

# INVISIBLE RELIGION IN ANCIENT EGYPT

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A study into the individual religiosity of non-royal  
and non-elite ancient Egyptians

by

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# ABSTRACT

The research presented in this thesis applies Thomas Luckmann's theory of invisible religion to three aspects of ancient Egyptian culture (festivals, household and personal items, and communication with the dead and with gods). The intention is firstly to address the four key issues that have arisen as a result of previous research into personal religion in ancient Egypt, secondly to determine whether ordinary ancient Egyptians possessed individual religiosity, and thirdly to establish whether the three aspects of ancient Egyptian culture considered can be viewed as examples of invisible religion. With regards to the four key issues, this research concludes: there was a link between individual religiosity and state religion; the intimacy of ordinary ancient Egyptians' emotions relating to individual religiosity varied; individual religiosity was not a phenomenon of the lower classes; individual religiosity was not an innovation of the New Kingdom. In addition, it is shown that ordinary ancient Egyptians did possess individual religiosity but that each person would have created, maintained, engaged with, and internalised the universe of meaning (as described by Luckmann) to a different extent. Finally, this research concludes that the three aspects of ancient Egyptian culture considered can be viewed as examples of invisible religion.



To my husband.

For reminding me that only when it is darkest can you see the stars.



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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1	Research aims and objectives.....	3
1.2	Methodology.....	5
1.3	Areas not considered .....	8
<b>2</b>	<b>Literature Review .....</b>	<b>11</b>
2.1	Introduction .....	11
2.2	Thomas Luckmann’s invisible religion .....	12
2.2.1	Key aspects of Luckmann’s invisible religion.....	12
2.2.2	Analyses of Luckmann’s invisible religion .....	16
2.2.3	Egyptology and Luckmann’s invisible religion.....	19
2.2.4	Individual religiosity and Luckmann’s invisible religion .....	22
2.3	Brief history of research into the Self.....	24
2.3.1	The Self in Egyptology .....	31
2.4	History of research into personal religion .....	32

Table of Contents

2.5	Current schools of thought regarding the study of personal religion .....	47
2.6	Key issues in the study of personal religion.....	49
2.7	Terminology .....	52
2.7.1	Existing terminology .....	53
2.7.2	Definition of 'religiosity' .....	58
2.8	History of research into the three aspects of ancient Egyptian culture.....	59
2.8.1	Festivals .....	59
2.8.2	Household and personal items.....	67
2.8.3	Communication with the dead and with gods .....	75
<b>3</b>	<b>Festivals.....</b>	<b>85</b>
3.1	Introduction .....	85
3.2	Invisible religion and festivals in ancient Egypt .....	86
3.3	The Festival of Osiris at Abydos .....	90
3.4	The Festival of Osiris and invisible religion.....	100
3.4.1	Attendance .....	100
3.4.2	Active involvement in the open part of the festival.....	101
3.4.3	Creation and/or giving of offerings .....	102

Table of Contents

3.4.4	Further action specific to the festival.....	103
3.4.5	Use of statues or stelae .....	103
3.4.6	Re-attendance .....	104
3.4.7	Personal burial.....	105
3.5	The Beautiful Feast of the Valley at Thebes .....	106
3.6	The Beautiful Feast of the Valley and invisible religion.....	118
3.6.1	Attendance .....	119
3.6.2	Active involvement in the open part of the festival.....	120
3.6.3	Creation and/or giving of offerings .....	121
3.6.4	Further action specific to the festival.....	122
3.6.5	Use of statues or stelae .....	123
3.6.6	Re-attendance .....	124
3.6.7	Personal burial.....	124
3.7	Conclusions regarding festivals and invisible religion .....	126
<b>4</b>	<b>Household and Personal Items .....</b>	<b>131</b>
4.1	Introduction .....	131
4.2	Invisible religion and household and personal items .....	132

## Table of Contents

4.3	Architectural features and decoration .....	136
4.3.1	Platforms .....	136
4.3.2	Wall niches.....	144
4.3.3	Vertical niches/false doors .....	145
4.3.4	Wall paintings .....	148
4.3.5	Invisible religion and architectural features and decoration .....	151
4.4	Furniture .....	154
4.4.1	Beds .....	155
4.4.2	Chairs .....	156
4.4.3	Stools .....	157
4.4.4	Boxes and chests .....	158
4.4.5	So-called cultic furniture .....	159
4.4.6	Case study: the intact tomb of the architect Kha (TT 8) .....	162
4.4.7	Invisible religion and furniture .....	172
4.5	Cosmetic Items.....	176
4.5.1	Mirrors.....	177
4.5.2	Cosmetic palettes, spoons and pots.....	182

Table of Contents

4.5.3	Invisible religion and cosmetic items .....	186
4.6	Amulets .....	189
4.6.1	Function and history of amulets.....	190
4.6.2	Types of amulets.....	194
4.6.3	Amulets discovered in non-mortuary contexts.....	198
4.6.4	Invisible religion and amulets.....	203
4.7	Conclusions regarding invisible religion and household and personal items .....	207
<b>5</b>	<b>Communication with the Dead and with Gods.....</b>	<b>217</b>
5.1	Introduction .....	217
5.2	Invisible religion and communication with the dead and with gods.....	218
5.3	Invisible religion and specific methods of communicating with the dead.....	221
5.3.1	Letters to the dead .....	222
5.3.2	Anthropoid busts and <i>ꜣh ikr n R<sup>c</sup></i> stelae.....	234
5.3.3	Dreams and the dead .....	243
5.4	Invisible religion and specific methods of communicating with the gods .....	248
5.4.1	Prayer.....	250
5.4.2	Votive offerings .....	262

Table of Contents

5.4.3	Oracles .....	271
5.4.4	Dreams and the gods.....	278
5.5	Conclusions regarding communication with the dead/gods and invisible religion	286
<b>6</b>	<b>Discussion.....</b>	<b>291</b>
6.1	Luckmann’s theory of invisible religion applied to ancient Egypt.....	293
6.2	Key issues and individual religiosity in ancient Egypt.....	304
6.3	Suggestions for further research .....	316
<b>7</b>	<b>Conclusions.....</b>	<b>319</b>
	<b>Appendix I: Deir el-Medina and Tell el-Amarna .....</b>	<b>325</b>
	<b>Appendix II: Texts.....</b>	<b>333</b>
A.	The Ikhernofret Stela .....	334
B.	Graffito from column four in the Temple of Amun ( <i>Dsr-3ht</i> ) at Deir el-Bahari.....	343
C.	Letters to the Dead .....	345
D.	Papyrus Chester Beatty III (The Dream Book) .....	358
E.	Late Ramesside Letters .....	362
F.	Deir el-Medina Ostraca .....	367
G.	The Biography of Ipuy .....	371

Table of Contents

H. The Biography of Djehutiemhab.....	375
<b>Plates .....</b>	<b>381</b>
<b>Figures .....</b>	<b>427</b>
<b>Bibliography.....</b>	<b>439</b>





# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

## PLATES

Plate 1: The Ikhernofret Stela.....	382
Plate 2: A scene depicting the resurrection of Osiris from the Osiris Temple at the Temple of Hathor at Dendera.....	383
Plate 3: Corn mummies. ....	383
Plate 4: A scene from the tomb of Userhat (TT 56) depicting a banquet and Userhat's son presenting a bouquet of flowers to his parents during the Beautiful Feast of the Valley.....	384
Plate 5: Papyrus and lotus bouquets being presented during the Beautiful Feast of the Valley, as depicted in TT 161.....	384
Plate 6: A singer at the Beautiful Feast of the Valley.....	385
Plate 7: Acrobatic dancers performing during the Beautiful Feast of the Valley procession as depicted in Hatshepsut's temple at Deir el-Bahari. ....	385
Plate 8: Offerings for the Beautiful Feast of the Valley depicted in TT 57.....	386

List of Illustrations

Plate 9: A depiction of individuals interacting during the Beautiful Feast of the Valley from TT 53. ....	386
Plate 10: Mrs J Tadema-Sporry sitting on top of a platform, probably in house SO I at Deir el-Medina.....	387
Plate 11: Platform in house P46.24 at Deir el-Medina.....	387
Plate 12: Wall painting from Main Street House 3 at Tell el-Amarna.....	388
Plate 13: Wall painting from Long Wall Street House 10 at Tell el-Amarna. ....	388
Plate 14: Bedframe, date and provenance uncertain. ....	389
Plate 15: Royal bedframe of Queen Hetepheres I, Fourth Dynasty, Giza. ....	389
Plate 16: Bedstead, New Kingdom, Deir el-Medina. ....	389
Plate 17: Open-backed chair, Eighteenth Dynasty, provenance unknown.....	390
Plate 18: Ceremonial chair, Eighteenth Dynasty, tomb of Tutankhamun. ....	390
Plate 19: Animal-legged stool, Middle Kingdom, provenance unknown.....	391
Plate 20: Animal-legged stool, Eighteenth Dynasty, provenance unknown. ....	391
Plate 21: Folding stool with ducks' heads detailing, Eighteenth or Nineteenth Dynasty, provenance unknown.....	391
Plate 22: Low stool, Eighteenth Dynasty, provenance unknown.....	392
Plate 23: Box with a gable lid, Eighteenth Dynasty, tomb of Kha. ....	392

List of Illustrations

Plate 24: Simple rectangular box, Twelfth Dynasty, Kahun. ....	393
Plate 25: Jewel Box, Twelfth Dynasty, tomb of Sithathoriunet.....	393
Plate 26: Entrance to the staircase that led down into Kha's tomb. ....	394
Plate 27: One corner of the tomb of Kha at the time of discovery.....	395
Plate 28: Kha's straight-backed chair. ....	396
Plate 29: Kha's folding chair. ....	396
Plate 30: Two large, low cane tables piled with foodstuffs. ....	397
Plate 31: Kha's bed. ....	397
Plate 32: Meryt's bed with two headrests. ....	398
Plate 33: Short sides of a chest decorated with geometric patterns and a funerary scene..	398
Plate 34: Chest with a flat top and decorated with floral and geometric patterns.....	399
Plate 35: Lotus flower-shaped lamp stand and bird-shaped lamp. ....	399
Plate 36: Mirror with Hathoric umbel, date unknown, Thebes. ....	400
Plate 37: Mirror with lotiform umbel, date unknown, Abydos.....	400
Plate 38: Mirror with lotiform umbel, date unknown, Thebes.....	401
Plate 39: Mirror with Hathoric umbel, date unknown, Lahun.....	401
Plate 40: Mirror with a pair of falcons on the umbel, date unknown, Kerma.....	402

List of Illustrations

Plate 41: Mirror with a pair of falcons on the umbel, date unknown, Kerma. ....402

Plate 42: Rectangular grey palette with three incised lines around the edge, Naqada III to First Dynasty, Naqada. ....403

Plate 43: Rectangular grey palette with notched edges, Naqada III to First Dynasty, Tarkhan. ....403

Plate 44: Spoon in the form of a swimming girl, Eighteenth Dynasty, provenance unknown. ....404

Plate 45: Cosmetic spoon in the shape of a bearded foreigner, Eighteenth Dynasty, Gournah. ....404

Plate 46: Cosmetic spoon in the shape of a walking foreigner, Eighteenth Dynasty, Gournah. ....404

Plate 47: Cosmetic spoon in the shape of a cartouche with papyrus and lotus flower decoration, Eighteenth Dynasty, provenance unknown. ....405

Plate 48: Cosmetic spoon in the shape of a cartouche with papyrus and lotus flower decoration, Eighteenth Dynasty, provenance unknown. ....405

Plate 49: Cosmetic spoon in the form of an oryx, Nineteenth to Twentieth Dynasty, provenance unknown. ....406

Plate 50: Cosmetic spoon in the form of an ibex, Eighteenth Dynasty, Fayum. ....406

Plate 51: Cosmetic spoon in the form of an ibex, Eighteenth Dynasty, provenance unknown. ....407

List of Illustrations

Plate 52: Cosmetic spoon in the form of a trussed goose, New Kingdom, provenance unknown.....	407
Plate 53: Kohl pot in the form of Bes, New Kingdom, provenance unknown.....	408
Plate 54: Kohl pot in the form of Bes, late New Kingdom, provenance unknown. ....	408
Plate 55: Kohl pot in the shape of Bes, Eighteenth Dynasty, provenance unknown.....	408
Plate 56: Old Kingdom and First Intermediate Period amulets in various forms. ....	409
Plate 57: Djed-pillar amulets. ....	409
Plate 58: Amulets in the form of shrines.....	409
Plate 59: Wedjat-eye amulets. ....	410
Plate 60: Amulets in the shape of Tawaret. ....	410
Plate 61: The Qau Bowl, exterior.....	411
Plate 62: The Hu Bowl. ....	411
Plate 63: Anthropoid bust with three-part wig, possibly New Kingdom, Fayum. ....	412
Plate 64: Anthropoid bust with tripartite wig and inlaid eyes, date unknown, Karnak.....	412
Plate 65: Anthropoid bust with tripartite wig, possibly Eighteenth to Twentieth Dynasty, possibly Deir el-Medina.....	413
Plate 66: Anthropoid bust with three-part wig and deep collar with lotus, possibly Eighteenth to Twentieth Dynasty, possibly Deir el-Medina. ....	413

List of Illustrations

Plate 67: Painted anthropoid bust with tripartite wig, probably Eighteenth or Nineteenth Dynasty, probably Deir el-Medina.....414

Plate 68: Anthropoid bust with three-part wig and an elaborate painted collar, probably Eighteenth to Nineteenth Dynasty, Deir el-Medina.....414

Plate 69: An *3h ikr n R<sup>c</sup>* stela dedicated to Bukentef, Nineteenth Dynasty, Deir el-Medina. 415

Plate 70: An *3h ikr n R<sup>c</sup>* stela dedicated to Ptah-hesi, Nineteenth Dynasty, Thebes.....415

Plate 71: An *3h ikr n R<sup>c</sup>* stela dedicated to Nekh, Nineteenth to Twentieth Dynasty, Thebes.  
.....416

Plate 72: An *3h ikr n R<sup>c</sup>* stela dedicated to Nesamun, Nineteenth to Twentieth Dynasty, Thebes. ....416

Plate 73: An *3h ikr n R<sup>c</sup>* stela dedicated to Khamuy, Nineteenth Dynasty, Deir el-Medina. .417

Plate 74: Papyrus Chester Beatty III (the Dream Book), Nineteenth Dynasty, Deir el-Medina.  
.....418

Plate 75: Papyrus Leiden I 370 (Late Ramesside Letter), late New Kingdom, Thebes.....419

Plate 76: Papyrus British Museum 10417 (Late Ramesside Letter), Twentieth Dynasty, Thebes. ....420

Plate 77: Intermediary statue of Amenhotep, Son of Hapu, date unknown, Karnak. ....421

Plate 78: Votive offerings from Deir el-Bahari, date unknown. ....422

Plate 79: Votive offerings from Faras, date unknown.....423

List of Illustrations

Plate 80: Votive stone ears.....424

Plate 81: Faience votive ears and eyes, date unknown, Deir el-Bahari. ....424

Plate 82: Two fertility figurines, date unknown, Deir el-Bahari.....424

Plate 83: Oracle ostrakon (Ostrakon IFAO 198), Eighteenth to Twentieth Dynasty, Deir el-Medina.....425

Plate 84: Oracle ostrakon (Ostrakon IFAO 560), Eighteenth to Twentieth Dynasty, Deir el-Medina.....425

Plate 85: The biography of Ipuy, Eighteenth Dynasty, Deir el-Medina.....426

FIGURES

Figure 1: A map of Abydos.....428

Figure 2: The Osiris Fetish, as depicted on the south wall of the barque chapel of Osiris in the temple of Seti at Abydos. ....429

Figure 3: A barque carrying the Osiris Fetish, as depicted on the north wall of the barque chapel of Osiris in the temple of Seti at Abydos. ....429

Figure 4: Mentuhotep II steering the barque of Amun during the Beautiful Feast of the Valley, as depicted in the temple of Mentuhotep at Deir el-Bahari. ....430

Figure 5: Musicians and acrobats in the procession during the Beautiful Feast of the Valley, as depicted in the Red Chapel at Karnak.....430



List of Illustrations

Figure 6: Torches by the barque of Amun in the barque room during the Beautiful Feast of the Valley, as depicted on the northern wall of the upper court in the temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahari.....431

Figure 7: Types of lit clos. ....432

Figure 8: Decoration of the platform in house NO12, Deir el-Medina, depicting a papyrus boat.....432

Figure 9: Decoration of the platform in house C6, Deir el-Medina, depicting a so-called morning toilet scene.....432

Figure 10: Decoration of the platform in house NE12, Deir el-Medina, depicting Bes. ....433

Figure 11: A wall niche in a house at Deir el-Medina.....433

Figure 12: Wall painting from Main Street House 3 at Tell el-Amarna. ....434

Figure 13: Wall painting from Long Wall Street House 10 at Tell el-Amarna. ....434

Figure 14: An *3h ikr n R<sup>c</sup>* stela dedicated to Baki, early Nineteenth Dynasty, Deir el-Medina. ....435

Figure 15: An *3h ikr n R<sup>c</sup>* stela dedicated to Anhotep, Nineteenth Dynasty, Deir el-Medina. ....435

Figure 16: Ear stelae from the temple of Ptah at Memphis.....436

Figure 17: Ear and eye stela from Deir el-Medina.....436

Figure 18: Votive stelae from Serabit el-Khadim. ....437

# LIST OF TABLES

<b>Table 1:</b> <i>The terms and definitions used by scholars in the existing studies into personal religion in ancient Egypt</i> .....	53
<b>Table 2:</b> <i>Items of furniture discovered in the tomb of Kha</i> .....	165
<b>Table 3:</b> <i>Amulets discovered in non-mortuary contexts at Amarna and other ancient Egyptian sites</i> .....	200
<b>Table 4:</b> <i>Letters to the dead – additional information (chronological order)</i> .....	226
<b>Table 5:</b> <i>Chronology of evidence used in this thesis</i> .....	313



# Chapter 1

## INTRODUCTION

The study of personal religion in ancient Egypt generally falls into one of two schools of thought.<sup>1</sup> The first considers the phenomenological aspects of personal religion and considers religious emotion; the second focusses on the social and functional settings of evidence for personal religion.<sup>2</sup> Neither approach considers both the internal and external elements of personal religion together and from an individual perspective. Ordinary ancient Egyptians are usually discussed at a macro-level rather than as individuals. It is only in recent studies that personal religion is considered in terms of what it 'actually meant for the individual in everyday life'.<sup>3</sup> The historic lack of focus on the individual and the fact that evidence for personal religion is scarce has meant that studies regarding religion in ancient Egypt often focus on state religion and the religious practices of royalty and the elite.<sup>4</sup> However, ordinary (non-royal and non-elite) ancient Egyptians made up the majority of

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<sup>1</sup> See Luiselli 2008b: 5. For more on approaches to the study of Egyptian religion in general, see Mohn 2011: 727-30.

<sup>2</sup> See Luiselli 2008b: 5; Weiss 2015: 1.

<sup>3</sup> Weiss 2015: 15. For personal religion and the individual in everyday life, see Stevens 2003; Stevens 2006; Stevens 2009; Luiselli 2011b; Luiselli 2012; Weiss 2012; Luiselli 2014; Weiss 2015.

<sup>4</sup> Becker 2011: 64.

ancient Egyptian society. An understanding of their individual religious thoughts and actions can provide a more comprehensive interpretation of ancient Egyptian culture as a whole.<sup>5</sup>

The existing research into personal religion often focusses on either archaeological or literary evidence and rarely discusses both types of evidence together. The primary evidence used in the existing research into personal religion is usually obviously religious in nature and/or is taken from a religious context. There has been little attempt to consider evidence from non-religious contexts or evidence that is not religious in nature in order to learn more about personal religion in ancient Egypt.<sup>6</sup>

To date, there are four key issues that have arisen as a result of the study of personal religion in ancient Egypt.<sup>7</sup> These are:

- 1) Whether personal religion was linked to state religion.
- 2) The association of personal religion with strong and intimate emotions on behalf of the individual.
- 3) Personal religion as a feature of the lower classes.
- 4) Personal religion as an innovation of the New Kingdom.

None of the existing research into personal religion in ancient Egypt discusses all four issues together, nor attempts to provide a conclusive statement regarding each issue.

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<sup>5</sup> See in particular Stevens 2003; Stevens 2006 who considers personal religion at Amarna and Weiss 2012; Weiss 2015 who focusses on personal religion at Deir el-Medina.

<sup>6</sup> The obvious exceptions to this are the publications by Stevens 2003; Stevens 2006 and Weiss 2009; Weiss 2012; Weiss 2015.

<sup>7</sup> See Section 2.6. See also Luiselli 2008b: 1-2.

In addition, the terminology used in association with the study of personal religion in ancient Egypt is varied and inconsistent.<sup>8</sup> Scholars use different terminology to suit their specific research focus and argument, meaning that it is often difficult to draw comparisons between the works of various scholars. Some of the terminology used has positive or negative connotations which can influence the way in which the evidence for personal religion is considered.

### 1.1 Research aims and objectives

This research aims to:

- Identify suitable terminology (individual religiosity) for the study of personal religion.
- Focus on the individual and establish whether ordinary ancient Egyptians possessed individual religiosity.
- Consider whether individual religiosity was connected to state or official religion.
- Identify whether ordinary ancient Egyptians had intimate and strongly internalised emotions regarding individual religiosity.
- Conclude whether individual religiosity was a phenomenon of the lower classes.
- Determine whether individual religiosity was an innovation of the New Kingdom.
- Establish whether the three aspects of ancient Egyptian culture (festivals, household and personal items, communication with the dead and with gods) considered in this research can be viewed as examples of invisible religion.

The research aims will be achieved by fulfilling the following objectives:

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<sup>8</sup> See Section 2.7.

- Consider the existing research into personal religion in ancient Egypt and identify current schools of thought in order to establish the key issues relating to the study of personal religion.
- Assess the terminology used in the existing research into personal religion. Debate the positive and negative connotations of each term and identify a suitable, neutral term to be used in this thesis.
- Study three aspects of ancient Egyptian culture (see above) from a new perspective by applying Thomas Luckmann's theory of invisible religion to the evidence relating to each aspect.
- Use Luckmann's theory to determine whether individual religiosity existed in ancient Egypt and how it was created and maintained.
- Focus on both the archaeological and literary primary sources,<sup>9</sup> as well as a wide range of secondary sources, that relate to the three aspects of ancient Egyptian culture in order to ensure the understanding of individual religiosity is as accurate as possible. Consider evidence from the start of the Old Kingdom to the end of the New Kingdom.
- Concentrate the research on ordinary ancient Egyptians rather than the elite or royalty.

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<sup>9</sup> Weiss 2015: 23 highlights the importance of considering textual evidence in conjunction with archaeological evidence when she states 'only the combination of both archaeological and textual evidence fosters a comprehensive understanding of a bygone culture'.

## 1.2 Methodology

The research aims and objectives will be achieved by focussing on three aspects of ancient Egyptian culture (festivals, household and personal items, communication with the dead and with gods) and considering them from the perspective of Luckmann's theory of invisible religion.<sup>10</sup> The theory considers the role of religion in culture, how it is created and maintained, and how individuals relate to it. With regards to individual religiosity in ancient Egypt, this thesis will consider examples of invisible religion to be aspects of culture to which Thomas Luckmann's theory can successfully be applied in order to generate increased understanding about religiosity. To the modern observer, examples of invisible religion may sometimes be considered to be 'visible' and 'religious' or sometimes 'hidden' and 'non-religious'. However, the ancient Egyptians would have viewed them as normal occurrences. Much of the evidence for the three aspects of culture mentioned above is linked to domestic and settlement contexts, rather than funerary or mortuary contexts. Consequently, the evidence is able to provide a clearer insight into the daily lives of ordinary ancient Egyptians and therefore whether Luckmann's theory of invisible religion can shed new light on individual religiosity in ancient Egypt. While elements of the three aspects of ancient Egyptian culture to be discussed in this thesis have previously been debated regarding individual religiosity,<sup>11</sup> they have not been assessed as a whole in terms of the information they are able to provide about individual religiosity. It is intended that the consideration of these three areas of ancient Egyptian culture from the perspective of Luckmann's theory of

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<sup>10</sup> For the key aspects of Luckmann's *invisible religion* see Section 2.2.1 in this thesis.

<sup>11</sup> For festivals, see Footnote 569 in this thesis. For household and personal items, see Footnotes 786, 846, 859, 884, 913, 1016, 1064, 1092 in this thesis. For communication with the dead and with gods, see Footnotes 1207, 1240, 1270, 1287, 1319, 1367, 1416, 1458 in this thesis.



invisible religion will demonstrate that ordinary ancient Egyptians fell within different points of the spectrum in terms of individual religiosity.

The research is presented across an additional six chapters and two appendices in the following format:

**Chapter 2** – Discusses Luckman’s *Invisible Religion* in detail, including key aspects of the theory, analyses of the theory and previous applications of the theory to Egyptology. This is followed by a brief history of the research into the concept of the Self and a consideration of the Self in Egyptology. The history of research into personal religion in ancient Egypt is then reviewed and an outline of the current schools of thought regarding the subject is provided. The key issues relating to the study of personal religion are identified and terminology is discussed in order to ascertain the most appropriate term for use in this thesis. A history of the research relating to the three aspects of ancient Egyptian culture considered in this thesis is also included.

**Chapter 3** – Considers festivals in ancient Egypt and the information they are able to provide regarding individual religiosity. Festivals in general in ancient Egypt are discussed from the perspective of invisible religion. This is followed by two case studies; the Festival of Osiris at Abydos and the Beautiful Feast of the Valley at Thebes. Each festival is broken down into seven different stages which enables them to easily be assessed in terms of the information they can provide regarding individual religiosity. Conclusions are drawn regarding festivals in ancient Egypt and invisible religion, and the role that festivals play in furthering the understanding of individual religiosity in ancient Egypt.

**Chapter 4** – Identifies ancient Egyptian household and personal items as examples of invisible religion. The evidence is divided into four sections which are: architectural features and decoration; furniture; cosmetic items; amulets. The primary and secondary sources available for each section are studied in detail and are then analysed using Luckmann's theory of invisible religion. Each of the four sections relating to household and personal items are discussed and conclusions are drawn regarding the information that household and personal items are able to provide about individual religiosity.

**Chapter 5** – Focusses on communication with the dead and with gods as examples of invisible religion. Communication with the dead is considered in terms of the theory of invisible religion, followed by a discussion of the theory in relation to specific methods of communicating with the dead. These methods are: letters to the dead; anthropoid busts and *3h ikr n R<sup>c</sup>* stelae; dreams and the dead. Communication with the gods is also considered in relation to the theory of invisible religion before specific methods of communication with the gods are assessed in more detail. The specific methods of communication with the gods are: prayer; votive offerings; oracles; dreams and the gods. The findings from the consideration of different methods of communication with the dead and with gods from the perspective of invisible religion are discussed. Conclusions are reached regarding what evidence this element of ancient Egyptian culture can offer regarding individual religiosity.

**Chapter 6** – The results from considering three aspects of ancient Egyptian culture (festivals, household and personal items, communication with the dead and with gods) from the perspective of Luckmann's theory of invisible religion are first discussed in the context of the information they are able to provide regarding the individual religiosity of ordinary ancient

Egyptians. The results from Chapters 3, 4 and 5 are then considered in terms of the key issues relating to the study of personal religion in ancient Egypt. Suggestions are made for further research including the study of additional aspects of ancient Egyptian culture, as well as the consideration of the theory of invisible religion in relation to different social groups.

**Chapter 7** – Presents the main conclusions from studying three aspects of ancient Egyptian culture using Luckmann’s theory of invisible religion. It addresses the four key issues relating to the study of personal religion in ancient Egypt identified in Chapter 2 and provides a conclusive statement regarding each issue.

**Appendix I: Deir el Medina and Tell el-Amarna** – Provides an overview of the sites of Deir el-Medina and Tell el-Amarna, as well as a discussion of the key issues that must be considered when using archaeological evidence from each site.

**Appendix II: Texts** – Comprises of the hieroglyphs/transliterations, transcriptions, translations, commentaries and philological notes of the key ancient Egyptian texts discussed within the main body of research. Only those texts discussed in detail in the thesis are included to ensure that the focus of this body of work remains on invisible religion in ancient Egypt. The texts discussed in the main chapters of this research have been selected because they provide evidence of invisible religion in ancient Egypt.

### 1.3 Areas not considered

There are some aspects of ancient Egyptian culture that would be relevant to a study of invisible religion in ancient Egypt that are not discussed in this thesis. These include: speech and language, gesture, art, and ancient Egyptian literature.

Speech, language, and gesture have previously been discussed by scholars regarding personal religion in ancient Egypt.<sup>12</sup> It is likely that the consideration of these elements from the perspective of invisible religion would yield information about individual religiosity. However, this thesis will focus on aspects of ancient Egyptian culture that have not been considered in detail in relation to personal religion and consequently speech, language, and gesture have not been included.

With regards to ancient Egyptian art and literature, these are vast subjects that have been discussed in great detail by many different scholars, sometimes in relation to personal religion, but more often not.<sup>13</sup> In order to include the topics of art and literature in this thesis, the majority of the research would need to be dedicated to the topics. It has been deemed to be more beneficial to the study of personal religion in ancient Egypt as a whole to research multiple aspects of ancient Egyptian culture and consider them from the perspective of invisible religion. As a result of doing so it is intended that as much new information about personal religion in ancient Egypt as possible will be gained.

This thesis considers a wide range of evidence and does not subdivide the evidence in order to consider different social groups. This is the first time that Luckmann's theory of invisible religion has been applied to multiple aspects of ancient Egyptian culture at once.<sup>14</sup>

Consequently, as many primary and secondary sources as possible have been used in order

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<sup>12</sup> See Bleeker 1958; Wilkinson 1994: 192-211; Taylor 2001: 188-9; Luiselli 2007a; Luiselli 2008a; Luiselli 2011b: 28-39, 50, 125, 142, 200, 237, 348, 364-75, 387, 392, 398, 403; Millward 2014.

<sup>13</sup> The works on ancient Egyptian art and literature are too vast to list here. Instead some key texts have been listed. For art, see, for example, Smith 1981; Robins 2000; Hartwig 2015. For literature, see, for example, Simpson 1972; Lichtheim 1973; Lichtheim 1976; Loprieno 1996a; Enmarch and Lepper 2013; Allen 2015.

<sup>14</sup> Assmann 1994b considers invisible religion in relation to cultural memory and the concept of *m3ʿt*. Bommas 2014 considers invisible religion in relation to ancient Egyptian literature, specifically the story of Sinuhe.

to establish whether Luckmann's theory is applicable across the whole of ancient Egyptian culture. If this is considered to be the case, then it would be useful to study each of the following social groups in more detail in future research: men, women, children, inhabitants of different towns and cities, individuals with different occupations, individuals from different social classes, and individuals from the pre-Old Kingdom and post-New Kingdom periods.

The aspects of ancient Egyptian culture (speech and language, gesture, and art) and the different social groups (men, women, children, inhabitants of different towns and cities, individuals with different occupations, individuals from different social classes, and individuals from the pre-Old Kingdom and post-New Kingdom periods) not included in this thesis are discussed in more detail in Section 6.3: Suggestions for further research.

# Chapter 2

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Introduction

To explain the methodology used in this thesis, an overview of Thomas Luckmann's theory of invisible religion is provided. Analyses of Luckmann's theory, how Luckmann's theory has previously been used in Egyptology, and how Luckmann's theory can be used to understand more about individual religiosity is then considered. This is followed by a brief history of research into the Self and a discussion of the Self in Egyptology. A review of the current state of research into personal religion in ancient Egypt, including research carried out into personal religion from the early twentieth century up to the present day is provided. The review considers the key points that have developed as a result of the existing research and the patterns that play an important role in the current study of personal religion. The terminology used in the literature is discussed in detail in order to justify the terminology used in this thesis. The existing research into the three aspects of ancient Egyptian culture considered in this study is analysed.

## 2.2 Thomas Luckmann's invisible religion

Thomas Luckmann's book entitled *The invisible religion: the transformation of symbols in industrial society* was first published in 1963 under the German title, *Das Problem der Religion in der Modernen Gesellschaft*.<sup>15</sup> The English version of the book was published in 1967.<sup>16</sup> In his publication Luckmann attempts to understand the position of man in society by reconsidering the classical concerns of the sociology of religion as discussed by Durkheim<sup>17</sup> and Weber<sup>18</sup> due to his 'dissatisfaction with the limitations of various empirical studies in the sociology of religion'.<sup>19</sup> The theory of invisible religion is central to this thesis because it is applied to aspects of ancient Egyptian culture in order to learn more about individual religiosity in ancient Egypt. Consequently, it has been considered essential to provide a discussion of: the key aspects of the theory; analyses of the theory; previous applications of the theory to aspects of ancient Egyptian culture. This will be followed by a brief history of the research into the concept of the Self.

### 2.2.1 Key aspects of Luckmann's invisible religion

The concept that human beings are able to become Selves is an important aspect of Luckmann's theory of invisible religion. He states that:

The organism – in isolation nothing but a separate pole of “meaningless” subjective processes – becomes a Self by embarking with others upon the construction of an “objective” and moral

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<sup>15</sup> Luckmann 1963.

<sup>16</sup> Luckmann 1967. Please note that this thesis uses the English version of the book.

<sup>17</sup> Durkheim 1912.

<sup>18</sup> Weber 1921a; Weber 1921b; Weber 1921c.

<sup>19</sup> Luckmann 1967: 7.

universe of meaning. Thereby the organism transcends its biological nature.<sup>20</sup>

As a Self, the individual is able to engage with and internalise the universe of meaning. In addition, Luckmann argues that the social processes by which the universe of meaning is formed can be seen as fundamentally religious; he says, 'the human organism becomes a Self in concrete processes of socialisation... socialisation, as the concrete process in which such transcendence is achieved, is fundamentally religious.'<sup>21</sup> Socialisation is described as 'the process by which a person learns to function within a particular society or group by internalising its values and norms'.<sup>22</sup> Consequently, the act of becoming a Self could be seen to form individual religiosity within each person.

Luckmann expands his thoughts on the creation of a universe of meaning (also called the 'world view') by human organisms.<sup>23</sup> He describes the world view and its relation to individual religiosity as follows:

A world view is an objective and stable social fact for the human organism born into a society. It is transmitted to him by concrete fellow men who demonstrate and validate its objectivity in a variety of social situations and reinforce its stability in continuous social processes. The world view is an objective system of meaning by which an individual past and future are integrated into a coherent biography and in which the emergent person locates himself in relation to fellow men, the social order and the transcendent sacred

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<sup>20</sup> Luckmann 1967: 48-49.

<sup>21</sup> Luckmann 1967: 51.

<sup>22</sup> Oxford English Dictionary: the definitive record of the English language 2016d.

<sup>23</sup> Luckmann 1967: 69-71.



universe. The continuity of sense in individual life is dependent on the coherence of meaning in the world view.<sup>24</sup>

The universe of meaning is extremely important as it affects that way in which individuals interpret everyday experiences and the way in which they interact with other people. The universe of meaning is, according to Luckmann, an objective and stable fact.<sup>25</sup> It is internalised by the individual and subsequently communicated to other individuals, who validate its objectivity through their own actions.<sup>26</sup> However, the internalisation of the universe of meaning is subjective and so one individual's interpretation of the world view may differ to another's.

Luckmann states that 'within the world view a sacred cosmos that represents symbolically the hierarchy of significance underlying the world view may become articulated'.<sup>27</sup> He notes that it is important to understand how the sacred cosmos (or symbolic universe) is socially objectivated.<sup>28</sup> According to Luckmann, the sacred cosmos is a system of meaning that represents a reality that refers to both the world of everyday life and a world that is experienced as transcending everyday life.<sup>29</sup> Luckmann also introduces the concept of the historical priority of meaning systems.<sup>30</sup> He states that, 'human organisms do not construct "objective" and moral universes of meaning from scratch – they are born into them'.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Luckmann 1967: 69-70.

<sup>25</sup> Luckmann 1967: 69.

<sup>26</sup> Luckmann 1967: 69.

<sup>27</sup> Luckmann 1967: 70-1.

<sup>28</sup> Luckmann 1967: 43.

<sup>29</sup> Luckmann 1967: 43.

<sup>30</sup> Luckmann 1967: 51.

<sup>31</sup> Luckmann 1967: 51.

Luckmann argues that 'religion becomes a social fact either as ritual (institutionalised religious conduct) or doctrine (institutionalised religious ideas)'.<sup>32</sup> If an individual is able to engage with religion through ritual and/or doctrine then they are more likely to accept it as a social fact. Religion then becomes a concrete part of the universe of meaning and, subsequently, the individual is able to internalise it.

However, Luckmann also notes that although individual religiosity cannot be understood without reference to ritual and doctrine, one should not assume that state religion and individual religiosity are 'identical'.<sup>33</sup> He makes reference to what he terms the 'objective' and 'subjective' dimensions of religiosity. According to Luckmann, the objective dimension of religiosity is identified with 'observable behaviour' or 'institutional participation', while the subjective dimension is usually identified with 'religious opinions or attitudes'.<sup>34</sup> He argues that the objective dimension of religiosity is often used as proof of the existence or non-existence of religiousness, while the subjective dimension is not considered.<sup>35</sup>

In addition to the objective and subjective dimensions of religiosity, Luckmann argues that 'individual religiosity cannot be understood without reference to a given historical and institutional reality of ritual and belief'.<sup>36</sup> This means that some of the social processes that can influence individual religiosity are historical in that they are passed down to individuals from previous generations.

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<sup>32</sup> Luckmann 1967: 22.

<sup>33</sup> Luckmann 1967: 24.

<sup>34</sup> Luckmann 1967: 25.

<sup>35</sup> Luckmann 1967: 25.

<sup>36</sup> Luckmann 1967: 24.

### 2.2.2 Analyses of Luckmann's invisible religion

In his 1974 paper entitled *Whose invisible religion? Luckmann revisited*, Weigert argues that Luckmann's definition of religion as 'any meaning system which in his [Luckmann's] judgment is a universal and functional or specific and substantive meaning system for a society or an individual' may lead to excessive conceptual confusion.<sup>37</sup> He states that according to Luckmann's theory of invisible religion, the main task for anyone studying the sociology of religion is:

The search for *qualitative themes* which constitute the universal and necessary anthropological process of socialisation, and which perform the universal and elementary functions of supplying socially objectivated meaning systems and individually "subjectivated" internalised identities.<sup>38</sup>

He acknowledges that Luckmann undertakes this task towards the end of his book.<sup>39</sup> However, he also notes that Luckmann does not 'suggest a methodology for knowing whether a particular qualitative theme performs the religious functions of a world view or identity'.<sup>40</sup> Weigert's main concern with Luckmann's theory is that it is not clear who decides which specific and substantive form functions as religion.<sup>41</sup> Consequently, Weigert believes that if Luckmann's approach is used then it is the investigator who '*a priori* predicts the term religion' according to his own interpretation of religion.<sup>42</sup> Weigert argues that 'the only *empirical* sources of the prediction of the term religion are the socially objectivated

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<sup>37</sup> Weigert 1974: 181.

<sup>38</sup> Weigert 1974: 183-4.

<sup>39</sup> Weigert 1974: 184.

<sup>40</sup> Weigert 1974: 184.

<sup>41</sup> Weigert 1974: 184.

<sup>42</sup> Weigert 1974: 184.

meanings of a society or the personally subjectivated meanings of an actor'.<sup>43</sup> Weigert does concede that the application of Luckmann's model can be legitimate and often illuminating if the investigator remains self-conscious and aware that he is 'engaging in analogy and simile'.<sup>44</sup> He also acknowledges the positive aspects of Luckmann's theory and says that it puts 'religion, and thus the sociology of religion, at the centre of the question of man and his location in society'.<sup>45</sup> Weigert also notes that Luckmann's theory 'leads to theoretical reflection which frees sociologists from the ethnocentric concern of Western institutional religion'.<sup>46</sup>

Knoblauch uses Luckmann's theory of invisible religion in relation to the decline of religion in modern Europe.<sup>47</sup> In his 2005 paper he states that Luckmann's theory of invisible religion is useful for considering the other side of this decline.<sup>48</sup> According to Knoblauch, 'Luckmann's theory is well known as one of the most general functional theories of religion'.<sup>49</sup>

Knoblauch's analysis of Luckmann's theory and his application of it to religion in Europe focuses on the modifications Luckmann made to his theory in the 1967 English translation, particularly the chapter entitled *The anthropological condition of religion* and the notion of transcendence.<sup>50</sup> Knoblauch summarises transcendence as follows:

Experiences of transcendence are based on the intentionality of consciousness, i.e. the fact that every experience is an experience of

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<sup>43</sup> Weigert 1974: 185.

<sup>44</sup> Weigert 1974: 185.

<sup>45</sup> Weigert 1974: 181.

<sup>46</sup> Weigert 1974: 181.

<sup>47</sup> Knoblauch 2003.

<sup>48</sup> Knoblauch 2003: 268.

<sup>49</sup> Knoblauch 2003: 268.

<sup>50</sup> Knoblauch 2003: 268-7. The 1967 English translation entitled *The Invisible Religion* is used in this thesis. Two chapters were added to Luckmann 1967: III. *The Anthropological Condition of Religion* (41-9) and V. *Individual Religiosity* (69-76).

something. By virtue of its intentionality, in experiencing we are automatically referring to something which is assumed by but not given in the experiencing act itself. This way, every experience may be said to transcend itself, or...transcendence lies at the very heart of every experience.<sup>51</sup>

He believes that this element of Luckmann's theory is key in diagnosing the fate of religion in modern society.<sup>52</sup> He argues that the theory of transcendence allows one to 'acknowledge the similarities between the religious resurgence outside [of Europe] and the somewhat different, alternative resacralisation in Europe'.<sup>53</sup>

In her paper entitled *Seeing invisible religion: religion as a societal conversation about transcendent meaning*, Besecke argues that 'theories of religious modernity...are unable to recognise or evaluate the social power of noninstitutionalised religious communication'.<sup>54</sup>

She uses Luckmann's definition of religion as the basis for her view that religion is a form of communication.<sup>55</sup> She says:

What religion most centrally is...is not an organisation or a societal form or a social relationship; what religion most centrally is, is a system of symbols that meets people in the terms of their everyday life and points them to a realm of significance that goes beyond – 'transcends' – those terms. Internally, then, religion is cultural in that religion is meaning.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Knoblauch 2003: 268-7.

<sup>52</sup> Knoblauch 2003: 267.

<sup>53</sup> Knoblauch 2003: 272.

<sup>54</sup> Besecke 2005: 179.

<sup>55</sup> Besecke 2005: 182-3.

<sup>56</sup> Besecke 2005: 183.

Besecke interprets Luckmann's theory as implying that religious meaning cannot be separated from the other meanings that make up a society's culture.<sup>57</sup> She views religious meanings as part of the objective social reality and states that 'by describing religious meanings, [as] 'objectivated', Luckmann opens the way to understanding meaning as a public phenomenon; as something that is not just for individuals but for societies'.<sup>58</sup> It is the ongoing communication about religious meanings that Besecke considers to be the 'public face of religious meaning in contemporary societies'.<sup>59</sup>

### 2.2.3 *Egyptology and Luckmann's invisible religion*

In 1994 Assmann considered Luckmann's theory of invisible religion in relation to ancient Egypt in an essay published in a book entitled *Die Objektivität der Ordnungen und ihre kommunikative Konstruktion, Für Thomas Luckmann*.<sup>60</sup> In 2000, the same essay was included in a publication entitled *Religion und kulturelles Gedächtnis: Zehn Studien*.<sup>61</sup> This publication was translated into English in 2006.<sup>62</sup> In his essay, Assmann considers invisible religion in relation to cultural memory. He argues that 'Luckmann's concept of invisible religion leads to a distinction within the concept of religion' and identifies the distinctions as invisible religion (IR) and visible religion (VR).<sup>63</sup> According to Assmann:

IR is the higher, invisible religion that determines the relationship of the individual to society and the 'world'. VR is the religion that has

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<sup>57</sup> Besecke 2005: 184.

<sup>58</sup> Besecke 2005: 184.

<sup>59</sup> Besecke 2005: 194.

<sup>60</sup> Assmann 1994b.

<sup>61</sup> Assmann 2000: 45-61.

<sup>62</sup> Assmann 2006b: 31-45. The English version of the essay has been used in this thesis.

<sup>63</sup> Assmann 2006b: 32.

become visible in the specific institutions of the cult and the priesthood and that is responsible for the tasks involved in transactions with the sacred and the administration of the sacred properties associated with them.<sup>64</sup>

Assmann believes that there is a tension between 'IR' and 'VR', and uses the ancient Egyptian notion of *maat* to prove it.<sup>65</sup> Assmann argues that the idea of *maat* is close to what Luckmann describes as invisible religion. As a concept, *maat* is not capable of being institutionalised and is therefore invisible.<sup>66</sup> However, the framework for the order (*maat*) that the king is responsible for upholding can be assembled from the texts of wisdom literature.<sup>67</sup> The framework can be broken down into 'two opposing cultural spheres of "law" and "cult"'.<sup>68</sup> This consequently makes the concept of *maat* visible. As a result of his consideration of the concept of *maat* in terms of both invisible and visible religion, Assmann states that 'the Egyptians drew a distinction between visible and invisible religion'.<sup>69</sup> This statement is impossible to prove and seems unduly strong given that Assmann has only considered one aspect of ancient Egyptian culture in relation to the theory of invisible religion. However, what is made clear from Assmann's essay is that in order to use invisible religion to learn about individual religiosity in ancient Egypt, the theory will sometimes be applied to aspects of ancient Egyptian culture that the modern observer may view as examples of visible religion. It is not possible to understand individual religiosity without referring to what Assmann has termed 'VR'.

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<sup>64</sup> Assmann 2006b: 32.

<sup>65</sup> Assmann 2006b: 32-7.

<sup>66</sup> Assmann 2006b: 33.

<sup>67</sup> Assmann 2006b: 34.

<sup>68</sup> Assmann 2006b: 34.

<sup>69</sup> Assmann 2006b: 36.

Later in his essay, Assmann discusses transformations of cultural memory.<sup>70</sup> He considers cultural memory to be the institutionalisation of invisible religion.<sup>71</sup> Assmann contemplates how societies without writing would have preserved, retrieved and communicated cultural memory.<sup>72</sup> He states that when cultural memory is in the hands of individual experts, the ordinary people can only acquire a share in the cultural memory by coming together.<sup>73</sup> He says, 'in societies without writing, participation in the cultural memory is only possible through being there'. This echoes Luckmann's theory that in order to become a Self, an individual must create a universe of meaning with others.<sup>74</sup> Assmann believes that festivals and rites were the ideal situation for 'the imparting of the knowledge that establishes identity and hence for the reproduction of cultural identity'.<sup>75</sup> Although writing existed in ancient Egypt during the time period covered by this thesis (the Old Kingdom to the New Kingdom), the low level of literacy among ordinary ancient Egyptians means that festivals would still have been extremely important in enabling individuals to develop their thoughts about the universe of meaning. This may have subsequently affected their individual religiosity.

