-nasir-pal II of Assyrian (883-859 B.C.* (Brooklyn: The Brooklyn Museum, 1976).

[54] Collins, *Assyrian Palace Sculptures*, 30 and for a color image p. 35 (lower image); Reade, *Assyrian Sculpture*, 37-38.

Further along the wall, bound captives are paraded before the victorious king. Much like with Egyptian reliefs, Assyrian soldiers are depicted interacting with the captives in believable fashion. One soldier holds the elbow bindings of the captive with one hand while the other grasps the captive's hair. The poses assumed by the captives are all standard ones; nothing overly torturous is evident.[55] Instead, a form of grisly entertainment is depicted. While musicians entertain them, several soldiers play catch with the severed heads of enemies. Such grisly spectacles were intended to "produce cheers of satisfaction at the demise of the villains of the narrative."[56] Thus, once again violence is celebrated as a necessary act undertaken against rebellious enemies and culminating in a public display.

The royal inscriptions of Ashurnasirpal II are more explicit. He calls himself the "trampler of all enemies…who defeated all his enemies [and] hung the corpses of his enemies on posts."[57] The former statement of course has obvious parallels to the Egyptian understanding of the king as conqueror, while the latter refers to impaling, a practice known in Egypt (see Chapter Five) but far more common in Assyrian sources. Ashurnasirpal's treatment of defeated enemies varied depending on their actions and the perceived level of rebellion. Enemy

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[55] For a color image, see Collins, *Assyrian Palace Sculptures*, 38. For more on the scenes, including the juxtaposition of the real with the symbolic, see Reade, *Assyrian Sculpture*, 38-41.

[56] Collins, *Assyrian Palace Sculptures*, 47, which also contains a clear photograph of the event in question.

[57] Albert Kirk Grayson, *Assyrian Royal Inscriptions, Part 2: From Tiglath-pileser I to Ashur-nasir-apli II* (Weisbaden: Otto Harrassowitz Press, 1976), 165.

rulers could ask for and receive mercy.[58] However, leaders foolish enough to

hold out for as long as possible were considered rebels of the highest magnitude

and thus deserving of exceedingly brutal punishment:

> "I flayed as many nobles as had rebelled against me [and] draped
> their skins over the pile [of corpses]…some I erected on stakes
> upon the pile…I flayed many right through my land [and] draped
> their skins over the walls."[59]

Such accounts serve not only to recount what allegedly happened but also scare

future rebellious leaders. After all, in the face of such a punishment, who would

dare resist? Yet rebel they did, time after time. In another passage, Ashurnasirpal

II says:

> "…I burnt 200 captives from them, [and] defeated in a battle on the
> plain 332…With their blood I dyed the mountain red…I cut off the
> heads of their fighters [and] built [therewith] a tower before the city.
> I burnt their adolescent boys [and] girls."[60]

The use of fire as punishment also echoes Egyptian practice, though again the

Assyrian record is more unequivocal. Equally harsh is the practice of maiming:

"…I captured many troops alive: I cut off some of their arms [and] hands; I cut off

of others their noses, ears, [and] extremities. I gouged out the eyes of many

troops…I hung their heads on trees around the city."[61] Such practices are more

extreme than those of the Egyptians but contribute to the overall pattern of

excessive violence against defeated enemies, especially those who have

rebelled against a given empire's view of Order. To modern minds such graphic

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[58] For example, see Grayson, *Assyrian Royal Inscriptions, Part 2*, 120.

[59] Grayson, *Assyrian Royal Inscriptions, Part 2*, 124.

[60] Ibid., 126-127.

[61] Ibid., 126.

displays are horrifying for obvious reasons, but they fit readily into the mindset of ancient empires.

Much like his father, Shalmaneser III (858-824) dismembered, decapitated and impaled his foes. Brutality is found in splendid bronze repoussé on bands decorating a wooden gate of a temple (or possibly palace) from Balawat (British Museum, WA 124661).[62] An Assyrian soldier grasps the hand and arm of a defeated enemy whose other hand and both feet have already been hacked off. In several places, Assyrians stab captives in the head, neck or torso or hack off their feet or hands.[63] Severed heads and dismembered limbs proliferate throughout the scenes.[64] Outside a Mesopotamian city, three stakes are filled with decapitated heads.[65] Another captive is impaled, his hands and feet previously cut off. Rows of impaled captives are staked to hills outside of their native cities.[66] Soldiers lead rows of bound prisoners into the presence of the

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[62] The most comprehensive publication of the gates of Shalmaneser is L.W. King, *Bronze Reliefs from the Gates of Shalmaneser, King of Assyria B.C. 860-825* (London: The British Museum, 1915). The most recent publication of the Balawat Gates is J.E. Curtis and N. Tallis, eds. *The Balawat Gates of Ashurnasirpal II* (London: The British Museum Press, 2008). While this publication focuses primarily on the gates from Ashurnasirpal II's palace, for the gates from Shalmaneser III see pls. 4-6. See also J.E. Reade, "The Balawat Gates," in *Art and Empire: Treasures from Assyria in the British Museum* (J.E. Curtis and J.E. Reade, eds. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1995), 98-99, figs. 42-43; Erika Bleibtreu, "Grisly Assyrian Record of Torture and Death," *BAR* 17.1 (1991): 51-61, 75.

[63] King, *Bronze Reliefs*, pls. XVII-XVIII, XXXVIII, XL-XLII, LVI.

[64] Ibid., pls. XXXVIII-XLII, LXXV.

[65] Ibid., pl. XLIV.

[66] Ibid., pls. VII-VIII, XXI.

king, who is joined by his usual entourage of courtiers.[67] Unlike Egyptian depictions of prisoners of war, these captives are not bound in bizarre or torturous poses. Rather, their bindings are the standard arms behind the back pose. Instead, humiliation can be found in the simple fact that the captives are naked and some of them are yoked about the neck, like so many cattle.[68]

The textual record also mentions these practices: "I made a pile of heads in front of his city. I razed, destroyed, (and) burned his cities."[69] He brags of impaling, saying, "I captured soldiers alive [and] erected [them] on stakes before their cities."[70] To be fair, despite his fondness for such horrific acts, Shalmaneser often boasts of defeating his enemies and receiving their tribute without resorting to grisly actions.[71] Most famous is his recording of the tribute of Jehu, King of Israel on the "Black Obelisk,"[72] which depicts Jehu or his envoy bowing before Shalmaneser III.

A brilliant general, Shalmaneser's successor Tiglath-Pileser III (744-727), rose to prominence in 744 BC and quickly established his own legacy of dominance.[73] Brutal actions are illustrated several times in the reliefs from his

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[67] Ibid., pls. IV-V; XIV-XV. A similar scene can be found on the gates from Ashurnasirpal II's reign: Curtis and Tallis, *The Balawat Gates*, 119-125, figs. 18-24.

[68] King, *Bronze* Reliefs, pl. X, XXII, XLV-XLVI, LXXIV, LXXVI-LXXVII.

[69] K. Lawson Younger, "Kurkh Monolith (2.113A)," in *CoS* II: 262.

[70] Grayson, *Assyrian Royal Inscriptions, Part 2*, 143.

[71] Cf. Younger, "Kurkh Monolith (2.113A)," 263 and Younger, "Annals: Assur Clay Tablets (2.113B)," in *CoS* II: 265.

[72] For the text and a full bibliography, see Younger, "Black Obelisk (2.113F)," in *CoS* II: 269-270.

palace at Nimrud, even though his many wars kept him from constructing his own palace until much later in his reign.[74] During this time, representations of the defeat of actual enemies complete with textual captions were added to military reliefs for the first time, perhaps inspired by earlier small-scale objects (see above regarding the decoration at Balawat), which place historical narratives within defined landscapes and included captions.[75] This interest in historical narrative is mirrored in accompanying texts. Many of the registers are divided into two images with a line of text separating them. This text naturally explains the battles and their aftermath. The king plays a central role, emphasized in scenes showing him trampling an enemy ruler under foot. Tribute and booty are brought before the victorious king, as an artist and a scribe hold writing instruments and a table and scroll, respectively.[76] Examples of each feature can be found in Egyptian battle narratives (see Chapter Four). Finally, a eunuch leads a pair of bound captives before the king as part of the tribute procession.[77]

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[73] This was a tumultuous time for Assyria. Threatened by the powerful kingdom of Urartu (eastern Anatolia), it had lost considerable prestige among its western vassals and tribute-paying states. More telling, the gravity of the situation led to rebellions within Assyria, leading ultimately to Tiglath-Pileser III's ascension to the throne. He quickly re-asserted Assyrian hegemony by containing Urartu and reorganizing Syria into a series of provinces ruled by Assyrian governors. He even managed to capture Damascus and claim the throne of Babylon.

[74] The overall decorative scheme is unfortunately difficult to piece together since Esarhaddon (680-669 BC) removed many of the reliefs to reuse in his so-called Southwest Palace. See Collins, *Assyrian Palace Sculpture*, 63-64.

[75] Ibid., 64.

[76] A large image can be found in Ibid., 69 and Reade, *Assyrian Sculpture*, 47-49, fig. 48.

[77] Ibid., 43, fig. 43. See also, R.D. Barnett and M. Faulkner, *The Sculptures of Tiglath-pileser III* (London: The Trustees of the British Museum, 1962), pls. XXIII-XXIV.