The theory of invisible religion has also been applied to an aspect of ancient Egyptian culture by Bommas in his 2014 paper entitled *Sinuhes Flucht: Zu Religion und Literatur als*

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<sup>70</sup> Assmann 2006b: 37-42.

<sup>71</sup> Assmann 2006b: 37.

<sup>72</sup> Assmann 2006b: 39-40.

<sup>73</sup> Assmann 2006b: 39.

<sup>74</sup> See Section 2.2.1 in this thesis.

<sup>75</sup> Assmann 2006b: 40. Along a similar line, Cabrol 2001: 776 describes the processional routes used during festivals as follows: 'Ces lieux sont l'unique espace où se croisent, se rencontrent, se montrent (parfois s'affrontent...), tant de personnalités issues d'horizons différents: hommes, rois et dieux'.



*Method*.<sup>76</sup> Bommas uses religion as a basis for the understanding of literature, in this case the story of Sinuhe. He argues that this approach is possible because literature, such as rites and myths, is an example of invisible religion.<sup>77</sup> Bommas believes that such literature moved from its *Sitz im Leben* as religious literature to a place in secular literature.<sup>78</sup> Consequently, he considers literature of this type to be a manifestation of otherwise invisible, coded religious communication, which is not visible to the cult but instead in the everyday world.<sup>79</sup> Bommas argues that the motive for Sinuhe's escape lies in religious norms.<sup>80</sup> PT 542 makes it clear that the death penalty is punishment for anyone who accidentally or intentionally overhears the announcement of the death of the king while the ruler's seat is still vacant.<sup>81</sup> As this is the position that Sinuhe finds himself in, it is clear that the fear of death lies behind Sinuhe's escape.<sup>82</sup>

#### 2.2.4 Individual religiosity and Luckmann's invisible religion

As is clear from Section 2.2.2, Luckmann's theory of invisible religion was devised with modern society (the 1960s) in mind. It has predominantly been used to further the understanding of religion in the modern world, for example the decline of religion in modern Europe. It is important to remember that access to religion and religious concepts are structured differently in modern society to how they were in ancient Egypt. However, Luckmann's theory has been successfully applied to ancient Egypt (see Section 2.2.3).

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<sup>76</sup> Bommas 2014.

<sup>77</sup> Bommas 2014: 16.

<sup>78</sup> Bommas 2014: 16.

<sup>79</sup> Bommas 2014: 16-7.

<sup>80</sup> Bommas 2014: 21.

<sup>81</sup> Bommas 2014: 21-2.

<sup>82</sup> Bommas 2014: 22.

Assmann uses invisible religion to develop his thoughts on religion and cultural memory, and compares invisible religion to the ancient Egyptian concept of *maat*. Bommas uses the theory of invisible religion to understand the reason for Sinuhe's escape in the story of Sinuhe. He also proposes that Luckmann's theory could be useful in understanding other examples of Egyptian literature, particularly rites and myths.

Luckmann's theory focusses on the individual and the concept of the Self (see Section 2.2.1). As mentioned above, Weigert describes the theory as making religion the focus when considering man and his location in society.<sup>83</sup> It is this emphasis on the individual, and the precedent established by Assmann and Bommas for applying the theory of invisible religion to aspects of ancient Egyptian culture, which has led to the approach used in this thesis (see also Section 1.2). The importance of focussing on the individual when considering personal religion in ancient Egypt has been highlighted by Weiss (see Section 2.4). She uses the agency theory to assess the relationship between the actor, the benefactor and the beneficiary<sup>84</sup> in order to further the understanding of religious practice at Deir el-Medina during the Ramesside Period.<sup>85</sup> A focus on the individual is essential if *individual* religiosity is to be considered. However, the criticisms of the theory of invisible religion highlighted by Weigert must be borne in mind to ensure that *a priori* assumptions about individual religiosity are not made.

Weiss states that, 'though the study of personal piety has polarized Egyptology, none of these [previous] studies has presented a model that fully explains the role of personal

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<sup>83</sup> Weigert 1974: 181.

<sup>84</sup> Weiss 2015: 25.

<sup>85</sup> Weiss 2015: 15.

religion in the daily life of ancient Egyptians'.<sup>86</sup> Developing and expanding the use of Luckmann's theory as carried out by Assmann and Bommas, and applying a wider range of aspects of the theory (see Section 2.2.1) to a wider range of aspects of ancient Egyptian culture, will ascertain whether this theory can provide a suitable model for explaining the role of personal religion (or individual religiosity) in ancient Egypt.

### 2.3 Brief history of research into the Self

As mentioned in Section 2.2.1 above, the concept of the Self is central to Luckmann's theory of invisible religion. However, this concept has been considered and debated since the start of human history. Pajares and Schunk use cave drawings as evidence to suggest that prehistoric humans had begun to consider their nonphysical and psychological selves.<sup>87</sup> The introduction of the written word enabled thoughts surrounding the concept of the Self to be articulated more clearly. According to Wiley, a shift in the way in which the Self was considered occurred in ancient Greece; the focus moved from the idea of a group Self towards individual Selves.<sup>88</sup> Pajares and Schunk states that philosophers such as Socrates, Plato and Aristotle viewed the Self as 'a spiritual entity separate from the physical'.<sup>89</sup> This belief subsequently 'formed the foundation for subsequent conceptions of mind and body duality'.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Weiss 2015: 8. Details of the studies referred to here can be found in Section 2.4 of this thesis.

<sup>87</sup> Pajares and Schunk 2002: 5.

<sup>88</sup> Wiley 1994: 534, 535.

<sup>89</sup> Pajares and Schunk 2002: 5.

<sup>90</sup> Pajares and Schunk 2002: 5.

According to Wiley, during the Christian Middle Ages the focus was on the soul and its sacred, immortal and free nature.<sup>91</sup> The concept of mind and body duality was developed by Thomas Aquinas who believed that, due to its nature and ability to interact with god, the soul was superior to the body in which it was housed.<sup>92</sup> In his 1644 publication, Descartes considered the relationship between thought and existence.<sup>93</sup> He reasoned that if he is able to think then he must exist.<sup>94</sup> Pajares and Schunk note that this concept proved to be a turning point in the thinking about the non-physical being.<sup>95</sup> Other scholars, such as Spinoza and Leibnitz, developed Descartes' ideas regarding inner processes and self-awareness.<sup>96</sup> However, a wide range of terminology was used in relation to the nonphysical being, for example 'mind, soul, psyche, and self'.<sup>97</sup> Consequently, as described by Pajares and Schunk, 'for the most part, a general state of metaphysical disorganisation regarding the concept of the Self existed well into the present [twenty-first] century (and to some extent continues)'.<sup>98</sup>

At the end of the nineteenth century and the start of the twentieth century there was a resurgence of interest in the concepts of the Self and self-belief.<sup>99</sup> An influential study produced at this time (1981) was entitled *Principles of psychology* and was written by James.<sup>100</sup> The publication consists of two volumes and in the chapter entitled 'The

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<sup>91</sup> Wiley 1994: 536.

<sup>92</sup> Pajares and Schunk 2002: 5; Wiley 1994: 536. See also Aquinas 1947.

<sup>93</sup> Descartes 1983. See also Pajares and Schunk 2002: 5.

<sup>94</sup> Descartes 1983. See also Pajares and Schunk 2002: 5.

<sup>95</sup> Pajares and Schunk 2002: 5.

<sup>96</sup> Pajares and Schunk 2002: 5. For Spinoza, see de Spinoza 1955. For Leibniz, see Wiener 1951; Loemker 1956; Ariew and Garber 1989.

<sup>97</sup> See Pajares and Schunk 2002: 5.

<sup>98</sup> Pajares and Schunk 2002: 5.

<sup>99</sup> See Pajares and Schunk 2002: 5.

<sup>100</sup> James 1981a; James 1981b.

Consciousness of Self' James describes the Self as being duplex.<sup>101</sup> He argues that the first part of the Self is the Self as knower, or the I.<sup>102</sup> He considers the I to be an individual's ego and therefore consciousness.<sup>103</sup> James describes the second part of the Self as the Self as known, or me.<sup>104</sup> The me consists of three components (physical or material, social, spiritual) and is one of the numerous things that the I may be aware of.<sup>105</sup> James notes that the I and the me are two aspects of the same Self, rather than separate things.<sup>106</sup> In addition to his thoughts on the I and the me, James was one of the earliest scholars to use the term self-esteem.<sup>107</sup> A compatible, albeit different, concept of the Self was discussed by Peirce; he sees the I as the present Self, while the me was the past Self.<sup>108</sup> He adds the you which was the Self of the immediate future.<sup>109</sup>

A decade after James' publication, Cooley considered the individual's sense of self and used the term 'looking-glass self'.<sup>110</sup> The concept behind Cooley's term is clearly summarised by Pajares and Schunk:

Individuals' sense of Self is primarily formed as they develop self-beliefs that have been created by their perceptions of how others perceive them. That is, the appraisals of others act as mirror reflections that provide the

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<sup>101</sup> James 1981a: Chapter X; Pajares and Schunk 2002: 5.

<sup>102</sup> Pajares and Schunk 2002: 5. See also James 1981a: Chapter X.

<sup>103</sup> Pajares and Schunk 2002: 5. See also James 1981a: Chapter X.

<sup>104</sup> Pajares and Schunk 2002: 5. See also James 1981a: Chapter X.

<sup>105</sup> See Pajares and Schunk 2002: 5. See also James 1981a: Chapter X.

<sup>106</sup> Pajares and Schunk 2002: 6. See also James 1981a: Chapter X.

<sup>107</sup> Pajares and Schunk 2002: 6. See also James 1981a.

<sup>108</sup> See Wiley 1994: 528.

<sup>109</sup> See Wiley 1994: 528.

<sup>110</sup> Cooley 1902: 184. See also Pajares and Schunk 2002: 6.

information we use to define our own sense of self. Hence, we are in very great part what we think other people think we are.<sup>111</sup>

Cooley's concept of the looking-glass self emphasises the importance of an individual's childhood and upbringing, as well as social comparisons with peers, on the individual's sense of Self.<sup>112</sup>

In 1912 Durkheim published his *Les formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse* which seeks to explain the beginnings of religion.<sup>113</sup> He focusses very little on the formation of the Self but, when he does consider it, he sees religion and the Self as having been created together.<sup>114</sup> Durkheim attributes 'a kind of religious sacredness to the Self'<sup>115</sup> which was primarily moral but also quasi-emotional.<sup>116</sup> He creates the image of a powerful Self which had taken in the sacredness of the gods.<sup>117</sup> A contrasting view to Durkheim's is provided by Weber who 'predicted a loss of the sacred for society in general and the self in particular'.<sup>118</sup>

The concept of the Self was also considered in the early twentieth century by Mead who, in the words of Pajares and Schunk, argued that 'the Self results from an interaction between the social processes and what Vygotsky...had called the psychological tools that individuals use to make sense of and share social symbols'.<sup>119</sup> In addition, Lewin saw the Self as 'a central and relatively permanent organisation that gave consistency to the entire

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<sup>111</sup> Pajares and Schunk 2002: 6.

<sup>112</sup> Cooley 1902: Chapter V. See also Pajares and Schunk 2002: 6.

<sup>113</sup> Durkheim 1912.

<sup>114</sup> Durkheim 1912: Section I Chapitre II:I and II:II, Section I Chapitre IX:I. See also Wiley 1994: 530.

<sup>115</sup> Wiley 1994: 537.

<sup>116</sup> Durkheim 1912: Section I Chapitre II:I and II:II, Section I Chapitre IX:I.. See also Wiley 1994: 537.

<sup>117</sup> Durkheim 1912: Section I Chapitre II:I and II:II, Section I Chapitre IX:I.. See also Wiley 1994: 538.

<sup>118</sup> Wiley 1994: 539. See Weber 1958.

<sup>119</sup> Pajares and Schunk 2002: 8. See Mead 1913; Mead 1934.

personality'<sup>120</sup> and Goldstein 'analysed the process of self-actualisation'.<sup>121</sup> Lecky viewed 'self-consistency as a primary motivating force in human behaviour'.<sup>122</sup> Bertocci revisited James' theory of the duality of the Self<sup>123</sup> and Murphy considered 'the origins and mode of self-enhancement and how the Self is related to the social group'.<sup>124</sup>

Freud's publication from this period was also significant in furthering the understanding of inner processes.<sup>125</sup> He saw the Self as the 'regulating centre of an individual's personality and shed light on self-processes under the guise of id, ego and superego functioning'.<sup>126</sup> He believed that all individuals faced a psychic struggle between 'instinctual drives, sociocultural norms, and the world of reality'.<sup>127</sup>

In spite of the work carried out by the theologians and psychologists discussed above, during the first half of the twentieth century there was an increase in behaviourist theories.<sup>128</sup>

Behaviourists argued that non-behaviourist theories were inadequate because they placed 'self and consciousness at the centre of human functioning despite the fact that only a person's tangible, observable, and measurable behaviour was fit for scientific inquiry'.<sup>129</sup>

Psychologists such as Pavlov,<sup>130</sup> Thorndike,<sup>131</sup> Watson<sup>132</sup> and Skinner<sup>133</sup> carried out empirical

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<sup>120</sup> Pajares and Schunk 2002: 8. See Lewin 1935.

<sup>121</sup> Pajares and Schunk 2002: 8. See Goldstein 1939.

<sup>122</sup> Pajares and Schunk 2002: 8. See Lecky 1945.

<sup>123</sup> Pajares and Schunk 2002: 8. See Bertocci 1945.

<sup>124</sup> Pajares and Schunk 2002: 8. See Murphy 1947.

<sup>125</sup> Freud 1923. For more on Freud's theories, see Pajares and Schunk 2002: 7-8.

<sup>126</sup> Pajares and Schunk 2002: 7. See Freud 1923.

<sup>127</sup> Pajares and Schunk 2002: 7. See Freud 1923.

<sup>128</sup> See Pajares and Schunk 2002: 9-10.

<sup>129</sup> Pajares and Schunk 2002: 9.

<sup>130</sup> See, for example, Pavlov 1955; Boakes 1984; Pavlov 1994; Todes 2000.

<sup>131</sup> See, for example, Thorndike 1905.

<sup>132</sup> Watson 1925.

<sup>133</sup> Skinner 1938.

investigations that measured observable stimuli and responses.<sup>134</sup> They believed that the consideration of inner processes was not possible using scientific psychology.<sup>135</sup> Concepts such as the Self, self-belief and consciousness received little attention and were largely ignored.<sup>136</sup>

In the mid-twentieth century, at the peak of the influence of behaviourist theories, some psychologists demanded 'renewed attention to inner experience, internal processes, and self constructs'.<sup>137</sup> They believed that behaviourism offered a blinkered approach to the study of human nature. The work of these psychologists triggered the start of the humanistic movement.<sup>138</sup> A key figure in this movement was Maslow who argued that 'all individuals have inner lives and potential for growth, creativity and free choice'.<sup>139</sup> In his 1943 publication *A dynamic theory of human motivation*, Maslow discusses his idea that 'human beings are motivated by basic needs that must be satisfied and that are hierarchically ordered'.<sup>140</sup> Rogers was also an important figure in the humanistic movement.<sup>141</sup> He believed that the Self was a key element in human adjustment and argued that it was 'a social product, developing out of interpersonal relationships and striving for consistency'.<sup>142</sup> The work of Combs and Snygg also played a significant role in the humanistic movement.<sup>143</sup> They argued that an individual's frame of reference was responsible for their

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<sup>134</sup> Pajares and Schunk 2002: 9.

<sup>135</sup> Pajares and Schunk 2002: 9.

<sup>136</sup> Pajares and Schunk 2002: 9.

<sup>137</sup> Pajares and Schunk 2002: 10.

<sup>138</sup> See Pajares and Schunk 2002: 10-2.

<sup>139</sup> Pajares and Schunk 2002: 10. See Maslow 1954.

<sup>140</sup> Pajares and Schunk 2002: 10. See Maslow 1954.

<sup>141</sup> See, for example, Rogers 1961; Rogers 1977; Rogers 1980.

<sup>142</sup> Pajares and Schunk 2002: 11.

<sup>143</sup> Combs and Snygg 1949.



behaviour.<sup>144</sup> During the 1960s and 1970s, the humanistic movement led to an 'enthusiastic renaissance of interest in internal and intrinsic motivating forces and affective processes, particularly with reference to the dynamic importance of the Self'.<sup>145</sup> Allport<sup>146</sup> and Coopersmith<sup>147</sup> were significant voices in this renaissance.

Despite a shift in the 1980s towards cognitive processes,<sup>148</sup> in recent decades psychology research has engaged once again with the concept of the Self.<sup>149</sup> However, the focus of the research has been less on self-referent thought and more on two self-beliefs, which are self-efficacy and self-concept.<sup>150</sup> Bandura is a prominent figure in research regarding self-efficacy and argues that 'individuals create and develop self-perceptions of capability that become instrumental to the goals they pursue and to the control they are able to exercise over their environments'.<sup>151</sup> Bandura theorises that human beings are proactive and self-regulating.<sup>152</sup> They are not 'reactive and controlled either by environmental or by biological forces' as previously thought.<sup>153</sup> With regards to research surrounding self-concept, much of the work by modern scholars has built upon the theories of James.<sup>154</sup> Combs,<sup>155</sup> Coopersmith,<sup>156</sup> and Shavelson and Marsh<sup>157</sup> have all considered the notion of self-concept.<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>144</sup> Combs and Snygg 1949. See also Pajares and Schunk 2002: 11.

<sup>145</sup> Pajares and Schunk 2002: 11.

<sup>146</sup> See, for example, Allport 1937; Allport 1950; Allport 1968.

<sup>147</sup> Coopersmith 1967.

<sup>148</sup> See Pajares and Schunk 2002: 12-3.

<sup>149</sup> See Pajares and Schunk 2002: 13.

<sup>150</sup> Pajares and Schunk 2002: 13.

<sup>151</sup> Pajares and Schunk 2002: 13. See Bandura 1977; Bandura 1997.

<sup>152</sup> Bandura 1986. See Pajares and Schunk 2002: 14.

<sup>153</sup> Pajares and Schunk 2002: 14. See also Bandura 1986.

<sup>154</sup> See James 1981a; James 1981b.

<sup>155</sup> Combs 1962.

<sup>156</sup> Coopersmith 1967.

<sup>157</sup> Shavelson and Marsh 1986.

<sup>158</sup> See Pajares and Schunk 2002: 15-6.

### 2.3.1 *The Self in Egyptology*

There has been extensive research into the different elements that characterise the concept of the human being in ancient Egypt.<sup>159</sup> These elements are generally considered to be the *akh, ba, ka*, heart, body, name and shadow, and together they constituted a person.<sup>160</sup> As noted by Meyer-Dietrich, the fact that the terms for these elements do not have direct counterparts in modern religion has led to some difficulties in their understanding.<sup>161</sup> These difficulties have been increased because some scholars have attempted to interpret the terms using modern words that are linked to the Christian religion or contemporary Western culture, for example the association of *ba* with *soul*.<sup>162</sup> Meyer-Dietrich also argues that the tendency of scholars to focus on one element at a time rather than considering them as different aspects of one concept has fuelled the confusion surrounding personal constituents in ancient Egypt.<sup>163</sup>

It has been argued that the combination of these personal constituents could be viewed as the ancient Egyptian representation of the concept of the Self.<sup>164</sup> However, it must be considered that thinking around the idea of the Self has developed significantly in recent

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<sup>159</sup> It is not within the scope of this research to provide a comprehensive list of the existing research into personal constituents in ancient Egypt. Instead a summary of the key publications is provided: Koch 1984; te Velde 1990; Gnirs 2003; Loprieno 2003; Meyer-Dietrich 2006; Englund 2007; Dann 2013.

<sup>160</sup> Meyer-Dietrich 2006: 1. For research into the *akh*, see Englund 1978; Jansen-Winkel 1996. For research into the *ba*, see Wolf-Brinkmann 1968; Žabkar 1968; Barta 1969; Goedicke 1970; Assmann 1998. For research into the *ka*, see Greven 1952; Schweitzer 1956; Bolshakov 1997. For research into the heart, see Brunner 1988. For research into the body, see Beinlich 1984; Hornung 1984; Brunner-Traut 1988. For research into the shadow, see George 1970. For research into the name, see Ranke 1935; Ranke 1952; Ranke 1977; Hornung 1982: 44-9; Baines 1991: 176-8. For a discussion of the additional elements that constituted the human being in ancient Egypt, see Meyer-Dietrich 2006: 226-30.

<sup>161</sup> Meyer-Dietrich 2006: 1.

<sup>162</sup> Meyer-Dietrich 2006: 1. For examples of ancient Egyptian personal constituents being linked to modern, Western terms, see, for example, George 1970; Koch 1984; Assmann 1998; Loprieno 2003.

<sup>163</sup> Meyer-Dietrich 2006: 1-2. For examples, see Footnote 160 above.

<sup>164</sup> Meyer-Dietrich 2006: 225-30. See, for example, Dann 2013; te Velde 1990.

history.<sup>165</sup> Therefore, as with the interpretation of the Egyptian terms, it is possible that the connection of the terms with the concept of the Self has been influenced by modern ideas. It is not possible to state for certain how the ancient Egyptians interpreted the concept of the Self or, indeed, whether they had a concept of the Self, in the modern sense at least.

Therefore, in order to avoid perpetuating possible misunderstandings, this thesis will not refer directly to ancient Egyptian terms in its definition of the Self. The Self will be defined as the distinct individuality or identity of a person that distinguishes them from others and from non-human organisms.

## 2.4 History of research into personal religion<sup>166</sup>

Erman<sup>167</sup> and Breasted<sup>168</sup> introduced the term 'personal piety' in the early twentieth century to describe the development of the belief in an 'intimate and personal relationship between the worshipper and his god'.<sup>169</sup> They mainly use a group of Ramesside votive stelae from Deir el-Medina as evidence. The fact that the stelae originate from Deir el-Medina means that it is important to consider that Erman and Breasted's interpretation of personal piety may not have been representative of ancient Egypt as a whole.<sup>170</sup> The provenance of the stelae led Erman and Breasted to classify personal piety as an origination of the New Kingdom,<sup>171</sup> with Breasted describing the New Kingdom as 'the age of personal piety'.<sup>172</sup> This

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<sup>165</sup> See Section 2.3 in this thesis.

<sup>166</sup> A detailed review of the history of research into personal religion has been undertaken by Luiselli 2011b: 1-6. Brief summaries of the history of research into personal religion are provided by Luiselli 2008b: 2-4; Ausec 2010: 13-27; Weiss 2015: 1-11.

<sup>167</sup> Erman 1911: 1986.

<sup>168</sup> Breasted 1912: 349.

<sup>169</sup> Breasted 1912: 349. For a critique of the term, see Luiselli 2011a: 39.

<sup>170</sup> See Appendix I.

<sup>171</sup> Luiselli 2008b: 1.

classification was further emphasised because during the early twentieth century it was only possible to follow the development of personal piety at Thebes,<sup>173</sup> which had become powerful in the New Kingdom as the principal cult centre of the god Amun-Ra. Breasted hints at the wider-spread personal religion of the ordinary Egyptian when referring to the pervasion of religion in all activities in the life of ancient man,<sup>174</sup> even stating that 'life, thought and religion are inextricably interfused'.<sup>175</sup> However, Breasted considers personal piety to be the culmination of the surviving influence of the Amarna Period<sup>176</sup> and says, '...the ideas and the tendencies which had given birth to the revolution of Ikhнатon [*sic*] were far from disappearing'.<sup>177</sup> To support this point he draws on the similarities in style and use of language between the hymns of the Amarna Period and those of the Ramesside Period.<sup>178</sup> He also focusses on the idea of a personal relationship with god that became prevalent in hymns of the New Kingdom; 'In the old hymns...every man might pray the same prayer; but now prayer becomes a revelation of inner personal experience, an expression of individual communion with God'.<sup>179</sup>

Four years after Erman and Breasted, Gunn focussed on the social setting of the same set of Ramesside votive stelae.<sup>180</sup> Gunn argues that the impression of Egyptian religion, as it is portrayed in its classic and official documents, is one of a relationship between people and their gods, with the worshipper demonstrating 'extraordinary complacency and self-

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<sup>172</sup> Breasted 1912: 344-70.

<sup>173</sup> Breasted 1912: 349.

<sup>174</sup> Breasted 1912: 4.

<sup>175</sup> Breasted 1912: 4.

<sup>176</sup> Breasted 1912: 349.

<sup>177</sup> Breasted 1912: 346.

<sup>178</sup> Breasted 1912: 347.

<sup>179</sup> Breasted 1912: 355.

<sup>180</sup> Gunn 1916; see also Luiselli 2008b: 1; Luiselli 2011a: 39.

sufficiency'.<sup>181</sup> He states that 'the Egyptian, as reflected in these texts, was unlikely to humble himself before a deity'.<sup>182</sup> He also observes that, prior to the New Kingdom, the Egyptians never took god into their confidence, nor would permit themselves to admit any guilt or sin.<sup>183</sup> He highlights the 'truly remarkable' change in mindset shown by the worshippers' 'self-abasing and sorrowful' appeals that are revealed in the Ramesside stelae.<sup>184</sup> Gunn interpreted the stelae as belonging to a 'relatively humble' class who would see consolation for their difficult lives in the new ideas of a merciful god.<sup>185</sup>

In 1948, Bell made some valuable points regarding what he terms 'popular religion', although it is important to note that his focus is on Graeco-Roman Egypt.<sup>186</sup> He suggests that a difference between official religion and 'that which forms the actual mental background of the average man and woman' can be seen in all periods and in all countries.<sup>187</sup> He explains that this difference works two ways; while an official religion can become stereotyped and irrelevant to the general populace, a new or popular religion can never quite replace the beliefs and customs of the pre- or co-existing state religion.<sup>188</sup> Bell predominantly uses Greek private letters that came from Egypt as evidence for popular religion and sees literary formulas (also used in earlier Egyptian texts) as potential evidence for personal piety. He describes religious literary formulas as an indication that 'men have

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<sup>181</sup> Gunn 1916: 81.

<sup>182</sup> Gunn 1916: 81.

<sup>183</sup> Gunn 1916: 81.

<sup>184</sup> Gunn 1916: 82.

<sup>185</sup> Gunn 1916: 93. For a critique of Gunn's publication, see Luiselli 2011a: 39.

<sup>186</sup> Bell 1948: 82-97.

<sup>187</sup> Bell 1948: 82.

<sup>188</sup> Bell 1948: 82.

not lost all sense of a divine influence in their lives'.<sup>189</sup> He also argues that it is possible that the use of conventional words or phrases does not indicate a lack of feeling but rather literary inarticulateness.<sup>190</sup>

Brunner agrees with some of Breasted's theories and also considers the influence of the Amarna Period in his reflection on the personal piety of the Ramesside Period.<sup>191</sup> He argues that social problems possibly stemming from the Amarna Period resulted in a feeling of fear which, in turn, led to the development of personal piety.<sup>192</sup> He defines personal piety as an occurrence specific to Egyptian religion that ran in parallel to state religion.<sup>193</sup>

Assmann takes up the idea of personal piety as an innovation of the New Kingdom and recognises the role that the Amarna Period played in its development.<sup>194</sup> He describes the religious history of the New Kingdom as having been marked by two developments of the utmost significance, the first being the Amarna Period and the second being personal piety.<sup>195</sup> Assmann argues that these developments began in the Middle Kingdom, in the course of adjusting to the serious disruptions that occurred in Egyptian culture after the collapse of the Old Kingdom.<sup>196</sup> The developments grew during the New Kingdom to intervene and alter the traditional structure of religion.<sup>197</sup> Assmann observes that, 'God succeeded to the role played by the king in the Middle Kingdom and the patron in the First

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<sup>189</sup> Bell 1948: 89.

<sup>190</sup> Bell 1948: 89.

<sup>191</sup> Brunner 1982: 951. See also Luiselli 2011a: 39.

<sup>192</sup> Brunner 1982: 951; Luiselli 2008b: 2.

<sup>193</sup> Brunner 1982: 951; Luiselli 2008b: 2.

<sup>194</sup> Assmann 1984: 164; Assmann 2002: 229; Luiselli 2008b: 2. See also Weiss 2015: Footnote 23. For a critique of Assmann's approach to the study of personal religion in Egyptology, see Mohn 2011: 730-5.

<sup>195</sup> Assmann 2002: 229.

<sup>196</sup> Assmann 1984: 164.

<sup>197</sup> Assmann 1984: 158. See also Luiselli 2011a: 40.

Intermediate Period, while pious individuals [who previously claimed entire innocence and admitted no sin<sup>198</sup>] were cast in the role of the weak, poor and vulnerable, regardless of their actual social position'.<sup>199</sup> His view differs from that of Brunner in that he does not consider personal piety to be linked to state religion, and in fact sees it as distinct from state religion, priestly temple religion and the religion and theology of the literate elite.<sup>200</sup> This distinction can be clearly seen in Assmann's view that the conventional dichotomy between state religion and personal religion should be replaced with a tetratomy: 'official religion' (state), 'local religion' (nome and town), 'popular religion' (house and family) and 'personal religion' (individual).<sup>201</sup> He argues that in this broader framework, 'personal piety emerges as "personal religion" in the form of a religious movement that has its roots in Theban festival customs ("local religion") and spreading during the Amarna period all over Egypt'.<sup>202</sup>

Assmann also reviews the classical conception of religious experience and develops the traditional three-dimensional approach into a four-dimensional one.<sup>203</sup> The three classical dimensions are '1) the political (cult and community), 2) the cosmic, and 3) the mythical (language, names and narratives)'.<sup>204</sup> Assmann adds personal piety as the fourth dimension and justifies this decision with the fact that in the New Kingdom (and only in the New Kingdom) 'historical events tend to be experienced and interpreted as "divine interventions" or expressions of divine will'.<sup>205</sup> It is this addition of personal piety as a fourth element that

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<sup>198</sup> Breasted 1912: 354.

<sup>199</sup> Assmann 2002: 234.

<sup>200</sup> Brunner 1982: 951; Assmann 2002: 229.

<sup>201</sup> Assmann 1995: 190.

<sup>202</sup> Assmann 1995: 190.

<sup>203</sup> Assmann 1995: 190.

<sup>204</sup> Assmann 1995: 190.

<sup>205</sup> Assmann 1995: 191. For more on divine intervention in ancient Egypt, see Borghouts 1982.

leads Assmann to distinguish between a 'theology of preservation' governing earlier Egyptian thought<sup>206</sup> and a 'theology of will' which arises in the New Kingdom and becomes the leading notion in the Ramesside Period.<sup>207</sup> Assmann notes that in the New Kingdom, the idea of the 'god-guided heart' replaces the Middle Kingdom model of the 'heart-guided individual'.<sup>208</sup> This reiterates Breasted's definition of personal piety as a close relationship between the worshipper and god.<sup>209</sup> Assmann also looks briefly beyond the New Kingdom. He believes that, as with Akhenaten's monotheistic revolution, 'the movement towards personal piety was of enormous political consequence' and resulted in the establishment of a theocracy in Thebes at the end of the Twentieth Dynasty, ruled over by Amun via the medium of an oracle.<sup>210</sup> According to Assmann, 'This shift signalled Egypt's reversion from the model of "representation" to a model of "direct" theocracy, but with the roles reversed. In the original version of direct theocracy, the king reigned as god; now the god reigned as king'.<sup>211</sup> Assmann considers that movements must be interpreted according to what they lead to, hence his consideration of personal piety in this way.<sup>212</sup>

Bickel examines the relationship between personal piety and state religion, and the role that state religion played in the development of personal religion.<sup>213</sup> She distances herself from Assmann's view that personal piety was distinct from state religion and highlights the role of state religion in 'supporting (rather than activating) the individual's need for religious

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<sup>206</sup> Assmann 1995: 191.

<sup>207</sup> Assmann 1995: 191; Assmann 2002: 230.

<sup>208</sup> Assmann 2002: 230.

<sup>209</sup> Breasted 1912: 349.

<sup>210</sup> Assmann 2002: 245. See also Luiselli 2011a: 40.

<sup>211</sup> Assmann 2002: 245.

<sup>212</sup> Assmann 1995: 191.

<sup>213</sup> Luiselli 2008b: 3 with reference to Bickel 2002: 66-7.



feelings' using iconographic material of the New Kingdom.<sup>214</sup> Luiselli summarises Bickel's views, which are in line with those of Brunner,<sup>215</sup> as considering personal piety to be 'complementary, rather than opposed to, state religion, which supplied logistic points to support personal religious practice'.<sup>216</sup>

According to Baines, the 'practical religion' he discusses, 'could be termed more loosely and explicitly "non-material modes of action and response"'.<sup>217</sup> Baines argues that religious practices and the way they were expressed was influenced by decorum and the restrictions it imposed, via the exclusion of 'human non-funerary religious concerns from the presentation of official religion'.<sup>218</sup> He suggests that the under-representation of personal religious practices before the New Kingdom does not mean that they did not exist, but rather that it was not conventional to display them.<sup>219</sup> He goes on to argue a case for early piety, stating that references to concern for or involvement with state religion in pre-New Kingdom texts, along with the attestation in personal names of a close relationship with deities, could imply a leaning towards personal piety.<sup>220</sup> This argument competes with that of Assmann who, according to Baines, 'maintains that the content and phraseology of New Kingdom pious texts points to an origin in instruction texts and the "loyalist" texts of the Middle Kingdom'.<sup>221</sup> Baines states that 'if this literary derivation reflected accurately the extent of the phenomenon, it would be necessary to exclude other possible manifestations

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<sup>214</sup> Luiselli 2008b: 3 with reference to Bickel 2002: 66-7; Luiselli 2011a: 40.

<sup>215</sup> Brunner 1982: 951.

<sup>216</sup> Luiselli 2008b: 4.

<sup>217</sup> Baines 1987: 80.

<sup>218</sup> Baines 1987: 79. See also Baines 1990: 6-21.

<sup>219</sup> Luiselli 2008b: 2. See also Baines 1987: 79. See also Baines 1990: 6-21.

<sup>220</sup> Baines 1987: 94-7.

<sup>221</sup> Baines 1987: 96

of piety from consideration and to assume that piety arose in the core elite and was a diversification of their religious orientation',<sup>222</sup> not something that he believes to be the case. Baines links personal piety to the ordinary Egyptian through what he describes as 'vital points of transition', which are: birth; puberty and becoming an adult; marriage and parenthood; death.<sup>223</sup> Events which occur suddenly and that have no particular pattern, such as sudden or early death, illness or disaster, disrupt these points of transition. Both the regular transitions and the less regular events may be the subject of what Baines terms 'rites of passage',<sup>224</sup> meaning that personal religious practice may be involved with these transitions or events via non-regular rituals.<sup>225</sup> When discussing personal piety, Assmann compares his opinion with that of Baines. He describes Baines as advocating the view that personal piety is a 'structural feature of ancient Egyptian religion, typical of all its periods but very differently testified by archaeological and textual evidence'.<sup>226</sup> Assmann describes himself as having the opinion that personal piety is a 'historical movement typical only of one particular period (...the Ramesside Period...), but that implies forerunners and consequences'.<sup>227</sup>

The points raised by Baines regarding decorum and early piety are reiterated in the 2011 paper published jointly by Baines and Froot on the subject of piety, change and display in the New Kingdom.<sup>228</sup> They consider the lack of surviving Ramesside votive offerings in contrast to those of the Eighteenth Dynasty. They argue that Ramesside piety was a 'newly

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<sup>222</sup> Baines 1987: 96.

<sup>223</sup> Baines 1987: 83.

<sup>224</sup> Baines 1987: 83.

<sup>225</sup> Baines 1987: 83.

<sup>226</sup> Assmann 1995: 190.

<sup>227</sup> Assmann 1995: 190.

<sup>228</sup> Baines and Froot 2011.

introduced style of display' that took existing and probably long-established religious practice and made it visible in new ways.<sup>229</sup> They do not believe that personal piety was a product of the Amarna Period and state that:

Piety...was intrinsic to Egyptian religion for as long as there were multiple deities with personal characteristics, that is, since no later than the beginning of the dynastic period and possibly earlier. Only very rarely, however, did people display their personal piety in texts that survive.<sup>230</sup>

In contrast to Baines, and Baines and Froot, Kemp considers personal piety to have been scarce in Egypt before the New Kingdom and does not view the piety of the Ramesside period as a continuation of an older and more complex phenomenon.<sup>231</sup> He describes ancient Egyptian culture as having been 'permeated by statements, symbolic and direct, which defined a world of deities and divine power'.<sup>232</sup> These statements formed a system of belief that generally did not relate to the individual behaviour of the wider population and that paid little heed to personal experience.<sup>233</sup> He states that it was not in the nature of Egyptian religion to 'impose participation on the individual (other than the king)'<sup>234</sup> and there was no community of the faithful.<sup>235</sup> He uses the fact that instruction texts, which detail how an individual should lead a good life and were first used c.2100 B.C., ignore temple cults as evidence.<sup>236</sup> He also mentions that the New Kingdom Instruction of Ani

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<sup>229</sup> Baines and Froot 2011: 17.

<sup>230</sup> Baines and Froot 2011:5.

<sup>231</sup> Kemp 1995b: 25-54.

<sup>232</sup> Kemp 1995b: 25.

<sup>233</sup> Kemp 1995b: 25.

<sup>234</sup> Kemp 1995b: 26.

<sup>235</sup> Kemp 1995b: 26.

<sup>236</sup> Kemp 1995b: 26.

(perhaps c.1300 B.C.) 'tells the reader to celebrate the annual festival of his god but urges no further observance'.<sup>237</sup> However, Kemp recognises that this does not establish whether the lack of formal guidance was made up for by the pressure of convention or by the religious beliefs of the individual.<sup>238</sup> Kemp touches briefly on the concept of the spiritual convictions of the individual when discussing knowledge of the hidden cosmos. He argues that it was possible for people to buy some of the knowledge of the cosmos in written form, such as Coffin Texts and the Book of the Dead, to facilitate survival in the afterlife, but it was 'not...a guide to living'.<sup>239</sup> Arguably, Kemp doubts the likelihood of personal piety stating that there was 'not...a distinctively religious way of conducting one's life'.<sup>240</sup> Kemp also makes reference to a wide range of texts that are available from many periods which show, 'Egyptians trying to make their way in a secular world which did not require constant reference to the mindset of religion'.<sup>241</sup> Kemp is of the opinion that religious action was carried out, to a degree, in a utilitarian manner with a regularity that varied according to the needs of the individual.<sup>242</sup> Personal crisis, such as illness, would have been a common preoccupation of those who carried out acts of personal religion, such as visiting and maybe making an offering at a shrine.<sup>243</sup> However, he does concede that while he believes in the scarcity of personal piety prior to the New Kingdom, if most Egyptians' experience of religion

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<sup>237</sup> Kemp 1995b: 26.

<sup>238</sup> Kemp 1995b: 26.

<sup>239</sup> Kemp 1995b: 50.

<sup>240</sup> Kemp 1995b: 50.

<sup>241</sup> Kemp 1995b: 50.

<sup>242</sup> Kemp 1995b: 50.

<sup>243</sup> Kemp 1995b: 29. For more on personal piety and crisis situations, see Becker 2011. In her publication, Becker focuses on the point that developments within the individual relationship with god can be assessed as direct reactions to crisis situations. She analyses the link between coping strategies after a crisis and the individual devotion to a deity, and concludes on page 71 that personal piety is documented as a reaction to personal crises, but also to environmental crises and economic crises. Becker also concludes on page 71 that evidence for personal piety can also be linked to political and social restructuring and problems.

prior to the New Kingdom 'was on quite a modest scale and was often associated with a homely mudbrick setting, this need not imply diminished personal significance'.<sup>244</sup> He argues that 'scale is not necessarily a correlate of piety'.<sup>245</sup> Kemp's overall approach focusses on the context and assessment of archaeological finds related to personal religion.<sup>246</sup> The importance of setting and context is highlighted by his comment that, if the religious texts of the Ramesside period are focussed on, an 'age of personal piety' can be seen to be reflected in them. However, if certain legal texts from the same period are considered, it could also be called an 'age of cynicism'.<sup>247</sup> He argues that neither term is really appropriate because they represent opposite ends of a 'spectrum of attitudes',<sup>248</sup> in which most people occupied the middle ground. He concludes that for the majority of people, 'most of the time, life is likely to have been a basically secular experience'.<sup>249</sup>

Stevens uses the same approach as Kemp and focuses on the context and assessment of archaeological findings related to personal religion.<sup>250</sup> As with the historic studies of Erman and Breasted, Stevens' assessment of personal religion may not be relevant to the whole of ancient Egypt due to her focus on archaeological evidence from a specific location, namely Amarna.<sup>251</sup> Stevens argues that 'domestic religious practices', which can be considered to be a form of personal religion, are not just a feature of the New Kingdom. She states that they can be seen throughout Egyptian dynastic history in textual sources, cult emplacements and

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<sup>244</sup> Kemp 1995b: 45.

<sup>245</sup> Kemp 1995b: 46.

<sup>246</sup> Luiselli 2008b: 3.

<sup>247</sup> Kemp 1995b: 50.

<sup>248</sup> Kemp 1995b: 50.

<sup>249</sup> Kemp 1995b: 50.

<sup>250</sup> See Luiselli 2008b: 3.

<sup>251</sup> Stevens 2003: 143-68. See also Appendix I.

objects from settlement sites.<sup>252</sup> In terms of personal religion and state religion, Stevens sides with Bickel and suggests that domestic religious practices drew on the 'same set of ritual actions used in temple and mortuary contexts', such as presenting offerings, conducting purification rites and erecting protective images.<sup>253</sup> However, she stresses that despite having absorbed aspects of state religion, domestic religious practices do not seem to have been controlled by the state at any point.<sup>254</sup> Stevens suggests that domestic ritual practice operated in order to solve problems and took place in response to immediate needs.<sup>255</sup> This correlates with Baines' thoughts on personal piety in relation to points of transition,<sup>256</sup> and Kemp's view that acts of personal religion were closely linked with personal crisis.<sup>257</sup> Stevens also states that the resulting irregularity in the performance of domestic religious practices would have contrasted with the regular pattern of state religion, which supports the theory that the state did not control these practices.<sup>258</sup>

Luiselli uses a slightly different approach to those examined thus far; she focusses on the advent and development of personal piety as a religious and cultural phenomenon.<sup>259</sup>

Luiselli attempts to answer to what extent individuals sought god's presence and to locate this socially. By doing so she aims to discover who practiced personal piety and where the associated sacred spaces were located.<sup>260</sup> She uses a cultural and scientific-sociological approach that places the acting person, rather than the recipient of action, at the forefront

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<sup>252</sup> Stevens 2009: 1.

<sup>253</sup> Stevens 2009: 9.

<sup>254</sup> Stevens 2009: 12.

<sup>255</sup> Stevens 2009: 9.

<sup>256</sup> Baines 1987: 83.

<sup>257</sup> Kemp 1995b: 29. See also Becker 2011: 71 and Footnote 243 above.

<sup>258</sup> Stevens 2009: 9, 12.

<sup>259</sup> Luiselli 2011b: 11-3.

<sup>260</sup> Luiselli 2011b: 35-81.

of religion in ancient Egypt.<sup>261</sup> Luiselli also studies iconographic topics, such as the gesture of prayer as a way of accessing a deity.<sup>262</sup> In her 2011 thesis, Luiselli considers the functional and chronological contextualization of the different sources for personal piety, spanning from the First Intermediate Period to the end of the New Kingdom, against the background of cultural premises.<sup>263</sup> Luiselli selects 129 textual sources that are representative of the expression of religious attitudes across a range of genres.<sup>264</sup> These genres include extracts from autobiographies (20 considered), letters (33 considered), prayers and prayer-like texts (63 considered), and architectural fragments from settlement contexts (13 considered).<sup>265</sup> The textual sources chosen by Luiselli are intended to demonstrate the variety of texts that relate to religious ways of thinking in ancient Egypt, and at the same time allow the consideration of the search for closeness to god (*Gottesnähe*) on an individual level and in different aspects of life.<sup>266</sup> In addition, Luiselli aims to use the selected textual sources to achieve two research objectives. The first is to present an illustration of the phenomenon of *Gottesnähe* by focussing on the expression of the tangible relationship between an individual and his/a god, as well as the methods used to achieve *Gottesnähe* by the individual, taking into consideration his position in society. The second research objective is to negate tension between the historical and contextual frameworks of the sources selected.

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<sup>261</sup> Luiselli 2011b: 14-34.

<sup>262</sup> Luiselli 2005: 87-96; Luiselli 2008a.

<sup>263</sup> Luiselli 2008b: 3; Luiselli 2011b: 11-3.

<sup>264</sup> Luiselli 2011b: 12.

<sup>265</sup> Luiselli 2011b: 12.

<sup>266</sup> Luiselli 2011b: 13.

This is achieved by evaluating the socio-cultural origin of each source, rather than focussing on a strictly philological analysis of the source material.<sup>267</sup>

Weiss analyses the domestic religious practices that took place at Deir el-Medina during the Ramesside Period within the framework of the theory of agency.<sup>268</sup> She defines agency as:

The perpetual movement between different roles and the appropriation of practices according to specific needs...The concept of appropriation allows, then, for conceiving this opportunity structure for individual religious practice – a structure that can be mapped onto different social layers:

- 1) Appropriation of individual practices
- 2) Appropriation of family practices
- 3) Appropriation of local practices
- 4) Appropriation of trans-local practices<sup>269</sup>

Weiss focusses on archaeological evidence rather than written sources.<sup>270</sup> She considers fixed cultic emplacements such as platforms<sup>271</sup> and wall niches,<sup>272</sup> as well as artefacts used in religious practice such as three-dimensional cult images<sup>273</sup> and amulets.<sup>274</sup> Weiss addresses some of the issues that have been identified as important in the study of personal piety.<sup>275</sup> She argues that the earliest comparable platforms to those at Deir el-Medina (Nineteenth to Twentieth Dynasty) appear at Malkata (Eighteenth Dynasty). This undermines 'the idea that the personal piety of the Ramesside Period was mainly a reaction following the

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<sup>267</sup> Luiselli 2011b: 14-34.

<sup>268</sup> Weiss 2012: 196-7; Weiss 2015: 15-9.

<sup>269</sup> Weiss 2015: 17-8. See also Weiss 2012: 201.

<sup>270</sup> Weiss 2009: 193; Weiss 2015: 179.

<sup>271</sup> See Weiss 2009.

<sup>272</sup> Weiss 2015: 62-93.

<sup>273</sup> Weiss 2015: 135-54.

<sup>274</sup> Weiss 2015: 164-8.

<sup>275</sup> See Section 2.6 in this thesis.



Amarna Period'.<sup>276</sup> In addition, Weiss refers to a sequence of text from the so-called restoration stela of Tutankhamun (CG 34183) that refers to the Amarna Period.<sup>277</sup> She describes the sequence as having 'previously been overlooked'<sup>278</sup> and translates it as follows:

If one prayed to any god, to ask something from him, he did not come at all.