Not to be outdone, Tiglath-Pileser III's art reinforces the notion that Assyrian art was more graphic than New Kingdom Egyptian art. During an attack on an enemy town, two sets of three corpses are impaled on stakes outside the town walls (British Museum, WA 118908),[78] the inevitable fate for those who rebel. This grisly display successfully intimidated the remaining defenders, who raise their hands in submission. Despite his capitulation, one defender has his throat slit by an Assyrian soldier as he kneels atop the walls. Below the town, a soldier stabs another hapless enemy in the neck. From the culmination of the Urartian campaign between the Central Palace and Upper Chambers, an Assyrian official drags a captive into the presence of the king by grasping the enemy's beard with one hand while his other hand carries two heads.[79] Other enemy rulers submit without being subjected to such brutal treatment.[80]

As with each Assyrian king, Tiglath-Pileser III's textual record speaks of the capturing of captives and booty,[81] as well as callous handling of enemy rulers. In one text, he brags, "Nabu-ushabshi, their king, I hung up in front of the gate of his city on a stake. His land, his wife, his sons, his daughters, his

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[78] The entire scene was first published in A.H. Layard, *The Monuments of Nineveh* (London, 1849), pl. 63; see also Barnett and Falkner, *The Sculptures of Tiglath-pileser*, pls. XXXVII-XL and more recently J. Reade, "Reliefs and Sculptures," in *Art and Empire*, 60-61, fig. 11. A detailed close up on the impaled enemies only can be found in Collins, *Assyrian Palace Sculpture*, 64.

[79] Barnett and Faulkner, *The Sculptures of Tiglath-pileser III*, pl. LIX.

[80] Ibid., pl. LXXXIV-LXXXV, XCV-XCVI.

[81] For example, see K. Lawson Younger, "The Calah Annals (2.117A)," in *CoS* II: 284-286 and various "Summary Inscriptions" in *CoS* II: 287-292.

property, the treasure of his palace, I carried off."[82] This is an excellent example

of pragmatic Assyrian foreign policy: the individual who rebelled is severely and

fatally punished, while his associates or family members are brought back to

Assyria. Again paralleling New Kingdom Egypt, in the Assyrian empire, rebellious

leaders often had more value as dead political, ideological statements, while

other individuals were spared, having value as living members of Assyrian

society either as slaves or as hostages.

Sargon II (712-705) followed in the footsteps of his father Tiglath-Pileser

III, spending much of his reign at war. He claimed the throne from his brother

Shalmaneser V (726-722) in a bloody coup and is most famous for completing

the conquest of Samaria.[83] Sargon moved the capital to Dur-Sharrukin ('Fortress

of Sargon), some twenty kilometers northeast of Nineveh (modern Khorsabad).

Inspired by the Northwest Palace at Nimrud, Sargon decorated the walls of his

palace with both mythic and military imagery. Egyptian influence is perhaps

visible in the differentiating of the ethnic physiognomies of enemies.[84]

Foreign tributaries are depicted in typical fashion in numerous places.[85]

More applicable to this discussion, foreign captives are presented to the king in

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[82] Daniel Luckenbill, *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia*, vol. 1 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1926), sections 584-585.

[83] Collins, *Assyrian Palace Sculptures*, 71.

[84] Ibid., 72.

[85] For more, see Pauline Albenda, *The Palace of Sargon, King of Assyria. Monumental Wall Reliefs at Dur-Sharrukin, from Original Drawings Made at the time of Their Discovery in 1843-1844 by Botta and Flandin* (Paris: Editions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 1986), 66-74, pls. 19-34, 65-71.

Rooms 4 and 8, each containing three presentations.[86] In Room 4, several captives are depicted either standing or kneeling.[87] All of them are fettered about the wrists and ankles with metal devices that look remarkably similar to modern handcuffs.[88] Their hands are open in a beseeching gesture. In room 8, the same metal shackles are used, but some individuals are subjected to tortuous treatment.[89] In one scene, Sargon holds a rope tied to metals rings, which pierce the captives' lips.[90] More horrifying is the depiction of a naked captive lying face down, limbs stretched out across a stone block.[91] An Assyrian solider places a curved knife to the captive's arm, a clear indication of flaying. Sargon specifically mentions flaying Yaubidi the Hamathite in "The Great 'Summary' Inscription."[92] The textual record also mentions the manacles found in the reliefs: "He put (Yamani) in manacles and handcuffs […] he had him brought before my presence like a captive."[93]

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[86] Ibid., 74-77, pls. 72-83.

[87] Ibid., 76-77, pls. 81-83.

[88] It should be noted that the presence of ankle fetters is not paralleled in Egyptian battle reliefs, which never bind the ankles or feet of the captives, allowing them to use a full stride on the march to Egypt.

[89] Ibid.,74-76, pls. 75-78.

[90] Ibid., pl. 75.

[91] Ibid., 78.

[92] K. Lawson Younger, "The Great 'Summary' Inscription (2.118E)," in *CoS* II, 296.

[93] K. Lawson Younger, "The Tang-I Var Inscription (2.118J) in *CoS* II: 299-300.

After Sargon II's inauspicious death in battle, his son, Sennacherib (704-

681), claimed the throne and, like several of his predecessors, moved the capital,

this time to the ancient and revered Nineveh.[94] Sargon's successful campaigns

allowed him to inherit a relatively stable empire. Thus, he was able to spend

more energy and resources on building projects. His capital occupied an area

twice that of Khorsabad, and his palace, the so-called Southwest Palace, took

some fifteen years to build and dwarfed the palaces of earlier kings.[95] Sculptures

from the palace reflect a broadened worldview and incorporate elements from

various regions of the empire: decorative columns from Syria, protective spirits

from Babylonia and Syria, and soldiers from the Levant and modern Iran appear

as part of the larger Assyrian army.[96] Structural innovations occurred as well;

narrative scenes were no longer divided by a row of text. Despite these

innovations, two aspects of Assyrian art were unaltered by Sennacherib: the

necessity of battle to crush disorder or rebellion and a fondness for brutality.

Sennacherib had a special affection for the celebration of siege warfare.

The capture of the Judean city of Lachish was recorded in spectacular fashion on

reliefs lining the walls of a room at the very heart of the palace. This event is

unique in the history and archaeology of this period because it is documented in

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[94] Collins, *Assyrian Palace Sculptures*, 75. For the details of its discovery and a useful synopsis of Layard's field notes, see John M. Russell, "Sennacherib's Palace Without Rival Revisited: Excavations at Nineveh and in the British Museum Archives," in *Assyria 1995*, 295-306. Sennacherib's Southwest Palace is without a doubt the best preserved Assyrian palace. For an exhaustive and recent volume, see Richard D. Barnett, Erika Bleibtreu, and Geoffrey Turner, *Sculptures from the Southwest Palace of Sennacherib at Nineveh* (London: British Museum Press, 1998).

[95] Collins, *Assyrian Palace Sculptures*, 75.

[96] Ibid., 76.

three independent sources, all of which converge to give the modern historian a clear picture of the happenings there.[97] In addition to the reliefs at Nineveh, the mound of the ancient city of Lachish, which has been extensively excavated since the 1930s, brings the Assyrian siege to life through physical evidence,[98] and the siege is recorded in the Hebrew Bible as well. Remains of Level III Lachish give evidence to a densely populated, violently destroyed city.[99] Ussishkin concludes that level III was certainly destroyed by Sennacherib and that the Babylonians were responsible for the destruction of the smaller level II city (588/6 B.C.).[100]

Returning to the Lachish reliefs found at Nineveh, they were clearly intended to impress the beholder. It is as if this was Sennacherib's greatest achievement.[101] Several incidental details are included on the central panel, which shows the attack on Lachish itself. Siege engines approach the city walls on artificial earthen ramps, protected by heavily armed soldiers.[102] Several captives are depicted throughout the palace. They are generally bound at the

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[97] David Ussishkin, *The Conquest of Lachish by Sennacherib* (Tel Aviv University: Publications of the Institute of Archaeology, 1982), 11.

[98] Ibid., 11-12.

[99] Ibid., 25-26.

[100] Ibid., 27-51. The topography of the land upon Lachish was built, makes reconstructing Sennacherib's siege relatively easy. The southwest corner and its gate were the most vulnerable to attack simply because of elevation. The height of this corner was only 27 meters, whereas the other major corners were over 39 meters in height. This corner bears witness to massive conflagration and burning, and even a huge siege ramp is attested.

[101] Ibid., 67.

[102] For detailed images, see Collins, *Assyrian Palace Sculptures*, 90-91.

wrist with the same metal shackles discussed above.[103] As before, the bindings themselves are not torturous. One unique captive is bound with his arms behind his back while he looks back at the Assyrian soldier in a nearly identical pose to the Egyptian version of this pose.[104] Also intriguing are the series of reliefs that show Assyrian overseers forcing foreigner prisoner to work. The most interesting example is the depiction of prisoners hauling stone and statues from a quarry where a stone bull-*lamassu* statute was carved.[105] In one scene, scribes can be seen counting captives or assigning them to a workplace, again echoing Egyptian practice.[106]

Of course, where there is Assyrian military imagery, torture and brutality are sure to follow. A soldier grabs the mouth of one bound captive with one hand while preparing to stab him with the other.[107] In the same scene, two captives walk behind five soldiers; each soldier carries a severed head in each hand. Heads are piled up by soldiers and counted by scribes in other scenes from Court XIX and Room XXVII (FF),[108] much like the Egyptians counting the hands or phalli of the slain. Sennacherib also celebrated the flaying of his enemies, as

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[103] For examples, see Barnett, et al, *Sculptures from the Southwest Palace*, pls. 35, 64-68, 70, 84-85, 154-155, 176-177, 182-186.

[104] Ibid., pl. 209.

[105] Ibid., pls. 104-125; Collins, *Assyrian Palace Sculpture*, 80-81; Reade, *Assyrian Sculpture*, 53, figs. 54-55

[106] Barnett, et al, *Sculptures from the Southwest Palace*, pls. 183,186.

[107] Ibid., pls. 176-177.