If one prayed to any goddess in the same way, she did not come at all.<sup>279</sup>

Weiss argues that the text only makes sense if the gods did come when prayed to before the Amarna Period.<sup>280</sup> She states that, 'the text proves that personal religion was not invented after the Amarna Period'.<sup>281</sup> Weiss also argues that 'the religious practice performed in temples was paralleled in houses as well' which implies that state religion and personal piety were closely linked.<sup>282</sup> Weiss' overall conclusions are that domestic religion at Deir el-Medina was carried out in order to ensure the well-being of the individual within the broader context of the family.<sup>283</sup> She identifies the benefactors of domestic religious practice as family members and the beneficiaries as the deceased or gods.<sup>284</sup>

To summarise, early research into personal piety in ancient Egypt mainly focusses on evidence from the Ramesside Period or Graeco-Roman Egypt. The research argues that

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<sup>276</sup> Weiss 2009: 207.

<sup>277</sup> Weiss 2015: 4-5. See also Lacau 1909-16: 227, Plate 70.

<sup>278</sup> Weiss 2015: 4.

<sup>279</sup> Weiss 2015: 5.

<sup>280</sup> Weiss 2015: 5.

<sup>281</sup> Weiss 2015: 5.

<sup>282</sup> Weiss 2015: 183.

<sup>283</sup> Weiss 2015: 179.

<sup>284</sup> Weiss 2015: 181.

personal piety was an innovation of the New Kingdom and that personal piety was a feature of the lower classes. The later research into personal piety uses evidence from throughout ancient Egyptian culture. The idea that the ancient Egyptians were looking for a close and personal relationship with god is discussed. In the later research, some scholars argue that personal piety was not connected to state religion<sup>285</sup> while others argue that it was.<sup>286</sup> It is possible to divide the later research into personal piety into two distinct schools of thought, which are discussed in more detail in Section 2.5 below.

## 2.5 Current schools of thought regarding the study of personal religion

Two major schools of thought in current studies of Egyptian personal religion have been identified by Luiselli.<sup>287</sup> Generally, the existing research into personal religion can be divided into these two schools of thought.

The first school of thought focusses on religious emotion and gives attention to the phenomenological aspects of personal religion, in which the individual 'search for a god' was considered to be something that affected cultural identity in Egypt as a whole.<sup>288</sup> This school of thought applies theories from religious studies and theology to Egyptian personal religion.<sup>289</sup> Consequently, it defines personal piety as a 'secondary religious experience'<sup>290</sup> in which a personal relationship with god<sup>291</sup> and the strong faith of the individual<sup>292</sup> make up

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<sup>285</sup> Assmann 1995: 190; Assmann 2002: 2002.

<sup>286</sup> See, for example, Bickel 2002: 66-7; Stevens 2009: 9; Weiss 2015: 183.

<sup>287</sup> Luiselli 2008b: 5.

<sup>288</sup> Luiselli 2008b: 5.

<sup>289</sup> Luiselli 2008b: 5.

<sup>290</sup> Luiselli 2008b: 5, with reference to Assmann 2006a: 275-7.

<sup>291</sup> Assmann 2006a: 275.

<sup>292</sup> Loprieno 2006: 262.

for a lack of knowledge of the divine. Assmann is a key figure in this school of thought and his opinions are clearly reflected in its foci and methodology. He considers the phenomena of the internal relationship of individuals with god rather than the external practices of individuals.<sup>293</sup> He mainly uses textual sources as evidence and applies theory in order to create meaning from this evidence, for example his 'theology of will'.<sup>294</sup>

The second school of thought, according to Luiselli, concerns the 'social and functional settings of evidence for personal religion, giving less priority to the investigation of religious emotions'.<sup>295</sup> It considers piety to be 'the result of elements such as social setting and ritual performance that cannot be isolated from their cultural roots'.<sup>296</sup> Baines,<sup>297</sup> Kemp,<sup>298</sup> Stevens,<sup>299</sup> Luiselli<sup>300</sup> and Weiss<sup>301</sup> can all be considered to be part of this second school of thought because they focus on the context and setting of archaeological sources. However, the use of a similar methodology does not mean that the same conclusions are reached and the viewpoints of these scholars differ. Baines sees personal piety as a feature of all periods in Egyptian history,<sup>302</sup> and both Stevens<sup>303</sup> and Weiss<sup>304</sup> agree with him. However, Kemp believes that personal piety was scarce before the New Kingdom and that even New Kingdom Egyptians would have led largely secular lives.<sup>305</sup> Bickel, Stevens and Weiss all

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<sup>293</sup> Assmann 2002: 229-46.

<sup>294</sup> Assmann 1995: 191; Assmann 2002: 230.

<sup>295</sup> Luiselli 2008b: 5.

<sup>296</sup> Luiselli 2008b: 5.

<sup>297</sup> Baines 1987: 79-98; Baines 1991: 123-200.

<sup>298</sup> Kemp 1995b: 25-54.

<sup>299</sup> Stevens 2003: 143-68; Stevens 2009: 1-31.

<sup>300</sup> Luiselli 2011b: 14-34.

<sup>301</sup> Weiss 2009: 193-208.

<sup>302</sup> Baines 1987: 96.

<sup>303</sup> Stevens 2009: 1.

<sup>304</sup> Weiss 2009: 207.

<sup>305</sup> Kemp 1995b: 25-54.

consider state religion and personal religion to have been linked; Bickel sees state religion as a support for personal religion,<sup>306</sup> Stevens notes the similarities in ritual action between the two<sup>307</sup> and Weiss argues that the importance of state religious festivals may have encouraged Egyptians to address the gods personally.<sup>308</sup> In contrast to this, Kemp suggests that there may have been hostility on the part of ordinary Egyptians towards state religion,<sup>309</sup> making it seem unlikely that state religion and personal religion were linked together.

## 2.6 Key issues in the study of personal religion

As well as the two schools of thought, three main issues have proven important in studies of personal piety.<sup>310</sup> These issues will need to be considered as part of this research, along with two further issues that have emerged as a result of exploring the existing literature.

The first issue is 'the apparent intimacy and strong internalisation of the individual's emotions'<sup>311</sup> regarding personal religion, which is discussed in more detail by Assmann,<sup>312</sup> Bickel,<sup>313</sup> Brunner<sup>314</sup> and Gunn.<sup>315</sup> If personal religion was indeed intimate and internalised then it is likely that there will be little evidence for it,<sup>316</sup> and the evidence that does exist is

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<sup>306</sup> Bickel 2002: 66-7.

<sup>307</sup> Stevens 2009: 1.

<sup>308</sup> Weiss 2009: 208.

<sup>309</sup> Kemp 1995b: 38.

<sup>310</sup> Luiselli 2008b: 1-2.

<sup>311</sup> Luiselli 2008b: 1. For a discussion of the correlation between rituals, emotions, and literature in ancient Egypt, see Verbovsek 2011.

<sup>312</sup> Assmann 1995: 191; Assmann 2002: 230, 234.

<sup>313</sup> Bickel 2002: 66.

<sup>314</sup> Brunner 1982: 951.

<sup>315</sup> Gunn 1916: 81-2.

<sup>316</sup> Weiss 2009: 193.

likely to be textual in the form of hymns, prayers and devotional stelae. In this case, the school of thought in which Assmann sits is the most appropriate when dealing with the issue of the internalisation of religious emotion. In light of the lack of archaeological evidence, the application of theory could prove useful in understanding the role that personal religion played in ancient Egypt, and the extent to which it can be considered to be invisible religion. The apparent intimate nature and internalisation of personal religion must first be explored and understood.

The second issue is the identification of personal piety as 'an innovation of the New Kingdom'.<sup>317</sup> As mentioned earlier, there is dissent among scholars regarding this issue, with the majority being spilt into two groups consisting of a) those who agree that personal piety originated in the New Kingdom and b) those who believe that personal religion existed before this period. Assmann, Bickel and Breasted argue strongly for 'group a',<sup>318</sup> with Breasted describing the New Kingdom as the 'age of personal piety'.<sup>319</sup> Stevens, Weiss and Luiselli provide convincing evidence in support of 'group b';<sup>320</sup> Stevens believes that personal religion can be 'traced throughout Egyptian dynastic history' in both textual and archaeological evidence.<sup>321</sup>

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<sup>317</sup> Luiselli 2008b: 1. For an excellent explanation of why personal piety should not be seen as a reaction to the 'crisis' of the Amarna Period, see Becker 2011: 65.

<sup>318</sup> Breasted 1912: 349; Assmann 2002: 229; Bickel 2002: 66.

<sup>319</sup> Breasted 1912: 349.

<sup>320</sup> Stevens 2009: 1; Weiss 2009: 207; Luiselli 2011b: 3-4, 52, 90-3, 117, 144-9, 236-8.

<sup>321</sup> Stevens 2009: 1. According to Backes 2000-2001, the Middle Kingdom stela of Nebpu is an example of this. Backes argues that the five different deities mentioned on the stela as part of offering formulae demonstrate how the polytheistic religion of ancient Egypt could be adapted to suit the individual's needs. He sees this as an example of an individual's personal relationship with deities, or personal piety. Similarly, Baines 2009 argues that three Middle Kingdom stelae of Amenisonbe infer that Amenisonbe had a personal commitment to the deity Wepwawet. Baines argues on page 14 that 'the desire to make commitment [to a deity] visible is entirely compatible with piety'.

The third issue is the occurrence of personal piety within a lower social class.<sup>322</sup> This point is argued mainly by Gunn<sup>323</sup> and it must be remembered that his argument was based largely on his interpretation of a group of Ramesside stelae from Deir el-Medina. He believed that the new 'merciful and forgiving god' would appeal to the people of the lower social class due to the daily hardships they faced.<sup>324</sup> This coincides with the thoughts of Baines,<sup>325</sup> Kemp<sup>326</sup> and Stevens<sup>327</sup> on personal piety being linked with points of transition and personal crisis.<sup>328</sup> However, it is not particularly clear if personal religion was just a characteristic of the lower class and this research will need to ensure that it does not assume this to be true when examining the existing evidence in light of new theories.

In the process of reviewing the existing research into personal religion in ancient Egypt, it becomes apparent that there are two additional issues that are key when studying this subject. There is discrepancy between the views of Assmann (and possibly Kemp) and other scholars regarding whether personal religion and state religion were linked. The opinions regarding this issue as stated in the existing research into personal religion are discussed in Section 2.4. If personal religion in ancient Egypt is to be fully understood and new light is to be shed on the subject then it is essential that this research reaches a firm conclusion regarding whether personal and state religion were linked or not.

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<sup>322</sup> Luiselli 2008b: 2.

<sup>323</sup> Gunn 1916: 81-95.

<sup>324</sup> Gunn 1916: 93.

<sup>325</sup> Baines 1987: 83.

<sup>326</sup> Kemp 1995b: 29.

<sup>327</sup> Stevens 2009: 9.

<sup>328</sup> See Becker 2011 and Footnote 243 above.

The other additional issue is terminology.<sup>329</sup> It is clear that there is no consistency and that scholars use the term or terms that they feel best describes the situation as they see it. This can often make it difficult to draw comparisons between the works of different scholars. The often subtle differences in the definition of their chosen terminology mean that although Egyptologists appear to be discussing the same issues, it is difficult to be certain that they really are.

## 2.7 Terminology

To understand the impact that differences in terminology can have, a summary of the key terms used by scholars is provided below in Section 2.7.1. This will be followed in Section 2.7.2 by an explanation of the terminology that will be used in this research.

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<sup>329</sup> For further discussions of the issue of terminology, see Luiselli 2008b: 4; Luiselli 2011a: 43-4; Luiselli 2011b: 9-11; Weiss 2015: 11-15.

2.7.1 Existing terminology

**Table 1:** The terms and definitions used by scholars in the existing studies into personal religion in ancient Egypt

Term	Source	Definition
Persönlich Frömmigkeit Personal piety	Ermann 1911 Breasted 1912	An intimate relationship between the worshipper and his god. <sup>330</sup>
Gottesnähe	Brunner 1977 Assmann 1984 Assmann 1995 Luiselli 2011	Closeness to a deity. <sup>331</sup>
Practical religion	Baines 1987	Religious action in an everyday context. <sup>332</sup>
Popular religion	Pinch 1993	Religious beliefs and practices, whether corporate or individual, of ordinary Egyptians in daily life. <sup>333</sup>
Folk religion	Pinch 1993	Religious or magical beliefs and practices of the populace, independent of the state cults and centred on home and family. <sup>334</sup>
Personal piety	Pinch 1993	Individual rather than corporate piety centred on one or more of the deities of the state cults. <sup>335</sup>
Local forms of religion	Assmann 2002	Distinct from the official state religion. <sup>336</sup>

<sup>330</sup> Breasted 1912: 349.

<sup>331</sup> Luiselli 2008b: 4-5.

<sup>332</sup> Baines 1987: 79.

<sup>333</sup> Pinch 1993: 325.

<sup>334</sup> Pinch 1993: 325.

<sup>335</sup> Pinch 1993: 325.

<sup>336</sup> Assmann 2002: 229.



Term	Source	Definition
Domestic and individual forms of religion	Assmann 2002	Distinct from priestly temple religion. <sup>337</sup>
Popular religion	Assmann 2002	Separate from the religion and theology of the literate elite. <sup>338</sup>
Personal piety peculiar to the New Kingdom	Assmann 2002	Distinct from traditional personal religion. <sup>339</sup>
Religiosité individuelle	Bickel 2002	Includes not only devotional acts of piety but also reflections based on the individual's religious sentiment. <sup>340</sup>
Private religion	Stevens 2006	The differentiation between religious action, such as rituals, and everyday conduct. <sup>341</sup>
Domestic religious practices	Stevens 2009	Religious conduct within a household setting. <sup>342</sup>
Piety	Baines and Frood 2011	The sense of selection and active involvement between a deity and a human being or king. <sup>343</sup>
Religiöser Praktiken Religious practice	Weiss 2012 Weiss 2015	A system of everyday religious practices that does not exclude religious experience. <sup>344</sup>

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<sup>337</sup> Assmann 2002: 229.

<sup>338</sup> Assmann 2002: 229.

<sup>339</sup> Assmann 2002: 229.

<sup>340</sup> The term used by Bickel 2002: 66-7 as summarised by Luiselli 2008b: 3.

<sup>341</sup> Stevens 2006: 21.

<sup>342</sup> Stevens 2009: 1.

<sup>343</sup> Baines and Frood 2011: 3-4.

<sup>344</sup> Weiss 2012: 197; Weiss 2015: 14-5.

The terminology relating to personal religion in ancient Egypt was first introduced by Erman<sup>345</sup> and Breasted<sup>346</sup> in the early twentieth century. They chose the term *personal piety*.<sup>347</sup> Piety is defined as ‘reverence and obedience to God (or to the gods)’ or ‘devotion to religious duties and observances’.<sup>348</sup> However, these interpretations of the term do not fully capture the nature of Erman and Breasted’s *personal piety*, as defined in Table 1. Breasted’s definition of the term is what should be considered when using the term *personal piety*. Baines suggests the broader term of *practical religion*.<sup>349</sup> This term was ‘intended to widen research perspectives to include sources and cultural phenomena beyond hymns and prayers’.<sup>350</sup> The focus on ‘action’ detracts from the internalisation of the individual’s emotions, which is noted by Luiselli as a key consideration in the study of personal religion.<sup>351</sup> *Practical religion* is a broad term and should be treated as such. Weiss follows the terminology proposed by Baines and uses *religiöser Praktiken* (religious practice).<sup>352</sup> However, she emphasises that the term does not exclude religious experience.<sup>353</sup> Pinch divides personal religion into three categories, which are *popular religion*, *folk religion*, and *personal piety* (see Table 1 for the definitions of these terms).<sup>354</sup> This attempt to provide clarity in fact confuses the situation. Stevens uses the terms *private religion*<sup>355</sup> and *domestic*

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<sup>345</sup> Erman 1911: 1086.

<sup>346</sup> Breasted 1912: 349.

<sup>347</sup> Erman 1911: 1086; Breasted 1912: 349.

<sup>348</sup> Oxford English Dictionary: the definitive record of the English language 2016a.

<sup>349</sup> Baines 1987: 79.

<sup>350</sup> Luiselli 2008b: 4.

<sup>351</sup> Luiselli 2008b: 1.

<sup>352</sup> Weiss 2012: 197.

<sup>353</sup> Weiss 2015: 14-5.

<sup>354</sup> Pinch 1993: 325.

<sup>355</sup> Stevens 2006: 21.

*religious practices*.<sup>356</sup> As with Baines' term *practical religion*, there is more of a focus on physical actions rather than internalised thoughts and feelings.<sup>357</sup> This is highlighted further by Stevens' comment that *domestic religious practices* 'provided an outlet especially for expressing and addressing the concerns of everyday life'.<sup>358</sup> Assmann views the term *personal piety* as a blanket term and subdivides it into four different phenomena.<sup>359</sup> These are: *local forms of religion, domestic and individual forms of religion, popular religion, and personal piety peculiar to the New Kingdom* (see Table 1 for definitions). The concept of personal piety and the belief in divine intervention are considered by Assmann to be concepts of a new religious focus that he terms 'theology of will'.<sup>360</sup> This 'theology of will' defined the relationship between men and gods as contracts.<sup>361</sup> Baines and Froot use the term *piety* which they define as the 'sense of selection and active involvement between and deity and a human being or king'.<sup>362</sup> They note that there are points of comparison with this definition and Assmann's 'theology of will'.<sup>363</sup> Bickel uses the term *religiosité individuelle* because she argues that it is 'moins restrictive que le sigle traditionnel «piété personnelle»'.<sup>364</sup> She believes that the phenomenon referred to as personal piety is primarily a manifestation of the elite because it gave them the opportunity to 'd'afficher leur loyauté d'une part et l'intimité avec le roi et les dieux que pouvaient leur procurer hautes

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<sup>356</sup> Stevens 2009: 1.

<sup>357</sup> Baines 1987: 79.

<sup>358</sup> Stevens 2009: 1.

<sup>359</sup> Assmann 2002: 229.

<sup>360</sup> Assmann 1995: 191; Assmann 2002: 230.

<sup>361</sup> Assmann 2006a: 276.

<sup>362</sup> Baines and Froot 2011: 3-4.

<sup>363</sup> Baines and Froot 2011: 4, Footnote 17.

<sup>364</sup> Bickel 2002: 66.

prêtrises et charges administratives, d'autre part'.<sup>365</sup> Bickel states that the term *religiosité individuelle* is used by her in a 'acception positive, impliquant non seulement les attitudes de piété et de dévotion, mais aussi la conscience de l'individu de prendre part à la religion qui définit sa culture et de vivre une relation de réciprocité avec le monde divin'.<sup>366</sup> However, it is important to note that Bickel uses the term *piété personnelle* in relation to the religious attitudes that emerged towards the middle of the Eighteenth Dynasty.<sup>367</sup> *Gottesnähe* (literally meaning 'closeness to god') is a German term introduced mainly by Brunner<sup>368</sup> and Assmann,<sup>369</sup> and used by Luiselli.<sup>370</sup> Luiselli notes that few other scholars have adopted it and suggests that the resistance could be a result of linguistic differences.<sup>371</sup> She argues that compounds such as this are far less common in English or French and so there is no corresponding term in these languages. Luiselli states that, 'Nevertheless, the term *Gottesnähe* is potentially quite valuable, because it can express a state to which one aspired either through religious activity or through emotion'.<sup>372</sup> Luiselli warns that care must be taken to translate this term as 'closeness to a deity' rather than its literal translation of 'closeness to God'.<sup>373</sup>

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<sup>365</sup> Bickel 2002: 66.

<sup>366</sup> Bickel 2002: 66.

<sup>367</sup> Bickel 2002: 66.

<sup>368</sup> Brunner 1977c.

<sup>369</sup> Assmann 1984: 9-21, 25-6; Assmann 1995.

<sup>370</sup> Luiselli 2011b: 9-11.

<sup>371</sup> Luiselli 2008b: 4-5.

<sup>372</sup> Luiselli 2008b: 4-5.

<sup>373</sup> Luiselli 2008b: 4-5.

### 2.7.2 Definition of 'religiosity'

This research will distance itself from broader terms such as *practical religion*<sup>374</sup> and *private religion*,<sup>375</sup> as well as from the original term *personal piety*.<sup>376</sup> Instead, this research will use the term *religiosity* or *individual religiosity*.<sup>377</sup> *Religiosity* is defined as 'religiousness' or 'the quality, character, or state of being religious'<sup>378</sup> and therefore does not favour religious action or religious emotion over the other. In this sense, the term incorporates some of the positive connotations of the term *Gottesnähe*. The use of the term *individual religiosity* will ensure that this research remains focused on the individual.<sup>379</sup> As discussed in Section 2.7.1, the term *individual religiosity* is favoured by Bickel who considers it to be the most suitable because of its positive sense.<sup>380</sup> According to Bickel, the term *individual religiosity* incorporates reflections based on the individual's religious sentiment and not just devotional acts of piety.<sup>381</sup> The positive sense of the term and its consideration of both action and emotion, as well as its focus on the individual, is why it has been chosen for use in this research. However, unlike Bickel's use of the term, in this thesis *individual religiosity* will be used in relation to the time period from the start of the Old Kingdom through to the end of New Kingdom, not just from the middle of the Eighteenth Dynasty.

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<sup>374</sup> Baines 1987: 79.

<sup>375</sup> Stevens 2006: 21.

<sup>376</sup> Erman 1911: 1086; Breasted 1912: 349.

<sup>377</sup> See Luiselli 2011b: 6-9 for a detailed discussion of the term individual religiosity.

<sup>378</sup> Oxford English Dictionary: the definitive record of the English language 2016b; Oxford English Dictionary: the definitive record of the English language 2016c.

<sup>379</sup> See Section 2.2.4 for a discussion on the importance of focussing on the individual.

<sup>380</sup> Bickel 2002: 66.

<sup>381</sup> Bickel 2002: 66.

## 2.8 History of research into the three aspects of ancient Egyptian culture

The history of research discussed in this section is intended to give an overview of the most useful publications for festivals, household and personal items, and communication with the dead and with gods. It is not a review of all the existing research into these aspects of ancient Egyptian society; full details of the all the relevant publications can be found in the appropriate chapter.<sup>382</sup>

### 2.8.1 Festivals

There is a wide range of existing research into ancient Egyptian festivals. The research discussed below is that which is particularly useful when considering festivals from the perspective of invisible religion. Two festivals, the Festival of Osiris at Abydos and the Beautiful Feast of the Valley at Thebes, will be considered in more detail in Chapter 3. The existing research into these festivals will also be considered below.

#### 2.8.1.1 Festivals in general

James' 1961 publication considers the seasonal feasts and festivals that occurred as part of a range of ancient cultures including Egypt, Mesopotamia, Palestine, Asia Minor and Greece, and Rome.<sup>383</sup> James focusses on 'the rhythm of nature reflected in the seasonal sequence' and its influence on mankind.<sup>384</sup> His chapter on ancient Egypt considers what the seasonal sequence of the Nile Valley would have been and how this influenced the invention of the

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<sup>382</sup> For festivals see Chapter 3, for household and personal items see Chapter 4, for communication with the dead and with gods see Chapter 5. Please note that the information regarding existing publications relating to a specific subject is included in the relevant subsection of each chapter.

<sup>383</sup> James 1961.

<sup>384</sup> James 1961: 11.

calendar.<sup>385</sup> By considering festivals in ancient Egypt from the perspective of nature and the seasons, James furthers the understanding of why Egyptian festivals took place and why they occurred at specific times.

Bleeker takes a different approach in his 1967 publication entitled *Egyptian festivals: enactments of religious renewal*; he considers festivals from the perspective of ancient Egyptian religion as a whole and attempts to understand the significance of festivals in Egyptian religion.<sup>386</sup> Bleeker aims to give a full and detailed overview of ancient Egyptian festivals by assessing the ancient Egyptian terminology, the available sources and key elements of Egyptian festivals.<sup>387</sup> In addition, he considers 'Festivals of the Gods', in particular the Festival of Sokar, in extensive detail in order to further understand ancient Egyptian festivals.<sup>388</sup> When considering ancient Egyptian festivals in general, chapters two ('The significance of Egyptian festivals')<sup>389</sup> and three ('Egyptian festivals')<sup>390</sup> are particularly enlightening.

In *Religion in ancient Egypt: gods, myths and personal practice* which was edited by Shafer and published in 1991,<sup>391</sup> ancient Egyptian festivals are discussed in the context of 'divinity and deities in ancient Egypt' (written by Silverman),<sup>392</sup> 'ancient Egyptian cosmogonies and cosmology' (written by Lesko),<sup>393</sup> and 'society, morality and religious practice' (written by

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<sup>385</sup> James 1961: 44-69.

<sup>386</sup> Bleeker 1967.

<sup>387</sup> Bleeker 1967: 27-50.

<sup>388</sup> Bleeker 1967: 51-90.

<sup>389</sup> Bleeker 1967: 23-6.

<sup>390</sup> Bleeker 1967: 27-50.

<sup>391</sup> Shafer 1991.

<sup>392</sup> Silverman 1991.

<sup>393</sup> Lesko 1991.

Baines).<sup>394</sup> The publication aims to consider the role of human beings in ancient Egyptian religion and thus offers an insight into festivals from the perspective of ordinary ancient Egyptians, as well as from the perspective of kings, priests and the elite. *Religion in ancient Egypt* provides information regarding the human element of festivals in ancient Egypt.

Assmann also considers the human elements of festivals in his 1994 publication in which he uses literary sources to consider the ancient Egyptians' desire to see god, particularly during and after the Amarna Period.<sup>395</sup> His publication predominantly focuses on a graffito written during the third year of the reign of Semenchkare by a man named Pawah inside the earlier Theban tomb of a man named Pairi.<sup>396</sup> Assmann uses this graffito along with other texts such as prayers to demonstrate the importance of festivals in allowing ordinary ancient Egyptians to cross the boundaries between 'secrecy and publicity, sacred and profane, inner and outer'.<sup>397</sup> In this publication, Assmann highlights how important festivals were to ordinary ancient Egyptians, as well as the link between festivals, state religion and individual religiosity.

In *Religion and ritual in ancient Egypt*, which was published in 2011, Teeter aims to provide an overview of ancient Egyptian religion using archaeological evidence and inscriptions.<sup>398</sup> Teeter focusses on the role of religion in society in order to understand what religion meant to ordinary ancient Egyptians. The logistical and economic challenges associated with

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<sup>394</sup> Baines 1991.

<sup>395</sup> Assmann 1994a.

<sup>396</sup> Assmann 1994a.

<sup>397</sup> Assmann 1994a: 20.

<sup>398</sup> Teeter 2011.



festivals are considered, in addition to the purpose of festivals.<sup>399</sup> Teeter briefly discusses the sources for festivals in general but predominantly focusses on those sources that evoke what it would have been like to attend a festival.<sup>400</sup> In addition to festivals in general, Teeter also discusses three festivals in more detail. These are the Festival of Osiris,<sup>401</sup> the Feast of the Valley,<sup>402</sup> and the Festival of Amenhotep I.<sup>403</sup> *Religion and ritual in ancient Egypt* offers a clear and concise overview of festivals in ancient Egypt. However, it is lacking in detail and does not fully engage with the available archaeological and textual sources meaning that it has limited use if a fully comprehensive discussion of ancient Egyptian festivals is required.

#### 2.8.1.2 *The Festival of Osiris at Abydos*

One of the earliest publications that deals with the Festival of Osiris was written by Schäfer and published in 1904.<sup>404</sup> Schäfer transcribes and translates the Ikhernofret Stela and uses it to identify key elements of the Festival of Osiris. The publication provides a clear interpretation of some of the components of the festival and establishes a chronology of events. However, as Schäfer only uses the Ikhernofret stela as evidence for the festival, there are some elements that are now known to have taken place which are not included.

In addition to the publication by Schäfer, publications by Chassinat (1966),<sup>405</sup> Mikhail (1984),<sup>406</sup> Lavier (1989)<sup>407</sup> and Eaton (2006)<sup>408</sup> all deal specifically with the Festival of Osiris

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<sup>399</sup> Teeter 2011: 56-8.

<sup>400</sup> Teeter 2011: 56-8.

<sup>401</sup> Teeter 2011: 58-66.

<sup>402</sup> Teeter 2011: 66-73.

<sup>403</sup> Teeter 2011: 73-5.

<sup>404</sup> Schäfer 1904.

<sup>405</sup> Chassinat 1966.

<sup>406</sup> Mikhail 1984a.

<sup>407</sup> Lavier 1989.

at Abydos. Both Chassinat and Mikhail deal with the so-called 'mysteries' or 'mystery play' element of the festival, with Mikhail considering in particular the dramatic elements of this part of the festival.<sup>409</sup> The publications by Lavier and Eaton focus on specific examples of evidence for the Festival of Osiris at Abydos.<sup>410</sup> Lavier uses Middle and New Kingdom stelae as evidence;<sup>411</sup> Eaton focusses on Nineteenth-Dynasty royal monuments at Abydos.<sup>412</sup> All four publications offer additional information regarding the Festival of Osiris at Abydos. The range of sources used in the publications supplements the information gained by Schäfer from his analysis of the Ikhnofret Stela and create the foundations of a more comprehensive understanding of the Festival of Osiris at Abydos.

In her 1973 publication, David considers religious ritual in general at Abydos, of which the Festival of Osiris forms a part.<sup>413</sup> The same can be said of O'Connor (2009) who focusses on the site of Abydos and its history.<sup>414</sup> He details the cult of Osiris which naturally includes the Festival of Osiris.<sup>415</sup> In Mojsov's 2005 publication, he takes a slightly different approach and studies the deity Osiris and the mythology, beliefs and practices surrounding him.<sup>416</sup> Osiris's importance at Abydos is discussed, as well as the Osiris Festival at the same site.<sup>417</sup> These three publications are valuable to the study of the Festival of Osiris at Abydos because they provide context for the festival. They further the understanding of why Osiris was a key deity at Abydos and why the Osiris Festival took place.

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<sup>408</sup> Eaton 2006.

<sup>409</sup> See Chassinat 1966; Mikhail 1984a.

<sup>410</sup> Lavier 1989; Eaton 2006.

<sup>411</sup> Lavier 1989.

<sup>412</sup> Eaton 2006.

<sup>413</sup> David 1973: 243-50.

<sup>414</sup> O'Connor 2009.

<sup>415</sup> O'Connor 2009: 31-4.

<sup>416</sup> Mojsov 2005.

<sup>417</sup> Mojsov 2005: 50-3.

Several publications focus on specific elements of the Festival of Osiris in more detail. Both Junker (1910) and Pries (2011) have studied an element of the festival known as *Stundenwachen* which translates as 'hours' guards'.<sup>418</sup> Both scholars have undertaken a philological study of the available texts relating to this ritual of performing hourly rites for Osiris in order to further understand the ritual. The 1969 publication by Gaballa and Kitchen,<sup>419</sup> and the 1984 publication by Mikhail<sup>420</sup> both deal with the Festival of Sokar which is often interpreted by scholars as being part of the Festival of Osiris. Raven (1982) and Coulon (2014) consider the archaeological evidence for corn mummies in order to assess their meaning and purpose;<sup>421</sup> Mikhail (1984) assesses the archaeological, textual and pictorial evidence for the role of the *djed*-pillar in the Festival of Osiris;<sup>422</sup> and Tooley (1996) focusses on the existence and function of Osiris bricks.<sup>423</sup> These publications provide important assessments of the extant evidence for specific elements of the Osiris Festival. When considered in conjunction with the publications discussed above, which deal with the Festival of Osiris at Abydos more generally, these publications can aid the development of an accurate understanding of what took place at the Festival of Osiris at Abydos and why.

### 2.8.1.3 *The Beautiful Feast of the Valley at Thebes*

Foucart's 1924 publication was the earliest publication to detail the Beautiful Feast of the Valley at Thebes.<sup>424</sup> Foucart primarily focusses on the processional element of the festival

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<sup>418</sup> See Junker 1910; Pries 2011.

<sup>419</sup> Gaballa and Kitchen 1969.

<sup>420</sup> Mikhail 1984b.

<sup>421</sup> Raven 1982; Coulon 2014

<sup>422</sup> Mikhail 1984c.

<sup>423</sup> Tooley 1996.

<sup>424</sup> Foucart 1924.

and mainly uses Graeco-Roman sources from Theban temples as evidence.<sup>425</sup> These sources are now considered to be out dated by other scholars in the field.<sup>426</sup> Wiebach's 1986 publication also deals primarily with the processional part of the festival and considers the role of the sun and the sun god Amun in the festival.<sup>427</sup> Wiebach also considers the unique relationship between the living and the dead that existed during the festival.<sup>428</sup> In her extensive 2001 publication, Cabrol has included a comprehensive section on the processional routes of Western Thebes.<sup>429</sup> She aims to determine which foundations are part of the route taken during the Beautiful Feast of the Valley at different periods, which are rest stops and which is the ultimate destination of the procession.

In 1953 Schott published a detailed analysis of the Beautiful Festival of the Valley based on evidence from Theban tombs.<sup>430</sup> In his study, Schott assesses every piece of this evidence in order to produce a comprehensive chronology of the festival. Schott identifies key elements of the festival and also provides a catalogue of all the inscriptions used in his publication.<sup>431</sup> Seyfried revised and expanded Schott's publication in 2013 with his own publication which details every extant source for the Beautiful Festival of the Valley.<sup>432</sup> This includes the evidence from Theban tombs as discussed by Scott, the references to the festival in Theban tombs that have been discovered since Schott's publication, and evidence from temples. Seyfried describes key elements of the festival and provides a catalogue of every existing

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<sup>425</sup> Foucart 1924.

<sup>426</sup> Seyfried 2013: 7.

<sup>427</sup> Wiebach 1986: 266-8, 284-91.

<sup>428</sup> Wiebach 1986: 277-84.

<sup>429</sup> Cabrol 2001: 543-64.

<sup>430</sup> Schott 1953.

<sup>431</sup> See Schott 1953: 94-133 for the catalogue of inscriptions.

<sup>432</sup> Seyfried 2013.

source for the festival at the time of publication.<sup>433</sup> The publications by Schott and Seyfried are key works in the study of the Beautiful Festival of the Valley. Both publications are comprehensively written and the inclusion of a catalogue of sources in both is extremely useful.

Karkowski uses Hatshepsut's temple at Deir el-Bahari as evidence for the Beautiful Festival of the Valley and published papers on the subject in 1979 and 1992.<sup>434</sup> Karkowski's evidence from the temple is often able to fill gaps left by the evidence from the tombs because the temple depicts elements of the festival that would have been hidden from public view, as well as the events that would have taken place publically.<sup>435</sup> Using evidence from Hatshepsut's temple at Deir el-Bahari, Karkowski has been able to provide a relatively full and detailed account of the Beautiful Festival of the Valley.

The publications by Schott, Seyfried, Karkowski, Wiebach and Cabrol are extremely valuable when attempting to understand the events that took place during the Beautiful Festival of the Valley and why they occurred. These publications can be supplemented by works such as that of Ventura (1986) who conducted a philological survey of documents of the Theban necropolis,<sup>436</sup> some of which refer to the valley festival, and Klotz who found references to the Beautiful Feast of the Valley in his study of Stela MMA 21.2.6.<sup>437</sup>

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<sup>433</sup> See Seyfried 2013: 55-105 for the catalogue of inscriptions.

<sup>434</sup> Karkowski 1979; Karkowski 1992.

<sup>435</sup> Karkowski 1979; Karkowski 1992.

<sup>436</sup> Ventura 1986.

<sup>437</sup> Klotz 2006.

## 2.8.2 *Household and personal items*

The household and personal items considered in Chapter 4 in terms of invisible religion are: architectural features and decoration, furniture, cosmetic items, and amulets. The key publications relating to these examples of household and/or personal items are discussed in detail below.

### 2.8.2.1 *Architectural features and decoration*

There are numerous publications that consider architectural features and decoration in domestic houses in ancient Egypt. However, some are particularly useful for understanding how invisible religion may have existed within the home. In her 2015 publication, Weiss considers architectural features and decoration from the houses at Deir el-Medina as evidence for religious practice.<sup>438</sup> She uses the theory of agency in order to reach conclusions regarding why religious practice was carried out in the home and who it was carried out by.<sup>439</sup> Badawy considers Egyptian architecture in general in his 1968 publication of the same name.<sup>440</sup> He provides a clear understanding of what features an ancient Egyptian domestic house was likely to have consisted of. Bierbrier (1982),<sup>441</sup> Romano (1987),<sup>442</sup> Friedman (1994),<sup>443</sup> Koltsida (2007),<sup>444</sup> Szpakowska (2008)<sup>445</sup> and Weiss (2009 and 2015)<sup>446</sup> all consider architectural features and decoration from the perspective of daily life.

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<sup>438</sup> Weiss 2015. See also Weiss 2009.

<sup>439</sup> Weiss 2015: 183-6. For more on agency theory, see Weiss 2012: 196-7.

<sup>440</sup> Badawy 1968.

<sup>441</sup> Bierbrier 1982: 65-70.

<sup>442</sup> Romano 1987: 22-32.

<sup>443</sup> Friedman 1994: 97-117.

<sup>444</sup> Koltsida 2007b.

<sup>445</sup> Szpakowska 2008: 14-9.

<sup>446</sup> Weiss 2009; Weiss 2015.

These publications use archaeological and literary evidence to establish the way in which ordinary ancient Egyptian used their homes. Robins (1996)<sup>447</sup> and Kleinke (2007)<sup>448</sup> focus on a specific element of the way in which the architectural features of domestic houses may have been used; as ‘female spaces’ associated with fertility and sexuality.

In Section 4.3 of this thesis, the evidence for the architectural features and decoration discussed predominantly comes from Deir el-Medina and Tel el-Amarna.<sup>449</sup> Bruyère’s 1939 excavation report for Deir el-Medina documents the platforms, wall niches, false doors and wall paintings discovered at the site.<sup>450</sup> Bruyère describes the location of each feature within the village of Deir el-Medina and within its specific house. Weiss expands on the work of Bruyère in her 2015 publication that considers fixed cultic emplacements and artefacts used in religious practice from Deir el-Medina in detail.<sup>451</sup> Meskell’s 1998 publication also details the architectural features mentioned above and she provides a thorough discussion of the features within the context of social relations within the village.<sup>452</sup> Koltsida (2006)<sup>453</sup> and Weiss (2009)<sup>454</sup> discuss platforms discovered in Deir el-Medina and attempt to assign a purpose to them. Architectural features and decoration at Amarna are detailed in the excavation reports by Woolley (1922),<sup>455</sup> Peet and Woolley (1923),<sup>456</sup> Newton (1924)<sup>457</sup> and

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<sup>447</sup> Robins 1996.

<sup>448</sup> Kleinke 2007.

<sup>449</sup> See Appendix I.

<sup>450</sup> Bruyère 1939b: 241-335.

<sup>451</sup> Weiss 2015: 33-178.

<sup>452</sup> Meskell 1998: 216-29.

<sup>453</sup> Koltsida 2006.

<sup>454</sup> Weiss 2009.

<sup>455</sup> Woolley 1922: 51-3.

<sup>456</sup> Peet and Woolley 1923: 37-50.

<sup>457</sup> Newton 1924: 289-94.

Pendlebury and Frankfort (1933).<sup>458</sup> These reports provide information regarding the location, size, associated finds, etc. of platforms, wall niches and wall paintings. The relationship of these examples of architectural features and decoration with religion is considered in Ikram's 1989 publication which focusses on the role of domestic shrines at Amarna,<sup>459</sup> and in Stevens' 2003 and 2006 publications in which she considers these features as evidence for domestic/private religion at Amarna.<sup>460</sup>

Wall paintings at both Deir el-Medina and Amarna are analysed by Kemp in his 1979 publication, which includes reconstructions of the wall paintings from Amarna.<sup>461</sup> Kemp also considers why the wall paintings were created and what purposes they were intended to serve. The style and purpose of the wall paintings at Deir el-Medina and Amarna are also considered by Meskell (1998)<sup>462</sup> and Stevens (2003 and 2009).<sup>463</sup>

#### 2.8.2.2 Furniture

Baker's 1966 publication entitled *Furniture in the ancient world* provides a clear analysis of the origins and evolution of ancient Egyptian furniture.<sup>464</sup> Baker focuses predominantly on furniture that is likely to have belonged to royalty or the elite and consequently his publication is of limited value when considering the furniture that would have belonged to ordinary ancient Egyptians. However, Baker's publication includes many images of typical

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<sup>458</sup> Pendlebury and Frankfort 1933: 5-77.

<sup>459</sup> Ikram 1989.

<sup>460</sup> Stevens 2003: 145-56; Stevens 2006: 215-8.

<sup>461</sup> Kemp 1979.

<sup>462</sup> Meskell 1998: 216, 219, 223, 226-7, 231.

<sup>463</sup> Stevens 2003: 155-6; Stevens 2009: 6-7.

<sup>464</sup> Baker 1966.



items of furniture which is useful.<sup>465</sup> Killen's first publication regarding ancient Egyptian furniture was published in 1980 and focusses predominantly on beds, chairs and stools.<sup>466</sup> In his publication Killen attempts to catalogue every extant example of each furniture type from 4,000 to 1,300 B.C. The catalogue is extremely useful as it provides the provenance, current location, materials, dimensions and a description of each item of furniture where possible. The publication also includes an extensive set of plates which provide numerous photographs of each furniture type. In addition, Killen has detailed the different techniques used to manufacture furniture in ancient Egypt and the materials that would have been available to use.<sup>467</sup> In his second publication on the subject of ancient Egyptian furniture (1994),<sup>468</sup> Killen focusses on boxes, chests and footstools. As in the first volume, Killen provides a catalogue of every known example of each type of furniture and multiple photographs of the different types. Due to the thoroughness of the catalogue and the wide range of plates included in the publications, both of Killen's books on ancient Egyptian furniture are extremely useful when trying to find evidence of invisible religion in ancient Egypt.

In order to be certain that furniture which was likely to have come from an ordinary domestic setting is being considered, particular attention is paid to items of furniture excavated at Tell el-Amarna and Deir el-Medina. For Amarna the 1923 excavation report by Peet and Woolley,<sup>469</sup> as well as Borchardt and Ricke's 1980 publication<sup>470</sup> and Stevens' 2006

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<sup>465</sup> Baker 1966.

<sup>466</sup> Killen 1980.

<sup>467</sup> Killen 1980: 1-22.

<sup>468</sup> Killen 1994.

<sup>469</sup> Peet and Woolley 1923: 60-5.

<sup>470</sup> Borchardt and Ricke 1980 (a *Fundliste* is provided for each house or group of houses).

publication,<sup>471</sup> provide the necessary information regarding the furniture discovered at the site. Bruyère's 1939 excavation report details all of the domestic furniture discovered at the site of Deir el-Medina.<sup>472</sup> Weiss discusses so-called cultic furniture from Deir el-Medina under the heading 'offering equipment' in her 2015 publication.<sup>473</sup> In addition, Janssen carried out a notable philological analysis of texts, ostraca and papyri from Deir el-Medina which was published in 2009.<sup>474</sup> The publication analyses the number of times different words for furniture appear within these texts from Deir el-Medina. As a result of Janssen's work it is possible to determine which items of furniture were most popular within the settlement. This is useful when considering invisible religion in relation to furniture because it suggests which items of furniture ordinary ancient Egyptians were most likely to come into contact with on a daily basis.

A case study of the furniture discovered in the intact tomb of the architect Kha is included in Section 4.4.6. Schiaparelli's 1927 excavation report for the tomb of Kha<sup>475</sup> (an English translation of the text only was published in 2008<sup>476</sup>) provides an excellent overview of the discovery and excavation of the tomb. The items discovered within the tomb are all detailed in the publication but not in a particularly clear format. Smith discusses the artefacts discovered in the tomb in a more methodological manner.<sup>477</sup> However, he compares the objects to those discovered in other intact or mostly-intact tombs of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Dynasties, and subsequently the artefacts are grouped under rather general

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<sup>471</sup> Stevens 2006: 195-201.

<sup>472</sup> Bruyère 1939b: 47-9.

<sup>473</sup> Weiss 2015: 117-34.

<sup>474</sup> Janssen 2009.

<sup>475</sup> Schiaparelli 1927.

<sup>476</sup> Schiaparelli 2008.

<sup>477</sup> Smith 1992: 196-7.

terms. Vassilika's publication highlights some of the more impressive items discovered in the tomb.<sup>478</sup> Her descriptions are accompanied by colour photographs which are very helpful for assessing whether the items of furniture discovered in Kha's tomb provide evidence for invisible religion in ancient Egypt.

### 2.8.2.3 *Cosmetic items*

Bénéдите's 1907 catalogue of the mirrors held at Cairo Museum provides an excellent overview of the wide variety of mirrors produced in ancient Egypt.<sup>479</sup> The publication includes examples of virtually every extant form of ancient Egyptian mirror. In 1979 Lilyquist analysed the archaeological evidence for Egyptian mirrors and detailed the patterns and the changes in their forms.<sup>480</sup> Lilyquist's publication is one of the most seminal works with regard to the study of ancient Egyptian mirrors. However, her publication only considers mirrors up until the Middle Kingdom meaning that a large section of ancient Egyptian culture is not included in her study. Nevertheless, Lilyquist's publication is extremely useful when considering invisible religion and mirrors in ancient Egypt. In 1989, Anlen and Padiou published a book on ancient bronze mirrors and a section of the publication is devoted to mirrors from ancient Egypt.<sup>481</sup> This publication is not as detailed as Lilyquist's 1979 publication but it does deal with mirrors that date to after the Middle Kingdom. The study by Anlen and Padiou is helpful, especially when considered in conjunction with Lilyquist's publication from 1979. In 2001, Derriks published a book and a paper that consider mirrors

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<sup>478</sup> Vassilika 2010.

<sup>479</sup> Bénéдите 1907.

<sup>480</sup> Lilyquist 1979.

<sup>481</sup> Anlen and Padiou 1989: 439-501.

with handles in the form of female figures.<sup>482</sup> He named these objects *miroirs cariatides*.<sup>483</sup>

These publications focus on a particular form of ancient Egyptian mirrors and, while this is useful for the study of Egyptian mirrors in general, it is slightly less relevant to the search for the relationship between mirrors and invisible religion. In order to find invisible religion the whole range of ancient Egyptian mirrors must be considered. The 2010 publication by Castañeda Reyes considers mirrors in a social context and the information that can be gained from them with regards to cultural change.<sup>484</sup> Castañeda Reyes provides a clear and concise history of mirrors before considering their role in society.

There are a large number of publications relating to ancient Egyptian cosmetic items.