[108] Ibid., pls. 193-195, 213, 253.

in one scene in Room XXXIII (BB).[109] The unfortunate prisoners are staked to the

ground, and thus clearly alive before the Assyrians began their horrifying act. The

same scene also shows soldiers in the act of decapitating enemies and cutting

off other body parts: hands, feet, tongues, etc. Another scene of flaying is found

in Room XXXVI (OO), where the captives are clearly naked and spread-

eagled,[110] just as in the example from Sargon II's reign. Equally disturbing is the

depiction of Assyrians anchoring to the ground the stakes upon which captured

men are impaled.[111]

Utterly unsurprising, Sennacherib's texts share this explicit violence: "I cut

their throats like lambs…(Their) testicles I cut off, and tore out their privates like

the seeds of cucumbers."[112] In other cases, he merely took those who

"committed sinful acts" as spoil,[113] presumably to be redistributed as slaves

throughout the empire.

Sennacherib was murdered by his own sons and succeeded by a third,

Esarhaddon (680-669), who carried on the gruesome tradition. He says of the

king of Sidon, "Like a fish I caught him up out of the sea and cut off his head."[114]

In what might be most macabre display referenced in Assyrian inscriptions he

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[109] Ibid., pls. 300-302.

[110] Ibid., pls. 329, 338-339; Collins, *Assyrian Palace Scupture*, 94; Bahrani, *Rituals of War,* 156, fig. 5.5; Reade, *Assyrian Sculpture*, 66, fig. 72.

[111] Ibid., 157, fig. 5.6

[112] Daniel Luckenbill, *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia*, vol. 2 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1927), sec. 254.

[113] See Mordechai Cogan, "Sennacherib's Siege of Jerusalem (2.119B)," in *CoS* II (302-303).

[114] Luckenbill, *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia*, vol. 2, sec. 511.

claims, "I hung the heads of Sandurri [king of the cities of Kundi and Sizu] and Abdi-Milkutti [king of Sidon] on the shoulders of their nobles and with singing and music I paraded through the public square of Nineveh."[115]

Ashurbanipal (668-627) succeeded Esarhaddon and chose to reside for most of his reign in the Southwest Palace at Nineveh.[116] With Assyria at the height of its power, Ashurbanipal was able to effectively deal with the two main threats to his empire: Kushite Egypt in the west and Elam to the east. The 25th Dynasty in Egypt was replaced with rulers more amenable to the Assyrian cause, and the Elamite king, Teumann, was slain. Campaigns against the latter were celebrated in a remarkable series of reliefs at the palace. These sculptures are among the greatest artistic achievements of the Assyrians;[117] each portion of the composition is carved with impressive details, ranging from the soldiers and enemies to animals and landscape.

At first glance these reliefs appear to simply, but spectacularly, render the chaos of war, but a closer look reveals a shocking truth: the decapitation of Teumann and the treatment of his head are the focus of the composition.[118] Teumann's demise began when he and his son fell from their upturned chariot

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[115] Ibid., sec. 521; see also Bleibtreu, "Grisly Assyrian Record of Torture and Death." This article is a useful overview of the brutality of the texts of the later Assyrian rulers and their presence in the Hebrew Bible.

[116] Collins, *Assyrian Palace Scupture*, 97.

[117] Ibid., 97-98.

[118] Ibid., 97-98; Bahrani, *Rituals of War*, 23-50.

during the Battle of Til-Tuba in 653 BC.[119] After fleeing into the woods with an

arrow sticking out of his back, Teumann is eventually caught and decapitated by

an Assyrian, an action vividly detailed in the reliefs.[120] The remaining Elamites

are driven into the River Ulai,[121] and Ashurbanipal boasts that the "river was

choked with corpses."[122]Teumann's head next appears to the left of the battle, as

an Assyrian soldier holds it in front of a tent where Elamites are identifying their

dead. From there, an Elamite cart drives off while the Assyrian soldier waves the

head as a grisly victory flag.[123] Ultimately, the head was taken to Nineveh where

it is depicted on the branches of a tree in Ashurbanipal's garden while he and his

queen dine.[124] Overall, the composition is a particularly poignant reflection of the

Assyrians' preferred aesthetic of violent and gruesome deeds.

Several depictions from Ashurbanipal's North Palace show prisoners of

war bound either in the standard arms behind the back pose using rope or with

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[119] Ibid., 23-25. These reliefs were originally excavated by Layard, who brought them to the British Museum, where they are now housed. For a thorough bibliography of recent works discussing this composition see Ibid.,23-25, no. 1-2 on p. 227. For a large color image see Collins, *Assyrian Palace Scupture*, 100-101; see also Bahrani, *Rituals of War*, 31, fig. 1.6; Curtis and Reade, *Art and Empire*, 73, no. 21; and Reade, *Assyrian Sculpture*, 82, fig. 96.

[120] Collins, *Assyrian Palace Scupture*, 101; Bahrani, *Rituals of War*, 36, fig. 1.9; Curtis and Reade, *Art and Empire*, 76, no. 22.

[121] For the scene see Collins, *Assyrian Palace Sculpture*, 102 and Curtis and Reade, *Art and Empire*, 73, no. 22.

[122] Reade, *Assyrian Sculpture*, 81.

[123] Curtis and Reade, *Art and Empire*, 77.

[124] R.D. Barnett, *Sculptures from the North Palace of Ashurbanipal at Nineveh (668-627 B.C.)* (London: British Museum Publications, 1976), pls. LXIII-LXV; Bahrani, *Rituals of War*, 22, fig. 1.1.

the hands in front of them using the previously mentioned manacles.[125] In one

case, the art closely parallels Egyptian art (perhaps even borrowing from it), as

soldiers threaten prisoners on the march and prepare to execute kneeling

prisoners.[126]

In conclusion, while the Assyrians doubtless possessed a different sense

of decorum concerning the representation of explicit brutality, many of their

policies echo those of the Egyptians. Both empires dealt harshly with those

deemed rebellious and used ideology and the words of the gods as justifications

for warfare. Each could potentially execute captured enemies though more

frequently enslaved them. Rhetorical language dominates the textual records for

each empire, but this does not invalidate the information gleaned from either

texts or reliefs, as it reveals of the general mindset and potential actions of each

society. Finally, each empire treated the depiction of defeated enemies as cause

for celebration, bringing glory to both their rulers and the gods.

The Roman Empire: Power, Violence and the Humiliation of the Other

Though their art was not as explicitly torturous as Assyrian art, the

Romans were of course a "warrior state,"[127] quick to celebrate the power of the

Roman war machine over people they believed to be inferior.[128] At the heart of

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[125] Barnett, *Sculptures from the North Palace*, pls. XVI-XVII, XX, XXII, LXVII.

[126] Ibid., pl. XXV.

[127] K. Hopkins, *Death and Renewal* (Cambridge University Press, 1983), 1; C. Kelly, *The Roman Empire: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press, 2006), 4.

[128] For more on Roman conceptions of enemies and ethnography, see Susan P. Mattern, *Rome and the Enemy: Imperial Stretegy in the Principate* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1999), 66-80.

this celebration was the Roman Triumph: famous parades through the city itself

that celebrated Rome's greatest military victories.[129] This is not to say that the

Romans were incapable of sophisticated reflection on the morality of warfare or

acts of war, for, as Beard has shown, the Triumph was the "context and prompt

for some of the most critical thinking on the dangerous ambivalence of success

and military glory."[130] That said, the sheer number of Triumphs makes clear its

importance never waned. In roughly one thousand years, the Triumph was

celebrated approximately three hundred times.[131] This should come as no

surprise for an event that was considered to be the most outstanding honor a

general could hope for. It celebrated the victorious general on one hand and the

blessings of the gods on the other. "In no other Roman ceremony do god and

man approach each other as closely as they do in the triumph."[132] For the Roman

populous it was hailed as the mark of a new era of prosperity,[133] yet for this

celebration to truly impact Roman citizens, a third component was vital: foreign

captives. It is in the exhibition of exotic foreign prisoners that the glory of the

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[129] Mary Beard, *The Roman Triumph* (Cambridge, MA and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007), 1-2.

[130] Ibid., 4. Though I have cited just the page containing Beard's quote, the entire book reflects this perspective and is, as she puts it, a "manifesto of sorts" (5). Beard's book is an important contribution in the study of Roman triumphalism, but this discussion must of necessity focus on the treatment of prisoners during Triumphs and not on the more philosophical aspects.

[131] Ibid., 4-5. The "facts" of the Triumphs — number of captives, amount of booty, etc. — is nearly impossible to ascertain (Ibid., 118).

[132] H.S. Versnel, *Triumphus: An Inquiry into the Origin, Development and Meaning of the Roman Triumph* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1970), 1. See pp. 2-8 for more on the origins of the Triumph and scholarly theories as to its purpose.

[133] Versnel, *Triumphus*, 397.

victorious general and the gods is displayed, and it is the captives on parade that must remain the focus of this discussion.[134]

Since the victors write history, it is no surprise that no surviving records detail a Triumph from the captives' perspective, unless one counts Ovid's clever, erotic allegory.[135] Despite this fact, certain clues can be gleaned from these ancient accounts. The humiliation of a Triumph was so great that a tradition of suicide among defeated rulers developed. Cleopatra's self-inflicted poison via cobra (asp in Plutarch's account) bite was already legendary in ancient times. Horace's "Cleopatra Ode," written soon after the event, says that she killed herself specifically to escape the humiliation of appearing in a Roman Triumph:

> Fiercer she was in death she chose, as though
> she did not wish to cease to be a queen, taken to Rome
>   on the galleys of savage Liburnians
>   to be a humble woman in a proud triumph.[136]

Plutarch, Florus, and Dio all provide a similar explanation, although Plutarch doubts the story's veracity.[137] It is possible that Octavian gave her every opportunity to end her own life or even arranged her murder.[138]

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[134] As my fields of specialization are ancient Egypt and the ancient Near East, I am indebted to the work of Mary Beard whose book, *The Roman Triumph*, proved to be an enormously helpful starting point.