However, some of these publications are more helpful when considering invisible religion and individual religiosity. The 1972 catalogue of ancient Egyptian *objets de toilette* by Vandier d'Abbadie is one such publication.<sup>485</sup> The catalogue divides the objects by type, for example spoons, kohl pots, palettes, etc. and provides an image of each item where possible. Cosmetic equipment is discussed in general by Schoske (1990),<sup>486</sup> Manniche (1999)<sup>487</sup> and Patch (2005).<sup>488</sup> Specific items of cosmetic equipment, such as palettes, are considered by Cialowicz (2000),<sup>489</sup> Baduel (2008),<sup>490</sup> Stevenson (2009)<sup>491</sup> and Buszek (2012).<sup>492</sup> A catalogue of the cosmetic palettes held at Manchester University Museum by

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<sup>482</sup> Derriks 2001a; Derriks 2001b.

<sup>483</sup> Derriks 2001a; Derriks 2001b.

<sup>484</sup> Castañeda Reyes 2010.

<sup>485</sup> Vandier d'Abbadie 1972.

<sup>486</sup> Schoske 1990.

<sup>487</sup> Manniche 1999.

<sup>488</sup> Patch 2005a.

<sup>489</sup> Cialowicz 2000.

<sup>490</sup> Baduel 2008.

<sup>491</sup> Stevenson 2009.

<sup>492</sup> Buszek 2012.

Patenaude and Shaw (2011) is also useful as it provides numerous examples of cosmetic palettes and states information about each item, such as the date and provenance, where possible.<sup>493</sup> Lucas and Harris' 1989 publication studies the materials and industries of ancient Egypt and so provides an insight into how cosmetic items would have been made and why certain materials were chosen.<sup>494</sup>

#### 2.8.2.4 Amulets

The 1914 publication by Petrie<sup>495</sup> and the 1994 publication by Andrews<sup>496</sup> are the two most valuable works regarding ancient Egyptian amulets, especially when considering them from the perspective of invisible religion. Both publications divide the existing ancient Egyptian amulets into different categories based on their form and/or function. Andrews also considers the history of amulets in ancient Egypt and how their forms and uses developed over time.<sup>497</sup> Andrews provides a detailed survey of the materials used to make amulets in ancient Egypt and the physical and symbolic qualities associated with each material.<sup>498</sup>

Stevens has produced a clear and thorough inventory of the jewellery and amulets discovered at Amarna.<sup>499</sup> Her discussions of the symbolism and parallels for each object type provide highly valuable information regarding the study of amulets in relation to invisible religion. This publication was extremely useful for the creation of Table 3 in Section 4.6.3 which details the amulets that were discovered in non-mortuary contexts at Amarna, as well

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<sup>493</sup> Patenaude and Shaw 2011.

<sup>494</sup> Lucas and Harris 1989.

<sup>495</sup> Petrie 1914.

<sup>496</sup> Andrews 1994b.

<sup>497</sup> Andrews 1994b: 6-13.

<sup>498</sup> Andrews 1994b: 100-6.

<sup>499</sup> Stevens 2006: 29-77.

as at other sites throughout Egypt. The table is helpful for determining a possible link between amulets and invisible religion.

Both volumes of the catalogue of amulets held at the Museum of Cairo written by Reisner and published in 1907 (Volume I)<sup>500</sup> and 1958 (Volume II)<sup>501</sup> also provide valuable information regarding amulets in ancient Egypt. Full details of each amulet and well as a photograph are provided where possible. Specific elements of ancient Egyptian amulets are considered by Haarlem (1992)<sup>502</sup> who analyses the function of amulets, Gwinnett and Gorelick (1993)<sup>503</sup> who have detailed the methods of manufacture associated with amulets, and Germond (2005)<sup>504</sup> who focusses on the symbolism of Egyptian amulets.

### *2.8.3 Communication with the dead and with gods*

Communication with the dead and with gods is a widely studied subject. The publications discussed below are particularly helpful when considering what information evidence for communication with the dead and with gods is able to provide regarding individual religiosity. Due to the scale of the information available on this subject, in Chapter 5 it has been split into two sections: communication with the dead and communication with the gods.

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<sup>500</sup> Reisner 1907.

<sup>501</sup> Reisner 1958.

<sup>502</sup> Haarlem 1992.

<sup>503</sup> Gwinnett and Gorelick 1993.

<sup>504</sup> Germond 2005.

### 2.8.3.1 *Communication with the dead*

The formative publication regarding letters to the dead is the 1928 publication by Gardiner and Sethe.<sup>505</sup> In their publication Gardiner and Sethe identify six letters to the dead and two possible letters to the dead. Gardiner and Sethe provide a detailed description of each letter to the dead, including its provenance, date, material, etc. and plates with drawings of each letter to the dead. Their publication also includes a translation and philological summary of the text written on each letter. This publication was followed by others in which additional letters to the dead are identified, or known letters to the dead are further analysed. These publications include: Gardiner (1930),<sup>506</sup> Piankoff and Clère (1934),<sup>507</sup> Černý and Gardiner (1957),<sup>508</sup> Simpson (1966),<sup>509</sup> Fecht (1969),<sup>510</sup> Gilula (1969),<sup>511</sup> Simpson (1970),<sup>512</sup> Goedicke (1972),<sup>513</sup> Simpson (1981),<sup>514</sup> Willems (1991),<sup>515</sup> Frandsen (1992),<sup>516</sup> Janák (2003)<sup>517</sup> and Donnat (2009).<sup>518</sup> It is essential to consider all of these publications in order to understand letters to the dead as fully as possible and to therefore identify whether they can be considered to be examples of invisible religion. In addition to the publications that consider specific letters to the dead, there are multiple publications that focus on letters to the dead in general. The 1999 publication by O'Donoghue is extremely helpful when considering letters

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<sup>505</sup> Gardiner and Sethe 1928.

<sup>506</sup> Gardiner 1930.

<sup>507</sup> Piankoff and Clère 1934.

<sup>508</sup> Černý and Gardiner 1957.

<sup>509</sup> Simpson 1966.

<sup>510</sup> Fecht 1969.

<sup>511</sup> Gilula 1969.

<sup>512</sup> Simpson 1970.

<sup>513</sup> Goedicke 1972.

<sup>514</sup> Simpson 1981.

<sup>515</sup> Willems 1991.

<sup>516</sup> Frandsen 1992.

<sup>517</sup> Janák 2003.

<sup>518</sup> Donnat 2009.

to the dead because O'Donoghue attempts to understand the relationship of these letters to ancient Egyptian religion, as well as their social context.<sup>519</sup> Similarly, Bommas' 1999 publication analyses the objects that the letters were written on in order to provide more accurate dates for the letters.<sup>520</sup> Bommas notes the importance of establishing an artefact's *Sitz im Leben* in order to fully understand the role it played in ancient Egyptian society.<sup>521</sup>

Anthropoid busts were first identified by Bruyère in his 1939 report on the 1934-5 excavations at Deir el-Medina.<sup>522</sup> In this publication, Bruyère describes the busts and details their find-spots, size, material, etc. However, it is important to note that anthropoid busts were first discovered during the 1911 and 1913 German excavations at Deir el-Medina, but that the report for these excavations was not published until 1943 by Anthes.<sup>523</sup> Both publications give important information regarding the initial interpretation of anthropoid busts which helped to shape their subsequent interpretation. Anthropoid busts have been considered to have been part of an ancestor cult by many scholars. The publications by Friedman (1985),<sup>524</sup> Harrington (2005 and 2013)<sup>525</sup> and Bochi (2010)<sup>526</sup> have all dealt with anthropoid busts in this manner and have aimed to understand the role that anthropoid busts played within culture. Such publications offer an essential insight into the purpose of ancestor busts and enable the consideration of whether they can be seen as examples of invisible religion. In her 1981 publication, Keith-Bennett highlights the importance of not

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<sup>519</sup> O'Donoghue 1999: 87, 102-3.

<sup>520</sup> Bommas 1999.

<sup>521</sup> Bommas 1999: 53.

<sup>522</sup> Bruyère 1939b: 168-74.

<sup>523</sup> Anthes 1943: 50-68.

<sup>524</sup> Friedman 1985.

<sup>525</sup> Harrington 2005; Harrington 2013.

<sup>526</sup> Bochi 2010.



assuming that the busts were related to an ancestor cult given that (in her opinion) there is little evidence to support this theory.<sup>527</sup> This argument is continued in her comprehensive 2011 catalogue (published under Keith and with contributions by Donnat, Stevens and Harrington) that details every extant example of anthropoid busts.<sup>528</sup> This publication is extremely valuable when studying ancient Egyptian anthropoid busts as it enables efficient comparison and analysis of the busts. Keith's own analysis is informative and offers several suggestions for the purpose of anthropoid busts based on the evidence relating to them.

*ꜥḥ iꜣr n Rꜥ* stelae were first published in 1939 by Bruyère.<sup>529</sup> In his publication Bruyère discusses the busts in detail and identifies them as an independent genre of mortuary stelae. However, it is Demarée's 1983 publication on *ꜥḥ iꜣr n Rꜥ* stelae that is the most important publication regarding these stelae.<sup>530</sup> In this book, Demarée considers the purpose and meaning of the stelae, as well as providing a catalogue (including translations) of every example of *ꜥḥ iꜣr n Rꜥ* stelae known to him at the time of publication. This publication provides an excellent overview of *ꜥḥ iꜣr n Rꜥ* stelae and their role in ancient Egyptian culture, and facilitates the consideration of these artefacts from the perspective of invisible religion. Demarée's publication was followed in 1986 by an article by Schulman in which he made observations regarding Demarée's interpretation and analysis of the stelae, as well as identifying another *ꜥḥ iꜣr n Rꜥ* stela.<sup>531</sup> Schulman's publication offers some interesting perspectives on *ꜥḥ iꜣr n Rꜥ* stelae but nevertheless Demarée's 1983 publication still remains the most useful. Also in 1986, Demarée published an article in which he continued his 1983

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<sup>527</sup> Keith-Bennett 1981: 47-8.

<sup>528</sup> Keith (with contributions by S. Donnat, A. K. Stevens, N. Harrington) 2011.

<sup>529</sup> Bruyère 1939a: 151-67.

<sup>530</sup> Demarée 1983.

<sup>531</sup> Schulman 1986.

catalogue by discussing some additional *ꜣḥ iḳr n Rꜥ* stelae that had come to his attention since his initial publication.<sup>532</sup> Additional *ꜣḥ iḳr n Rꜥ* stelae were also published by Leahy in 1990<sup>533</sup> and Griffin in 2007.<sup>534</sup> Both of these publications, but Griffin's in particular, add to the discussion regarding the purpose and function of *ꜣḥ iḳr n Rꜥ* stelae.

Dreams as a method of communication with the dead are predominantly discussed by Szpakowska.<sup>535</sup> Szpakowska's work is particularly helpful when considering dreams as an example of invisible religion because she considers why the ancient Egyptians had certain opinions regarding dreams. She also discusses conventions or decorum that may have existed in relation to dreams and that could explain why so few accounts of dreams exist. In addition to the work published by Szpakowska, Gardiner's 1935 publication of Papyrus Chester Beatty III (the so-called Dream Book) is highly valuable.<sup>536</sup> The Dream Book includes several interpretations of dreams that relate to communication with the dead and so is a vital primary source when considering communication with the dead via dreams in relation to invisible religion. Gardiner does not specifically discuss the sections of the Dream Book that refer to the dead. However, he does provide details relating to the context, condition, etc. of the papyrus which is helpful when attempting to interpret specific sections.

### 2.8.3.2 *Communication with the gods*

Prayer in ancient Egypt has been widely covered by scholars but some publications are particularly relevant when considering invisible religion. In 1999 Assmann published a study

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<sup>532</sup> Demarée 1986.

<sup>533</sup> Leahy 1990.

<sup>534</sup> Griffin 2007.

<sup>535</sup> See Szpakowska 2001a; Szpakowska 2001b; Szpakowska 2003b; Szpakowska 2006.

<sup>536</sup> Gardiner 1935a: 7-23; Gardiner 1935b: Plates 5-8a.

of Egyptian hymns and prayers in which he translated, provided commentary for and analysed various literary sources.<sup>537</sup> Assmann's interpretations of the hymns and prayers included in his publication furthers the understanding of why ancient Egyptians made hymns and prayers, as well as what they may have been hoping to achieve as a result of them. Luiselli also considers hymns and prayers in her 2007 and 2011 publications.<sup>538</sup> In her 2007 paper, Luiselli assesses the relationship between religion and literature.<sup>539</sup> She analyses Egyptian literature in terms of the information it is able to provide regarding personal piety. Luiselli's 2011 publication focusses on the search for *Gottesnähe* or 'closeness to a deity'.<sup>540</sup> As part of this publication, Luiselli has created a catalogue of ancient Egyptian texts that show evidence of personal piety, which includes hymns and prayers.<sup>541</sup>

Particular elements of prayer in ancient Egypt have been considered in more detail by some scholars. In 1985 Sweeney considered intercessory prayers;<sup>542</sup> in 2001 Baines considered the formulaic prayers in New Kingdom letters as evidence for religious practice;<sup>543</sup> in 2008 Luiselli assessed evidence for the gesture of prayer;<sup>544</sup> and in 2013 Eyre detailed the relationship between women and prayer.<sup>545</sup> Intermediary statues as a method of carrying out prayer have also been considered by Wildung (1977),<sup>546</sup> Galán (2003)<sup>547</sup> and Simmance

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<sup>537</sup> Assmann 1999.

<sup>538</sup> Luiselli 2011b: 68-76, 90-101, 132-37, 144-75, 180-7, 193-218, 311-404.

<sup>539</sup> Luiselli 2007a.

<sup>540</sup> Luiselli 2011b.

<sup>541</sup> Luiselli 2011b: 244-421.

<sup>542</sup> Sweeney 1985.

<sup>543</sup> Baines 2001.

<sup>544</sup> Luiselli 2008a.

<sup>545</sup> Eyre 2013.

<sup>546</sup> Wildung 1977a.

<sup>547</sup> Galán 2003.

(2014).<sup>548</sup> These publications use literary and archaeological evidence to further the understanding of prayer in ancient Egypt. A wide understanding of prayer in ancient Egypt, as provided by these publications, is essential before prayer is considered from the perspective of invisible religion.

Two key publications regarding votive offerings in ancient Egypt are Pinch's *Votive offerings to Hathor* (1993)<sup>549</sup> and Pinch and Waraksa's *Votive practices* (2009).<sup>550</sup> Pinch's study comprises a comprehensive survey of all known ancient Egyptian sites at which votive offerings to Hathor have been discovered. Pinch considers the development of such offerings, the possible methods of production, the industries that may have been related to the production of such items, common materials used for votive offerings and different categories of offerings. Pinch also examines why votive offerings may have been made (in this instance to Hathor) and the role that they played in culture. Pinch and Waraksa's publication provides an excellent summary of ancient Egyptian votive practices. They consider votive practices throughout Egypt and at different periods of ancient Egyptian history. Their summary incorporates examples of archaeological evidence and discussions regarding why certain items were produced and offered to deities. A discussion of votive offerings also forms part of the publications by Sadek (1987),<sup>551</sup> Baines (1991)<sup>552</sup> and Luiselli (2014).<sup>553</sup> These scholars all consider votive offerings from the perspective of personal piety or personal religious practice and aim to place votive offerings within their social context.

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<sup>548</sup> Simmance 2014.

<sup>549</sup> Pinch 1993.

<sup>550</sup> Pinch and Waraksa 2009.

<sup>551</sup> Sadek 1987: 245-67.

<sup>552</sup> Baines 1991: 180-4.

<sup>553</sup> Luiselli 2014: 107-8.

The consideration of the social context of votive offerings is particularly useful when assessing what information votive offerings are able to provide with regards to invisible religion and individual religiosity.

One of the most useful publications relating to oracles in ancient Egypt is Černý's 1962 section in Parker's book about a Saite oracle papyrus.<sup>554</sup> Černý provides an excellent overview of the role played by oracles in ancient Egyptian culture. Similar general discussions about ancient Egyptian oracles have been carried out by Ray (1981),<sup>555</sup> Shehab el-Din (2003)<sup>556</sup> and Garcia (2010).<sup>557</sup> These publications are helpful in furthering the understanding of ancient Egyptian oracles because they combine both the analysis and interpretation of archaeological and literary evidence. In addition to these general studies of oracles, numerous scholars have studied specific primary sources that relate to oracles. Blackman's 1925 and 1926 publications provide translations and commentaries of numerous ostraca and papyri on which texts relating to oracles have been written.<sup>558</sup> In 1935 Černý published a collection of texts written on ostraca found at Deir el-Medina.<sup>559</sup> He translated and provided a commentary for each ostraca. Publications such as those produced by Blackman and Černý provide evidence for the way in which ordinary ancient Egyptians used oracles. They help to establish the nature of the relationship between the oracle and the ordinary individual, an understanding of which is essential when considering invisible

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<sup>554</sup> Černý 1962.

<sup>555</sup> Ray 1981.

<sup>556</sup> Shehab el-Din 2003.

<sup>557</sup> Garcia 2010: 15-7, 19, Footnote 45.

<sup>558</sup> Blackman 1925; Blackman 1926.

<sup>559</sup> Černý 1935.

religion. Baines and Parkinson's 1997 publication<sup>560</sup> questions the view held by many scholars that oracles did not exist in ancient Egypt before the New Kingdom. They use Sinai Inscription 13 as evidence to support their view. This publication highlights the importance of understanding the primary evidence available before making assumptions about the activities of ancient Egyptians.

The key areas of research relating to dreams as a method of communicating with the dead, as discussed above in Section 2.8.3.1, are also applicable when considering dreams as a method of communicating with gods. However, there are some additional studies that are essential when considering dreams and gods. The first is the 1985 publication by Satzinger which documents and analyses the limestone stela discovered at Deir el-Medina upon which is written Ipuw's account of his dream of Hathor.<sup>561</sup> This account is one of only two in which an ordinary ancient Egyptian refers to seeing a deity in a dream. Consequently, Satzinger's publication is very useful as it allows the text to be analysed. The second item that is essential when considering communication with the gods and dreams is Assmann's 1978 publication of Djehutiemhab's account of seeing Hathor in a dream.<sup>562</sup> This inscription, found in Theban tomb 194, is the second account of an ordinary ancient Egyptian seeing a deity in a dream. Assmann's transcription, translation and analysis of the text is vital for understanding the relationship between dreams and communication with the gods. Both

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<sup>560</sup> Baines and Parkinson 1997.

<sup>561</sup> Satzinger 1985: 249-54.

<sup>562</sup> Assmann 1978.

Ipuy and Djehutiemhab's accounts of seeing Hathor in a dream are also translated and analysed by Szpakowska in two separate studies, both published in 2003.<sup>563</sup>

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<sup>563</sup> Szpakowska 2003a: 229-33; Szpakowska 2003b: 194-6.

# Chapter 3

## FESTIVALS

### 3.1 Introduction

Festivals are included in this research because of their importance in creating a universe of meaning with others.<sup>564</sup> They provided a unique opportunity for individuals to come together and share the knowledge that established identity and subsequently reproduced cultural identity.<sup>565</sup> Ordinary ancient Egyptians would have had no concept of the importance of festivals in creating a universe of meaning and therefore developing individual religiosity. Instead they would have been seen as normal occurrences that offered a break from the tedium of everyday life.<sup>566</sup> Luckmann's theory of invisible religion will be used to define seven categories that festivals can be broken down in to, in order to assess their potential for individual engagement with and internalisation of the universe of meaning.<sup>567</sup> The seven categories will be applied to two ancient Egyptian festivals. These are the Middle Kingdom Festival of Osiris at Abydos and the New Kingdom Beautiful Feast of the Valley at Thebes. These festivals have been chosen because they are good examples of festivals in

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<sup>564</sup> See Section 2.2.1.

<sup>565</sup> See Assmann 2006b: 40; Section 2.2.3.

<sup>566</sup> Bleeker 1967: 23; Meskell 2002: 171; Teeter 2011: 56.

<sup>567</sup> See Section 2.2.1.



which the general public played an important role, at two theologically different periods in ancient Egyptian history.

### 3.2 Invisible religion and festivals in ancient Egypt<sup>568</sup>

The ancient Egyptians celebrated many festivals of varying importance at regular intervals throughout the year.<sup>569</sup> These festivals gave ordinary Egyptians an opportunity to be

involved with activities of the state cult,<sup>570</sup> something they were mostly excluded from.<sup>571</sup>

The cultic rites and rituals of ancient Egyptian state religion usually took place within the private sphere of the temple and were hidden from all but the highest ranks of priests.<sup>572</sup>

However, during a festival the god left his sanctuary and appeared to the general population.<sup>573</sup> Despite the fact that festivals occurred regularly,<sup>574</sup> they provide a unique situation in terms of individual religiosity; at a festival, the religiousness of the individual comes into direct contact with the state cult. Generally, scholars argue that festivals were a chance for ordinary Egyptians to break from their monotonous daily lives and provided an opportunity for the state to reinforce its control.<sup>575</sup> Scholars also repeatedly use terms such as 'celebration', 'happiness', 'freedom' and 'stimulation' which imply that for the ordinary Egyptian, the religious element of a festival held less importance than the opportunity to

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<sup>568</sup> For a detailed summary of the key aspects of Luckmann's *Invisible Religion*, see Section 2.2.1 in this thesis.

<sup>569</sup> For further information regarding ancient Egyptian festivals in general, see Schott 1950; James 1961; Bleeker 1967; Assmann 1994a; Luiselli 2011b: 51-8; Teeter 2011: 56-75.

<sup>570</sup> Teeter 2011: 56.

<sup>571</sup> Assmann 1994a: 20.

<sup>572</sup> Teeter 2011: 56.

<sup>573</sup> Assmann 1994a: 20.

<sup>574</sup> Teeter 2011: 56 quotes records from Karnak which state that in the reign of Thutmose III 54 days of the 365-day year were dedicated to festivals and by the reign of Ramesses III this had risen to 60. For more information regarding the dating of festivals, see Spalinger 1992; Spalinger 1996; Depuydt 1997.

<sup>575</sup> Bleeker 1967: 23; Teeter 2011: 56.

leave behind the realities of their life for a short time.<sup>576</sup> If festivals are considered from the point of view of invisible religion, new insight into the individual religiosity of those present at and participating in festivals can be provided.

Festivals in ancient Egypt are an example of ritual because they were controlled to a large extent by the state. It is important to consider that religion as a social fact is what can influence the religiosity of an individual. The link between state religion and personal religiosity is further emphasised when the concept of doctrine is considered. Festivals are based upon the religious ideas of the state and are often used to emphasise state ideology.<sup>577</sup> They combine both ritual and doctrine, thereby creating religion as a social fact that is heavily influenced by the state.

It is important not to assume that state religion and individual religiosity are identical.<sup>578</sup> If only the objective dimension of festivals is considered then it is likely that the conclusion that state religion and individual religiosity were one and the same will be reached. The objective dimension of religiosity has not been taken into account; instead the focus is on physical actions rather than emotions. These physical actions, especially at ancient Egyptian festivals where the level of state control over an individual's behaviour is hard to determine, can mean very little by themselves. It is essential to attempt to use sources, such as texts and images, in order to piece together the subjective religiosity of ancient Egyptians. By combining both dimensions a more complete picture of individual religiosity in ancient Egypt can be obtained.

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<sup>576</sup> Bleeker 1967: 23; Teeter 2011: 56-75.

<sup>577</sup> Teeter 2011: 57.

<sup>578</sup> See Section 2.2.1.

Festivals can be viewed as a method by which universes of meaning were created; they provided an opportunity for the ancient Egyptians to detach themselves from immediate experience while face-to-face with other members of society. Festivals integrated the past (previous actions of deities/the king), present (the festival itself) and future (continued kingship, death and the afterlife) which helped to create a socially defined biography, which developed in continuous social relations and led to the formation of conscience.<sup>579</sup> Without conscience, the individual is unable to become a Self. It is possible (although very difficult to prove using the extant evidence) that ordinary ancient Egyptians were subconsciously compelled to attend these events to ensure that they were able to transcend their biological nature and maintain the status of Selves.

It is important to consider the extent to which the actions carried out by ordinary Egyptians at festivals signify individual religiosity and to what extent they show inherited thoughts and actions. An individual's religiosity could be actively maintained or, alternatively, simply a habitual, hereditary processes.

Festivals are a process by which norms, customs, etc. are acquired and spread and this is considered by Luckmann to be fundamentally religious.<sup>580</sup> In order to understand more about individual religiosity in ancient Egypt, the way in which religious processes (i.e. socialisation) affect the individual and what that individual gains from them need to be considered. Festivals can be broken down as follows and assessed in terms of engagement:

- 1) Attendance

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<sup>579</sup> See Section 2.2.1.

<sup>580</sup> See Section 2.2.1.

- 2) Active involvement in the open part of the festival
- 3) Creation and/or giving of offerings
- 4) Further action specific to the festival
- 5) Use of statues or stelae
- 6) Re-attendance
- 7) Personal burial

The breaking down of a festival into different stages, and the consideration of the extent to which the different stages are engaged with by the individual, links to Luckmann's comments on the world view.<sup>581</sup> Through festivals, the world view was stabilised and presented to the general population. Festivals were a social situation at which other members of society were present. Many of these fellow men would have previously attended festivals or have learned about them from other members of society, thereby allowing them to demonstrate the objectivity of the world view. The frequent occurrence of festivals could be considered to be a continuous social process through which the stability of the world view was reinforced. Festivals would have allowed the individual to assess the actions of others and to decide on a level at which they were comfortable and to locate themselves there. The extent to which an individual internalised the world view would have affected the range of meaningful and potentially meaningful experiences which that individual could have. Therefore, an individual's internalisation of the world view could be considered to be individual religiosity. If an individual is born into a society with an articulated sacred cosmos, that individual will internalise the sacred cosmos. This, in turn, will enable the individual to understand the

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<sup>581</sup> See Section 2.2.1.

routine of everyday life and ‘instil sense into the brute finality of life’s crises’.<sup>582</sup> Festivals could be seen as a very public and prominent expression of this. The logic of the sacred cosmos is publically being used to give meaning to death and the afterlife. According to Luckmann’s theory, festivals could also have been a method to ensure that the general Egyptian population felt part of the official model of religion and remove any risk of danger to the sacred cosmos that inevitably occurs when experts on the sacred cosmos become divorced from the ‘routines and crises of the laymen’.<sup>583</sup>

### 3.3 The Festival of Osiris at Abydos

The Festival of Osiris took place in the month of *Khoiak* (mid-October to mid-November), which was the fourth month of the season of *Akhet*.<sup>584</sup> *Akhet* was the inundation season and during this time the Nile flooded.<sup>585</sup> When it receded the land was left covered in a layer of fertile black silt and a new crop was planted shortly afterwards.<sup>586</sup> The Festival of Osiris is believed to have been performed in order to ensure that the land of Egypt was successfully reborn and rejuvenated.<sup>587</sup> It was also intended to ensure the rebirth of the god Osiris because the festival was closely linked to the myth of Osiris. The myth describes the murder of the god at the hands of his brother Seth, and his subsequent rejuvenation by his wife Isis. Osiris, who had been king of Egypt, was reborn as king of the afterlife and his son, Horus,

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<sup>582</sup> Luckmann 1967: 71.

<sup>583</sup> Luckmann 1967: 76.

<sup>584</sup> Mojsov 2005: 51; Eaton 2006: 75. For further research on the Festival of Osiris in general, see Schäfer 1904; Chassinat 1966; David 1973: 243-50; Mikhail 1984a; Lavier 1989; Mojsov 2005: 50-3; Eaton 2006; O’Connor 2009: 31-4. For research into specific aspects of the Festival of Osiris, see Junker 1910; Gaballa and Kitchen 1969; Raven 1982; Beinlich 1984; Mikhail 1984b; Mikhail 1984c; Tooley 1996; Pries 2011.

<sup>585</sup> Eaton 2006: 76. For additional information regarding ancient Egyptian calendars and the dating of feasts, see Schott 1950; Spalinger 1992; Spalinger 1996; Depuydt 1997.

<sup>586</sup> Eaton 2006: 76.

<sup>587</sup> Eaton 2006: 76.

became king of Egypt. The myth provided a model for various rituals which would ensure that all Egyptians could be reborn in the afterlife.<sup>588</sup> It also created a structure for royal succession, whereby the deceased king became Osiris and his living heir was Horus.<sup>589</sup> This link with divine kingship explains why Osiris was associated with Abydos in particular; Abydos was the cemetery of Thinis, the first capital of ancient Egypt and, consequently, the first kings of Egypt were buried there.<sup>590</sup>

The Festival of Osiris occurred annually and some of the events that made up the festival are often referred to as a mystery play or passion play.<sup>591</sup> For the purpose of this research the events of the festival will be described as a mythical play because they involved the re-enactment of the events that occurred in the myth of Osiris. The term mystery play is not suitable because the events that made up this part of the festival were not kept secret from the general public and therefore were not a mystery. The term passion play is unsuitable because it has modern connotations related to the Easter celebrations of the Christian religion. The mythical play involved the image of the god Osiris and other associated deities (particularly Sokar)<sup>592</sup> being carried in procession from Osiris's temple at the edge of the floodplain to his tomb at U-Pequer in the desert (see Figure 1).<sup>593</sup> Along the route, the procession was 'attacked' by actors playing Seth and other enemies of Osiris, who were

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<sup>588</sup> O'Connor 2009: 16, 31.

<sup>589</sup> O'Connor 2009: 16.

<sup>590</sup> Mojsov 2005: 15.

<sup>591</sup> David 1973: 245 uses the term 'mystery play'; Mikhail 1984a: 40 uses the term 'play'; Mojsov 2005: 38 uses the term 'passion play'.

<sup>592</sup> The Festival of Sokar occurred on the fourth day of Akhet. There is some debate amongst scholars as to when this festival was incorporated into the Festival of Osiris, if at all. Gaballa and Kitchen 1969: 36 argue that the Festival of Sokar was incorporated into the Osiris Festival well before the New Kingdom. This view is shared by Mikhail 1984b: 28. However, Eaton 2006: 80 believes that the Festival of Sokar was still separate from the Festival of Osiris during the reign on Seti I (Nineteenth Dynasty).

<sup>593</sup> Mojsov 2005: 51-2; Eaton 2006: 75-6; O'Connor 2009: 16.

fought off by those in the procession.<sup>594</sup> Once the procession arrived at the tomb of Osiris, the rebirth and revival of Osiris was ritually enacted using the image of the god.<sup>595</sup> The image of the god was then triumphantly returned to his temple.<sup>596</sup>

By the Middle Kingdom, the Festival of Osiris at Abydos had developed and the tomb of king Djer, a ruler of the First Dynasty, had been identified as the tomb of Osiris.<sup>597</sup> The tomb of king Djer is located at Umm el-Qab, which is probably the area known as U-Pequer to the ancient Egyptians.<sup>598</sup> The festival at Abydos was popular, as is demonstrated by the number of stelae and statues set up at the site which commemorate the relationship between the dedicator of the stela or statue and the festival.<sup>599</sup> The stelae and statues also make it clear that Abydos was a place of pilgrimage and that lots of individuals travelled from all over Egypt to witness the Festival of Osiris; many of the stelae and statues state the home city or town of the dedicator.<sup>600</sup> Numerous stelae also demonstrate a lack of literacy and many of the votive offerings from Abydos are crudely made.<sup>601</sup> This implies that individuals from all sections of Egyptian society, including the lower classes, attended the festival and felt the need to commemorate their attendance.<sup>602</sup> The Osiris Festival continued to be celebrated at

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<sup>594</sup> Mojsov 2005: 51; O'Connor 2009: 16. See also Appendix II: A, lines 60-1.

<sup>595</sup> Mojsov 2005: 51-2; O'Connor 2009: 16.

<sup>596</sup> Mojsov 2005: 52; O'Connor 2009: 16. See also Appendix II: A, line 81.

<sup>597</sup> Mojsov 2005: 15; Eaton 2006: 75-6; O'Connor 2009: 43.

<sup>598</sup> This is generally accepted to be the case. For more on Umm el-Qaab as U-Pequer (*pkr*), see Schäfer 1904: 27-8. See also, Eaton 2006: 76, Footnote 3.

<sup>599</sup> O'Connor 1985; Lichtheim 1992: 101-128; Simpson 1995; Eaton 2006: 76; O'Connor 2009: 34.

<sup>600</sup> O'Connor 1985; Lichtheim 1992: 101-128; Simpson 1995; Eaton 2006: 76.

<sup>601</sup> David 1973: 245; Mojsov 2005: 20.

<sup>602</sup> Exell 2009: 13.

Abydos throughout the New Kingdom (with, as noted by Eaton, the possible exception of the Amarna Period) and into the Ptolemaic Period.<sup>603</sup>

Although this chapter discusses the Festival of Osiris as performed at Abydos, it is relevant to note that the festival was carried out throughout Egypt, particularly during the New Kingdom.<sup>604</sup> However, there is disagreement among scholars regarding whether a national tradition or local traditions were adopted for the performance of the Osiris Festival. Gaballa and Kitchen have used textual and iconographic evidence to argue that a single national tradition had been implemented.<sup>605</sup> They state that this national approach followed the ritual progression detailed in the Ptolemaic temple of Hathor at Dendera.<sup>606</sup> However, Raven and Tooley have independently studied archaeological evidence in the form of different types of Osiris burial and have established that there was significant variation in the size and composition of the images of Osiris and the moulds used to make them.<sup>607</sup> Raven and Tooley use this, along with the fact that the texts from the temple of Hathor at Dendera refer to certain images of Osiris being associated with different locations, to argue that local traditions were adopted for the performance of the Festival of Osiris throughout Egypt.<sup>608</sup>

Evidence for the Osiris Festival exists from the Middle Kingdom through to the Ptolemaic Period.<sup>609</sup> Due to its level of detail, one of the most valuable pieces of evidence is a Middle Kingdom stela, known as the Ikhnofret Stela (see Appendix II: A and Plate 1). Ikhnofret

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<sup>603</sup> Eaton 2006: 76.

<sup>604</sup> Eaton 2006: 77.

<sup>605</sup> Gaballa and Kitchen 1969: 36. See also Eaton 2006: 77-8.

<sup>606</sup> Gaballa and Kitchen 1969: 36. See also Eaton 2006: 77-8.

<sup>607</sup> Raven 1982; Tooley 1996: 179; Raven 1998: 231-2. See also Eaton 2006: 77-8.

<sup>608</sup> Chassinat 1966: 91-8; Tooley 1996: 178; Raven 1998: 237. See also Eaton 2006: 77-8.

<sup>609</sup> Mikhail 1984a: 30.



was a Chief Treasurer during the reign of Sesostris III and was sent to Abydos to reorganise the cult of Osiris.<sup>610</sup> The stela recounts many elements of the festival, including the creation of a portable shrine for Osiris, the creation of images of various deities to attend Osiris, the dressing and bejewelling of the image of Osiris, the procession to the tomb of Osiris, and the 'attack' by the enemies of Osiris.<sup>611</sup> The Ptolemaic temple of Hathor at Dendera is another important piece of evidence for the Festival of Osiris and provides more details than any other temple (see Plate 2).<sup>612</sup> The texts inscribed on the temple walls describe the hidden ceremonies that occurred during the festival.<sup>613</sup> The texts also explain what took place on the different days of the festival.<sup>614</sup> Similarities between the elements of the festival as described on the Ikhernofret Stela and the texts of the Dendera temple imply that certain processes from the Middle Kingdom (and possibly earlier) were continued through to the Ptolemaic Period.<sup>615</sup> During this chapter the Ikhernofret Stela will predominantly be used as evidence in order to piece together the events of the festival because this thesis considers invisible religion in ancient Egypt from the Old Kingdom to the New Kingdom.

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<sup>610</sup> The Ikhernofret Stela was first published by Mariette 1880: Plates 24-6. For more information regarding the Ikhernofret Stela, see Schäfer 1904; Breasted 1906: 297-300; Anthes 1974; Lavier 1989; Lichtheim 1973: 123-5. For a brief discussion of the Ikhernofret Stela in relation to the stelae of Amenisonbe and Middle Kingdom displays of personal religion, see Baines 2009: 15. For a transcription, translation and commentary, see Appendix II: A.

<sup>611</sup> For the creation of a portable shrine, see Appendix II: A, lines 33-7. For the creation of images of various deities, see Appendix II: A, lines 38-9. For the dressing and bejewelling of the image of Osiris, see Appendix II: A, lines 48-57. For the procession to the tomb of Osiris, see Appendix II: A, lines 58-9. For the 'attack' by the enemies of Osiris, see Appendix II: A, lines 60-1.

<sup>612</sup> Mikhail 1984a: 36. For more on the Osiris chapels at the temple of Hathor at Dendera, see Mariette-Bey 1873: Plates 35-9; Daumas 1969: 67-9; Cauville 1988; Cauville 1997a; Cauville 1997b.

<sup>613</sup> Mikhail 1984a: 31.

<sup>614</sup> Mikhail 1984a: 32.

<sup>615</sup> Mikhail 1984a: 41.

The Festival of Osiris began with the creation of a new image of Osiris, as well as the deities who attended him, such as Sokar.<sup>616</sup> These images were made from grains and other materials, and are often referred to as ‘corn mummies’ (see Plate 3).<sup>617</sup> The creation of such images is mentioned in the Ikhernofret Stela when Ikhernofret states, ‘The gods who attended him [Osiris] were fashioned...’.<sup>618</sup> Ikhernofret does not describe how the corn mummies were made or exactly what they looked like. However, he does refer to decorating the images with gold and precious stones:

I decked the chest of the Lord of Abydos  
with lapis lazuli and turquoise,  
fine gold and every costly stone,  
which are the ornaments of a god’s body.<sup>619</sup>

As noted by Eaton, this description fits well with the appearance of corn mummies excavated at various sites, which are often decorated with gold foil.<sup>620</sup> Once the new images had been made, the old images of Osiris and his attending deities were taken from the Osiris temple and buried at his tomb in U-Pequer.<sup>621</sup>

After the image of Osiris had been created, a ritual known as the Hours’ Watches was performed.<sup>622</sup> The ritual took place in the *w<sup>c</sup>b.t* (pure place or workshop for embalming)<sup>623</sup>

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<sup>616</sup> Eaton 2006: 77.

<sup>617</sup> Eaton 2006: 77. For further information about corn mummies, see Raven 1982: 28; Tooley 1996: 175-6; Centrone 2005; Centrone 2006a; Centrone 2006b; Centrone 2007; Centrone 2009; Coulon 2014.

<sup>618</sup> See Appendix II: A, line 38.

<sup>619</sup> See Appendix II: A, lines 48-51.

<sup>620</sup> Eaton 2006: 77. See also Raven 1982: 19-20 (Corn-Mummies from Thebes nos. 2-9, 13-15), 21-7 (Corn-Mummies of Unknown Provenance nos. 2, 15 and 16).

<sup>621</sup> Eaton 2006: 77.

<sup>622</sup> Junker 1910; Mikhail 1984a: 44-6; Pries 2011.

<sup>623</sup> Erman and Grapow 1926-1953a (Wb I): 284.1-7.

and the image of Osiris was watched over for twenty-four hours.<sup>624</sup> Different ceremonies, such as pouring libations, and censuring and anointing the image, took place.<sup>625</sup> The rituals and ceremonies were carried out by priests, some acting in the roles of various deities.<sup>626</sup> The different hours were sometimes accompanied by tambourine music.<sup>627</sup> The ritual was intended to keep the enemies of Osiris at bay, to express sorrow at the god's suffering and to ensure his successful rebirth in the afterlife and as part of the festival.<sup>628</sup>

The procession to Osiris's tomb was a major part of the Festival of Osiris. As well as the image of Osiris in the form of a corn mummy, the procession also included another image of Osiris, often referred to as the Osiris Fetish.<sup>629</sup> There are different depictions of the Osiris Fetish and consequently it does not appear to have had a standardised form (see Figures 2-3).<sup>630</sup> However, according to Eaton, by the New Kingdom, 'the fetish seems to have represented the head reliquary of Osiris-Khentyimentiu'.<sup>631</sup> The fetish usually consisted of 'a wig, sometimes with a face, stuck onto a plain pole'.<sup>632</sup> Wilkinson describes depictions of the fetish as often showing it 'not only adorned with sun disk and plumes, but also with uraei and headbands, and the ribbons associated with these fillets'.<sup>633</sup> He argues that these cultic

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<sup>624</sup> Junker 1910; Mikhail 1984a: 44-6; Pries 2011.

<sup>625</sup> Junker 1910; Mikhail 1984a: 44; Pries 2011.

<sup>626</sup> Mikhail 1984a: 44.

<sup>627</sup> Mikhail 1984a: 44.

<sup>628</sup> Junker 1910; Mikhail 1984a: 44; Pries 2011.

<sup>629</sup> See Eaton 2006: 84; Wilkinson 1987: 169.

<sup>630</sup> See Eaton 2006: 84; Wilkinson 1987: 169.

<sup>631</sup> Eaton 2006: 84.

<sup>632</sup> Eaton 2006: 84.

<sup>633</sup> Wilkinson 1987: 169.

symbols were all intended to show that the fetish represented the head of Osiris, which seems feasible.<sup>634</sup>

As well as different representations of the fetish itself, there are also numerous depictions of the way in which the fetish was conveyed to and during the procession.<sup>635</sup> These are: set in a base consisting of two kneeling figures of the king wearing the *nms*-headdress; in the *Aker* platform; in various barques.<sup>636</sup> This section will focus on the use of barques for carrying the Osiris fetish because the Ikhnofret Stela mentions three barques and so it is certain that they were used during the Middle Kingdom Osiris Festival at Abydos. The barques referred to in the Ikhnofret Stela are the great barque,<sup>637</sup> the *nšmt*-barque,<sup>638</sup> and a barque named 'Truly-risen-is-the-Lord-of-Abydos'.<sup>639</sup> In accordance with Eaton's view, it is probable that two images of Osiris were used during the festival at Abydos; one which was carried upright (probably the fetish) and one which was carried lying down on a bed (probably the corn mummy).<sup>640</sup> Consequently, it seems likely that the three barques mentioned in the Ikhnofret Stela carried the images of Osiris during different parts of the procession, although the exact function of the barques mentioned is not certain. The stela does make it clear that both the *nšmt*-barque and 'Truly-risen-is-the-Lord-of-Abydos' had cabins,<sup>641</sup> and that the *nšmt*-barque was used during the part of the procession when Seth and the other

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<sup>634</sup> Wilkinson 1987: 169.

<sup>635</sup> See Eaton 2006: 84-90 for a discussion the various methods of conveyance.

<sup>636</sup> Eaton 2006: 84, 85, 88.

<sup>637</sup> See Appendix II: A, line 31.

<sup>638</sup> See Appendix II: A, lines 46, 60.

<sup>639</sup> See Appendix II: A, line 66.

<sup>640</sup> Eaton 2006: 97.

<sup>641</sup> See Appendix II: A, lines 46-7, 66.

enemies of Osiris made their 'attack'.<sup>642</sup> However, no other information regarding the purpose of each barque is given. Other depictions and descriptions of the barques are often misleading. For example, during the New Kingdom the *nšmt*-barque is depicted both on water and with carrying poles.<sup>643</sup> From this it can be inferred that some of the barques were river barques and some were processional barques. Ikhernofret says in his stela, 'I made the god's boat sail, Thoth steering the sailing'.<sup>644</sup> However, it is not clear which barque is meant by the term 'the god's boat'; nor is it clear whether Ikhernofret is referring to the literal or metaphorical 'sailing' of the boat. If the distance from the temple of Osiris to his tomb (approximately 2km)<sup>645</sup> is taken into account, along with the fact that there is no evidence of a waterway leading from the Osiris Temple to the tomb of Osiris, it seems highly likely that the majority of the procession took place on land and that the barques used during the procession were processional rather than river barques.<sup>646</sup>

As mentioned, during the procession to the tomb of Osiris, the convoy was 'attacked' by enemies of Osiris.<sup>647</sup> These enemies were probably played by priests wearing masks and were fought off by members of the procession playing other deities.<sup>648</sup> This episode of the festival is specifically mentioned in the Ikhernofret Stela. Ikhernofret says, 'I repelled the attackers of the *nšmt*-barque, I overthrew the enemies of Osiris'.<sup>649</sup> The stela indicates that once this attack was finished, the procession continued peacefully to the tomb of Osiris at U-

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<sup>642</sup> See Appendix II: A, line 60.

<sup>643</sup> Eaton 2006: 88. For the *nšmt*-barque depicted on water, see Karlshausen 1997: catalogue 306 (the Stela of Houyou); Schott 1957: Plate 2 (the Chapel of Mayor Paser at Medinet Habu). For the *nšmt*-barque with carrying poles, see Anthes 1974: 25; Karlshausen 1997: 125.

<sup>644</sup> See Appendix II: A, lines 64-5.

<sup>645</sup> O'Connor 2009: 16.

<sup>646</sup> Eaton 2006: 88-9.

<sup>647</sup> Mojsov 2005: 51; O'Connor 2009: 16. See also Appendix II: A, lines 60-1.

<sup>648</sup> Mojsov 2005: 51. For the Festival of Osiris as a dramatic performance, see Mikhail 1984a.

<sup>649</sup> See Appendix II: A, lines 60-1.

Peqer: ‘...he [Osiris] proceeded to the region of U-Pequer. I cleared the god’s path to his tomb in U-Pequer’.<sup>650</sup> When the procession reached the tomb of Osiris, the image of the god was placed in the tomb. At this point, the old images of Osiris and his associated deities were buried.<sup>651</sup> It seems likely that the mythical play continued and the rebirth of Osiris was enacted. Ikhnofret states, ‘I gladdened the hearts of the eastern deserts, I caused rejoicing in the western deserts’.<sup>652</sup> This is presumably describing the joyous reaction of those attending the festival to the successful rebirth of Osiris. Following the rebirth of Osiris, the image of the god was returned to his temple at Abydos by barque. Ikhnofret says, ‘It brought [Osiris, Foremost of the Westerners, Lord] of Abydos, to his palace’.<sup>653</sup> On the last day of the festival, presumably once Osiris had been returned to his temple, there is evidence, from the New Kingdom onwards, for a ceremony which involved raising the *djed*-pillar.<sup>654</sup> By the New Kingdom, the *djed*-pillar was associated with the backbone of Osiris, as well as with strength and stability.<sup>655</sup> Therefore, it is probable that the ceremony was carried out as part of the Osiris Festival to reaffirm the successful rebirth of Osiris as the strong and stable king of the afterlife. Mikhail argues that the ceremony would have been a performance with a clear lyrical element.<sup>656</sup> The raising of the *djed*-pillar could be seen as the final ‘act’ in the mythical play that took place as part of the Osiris Festival.

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<sup>650</sup> See Appendix II: A, lines 68-70.

<sup>651</sup> Eaton 2006: 77.

<sup>652</sup> See Appendix II: A, lines 77-8.

<sup>653</sup> See Appendix II: A, line 81.

<sup>654</sup> Mikhail 1984c; Mojsov 2005: 52.

<sup>655</sup> Taylor 2001: 204.

<sup>656</sup> Mikhail 1984c: 61-2.

### 3.4 The Festival of Osiris and invisible religion

The Festival of Osiris at Abydos will now be broken down into the seven stages discussed in Section 3.2 in order to determine what information it can provide regarding individual religiosity in ancient Egypt.

#### 3.4.1 Attendance

Luiselli states that it is not currently possible to determine whether attendance at festivals was mandatory for the local and wider community.<sup>657</sup> Kemp suggests that there was no such obligation, having established that no testimonies relating to the topic of attending festivals have come to light from settlements that had no contact with temples or tombs.<sup>658</sup> Despite the lack of evidence to indicate that attendance at festivals was mandatory, archaeological evidence such as the votive offerings found at Abydos suggests that some Egyptians travelled long distances in order to attend the Osiris Festival.<sup>659</sup> The varying quality of these votive offerings also implies that those visiting were from a wide social spectrum.<sup>660</sup> According to Luckmann's theory, in being at Abydos and taking part in the festival, these individuals participated in the creation, with others, of a universe of meaning and therefore transcended their own nature to become Selves. This process has been established by Luckmann as being fundamentally religious.<sup>661</sup> However, there is no firm evidence in support

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<sup>657</sup> Luiselli 2011b: 52-3.

<sup>658</sup> Kemp 1995b: 30. See also, Luiselli 2011b: 52-3.

<sup>659</sup> O'Connor 1985: 34; Lichtheim 1992: 101-28; Simpson 1995: 33-53; Eaton 2006: 76.

<sup>660</sup> David 1973: 245; Mojsov 2005: 20.

<sup>661</sup> See Section 2.2.1.

of the conclusions drawn as a result of the application of Luckmann's theory to attendance at the Festival of Osiris.

Attendance at the festival provides evidence of both the objective and subjective dimensions of religiosity. The attendees have often taken the physical action of travelling to Abydos and actively participating in the festival (following the procession, erecting stelae, etc.). While it is impossible to know what they were thinking at the time, it is likely that they made a conscious decision to attend and participate. The decision to travel to Abydos, sometimes over long distances, implies active engagement on behalf of the individuals, rather than simply the repetition of the actions of their ancestors.

#### *3.4.2 Active involvement in the open part of the festival*

The Festival of Osiris is an example of ritual and doctrine being used simultaneously in order to establish religion as a social fact. The active engagement (following the procession, shouting out, singing, dancing, etc.) of the individual with the open part of the festival suggests some internalisation of this social fact, or aspect of the universe of meaning. During the processional element of the Festival of Osiris, the sacred cosmos was articulated. Typically, the sacred cosmos is predominantly maintained within the world view by the state. Those individuals who were actively involved in the procession were engaging with and internalising, to varying degrees, the sacred cosmos. This implies that state religion and individual religiosity were linked, albeit to different extents, in the minds of separate individuals. It is clear that during the procession, due to the undoubted excitement, drama and visual stimuli, there was high potential for internalisation of the world view. As a consequence, the religiousness of the individual may have temporarily increased at this time



or have undergone permanent changes which led to an increase. Unfortunately, the available evidence is unable to prove that this occurred.

### *3.4.3 Creation and/or giving of offerings*

The creation and/or giving of votive offerings is less an example of ritual and more an example of tradition. This aspect of the Festival of Osiris is an example of socialisation and demonstrates one of the norms or customs appropriate for the social position of those who carried it out. However, this process appears to be an aspect of the historically given universe of meaning, rather than something heavily institutionalised by the state. Therefore, it is possible that the creation and/or giving of votive offerings demonstrated acquired action rather than individual religiosity. As mentioned previously, there is a large degree of differentiation in the quality of the votive offerings found at Abydos.<sup>662</sup> This is usually considered to be indicative of the social status of those who offered them. While this is most likely to have been the case due to access to resources, workshops, and craftsmen, as well as affordability, it is also worth considering that the quality of the offerings could demonstrate individuals' religiosity. A person who was more individually religious may have been willing to spend more time and expense creating or obtaining an offering, while someone who was less individually religious may have been satisfied with leaving a lesser quality offering. While this is highly speculative and the available evidence does not prove it with any certainty, it does highlight that it is important to ensure that the historical priority of socialisation is not dismissed as being unable to offer information regarding individual religiosity.

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<sup>662</sup> David 1973: 245; Mojsov 2005: 20.

#### *3.4.4 Further action specific to the festival*

In terms of the Festival of Osiris, action specific to the festival refers to the mourning of Osiris after his death and the subsequent celebration of his resurrection. As mentioned in Section 3.3, the Osiris Festival was closely associated with the myth of Osiris which provided a model for various rituals which would ensure that all Egyptians could be reborn in the afterlife.<sup>663</sup> Consequently, it is likely that this part of the Festival of Osiris held great importance for those attending the festival because at this point the aspect of the universe of meaning in which individuals were able to be resurrected as an Osiris was emphasised and maintained. Although it is impossible to know what each individual was thinking at the time and there is no evidence to prove it, it seems likely that they had engaged with and internalised the world view to an extent by this point.

#### *3.4.5 Use of statues or stelae*

The proliferation of statues and stelae relating to the Osiris Festival at Abydos demonstrates that the individuals who attended the festival felt the need to leave a permanent reminder of their presence at the festival. This suggests that they had internalised the sacred cosmos (which allowed for their resurrection) and wanted to ensure that they would be restored to life as an Osiris. The act of dedicating statues or stelae also demonstrates both the objective and subjective dimensions of religiosity. The individuals actively created or obtained the statues or stelae and left them at Abydos. As always, it is not possible to know their exact thoughts during this process. However, it is possible to get an indication of them from the

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<sup>663</sup> O'Connor 2009: 16, 31.

objects chosen (type, size, material, etc.) and the inscriptions selected. As well as demonstrating the social status and wealth of their owners, the statues and stelae found dedicated to Osiris at Abydos indicate the individual religiosity of those who left them there. It is clear that not everyone who attended the festival left a statue or stela and so it seems unlikely that this was simply a tradition.

#### *3.4.6 Re-attendance*

Those individuals who attended the festival on more than one occasion increased their potential for internalisation of the world view and the sacred cosmos. However, there is no clear evidence regarding what re-attendance meant for individual religiosity. It is possible that those who re-attended the festival were more individually religious than those who did not, but this is a tenuous conclusion. It is also possible that re-attendance shows that some people needed to repeat various aspects of socialisation to ensure that the knowledge of certain norms and customs was maintained because socialisation is an ongoing process. However, this cannot be proven with any certainty. Finally, it is possible that those who re-attended the Festival of Osiris became more familiar with the ritual and doctrine present at the festival. Subsequently, the individual religiosity which they experienced would have been more closely linked to the state than that of an individual who did not attend the festival multiple times. Once again, there is no firm evidence in support of this inference.

### 3.4.7 *Personal burial*

Archaeological evidence suggests that many people from outside of the region were buried at Abydos.<sup>664</sup> It can be assumed (but not proven) that these individuals felt that being buried close to the tomb of Osiris would make it more likely that they would be resurrected in the afterlife. If this was the case, it implies that they had engaged with and internalised the sacred cosmos to a greater extent than those who chose not to be buried at Abydos. Of course, this cannot be the only reason why an individual was not buried at Abydos; it may have been too expensive, too impractical, etc.

The objective dimension of religiosity can be seen in the procurement of the necessary funerary equipment, the placing of said items at Abydos, and the arrangement of a burial at Abydos. The subjective dimension of religiosity can be seen as a result of the objective dimension; it was the wish of the deceased individual to be buried at Abydos. It is possible that those who chose to be buried at Abydos were able to establish themselves firmly as selves within the universe of meaning generated by the Osiris Festival. They chose to demonstrate outwardly their perceived place in the universe of meaning through burial at Abydos.

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<sup>664</sup> O'Connor 2009: 34.

### 3.5 The Beautiful Feast of the Valley at Thebes

The Beautiful Feast of the Valley was a festival that is generally believed to have taken place at Thebes from the Middle Kingdom.<sup>665</sup> However, its popularity peaked from the Eighteenth Dynasty onwards.<sup>666</sup> It lasted for two days and was carried out during the second month of the *shemu* season, in between the harvest and the inundation of the Nile.<sup>667</sup> The festival was one of the most important religious events in the Egyptian calendar and involved the procession of the barque of the god Amun, and later the Theban Triad, from their shrines at Karnak on the east of the Nile to certain constructions situated on the west bank, such as the mortuary or valley temple of the ruling pharaoh and his ancestors, as well as the necropolis.<sup>668</sup> As Cabrol states, the festival seems simple in principle but in reality it is fairly complicated to piece together.<sup>669</sup> The processional route changed during different time periods and constructions such as temples were added, removed, etc.<sup>670</sup> The procession was accompanied by priests, offerings, other ships and, later in the Eighteenth Dynasty, by the barques of the deities Mut and Khonsu.<sup>671</sup> This open part of the festival, so called because it took place in sight of the inhabitants of Thebes, rather than the closed parts of the festival

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<sup>665</sup> Cabrol 2001: 543, Footnote 214. For further research on the Beautiful Feast of the Valley, see Foucart 1924; Schott 1953; Karkowski 1979; Wiebach 1986; Karkowski 1992; Hartwig 2004: 11-4, 93-5, 98-9; Schröder 2010; Seyfried 2013.

<sup>666</sup> Schott 1953: 5,7; Karkowski 1992: 155. Cabrol 2001: 543-64 has produced a comprehensive study of the processional routes of Western Thebes in order to determine which foundations are part of the route taken during the Beautiful Feast of the Valley at different periods, which are rest stops and which is the ultimate destination of the procession.

<sup>667</sup> Schott 1953: 5; Wiebach 1986: 265; Karkowski 1992; 155; Hartwig 2004: 11. For additional information regarding ancient Egyptian calendars and the dating of feasts, see Schott 1950; Spalinger 1992; Spalinger 1996; Depuydt 1997.

<sup>668</sup> Schott 1953: 5; Karkowski 1992: 155; Hartwig 2004: 11.

<sup>669</sup> Cabrol 2001: 543.

<sup>670</sup> See Cabrol 2001: 544-64.

<sup>671</sup> Schott 1953: 6, 8; Karkowski 1992; Seyfried 2013: 20-31.

which took place in temples and shrines, would have been a spectacular event.<sup>672</sup> Assmann identifies the meaning of the Valley Festival when he compares it to the Luxor Festival:

Luxorfest und Talfest waren im Neuen Reich eng aufeinander bezogen. Im Luxorfest feiert der König seine Sohnschaft zum Gott Amun, im Talfest seine Sohnschaft als Glied einer dynastischen Kette. Wie er beim Luxorfest in Gemeinschaft von Amun, Mut und Chons von Karnak nach Luxor zieht, ... , so zieht er am Talfest in gleicher Gesellschaft von Karnak zu den Totentempeln seiner Vorfahren auf der Westseite von Theben, um sich als legitimer Sohn seiner leiblichen Vorfahren ihres Segens zu vergewissern und so in die Heilszeit seiner Regierung einzubeziehen.<sup>673</sup>

The emphasis on ancestors may be what helped to make the festival so important to the ordinary Egyptians living in Thebes at the time. The festival emphasised the separation between the world of the living and the world of the dead, but also reminded the living that the boundaries between the two worlds could be crossed.<sup>674</sup>

The sources for the Beautiful Feast of the Valley are predominantly New Kingdom Theban temples and tombs (see Plates 4-9).<sup>675</sup> Some of the key temples which include depictions and/or descriptions of the Valley festival are the Chapelle Rouge at Karnak, Hatshepsut's

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<sup>672</sup> Karkowski 1992: 155.

<sup>673</sup> Assmann 1996: 402. See also, Seyfried 2013: 44.

<sup>674</sup> For more on the relationship between the living and the dead during the Beautiful Feast of the Valley, see Wiebach 1986, particularly pages 263-70.

<sup>675</sup> The evidence from tombs has been compiled and commented on by Schott 1953. Schott's evidence from the tombs has been added to by Seyfried 2013 who has created a catalogue of every extant source for the Beautiful Feast of the Valley, from both tombs and temples. Murnane 1979: 18-21 has provided a list and description of every extant representation of the river barge of Amun. Karkowski 1979; 1992 has commented fairly extensively on the evidence for the festival found in Hatshepsut's temple at Deir el-Bahari. Wiebach 1986: 266-7 has considered the passages identified in Schott 1953 in order to compile a list of terms or, as she describes it on page 266, 'einer "Fest"-Sprache'. The list of terms is helpful in identifying the different stages of the festival. Cabrol 2001: 544-64 has considered numerous temples and foundations on the west bank of the Nile in terms of their role along the processional route of the Beautiful Feast of the Valley.

temple at Deir el-Bahari, the temple of Seti I at Karnak and the temple of Rameses III at Medinet Habu.<sup>676</sup> The tombs that contain information regarding the festival are mainly located in the Theban necropolis on the west bank of the Nile.<sup>677</sup> Schott states that depictions and descriptions of the Beautiful Feast of the Valley form the largest part of the material obtained from the tombs in the Theban necropolis and that no other festival has been documented so richly and extensively.<sup>678</sup> This emphasises the popularity of the festival and the importance placed on it by the ancient Thebans.

Despite the fact that there are a relatively high number of sources for the Valley Festival,<sup>679</sup> it is difficult to be certain of exactly what the festival entailed.<sup>680</sup> This is largely due to challenges in interpreting and understanding the sources. As Schott points out, in many tombs from the Theban necropolis it is hard to distinguish between depictions of life and depictions of the afterlife.<sup>681</sup> Hartwig argues that the tomb owner may have participated in the rites of the Beautiful Feast of the Valley in his own tomb chapel while he was still alive.<sup>682</sup> Consequently, some representations may be depicting both life and the afterlife.

Alternatively, while a scene may appear to show the Valley Festival, it could actually be depicting a scene from the afterlife. Similarly, other rites and festivals were celebrated in Thebes and it is often difficult to differentiate between portrayals of these events and the

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<sup>676</sup> For a list of all the temples that contain descriptions and/or depictions of the Beautiful Feast of the Valley, see Seyfried 2013: 111. For the Chapelle Rouge at Karnak, see Lacau and Chevrier 1977; Burgos and Larché 2006; Seyfried 2013: 57-59, sources 5a-h. For Hatshepsut's temple at Deir el-Bahari, see Naville 1906; Karkowski 1992; Seyfried 2013: 59-61, sources 6a-d. For the temple of Seti I at Karnak, see Nelson 1981; Seyfried 2013: 87, sources 52a-b. For the temple of Rameses III at Medinet Habu, see Foucart 1924; Murnane 1980; Seyfried 2013: 92-94, sources 69a-d.

<sup>677</sup> See Schott 1953: 94-133.

<sup>678</sup> Schott 1953: 10.

<sup>679</sup> See Seyfried 2013: 55-105. Seyfried details 149 items of evidence for the Beautiful Feast of the Valley.

<sup>680</sup> Schott 1953: 7-8; Karkowski 1992: 155, 163-4.

<sup>681</sup> Schott 1953: 7.

<sup>682</sup> Hartwig 2004: 99.

Valley Festival.<sup>683</sup> This is due, in part, to the fact that representations of rites and festivals in the tombs are often not explicitly described, if at all.<sup>684</sup> Schott mentions a tomb which refers to 'dieser herrliche Gott Amon beim Kommen von Karnak', and another which mentions the 'alljährliche Ruderfahrt zum Westen'.<sup>685</sup> While it is highly likely that these descriptions refer to the Beautiful Feast of the Valley, it is not certain. In addition, the tombs do not show every element of the festival. They are limited to the open part of the festival and even that is not depicted fully; there are many rites which are excluded, such as the festive procession.<sup>686</sup> It is possible that the tomb owners chose to depict the elements of the festival that they felt were the most important, or the most relevant to them.

The representations of the festival from temples are able to fill some of the gaps left by the tombs because they sometimes show the closed parts of the festival, as well as the open parts.<sup>687</sup> However, the evidence from temples also has problems relating to interpretation and understanding. Karkowski notes that the best known scenes of the Valley Festival are on Hatshepsut's blocks from the barque shrine at Karnak.<sup>688</sup> The majority of these blocks were reused in the filling of the third pylon at Karnak and have consequently had to be restored.<sup>689</sup> A number of blocks are still missing which makes it difficult to interpret the extant blocks.<sup>690</sup> The situation is similar at Hatshepsut's temple at Deir el-Bahari, which also had to be

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<sup>683</sup> Schott 1953: 8.

<sup>684</sup> Schott 1953: 7-8.

<sup>685</sup> Schott 1953: 7.

<sup>686</sup> Schott 1953: 8; Karkowski 1992: 155, 163.

<sup>687</sup> See Karkowski 1979; Karkowski 1992.

<sup>688</sup> Karkowski 1992: 155.

<sup>689</sup> Karkowski 1992: 155.

<sup>690</sup> Karkowski 1992: 155.



restored and is still missing blocks.<sup>691</sup> As with the temples, a lack of clear descriptions (or sometimes no descriptions at all) makes it difficult to be certain that some scenes are depicting the Beautiful Feast of the Valley. Karkowski mentions that in Hatshepsut's temple at Deir el-Bahari, the Beautiful Feast of the Valley is also called, 'the Beautiful Feast of the Ruler' or 'the Feast of *Djeser-Djeseru*'.<sup>692</sup> However, regardless of the fact that there are challenges in interpreting the sources, they can be used to create a sequence of events of the festival.

The Valley Festival began on the east side of the Nile in the shrine of Amun at Karnak.<sup>693</sup> During a closed part of the festival, the ruling pharaoh entered the temple and praised Amun in his shrine.<sup>694</sup> Amun was accompanied in his shrine by Mut, Lady of *Isheru*, and Khonsu.<sup>695</sup> Once Amun had been praised by the pharaoh, the procession to the Nile could begin. The statue of Amun was transferred onto a portable procession barque (see Figure 4).<sup>696</sup> Here, favours were granted to the king by the god.<sup>697</sup> The shrine of Amun on the barque was flanked by two *hemu-netjer* wearing panther skins and the barque itself was carried by 30 *wab*-priests arranged in six rows.<sup>698</sup> According to Karkowski, the barque 'was also

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<sup>691</sup> Karkowski 1992: 155.

<sup>692</sup> Karkowski 1992: 164. *Djeser-djeseru* (meaning 'Holiest of Holies') is the Egyptian name for Hatshepsut's mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahari (see Erman and Grapow 1926-1953d (Wb V): 612.18).

<sup>693</sup> Karkowski 1992: 156.

<sup>694</sup> See Karkowski 1992: 155. Karkowski explains that in Hatshepsut's temple at Deir el-Bahari, Thutmose III and originally Hatshepsut are depicted 'praising god four times'.

<sup>695</sup> Karkowski 1992: 156. Karkowski states that Khonsu seems to be a post-Amarna addition to the scene.

<sup>696</sup> Schott 1953: 6; Karkowski 1992: 156.

<sup>697</sup> Karkowski 1992: 156.

<sup>698</sup> Karkowski 1992: 156. Karkowski states that in Hatshepsut's temple at Deir el-Bahari, the barque is depicted as only being carried by 18 priests arranged across six rows. Legrain 1917: 13 has suggested that at this time the barque was enlarged and two priests were added to each row.

accompanied by statues of the royal family, priests with divine standards and other cult objects'.<sup>699</sup>

Once Amun's procession barque had reached the banks of the Nile, its contents were transferred to a ceremonial river barque.<sup>700</sup> At this point, the god could begin his journey across the river to the west side. Amun's ceremonial river barque was towed across the Nile by the royal barques, which were rowed by higher and lower magistrates.<sup>701</sup> In Hatshepsut's temple at Deir el-Bahari, four boats are shown taking part in the river crossing.<sup>702</sup> These are two royal barques with oarsmen and two ceremonial barques.<sup>703</sup> One ceremonial barque is depicted carrying the 'royal seated figure clad in jubilee dress' and the other is shown carrying Amun.<sup>704</sup>

The crossing of the Nile would have been an impressive sight;<sup>705</sup> a scene from Hatshepsut's temple at Deir el-Bahari shows 'processions of priests, courtiers and soldiers as well as scenes of butchery and presentation of offerings on small offering tables'.<sup>706</sup> In the scene, *wab*-priests are also depicted carrying the royal throne accompanied by men carrying fans, sandals and other such items.<sup>707</sup> Karkowski describes the texts associated with this scene as giving details about the soldiers depicted accompanying the procession.<sup>708</sup> The soldiers were selected from three different places: crews of royal ships, units of different branches of the

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<sup>699</sup> Karkowski 1992: 156.

<sup>700</sup> Schott 1953: 8.

<sup>701</sup> Schott 1953: 8.

<sup>702</sup> Karkowski 1992: 156.

<sup>703</sup> Karkowski 1992: 156.

<sup>704</sup> Karkowski 1992: 156.

<sup>705</sup> Schott 1953: 6; Karkowski 1992: 155.

<sup>706</sup> Karkowski 1992: 156.

<sup>707</sup> Karkowski 1992: 156.

<sup>708</sup> Karkowski 1992: 158-9.

army, and the bodyguard of Thutmose III.<sup>709</sup> It is evident from the number of soldiers depicted accompanying Amun on the crossing of the Nile that this element was considered to be the most dangerous part of the festival.<sup>710</sup> Karkowski states that the soldiers 'most probably joined the procession at the outer gate of Karnak, accompanied it on board the ships, and guarded it along the channel which reached the valley temple at the edge of the desert'.<sup>711</sup>

As mentioned above, once the barque had reached the west bank of the Nile it was then transported in procession to the valley temple of the current king.<sup>712</sup> The enclosure formed by the walls of the processional avenue and the upper temple precinct meant that Amun was considered to be safe again once he reached the temple.<sup>713</sup> Seyfried believes that it is likely that ordinary Egyptians were able to present prayers and requests to the god during this procession, which seems likely as it is in keeping with the activities that occurred during other ancient Egyptian festivals.<sup>714</sup> He also argues that some sources could be considered to contain expressions of 'persönlichen Frömmigkeit'.<sup>715</sup> For example, source 56 which is a graffito from column four in the Temple of Amun at Deir el-Bahari:

Year 22, second month of the Smw-season, day 23.

The Day of Coming,

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<sup>709</sup> Karkowski 1992: 158.

<sup>710</sup> Karkowski 1992: 159.

<sup>711</sup> Karkowski 1992: 159.

<sup>712</sup> Cabrol 2001: 253-4 believes that it is very likely that a main canal existed on the west bank from at least the Eighteenth Dynasty. This main canal would have enabled the procession to travel inland towards the Theban necropolis and the temples visited during the Beautiful Feast of the Valley would have been positioned along it. Cabrol notes that it is not clear whether the quays of the temples were built directly alongside the main canal or whether they were linked to the main canal by small side channels.

<sup>713</sup> Karkowski 1992: 159.

<sup>714</sup> Seyfried 2013: 39.

<sup>715</sup> Seyfried 2013: 39. See page 88 for source 56; page 89 for source 59; page 91 for source 65.

performed by the scribe Asha-heret  
of the temple of Khonsu, of Amun and of Ipet,  
and uttered from the songstress of Amun, Ta-y-hem,  
to pray to the lady Hathor,  
the lady of Deir el-Bahari,  
in the Beautiful Feast of the Valley  
of Amun-Ra,  
king of the gods...<sup>716</sup>

Seyfried states that the 'Hören der Worte' by the god Khonsu as mentioned in his source 74.2 could be linked to oracles because the questioning of oracles during barque processions frequently occurred from the Thutmosid period onwards.<sup>717</sup> It seems highly likely that this element of the festival would also have been accompanied by excited shouting and cheering from the ordinary Egyptians watching. While Seyfried does note that it is often difficult to differentiate between ritualised chants, praising by choirs, hymns of the god's wife, etc. and roars and shouts from the crowd, he also states that it is probable that this element of the festival was carnival-like in character.<sup>718</sup> The statue of Amun would usually be kept separate from ordinary Egyptians who had limited access to temples.<sup>719</sup> Consequently, the Beautiful Feast of the Valley would have offered a unique and exciting opportunity for them to be in his presence and make prayers, offerings, etc. directly to him.<sup>720</sup>

During the procession to the valley temple, various activities were also carried out by priests. Burnt offerings were made to the god, although, as Karkowski notes, the exact location at

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<sup>716</sup> See Appendix II: B.

<sup>717</sup> Seyfried 2013: 39-40.

<sup>718</sup> Seyfried 2013: 41.

<sup>719</sup> Assmann 1994a: 20; Pinch and Waraksa 2009: 2; Teeter 2011: 56; Eyre 2013: 109.

<sup>720</sup> Note that the statue of Amun would still have been hidden from view. See Römer 2003: 283.

which these offerings were made cannot be identified.<sup>721</sup> He argues that it is likely that they were made as part of the procession because the slaughtering and preparation of oxen could not take place on the barques.<sup>722</sup> A scene from Hatshepsut's temple at Deir-el Bahari suggests that a garment was brought to Amun, either during the procession or once the barque reached the valley temple.<sup>723</sup> Another scene also implies that the barque was cleansed and purified by priests during the procession; in one sub-register three priests are depicted, the first carrying two vases for water, the second carrying two braziers and the third carrying a censer.<sup>724</sup>

On the way to the valley temple the procession stopped at a barque stations.<sup>725</sup> Karkowski believes that these were the final points at which ordinary Egyptians were able to observe the rites that made up the Beautiful Feast of the Valley.<sup>726</sup> A scene from Hatshepsut's temple at Deir el-Bahari shows the barque resting on a stand.<sup>727</sup> The queen (whose image was later removed and replaced with a depiction of offerings) and Thutmose III are censuring the barque and are accompanied by statues of the royal family and priests.<sup>728</sup> Male dancers and female acrobatic/cultic dancers are also shown in this scene, although it is likely that they would have accompanied the procession from the landing place on the west side of the Nile to the valley temple at Deir el-Bahari (see Plate 7; Figure 5).<sup>729</sup> These dancers, along with the

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<sup>721</sup> Karkowski 1992: 159. For more about 'burnt offerings', see Schott 1953: 12-31.

<sup>722</sup> Karkowski 1992: 159.

<sup>723</sup> Karkowski 1992: 159.

<sup>724</sup> Karkowski 1992: 159.

<sup>725</sup> Karkowski 1992: 159. See also Cabrol 2001: 554-61.

<sup>726</sup> Karkowski 1992: 159.

<sup>727</sup> Karkowski 1992: 159.

<sup>728</sup> Karkowski 1992: 159-60.

<sup>729</sup> Karkowski 1992: 160. For further information regarding acrobats in ancient Egypt and at the Beautiful Feast of the Valley, see Iversen 2014: 246-9.

musicians also depicted in Hatshepsut's temple and many tombs from the Theban necropolis, would have added to the celebratory atmosphere (see Plate 6).<sup>730</sup>

After stopping at the barque stations, the procession continued on its way to the mortuary temple of the ruling pharaoh. At this point, it is very likely that another closed part of the festival began, with the barque entering the temple precinct and then the barque room of the temple.<sup>731</sup> There is no evidence from the tombs in the Theban necropolis relating to what occurred once the barque reached the mortuary temple.<sup>732</sup> However, some of the temples, such as Hatshepsut's at Deir el-Bahari, are able to give an indication as to what took place inside the barque room (see Figure 6).<sup>733</sup> The barque was surrounded by divine standards brought by priests from Karnak.<sup>734</sup> In front of the standards were four statues of fertility divinities holding torches, as well as two containers holding ten torches each.<sup>735</sup> The torches were lit each evening and extinguished every morning in pools of milk.<sup>736</sup> A large offering was made to Amun while the god and his barque were situated within the temple.<sup>737</sup> The temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahari also contains scenes which show additional processions involving the barque of Amun and, added after the Amarna period, the barques of Mut and Khonsu.<sup>738</sup> It is therefore likely that after the rituals that took place in the barque room were completed, the barques were carried in procession to visit the mortuary temples of the deceased ancestors of the current king.

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<sup>730</sup> For depictions of musicians in Hatshepsut's temple at Deir el-Bahari, see Karkowski 1992: 160. For musicians depicted in the Theban tombs, see Seyfried 2013: source 76.

<sup>731</sup> Karkowski 1992: 160.

<sup>732</sup> Karkowski 1992: 163.

<sup>733</sup> Schott 1937; Karkowski 1992: 160; Seyfried 2013: 59-61.

<sup>734</sup> Karkowski 1992: 160.

<sup>735</sup> Karkowski 1992: 160.

<sup>736</sup> Karkowski 1992: 160; Hartwig 2004: 12. See also Schott 1937: 1.

<sup>737</sup> Karkowski 1992: 160.

<sup>738</sup> Karkowski 1992: 160-2.

Karkowski argues that the open part of the festival, in which ordinary ancient Egyptians were able to participate, continued during the closed part of the festival.<sup>739</sup> This is likely because once the barque of Amun had moved inside the temple precinct and the closed part of the festival had begun, there would no longer be anything for the ordinary Egyptians to watch or participate in. Instead, they could begin the part of the festival which had particular relevance for them; as well as guaranteeing rejuvenation for the king, the festival also enabled ordinary Egyptians to ensure that their ancestors were renewed in the afterlife.<sup>740</sup> After Amun's barque had entered the king's mortuary temple and enough noise had been made in the necropolis to awaken the deceased,<sup>741</sup> ordinary Egyptians visited the tombs of their ancestors.<sup>742</sup> These tombs, described by Schott as becoming houses of joy rather than houses of eternity for one day each year during the festival, were the setting for a celebration and feast.<sup>743</sup> The deceased were represented by statues which were taken out of their tombs and included in the feasting.<sup>744</sup> Hymns were recited and offerings of meat, beer and flowers were made to the deceased (see Plates 4-5, 8).<sup>745</sup> Plenty of food and intoxicating drinks were key elements of the festival.<sup>746</sup> It was intended that the food and drink be consumed by the living and not just offered to the deceased.<sup>747</sup> According to Seyfried, it is

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<sup>739</sup> Karkowski 1992: 163.

<sup>740</sup> For a detailed study of the encounter between the living and the dead during the Beautiful Feast of the Valley, see Wiebach 1986. See also Karkowski 1992: 166; Teeter 2011: 70.

<sup>741</sup> Teeter 2011: 69.

<sup>742</sup> Bleeker 1967: 137; Schott 1953: 64-84; Karkowski 1992: 155; Hartwig 2004: 12; Teeter 2011: 70-3; Seyfried 2013: 39-43.

<sup>743</sup> Schott 1953: 91-2; Bleeker 1967: 137; Seyfried 2013: 42-3.

<sup>744</sup> Schott 1953: 91.

<sup>745</sup> See Schott 1953: 65-7; Wiebach 1986: 265; Teeter 2011: 71; Seyfried 2013: 42-3.

<sup>746</sup> Schott 1953: 92-3; Klotz 2006: 282; Seyfried 2013: 42.

<sup>747</sup> Seyfried 2013: 42.

difficult to gauge the extent to which ecstatic excesses formed part of the celebrations.<sup>748</sup>

However, it seems likely that drunkenness and perhaps sexual debauchery would have occurred during this part of the festival; the Leiden Amun hymn describes nocturnal singing occurring at a drinking festival which Klotz believes is very likely to be the Beautiful Feast of the Valley.<sup>749</sup> The necropolis would have been filled with the smells of roasting meat and incense, and the sounds of singing, chanting and the shaking of *sistra*.<sup>750</sup> The purpose of these activities was to unify the living and the dead, and to ensure that the deceased were remembered by the living and therefore guaranteed resurrection in the afterlife.<sup>751</sup> Wiebach clearly explains the significance of including the dead in the Beautiful Feast of the Valley:

Im Falle des Talfestes werden die Toten notwendigerweise in das Geschehen miteinbezogen, um die Dimension des Vergangenen in den erhöhten Festes-Augenblick einzuführen und ihn damit auszuweiten in einen übergeordneten Bereich. Aber es wird nicht nur eine Verbindung zwischen beiden Welten hergestellt: die Grenzen verschwimmen sogar für die Zeitspanne, in der sich beide Gruppen in der Gefolgschaft des Amun-(Re) vereinigen auf einer Ebene, die man - ob tot oder lebendig - nur über das Medium der "Maat" betreten kann. Die "*ḥw tp-t3*" wie die Bewohner des Totenreiches haben teil an dem Zustandekommen dieses überirdischen Festes, indem sie in die Sonnenbarke einsteigen, die von den Lenkerinnen, den beiden "*m3ḥtj*", auf dem rechten Kurs gesteuert wird: ein Bild, welches die Totenbuchsprüche als Jenseitsverheißung aufzeigen.<sup>752</sup>

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<sup>748</sup> Seyfried 2013: 42-3.

<sup>749</sup> Klotz 2006: 282.

<sup>750</sup> Schott 1953: 78-80; Meskell 2002: 173; Hartwig 2004: 93; Teeter 2011: 71; Seyfried 2013: 41-2.

<sup>751</sup> See Wiebach 1986, particularly pages 263-70. See also Karkowski 1992: 166.

<sup>752</sup> Wiebach 1986: 284.



The fact that no other festive event has been depicted in as much detail as the Beautiful Feast of the Valley during the Eighteenth Dynasty confirms that it was an extremely popular festival in Thebes.<sup>753</sup> Not only was it the most important event in which the barque of Amun crossed the Nile,<sup>754</sup> it was also an occasion during which state religion and practices occurred in parallel with the beliefs and practices of ordinary Egyptians. The king met with his dead ancestors in order to reconfirm his kingship and, at the same time, ordinary Egyptians were able to meet with their own deceased ancestors in order to ensure their continued afterlife.<sup>755</sup> Karkowski summarises the festival clearly when he says, ‘the feast seems to be taking place in the reality animated by ritual which discards the physical death and permits the world of the living and the world of the dead to meet’.<sup>756</sup> It also seems likely that the active participation of the king in the festival would have added to its popularity as it would have given the inhabitants of Thebes a rare opportunity to see the king in person.

### **3.6 The Beautiful Feast of the Valley and invisible religion**

The Beautiful Feast of the Valley will now be considered in relation to the seven stages identified in Section 3.2 in order to assess what information the festival is able to provide regarding individual religiosity in ancient Egypt.

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<sup>753</sup> Schott 1953: 7, 10, 93.

<sup>754</sup> Klotz 2006: 282.

<sup>755</sup> Karkowski 1992: 166.

<sup>756</sup> Karkowski 1992: 166.

### 3.6.1 *Attendance*<sup>757</sup>

Unlike for the Festival of Osiris, there is little evidence to suggest that Egyptians travelled long distances to attend the Beautiful Feast of the Valley. It is likely that this is because the festival was only celebrated at Thebes and so those living elsewhere had no desire to travel to the main cult centre of a festival which they did not celebrate.<sup>758</sup> Therefore, it is difficult to argue that attendance at the festival shows both objective and subjective elements of religiosity. Unlike at Abydos, it is not clear whether a definite decision to attend the festival had been made, or whether those in attendance were simply present because they lived in or close to Thebes. The Beautiful Feast of the Valley can be considered to be a festival in three parts. The first is the closed part of the festival which took place in the temple of Amun at Karnak; the second is the main procession of the statue of Amun to the mortuary or valley temples of the ruling pharaoh and his ancestors; the third is the feasting carried out by ordinary Egyptians at the tombs of their ancestors. The second part is linked with institutionalised ritual and doctrine, and attendance at this element of the festival shows some awareness and acceptance of these aspects. However, simply attending this part of the festival does not give any indication of an individual's religiosity. Attendance at the third part of the festival shows a desire to participate in a community event. It also suggests that some aspects of the sacred cosmos had been internalised. By feasting at the tombs of their ancestors, individuals were creating and maintaining a universe of meaning in which they located themselves as Selves in order to ensure that they too would be renewed and resurrected in the afterlife.

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<sup>757</sup> For the mandatory participation in festivals see Kemp 1995b: 30; Luiselli 2011b: 52-3.

<sup>758</sup> Schott 1953: 5,7; Karkowski 1992: 155.

### 3.6.2 *Active involvement in the open part of the festival*

Active involvement in the open part of the festival (the procession) during the Beautiful Feast of the Valley would have involved similar aspects to the Festival of Osiris (following the procession, shouting out, singing, dancing, etc.).<sup>759</sup> This element of the festival was an example of state doctrine being promoted via state ritual. Active involvement in the open part of the festival implies that the individuals present had engaged with the doctrine and ritual and had internalised it, to an extent. Wiebach states, 'So haben die öffentlichen Prozessionen und Grabversammlungen eine nicht zu unterschätzende Rolle in der Übermittlung der religiösen Inhalte. Sie waren geeignet, die Kluft zwischen den Wissenden und den Normalmenschen etwas zu verringern und die Bevölkerung bei solchen Anlässen in die göttliche Sphäre zu versetzen'.<sup>760</sup> During this stage, there was high potential for internalisation of the universe of meaning, especially for those who had not actively participated in the procession previously. The high levels of excitement, tension and drama would have helped those present to engage with the doctrine and ritual. It would have enabled them, with others, to locate themselves within the universe of meaning and become Selves. According to Wiebach, 'Durch eine Verbindung des "vollendeten Zeitpunktes" [the temporary reunification of the living with the dead] mit dem toten Bild des ehemals Gelebten entsteht nun ein Identitätsbewußtsein von der eigenen Individualität'.<sup>761</sup>

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<sup>759</sup> Schott 1953: Chapters II, III and IV; Meskell 2002: 173; Seyfried 2013: 23-7.

<sup>760</sup> Wiebach 1986: 289.

<sup>761</sup> Wiebach 1986: 280.

### 3.6.3 *Creation and/or giving of offerings*

The creation and giving of offerings formed a major part of the Beautiful Feast of the Valley. During the third part of the festival, ordinary Egyptians feasted outside of the tombs of their ancestors and offerings of beer, bread, meats, oils, incense and flowers were made.<sup>762</sup> This stage of the festival shows both the objective and subjective dimensions of religiosity. The objective dimension is evidenced in that all of the offerings, as well as chairs, tables, cups, bowls, food and drink for the living, etc. would have been created and/or obtained and carried from the homes of those present to the tombs of their ancestors. This would not have been an easy task and the effort involved in creating and giving the offerings to the deceased suggests a desire to do so on the part of those involved, which is the subjective dimension. In this instance, the objective and subjective dimensions of religiosity imply that the universe of meaning had been internalised and that the individuals involved had located themselves within it as people who believe in the cosmos and want to ensure that their ancestors, and later themselves, are resurrected in the afterlife. This element of the festival combined the past (the death of ancestors), the present (the festival itself and the making of offerings) and the future (the hoped for resurrection of those present). Consequently, the creation and giving of offerings could be interpreted as a subconscious demonstration of an individual's desire to remain a Self. However, the evidence is not able to firmly support this theory.

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<sup>762</sup> Schott 1953: 64-84; Bleeker 1967: 137; Seyfried 2013: 42-3.

#### *3.6.4 Further action specific to the festival*

At the Beautiful Feast of the Valley, further actions specific to the festival involved eating, drinking, the singing of hymns, and the creation of music.<sup>763</sup> These actions were carried out in order to ensure a both a physical and intellectual union of the living and the dead. Actions such as these cemented the universe of meaning and the place of the individual within it, as a result of their highly sensory nature. There would have been a high potential for engagement with and internalisation of the universe of meaning because the actions carried out were enjoyable. The singing and chanting of hymns, and the creation of music, can be seen as an external demonstration of the individual's internalisation of the sacred cosmos and their perceived position within it. Many of these actions could be considered to be examples of historically inherited actions; feasting and drinking are pleasurable so it is very likely that an individual would want to be involved in this, even if they had no individual religiosity. However, as mentioned in Section 3.6.3 this seems unlikely because of the effort involved in carrying out the feasting and singing. The effort implies that the further actions and the enjoyment of them stem from individual religiosity. The application of Luckmann's theory supports the view that these actions are a demonstration of the desire of the individual to be resurrected in the afterlife.

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<sup>763</sup> Teeter 2011: 66-73.

### 3.6.5 *Use of statues or stelae*

During the Beautiful Feast of the Valley, the deceased were represented by statues which were taken out of their tombs and placed among the living.<sup>764</sup> It is likely that this was done to strengthen the physical presence of the dead and to ensure that they were part of the festival. Although it is impossible to know for certain, the act of placing a representation of the dead among the living suggests that the living felt a need to establish the dead as Selves within the universe of meaning, as well as themselves. The act of bringing the statue out of the tomb demonstrates the objective and subjective dimensions of personal religiosity. The objective dimension is shown in the removal of the statue from the tomb, the giving of offerings to the statue and interaction with the statue. The subjective dimension is hinted at as a result of the actions carried out, although the available evidence cannot offer any firm proof of it. The actions imply a desire to connect with the dead and a wish to ensure that they (the dead) were provided for and resurrected in the afterlife. There was also the hope that the participation of the living in the festival would ensure that their own family members took part in the festival once the living were deceased, thus ensuring they too were resurrected in the afterlife. As well as the involvement of statues, the Beautiful Feast of the Valley sometimes saw stelae erected at tombs to record the festival, or the festival was depicted in the tomb of the deceased.<sup>765</sup> This shows an engagement with and an internalisation of the universe of meaning because it demonstrates the need to mark an individual's participation in the festival, as well as the participation of the deceased. Hartwig argues that ostraca found in the forecourt of the tomb of Tjenuny (TT 74), one of which was

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<sup>764</sup> Schott 1953: 90-2; Teeter 2011: 71; Seyfried 2013: 39.

<sup>765</sup> See Schott 1953: 94-133; Seyfried 2013: 55-105.

inscribed with the names of 14 servants, demonstrate the need to commemorate the presence of the living at the tomb of the deceased.<sup>766</sup>

### *3.6.6 Re-attendance*

There is no evidence of pilgrims travelling to attend the Beautiful Feast of the Valley. Consequently, it can be assumed that the vast majority of individuals, if not all, who re-attended the festival lived in Thebes. For them, re-attendance was relatively simple. That is not to say that those who re-attended the festival did not have individual religiosity but that, in this instance, their actions could have been prompted by the historical priority of meaning systems rather than individual religiosity; their ancestors, family and friends had attended the festival each year and so they did as well.

### *3.6.7 Personal burial*

The majority of people buried at Thebes lived in the area and so it could be argued that they chose to be buried at Thebes because it was convenient. This was certainly a factor but it is also possible that individual religiosity played a part as well. Those buried at Thebes would have wanted to maintain their closeness to the local gods. In addition, they would have wanted to be laid to rest near to their ancestors to ensure that the rituals that made up the Beautiful Feast of the Valley were carried out for them too. In the tomb chapel of Menna, a song to Amun is written on the walls.<sup>767</sup> The song makes reference to the Beautiful Feast of the Valley and says, 'One remembers the beauty (of) Amun...Our wish is to see it [the barque

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<sup>766</sup> Hartwig 2004: 12-3.

<sup>767</sup> Hartwig 2013: 53.

of Amun]!'.<sup>768</sup> The inclusion of the song in his tomb chapel implies that Menna wanted to ensure he was able to participate in the Beautiful Feast of the Valley even after death. The notion of individuals participating in the festival after death is also mentioned in a text discussed by Bommas.<sup>769</sup> The Nineteenth-Dynasty statue of Nofirronpit is inscribed with the following text:

Möge er geben, dass ich ihn schaue am Talfest.  
Aus der Erde hervorzukommen, um Amun zu schauen  
bei seinem schönen Fest vom Wüstental.<sup>770</sup>

Similarly, Assmann states that the development of the mortuary prayer (*ḥtp-di-nisw.t* formula) demonstrates that festivals represented a time when the deceased could return to the world of the living and join in the celebrations.<sup>771</sup> There are examples of the mortuary prayer from the New Kingdom that refer to the Beautiful Feast of the Valley; individuals expressed the desire to 'go forth by day to see Amun on his Beautiful Festival of the Valley'.<sup>772</sup> This subconscious desire to continue to be a Self in the universe of meaning, even once dead, suggests that these individuals had taken in elements of the sacred cosmos (part of the universe of meaning) as demonstrated to them through state ritual and possibly doctrine.

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<sup>768</sup> Hartwig 2013: 53.

<sup>769</sup> Bommas 2005: 68. This concept is also discussed by Assmann 2005a: 206, §8. For more examples of the desire of the deceased to participate in the Beautiful Feast of the Valley, see Epigraphic Survey (The) 1980: Plate 69 (TT 192); Schott 1953: 123, Number 118 (TT 247); Seele 1959: Plate 35 (TT 158).

<sup>770</sup> As translated by Bommas 2005: 68. See also Boreux 1933: 12-13.

<sup>771</sup> Assmann 2005b: 212.

<sup>772</sup> Assmann 2005b: 212. See also Boreux 1933: 12-3; Barta 1968: 118.



### 3.7 Conclusions regarding festivals and invisible religion

This chapter has demonstrated that the consideration of festivals in ancient Egypt in relation to the theory of invisible religion suggests that those individuals who attended and participated in ancient Egyptian festivals had individual religiosity. This has been shown by the division of two ancient Egyptian festivals (the Festival of Osiris at Abydos and the Beautiful Feast of the Valley at Thebes) into the seven sections discussed in Section 3.2.

Festivals are an example of institutionalised religious conduct and institutionalised religious ideas, and would therefore have enabled religion to become a social fact. This implies that there is a link between state theology and individual religiosity because the internalisation of religion as a social fact influences an individual's religiosity. However, it is relevant to note that state religion and individual religiosity are not identical. It is important to consider both the objective and the subjective dimensions of religiosity; the presence of the objective dimension of religiosity alone should not be used as proof for the existence or non-existence of religiousness.

The fundamentally religious process of the creation of a universe of meaning can arguably be seen to occur during festivals. The presence of ordinary Egyptians at festivals may simply demonstrate that festivals were important and relevant events for their community, family, etc. However, it could also imply a subconscious desire to ensure that they maintained the status of Self. It should be considered whether a person's actions are consciously carried out (and therefore likely to be a product of individual religiosity), or whether they are simply habitual, inherited actions.

Festivals in ancient Egypt were an example of socialisation; attendance at festivals was part of the continuing process whereby an individual learned the norms, customs, etc. necessary for existing within his own society. It is evident that the effect of socialisation on an individual and that individual's level of engagement with socialisation is an important consideration for assessing individual religiosity.

In order to make the assessment of engagement and internalisation, and the application of Luckmann's theory easier, the two festivals discussed were broken down into the following stages:

- 1) Attendance
- 2) Active involvement in the open part of the festival
- 3) Creation and/or giving of offerings
- 4) Further action specific to the festival
- 5) Use of statues or stelae
- 6) Re-attendance
- 7) Personal burial

As a result of the analysis of the Festival of Osiris at Abydos and the Beautiful Feast of the Valley at Thebes, it was concluded that those present at festivals were participating, with others, in the creation of a universe of meaning and were therefore transcending their biological nature to become Selves. Depending to an extent on the festival, festivals are able to show both the objective and subjective dimensions of religiosity. Attendance also shows a degree of acceptance of state ritual and doctrine, which demonstrates that state religion and individual religiosity are linked. The consideration of attendance at ancient Egyptian festivals

from the perspective of Luckmann's theory is able to provide further information regarding individual religiosity in ancient Egypt, although often the lack of firm evidence means that concrete conclusions cannot be drawn.