[135] Ovid's poem is of course more telling in terms of his own reflections on the Triumph seen through the guise of a lover snared helplessly in Cupid's Triumph (Ovid, *Amores* I) For more see, Beard, *The Roman Triumph*, 111-114.

[136] Horace, *Carmina* I, 37, 29-32 (after Beard, *The Roman Triumph*, 114, 358, n. 11).

[137] Plutarch, *Antonius*, 84; Florus, *Epitome* 2, 21; Dio Cassius 51, 12-4.

[138] Scholars still debate the truth of this event. See the following: C. Pelling, *Plutarch, Life of Antony* (Cambridge University Press, 1988), 318-320; R.G.M.N. Nisbet and M. Hubbard, eds. *A Commentary on Horace, Odes Book I* (Oxford University Press, 1970), 407-411; J.E.G. Whitehorne, *Cleopatras* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 186-202.

Cleopatra was not alone in potentially taking this extreme action. Nearly as famous, at least to the Romans, was Mithradates' decision to end his life at the hands of one of his own officers rather than face Pompey's Triumph.[139] Mithradates had committed a heinous genocide on the Italians living in the province of Asia, unspeakable even in ancient times, making him one of Rome's all-time greatest villains.[140] A similar tale was told of Vivius Virrius, leader of Capua, who had sided with Hannibal during Rome's struggles with Carthage. Virrius someone persuaded his fellow Capuan senators to join him in drinking poison, saying: "I shall not be bound and dragged through the city of Rome as a spectacle in a triumph."[141] The historicity of these tales is not particularly important to this discussion; what matters is that the Triumph was viewed by the ancients as so humiliating that it was entirely possible for a tradition of suicide as escape to develop.[142]

The fate of captives is often difficult to determine, but several reasonable assumptions can be put forth. From the Roman perspective, the most important prisoners were defeated rulers and their families.[143] Augustus brags that nine

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[139] Beard, *The Roman Triumph*, 115; Appian, *Roman History* XVI, section 111.

[140] Beard, *The Roman Triumph*, 8. On the campaign, see P. Greenhalgh, *Pompey: The Roman Alexander* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1980), 72-167 and R. Seager, *Pompey the Great: A Political Biography* (Revised Edition. Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), 40-62.

[141] Livy, 26, 13, 15; after Beard, *The Roman Triumph*, 115-116.

[142] The suicide of the "noble prisoner" was also part of the power struggle between the Romans and their victims, that lay at the heart of the Triumph and its representation. See Beard, *The Roman Triumph*, 117.

[143] Ibid., 120.

monarchs or their children were paraded before his chariot.[144] Famous Roman

nemeses without end were listed in the Triumphs of various generals and

emperors: Gentius, king of Illyricum; Juba of Mauretania; Bituitus, king of the

Gallic Arverni; and the notorious Vercingetorix in Caesar's Triumph in 46 BC.[145]

Aesthetic value also placed in exoticness; the more "foreign" and exotic a

captive, the more powerful the representation of the might and scope of the

Roman Empire. In this sense, captured enemies had more value as part of a

Triumph than they did as a corpse on the battlefield.[146] Balancing this

understanding is the simple fact that the triumphant Romans had to weigh the

cost of transporting, feeding, and containing foreign prisoners before the

Triumph. Thus, the majority of prisoners of war were sold into slavery closer to

the region of conflict and participated in the triumph only in the form of the

income raised from the sale.[147]

At the conclusion of the parade, the most famous or reviled of the captives

were potentially executed and possibly beaten or flogged. As Josephus writes

concerning Simon, son of Gioras:

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[144] Augustus, *Res Gestae (Achievements) 4*, 3 (after Beard, *The Roman Triumph*, 120).

[145] After Beard, *The Roman Triumph*, 120-121. For references in Roman sources for each ruler, see Ibid., 359, n. 31. Caesar's Triumph was particularly important as he was the first general to be given the title "imperator" and the first who was given unquestionably divine honors. For more, see Versnel, *Triumphus*, 396-397.

[146] Ibid., 123; E. Dench, *Romulus' Asylum: Roman Identities from the Age of Alexander to the Age of Hadrian* (Oxford University Press, 2005), 76-80.

[147] Beard, *The Roman Triumph*, 118-119, 358, n. 24. For example see Livy 10, 46, 5, which notes 2,533,000 pounds of bronze carried in the Triumph coming directly from the prior sale of prisoners.

> "He had been led in the procession amongst the prisoners of war;
> then, a noose round his neck, scourged by his guard, he had been
> taken to that place next to the Forum where Roman law prescribes
> that condemned criminals be executed."[148]

Others were noted by ancient authors as the victims of executions at the

conclusions of Triumphs: Caius Pontius, leader of the Samnites in 291 BC;

vague pirate chiefs in 74 BC, Vercingetorix in 46 BC; and Adiatorix and

Alexander in 29 B.C.[149] Despite this list, for the vast majority of Triumphs there is

no way of knowing if there were executions. At times, the sources contradict

each other. Livy implies that Jugurtha was executed in Marius' Triumph in 104

BC, but Plutarch claims he was imprisoned and ultimately died of starvation.[150] In

this case a swift execution would have been the kinder fate.

Public spectacles of death were not restricted to the Triumph. Death in the

arena was "public, official, and communicative; and, when properly conducted,

spectacles of death were comforting and entertaining for Romans of all

classes."[151] The existence of the arenas themselves, monumental facilities found

throughout the empire, highlights the value placed on these public spectacles.

Roman blood sports remain fascinating for modern observers, as, "on the surface

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[148] Josephus, *The Jewish War* 7, 153-155; after Beard, *The Roman Triumph*, 129.

[149] Ibid., 129-130; for the ancient sources, p. 360, n. 50.

[150] Beard, *The Roman Triumph*, 130; Livy, *Periochae* 67; Plutarch, *Casius Marius* 12.

[151] Donald G. Kyle, *Spectacles of Death in Ancient Rome* (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), 2.

a glaring contradiction of Rome's image as a civilizing power."[152] On one hand, the Romans are celebrated as "civilized," yet on the other hand they enjoyed watching hundreds and even thousands of humans and animals slaughtered in public displays.[153] Modern Westerners have difficulty reconciling these extremes to their own sensibilities about violence, but until recently western societies tolerated or even enjoyed public hangings and other executions and the humiliation of humans and animals (bear baiting, cockfights, etc.).[154]

For their part, the gladiators themselves often become so against their will as "prisoners of war, victims of kidnapping, slaves, or criminals sentenced to gladiatorial schiools (*in ludum damnati*).[155] Forced involvement in the arena was also punitive for foreign foes.[156] For a host of crimes, including rebellions, there existed a series of severe, ultimate punishments (*summa supplicia*), which included exposure to wild beasts, crucifixion, and burning alive.[157] Crucifixion in particular was used frequently against rebellions Jews and Christians.[158] Overall,

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[152] Ibid., 5.

[153] Ibid., 5.

[154] Ibid., 5; see also Michel Foucalt, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (Alan Sheridan, trans. New York: Second Vintage Books, 1995) and N. Elias and E. Dunning, *Quest for Excitement: Sport and Leisure in the Civilizing Process* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986). It should be noted that the process by which modern Westerners have come to feel embarrassment or shame at such excessive violence is not completed. The banning of modern blood sports, animal baiting, and violent celebrations has not been totally achieved.

[155] Kyle, *Spectacles of Death*, 79, 105, n. 23.

[156] Ibid., 81.

[157] Ibid., 53. On *summa supplicia*, see also P. Garnsey, *Social Status and Legal Privilege in the Roman Empire* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), 122-136.

[158] Kyle, *Spectacles of Death*, 53, 73, n. 134, and 242-255.

the Roman Empire was a well known for its celebration of the humiliation of foreign enemies. From the Triumph to the Arena, the humiliation or execution of captured enemies was a popular and often public spectacle.

Captives Across the Globe: The Americas

Warfare in eastern North America had a long tradition, now well documented in the archaeological record.[159] As the bow and arrow and war club became more prominent, violence increased during the Late Woodland period.[160] At Site 1Pi61 in Pickens County, Alabama, roughly eight percent of the skeletons had embedded arrow points, twenty-five percent had upper body fractures and sixteen percent had lower body fractures, likely from war clubs.[161] Many of these individuals were buried in mass graves, leading scholars to hypothesize that the graves held captives as opposed to warriors slain in battle.[162] The treatment of

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[159] Far afield from my own regions of specialization, I am indebted to the works and assistance of David Dye. My discussion of these regions is but a cursory glance at the patterns of behavior governing the treatment of enemy captives, demonstrating that the simple truth is that ancient people the world over dealt brutally with prisoners of war. Curious readers would do well to consult the works cited below for more on these regions and their cultural practices.

[160] Alongside these developments, dependence on corn and chiefdom political structures led to an increase in intersocietal conflict. For more, see Ibid., 102; Robert L. Carneiro, "What Happened at the Flashpoint? Conjectures on Chiefdom Formation at the Very Moment of Conception," in *Chiefdoms and Chieftaincy in the Americas* (Elsa M. Redmond, ed.. Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 1998); Elsa Redmond, "In War and Peace: Alternative Paths to Centralized Leadership," in *Chiefdoms and Chieftaincy*, 68-103.

[161] Patricia S. Bridges et al., "Warfare-Related Trauma in the Late Prehistory of Alabama," in *Bioarchaeological Studies of Life in the Age of Agriculture: A View from the Southeast* (Patricia M. Lambert, ed. Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 2000), 42-43, table 3.1; David Dye, *War Paths, Peace Paths: An Archaeology of Cooperation and Conflict in Native Eastern North America* (Lanham, New York, Toronto & Plymouth, UK: Altamira Press, 2009), 101-102.

captives in the eastern portion of North America by the various people groups

inhabiting it followed similar patterns even among groups separated by vast

spatial or chronological distances; this discussion will focus on one of the largest

groups, the Iroquois.

The Iroquois nation provides a wealth of information relating to captives.

The warrior's "war kit" contained knives for scalping (trophy-taking) and a rope

with which to tie captives, alongside the expected weaponry.[163] One of the

primary motivations for conducting raids was the taking of captives.[164] Raiding

was a sure-fire means of attaining prestige and was necessary for a young

Iroquois warrior hoping to improve his prospects for an advantageous marriage

or his chances for village leadership.[165] During later periods, revenge was an

important factor, and rites of mourning "required the replacement of any

individual who died, even of natural causes."[166] This replacement came in the

form of captives, and the mourning rites were so important that a war party

[162] Mary C. Hill, "Analysis, Synthesis, and Interpretation of the Skeletal Material Excavated for the Gainesville Section of the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway," in *Archaeological Investigations in the Gainesville Lake Area of the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway*, vol. 4 (Ned J. Jenkins, ed. Report of Investigations 14. Office of Archaeological Research, Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama, 1981), 187-258.

[163] José A. Brandåo, *"Your Fyre Shall Burn No More": Iroquois Policy towards New France and Its Native Allies to 1701* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 33-35; Dye, *War Paths, Peace Paths*, 111.

[164] Ibid., 112; Ron Williamson, "Ontinontsiskiaj Ondoan ('The House of Cut-Off Heads')," in *The Taking and Displaying of Human Body Parts as Trophies by Amerindians* (Richard J. Chacon and David H. Dye, eds. New York: Springer, 2007), 193.

[165] Daniel K. Richter, "War and Culture: The Iroquois Experience," *William and Mary Quarterly* 40 (1983): 528-529.

[166] Dye, *War Paths, Peace Paths*, 114.

leader's effectiveness was determined by his ability to capture prisoners, return them alive to his village, and ultimately disperse them among the mourners.[167] The mourning family often adopted the captives to replace their deceased relative. However, if the family felt the need to vent their rage, the captive could be tortured, executed or even subjected to ritual cannibalism and trophy taking.[168] The latter was so common that collective analyses of archaeological, ethnohistorical, osteological, and ethnographic evidence demonstrates that trophy taking was widespread in the western hemisphere dating as far back as the Archaic Period.[169] Precombat rituals also reflected the importance of captives. As Dye notes, "The boiling war kettle and subsequent war feast foreshadowed the return of the war party and its cannibalistic rites."[170] Mourning women could convince warriors to bring them captives to alleviate their grief, while during the precombat ritual tribal leaders agreed on the "appropriate division of captives among the respective towns."[171] In other words, victory was already assured and assumed to be inevitable. Postcombat activities were also

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[167] Ibid., 114-115.

[168] Ibid.,115-116; Craig S. Keener, *An Ethnohistoric Perspective on Iroquois Warfare during the Second half of the Seventeenth Century (A.D. 1649-1701)* (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Anthropology, Ohio State University, Columbus, OH, 1998 [as cited in Dye, *War Paths, Peace Paths*, 115]), 81. Evidence of both cannibalism and trophy taking have been found in archaeological midden deposits in the form of split, cut, and cooked human bones. See Thomas S. Abler, "Iroquois Cannibalism: Fact Not Fiction," *Ethnohistory* 27 (1980): 309-316; Dye, *War Paths, Peace Paths*, 116-117.

[169] Richard J. Chacon and David H. Dye, "Introduction to Human Trophy Taking: An Ancient and Widespread Practice," in *The Taking and Displaying of Human Body Parts*, 5-6. The only exception is in Patagonia, which has yet to provide such evidence.

[170] Ibid., 114.

[171] Ibid., 114; see also Richter, "War and Culture," 535.

highly ritualized, as those individuals selected for torture were incorporated into an elaborate ceremony as a sacrifice to the sun.[172] Body parts were mutilated with weapons and firebrands while the prisoner was kept alive until sunrise before eventually being subjected to ritual cannibalism.[173] In short, the importance of captives is seen throughout the raiding process and the rituals that took place before and after the raid.

The taking of human body parts as trophies of war has a long history in Mesoamerica as well and can be traced as far back as the Middle Formative period (800-500 BC).[174] For the ancient Mayans, the need for captives is believed to be the primary incentive for warfare, much like with the Iroquois, and certain important events — birth of an heir, death of a ruler, etc. — apparently required a human sacrifice.[175] This need has an ideological basis, found most clearly in the myths of *Popul Vuh*, which associate sacrifice with creation and rebirth. In the myth, the hero twins outwit the lords of death, "tricking them into submitting to sacrifice through decapitation."[176]

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[172] Williamson, "Ontinontsiskiaj Ondoan," 193-195.

[173] Ibid., 194-195.

[174] Carrie Anne Berryman, "Captive Sacrifice and Trophy Taking Among the Ancient Maya: An Evaluation of the Bioarchaeological Evidence and Its Sociopolitical Implications," in *The Taking and Displaying of Human Body Parts as Trophies by Amerindians*, 377.

[175] Ibid., 379. See also Linda Schele, "Human Sacrifice among the Classic Maya," in *Ritual Human Sacrifice in Mesoamerica* (E.H. Boone, ed. Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 1983), 7-48; and for a caution regarding the ideology and potential propaganda in Mayan sources on warfare, see Joyce Marcus, *Mesoamerica Writing Systems: Propaganda, Myth, and History in Four Ancient Civilizations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).

Much like the Assyrians, decapitated heads became for the Mayans a prominent symbol of royal power on stelae and other forms of art during the Classic Period.[177] The earliest such depictions date to the Middle Formative Period as trophies adorning the belts, headdresses and necklaces of rulers and warriors.[178] Following a survey of relevant archaeological finds, especially "problematic deposits" of human bones, Berryman concludes that archaeological evidence "seems to provide excellent support for the conclusion that many graphic scenes depicted in Mayan art and iconography were more than mythical events, and were in fact representations of actual historical events."[179]

Ideology also served as the impetus for the acquisition of human trophies and the blood sacrifices for the Aztecs. Such acts were specifically deemed necessary for the "maintenance and renewal of the cosmos; and as such, the offering of captives blessed with a powerful *tonal*, or spiritual essence, were construed as most sacred."[180] Ritual specialists were employed to conduct grisly rites aimed at displaying human heads after they were emptied of their contents,

[176] Berryman, "Captive Sacrifice," 379. For more on the myths see Linda Schele and David Freidel, *A Forest of Kings: the Untold Story of the Ancient Maya* (New York: William Morrow, 1989).

[177] Ibid.,124; Berryman, "Captive Sacrifice, 379-380.

[178] For example, see Ibid., 382, fig. 13.2 and 387, fig. 13.7. The former can also be found in Robert F. Heizer, *Analysis of Tow Low Relief Sculpture from La Venta* (Contributions of the University of California Research Facility, No. 3. Berkeley, CA, 1967), 25-55, fig. 1.

[179] Berryman, "Captive Sacrifice," 395.

[180] Rubén G. Mendoza, "The Divine Gourd Tree: Tzompantli Skull Racks, Decapitation Rituals and Human Trophies in Ancient Mesoamerica," in *The Taking and Displaying of Human Body Parts as Trophies by Amerindians*, 413-414; see also David Carrasco, *City of Sacrifice: The Aztec Empire and the Role of Violence in Civilization* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1999).

flayed, and dried.[181] Archeologists have found human skulls and human trophies, providing tangible evidence for these practices,.[182]

For their part, the taking of human trophies and execution of captives for the Incas was largely relegated to the emperors, military leaders, and other elites.[183] The Incas created several different forms of trophies from their captives; the primary ones appear to have been severed heads, drums made from flayed human skins, and drinking cups made from human skulls.[184] Severed heads were taken from defeated enemy leaders. Such trophies were prominently displayed in victory celebrations, including the triumphal return of the ruler and his army to Cuzco.[185] In these victory parades, captives were displayed and sometimes sacrificed.[186] In the case of the Inca Pachacuti, one account claims the prisoner was kept alive until the triumphal entrance. The captive's head was then cut off during a ceremony and kept as a trophy.[187] The Roman Triumph immediately springs to mind when one reads such accounts. Certainly, a vast difference exists in the treatment of the defeated enemy's corpse in the aftermath

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[181] Mendoza, "The Divine Gourd Tree," 413.

[182] Ibid., 400-401, fig. 14.1, 410, fig. 14.7, 414, fig. 14.9.

[183] Dennis E. Ogburn, "Human Trophies in the Late Pre-Hispanic Andes: Striving for Status and Maintaining Power Among the Incas and Other Societies," in *The Taking and Displaying of Human Body Parts as Trophies by Amerindians*, 509-510.
[184] Ibid., 509.

[185] Ibid., 510.

[186] Elizabeth N. Arkush, "The Transformation of Warfare in Late Prehispanic Andean Highlands," in *The Archaeology of Warfare: Preshistories of Raiding and Conquest* (Elizabeth N. Arkush and Mark W. Allen, eds. University Press of Florida, 2006), 317.

[187] Ogburn, "Human Trophies," 510.

of the celebration, but the triumphalistic purpose remains the same: the victor celebrates his dominance over the helpless physical form of his captive foe(s).