The open part of the festival is an example of the use of both state ritual and doctrine (see Sections 3.4.2 and 3.6.2). The active involvement of the individual in the open part of the festival shows engagement and suggests a degree of internalisation of the universe of meaning. Due to the excitement and drama of the open part of the festival, it is possible that active involvement in it (following the procession, shouting out, singing, dancing, etc.) would have increased the level of religiosity in those who already had it and created it in those who did not. Unfortunately, there is no clear evidence to support this view.

The creation and/or giving of offerings could be considered to be an example of the historical priority of meaning systems (a tradition rather than a ritual). However, this aspect of the festival is still able to provide information about the objective and subjective dimensions of religiosity. The evidence for the offerings made during the Festival of Osiris and the Beautiful Feast of the Valley could suggest that the effort and thought processes (subjective) that went into creating or obtaining an offering (objective) demonstrate individual religiosity in the person responsible for the offering, but the evidence is not conclusive enough to state this for certain.

According to Luckmann's theory, the carrying out of further action specific to the festival was a way in which the universe of meaning was created and maintained. If his theory is used as the rule then it can be argued that further action specific to the festival enabled the individual to locate him or herself within the universe of meaning as a Self. The desire to do

this implies that individual religiosity existed within the person, although this cannot be proven. Often the further actions had the potential to greatly influence the lives of the participants and involved elements of the past, present and future (see Sections 3.4.4 and 3.6.4). The need to carry out such actions suggests that the internalisation of the sacred cosmos had occurred within these individuals. The need to comply with the customs and beliefs of the sacred cosmos confirms that state religion and individual religiosity were linked.

The use of statues and stelae at festivals is an example of both the objective and subjective dimensions of religion. The act of using and/or interacting with a statue or a stela demonstrates the objective dimension because it involves physical action. The intentions and thought processes behind the actions demonstrate the subjective dimension. Evidence of both the objective and subjective dimensions of religiosity implies that those who used statues or stelae had individual religiosity. It also indicates that the individual involved had internalised the sacred cosmos to some extent. The statue or stela was considered to be an important way of marking the presence of an individual at the festival, thus ensuring a positive action (often resurrection in the afterlife) would happen to the individual in the future.

Re-attendance at festivals increased the potential for internalisation of the sacred cosmos. It was also a process of socialisation and so those who re-attended may have had firmer views regarding their role in society. It is also possible that those who attended festivals more frequently were doing so due to the importance or relevance of the festival to their community, family, etc. and it had little or nothing to do with individual religiosity.

Unfortunately, the available evidence for individuals re-attending festivals cannot deliver firm conclusions regarding individual religiosity when considered from the perspective of Luckmann's theory.

Personal burial at or near the site of a festival could simply be a result of convenience or tradition. However, it could also be a marker of individual religiosity because it shows an internalisation of the universe of meaning (and therefore the sacred cosmos). This implies a desire to ensure that the particular individual continued to be a Self in the universe of meaning, through resurrection in the afterlife, as shown to them through state ritual and doctrine.

The application of Luckmann's theory of invisible religion to ancient Egyptian festivals has demonstrated that the theory can provide more information regarding individual religiosity and festivals. However, it has also shown that the available evidence often cannot provide firm support for the positions reached as a result of applying invisible religion to ancient Egyptian festivals. In theory, the consideration of the objective and subjective dimensions of religiosity can be used in order to help understand the engagement with and the internalisation of the universe of meaning by individuals, which in turn can enable conclusions to be reached regarding individual religiosity. However, it is difficult to carry this out in practice with any certainty.

# Chapter 4

## HOUSEHOLD AND PERSONAL ITEMS

### 4.1 Introduction

Household and personal items will be considered in relation to the theory of invisible religion because ordinary ancient Egyptians would have come into contact and interacted with these items on a daily basis. It is unlikely that they would have been seen as religious objects. The assessment of household and personal items will focus on architectural features and decoration, furniture, cosmetic items, and amulets. Where possible, household and personal items found within domestic contexts such as houses will be considered.<sup>773</sup> Each of the four categories of items will be broken down to include a summary of the objects that make up the category and an analysis of the objects using key elements of Luckmann's theory of invisible religion.<sup>774</sup> The information that household and personal items are able to provide regarding individual religiosity will then be considered and summarised.

A large percentage of the archaeological evidence for household and personal items dates to the New Kingdom. This is partly because a greater number of New Kingdom settlements

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<sup>773</sup> See Stevens 2009: 12-20 (Table 1) for a survey of the dynastic sites that yielded archaeological evidence for domestic religion.

<sup>774</sup> See Section 2.2.1 in this thesis.

have survived and in better condition compared to settlements from earlier periods.<sup>775</sup> In addition, excavations carried out during the twentieth century tended to focus on royalty and the elite, meaning that many of the domestic sectors of Old and Middle Kingdom sites excavated during this time are very poorly recorded.<sup>776</sup> However, even well-preserved and well-documented sites that date to the Old and/or Middle Kingdoms, such as Elephantine, have yielded little or no archaeological evidence for the household and personal items discussed below.<sup>777</sup> Much of the archaeological evidence for household and personal items was excavated at Deir el-Medina and Amarna.<sup>778</sup> This is largely due to the durable materials that these sites were built from which has led to their excellent preservation, including the domestic sectors. The variation in the amount of archaeological evidence available for household and personal items should not be considered to directly correlate to the individual religiosity of the people living during the different periods. Instead, it should be viewed as a reflection of the way in which the symbolic universe was socially objectivated at different points during ancient Egypt's history.

## 4.2 Invisible religion and household and personal items<sup>779</sup>

Household and personal items are able to offer numerous examples of religion becoming a social fact as a result of ritual and doctrine. Architectural features and decoration can often provide examples of institutionalised religious conduct having taken place. They reflect many

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<sup>775</sup> Kemp 1995b: 42. See also Stevens 2009: 12-20 (Table 1).

<sup>776</sup> See Bussmann 2015: 3, 6.

<sup>777</sup> See for example Kaiser et al. 1990; Kemp 1995b: 26; Raue et al. 2010.

<sup>778</sup> For Deir el-Medina, see Bruyère 1939b: 241-364. For a summary of the excavations carried out at Deir el-Medina, see Weiss 2015: 26-31 (Section 1.5). For Amarna, see Petrie 1894: 20-5; Peet and Woolley 1923: 37-50; Pendlebury and Frankfort 1933: 5-77; Stevens 2003; Stevens 2006. See also Appendix I in this thesis.

<sup>779</sup> For a detailed summary of the key aspects of Luckmann's *Invisible Religion*, see Section 2.2.1 in this thesis.

of the beliefs and practices associated with state religion and enabled individuals to perform religious acts, such as making offerings, in their own homes. Architectural features and decoration show that religion became a social fact as a result of private activities that took place in the home, as well as more public and/or official activities. Amulets also demonstrate ritual because, as is demonstrated in Section 4.6.1, the archaeological evidence makes it clear that amulets were worn in everyday life by ancient Egyptians and were closely linked to state funerary beliefs.<sup>780</sup> Due to their use in everyday life, as well as in the funerary context, amulets show how religion became a social fact in the private sphere as well as the public sphere. Examples of doctrine are also shown through household and personal items. Cosmetic items such as kohl pots in the shape of the god Bes<sup>781</sup> suggest that ordinary ancient Egyptians believed that the shape of a kohl pot could give protective power to the cosmetics held inside it. This power would then be transferred to the wearer of the cosmetics when applied to the skin. Furniture such as so-called cultic furniture implies that ordinary ancient Egyptians believed that they were able to communicate with deities or the deceased through offerings presented within their homes. These ideas stem from the beliefs and practices of state religion and so can be considered to be institutionalised.

The objective dimension of religiosity is demonstrated by household and personal items. For example, the archaeological record shows that individuals wore amulets on a daily basis.<sup>782</sup> Individuals would have selected and created/purchased the specific amulet or amulets that they wore. The choice demonstrated as part of this observable behaviour can further the

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<sup>780</sup> Andrews 1994b: 6; Stevens 2006: 29-77.

<sup>781</sup> See Vandier d'Abbadie 1972: 55-71; Patch 2005a: 215.

<sup>782</sup> Andrews 1994b: 6.



understanding of an individual's religiosity. It is impossible to know for certain the opinions or attitudes of ordinary ancient Egyptians. However, some household and personal items are able to give an indication of what they may have been, which in turn aids the understanding of individual religiosity. The wearing of an amulet suggests that the wearer had internalised and engaged with the universe of meaning and that they had a belief in the supposed capabilities of the amulet. Consequently, the quantity and form of amulets belonging to a person could provide information regarding how individually religious they were. However, it could also demonstrate a desire to 'keep up' with friends and neighbours and ensure the individual in question possessed the latest fashion, so to speak, in amulets.

The existence of cosmetic spoons designed to represent the forms of animals associated with the god Seth could demonstrate that ordinary ancient Egyptians believed that they were able to crush the god's power when they ground pigments on such palettes.<sup>783</sup> This also suggests the existence of a universe of meaning and that it had been engaged with and internalised by some ordinary ancient Egyptians. If both the objective and subjective dimensions of individual religiosity can be understood then individual religiosity as a whole in ancient Egypt can be better comprehended.

Household and personal items are able to provide information regarding how the symbolic universe was socially objectivated in ancient Egypt. By their very nature, these items were social. They were present in the houses and on the bodies of ordinary ancient Egyptians and would have been used by both individuals and family groups. The items discussed in this chapter were all physical items that were created and used by ordinary Egyptians, meaning

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<sup>783</sup> See te Velde 1967: 13; Armour 1986: 37; Pinch 2004: 81 for antelopes and their association with Seth.

that they can very literally be considered to be objectifications of the symbolic universe. Household and personal items are able to provide important information about the way in which the symbolic universe was socially objectivated on a personal level, rather than a public level. An understanding of the personal objectivation of the symbolic universe is essential in order to learn more about individual religiosity. It is clear that these items demonstrate the social objectivation of the symbolic universe or universe of meaning because they refer to everyday life and to a world beyond everyday life. For example, mirrors ultimately had a practical purpose that was important for everyday life in that they allowed individuals to see their reflection. However, the decoration of and the terminology for these items implies that they were also considered capable of ensuring their users would be fertile or reborn in the afterlife.<sup>784</sup> When considering individual religiosity it is essential to understand the social objectivations of the symbolic universe that an individual was likely to have come into contact with.

The consideration of household and personal items can provide information regarding the way in which an objective and moral universe of meaning was created. These items suggest that the universe of meaning created by ordinary individuals was influenced by and connected to the universe of meaning created by royalty and the elite through state religion and beliefs. It is difficult to be sure how clearly the concept of the universe of meaning being created with others is demonstrated by household and personal items. It is possible that many of these items, for examples cosmetic objects, would have been predominantly used by one individual. However, it is also possible that such items were shared among family

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<sup>784</sup> See Section 4.5.1.

members or even wider social groups. In either case, they would have caused the individual/s interacting with them to engage with and internalise the universe of meaning. What is not clear is the extent to which they assisted with the development of the Self because it cannot be determined for certain whether the use of these items took place with others or not.

### 4.3 Architectural features and decoration

The architectural features and decoration that were present in the homes of ordinary ancient Egyptians will be considered from the perspective of invisible religion. This section has been subdivided into four smaller sections, which are platforms, wall niches, vertical niches/false doors, and wall paintings.

#### 4.3.1 Platforms

Platforms appear in ancient Egyptian houses from the reign of Amenhotep III onwards.<sup>785</sup>

The platforms have predominantly been discovered in houses at Deir el-Medina and Tell el-Amarna (see Plates 10-1).<sup>786</sup> However, they have also been found at Amenhotep III's residence at Malkata and at Medinet Habu.<sup>787</sup> The houses at Medinet Habu are dated by Hölscher to the Eighteenth and Twenty-Second Dynasties.<sup>788</sup> Consequently, it seems likely that the platforms at Malkata appeared first, followed by the Eighteenth-Dynasty platforms

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<sup>785</sup> Weiss 2009: 207.

<sup>786</sup> For platforms at Deir el-Medina, see Bruyère 1939b: 54-64; Meskell 1998: 222-9; Koltsida 2006; Weiss 2009. For platforms at Amarna, see Borchardt 1923: 20-4; Newton 1924: 292; Peet and Woolley 1923: 24, 84; Pendlebury 1951: 26-7; Assmann 1972: 153; Borchardt and Ricke 1980 (this publication is made up of a *Fundliste* for each house or group of houses); Crocker 1985: 56; Ikram 1989: 96-7; Stevens 2003: 145-9; Stevens 2006: 219-34. For platforms in general, see Bierbrier 1982: 69-70; Romano 1987: 26-7; Friedman 1994: 97-110; Kleinke 2007: 16-62; Koltsida 2007b: 22-4; Szpakowska 2008: 25-6; Stevens 2009: 4-6.

<sup>787</sup> Lacovara 1997: 41, 141; Stevens 2006: 233; Koltsida 2007a: 1013, 1018; Weiss 2009: 207.

<sup>788</sup> Hölscher 1939: 69-71; Hölscher 1954: 6-8; Weiss 2009: 208.

at Medinet Habu and Amarna.<sup>789</sup> These were succeeded by those discovered at Deir el-Medina, which probably date to the Nineteenth or Twentieth Dynasty, and finally those at Medinet Habu from the Twenty-Second Dynasty.<sup>790</sup> From this timeline it is clear to see why Weiss describes the platforms as ‘an invention of the New Kingdom’.<sup>791</sup>

The function of the platforms has been greatly debated by scholars since they first appeared in Bruyère’s report on the excavations at Deir el-Medina.<sup>792</sup> Bruyère termed the platforms *lit clos* or ‘enclosed beds’ which, as explained by Meskell, are a type of French day bed that are folded away when not in use (see Figure 7).<sup>793</sup> The association of the platforms with beds, which derived from Bruyère’s term, has impacted the subsequent interpretation of the platforms.<sup>794</sup> Meskell argues that the size of the platforms, which could sleep one or two people, means that the possibility that they were beds cannot be ruled out.<sup>795</sup> However, she favours the concept that the platforms were associated with the female sphere and does not entirely reject the possibility that they were a ritual place for sexual intercourse, conception

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<sup>789</sup> See Weiss 2009: 208.

<sup>790</sup> See Weiss 2009: 208.

<sup>791</sup> Weiss 2009: 207.

<sup>792</sup> The platforms have been interpreted as beds (Bruyère 1939b: 54-6; Romano 1987: 27), as seating accommodation (Hobson 1987: 117), as part of the ‘female sphere’ (Bruyère 1939b: 64; Brunner-Traut 1955: 30; Meskell 1998: 223; Dunand and Zivie-Coche 2006: 184), as altars (Bruyère 1939b: 61; Brunner-Traut 1955: 30; Badawy 1968: 65; Bierbrier 1982: 69; Robins 1996: 29; Koltsida 2006: 171-2; Stevens 2006: 234; Kleinke 2007: 75-6; Koltsida 2007b: 24; Weiss 2009: 208), and as having a multifunctional use (Bruyère 1939b: 64; Friedman 1994: 99; Szpakowska 2008: 26). See also Weiss 2009: 196-7.

<sup>793</sup> Bruyère 1939b: 54-64; Meskell 1998: 223.

<sup>794</sup> For the interpretation of the platforms as beds, see Romano 1987: 27. For the interpretation of the platforms as part of the ‘female sphere’, see Brunner-Traut 1955: 30; Meskell 1998: 223; Dunand and Zivie-Coche 2006: 184.

<sup>795</sup> Meskell 1998: 223. Ritner 2008: 179 disagrees with this interpretation due to the ‘excessively narrow dimensions of the supposed “beds”’.

and birth.<sup>796</sup> This seems unlikely given that birthing stools or bricks, rather than platforms, are depicted on ostraca from Deir el-Medina.<sup>797</sup>

The platforms have also been interpreted as house altars.<sup>798</sup> Weiss, who focusses on the platforms at Deir el-Medina, argues that the platforms were versions of official temple altars and that various religious actions were performed on them in daily life.<sup>799</sup> This view is corroborated by Stevens, who focusses on the platforms at Amarna and describes them as 'altars'.<sup>800</sup> The platforms have also been interpreted as seating or multifunctional areas.<sup>801</sup> The aim of this section is not to identify the use of these platforms, but rather to consider them in terms of the theory of invisible religion. Consequently, they will continue to be referred to as 'platforms'.

At Deir el-Medina, there are 29 extant platforms, all of which occur in houses located in the part of the village enclosed by a wall.<sup>802</sup> Some of the houses are poorly preserved and consequently it seems likely that the number of houses originally containing platforms was higher than 29.<sup>803</sup> The platforms at this site are made of mudbrick and have steps attached

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<sup>796</sup> Meskell 1998: 223. Meskell's theory regarding the separation of the houses' interiors into male and female spheres is rejected by Kleinke 2007: 73-6. Ritner 2008: 180-1 disagrees that the platforms were used as places for giving birth and says, 'The fact that Deir el-Medina brick platforms are *not* maternity beds is further confirmed by textual evidence from the same site that unambiguously mentions "beds for women" in the context of "protection for birth". In these hieratic ostraca recording the sale and decoration of such beds, the material is explicitly said to be of *wood*, not brick'.

<sup>797</sup> Meskell 1998: 223; Ritner 2008: 179.

<sup>798</sup> See Brunner-Traut 1955: 30; Badawy 1968: 65; Bierbrier 1982: 69; Robins 1996: 29; Koltsida 2006: 171-2; Stevens 2006: 234; Kleinke 2007: 75-6; Koltsida 2007b: 24; Weiss 2009.

<sup>799</sup> Weiss 2009: 208.

<sup>800</sup> Stevens 2003: 145-9.

<sup>801</sup> See Hobson 1987: 117.

<sup>802</sup> Bruyère 1939b noted 28 platforms but Weiss 2009: 197, Footnote 32 argues that there are 29 platforms. See Meskell 1998: 222-3 for the locations of the platforms.

<sup>803</sup> Meskell 1998: 222.

to them.<sup>804</sup> Bruyère suggested that the platforms were topped with a superstructure that reached the roof.<sup>805</sup> However, this has not been confirmed and seems unlikely given the relatively simple structure of the houses at Deir el-Medina. The platforms differ in appearance; some are more elaborate than others and ten have the remains of decoration on them (see Figures 8-10).<sup>806</sup> These decorations are described by Weiss as follows:

A geometric pattern (house NO12), a polychrome dancing female (house SE8), a polychrome standing girl in a papyrus boat (house NO12), a so-called 'morning toilet scene' (house C6), the god Bes (five times: houses NE10, NE12, NE13, SE9, and SO6), and an unclear figure (house C5). Apart from the two polychrome paintings, all other paintings were made with white brushstrokes on a grey background.<sup>807</sup>

The fact that all of the decorations on the platforms (other than the unclear figure) depict or have links to women and girls has been used as evidence to suggest that the platforms were associated with female traits such as sexuality and fertility. However, the images are not particularly sexual and do not directly refer to fertility. It could be that women were responsible for carrying out any cultic acts associated with the platforms, or women made the decisions regarding how their homes should be decorated and chose to depict scenes and figures that appealed to them. The repeated depiction of the god Bes could imply that the platforms had a religious function.<sup>808</sup> Weiss argues that Bes protected 'not only women

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<sup>804</sup> Weiss 2009: 196.

<sup>805</sup> Bruyère 1939b: 54-64.

<sup>806</sup> Kemp 1979: 51-3; Pinch 1983: 407; Meskell 1998: 223; Kleinke 2007: 18-24; Weiss 2009: 196-200.

<sup>807</sup> Weiss 2009: 197.

<sup>808</sup> For a detailed discussion of the Bes-image at Deir el-Medina, see Weiss 2015: 150-3.

and children...but also the family's well-being more generally'.<sup>809</sup> Consequently, his presence on some of the platforms at Deir el-Medina<sup>810</sup> implies that the activity that took place on the platforms was closely linked to the concept of protection, both of women and children, and the family as a whole. When the depictions of Bes are considered along with the other decorations on the platforms at Deir el-Medina it seems probable that the platforms were used for cultic acts linked to protection and that these were predominantly carried out by women.

All of the platforms are approximately 75 cm high, 170 cm long and 80 cm wide.<sup>811</sup> The platforms are typically located in the first room of each house, which was the closest room to the street.<sup>812</sup> It is likely that this first room was enclosed, rather than a courtyard.<sup>813</sup> The platforms are not consistently orientated and Weiss argues that this may reflect 'personal preference, space considerations, or practical reasons'.<sup>814</sup> She also notes that the lack of consistent orientation is unusual if the platforms are assumed to exist for ritual purposes; for an ancient Egyptian ritual to be effective, the performer needed to face the correct direction.<sup>815</sup>

Several finds were discovered in association with some of the platforms at Deir el-Medina. In house NE11, a limestone headrest, a wooden *Atef*-crown from a statue, and a fragment of a

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<sup>809</sup> Weiss 2015: 153. For a summary of alternative interpretations, see Weiss 2009: 196-7.

<sup>810</sup> For more on the image of Bes used as decoration on house altars, see Weiss 2009: 197; Weiss 2015: 152.

<sup>811</sup> Meskell 1998: 223; Weiss 2009: 196.

<sup>812</sup> Meskell 1998: 222; Weiss 2009: 196.

<sup>813</sup> In contrast to Koltsida 2006: 170 and Koltsida 2007b: 42 who argues that the first room had no permanent ceiling, Weiss 2009: 196, Footnote 25 argues that 'the presence of limestone columns in the first room seems to indicate that they carried a heavy, i.e. probably a permanent, roof'.

<sup>814</sup> Weiss 2009: 204-5.

<sup>815</sup> Weiss 2009: 204.

female statuette were discovered on top of the platform.<sup>816</sup> In front of the platform was an offering table.<sup>817</sup> An offering table was also found in front of the platform in house C7.<sup>818</sup> In houses NE15 and SW6, the platforms were built with associated so-called 'cultic cupboards'.<sup>819</sup> The finding of the headrest has been used by scholars to support the concept that the platforms were used as beds.<sup>820</sup> However, it is more likely that the headrest was left as part of the abandonment process at Deir el-Medina and does not signify that the platforms were used as beds. The discovery of the wooden *Atef*-crown, the female statuette fragment, the offering tables and the 'cultic cupboards' have been used to support the house altar hypothesis.<sup>821</sup> The relatively high number of objects linking the platforms to house altars means that it seems likely that the platforms were used in this way, especially as this hypothesis has also been supported by two pictorial ostraca from Deir el-Medina.<sup>822</sup> The first depicts the god Thoth sitting in a shrine on top of an altar which is very close in appearance to the platforms.<sup>823</sup> The second shows the goddess Meretseger, a popular patron deity of Deir el-Medina,<sup>824</sup> on top of an altar-like structure which is also similar in appearance to the platforms.<sup>825</sup>

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<sup>816</sup> Bruyère 1939b: 257; Meskell 1998: 226; Weiss 2009: 203; Weiss 2015: 344 (Cat. 10.3 and 10.4).

<sup>817</sup> Bruyère 1939b: 257, Figure 134; Meskell 1998: 226; Weiss 2009: 203; Weiss 2015: 299-300 (Cat. 5.2).

<sup>818</sup> Bruyère 1939b: 311-2; Meskell 1998: 226.

<sup>819</sup> Bruyère 1939b: 260-1, 329-34; Meskell 1998: 223, 226; Weiss 2015: 62-3. The term 'cultic cupboard' is used to refer to cupboards that were believed to be used to store cult equipment, for example, see Stevens 2003: 153. However, Weiss 2015: 63 argues that if the niches found in houses NE15 and SW6 and referred to as 'cultic cupboards' were used as cupboards then, '...they would have stored various kinds of objects, both cultic and profane [similarly Stevens 2006: 248]. The specification "cultic" cupboard should therefore be abandoned'.

<sup>820</sup> For example, Romano 1987: 27. See Weiss 2009: 203.

<sup>821</sup> Meskell 1998: 226; Weiss 2009: 203; Weiss 2015: 62-3, 120-1.

<sup>822</sup> Weiss 2009: 205-6.

<sup>823</sup> This ostrakon is pictured in Keimer 1941: Plate xviii. The current location of the ostrakon is unknown. See Weiss 2009: 205.

<sup>824</sup> See Bruyère 1930a.

<sup>825</sup> This ostrakon is pictured in Keimer 1941: Plate xiii. The ostrakon is currently held at the Musée du Louvre, France (O. Louvre E. 25301). See Weiss 2009: 205.



There are approximately 40 platforms at Amarna.<sup>826</sup> The majority are located within the Main City and the North Suburb, but they are also present in the Central City and possibly the Workmen's Village.<sup>827</sup> Typically, the platforms feature in dwellings with a floor area of over 100 square meters.<sup>828</sup> The platforms at Amarna differ in form, although the majority are made of mudbrick.<sup>829</sup> There are at least 11 platforms that consist of a rectangular base with attached stairs or a ramp.<sup>830</sup> There is often a raised edge around the top of the platform.<sup>831</sup> These platforms measure between 30 and 90 cm in height and up to 100 cm in width.<sup>832</sup> At least 15 of the platforms have a rectangular base but no attached stairs or a ramp.<sup>833</sup> Stevens notes that it is 'not always clear whether the staircase or ramp is simply not preserved, but some seem to have been constructed without this feature'.<sup>834</sup> Platforms of this type measure between 25 and 90 cm in height.<sup>835</sup> Three platforms take a different form; they span the entire width of the room in which they are located.<sup>836</sup> These platforms are rectangular in shape and have a raised front edge.<sup>837</sup> The platform in house M50.1 has stairs leading to it and the other two have central projections which may have been stairs.<sup>838</sup> The

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<sup>826</sup> Stevens 2003: 145; Stevens 2006: 219, 226-32 (Table II.13.1. *In situ* domestic altars).

<sup>827</sup> Borchardt 1923: 21-4; Peet and Woolley 1923: 24, 84; Newton 1924: 292; Pendlebury and Frankfort 1933: 12, 34-5; Pendlebury 1951: 26-7; Stevens 2003: 145.

<sup>828</sup> Stevens 2003: 145; Stevens 2006: 222.

<sup>829</sup> Stevens 2003: 146-9; Stevens 2006: 222.

<sup>830</sup> Borchardt 1923: 21-3; Peet and Woolley 1923: 24; Stevens 2003: 146.

<sup>831</sup> Stevens 2003: 146.

<sup>832</sup> Stevens 2003: 146; Stevens 2006: 222.

<sup>833</sup> Borchardt 1923: 21-2; Pendlebury and Frankfort 1933: 68; Stevens 2003: 147.

<sup>834</sup> Stevens 2003: 147.

<sup>835</sup> Stevens 2003: 147.

<sup>836</sup> Stevens 2003: 148; Stevens 2006: 223. The houses are M50.1, J49.1 and O49.9. See Borchardt 1923: 22; Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 228, 247, 280.

<sup>837</sup> Stevens 2003: 148; Stevens 2006: 223.

<sup>838</sup> Stevens 2003: 148; Stevens 2006: 223.

measurements are only known for one of these platforms (M50.1), which measures 30 cm in height and 150 cm in length.<sup>839</sup>

Generally, the platforms at Amarna are located in the central room of the house.<sup>840</sup> There are approximately 22 examples of platforms located in central rooms.<sup>841</sup> However, there are up to 17 examples of platforms located elsewhere in a dwelling.<sup>842</sup> As at Deir el-Medina, the orientation of the platforms is not consistent:

It is not always possible to determine the orientation of the altars [platforms] from the published reports, but at least fourteen are built against an east wall, ten against a north wall, eight against a south wall and up to two against a west wall.<sup>843</sup>

Other than some traces of white gypsum plaster on some of the platforms, those at Amarna have no evidence of decoration.<sup>844</sup> The only finds associated with the platforms at Amarna were fragments of a lamp stand discovered near the platform in house Q46.1 and some pottery vessels sunk into the ground near the platforms in houses P49.15 and P47.22.<sup>845</sup> It seems likely that these finds are indicators of the abandonment process rather than any ritualistic actions that may have taken place on or around the platforms.

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<sup>839</sup> Stevens 2003: 148; Stevens 2006: 223.

<sup>840</sup> Borchardt 1923: 22; Stevens 2003: 148-9.

<sup>841</sup> Stevens 2003: 148; Stevens 2006: 226-32 (Table II.13.1. *In situ* domestic altars).

<sup>842</sup> See Stevens 2003: 148-9; Stevens 2006: 226-32 (Table II.13.1. *In situ* domestic altars).

<sup>843</sup> Stevens 2003: 149.

<sup>844</sup> Stevens 2003: 146-7; Stevens 2006: 222; Stevens 2009: 4.

<sup>845</sup> Stevens 2003: 149; Stevens 2006: 232.

### 4.3.2 Wall niches

In some of the dwellings at Deir el-Medina and Amarna, relatively small round-topped or rectangular niches are carved into the walls.<sup>846</sup> These niches have been interpreted as holders for lamps<sup>847</sup> and, as Stevens points out, the evidence of blackening by smoke inside some of the niches supports this theory.<sup>848</sup> However, some scholars believe that the niches had a ritualistic function and were the receptacle for cult objects such as statues and stelae.<sup>849</sup> On occasion at Deir el-Medina, objects such as anthropoid busts and *ꜣḥ ikr n R<sup>c</sup>* stelae have been found close to wall niches.<sup>850</sup> It is thought that these items, which are often associated with an ancestor cult, would have sat in the niches.<sup>851</sup> The *ꜣḥ ikr n R<sup>c</sup>* stelae are usually round-topped and so could have been designed to fit into the round-topped niches.<sup>852</sup> Weiss states that the niches at Deir el-Medina vary in size but Bruyère did not record the measurements for each niche, instead he noted that the width was between 25 and 65 cm and the height was between 25 and 80 cm.<sup>853</sup> Stevens notes that the dimensions of some of the niches at Amarna may suggest a ritualistic function. She describes the niche at West Street 13 in Amarna as being round-topped and 45 cm high, 30 cm wide and 10 cm

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<sup>846</sup> For wall niches at Deir el-Medina, see Bruyère 1939b: 171; Meskell 1998: 233; Weiss 2009: 200; Weiss 2015: 62-93, Table 3b. For wall niches at Amarna, see Woolley 1922: 57; Peet and Woolley 1923: 63, 81, 87, 89-90; Stevens 2003: 152-3; Stevens 2006: 246-7.

<sup>847</sup> Woolley 1922: 57; Peet and Woolley 1923: 63, 81. See also Stevens 2006: 246; Weiss 2015: 62.

<sup>848</sup> Stevens 2003: 152; Stevens 2006: 246.

<sup>849</sup> Peet and Woolley 1923: 86, 89-90; Stevens 2003: 152; Stevens 2006: 246; Weiss 2009: 200.

<sup>850</sup> For anthropoid busts, see 'Chapter 1: Find places and current locations of anthropoid busts' in Keith (with contributions by S. Donnat, A. K. Stevens, N. Harrington) 2011: 7-25. For *ꜣḥ ikr n R<sup>c</sup>* stelae, see Bruyère 1939a: 165; Bierbrier 1982: 95; Friedman 1994: 113. For both, see Weiss 2015: 68-93.

<sup>851</sup> Bruyère 1939a: 165; Bierbrier 1982: 95; Friedman 1985: 83; Pinch 1993: 219; Friedman 1994: 113, 115; Stevens 2003: 152; Weiss 2009: 200; Bochi 2010: 79; Harrington 2013: 57.

<sup>852</sup> Peet and Woolley 1923: 86, 89-90; Bruyère 1939a: 165; Bierbrier 1982: 95; Friedman 1994: 113; Stevens 2003: 152-3.

<sup>853</sup> Weiss 2015: 62. See also Bruyère 1939b: 195.

deep, which would almost certainly be too shallow for a lamp but not for a stela.<sup>854</sup> The discovery of anthropoid busts and *ꜣh ikr n Rꜥ* stelae close to some wall niches and the sometimes round-topped and/or shallow shape of the niches suggests that they did have a cultic function.<sup>855</sup> At Deir el-Medina, the niches were predominantly found in the first or second rooms of the dwellings.<sup>856</sup> At Amarna, they were primarily discovered at the Workmen's Village.<sup>857</sup> However, this may be due to the poor vertical preservation of the houses beyond the Workmen's Village.<sup>858</sup> These smaller wall niches are undecorated.

### 4.3.3 Vertical niches/false doors

At both Deir el-Medina and Amarna, vertical wall niches are present in some of the houses (see Figure 11).<sup>859</sup> These wall niches have been identified as false doors by several scholars,<sup>860</sup> based on their shape and decoration. At Deir el-Medina, false doors often occurred in the second room of the house and some have traces of decoration in red and yellow paint on them.<sup>861</sup> However, Weiss states that, 'traces of red and yellow cannot alone serve as indication of potential symbolism of the large cultic emplacements [vertical niches], let alone justify connection to false doors and mortuary practices'.<sup>862</sup> Other vertical niches appear to have been decorated with cultic scenes, such as the worship of Ahmose Nefertari

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<sup>854</sup> Stevens 2003: 153; Stevens 2006: 246-7. See also Peet and Woolley 1923: 86.

<sup>855</sup> See, for example, House C. VI at Deir el-Medina, as described by Weiss 2015: 87-90.

<sup>856</sup> Bruyère 1939b: 171; Meskell 1998: 232-3; Weiss 2009: 200; Weiss 2015: 68-93.

<sup>857</sup> Woolley 1922: 57; Peet and Woolley 1923: 63, 81, 87, 89-90; Stevens 2003: 152; Stevens 2006: 246.

<sup>858</sup> Stevens 2003: 152, Footnote 52.

<sup>859</sup> For vertical niches at Deir el-Medina, see Bruyère 1939b: 67-9; Valbelle 1985: 261; Meskell 1998: 231-2; Stevens 2003: 152; Weiss 2015: 35-55, Table 2. For Amarna, see Peet and Woolley 1923: 7, 10, 42-3; Pendlebury and Frankfort 1933: 9; 11; Borchardt and Ricke 1980; Stevens 2006: 235-46 (including Table II.13.2. Vertical niches in Amarna houses).

<sup>860</sup> Petrie 1898: 34-5; Bruyère 1939b: 67; Meskell 1998: 231-2.

<sup>861</sup> Bruyère 1939b: 67-9; Valbelle 1985: 261; Meskell 1998: 231-2; Stevens 2003: 152.

<sup>862</sup> Weiss 2015: 37-8.

and Amenhotep I.<sup>863</sup> In light of the number of objects excavated at Deir el-Medina that have been associated with an ancestor cult (anthropoid busts and *3h ikr n R<sup>c</sup>* stelae), Meskell argues that the false doors at Deir el-Medina could have been intended to facilitate contact with deceased ancestors.<sup>864</sup> It is very possible that this was the case as it would mirror the function of false doors in ancient Egyptian funerary beliefs, in which they were considered to enable an individual's *ka* to pass in and out of the tomb in order to receive offerings.<sup>865</sup> False doors were a transitional point between the world of the living and the world of the dead.

Vertical wall niches were a 'relatively common' feature in Amarna houses.<sup>866</sup> The niches measured approximately 150 cm in width and, according to Stevens, were originally around the same height as the doorways.<sup>867</sup> Vertical niches predominantly occur in the central room of a dwelling and are present in approximately 136 houses.<sup>868</sup> More than one vertical niche is evident in many of the houses.<sup>869</sup> It is not certain whether these niches are simply an architectural feature or whether they had a cultic purpose.<sup>870</sup> Many of the niches are located opposite a doorway/another niche or at the opposite end of a wall with a doorway/another niche in it.<sup>871</sup> Subsequently, they have been interpreted as intending to balance the architectural features in a room.<sup>872</sup> However, it seems unlikely that ordinary ancient Egyptians would have gone to the trouble and expense of building vertical niches within

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<sup>863</sup> Bruyère 1939b: 67-9; Valbelle 1985: 261; Stevens 2003: 152.

<sup>864</sup> Meskell 1998: 231-2. See also Weiss 2015: 53.

<sup>865</sup> Taylor 2001: 156-8.

<sup>866</sup> Stevens 2003: 149.

<sup>867</sup> Stevens 2003: 150; Stevens 2006: 236. See also, Petrie 1894: 21; Peet and Woolley 1923: 42.

<sup>868</sup> Stevens 2003: 150; Stevens 2006: 236, 238-46 (Table II.13.2. Vertical niches in Amarna houses).

<sup>869</sup> Stevens 2003: 150; Stevens 2006: 236, 238-46 (Table II.13.2. Vertical niches in Amarna houses).

<sup>870</sup> See Borchardt 1911: 22; Woolley 1922: 65; Peet and Woolley 1923: 42-3; Bissing 1926; Glanville 1929: 39-40, 50; Pendlebury and Frankfort 1933: 9; Stevens 2003: 150; Stevens 2006: 236.

<sup>871</sup> Borchardt 1912: 18-9; Borchardt 1913: 15; Borchardt 1914: 20-1; Stevens 2003: 150; Stevens 2006: 236.

<sup>872</sup> Stevens 2003: 150; Stevens 2006: 236.

their homes purely with the intention of creating architectural balance. Instead, it is possible that they had a religious function; there is evidence for decoration on some of the niches that points towards such a function. Three niches are decorated with prayers to Aten and possible scenes of worship of the royal family.<sup>873</sup> A further 45 niches have evidence of red and/or yellow decoration, occasionally with a white border, which is the same as the decoration on the niches at Deir el-Medina.<sup>874</sup> The vertical niches at Amarna also have some associated finds and architectural features which suggest that the niches had a religious function.<sup>875</sup> A pottery vase was excavated from in front of one of the niches decorated with a partial hymn to Aten (K50.1) and it has been suggested that the vase was a container for offerings.<sup>876</sup> Three niches (in houses O48.8, U37.1 and N49.21) have been associated with possible altars and a painted mud falcon head was found close to another niche (O49.1).<sup>877</sup> Borchardt suggests that this item may have been part of a frieze surrounding the niche.<sup>878</sup> Stevens disagrees due to the fact that the head would be orientated towards the floor if it were attached to the wall by its roughened base.<sup>879</sup> However, she does acknowledge that the falcon head may indicate 'religious conduct that focussed upon the niche'.<sup>880</sup> It seems likely that, as at Deir el-Medina, the vertical niches at Amarna were false doors, especially given the links between the associated finds and architectural features, and the giving of offerings.

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<sup>873</sup> The three decorated niches are in houses K50.1, M50.16 and P47.19. See, Woolley 1922: 65; Peet and Woolley 1923: 6, 19, 43; Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 124, 127; Stevens 2003: 150; Stevens 2006: 236.

<sup>874</sup> Peet and Woolley 1923: 42-3; Stevens 2003: 151; Stevens 2006: 236, 238-46 (Table II.13.2. Vertical niches in Amarna houses).

<sup>875</sup> Stevens 2003: 151.

<sup>876</sup> Peet and Woolley 1923:43; Stevens 2003: 151; Stevens 2006: 236-7.

<sup>877</sup> Borchardt 1911: 22; Stevens 2003: 151; Stevens 2006: 237.

<sup>878</sup> Borchardt 1911: 22; Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 239.

<sup>879</sup> Stevens 2003: 152; Stevens 2006: 237.

<sup>880</sup> Stevens 2003: 152.

#### 4.3.4 *Wall paintings*

From the Eighteenth Dynasty onwards domestic decoration consisting of scenes and texts showing devotion to deities, and deceased and living members of the royal family were popular.<sup>881</sup> Scenes of this nature have been discovered at sites such as Amarna, Aniba, Buhen and Deir el-Medina.<sup>882</sup> Budka convincingly argues that depictions of the living king should be interpreted as displays of loyalty rather than having religious significance, especially when they appear on the public parts of houses.<sup>883</sup> However, a number of the wall paintings from Amarna and Deir el-Medina have a different focus. They depict female figures and household deities such as Bes and Tawaret. Consequently, they have been considered by some scholars to be focussed around the theme of fertility and possibly have a cultic or ritualistic function.<sup>884</sup> Due to the relatively isolated position of the inhabitants of Deir el-Medina and their unique function in society, and the close association of the inhabitants of Amarna to the monotheistic king Akhenaten, the wall paintings at these sites could demonstrate the creation of slightly different universes of meaning as a result of religion being socially objectivated in alternative ways. In addition, the universes of meaning created may have been outwardly expressed in ways that differed from 'normal' ancient Egyptian society.

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<sup>881</sup> Stevens 2009: 6.

<sup>882</sup> For Amarna, see Seidlmayer 1983; Stevens 2006: 215-6. For Aniba, see Steindorff 1937: 28. For Buhen, see Smith 1976: 94-156. For Deir el-Medina, see Bruyère 1939b: 241-364.

<sup>883</sup> Budka 2001: 77-8. See also Stevens 2009: 7; Weiss 2015: 114.

<sup>884</sup> Kemp 1979: 53; Stevens 2009: 7; Stevens 2006: 216.

The wall paintings of this nature from Deir el-Medina are mainly located in the first rooms of the houses.<sup>885</sup> Some examples of the murals discovered at Deir el-Medina are described below. In SE8 is a representation of a female musician. The musician plays a double flute and has a tattoo on her upper thigh.<sup>886</sup> She is surrounded by convolvulus leaves, which were an erotic symbol in ancient Egypt.<sup>887</sup> In SE1 is a depiction of a woman breastfeeding.<sup>888</sup> In C7 there is a wall painting showing a woman grooming herself with her servant.<sup>889</sup> In NW12 there is a scene showing a figure (probably female) standing on a small boat.<sup>890</sup> The female focus of these paintings explains why some scholars believe that the platforms, also often found in the first room of houses at Deir el-Medina, were associated with sexual intercourse, conception and childbirth.<sup>891</sup> However, the decorations could also suggest that the platforms were used predominantly by women, that fertility and reproduction were the focus of cultic and ritual actions within the home, or that this room was generally a female domain.<sup>892</sup>

At Amarna, two wall paintings were discovered which, although limited, are more than fragmentary, meaning that their content can be discussed with a relative degree of certainty (see Plates 12-3 and Figures 12-3).<sup>893</sup> Both scenes are painted in white on an untreated mud-

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<sup>885</sup> Meskell 1998: 226.

<sup>886</sup> Meskell 1998: 226.

<sup>887</sup> Vandier d'Abbadie 1938: 30. See also Meskell 1998: 226.

<sup>888</sup> Meskell 1998: 227.

<sup>889</sup> Meskell 1998: 227.

<sup>890</sup> Bruyère 1923; Meskell 1998: 227.

<sup>891</sup> See Bruyère 1939b: 64; Brunner-Traut 1955: 30; Meskell 1998: 223; Dunand and Zivie-Coche 2006: 184.

<sup>892</sup> For the first room in the houses at Deir el-Medina as female spaces, see Meskell 1998: 219. Kleinke 2007: 73-6 and Weiss 2015: 30, 77, etc. do not agree that the interiors of the houses at Deir el-Medina were split into male and female spaces because, according to Meskell's theory, the kitchen would be the most important room in the house. This seems unlikely given the locations of large and smaller cult emplacements at Deir el-Medina (see Weiss 2015: Table 2, 3).

<sup>893</sup> See Kemp 1979; Stevens 2006: 216.



plaster background.<sup>894</sup> The first painting is located in first room of house Main Street 3 and takes up the entire width of the north wall, which is approximately 280 cm wide.<sup>895</sup> The mural depicts a group of dancing Bes figures, with the goddess Thoeris at the far right of the scene.<sup>896</sup> The second wall painting was discovered in the front hall of house Long Wall Street 10.<sup>897</sup> The surviving section of the painting is on the west wall.<sup>898</sup> However, there is evidence that the scene continued onto the north wall.<sup>899</sup> The width of the west wall was originally approximately 180 cm and the painting occupies around half of the width of that wall.<sup>900</sup> The width of the section of the mural on the north wall is unknown. The painting of the mural over two walls appears to have been deliberate, rather than the result of a lack of space.<sup>901</sup> The scene portrays 'human figures alternately large and small advancing right' and is framed by two lines at the sides and three at the bottom.<sup>902</sup> Kemp states that the first three large figures are 'women wearing long fringed robes' and that the smaller figures are two girls; 'that on the left apparently naked, her counterpart on the right wearing a long flowing robe without a fringe'.<sup>903</sup> He also argues that the fact that the foot of the fourth large figure has a raised heel and is not flat on the ground indicates that the figure was in a dancing pose.<sup>904</sup> It is therefore possible that this wall painting represents a group of musicians, singers or dancers. As at Deir el-Medina, the female focus of these wall paintings has been interpreted

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<sup>894</sup> Kemp 1979: 47.

<sup>895</sup> Kemp 1979: 47. See also Stevens 2006: 216.

<sup>896</sup> Kemp 1979: 47-8.

<sup>897</sup> Kemp 1979: 48. See also Stevens 2006: 216.

<sup>898</sup> Kemp 1979: 49.

<sup>899</sup> Kemp 1979: 49.

<sup>900</sup> Kemp 1979: 49.

<sup>901</sup> Kemp 1979: 49.

<sup>902</sup> Kemp 1979: 48-9.

<sup>903</sup> Kemp 1979: 49-50.

<sup>904</sup> Kemp 1979: 50.

as having links with female sexuality, fertility and childbirth.<sup>905</sup> This implies that the rooms in which these wall paintings occur were mainly inhabited by women. However, it is also possible that women were simply responsible for the decoration of their homes and chose to depict scenes that appealed to them.

#### *4.3.5 Invisible religion and architectural features and decoration*

Architectural features and decoration in the houses of ordinary ancient Egyptians do not appear to be examples of ritual and doctrine because there is no obvious indication that their existence was due to institutionalisation. However, if the specific features and decorations are considered in more detail then it is possible to link them to ritual and/or doctrine. For example, if platforms are interpreted as having a religious function in their role as altars (as argued by Weiss<sup>906</sup>) then it is apparent that those individuals with platforms in their houses were attempting to emulate, on a smaller scale, the activities, such as the giving of offerings and libations (an example of institutionalised religious conduct), that would have occurred on a daily basis in state or locally-run chapels and temples. The same can be said of the vertical niches or false doors which appear in the architecture of some houses. These vertical niches imitate the false doors which often appear in funerary architecture and were believed to allow the *ka* of the deceased individual to move in and out of the tomb to accept offerings (an example of institutionalised religious ideas).<sup>907</sup> Consequently, architectural features and decoration in the homes of ordinary Egyptians may have helped in the creation

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<sup>905</sup> Kemp 1979: 53; Stevens 2003: 155.

<sup>906</sup> Weiss 2009: 208.

<sup>907</sup> Taylor 2001: 156-8.

of religion as a social fact and therefore those individuals with such features in their homes may have been more exposed to it.