Though obvious differences exist among these parallels, a clear picture emerges of the general tendencies of ancient empires, who were quick to celebrate their victories over foreign peoples in public displays, often involving rituals or sacrifice. These actions are emphatic statements of power expressed over the physical bodies of enemies. Trophies were often taken as timeless symbols of such deeds, and ideology serves as the motivation for such harsh treatment. In societies the world over, victorious civilizations claimed their victories and subsequent celebrations were necessary to reassert Order or balance the cosmos.

Egyptology and the Reality of Brutality

Clearly, ancient empires dealt harshly with people groups that they considered dangerous rebels or uncivilized threats to society. While it is important to remember that foreigners were also incorporated into ancient societies, the official record often speaks of great violence, usually involving rituals. Whether discussing Assyrian cruelty, the Roman Triumph, or Amerindian trophy taking and sacrifice, scholars acknowledge that brutality was common and even familiar.

For the ancient Egyptians, the situation was similar. They harshly punished "rebels" throughout their history, yet the majority of scholarship on these topics is hesitant to ascribe such practices to the ancient Egyptians in all but the earliest time periods. This stands in stark contrast to scholarship covering

Assyria, Rome, and Mesoamerica, where there is little to no attempt to deny the historicity of gruesome actions. A quick sampling of scholarly literature on one brutal type of action — ritual slaying — in ancient Egypt reveals a sharp divide of opinions with a general viewpoint that the Egyptians were too "civilized" to engage in such practices.[188] There are various reasons for this squeamishness, and each deserves a brief examination and refutation.

Before proceeding, a word on terminology and ancient perspectives is in order. Though one could argue endlessly the semantics of terms like "ritual killing", "human sacrifice", "capital punishment", and "torture", it is abundantly clear that each term readily fits into a general category of brutality. For clarity, it is best to follow Muhlestein's example and use the term "ritual slaying/killing" as opposed to "human sacrifice" which carries with it connotations of mass sacrifice from Mesoamerica (and other regions) and is better left to those fields. I speak of ritual killing to refer to any execution of an individual deemed to be a rebel or criminal conducted in a public or ceremonial manner. It need not necessarily refer to mass sacrifice or the sacrifice of children.[189] It is also important to note that there is a clear difference between killing an enemy in battle versus a captured enemy or criminal.[190]

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[188] For lists of scholars on both sides of the debate, see Muhlestein, *Violence in the Service of Order* (BAR International Series 2299. Oxford: Archaeopress, 2011), 5-6.

[189] In this sense, available evidence suggests Egypt was very different from Mesoamerican empires. Brutality existed in both locations, but the Egyptians seem to have practiced it on a more individualized level than the Mesoamericans.

[190] Muhlestein, "Royal Executions," 204-205.

In ancient societies, modern notions like the separation of church and state were utterly absent. Capital punishment was a restoration of Order and thus ritualized. For example, during the Middle Kingdom (ca. 1950-1750 BC), Senusret is quick to act with the utmost brutality:

> "…them that had trespassed on th[is] house, [My Majesty] made
> [a great(?)] slaughter among them(?)], (both) men and women,
> the valleys being (filled) with the flayed and the mountains with the
> transfixed; the enemy from the terraces were placed on the brazier,
> it was (death by) fire because of what they did…"[191]

The word translated as "flayed" by Redford is $sr\d{h}$, which is probably to be identified with the West Semitic root for the Ugaritic word for sword ($\check{s}l\d{h}$). As for "impaling," the word used is $pt\underline{h}w$, with a four stakes determinative (bound upright) making its meaning clear, most likely following the Semitic word $pt\d{h}$ which conveys the same action.[192] The punishments meted out by Senusret are of the utmost severity and bring to mind the deeds of Assyrian kings.

While Senusret I is obviously casting himself in the standard role of the king as the Champion of Order, this ideological slant does not diminish the text's historical value (see Chapter One). Whatever exaggerations might be present are more likely to be found in the numbers of rebels mentioned than in the king's action.[193] Furthermore, much like with purely rhetorical depictions of bound

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[191] Donald B. Redford, "The Tod Inscriptions of Senwosret I and Early 12th Dynasty Involvement in Nubia and the South," *JSSEA* 17 (1987), 42; for the hieroglyphs, see figure 2, X + 30. See also Kerry Muhlestein, *Violence in the Service of Order*, 37-39.

[192] Redford, "The Tod Inscriptions," 51, n. 68.

[193] Ibid.,97-98; Kerry Muhlestein, "Royal Executions: Evidence Bearing on the Subject of Sanctioned Killing in the Middle Kingdom," in *The Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 51.2 (2008): 194-195.

captives, even if the events mentioned by Senusret are only a partial representation of the truth, they provide a glimpse into of the type of actions the king could engage in when punishing evil-doers.

That Senusret I refers to decapitation and especially burning makes explicit the connection between capital punishment and ritual. Insisting that acts be either one or the other "artificially compartmentalizes modern standards that were foreign to Egyptian society."[194] Sacrificial animals were struck with a knife and then burned, much like the perpetrators at the Temple of Tod.[195] As Muhlestein puts it, "Whether modern-day Egyptologists like to associate the Egyptians with human sacrifice or not, it is clear that Senusret did."[196]

The ritual slaying at Mirgissa, a Middle Kingdom fort in Nubia, provides archaeological evidence of a similar rite from this same time period (see Chapter One). Over 175 execration texts were found adjacent to the remains of a man who was slain as a living execration rite. A human skull was found merely twenty centimeters from a knife that Ritner has conclusively demonstrated was used for ritual slaying.[197] Muhlestein appropriately calls this an "undeniably human

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[194] Muhlestein, *Violence in the Service of Order*, 7. For that matter, Egyptian terminology makes no distinction between ritual and punishment and uses terms for killing without semantic distinction. See Renate Müller-Wollermann, *Vergehen and Strafen: Zur Sanktionierung abweichenden Verhaltens im alten Ägypten* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2004), 205.

[195] Muhlestein, "Royal Executions," 189-190, no. 44.

[196] Ibid., 190-191.

[197] Robert Kriech Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice* (Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilizations 54. The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 1993), 163-167, especially n. 758.

counterpoint to the clay figures of the ritual.[198] For Ritner, this is "indisputable evidence for the practice of human sacrifice."[199]

Given that rulers like Senuset I from the Middle Kingdom make claims similar to those discussed from the New Kingdom in Chapter Five, why are Egyptologists so hesitant to acknowledge such brutality? In other words, if brutal actions are referenced from multiple rulers from different time periods throughout Egyptian history, one cannot simply claim they are exceptions to the rule. The most prevalent reason for the tendency to shy away from brutality in scholarship concerning ancient Egypt is the notion that Egypt is somehow different than other ancient civilizations and one of the great ancestors of modern western culture. While the latter statement is certainly true, it has somewhat clouded the judgment of scholars regarding the former. The vast majority of scholarship on Egypt over the past two hundred years was written by Westerners who view themselves as "cultural inheritors of Egypt."[200]

Along these same lines, scholars have become emotionally invested in the society they have studied for so long and grown to love (or loved from the start). It is human nature to shy away from topics that one finds offensive and might shatter the veneer of Egypt as "more civilized". Yoyotte accurately observes, "égyptologues répugnent à l'idée que les bons Égyptiens aient pu tuer

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[198] Muhlestein, "Royal Executions," 195.

[199] Ritner, *The Mechanics*, 162-163.

[200] Muhlestein, *Violence in the Service of Order*, 5-7.

religieusement leurs semblables."[201] Yoyotte's statement is not only accurate

regarding the reluctance of Egyptologists, it also hints at an important aspect of

this discussion: that "good" people cannot ritually slay (or torturously bind or

desecrate the corpses of, etc.) their fellow human beings. Yoyotte continues,

pointing out the fallacy of such a perspective:

> A vrai dire, la notion de "sacrifice humain", pratique sentie comme
> spécialement monstrueuse par les traditions humanistes et les reli-
> gions révélées, est une notion bien mal commode pour l'historien.
> Elle résulte de la réprobation chez les autres -- les ancient or les
> étrangers – de pratiques religieuses fort diverses et l'on ne aurait
> poser a priori due les Égyptiens classiques, pour "humanitaire" que
> fût leur morale, n'aient pas connu quelques rites incluant la mise a
> mort d'un homme ou encore des exécutions prenant une forme
> rituelle.[202]

It is unreasonable to expect the views of ancient people, including the "good"

Egyptians, to conform to notions of how to treat a captured prisoner espoused by

modern Westerners, especially if they viewed the prisoners as ritually significant.

To be fair, the nature of Egyptian evidence is less explicit and less direct

than data from other cultures in many instances. Egyptian artistic sensibilities led

to a general standardization of the iconography of warfare and the depiction of

captives. This has given scholars some leeway to assume the Egyptians were

less brutal than others. While iconic images of the king at battle and his

unquestionable victory are undeniably the dominant themes in the artistic record,

this view fails to acknowledge the great variety and creativity on display in the

bindings and treatment of captives (see Chapters 2-4). Such a failure is

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[201] Jean Yoyotte, "Héra d'Héliopolis et le Sacrifce Humain," *Annuaire—Ecole pratique des hautes aetudes, Section-sciences religieuses* 89 (1980-81), 36.

[202] Ibid., 39.

unsurprising when the captives receive only passing mention in major epigraphic works. Those that do examine the prisoners more closely typically emphasize only the more aesthetically pleasing aspects: their costumes, hairstyles, facial features, etc. They are simply more interested in who was defeated by whom than in the treatment of the defeated. The torturous and bizarre bindings that lie at the heart of this study are often ignored or dismissed as a stereotyped reflection of the ideology of Order and Chaos. While the ideology is a vital part of the equation, it not need be the terminus point for study. Torturous imagery is ever-present, used nearly as often as more standard bindings, and should not be dismissed without first examining its potential reflection of reality and its revelatory capacity concerning the mindset of the Egyptians. While less explicit than Assyrian art with its fondness for impaling, decapitation, and flaying, the brutal bindings in Egyptian sources at the very least speak to a civilization that on some level valued the depiction of harsh treatment of prisoners of war. They are clearly excessively brutal and discomfiting to behold.

Perhaps the clearest example of the general squeamishness of Egyptologists is the usual interpretation of the so-called "smiting scene." These grandiose scenes were designed primarily to glorify the king and are ubiquitous on Egyptian monuments during all periods of Egyptian strength. While they were often a symbolic way to protect the temple and a means of expressing the king's victory, they also depict an execution in extremely obvious fashion.[203] So

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[203] It is not my intention to examine each scene, nor to attempt to distinguish "real" scenes from borrowed ones. The significance of these scenes for this discussion is not their historicity but the tone used for the discussion itself and the puzzling reaction to Schulman's work.

widespread was this scene-type in ancient Egypt that it found its way onto private stelae during the New Kingdom.[204] On these stelae, the king is "pictured in the act of slaying an enemy captive, or group of captives, in the presence of one of the Egyptian gods, usually Ptah."[205] Schulman is quick to point the historical value of these stelae, noting that they show enough diversity and individual details to not necessarily have come from the "stock repertoire."[206] He even seeks a paradigm shift, questioning whether Egyptologists have been asking the right questions of such stelae and scenes.[207] The subject of the stelae brags that he attended an event where the king engaged in the activity depicted: either an execution scene or the giving of gold as a reward.[208] These private celebrations, while still bringing glory to the king, cannot be said to be part of the larger decorative program, as their private context means few people would have seen them, especially compared to the grandiose scenes adorning the exteriors of temple walls.

Concerning the smiting scenes on these stelae, Schulman concludes that the events recorded were real, specific sacrifices that took place at the location associated with the god mentioned.[209] While the motif symbolizes the timeless

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[204] Alan R. Schulman, *Ceremonial Execution and Public Reward: Some Historical Scenes on New Kingdom Private Stelae* (Freiberg, Schweiz: Universitätsverlag, 1988), 8-9.

[205] Ibid., 9-10.

[206] Ibid., 1-2.

[207] Ibid., 1-3.

[208] On the latter, see Ibid., 116-191.

[209] Ibid., 57-59.

triumph of the king, Schulman has aptly demonstrated that "this stereotyped, symbolic, conventional theme is nevertheless rooted in an actual event, the ritual execution of a captured enemy ruler during the ceremonial thanksgiving offered by the pharaoh to the god(s) at the conclusion of a successful military campaign."[210] Such an act must have been public for individuals to commemorate it later as one of the pinnacle moments of their lives. From the king's perspective, a public display was the "most tangible demonstration of the awesome might and power of the king, a concrete testimonial of his inevitable triumph over his foes and his omnipotence in all matters."[211] On other stelae, the king is shown giving gold to individuals which should also be viewed as historical events, according to Schulman.[212]

Despite praising Schulman's research as thorough, William Ward finds room to disagree with Schulman's conclusions. His review is emblematic of the problem Egyptologists seem to have addressing brutality outside of battle. He agrees with Schulman that scenes depicting the giving of gold were historical, but is "not very comfortable with the idea that representations on private stelae of the king slaying captives reflect reality."[213] Ward continues by saying that his reluctance to embrace Schulman's conclusion regarding ceremonial executions stems from his own view of Egyptian character. He writes, "This does not seem

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[210] Ibid., 193.

[211] Ibid., 194.

[212] Ibid., 194-195.

[213] William A. Ward, "Review of *Ceremonial Execution and Public Reward: Some Historical Scenes on New Kingdom Private Stelae* by Alan R. Schulman," *JNES* 51 (1992): 152-153.

to me to be part of the Egyptian national character."[214] He mentions that such

actions are expected of the Assyrians, not the Egyptians. Ward believes that

there was no need for the ritual to involve a real person; "going through the

motions" would suffice to impress the spectators.[215] In other words, Ward would

have us believe that these depictions are a religious drama devoid of real

victims.[216]

It is remarkable that such a well-respected Egyptologist as William Ward

could put forth an argument as specious as this. Ward mentions a contemporary

civilization, the Assyrians, with no consideration for the obvious fact that Assyrian

practices and sensibilities more closely mirror those of the Egyptians than do

those of modern societies. For that matter, he is rather blithely judging the

Assyrians as inferior as a result. Worse, Ward is picking and choosing which

scenes to ascribe as historical from the same genre: private celebratory/mortuary

stelae. The overall context of both the giving of gold scenes and the smiting

scenes is identical, yet Ward dismisses the historical value of only the latter.

One cannot help but wonder if the smiting scenes are merely

commemorating a symbolic slaying, why then do they depict real people as the

victims instead of portraying the symbolic objects? After all, no symbolic

depiction takes place in the giving of gold scenes. A retreat by claiming

symbolism has been a crutch for Egyptologists to rely on in the face of potentially

brutal acts and depictions seemingly since the dawn of the discipline. Any retreat

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[214] Ibid., 153.

[215] Ibid., 154.

[216] Ibid., 155.

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made on crutches is ultimately doomed to fail. Statements of symbolism escape

historical investigation by their very nature; illusive, ephemeral, and transient, the

symbolic is safe haven for those seeking to deny the practice of violent rituals. It

is time for scholars to begin analyzing the material with new perspectives (such

as the potential for real actions or the power of a human being as symbol vs.

figurine as a symbol, etc.) rather than using the catchall failsafe of symbolism.

To be perfectly blunt, Ward's critique is entirely too subjective. He bases

his criticism on his own personal feelings, being uncomfortable with the idea of

public execution or ritual slaying. He speaks of the Egyptian national character

without ever defining it. This is perhaps due to the fact that such a statement

rings hollow as a gross oversimplification of historical processes and the diversity

of practice from era to era or even ruler to ruler. Dismissing the data due to

personal feelings is simply not scholarship.[217]

Concerning smiting scenes overall, there is strong evidence that they are

at times a commemoration of a ritual slaying.[218] Two passages from Medinet

Habu strengthen the notion. In one, Ramesses III is told by Amun that the god

has given him prisoners specifically so he can "grant breath" to those he likes

and slay the others.[219] In the other, a foreign leader begs for the life of his son,

but Ramesses III, knowing their treachery, "came down upon their heads like a

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[217] The problem with Ward's notion of religious ritual not needing a real victim will be discussed below.

[218] For evidence from the earliest periods, see Muhlestein, *Violence in the Service of Order*, 85-91.

[219] *KRI* V: 97, lines 6-7.

mountain of granite" (*ḥm.f ḥ3w ḥr tp.sn mi ḏw n m3t*).[220] This idiom seems to

mean that something very hard came down upon their heads very quickly. As

Muhlestein notes, no object better fits this description than the king's mace.[221] It

appears Ramesses III has executed his god-given prerogative and emphatically

not "granted life" to these individuals. Ramesses III even inaugurated a new

festival known as the "Slaying of the Libyans,"[222] a likely time for the impaling of

Libyan leaders mentioned in Chapter Five.

Doubtless, many smiting scenes are purely symbolic, while others were

both commemorative and decorative. Scholars are often mired in the controversy

of whether a particular scene is historical, symbolic, or borrowed from earlier

rulers to the extent that the entire genre is often dismissed as unhistorical.

Determining which precise smiting scenes are evidence of actual slaying is for

the most part a fool's errand. Instead, it is important to simply recognize that

some smiting scenes do have historical referents,[223] including many of those

examined by Schulman.

The tendency to shy away from brutality is equally difficult to maintain

concerning to the textual record, which mentions specific treatments, like

impaling, not found in the artistic record (see Chapter Five). While these types of

executions are not the most common fate for prisoners, they are attested.

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[220] *KRI* V: 70, lines 28-29; Muhlestein, *Violence in the Service of Order*, 55 and 89; *ARE* 3, 58.

[221] Muhlestein, *Violence in the Service of Order*, 89.

[222] *KRI* V: 173.

[223] Muhlestein, *Violence in the Service of Order*, 91.

Whether these acts happen immediately after battle or back in Egypt, they are

fundamentally a final punishment of a rebellious, captured and helpless enemy. It

is also important to clearly distinguish between actions taken during battle and

those taken after battle; they are most emphatically not the same. A captive

executed after battle has been fully restrained; he is totally helpless whether in

Egypt or not. Such an activity is more akin to capital punishment than to death

during battle. Attempts by Egyptologists to make a distinction between violence

after battle and execution back in Egypt are misleading. In both cases, the victim,

criminal, or captive is completely incapable of resisting. Thus, after battle

celebratory executions are essentially just as harsh as ritual slayings undertaken

in Egypt proper.

Conclusion: Archaeological Evidence

That the Egyptians engaged in ritual slayings is not something that can

continue to be avoided by Egyptologists in light of recent archaeological

discoveries. In addition to the discoveries at Mirgissa, excavations at Avaris have

uncovered two pits, the latter most likely associated with the New Kingdom

pharaoh Ahmose. The first pit, Locus 1055, contained three human skulls,

providing more evidence of human inclusion in execration rites.[224] Next to the

skulls were the fingers from the right hands of three male individuals, providing

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[224] Perla Fuscaldo, "Tell al-Dab'a: Two Execration Pits and a Foundation Deposit," in *Egyptology at the Dawn of the Twenty-first Century. Proceedings of the Eighth International Congress of Egyptologists, Cairo, 2000*, vol. 1 (Zahi Hawass, ed. New York: The American University in Cairo Press, 2003), 186; Muhlestein, "Royal Executions," 195.

more confirmation for the sacrificial context.[225] This should also be considered a real-life example of the common artistic motif of cutting off hands.