Architectural features and decoration can also be considered to show both the objective and the subjective dimensions of religiosity. The architectural features that are present in some houses would have been used, rather than existing simply for decorative purposes as this would have meant taking up unnecessary room and would have cost unnecessary expense. If the architectural features are considered to have had a religious purpose then their existence hints at the type of observable behaviour that may have been associated with them, for example the giving of offerings to deities, the enactment of an ancestor cult, etc. Similarly, if the architectural features and decoration are viewed as being linked to religion in some way then it is likely that the individuals associated with them had religious thought processes to an extent, which shows the subjective dimension of religiosity. Weiss argues that it was the responsibility of the individual and the family to maintain the circle of life, which was done by carrying out activities in the home that mirrored those carried out by the king in state temples.<sup>908</sup> If elements of both the objective and subjective dimensions of religiosity can be shown by architectural features and decoration then it could be argued that those individuals with such features in their houses had individual religiosity.

If household items such as architectural features and decoration are considered to be linked to religious attitudes and/or actions then they can also be seen as important elements of the symbolic universe or religious cosmos. The physical presence of these features in the homes of ordinary Egyptians is an example of a meaning system being socially objectivated. It also

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<sup>908</sup> Weiss 2015: 185.

shows how the meaning system referred to both everyday life and a world that transcends everyday life; by featuring them in their homes the ancient Egyptians ensured that the architectural features became part of their everyday lives, yet at the same time these features offered individuals an opportunity to interact with those in another plain of existence, such as deities or the deceased. Weiss uses the theory of agency to argue that small cultic emplacements (which includes wall niches) demonstrate that 'some families had affinities to certain gods and that these family traditions were maintained [as part of the symbolic universe] for several generations'.<sup>909</sup>

Architectural features and decoration can be seen as a way in which a universe of meaning was created. They affect the daily lives of individuals by giving meaning and purpose to their actions, which in turn enables them to become Selves. However, the extent to which architectural features and decoration can be considered to fulfil the 'with others' requirement for becoming a Self is less clear.<sup>910</sup> The universe of meaning created by the architectural features and decoration in a house would only have involved the individuals, probably a family, living in the house. It is unlikely to have involved the wider community. Due to the emphasis that Luckmann places on the creation of a universe of meaning with others it does not seem unreasonable to argue that the degree to which an individual can be considered to be a Self can be assessed by considering the degree to which they interact with others when forming a universe of meaning. This is because interaction with others exposes an individual to more social processes than if they were to interact with fewer

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<sup>909</sup> Weiss 2015: 108.

<sup>910</sup> See Section 2.2.1 in this thesis for more on the creation of a universe of meaning with others.

individuals. Therefore, there is a limit to what conclusive information architectural features and decoration are able to provide regarding individual religiosity.

#### 4.4 Furniture

The majority of existing ancient Egyptian furniture was discovered in tombs.<sup>911</sup> However, in many cases the furniture found in tombs was originally used in houses, or, if the furniture was made specifically for use in a tomb, it was a copy of the items commonly used in houses.<sup>912</sup> This section will use archaeological and textual evidence to consider the different types of domestic furniture used in ancient Egypt.<sup>913</sup> Examples of items of furniture discovered in domestic settings, such as the houses at Deir el-Medina and Amarna will be used where possible.<sup>914</sup> Items of furniture discovered in royal or elite tombs, for example the tomb of Tutankhamun, will not be considered in general because this thesis focusses on ordinary ancient Egyptians. Luckmann's theory of invisible religion will also be used in order to ascertain whether domestic furniture is able to provide any information about individual religiosity in ancient Egypt.<sup>915</sup>

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<sup>911</sup> Janssen 2009: 3. See also Killen 1980: 23-71; Killen 1994: 1-91.

<sup>912</sup> Janssen 2009: 3.

<sup>913</sup> For archaeological evidence, see Baker 1966; Killen 1980; Killen 1994. For textual evidence, see Janssen 2009.

<sup>914</sup> Bruyère 1939b: 47-9; Stevens 2006: 195-201.

<sup>915</sup> For key aspects of Luckmann's theory see Section 2.2.1 in this thesis.

#### 4.4.1 Beds

According to Janssen, the word for bed (*ḥṯti*) is the most commonly featured term for furniture in the texts he analysed from Deir el-Medina; it appears at least 125 times.<sup>916</sup> The texts also make reference to beds with feet and with footboards, as well as the fact that beds can be made from different types of wood (see Plates 14-6).<sup>917</sup> This textual evidence from Deir el-Medina looked at by Janssen is supported by the archaeological evidence.<sup>918</sup> All extant bed frames (except for one)<sup>919</sup> have animal legs and are made from a range of woods, such as acacia, cedar and pine.<sup>920</sup> Footboards were often attached to the bedframes and are usually decorated, often with images of Bes or Tawaret.<sup>921</sup> Headrests could also be attached to the bedframes and are sometimes decorated.<sup>922</sup> The texts Janssen analysed provide more information about the beds that were almost certainly used in Deir el-Medina; some of the beds are described as being filled with linen or having webbing.<sup>923</sup> These methods of creating a sleeping area within the bed frame are evidenced by the extant bed frames, as many of them still have their webbing in place.<sup>924</sup> The webbing is often made of linen string or cord, which is perhaps what is being referred to by the phrase 'filled with linen'.<sup>925</sup> However, this could also be referring to a mattress of some kind. The only example of a bed discovered at Deir el-Medina uses string made from rushes and reeds to form the

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<sup>916</sup> Janssen 2009: 16. Janssen has analysed texts, ostraca and papyri from Deir el-Medina.

<sup>917</sup> Janssen 2009: 16. For beds with feet, see O. Brussels E 306, 2. For beds with footboards, see O. Cairo 25572, vs. 10. For beds made of different types of wood, see O. Deir el-Medina 932, 4 and O. Der el-Medina 978, 2.

<sup>918</sup> Baker 1966: 142-5; Killen 1980: 23-36, Plates 25-44.

<sup>919</sup> See Killen 1980: 31, Plate 38.

<sup>920</sup> For a full discussion of the different types of wood used for furniture making in ancient Egypt, see Killen 1980: 1-6.

<sup>921</sup> See Killen 1980: 28-36, Plates 36-7, 39-42, 44.

<sup>922</sup> See Killen 1980: 28-9, 31, 35-6, Plates 36, 38, 44.

<sup>923</sup> Janssen 2009: 16. For 'filled with linen' and 'put in the webbing', see O. Michaelides 13, vs 4-5.

<sup>924</sup> See Killen 1980: 28-9, 31-6, Plates 36, 38-9, 41-2, 44.

<sup>925</sup> See Killen 1980: 28-9, 31-6, Plates 36, 38-9, 41-2, 44.

webbing.<sup>926</sup> The bed is very simple in design and does not have animal feet. However, it does have an attached headrest which is not decorated.

#### 4.4.2 Chairs

The chair in ancient Egypt developed from the stool in around the Second Dynasty. There are many examples of chairs with backs belonging to royalty and the elite from this period onwards (see Plates 17-8).<sup>927</sup> However, Baker argues that it is unlikely that chair would be found in the houses of ordinary Egyptians until after the Middle Kingdom.<sup>928</sup> He also notes that no examples of household chairs have survived from the Eighteenth Dynasty onwards.<sup>929</sup> Consequently, it is impossible to be certain of the form of domestic chairs and scholars must use the examples found in tombs as a guide. Like the beds, the majority of ancient Egyptian chairs have feet carved into the shape of animal feet (e.g. bovine, lion, and gazelle) and the area for sitting is constructed using webbed linen string or cord.<sup>930</sup> Some chairs are extremely ornate and are carved and/or painted with decorative images and texts.<sup>931</sup> However, it seems likely that the chairs used in a domestic environment would have been much simpler with little, if any, decoration.<sup>932</sup> Despite the lack of archaeological evidence, textual evidence from Deir el-Medina does imply that chairs were used by ordinary Egyptian in a domestic setting.<sup>933</sup> The word *knw* is generally accepted to mean chair and

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<sup>926</sup> Killen 1980: 31, Plate 38.

<sup>927</sup> Killen 1980: 51-63.

<sup>928</sup> Baker 1966: 128.

<sup>929</sup> Baker 1966: 127.

<sup>930</sup> See Killen 1980: 51-63, Plates 85-8, 94-102.

<sup>931</sup> See Killen 1980: 58-63, Plates 96-102.

<sup>932</sup> See, for example, Killen 1980: 51-8, Plates 85-8, 94-5.

<sup>933</sup> Janssen 2009: 20-1.

appears approximately 40 times in the Deir el-Medina texts.<sup>934</sup> It is also worth noting that *knw* is not the only word used to describe a seat, which suggests that different types of seats and chairs were used in the domestic environment.<sup>935</sup>

#### 4.4.3 Stools

Killen states that ‘stools were the most common piece of furniture used in ancient Egypt’, which is supported by the archaeological evidence.<sup>936</sup> What is also clear from the archaeological evidence is that the development of the stool was complicated and that some styles lasted for centuries, while others merged into new styles.<sup>937</sup> Styles of stools included simple stools, folding stools, low stools, three-legged stools, lattice stools and round-legged stools (see Plates 19-22).<sup>938</sup> The seating area of the stool could be constructed from wood, leather or a woven lattice of linen, wicker, rushes, etc.<sup>939</sup> As with chairs, stools could be very simple in design, or much more ornate and decorative. Common decorative features of stools were feet carved into the shape of animals’ feet, ducks’ heads used on joins with stretchers at the floor, and engraved and/or painted patterns.<sup>940</sup> It is likely that the stools used in the homes of ordinary Egyptians were simpler in style. Seven rush-seat stools and

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<sup>934</sup> Janssen 2009: 20.

<sup>935</sup> Janssen 2009: 20.

<sup>936</sup> Killen 1980: 37. See also, Baker 1966: 133-42; Killen 1980: 37-50, Plates 45-84.

<sup>937</sup> Killen 1980: 37.

<sup>938</sup> For simple stools, see Killen 1980: 37, 39, Plates 45-7, 51-4. For folding stools, see Killen 1980: 40-2, Plates 55-64. For low stools, see Killen 1980: 43-4, Plates 65-7. For three-legged stools, see Killen 1980: 44-5, Plates 68-71. For lattice stools, see Killen 1980: 46-7, Plates 74-7. For round-legged stools, see Killen 1980: 48-9, Plates 79-84.

<sup>939</sup> For examples of wooden seating areas, see Killen 1980: 37, 44-8, Plates 45-6, 68-9, 70-1, 73, 77-8. For examples of stools with leather seats, see Killen 1980: 40, 42-3, Plates 55, 56, 64. For examples of stools with lattice seats, see Killen 1980: 38-9, 43-4, 45, 47, Plates 50, 54, 65-7, 72, 76.

<sup>940</sup> For examples of stools with animals’ feet, see Killen 1980: 38-9, 45, 47-8, Plates 49, 50, 71, 78. For examples of stools with ducks’ heads, see Killen 1980: 40-3, Plates 57-8, 61, 64. For examples of stools with engraved and/or painted patterns, see Killen 1980: 42-3, 45, 47-8, Plates 64, 71, 77, 78.



two three-legged stools were discovered in tombs at Deir el-Medina,<sup>941</sup> which suggests that these were the types of stools used in the houses in the village, and probably in domestic settings throughout Egypt. Janssen states that the word *hdm*, which is often translated as footstool, appears in the Deir el-Medina texts more than 30 times.<sup>942</sup> The word *isbw.t*, which means folding stool, also appears in the texts over 30 times.<sup>943</sup> This implies that stools were not an uncommon item of furniture in Deir el-Medina.

#### 4.4.4 Boxes and chests

According to Janssen, the texts he analysed from Deir el-Medina contain 14 different words for boxes or chests.<sup>944</sup> The most popular of these words, such as *škr/šgr* and *ʿfd.t*, appear over 40 times each.<sup>945</sup> The different terms refer to the specific size, shape and/or function of the container.<sup>946</sup> Boxes and chests were used for a variety of purposes, such as the storage of textiles, the storage of toilet items, and the storage of clothes and jewellery.<sup>947</sup> Killen refers to numerous styles of boxes and chests, including boxes with round lids, boxes with cavetto cornices, boxes with carrying handles, and boxes in the shape of shrines (see Plates 23-5).<sup>948</sup> Some boxes were left plain and undecorated, while other boxes were decorated

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<sup>941</sup> Bruyère 1937b: 47-51, Figure 21; Baker 1966: Figure 214.

<sup>942</sup> Janssen 2009: 15.

<sup>943</sup> Janssen 2009: 6.

<sup>944</sup> Janssen 2009: 26-56.

<sup>945</sup> Janssen 2009: 26.

<sup>946</sup> Janssen 2009: 26-7. For a full discussion of each of the ancient Egyptian terms, see Janssen 2009: 29-56.

<sup>947</sup> For examples of chests used for the storage of textiles, see Killen 1994: 8-11, 17-19, Plates 3, 10. For examples of chests used for the storage of toilet items, see Killen 1994: 26-28, 35, Plates 12, 14, 24-6. For examples of chests used for the storage of clothing and jewellery, see Killen 1994: 11, 23-26, 30-4, 55, Plates 4, 11, 18, 21, 46.

<sup>948</sup> For more information about boxes with round lids, see Killen 1994: 14-7. For more information about boxes with cavetto cornices, see Killen 1994: 17-9, Plates 10. For more information about boxes with carrying handles, see Killen 1994: 19-20. For more information about boxes in the shape of shrines, see Killen 1994: 69-75, Plates 57-9.

with geometric patterns and borders, or with detailed images and scenes.<sup>949</sup> Given the high number of ancient Egyptian words for boxes or chests and the large quantity of these items that are still extant,<sup>950</sup> it seems certain that items of this nature would have been present in the homes of ordinary ancient Egyptians. The size, quality and decoration of the items would probably have been dependent on the status of the individuals occupying the home.

However, due to the highly practical nature of the objects, the intended function of each box or chest may also have had an impact on its design and decoration.

#### 4.4.5 *So-called cultic furniture*

For the purpose of this thesis, so-called cultic furniture will be considered to refer to shrines, offering tables and basins. The archaeological evidence for so-called cultic furniture being used in domestic settings comes predominantly from Amarna and Deir el-Medina.<sup>951</sup>

At Amarna, a small wooden shrine decorated with a uraeus frieze was discovered at the House of the King's Statue in the Central City.<sup>952</sup> Consequently, a number of wooden uraei discovered in domestic settings have been considered to be parts of shrines.<sup>953</sup> However, as Stevens notes, it is difficult to be certain of the link between wooden uraei and shrines

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<sup>949</sup> For examples of boxes or chests that are plain and undecorated, see Killen 1994: 13, 28-30, Plates 5, 14, 15, 16. For examples of boxes or chests that are decorated with geometric patterns and borders, see Killen 1994: 30-7, 42, 44, Plates 18, 21, 27, 28, 35, 41. For examples of boxes or chests that are decorated with detailed images and scenes, see Killen 1994: 17-9, 26-8, 38-40, 42-5, 53-5, Plates 10, 12, 29, 39, 42, 44.

<sup>950</sup> See Killen 1994: 1-86; Janssen 2009: 26-56.

<sup>951</sup> For Amarna see Peet and Woolley 1923: 60-5; Stevens 2006: 195-201. For Deir el-Medina, see Bruyère 1939b: 47-9; Weiss 2015: 117-34. Note that offering tables and/or stands were also discovered at Abydos, Lahun and Buhen. See Stevens 2009: 12-4 for more information on archaeological evidence for 'domestic religion' discovered at these sites. See also Appendix I.

<sup>952</sup> Pendlebury 1951: 142, Plate LXXIX.7; Stevens 2006: 197.

<sup>953</sup> Stevens 2006: 197.

because uraei also featured on other items, such as coffins, statues and staves.<sup>954</sup> Wooden shutters have also been discovered in domestic settings and Stevens argues that they could conceivably have originated from free-standing wooden shrines, composite stone and wooden altars, or wall-niche shrines.<sup>955</sup> Stevens also notes that the shutters could have originated from boxes, windows or shrine-shaped stelae.<sup>956</sup> A wooden Hathor head was found in the Workmen's Village in house East Street 12 and Stevens argues that this could have come from a shrine.<sup>957</sup> It may have originated from a shrine that was similar to a free-standing wooden one discovered at Deir el-Medina, which was dedicated to the Elephantine triad and had Hathor-headed columns.<sup>958</sup> A fragment of a wooden Hathor head was found in house SO III in Deir el-Medina and it is possible that this also came from a shrine.<sup>959</sup>

At least 18 intact and fragmentary offering tables have been discovered at Amarna in the Workmen's Village and the Main City.<sup>960</sup> These offering tables were found in domestic contexts.<sup>961</sup> The offering tables are approximately 15 to 25 cm in length, although there was one miniature offering table discovered at West Street 17 in the Workmen's Village which measures approximately 6 cm in length.<sup>962</sup> The offerings tables are all square or rectangular in shape and the majority have a runnel which extends beyond the edge of the table.<sup>963</sup>

Most of the offering tables are not decorated. However, one was decorated with images of

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<sup>954</sup> Stevens 2006: 197. See also, Lillesø 1975; Johnson 1988: 143-4.

<sup>955</sup> Stevens 2006: 198.

<sup>956</sup> Stevens 2006: 198.

<sup>957</sup> Peet and Woolley 1923: 72, Plate XX.1; Stevens 2006: 198-9.

<sup>958</sup> Leospo 1988: Figure 215.

<sup>959</sup> Bruyère 1939b: 320.

<sup>960</sup> Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 20, 164, 217; Stevens 2006: 195.

<sup>961</sup> Stevens 2006: 195.

<sup>962</sup> Stevens 2006: 195.

<sup>963</sup> Stevens 2006: 195-6.

flowers and birds,<sup>964</sup> and the miniature table was decorated with six *nfr*-signs.<sup>965</sup> Offering tables were also excavated from domestic contexts at Deir el-Medina.<sup>966</sup> As at Amarna, many of the tables were undecorated. However, some were inscribed with the names of their owners, prayers and the *ꜣḥ ikr n Rꜥ* formula.<sup>967</sup> Stevens mentions that an offering table was also excavated from a domestic context at Abydos which dates to the First Intermediate Period.<sup>968</sup>

As noted by Stevens, there is no clear evidence to indicate that basins served a cultic function because 'there is a range of utilitarian, secular purposes for which they would have been suitable'.<sup>969</sup> However, it is worth mentioning that one basin found at Amarna (in the central room of P47.17) was inscribed with the figure of a worshipper, which suggests that the basin may have had a religious function.<sup>970</sup> Similarly, at Deir el-Medina, some of the fragments of stone basins that have been discovered are inscribed with prayers, images of plants, animals and worshippers, and the *ꜣḥ ikr n Rꜥ* formula.<sup>971</sup> It seems likely that multiple basins would have existed in the homes of ordinary ancient Egyptians, some of which had a utilitarian function and others which were used for cultic purposes.

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<sup>964</sup> Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 20; Stevens 2006: 196.

<sup>965</sup> Stevens 2006: 196.

<sup>966</sup> Bruyère 1939b: 204-8; Weiss 2015: 119-26.

<sup>967</sup> Bruyère 1939b: 165-7, 204-8, 237-335; Demarée 1983: 145-53, 287; Friedman 1994: 113, 179; Meskell 1998: 226; Stevens 2006: 197.

<sup>968</sup> Stevens 2006: 197. See also Adams 1998: 24.

<sup>969</sup> Stevens 2006: 195.

<sup>970</sup> Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 119; Stevens 2006: 195.

<sup>971</sup> Bruyère 1939b: 210, 237-335; Demarée 1983: 146-53, 287; Stevens 2006: 195.

#### 4.4.6 Case study: the intact tomb of the architect Kha (TT 8)

The intact tomb of Kha<sup>972</sup> is used as a case study in this thesis because, as discussed above, very few items of furniture have been discovered in settlement or domestic contexts.<sup>973</sup> The majority of ancient Egyptian furniture has been found in funerary contexts, particularly tombs.<sup>974</sup> Kha was a high ranking official and so the items in his tomb may not be representative of the furniture used by the majority of ordinary ancient Egyptians.<sup>975</sup> However, the furniture found as part of Kha's funerary assemblage is a rare example of a relatively complete set of furniture that shows evidence of having been used in daily life.<sup>976</sup> Subsequently, it has been deemed relevant and useful to include a case study of the items of furniture discovered in Kha's tomb in this chapter on household and personal items.

##### 4.4.6.1 The discovery of the tomb of Kha

The tomb of Kha was discovered in 1906 by Ernesto Schiaparelli, director of the Turin Egyptian Museum, towards the end of a season spent excavating parts of Deir el-Medina and the western necropolis at Thebes.<sup>977</sup> After clearing some parts of the temple and settlement at Deir el-Medina, Schiaparelli and his team focussed their excavations on the northern sector of the necropolis.<sup>978</sup> They believed that the presence of visible, decorated chapels in

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<sup>972</sup> For the full excavation report, see Schiaparelli 1927. See also Marro 1927; Marro 1928; Vandier d'Abbadie 1939; Curto and Mancini 1968; Smith 1992: 197-214; Martina et al. 2005; Moiso 2008; Schiaparelli 2008; Vassilika 2010; Russo 2012; Ostrand 2013.

<sup>973</sup> Janssen 2009: 3. See also Killen 1980: 23-71; Killen 1994: 1-91.

<sup>974</sup> Janssen 2009: 3. See also Killen 1980: 23-71; Killen 1994: 1-91.

<sup>975</sup> Roccati 2008: 5.

<sup>976</sup> Roccati 2008: 7; Schiaparelli 2008: 27-8; Vassilika 2010: 13; Russo 2012: 3.

<sup>977</sup> Schiaparelli 1927: 3-6; Schiaparelli 2008: 15. See also Roccati 2008: 5; Russo 2012: 3.

<sup>978</sup> Schiaparelli 1927: 6-7; Schiaparelli 2008: 15-6. See also Russo 2012: 3.

the northern region indicated that tombs existed in the area.<sup>979</sup> Initially they uncovered many looted tombs until eventually discovering an area of the mountainside where the ground appeared to be untouched by robbers.<sup>980</sup> Schiaparelli and his team continued to excavate in the undisturbed region of the necropolis and subsequently uncovered the entrance to a tomb (see Plate 26).<sup>981</sup> Russo describes what Schiaparelli was met with beyond the entrance to the tomb as follows:

Down stairs carved in the rock, Schiaparelli reached the entrance of the first room sealed with bricks; the room was left with bare walls and contained objects that had been abandoned in the final stages of the burial; a wooden door leading to another room was still closed. As Schiaparelli opened it, he found the complete burial assemblages of Kha and his wife Meryt.<sup>982</sup>

The tomb of Kha is very significant because it is a rare example of an intact Eighteenth-Dynasty tomb.<sup>983</sup> In addition, the artefacts discovered in the tomb are varied and of exceptional quality.<sup>984</sup> Over 500 objects from many aspects of Egyptian life were found in the tomb, such as furniture, foodstuffs, clothing, working tools, pottery and stoneware, personal objects, and toiletry sets (see Plate 27).<sup>985</sup> Although some of the objects are believed to be copies of original items made specifically for use in the tomb,<sup>986</sup> many of the

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<sup>979</sup> Schiaparelli 1927: 6-7; Schiaparelli 2008: 15-6. See also Russo 2012: 3.

<sup>980</sup> Schiaparelli 1927: 7-8; Schiaparelli 2008: 16. See also Roccati 2008: 5; Russo 2012: 3.

<sup>981</sup> Schiaparelli 1927: 7-9; Schiaparelli 2008: 16. See also Russo 2012: 3.

<sup>982</sup> Russo 2012: 3.

<sup>983</sup> Russo 2012: 3.

<sup>984</sup> Schiaparelli 1927: 15-6; Schiaparelli 2008: 17. See also Roccati 2008: 6-7; Vassilika 2010; Russo 2012: 3.

<sup>985</sup> See Schiaparelli 1927: 17-187; Schiaparelli 2008: 19-58; Smith 1992: 197-213; Vassilika 2010: 29-110; Fondazione Museo delle Antichità Egizie di Torino (enter the search term 'Kha').

<sup>986</sup> Schiaparelli 1927: 112-45; Schiaparelli 2008: 37-44; Vassilika 2010: 14.

items show signs of wear such as missing rails on stools.<sup>987</sup> This indicates that they were used by Kha, Meryt and their family in daily life.<sup>988</sup>

Kha was born during the reign of Amenhotep II and died during the reign of Amenhotep III.<sup>989</sup> According to the inscriptions on some of the items discovered in his tomb, Kha was 'overseer of (construction) works' and 'chief of the Great Palace'.<sup>990</sup> These titles, as well as the high quality of many of the objects found in his tomb, indicate that Kha was an important official of a relatively high rank.

Despite the importance of his discovery, Schiaparelli did not publish details of Kha's tomb until 1927.<sup>991</sup> By this point, the tomb of Tutankhamun had been discovered and so the importance of the finding of Kha's tomb and the objects within it was underestimated.<sup>992</sup> In addition, due to the twenty-year gap between the discovery and publication of the tomb, there is much uncertainty regarding the exact location of the objects discovered inside the tomb.<sup>993</sup>

#### 4.4.6.2 *The items of furniture discovered in the tomb of Kha*

The items of furniture discovered in Kha's tomb are listed below. Any distinguishing features or decoration is noted. Due to the uncertainty surrounding the locations of the different items, this is not included in the table. Unless stated otherwise, the predominant material of each item of furniture is wood.

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<sup>987</sup> Vassilika 2010: 13.

<sup>988</sup> Roccati 2008: 7; Schiaparelli 2008: 27-8; Vassilika 2010: 13; Russo 2012: 3.

<sup>989</sup> Roccati 2008: 5.

<sup>990</sup> Russo 2012: 3.

<sup>991</sup> See Schiaparelli 1927. See also Russo 2012: 3.

<sup>992</sup> Russo 2012: 3.

<sup>993</sup> Russo 2012: 3.

**Table 2:** *Items of furniture discovered in the tomb of Kha*

Item of furniture	Egyptian Museum of Turin Object Number <sup>994</sup>	Distinguishing features or decorations <sup>995</sup>
Straight-backed chair <sup>996</sup>	S. 08333	Statue of Kha placed on top of it. Feet in the form of lions' paws. Funerary inscription along both sides of the front, and the back. Geometric and lotus flower patterns.
Folding chair <sup>997</sup>	S. 08509	Leather seat. Legs in the form of ducks' heads.
Rectangular chair	S. 08510	White in colour.
Rectangular chair	S. 08511	White in colour.
Rectangular chair	S. 08512	White in colour.
Rectangular chair	S. 08513	White in colour.
Small chair	S. 08468	
Rectangular stool	S. 08507	Red leather seat. Decorations stamped on the leather.
Rectangular stool	S. 08508	Red leather seat. Decorations stamped on the leather.

<sup>994</sup> See Fondazione Museo delle Antichità Egizie di Torino (enter the search term 'Kha').

<sup>995</sup> This information has been taken from Schiaparelli 1927: 112-45; Schiaparelli 2008: 37-44; Fondazione Museo delle Antichità Egizie di Torino (enter the search term 'Kha').

<sup>996</sup> See Plate 28.

<sup>997</sup> See Plate 29.



Item of furniture	Egyptian Museum of Turin Object Number <sup>994</sup>	Distinguishing features or decorations <sup>995</sup>
Four-legged stool	S. 08614	Linen-cord frame. Feet in the form of lions' paws.
Three-legged stool	S. 08505	White in colour.
Three-legged stool	S. 08506	White in colour.
Low footstool	S. 08522	White in colour.
Table	S. 08257	White in colour. Inscribed with funerary offering formulae.
Table	S. 08258	White in colour. Inscribed with funerary offering formulae.
Low table	S. 08402	
Large, low cane table <sup>998</sup>	S. 08342	Piled with breads and other foodstuffs.
Large, low cane table <sup>999</sup>	S. 08343	Piled with breads and other foodstuffs.
Small, high cane table	S. 08342	Supported a fragile papyrus basket.
Large bed (Kha's) <sup>1000</sup>	S. 08327	Vegetable-cord base. Legs in the form of lions' paws.
Small bed (Meryt's) <sup>1001</sup>	S. 08329	White in colour. Vegetable-cord base.

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<sup>998</sup> See Plate 30.

<sup>999</sup> See Plate 30.

<sup>1000</sup> See Plate 31.

<sup>1001</sup> See Plate 32.

Item of furniture	Egyptian Museum of Turin Object Number <sup>994</sup>	Distinguishing features or decorations <sup>995</sup>
		Legs in the form of lions' paws. Made up with sheets, blankets, towels and two headrests.
Headrest	S. 08630	Found on Meryt's bed.
Headrest	S. 08631	Found on Meryt's bed.
Cupboard	S. 08493	Contained Meryt's wig.
Chest <sup>1002</sup>	S. 08212	Pointed top. Four high legs. Decorated with a funerary scene and geometric patterns.
Chest	S. 08213	Pointed top. Four high legs. Decorated with a funerary scene and floral and geometric patterns.
Chest	S. 08314	Flat top. Four low legs. White in colour. Column of hieroglyphs painted in black along the top.
Chest	S. 08412	Flat top. Four low legs. White in colour. Two columns of hieroglyphics engraved and painted in black on a yellow background. One is on the front and one is on the lid.

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<sup>1002</sup> See Plate 33.

Item of furniture	Egyptian Museum of Turin Object Number <sup>994</sup>	Distinguishing features or decorations <sup>995</sup>
Chest	S. 08421	<p>Flat top.  Four low legs.  White in colour.  A column of black hieroglyphs on a yellow background and edged in red, white and black runs along the centre of the lid.</p>
Chest	S. 08440	<p>Pointed top.  Four high legs.  Decorated with geometric patterns.</p>
Chest	S. 08450	<p>Pointed top.  Four high legs.  Mainly undecorated but possibly waxed.  On both slopes of the top runs a line of hieroglyphs engraved and filled with light blue on a yellow background.</p>
Chest	S. 08477	<p>Flat top.  Four low legs.  White in colour.</p>
Chest	S. 08515	<p>Pointed top.  Four high legs.  White in colour.  Column of hieroglyphs hollowed out of the bottom and painted yellow begins on the fixed panel of the cover and continues to the centre of the long side.</p>

Item of furniture	Egyptian Museum of Turin Object Number <sup>994</sup>	Distinguishing features or decorations <sup>995</sup>
Chest	S. 08515	Pointed top. Four high legs. White in colour. On both slopes of the top a line of hieroglyphs is engraved on a yellow background, bounded above and below by a red line.
Chest	S. 08613	Pointed top. Four high legs. Decorated with a funerary scene and geometric patterns.
Chest	S. 08617	Pointed top. Four high legs. Decorated with floral and geometric patterns. Engraved lines of hieroglyphs painted black on one slope of the top and one of the short sides.
Chest	S. 08527	Flat, sliding top. Mainly undecorated but possibly waxed. Column of black hieroglyphs on a yellow background edged in red along the lid.
Chest <sup>1003</sup>	S. 08479	Flat, sliding top. Decorated with geometric and floral designs. Funerary formula painted on one side.

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<sup>1003</sup> See Plate 34.

Item of furniture	Egyptian Museum of Turin Object Number <sup>994</sup>	Distinguishing features or decorations <sup>995</sup>
Small box	S. 08378	Flat top. White in colour. Hieroglyphs painted in black along the top.
Small box	S. 08593	Pointed top. Four high legs. Mainly undecorated but possibly waxed. Offering formula painted in black along the top.
Small box	S. 08600	Flat top. Two low legs. Mainly undecorated but possibly waxed. Offering formula painted in black along the top.
Small box	S. 08615/01	Pointed top. Four high legs. Ebony inlaid with ivory in a geometric pattern. Offering formula painted on one of the short sides.
Lamp stand <sup>1004</sup>	S. 08628	In the form of a lotus flower. Supporting a bronze lamp shaped like a bird.
Bronze lamp <sup>1005</sup>	Held in Cairo Museum, number JE 38642	In the form of a bird. Supported on one of the lotus flower lamp stands.

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<sup>1004</sup> See Plate 35.

<sup>1005</sup> See Plate 35.

There are three additional items discovered in Kha's tomb which, although not items of furniture, are worthy of note. These are:

- 1) A blue enamel ring bearing the image of a uraeus with a double crown. It was discovered in a small, undecorated chest shaped like a prism that belonged to Kha.<sup>1006</sup>
- 2) A ring bearing the inscription, 'Mut, the sovereign of the sky, queen of the two lands'. It was also discovered in the small, undecorated chest shaped like a prism that belonged to Kha.<sup>1007</sup>
- 3) An alabaster bowl with a handle in the form of a bird's tail. This was found in a wooden toiletry box decorated with geometric and floral patterns that belonged to Meryt.<sup>1008</sup>

The furniture discovered in the tomb of Kha is in keeping with the extant examples of ancient Egyptian furniture.<sup>1009</sup> The majority of decoration is present on the various chests and boxes, some of which appear to have been decorated specifically for use in the tomb. Both of the beds, as well as one chair and one stool have feet in the form of lions' paws, which is a common form of embellishment on such items of furniture. The same can be said of the folding chair which has legs in the form of ducks' heads.

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<sup>1006</sup> See Schiaparelli 1927: 89; Schiaparelli 2008: 31. The museum object number for this item cannot be identified.

<sup>1007</sup> See Schiaparelli 1927: 89; Schiaparelli 2008: 31. The museum object number for this item cannot be identified.

<sup>1008</sup> See Schiaparelli 1927: 109; Schiaparelli 2008: 34. The museum object number for this item cannot be identified.

<sup>1009</sup> See Sections 4.4.1 to 4.4.5.

#### 4.4.7 *Invisible religion and furniture*

Ancient Egyptian furniture could be considered to provide examples of both ritual and doctrine. Ritual is demonstrated most clearly through so-called cultic furniture such as shrines and offering tables. These items of furniture demonstrate that religious acts that were in line with the practices common in state religion, such as the giving of offerings and libations, were carried out by individuals within their homes. Decorative furniture might suggest the presence of doctrine because the decoration, which is usually linked to deities or symbols of power and strength,<sup>1010</sup> implies that the owner of the furniture had engaged with and internalised some of the beliefs associated with state religion. However, such evidence for doctrine is not conclusive enough to state its existence for certain. Much of the furniture discovered in the houses and tombs of ordinary ancient Egyptians was fairly simple in form and the more decorative items are usually associated with elite individuals or royalty.<sup>1011</sup> However, the furniture found in the intact tomb of the high-ranking official Kha is largely undecorated. Many of the items that are decorated, such as chests, appear to have been decorated specifically for the purpose of use in Kha's tomb. If this is the case then it implies that Kha had engaged with and internalised the ritual and doctrine associated with state religion because he wanted to ensure that he was fully provided for in the afterlife by decorating some of the items in his tomb with funerary scenes and offering texts. However, the fact that many of the items were decorated specifically for the tomb could imply that Kha did not feel the need to outwardly express his internalisation of state ritual and doctrine during his life or, perhaps, that he chose to express it through other mediums such as the

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<sup>1010</sup> See Sections 4.4.1 to 4.4.5.

<sup>1011</sup> See, for example, Schiaparelli 1927: 17-187; Bruyère 1939b: 47-9.

two inscribed rings found in his tomb. Subsequently, it is difficult to state for certain whether furniture can be used to provide information about ritual and doctrine, and therefore individual religiosity. Plain and simple furniture cannot be considered to be an example of invisible religion and provides very little information about ritual and doctrine. More decorative or so-called cultic furniture can be considered to be an example of invisible religion, but its context must be considered before making assumptions about the information it can provide. It could be that an item of furniture is decorated in a certain way due to its function or for a specific purpose and has very little, if anything, to do with religious conduct or opinions. It is also possible that some items of furniture were inherited from ancestors and so may not be able to provide accurate information regarding the individual religiosity of its last owner.

Ancient Egyptian furniture can, to an extent, provide information regarding the historical and institutional reality of ritual and belief which subsequently aids the understanding of individual religiosity in ancient Egypt. However, it is important to remember that the archaeological record provides little certainty with regard to how many ordinary ancient Egyptians would have had cultic furniture or other items of furniture that were decorated with religious or cultic imagery in their homes. The historical element of the reality of ritual and belief can be seen in the typical forms that ancient Egyptian furniture takes. Although the styles of different types of furniture developed over time, the basic forms remained very similar as did the decoration.<sup>1012</sup> The repetition of certain forms, such as animal feet (several items of furniture discovered in Kha's tomb are decorated with feet in the form of lions'

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<sup>1012</sup> See Sections 4.4.1 to 4.4.5.



paws), and decorations, such as the deities Bes and Tawaret,<sup>1013</sup> imply that these symbols and deities were important and that an individual's religiosity would have been influenced by these historical elements of the reality of ritual and belief. In addition, as discussed above, it is likely that some items of furniture were passed on to an individual by his or her ancestors. Subsequently, an individual's religiosity could be influenced by the same iconography and actions that influenced his or her ancestors. The institutional element of the reality of ritual and belief can also be seen in the form and decoration of furniture. Much of the iconography is present in state religion and shows a link between state religion and individual religiosity. As discussed above, so-called cultic furniture demonstrates the institutional reality of ritual and belief most clearly because it allows the individual to mimic actions that would have taken place in state temples on a smaller scale in their own homes. Furniture demonstrates the objective dimension of religiosity because so-called cultic furniture shows that observable behaviour occurred within the homes where such furniture was present. Offerings were made to deities and/or ancestors using shrines, offering tables and basins.<sup>1014</sup> The subjective dimension of religiosity cannot be proven by considering furniture. In view of Luckmann's theory, decorative furniture may imply that, when given the chance, those people with religiosity chose an item of furniture with a design that focussed on religious elements, such as deities, whereas people without individual religiosity chose a simpler item. The existing evidence does not support this application of the theory of

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<sup>1013</sup> See, for example, Killen 1980: 31, Plate 38; Killen 1980: 28-36, Plates 36-7, 39-42, 44.

<sup>1014</sup> See Section 4.4.5. See also Stevens 2003: 156-8; Stevens 2009: 3-6, 11, Table 1; Weiss 2015: 120, 126-7. In Table 1, Stevens 2009 notes that offering tables have been discovered at Abydos (First Intermediate Period), Buhen (Middle Kingdom to New Kingdom), Tell el-Amarna (New Kingdom) and Deir el-Medina (New Kingdom). Shrines associated with the domestic sphere have been discovered at Tell el-Dabaa (Middle Kingdom to Second Intermediate Period), Tell el-Amarna (New Kingdom), Deir el-Medina (New Kingdom) and Kom Rabia (New Kingdom to Third Intermediate Period).

invisible religion. There is no way of proving that individuals who possessed simple items of furniture had no individual religiosity or vice versa. It could simply be that some individuals were unable to afford a more decorative item of furniture. In the case of Kha's tomb, the decorated furniture found inside it predominantly consists of items decorated with geometric and/or floral patterns, as well as funerary scenes. The focus on funerary scenes is not unusual in the context of the tomb. However, this evidence, combined with the lack of depictions of deities, might suggest that the objective and subjective dimensions of Kha's religiosity were more focussed on the concept of the afterlife, rather than a personal connection with god. However, this is speculation and an assessment of the extant contemporary tomb-furniture (to establish whether the items from Kha's tomb were typical of the time period or not) would be required in order to provide conclusive evidence for or against this theory.

The creation of furniture for the purpose of performing cultic acts and furniture decorated with religious iconography is an example of the social objectivation of the religious cosmos or symbolic universe.<sup>1015</sup> However, the existence of such furniture is unable to demonstrate with any certainty the internalisation of or the engagement with the symbolic universe by the individuals who created, purchased or used such items. For example, the funerary scenes painted onto some of the furniture found in Kha's tomb may suggest that Kha had internalised and engaged with at least one aspect of the symbolic universe because he believed that it was possible for human beings to be reborn in the afterlife and that he needed to ensure that he was fully equipped if this was to happen to him. However, it is also

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<sup>1015</sup> See Section 2.2.1 in this thesis for more on the social objectivation of the religious cosmos or symbolic universe.

possible that Kha was simply following the trends of the time or that the individual responsible for decorating the furniture chose which scenes to paint.

Furniture can also be seen as a way in which the symbolic universe was strengthened, affirmed and communicated to individuals. The presence of undecorated furniture may imply that only individuals who were considered to have an understanding of the symbolic universe were permitted to interact with objects that were intended to socially objectify the symbolic universe. However, there is no way to prove that this was the case. The same is true of the theory that furniture decorated with religious iconography may have been used in closed or secluded rooms in ancient Egyptian houses. If this were the situation, it would imply that there may have been a degree of secrecy regarding invisible religion in ancient Egypt and subsequently an individual's religiosity would be dependent on their level of knowledge. However, the consideration of furniture from the perspective of invisible religion is unable to provide concrete evidence in support of this. Furniture is not able to provide clear information about the religiosity of individuals but it is able to provide information about the symbolic universe and the way in which it was articulated. It is important to understand the symbolic universe and how it was communicated to individuals, as well as how different individuals engaged with it in order to further assess individual religiosity in ancient Egypt.

#### **4.5 Cosmetic Items**

Ancient Egyptian cosmetic items functioned as both practical objects that assisted with the application of beauty products such as kohl eyeliner and symbolic objects that represented

elements of the ancient Egyptian cosmos. Consequently, they can provide an insight into the individual religiosity of ordinary ancient Egyptians when considered from the perspective of invisible religion. Cosmetic items have been divided into two categories: mirrors; cosmetic palettes, spoons and pots. The items have been divided in such a way because the use and symbolism associated with each category differed and in order to understand individual religiosity in ancient Egypt it is essential to consider each category fully.

#### 4.5.1 Mirrors

Mirrors have 'remarkable relevance in the history and the culture of ancient Egypt'.<sup>1016</sup> This is not only as a result of their practical purposes, but also the symbolism associated with them.<sup>1017</sup> They are linked with fertility, wellbeing, rebirth of the dead, the sun and various deities.<sup>1018</sup> Much of this symbolism is indicated by the ancient Egyptian terms for mirror.<sup>1019</sup> The term *ꜥnh*,<sup>1020</sup> which can be translated as 'to live' or 'to be alive',<sup>1021</sup> could refer to the concept that the mirror brought to life the features of the face it was reflecting.<sup>1022</sup> The word *itn*,<sup>1023</sup> which can mean 'disk',<sup>1024</sup> clearly demonstrates the association of the mirror with the sun disk, which is known to aid the rebirth and regeneration of the dead.<sup>1025</sup> The solar disk is also closely associated with the deities Hathor and Ra. Hathor is the

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<sup>1016</sup> Castañeda Reyes 2010: 39. For more information about mirrors in ancient Egypt, see Bénédite 1907; Lilyquist 1979; Anlen and Padiou 1989: 439-501; Derriks 2001a; Derriks 2001b; Lilyquist 2007.

<sup>1017</sup> See Lilyquist 2007: 98-9; Castañeda Reyes 2010: 39-43.

<sup>1018</sup> Lilyquist 2007: 98-9; Castañeda Reyes 2010: 39-43.

<sup>1019</sup> Husson 1977: 35; Lilyquist 1979: 66-70; Derriks 2001a: 6; Castañeda Reyes 2010: 39-40.

<sup>1020</sup> For *ꜥnh* as a term for 'mirror', see Erman and Grapow 1926-1953a (Wb I): 204.11-14.

<sup>1021</sup> Erman and Grapow 1926-1953a (Wb I): 193.8-198.10.

<sup>1022</sup> Husson 1977: 38; Lilyquist 1979: 66; Castañeda Reyes 2010: 40.

<sup>1023</sup> For *itn* as a term for 'mirror', see Erman and Grapow 1926-1953a (Wb I): 145.10.

<sup>1024</sup> Erman and Grapow 1926-1953a (Wb I): 145.1-8. See also, Bénédite 1907: Plates II, III; Husson 1977: 39; Castañeda Reyes 2010: 40.

<sup>1025</sup> Castañeda Reyes 2010: 40

manifestation of femininity, fertility and sexuality.<sup>1026</sup> Other terms for mirror also refer to these deities: *ntry*, ‘the divine one’;<sup>1027</sup> *iwny*, ‘the one from Heliopolis’; and *m3ꜥty*, *ꜥnh ntri* and *ꜥnhy*, which are all epithets that relate to the god Ra.<sup>1028</sup> Terms such as *m3.w hr* or *wn.t hr*, which imply the meaning the ‘object that allows one to see the face’,<sup>1029</sup> refer to the utilitarian aspect of the mirror.<sup>1030</sup>

The existing mirrors from ancient Egypt were predominantly discovered in mortuary contexts such as sarcophagi, coffins, tombs, burial chambers and tomb chapels.<sup>1031</sup> However, there are some instances of mirrors being discovered in domestic settings.<sup>1032</sup> For example, a mirror with an umbel in the shape of Hathor’s head was discovered in a house in the workmen’s quarter of Lahun.<sup>1033</sup> Petrie dates the mirror to the Twelfth Dynasty but Lilyquist argues that the objects discovered with the mirror suggest that it is of later date.<sup>1034</sup> In addition, a papyriform mirror handle dating to the Thirteenth Dynasty was found in House 530 at Harageh.<sup>1035</sup> Despite the lack of mirrors discovered in domestic contexts, the fact that many of the mirrors found in mortuary context show signs of wear indicates that the mirrors were used in daily life before being placed in mortuary contexts.<sup>1036</sup> In addition, mirrors

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<sup>1026</sup> Castañeda Reyes 2010: 40.

<sup>1027</sup> Erman and Grapow 1926-1953b (Wb II): 364.19-23.

<sup>1028</sup> Castañeda Reyes 2010: 40.

<sup>1029</sup> For *m3.w hr*, see Erman and Grapow 1926-1953b (Wb II): 10.15. For *wn.t hr*, see Erman and Grapow 1926-1953a (Wb I): 313.7.

<sup>1030</sup> Lilyquist 1979: 66, 70; Castañeda Reyes 2010: 39.

<sup>1031</sup> For a full discussion of the context of pre-Middle Kingdom mirrors, see Lilyquist 1979: 71-80.

<sup>1032</sup> Lilyquist 1979: 71-80.

<sup>1033</sup> Petrie 1891: 12, group 9, Plate 13; Lilyquist 1979: 35, 77, Figure 74. This mirror is currently held at the University of Manchester Museum, accession number 189.

<sup>1034</sup> Petrie 1891: 12, group 9, Plate 13; Lilyquist 1979: 35.

<sup>1035</sup> Engelbach and Gunn 1923: 16, 18, Plate 23; Lilyquist 1979: 36, 77, Figure 67. This mirror is currently held at the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, object number 1914.754.