The purpose of the other pit, Locus 1016, is less clear, but at least one excavator, Fuscaldo, believes it was also an execration pit.[226] Inside the pit, two male skeletons were uncovered. Lying face down, the condition of the skeletons, according to Fuscaldo, signifies a rite similar to the deposited skull from Mirgissa. She points out that unlike at Mirgissa, where figurines were also included, at Avaris full human skeletons were used instead.[227] In other words, no symbolic substitute was needed. That the captives were alive prior to the sacrifice is likely due to the simple fact that the power of the ritual was embodied in the act itself. Desecrating a body posthumously, while still clearly a form of brutality, would be less ritualistically powerful. For that matter, using a real person instead of a clay or wax substitute invoked a more powerful rite. Any attempt to dismiss the overall data from Avaris and Mirgissa as anything other than a human execration rite/ritual slaying is disingenuous. As Muhlestein summarizes, "Smashing intact texts and figurines is mirrored much better and more powerfully in the slaying of a live human than in the dissection of a dead one. One would have to be looking

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[225] Manfred Bietak, Josef Dorner, and Peter Janosi, "Ausgrabungen in dem Palastbezirkvon Avaris Vorbericht tell El-Dab'a/'Ezbet Helmi 1993-2000," in Ägypten & Levante 11 (2001):62-64; Muhlestein, "Royal Executions," 195.

[226] Fuscaldo, "Tell al-Dab'a," 186. Bietak, Dorner, and Janosi are less sure ("Ausgrabungen," 67-74).

[227] Fuscaldo, "Tell al-Dab'a," 187-188; Muhlestein, "Royal Executions," 195-196.

for reasons not to see the ritual slaughter of a human to take this point of view."[228]

Recent discoveries by Manfred Bietak at Avaris and Betsy Bryan and the Temple of Mut precinct at Karnak leave little room for debate. At ancient Avaris, Bietak and his team from four pits containing a total of sixteen human hands.[229] Two of the pits contained just one hand apiece and were located just in front of what is believed to be a throne room of the Hyksos king, Khayan, of the Fifteenth Dynasty. It is likely that each pit represents a ceremony whereby a soldier presents a hand to the king and is given gold. The other two pits were located just outside the palace. Every single hand is a right hand; no left hands are attested. It should be noted that this practice pre-dates mentions by Ahmose son of Ibana and others at the onset of the New Kingdom by 60-80 years.

Some may question whether this practice was a Hyksos innovation since there were not native Egyptians. Bietak counters this thought by pointing out that the mutilation of enemy corpses is well attested in Egyptian history from the time of Narmer.[230] Furthermore, the Hyksos were in close contact with both Nubians (potential allies) and Egyptians (enemies) to the south, so they would likely have been familiar with the taking of enemy hands as a reality of Egyptian warfare. In particular, Nubian pottery has been found at Avaris and it is possible that were

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[228] Muhlestein, "Royal Executions," 196.

[229] Initially published in Manfred Bietak, "The Archaeology of the 'Gold of Valor,'" *EA* 40 (2012): 32-33. Images and a brief write up can be found at: http://www.livescience.com/22267-severed-hands-ancient-egypt-palace.html (accessed January 17, 2013).

[230] Bietak, "The Archaeology of the 'Gold of Valor,'" 33.

employed as mercenaries by the Hyksos and thus introduced the trophy taking practice to them.[231] Unless future research demonstrates the reality of this practice in northern Canaan, it is best to conclude that the Hyksos adopted this action from Egyptians or Nubians. The pits of hands are thus tangible proof of the practice of taking enemy hands as a way of counting the dead and symbolically removing their power so frequently mentioned in both text and art.

At the Temple of Mut precinct at Karnak, Bryan and her team found a human male skeleton in Square 9.[232] The skeleton was found lying on his side, bound and trussed as a captive with his wrists bound to his ankles. It is clear he was executed, although the precise cause of death is yet to be determined. Regardless, this fascinating discovery proves once and for all that the Egyptians did in fact brutally bind and execute foreign captives from time to time.

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[231] Ibid., 33.

[232] Since the skeleton is still being investigated, publication is forthcoming. For now, see http://www.jhu.edu/egypttoday/ (accessed January 17, 2013).

CONCLUSION

The results of this study are important for the discipline of Egyptology, demonstrating that previously neglected or ignored material concerning bound foreigners reveals much about the purposes for capturing and depicting prisoners of war. Depictions of enemy captives in a variety of poses, some of which are unavoidably torturous, served several purposes. Ideologically, such depictions have long been understood as part of the king's mandate to vanquish Chaos and establish Order (Chapter One). The painful and bizarre poses the captives are forced to assume reflect this understanding on a visual level that would have been obvious to anyone viewing the scenes. This is the Iconography of Humiliation at its most basic level: the victorious king has dominated chaotic, hapless foreigners.

So vital was this motif that a great deal of valuable space on temple walls was devoted to the depiction of captives, functioning not only as political power statements but also as apotropaic protection for the temple (Chapters Three and Four; for specific examples see pages 141-152 and 197-210). Depictions stretched far beyond the walls of temples, appearing on entryways, floors, staircases, throne daises, and other architectural features. Various objects used by the king were also decorated with this ubiquitous motif (Chapter Two). From sandals and footstools to chariot yokes and walking sticks, the Egyptians displayed remarkable creativity in incorporating the Iconography of Humiliation into numerous royal objects. In many cases, the iconography was directly related to an object's inherent purpose. As the king used the object, the enemies of

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Egypt were symbolically defeated time and time again. He trampled them with his sandals, strangled them or dragged them through the dust with his canes, and garroted them when he fired his bow. As mentioned in Chapter Two, this creative incorporation of the bound foreigner motifs carries with it an undeniable sense of irony or even a cruel sense of humor: as he conducted his ceremonial duties the king himself was bound to the motif, surrounded each step of the way with the mandate to symbolically defeat Egypt's foes.

This is not to say the iconography was entirely fictitious or lacking historical referent. In nearly each scene from temple walls, excepting the smiting scenes, Egyptologists believe that a campaign took place. The scenes are used to understand the details of battle, the weaponry used, the enemy people group or polity, and the like. Unfortunately, heretofore the depictions of the captives have largely been ignored as scholars emphasize other aspects. Unique bindings, such as the catchpole used at Beit el-Wali (Figure 18, page 169-170) or the fish manacle used at Medinet Habu (Figure 27, page 205-207), emerge when the captives receive due attention.

This study has also demonstrated that the artistic record shows an approximately even split between standard and torturous or painful bindings on the many monuments of the Ramesside era depicting the chariot battle narrative (Table 6). In many cases, the variety in the bindings served spatial purposes, allowing the artisans to make the most of limited and highly valuable space on temple walls. A simple aesthetic was also frequently involved; by placing some of

the bindings above a captive's head, for example, the artists were able to add variety to the depictions.

Of course, these depictions are not intended to represent the total sum of the captives brought back to Egypt, but several aspects of the scenes add to their realism: the presence of Egyptian soldiers interacting with the prisoners; notions of sequence and movement, especially on the march home to Egypt; and the presence of scribes taking notes or assigning the captives to their future fates (for example, see pages 136-137 and 208-209, Figure 29). Overall, the depictions speak to the potential for action and are wholly believable in the context of celebratory triumphalism made famous by other ancient societies, namely Rome.

While one can celebrate the cleverness of the Egyptians on one hand, the other hand holds a more disturbing truth: many of these bindings and the fates of certain captives were very brutal. Too often scholars attempt to hide this "hand" behind their backs, cloaking the simple truth that the Egyptians acted much like other ancient empires the world over in their treatment of captured enemies (Chapters Five and Six). Though their artistic sensibilities differed from that of the Assyrians, the actual treatment of and motivation for taking captives was essentially the same. For many societies, warfare that did not result in the successful capture of enemies was considered a failure no matter how many enemies were slain. Captives were vital to ancient economies as part of the work force, usually serving in agricultural or construction projects. To be fair, in ancient

Egypt numerous avenues to freedom existed, such as marriage, promotion, and even purification by the king, to name a few.

Brutality is most evident in textual reference to the treatment of rebellious rulers, and it is here that the Egyptians most closely relate to the Assyrians and other pre-modern societies. Enemy chieftains were subjected to a variety of fates that are best described as ceremonial executions or ritual slayings: decapitation, burning, impaling, etc. These actions were doubtless intended to send a message to future rebels and must have also served to symbolically defeat Egypt's enemies. After all, if an inscribed pot or figurine can represent an enemy people group and be incorporated into rituals (execration rites), how much more powerful must an enemy ruler have been as a symbolic representation? Recent archaeological excavations provide new, exciting, and tangible evidence that iconographic elements like the cutting off of enemy hands and brutal bindings were indeed practiced by the Egyptians (see pages 19-21 and 312-315). While still being analyzed, these findings leave little doubt that at least from time to time the Iconography of Humiliation had real life application.

It is hoped that this study will open up new avenues for research into the depiction and treatment of prisoners of war in Egyptian society, and that a discussion will develop that does not fear the harsher realities of the treatment of prisoners of war. While it is understandable, to a certain degree, to shy away from topics that one considers to be discomffitting or offensive, there is nothing to be gained from ignoring the data, as scholars have often done. A nuanced approach is imperative, for the Egyptians were capable of great brutality

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(impaling, etc.) and also of showing great compassion (for example, keeping captured families together). Ultimately, the Iconography of Humiliation deserves attention for the simple fact that the Egyptians themselves valued it to such an unmistakably high degree.

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