<sup>1036</sup> See Lilyquist 1979: 97.

were one of the most frequently occurring objects in the *trousseaux* of ancient Egyptian women.<sup>1037</sup>

From the Old Kingdom onwards, the reflective surfaces of mirrors were mostly made from metal, for example copper, bronze or sometimes silver.<sup>1038</sup> Analysis of some extant mirrors suggests that the manufacturing process of the reflective surfaces varied.<sup>1039</sup> However, in order to create a surface that was reflective rather than dull, all mirror disks would have been highly polished.<sup>1040</sup> The finished reflective disks were always elliptical to circular in shape.<sup>1041</sup> In addition to the terminology discussed above, the finished shape and appearance of the discs (the majority would have been a shining gold colour) is another reason why they have been interpreted as representations of the sun and subsequently linked to the solar deities Ra and Hathor.<sup>1042</sup> The reflective surface was sometimes decorated with images and/or patterns, and could also be engraved with short hymns.<sup>1043</sup>

The handles of mirrors were made from a variety of materials such as metal, ivory and wood.<sup>1044</sup> The handles could be simple in form or much more elaborate (see Plates 36-41). Simple handles included those in the shape of a papyrus or lotus column (known as papyriform or lotiform respectively).<sup>1045</sup> Papyrus was associated with the goddess Hathor and so it is possible that mirrors with papyriform handles were linked to the goddess in some

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<sup>1037</sup> Castañeda Reyes 2010: 41.

<sup>1038</sup> Lilyquist 1979: 49-57.

<sup>1039</sup> See Lilyquist 1979: 49-57.

<sup>1040</sup> Lilyquist 1979: 50. See also Mond and Myers 1937: 118, Plate 44.

<sup>1041</sup> Lilyquist 1979: 49-57. For examples, see also Bénédite 1907; Anlen and Padiou 1989: 440-59, 464-72, 476-97.

<sup>1042</sup> Bénédite 1907: Plate XXIf; Scharff 1920-1: 130; Jéquier 1921: 134; Schäfer 1932: 1; Lilyquist 1979: 94.

<sup>1043</sup> See, for example, Bénédite 1907: 36, 38, 39, 50, Plates XVII, XVIII, XIX, XXIII; Lilyquist 1979: 12-4, 22, 24, 29, Figures 5-19, 22, 24-6, 28; Anlen and Padiou 1989: 448-55.

<sup>1044</sup> Lilyquist 1979: 57-63.

<sup>1045</sup> Lilyquist 1979: 57-63.

way.<sup>1046</sup> Similarly, it has been suggested that mirrors with lotiform handles were associated with Hathor.<sup>1047</sup> However, the lotus flower is often included in depictions of the deceased and lotiform mirrors may have had links to the concept of renewal and rebirth in the afterlife.<sup>1048</sup> Another simple mirror handle is the club, which is very similar in shape to the hieroglyphic sign *hm*.<sup>1049</sup> This sign can be translated as ‘servant’ or ‘slave’,<sup>1050</sup> and it is therefore possible that mirrors with handles in the club shape are referring to the individuals who would have used the mirror most; in wealthy households hair dressing and the application of cosmetics would have been carried out by a servant.<sup>1051</sup> It is also possible that handles of this shape indicated that the mirror was used for cultic purposes. The Egyptian words *hm-ntr* are usually translated as ‘priest’ but literally mean ‘servant of god’.<sup>1052</sup> Therefore, the club handle, when considered along with the reflective surface (which, as discussed above, has been interpreted as representing the sun and/or the deities Ra and Hathor)<sup>1053</sup> could be an indication that the user was a priest or closely associated with the cult of a deity, probably Ra or Hathor. It could also indicate ordinary ancient Egyptians who wanted to emphasise their loyalty to a deity.

During the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Dynasties, the simple papyriform handle was often replaced with a nude female figure.<sup>1054</sup> There are approximately 100 extant mirrors with

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<sup>1046</sup> Lilyquist 1979: 95.

<sup>1047</sup> Lilyquist 1979: 95.

<sup>1048</sup> For example, the deceased individual is often depicted sniffing a lotus flower on *ḥ ikr n R* stelae. See Demarée 1983: 285.

<sup>1049</sup> Bénédite 1907: Plate XVIII; Lilyquist 1979: 62, 95.

<sup>1050</sup> Erman and Grapow 1926-1953c (Wb III): 87:12.

<sup>1051</sup> See Riefstahl 1956; Robins 1999.

<sup>1052</sup> Erman and Grapow 1926-1953c (Wb III): 88.19-90.7.

<sup>1053</sup> Lilyquist 1979: 94-5.

<sup>1054</sup> Lilyquist 2007: 96.

handles in this form,<sup>1055</sup> which, as Lilyquist points out, is notable because only a small number of copper alloy female figurines are known before the New Kingdom, in comparison with males.<sup>1056</sup> It has been suggested that these female figurines represent servants due to their hairstyles, body-types, cross-bands, and tattoos, all of which are indicators of foreignness and, subsequently, lower status.<sup>1057</sup> However, the pubic region of many of these figures is highlighted in some way, usually by painting in black, which has led Lilyquist to argue that they are linked with sexuality and fertility.<sup>1058</sup> It has also been suggested that they are representations of Hathor or another deity, *nfr.wt* (young women in the train of Hathor), or a combination of a woman and a child, therefore representing rejuvenation.<sup>1059</sup>

In addition to female figures, other figures, such as Bes, also feature on mirror handles.<sup>1060</sup> The umbels of mirrors are also often decorated with the face of Hathor, leopard faces, or pairs of falcons or uraei.<sup>1061</sup> Decorations such as these have religious connotations. The face of Hathor is associated with the deity herself, while the leopard faces may be linked to the leopard skins worn by *wab*-priests. The pair of falcons or uraei is associated with the god Horus. The uraei could also indicate a link with the goddess Wadjet or with divine power.

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<sup>1055</sup> Derriks 2001a; Derriks 2001b; Lilyquist 2007: 96.

<sup>1056</sup> Lilyquist 2007: 96. For female copper alloy figurines, see Hill 2004: 10; Snape 1990: 231, 465, 619. For male copper alloy figurines, see Malek 1999: 273, 367-71; Hill 2004: 7-16; Mendoza 2004.

<sup>1057</sup> Lilyquist 2007: 97. For a detailed discussion of female figures on mirror handles, see Quack 2003.

<sup>1058</sup> Lilyquist 2007: 97.

<sup>1059</sup> For the figurines on mirrors and other cosmetic items as representations of Hathor or another deity, see Hornblower 1929: 42; Kozloff 1992: 356; Williams 1992: 97-9; Schneider 1997. For the figurines as representations of *nfr.wt*, see Berman 1999: number 235. For the figurines as a combination of woman and child, see Müller 2003: 82.

<sup>1060</sup> For examples, see Bénéдите 1907: 7, 24, Plates IV, XIII; Anlen and Padiou 1989: 458-9, 462-3.

<sup>1061</sup> For umbels decorated with the face of Hathor see, Bénéдите 1907: 18, Plate XI; Lilyquist 1979: 34, 35, Figures 35, 64, 74; Anlen and Padiou 1989: 468-7, 486-9, 494-5. For umbels decorated with leopard faces, see Lilyquist 1979: 31, Figure 65. For umbels decorated with pairs of falcons or uraei, see Bénéдите 1907: 15, 16, Plates VII, IX; Lilyquist 1979: 46, Figures 82-7.



#### 4.5.2 *Cosmetic palettes, spoons and pots*

Cosmetic items such as palettes, spoons and pots were used by ancient Egyptians to prepare and contain cosmetic pigments. The pigments, which included ochre, galena, malachite, and hematite, were ground up and mixed with oils.<sup>1062</sup> This formed a paste which could be used on the body for cosmetic reasons, and also for medicinal and/or magical purposes.<sup>1063</sup>

Cosmetics were used by men and women and consequently cosmetic items have been discovered in the tombs of both sexes.<sup>1064</sup> Despite the fact that the majority of the existing cosmetic items were discovered in tombs, there is evidence to suggest that these items were used in life before being placed in tombs.<sup>1065</sup> Fragments of pigments are frequently found on cosmetic items and, in addition, objects such as palettes often show signs of wear such as hollows on the surface where the pigment was repeatedly ground up.<sup>1066</sup> Cosmetic items were made from a variety of materials. Palettes were made from stone such as limestone, diorite, basalt, greywacke and slate.<sup>1067</sup> Cosmetic spoons were often produced from wood and ivory but could also be made from faience, slate and shell.<sup>1068</sup> Kohl pots were created from materials such as ivory, faience, slate, wood, glass, marble and alabaster.<sup>1069</sup>

The oldest existing examples of ancient Egyptian cosmetic palettes date to the Fayum A culture in the north and the Badari culture in the south.<sup>1070</sup> The presence of cosmetic

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<sup>1062</sup> Buszek 2012: 315.

<sup>1063</sup> Lucas and Harris 1989: 80; Schoske 1990: 25; Patch 2005a: 215; Baduel 2008: 1057-90; Buszek 2012: 315.

<sup>1064</sup> Manniche 1999: 127-42; Patch 2005a: 215; Buszek 2012: 315.

<sup>1065</sup> Patenaude and Shaw 2011: 1; Buszek 2012: 315. Stevens 2006: 188 notes that some kohl pots and tubes were found in residential areas at Amarna.

<sup>1066</sup> Cialowicz 2000: 17; Stevenson 2009: 1-2; Patenaude and Shaw 2011: 1; Buszek 2012: 315.

<sup>1067</sup> Buszek 2012: 315.

<sup>1068</sup> See Vandier d'Abbadie 1972: 11- 38.

<sup>1069</sup> See Vandier d'Abbadie 1972: 55-91.

<sup>1070</sup> Buszek 2012: 315.

palettes grew during the following phases of the Naqada culture.<sup>1071</sup> However, there are also examples that date to the First Dynasty and so cosmetic palettes have been deemed relevant for inclusion in this thesis.<sup>1072</sup> Cosmetic palettes exist in many forms and shapes which developed over time (see Plates 42-3).<sup>1073</sup> Palettes in the form of animals, such as fishes and birds, are particularly relevant to this study as they may be able to provide an insight into individual religiosity when considered from the perspective of invisible religion. Palettes in the form of fish such as the Nile tilapia fish may have been linked to rebirth and regeneration, while those in the form of birds such as the falcon were most probably linked to the deity Horus.<sup>1074</sup> It is possible that the ancient Egyptians believed that grinding the pigments used to create cosmetics on a palette in the shape of particular animal would cause the pigments to take on the qualities or powers associated with that animal. These qualities would then be transferred to the wearer when the cosmetics were placed on their face or body.

Cosmetic spoons date predominantly to the Middle and New Kingdoms.<sup>1075</sup> They exist in a variety of forms, including swimming girls pushing fish, ducks or another receptacle; servants carrying receptacles on their shoulders or heads; cartouches atop lotus and/or papyrus plants; and animals including ibexes, antelopes, fish and ducks (see Plates 44-52).<sup>1076</sup> It seems likely that these forms were chosen for a reason and that they held a meaning for their owners. It is possible that the swimming girl was intended to imbue the cosmetic paste

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<sup>1071</sup> Buszek 2012: 315.

<sup>1072</sup> See, for example, Patenaude and Shaw 2011: palettes 4277, 4279, 4356 a-b.

<sup>1073</sup> Buszek 2012: 315.

<sup>1074</sup> Buszek 2012: 317.

<sup>1075</sup> See Vandier d'Abbadie 1972: 11- 38.

<sup>1076</sup> See Vandier d'Abbadie 1972: 11- 38. For swimming girls, see also Phillips 1941.

held on the spoon with cooling properties that would offer some relief from the sun, much as a swim in a river or a lake would. Spoons in the form of servants carrying receptacles may have been intended to demonstrate and enhance the power of the spoon's owner over such individuals. The act of crushing and grinding pigments in such a spoon would then symbolise the crushing of a servant's power. The act of grinding and/or mixing pigments in a spoon in the form of a cartouche atop lotus and/or papyrus plants might be intended to imbue the owner with the qualities and powers associated with these plants (the lotus plant was linked with the concept of rebirth and was also believed to have healing properties, while the papyrus plant symbolised life<sup>1077</sup>), or affirm and strengthen the unification of the Two Lands of Egypt (the lotus plant was the symbol of Upper Egypt and the papyrus plant was the symbol of Lower Egypt<sup>1078</sup>). The use of a cartouche was possibly intended to provide protection for the wearer of the cosmetics prepared within it by transferring protective power to the cosmetics which were then applied directly to the face or body of an individual.<sup>1079</sup> This allowed the protective power to move from the cosmetics to the individual. Animals such as antelopes were associated with the god Seth and consequently the act of crushing pigment in a spoon in the form of an antelope may have represented the control and repression of Seth by the owner of the spoon.<sup>1080</sup> It gave the owner control over Seth and protected him from negative events that may be caused by the deity.

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<sup>1077</sup> For more information on the symbolism of the lotus plant and the papyrus plant, see el-Saghir 1985; zu Stolberg 2009.

<sup>1078</sup> See el-Saghir 1985; Nibbi 1991; zu Stolberg 2009.

<sup>1079</sup> Names of kings or other royal individuals were written inside of a cartouche, see Gardiner 1957: 522, sign V10.

<sup>1080</sup> For antelopes and their association with Seth, see te Velde 1967: 13; Armour 1986: 37; Pinch 2004: 81.

Pots or vases for cosmetics usually exist in simple, undecorated forms.<sup>1081</sup> However, some pots, especially those for containing kohl were created in more elaborate forms (see Plates 53-5).<sup>1082</sup> Kohl was the most common cosmetic in ancient Egypt and was a black substance used by both men and women to outline their eyes.<sup>1083</sup> Kohl was made by mixing galena, manganese oxide and brown ochre with animal fat, vegetable oil and beeswax.<sup>1084</sup> Its primary use was to enhance the beauty of the wearer, but it also served a medicinal purpose and protected the wearer from the numerous eye diseases to which they were susceptible.<sup>1085</sup> As noted by Patch, 'the importance of eye paint as a medicine was reinforced by the decorative motifs on the jars in which it was stored'.<sup>1086</sup> Kohl pots often depict or are in the shape of the deities Bes or Tawaret.<sup>1087</sup> These deities were closely associated with the home and were considered to be protective deities, particularly of women and children.<sup>1088</sup> By storing cosmetics such as kohl in pots depicting or in the shape of protective deities, the ancient Egyptians were ensuring that the kohl took on these protective qualities and passed them on to the wearer when applied to the skin. Symbols associated with fertility, life and rebirth (such as Hathor and the *ankh* sign) also appear on cosmetic pots and it is likely that these symbols were intended to instil these qualities in the wearer of the cosmetics held in the pots.<sup>1089</sup>

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<sup>1081</sup> See Vandier d'Abbadie 1972: 73-91.

<sup>1082</sup> Vandier d'Abbadie 1972: 55-71; Patch 2005a: 215.

<sup>1083</sup> Patch 2005a: 215.

<sup>1084</sup> Lucas and Harris 1989: 80-4; Schoske 1990: 53-5; Patch 2005a: 215, Footnote 4.

<sup>1085</sup> Lucas and Harris 1989: 80; Schoske 1990: 25; Patch 2005a: 215.

<sup>1086</sup> Patch 2005a: 215.

<sup>1087</sup> Vandier d'Abbadie 1972: 55-71; Patch 2005a: 215.

<sup>1088</sup> For more information on Bes and Tawaret see, Andrews 1994b: 40; Wilkinson 2003: 102-4, 185-6.

<sup>1089</sup> See Patch 2005a: 215; Roehrig et al. 2005: 217 (141. Kohl Jar).

### 4.5.3 *Invisible religion and cosmetic items*

Cosmetic items show ritual because they indicate that the owners of the items applied cosmetics to their faces and bodies for reasons of beautification and also for medicinal and/or magical purposes. The application of cosmetics can be considered to be institutionalised because ordinary ancient Egyptians would have seen royal and elite individuals (including priests) wearing cosmetics, either in person or in artwork, and would have wanted to imitate them. Their understanding of the medicinal or magical purpose of applying cosmetics would have stemmed from the beliefs and practices of state religion. The act of preparing and applying cosmetics from a palette or jar in the shape of a deity or specific symbol, and the act of looking in a mirror with designs of religious iconography can be considered to be ritual that enabled religion to become a social fact. It is difficult to be certain whether the same can be said of cosmetic items in relation to doctrine. While the use of such items indicates that the owner believed in the symbolism and meaning of the iconography associated with the different items, which developed from state religion, it is not possible to prove this belief for certain. The owner of a lotiform mirror may have believed that she was being imbued with life each time she looked in it, or the owner of a kohl pot in the shape of Bes may have believed that the protection provided by Bes would be transferred to the kohl and subsequently to herself. If there was firm evidence in support of this interpretation then it could be argued that those individuals in possession of decorated cosmetic items were more exposed to religion as a social fact than those who did not own such items. However, it is impossible to know for certain the thoughts or beliefs of the individuals who used such cosmetic items and therefore no such conclusion can be drawn.

The subjective and objective dimensions of religiosity are shown as a result of cosmetic items that are decorated with symbolic iconography. The objective dimension of religiosity is indicated by the fact that the majority of cosmetic items show signs of use in daily life. Individuals were using the items to examine their reflection, grind and mix pigments, and store various cosmetics.<sup>1090</sup> While it is possible that cosmetic items decorated with symbolic iconography were intended only to be visually attractive, the existence of cosmetic items decorated with non-symbolic patterns or not decorated means that this is unlikely. The daily use of cosmetic items decorated with symbolic iconography suggests that the individuals using the items were interacting with and absorbing the universe of meaning as articulated by these items. However, the evidence for this is not certain and consequently it only provides limited information regarding individual religiosity because the absorption of and the interaction with the universe of meaning cannot be fully understood. The subjective dimension of religiosity is not demonstrated with any certainty because it is impossible to know what the emotions of the individuals using cosmetic items were. However, the consideration of the symbolism associated with the items and the way in which the items were used can indicate what the ancient Egyptians' religious opinions or attitudes may have been in this instance. As discussed previously, it is probable that ordinary ancient Egyptians believed that some cosmetic items, such as kohl pots or mirrors, would imbue their owner with the qualities or powers associated with the deities or symbols depicted on them as a result of the owner's use of the item or the cosmetics created or contained within it. In addition, they may also have believed that they were able to gain power over certain beings, for example their servants or deities such as Seth, by grinding pigments on palettes in the

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<sup>1090</sup> See Sections 4.5.1 and 4.5.2.

form of these individuals or deities. Subsequently, although there is no concrete evidence, when considered from the perspective of invisible religion cosmetic items can provide an insight into the subjective dimension of religiosity which enables a greater understanding of individual religiosity.

Cosmetic items provide an example of one of the ways in which the symbolic universe (or universe of meaning) was socially objectivated in ancient Egypt. Symbols and figures which refer to a world that transcends everyday life, such as the papyrus plant, lotus flower or the goddess Hathor,<sup>1091</sup> have been physically associated with items whose main purpose was to perform functions that are very much part of everyday life. The desire to see one's own reflection or apply cosmetics to one's eyes that would protect them from the Egyptian sun and from eye diseases are understandable and relatively ordinary needs. However, by associating these actions with religious symbols and iconography the ancient Egyptians gave these actions a deeper, magical significance and brought the universe of meaning and the world of everyday life together. If cosmetic items are considered as a way in which the universe of meaning was socially objectivated, then it becomes difficult to imagine that those individuals who owned and used such items did not have individual religiosity. Indeed, due to the very existence of symbolically decorated cosmetic items one could argue that all individuals living in ancient Egyptian society would have been exposed to the universe of meaning to some extent, either directly or indirectly, and that this would have had an effect on their individual religiosity. An individual who chose to purchase and/or use cosmetic items decorated with religious iconography was almost certainly individually religious to an

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<sup>1091</sup> See Sections 4.5.1 to 4.5.2.

extent. However, an individual who chose not to purchase or use such cosmetic items could also have had individual religiosity.

It can be argued that the ownership and use of cosmetic items enabled their owners to create and build an objective and moral universe of meaning. As discussed above, cosmetic items gave meaning to ordinary actions and enabled the individual to establish themselves within the universe of meaning. However, cosmetic items do not clearly demonstrate the construction of an objective and moral universe of meaning with others. The acquisition and use of cosmetic items was probably a relatively solitary act, but their creation was part of a wider system of actions that would have involved many individuals from ancient Egyptian society. Despite the seemingly solitary nature of acquiring and using cosmetic items, it can be said that cosmetic items do demonstrate the creation of an objective and moral universe of meaning with others. Therefore, the creation, acquisition and use of cosmetic items can provide an insight into individual religiosity.

#### **4.6 Amulets**

The wide range of shapes, sizes, colours and materials that ancient Egyptian amulets were made in provides an insight into what was considered important by ordinary ancient Egyptians. The popularity of amulets in ancient Egypt is evident from the numerous extant examples and, subsequently, detailed research has been carried out into their manufacture, use and symbolism. However, there has been little focus on what information amulets can provide regarding ordinary individuals. By considering amulets using Luckmann's theory of



invisible religion this research will provide more information regarding individual religiosity in ancient Egypt.

#### 4.6.1 *Function and history of amulets*

Andrews clearly explains the purpose and function of amulets when she says:

An amulet, talisman or charm is a personal ornament which, because of its shape, the material from which it is made, or even just the colour, is believed to endow its wearer, by magical means, with certain powers or capabilities. At the very least it should afford some kind of magical protection.<sup>1092</sup>

In ancient Egypt, amulets and amuletic jewellery were an extremely popular, perhaps even essential, form of personal adornment.<sup>1093</sup> Their function as protective objects is evident when the ancient Egyptian words for 'amulet' are considered. The words *mkt*, *nht* and *s3* derive from verbs meaning 'to guard' or 'to protect, while the word *wd3* is similar in sound to the word meaning 'well-being'.<sup>1094</sup> Amulets were worn by the living but also played an important role in funerary beliefs.<sup>1095</sup> Some amulets that were worn in life were placed in the tomb of the deceased to be used in death, while other amulets were made specifically for the purpose of being placed within the wrappings of a mummy in order to provide the

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<sup>1092</sup> Andrews 1994b: 6. For more information on amulets in general, see Reisner 1907; Petrie 1914; Reisner 1958; Müller-Winkler 1987; Schlick-Nolte and Droste zu Hülshoff 1990; Haarlem 1992; Gwinnett and Gorelick 1993; Andrews 1994a; Germond 2005.

<sup>1093</sup> Andrews 1994b: 6. For more information on amuletic jewellery, see Aldred 1971: 130-62; Wilkinson 1971: 15-6, 26-8, 55-61, 97-9, 167-8, 187-9, 193; Andrews 1990: 171-85.

<sup>1094</sup> Andrews 1994b: 6. For *mkt* see also Erman and Grapow 1926-1953b (Wb II): 160.1-21. For *nht* see also Erman and Grapow 1926-1953b (Wb II): 281.2, 10-17. For *s3* see also Erman and Grapow 1926-1953c (Wb III): 415.12-17. For *wd3* see also Erman and Grapow 1926-1953a (Wb I): 401.3-11.

<sup>1095</sup> See Shorter 1931; Shorter 1935; Andrews 1984: 31-9; Taylor 2001: 201-7; Patch 2005b; Sousa 2007; Sousa 2008-10.

deceased with protection during his journey through the afterlife.<sup>1096</sup> These funerary amulets and funerary jewellery are described in ancient Egyptian texts such as the Book of the Dead.<sup>1097</sup> In the Book of the Dead, certain amulets are illustrated and information is provided regarding the material they should be made from, the spells that should be recited over them and their intended function.<sup>1098</sup> A list of amulets is also inscribed on a doorway in the Osiris complex on the roof of the temple of Hathor at Dendera and on a funerary papyrus known as the MacGregor Papyrus.<sup>1099</sup>

Ancient Egyptian amulets were made from a wide range of materials, both natural and manufactured.<sup>1100</sup> The material for a particular amulet was sometimes chosen because of the symbolism associated with its colour or qualities.<sup>1101</sup> For example, green turquoise was more popular than blue turquoise because the colour green was associated with vegetation, new crops and fertility.<sup>1102</sup> Faience, manufactured using powdered quartz with a vitreous alkaline glaze on the surface, was the most common material used for the production of amulets during the Dynastic Period.<sup>1103</sup> The popularity of faience was due to the fact that it could be easily moulded into different shapes and that its final colour could be changed by adding various colourants to the glaze mixture.<sup>1104</sup> Green and blue faience is the colour most

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<sup>1096</sup> Andrews 1994b: 6.

<sup>1097</sup> Andrews 1994b: 6.

<sup>1098</sup> Andrews 1994b: 6.

<sup>1099</sup> For the Osiris complex at the temple of Hathor at Dendera, see Cauville 1997a; Cauville 1997b; Cauville 1988. For the MacGregor Papyrus, see Capart 1908.

<sup>1100</sup> See Andrews 1994b: 100-6 for a full discussion of the materials used to make amulets. See also Kotková 2008.

<sup>1101</sup> For more on colour in ancient Egypt, see Baines 2007.

<sup>1102</sup> Andrews 1994b: 102-3.

<sup>1103</sup> Kaczmarczyk 1983; Andrews 1994b: 100; Kaczmarczyk and Vandiver 2008; Nicholson 2008.

<sup>1104</sup> Andrews 1994b: 100. For more information on the production of blue and green faience, see Hatton 2008.

often associated with ancient Egyptian faience. However, faience was also produced in black, white, purple, yellow and red.<sup>1105</sup>

The first amulets date to the Predynastic Period and were all discovered as part of burials.<sup>1106</sup> The amulets were simple in form and material.<sup>1107</sup> By the Old Kingdom, amulets had taken on a wider variety of forms (see Plate 56). They predominantly consisted of animate objects such as frogs (associated with fertility), cow heads (associated with the goddess Hathor), lions (symbolising ferocity and regeneration) and ducklings (which may have represented food offerings).<sup>1108</sup> However, during the Old Kingdom inanimate objects including the *ankh* amulet, the *wedjat*-eye and the *djed*-pillar appeared for the first time.<sup>1109</sup>

A highly stylised version of the scarab beetle, probably the best known ancient Egyptian amulet, also occurred for the first time during the Old Kingdom.<sup>1110</sup> In addition, a large number of amulets in human form were produced during the Old Kingdom.<sup>1111</sup> These amulets were 'of very crude manufacture' and were predominantly in the form of males, with a few females and very few children.<sup>1112</sup>

During the First Intermediate Period, funerary amulets increased in both number and form.<sup>1113</sup> Andrews notes that amulets in the shape of body parts were particularly common during the First Intermediate Period.<sup>1114</sup> These amulets were intended to provide the

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<sup>1105</sup> Andrews 1994b: 100.

<sup>1106</sup> Andrews 1994b: 8; Győry 2001: 100; Gashe 2008.

<sup>1107</sup> Andrews 1994b: 8.

<sup>1108</sup> Andrews 1994b: 10; Kremler 2012.

<sup>1109</sup> Andrews 1994b: 10-1.

<sup>1110</sup> Andrews 1994b: 11.

<sup>1111</sup> Andrews 1994b: 11.

<sup>1112</sup> Andrews 1994b: 11.

<sup>1113</sup> Andrews 1994b: 11.

<sup>1114</sup> Andrews 1994b: 11. See also Chanteloup 1986; Colazilli 2012.

deceased with particular bodily functions or, if necessary, act as replacements should the real body part become damaged.<sup>1115</sup>

The stylised scarab amulet of the Old Kingdom developed into its fully recognisable form during the Middle Kingdom.<sup>1116</sup> These scarab amulets were often inscribed on the underside with the title and name of their owner, and sometimes with the name of the pharaoh the owner served.<sup>1117</sup> Scarabs were also placed in finger ring settings and used as seals for the first time.<sup>1118</sup> Additional forms of amulets developed in the Middle Kingdom, which continued to be used during the Middle Kingdom and Late Period. However, some amuletic forms were specific to the Middle Kingdom and do not date to any other time period. These include the oyster shell, the knot clasp and the female sphinx.<sup>1119</sup>

Despite the fact that during the Middle Kingdom amulets in the shape of minor deities such as Bes and Tawaret were present, it was not until the New Kingdom that amulets depicting deities existed in high numbers.<sup>1120</sup> During the New Kingdom, amulets were created in the form of all the major deities such as Ra, Isis, Horus, Hathor, Sekhmet and Bastet.<sup>1121</sup> Lesser known deities were also represented in amuletic form.<sup>1122</sup>

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<sup>1115</sup> Andrews 1994b: 11.

<sup>1116</sup> Andrews 1994b: 11.

<sup>1117</sup> Andrews 1994b: 11.

<sup>1118</sup> Andrews 1994b: 11; Roulin 2003; Andrews 2004.

<sup>1119</sup> Andrews 1994b: 11.

<sup>1120</sup> Andrews 1994b: 12.

<sup>1121</sup> Andrews 1994b: 12.

<sup>1122</sup> Andrews 1994b: 12.

#### 4.6.2 *Types of amulets*

In his 1914 publication entitled *Amulets*, Petrie divided the different amulets featured into five categories.<sup>1123</sup> These are: homopoeic, dynatic, ktematic, phylactic and theophoric.<sup>1124</sup>

Petrie's categories are still relevant and useful. However, it is important to note that the five categories are not clear cut and there is often a crossover between them.

The term homopoeic refers to amulets in the form of animals or parts of animals which were intended to imbue the wearer with the powers or characteristics associated with the animal.<sup>1125</sup> Andrews has termed such amulets, 'amulets of assimilation.'<sup>1126</sup> Typically, amulets in the form of animals or parts of animals date to the Predynastic Period and the Old Kingdom.<sup>1127</sup> In ancient Egypt, the depiction of part of an animal was considered sufficient enough to represent the whole animal.<sup>1128</sup> Consequently, those amulets in the form of part of an animal were seen to be just as effective as amulets in the form of a whole animal. As mentioned, animal amulets were intended to instil certain power or characteristics in the wearer. However, as Andrews notes, it is possible that in the case of amulets depicting very powerful or dangerous creatures the intention was that the amulet would be apotropaic and provide protection by repelling the animal it represented.<sup>1129</sup>

Common animal-form amulets include lions or lionesses, flies, cows, hippopotami, frogs or

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<sup>1123</sup> Petrie 1914.

<sup>1124</sup> See Petrie 1914.

<sup>1125</sup> Petrie 1914: 9-14; Andrews 1994b: 60.

<sup>1126</sup> Andrews 1994b: 60.

<sup>1127</sup> Andrews 1994b: 60.

<sup>1128</sup> Andrews 1994b: 60.

<sup>1129</sup> Andrews 1994b: 60.

toads, and bulls or oxen.<sup>1130</sup> Amulets in the form of scarab beetles could also be considered to be homopoeic amulets. The ancient Egyptians believed that scarab beetles had magical powers relating to new life and resurrection.<sup>1131</sup>

Dynatic amulets are very similar in function to homopoeic amulets in that they are intended to provide the wearer with certain powers.<sup>1132</sup> They can also represent 'a certain condition, state or quality which the deceased desired to enjoy in the afterlife'.<sup>1133</sup> However, they take the form of inanimate objects rather than animals or parts of animals.<sup>1134</sup> Dynatic amulets in the form of royal objects such as crowns, sceptres, sphinxes, uraei and *djed*-pillars are common because the wearer (alive or deceased) wished to be reborn in the afterlife as an Osiris, which was the prerogative of just the king and the elite prior to the late Middle Kingdom/early New Kingdom (see Plate 57).<sup>1135</sup> In addition to objects associated with royal and divine powers, dynatic amulets also take the form of ritual implements, including items associated with the Opening of the Mouth ceremony; states and conditions, such as those represented by the *ankh*-amulet (meaning 'to live', 'to be alive', 'life'<sup>1136</sup>) and the *nefer*-amulet (meaning 'good', 'beautiful', 'perfect'<sup>1137</sup>); and cosmic powers such as rebirth, which was represented by the sun-in-the-horizon amulet.<sup>1138</sup>

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<sup>1130</sup> See Andrews 1994b: 60-73 for a full discussion of the common forms of homopoeic amulets/amulets of assimilation.

<sup>1131</sup> See Andrews 1994b: 50-9 for a full discussion of amulets in the form of scarab beetles.

<sup>1132</sup> Petrie 1914: 14-9; Andrews 1994b: 74.

<sup>1133</sup> Andrews 1994b: 74.

<sup>1134</sup> Petrie 1914: 14-9; Andrews 1994b: 74.

<sup>1135</sup> Andrews 1994b: 74.

<sup>1136</sup> See Erman and Grapow 1926-1953a (Wb I): 193.8-200.8.

<sup>1137</sup> See Erman and Grapow 1926-1953b (Wb II): 253.1-256.15.

<sup>1138</sup> See Andrews 1994b: 74-90 for a full discussion of the forms of dynatic amulets.

Amulets that fall into Petrie's category entitled *ktematic* are those which represent either items belonging to the living, such as clothing, which were taken into the tomb when an individual died, or items specifically created for the purpose of the funerary cult, such as food offerings or shrines (see Plate 58).<sup>1139</sup> The amulets were intended to act as substitutes should the real items be damaged or stolen. In the case of amulets depicting funerary offerings, they ensured that the deceased was constantly supplied with offerings of food and drink, even if real offerings were no longer presented at his tomb by his living ancestors etc.<sup>1140</sup> Given their close association with the funerary cult, it seems unlikely that *ktematic* amulets would have been worn by the living. Unlike a deceased individual, a living person would be able to replace an item if it was damaged or stolen, thus rendering *ktematic* amulets far less useful and valuable in life than in death.

*Phylactic* is the term used by Petrie to describe amulets that were intended to provide the wearer with protection.<sup>1141</sup> Andrews notes that apotropaic amulets, that depicted the danger they were supposed to repel, should also be considered *phylactic*.<sup>1142</sup> There are a large number of existing ancient Egyptian amulets that can be deemed to be *phylactic* or protective and they take many different forms. Animate forms include animals such as crocodiles, hippopotami, turtles and vultures.<sup>1143</sup> Animals such as these were considered to possess qualities that would be well suited to providing the wearer with protection. It is highly likely that amulets representing animals which were dangerous to humans, such as

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<sup>1139</sup> Petrie 1914: 19-22; Andrews 1994b: 91.

<sup>1140</sup> Andrews 1994b: 91.

<sup>1141</sup> Petrie 1914: 22-32; Andrews 1994b: 36.

<sup>1142</sup> Andrews 1994b: 36.

<sup>1143</sup> See Andrews 1994b: 36-41 for a full discussion of animate forms of *phylactic* amulets. See also Fischer 1965-6.

lions, crocodiles and hippopotami, also had an apotropaic function. Other animate forms used for protective amulets include the god Bes and Tawaret.<sup>1144</sup> Amulets of Bes and Tawaret were usually worn in life by women and children, due to their association with the protection of woman and children, particularly during childbirth.<sup>1145</sup> Inanimate forms used for phylactic amulets include Middle Kingdom cylindrical amulets, cowrie shells, oyster shells, the Isis knot and the *wedjat*-eye.<sup>1146</sup> The *wedjat*-eye is one of the most popular protective amulets and is linked to a myth in which the eye of the god Horus is damaged during a battle with Seth and subsequently healed by Thoth (see Plate 59).<sup>1147</sup> Horus then gave his healed eye to his dead father, Osiris, who was reborn as a result of the power of the eye.<sup>1148</sup> As noted by Andrews, it is curious that amulets in the shape of the hieroglyphic meaning 'protection' (*s3*) are very rare and those that do exist date to the Middle Kingdom almost exclusively.<sup>1149</sup>

Theophoric (or theomorphic) amulets are those in the human forms or animal manifestations of deities.<sup>1150</sup> These amulets could also be considered to be phylactic and homopoeic because they were intended to provide the wearer with the protection of the deity and/or instil the magical powers associated with the deity in the wearer. Andrews states that despite the large number of deities in the Egyptian pantheon, 'amulets were made in the likeness of only a small proportion of them'.<sup>1151</sup> Popular male deities in human

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<sup>1144</sup> Andrews 1994b: 39-40.

<sup>1145</sup> Andrews 1994b: 40.

<sup>1146</sup> See Andrews 1994b: 41-4 for a full discussion of inanimate forms of phylactic amulets.

<sup>1147</sup> Andrews 1994b: 43.

<sup>1148</sup> Andrews 1994b: 43.

<sup>1149</sup> Andrews 1994b: 43. For the translation of *s3*, see: Erman and Grapow 1926-1953c (Wb III): 414.9-415.11.

<sup>1150</sup> Petrie 1914: 32-51; Andrews 1994b: 14.

<sup>1151</sup> Andrews 1994b: 14.



form include Amun-Ra, Min and Shu.<sup>1152</sup> Deities such as Osiris and Ptah are surprisingly rare.<sup>1153</sup> The female deities Hathor, Isis, Maat, Mut and Nephthys often appear as amulets in their human form.<sup>1154</sup> Male animal-headed and animal-form deities include the Apis Bull (Ptah), Bes (see above), Seth, Sobek, Horus and Amun-Ra.<sup>1155</sup> Female animal-headed and animal-form deities include Bastet, Sekhmet, Mut, Hathor, Isis, Beset (the female form of Bes) and Tawaret (see Plate 60).<sup>1156</sup>

#### 4.6.3 *Amulets discovered in non-mortuary contexts*

As discussed above, amulets played an important role in ancient Egyptian funerary and mortuary belief. The majority of the extant amulets from ancient Egypt were discovered in mortuary contexts. However, using Stevens' inventory of the jewellery and amulets discovered at Amarna,<sup>1157</sup> it has been possible to create a table detailing those amulets that were discovered in non-mortuary contexts at Amarna, as well as at other sites throughout Egypt. Non-mortuary contexts include temples, shrines, communal areas in settlements, domestic buildings, foundation deposits, rubbish pits, etc. The provenance of many existing Egyptian amulets is unknown or uncertain and consequently this table is not intended to be a full catalogue of all the extant ancient Egyptian amulets. Instead, it provides information regarding significant amulets types and the key sites at which they were discovered in non-

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<sup>1152</sup> See Andrews 1994b: 15-9 for a full discussion of theophoric amulets in male human form.

<sup>1153</sup> Andrews 1994b: 19, 47.

<sup>1154</sup> See Andrews 1994b: 19-24 for a full discussion of theophoric amulets in female human form.

<sup>1155</sup> See Andrews 1994b: 24-32 for a full discussion of theophoric amulets in male animal-headed and animal form.

<sup>1156</sup> See Andrews 1994b: 32-5 for a full discussion of theophoric amulets in female animal-headed and animal form. For Beset, see Bosse-Griffiths 1977.

<sup>1157</sup> Stevens 2006: 29-77.

mortuary contexts. For simplicity, the table has been divided into five sections which are deities, anthropoid figures and body parts, animals, hieroglyphs, and other.

**Table 3:** Amulets discovered in non-mortuary contexts at Amarna and other ancient Egyptian sites <sup>1158</sup>

Amulet Type	Provenance																		
	Abydos <sup>i</sup>	Amarna <sup>ii</sup>	Beth Shan <sup>iii</sup>	Deir el-Bahari <sup>iv</sup>	Deir el-Medina <sup>v</sup>	Faras <sup>vi</sup>	Gebel Zeit <sup>vii</sup>	Gurob <sup>viii</sup>	Harageh <sup>ix</sup>	Kom Rabi'a <sup>x</sup>	Koptos <sup>xi</sup>	Lisht <sup>xii</sup>	Malkata <sup>xiii</sup>	Medinet Habu <sup>xiv</sup>	Mirgissa <sup>xv</sup>	Serabit el-Khadim <sup>xvi</sup>	Sesebi <sup>xvii</sup>	Tel el-Retabeh <sup>xviii</sup>	Timna <sup>xix</sup>
<b>Deities</b>																			
Amun-Re		x																	
Anubis or Seth		x																	
Aten		x																	
Bes		x	x	x	x	x	x				x	x		x	x				x
Beset		x <sup>2</sup>																	
Falcon or falcon-headed god		x																	
Hathor		x			x								x						
Isis		x																	
Maat		x																	
Mut		x																	
Ptah	x	x																	
Re and Re-Harakhty		x																	
Sekhmet or lioness goddess		x																	x
Tawaret		x			x							x	x						

<sup>1158</sup> The references for Table 3 can be found at the end of Chapter 4. The amulets date to the New Kingdom, unless otherwise indicated. x<sup>2</sup> – Indicates that the provenance is uncertain. X – Indicates that the amulet/s date to the Middle Kingdom. X – Indicates that the amulet/s date to the Second Intermediate Period.

Amulet Type	Provenance																		
	Abydos <sup>i</sup>	Amarna <sup>ii</sup>	Beth Shan <sup>iii</sup>	Deir el-Bahari <sup>iv</sup>	Deir el-Medina <sup>v</sup>	Faras <sup>vi</sup>	Gebel Zeit <sup>vii</sup>	Gurob <sup>viii</sup>	Harageh <sup>ix</sup>	Kom Rabi'a <sup>x</sup>	Koptos <sup>xi</sup>	Lisht <sup>xii</sup>	Malkata <sup>xiii</sup>	Medinet Habu <sup>xiv</sup>	Mirgissa <sup>xv</sup>	Serabit el-Khadim <sup>xvi</sup>	Sesebi <sup>xvii</sup>	Tel el-Retabeh <sup>xviii</sup>	Timna <sup>xix</sup>
<b>Anthropoid figures and body parts</b>																			
Anthropoid busts		x						x <sup>2</sup>								x			
Dwarf		x													x				
Ears		x																	
Foot		x																	
Hand		x							x			x							
Heart		x											x						
Royalty		x			x										x				
<b>Animals</b>																			
Bird		x																x	
Bovid		x		x															
Cobra or ureaus		x	x		x														
Crocodile		x													x				
Dog		x																	
Falcon-headed sphinx		x																	
Feline		x			x		x						x						x
Fish		x		x												x			
Fly		x				x	x					x			x				
Frog or toad		x				x	x						x						
Gazelle or ibex		x		x	x	x							X						
Horse		x																	
Jackal or fox		x																	
Monkey or baboon		x																	
Scarab beetle		x		X		x	X								x	X	x		x
Scorpion		x		x									x						

Amulet Type	Provenance																			
	Abydos <sup>i</sup>	Amarna <sup>ii</sup>	Beth Shan <sup>iii</sup>	Deir el-Bahari <sup>iv</sup>	Deir el-Medina <sup>v</sup>	Faras <sup>vi</sup>	Gebel Zeit <sup>vii</sup>	Gurob <sup>viii</sup>	Harageh <sup>ix</sup>	Kom Rabi'a <sup>x</sup>	Koptos <sup>xi</sup>	Lisht <sup>xii</sup>	Malkata <sup>xiii</sup>	Medinet Habu <sup>xiv</sup>	Mirgissa <sup>xv</sup>	Serabit el-Khadim <sup>xvi</sup>	Sesebi <sup>xvii</sup>	Tel el-Retabeh <sup>xviii</sup>	Timna <sup>xix</sup>	
Turtle or tortoise		x							X											
Royal names		x		X		X	x						x	x	x	X		x		
<b>Hieroglyphs</b>																				
<i>ᵚnh</i>		x		x											x	x				
<i>dd</i>		x	x	x	x										x	x				
<i>ḥ</i>		x																		
<i>ḥk3t</i> -sceptre		x																		
<i>ḥs</i> -vase		x																x		
<i>nfr</i>	x	x			x	x									x					
<i>šw</i> -feather		x				x														
<i>tit</i>					x															
<i>w3s</i> -sceptre		x																		
<i>wd3t</i> -eye		x		x	x	x				x								x		
<b>Other</b>																				
Moon with crescent or horns		x	x																	
Shell		x	x	x		x	x				x				x					x
Sistra		x		x		x			x											
Plant forms		x																		
Beads		x																x		

Table 3 clearly demonstrates that the majority of extant amulets discovered in non-mortuary settings date to the New Kingdom. The amulets took a wide variety of forms and were discovered at a fairly expansive range of sites. There is a bias towards deities such as Bes, Tawaret and Hathor, who are associated with protecting the home, women and children.

#### 4.6.4 *Invisible religion and amulets*

The wearing of amulets by the living, and the placing of amulets within the wrappings of mummies, shows ritual.<sup>1159</sup> The creation of amulets in certain shapes or from specific materials also gives an example of ritual.<sup>1160</sup> These acts can be described as ritualistic because of their links with state religion and their subsequent institutional nature. The shape of an amulet, the material it was made from and the location it was worn or placed on the body all stem from religious beliefs, actions and texts associated with state religion.<sup>1161</sup> As mentioned, texts such as the Book of the Dead provide information detailing the correct form of certain amulets. Although it describes amulets to be placed on the body of a deceased individual, the archaeological evidence suggests that some amulets were worn by both the living and the dead.<sup>1162</sup> Indeed, some of the amulets found in the wrappings of mummies show signs of wear which implies that they were worn in life.<sup>1163</sup> Although it is not possible to be certain of the thoughts of each individual, the range of amulets available, in addition to the fact that their small size and varying degrees of quality would have made them relatively affordable, suggests that the wearer chose to wear an amulet rather than wearing one out of tradition or perceived expectation. This implies that the wearer of an amulet had a belief in the supposed power or function of that amulet and had chosen to wear it for a specific reason. While the evidence does indicate that amulets demonstrated doctrine, it is not expressed in a way that enables firm conclusions about doctrine to be reached.

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<sup>1159</sup> See Andrews 1994b: 6.

<sup>1160</sup> See Sections 4.6.1 to 4.6.2.

<sup>1161</sup> Andrews 1994b: 6.

<sup>1162</sup> Andrews 1994b: 6.

<sup>1163</sup> Andrews 1994b: 6.

The subjective and objective dimensions of religiosity are shown through the wearing of amulets. The objective dimension is demonstrated via the archaeological record which indicates that living individuals wore amulets in daily life and that amulets were placed in the wrappings of mummies.<sup>1164</sup> In addition, the likely choosing and purchasing of the amulets worn by an individual can also be deemed to show the objective dimension of religiosity. The subjective dimension is not as clear but, as mentioned above, a certain degree of personal choice can be assumed when considering individuals who wore an amulet. It is very likely that the amulet or amulets worn by an individual were chosen by that individual as a result of their perceived function or powers. Consequently, it is possible to learn something about the particular issues that were important to that individual. A person who chose to wear predominantly protective amulets (Petrie's 'phylactic' amulets<sup>1165</sup>) would have had different concerns to an individual who chose to mainly wear amulets intended to imbue them with powers (Petrie's 'homopoeic' and 'dynatic' amulets<sup>1166</sup>). If clearer evidence arose in support of the concept of personal choice with regards to amulets, this would provide more information about an individual's religiosity and a greater understanding of individual religiosity in ancient Egypt as a whole.

The creation and wearing of amulets is one way in which an objective and moral universe of meaning can be seen to have been created by ordinary ancient Egyptians. Amulets would have given meaning to everyday situations and would have provided individuals with a sense of comfort and structure. The wide range of amulets that existed demonstrates the objective

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<sup>1164</sup> Andrews 1994b: 6.

<sup>1165</sup> Petrie 1914: 22-32.

<sup>1166</sup> Petrie 1914: 14-9.

nature of emotions of the individual, yet they also allowed for subjectivity on an individual level. Examples of subjectivity within an objective universe of meaning are able to provide information about an individual's religiosity because it enables a comparison between the thoughts and feelings of more than one individual. Amulets were such a common feature in ancient Egyptian life that they can certainly be seen as part of the creation of a universe of meaning with others. Ordinary ancient Egyptians would have been able to see the amulets worn by their fellow man on a daily basis and this would probably have made them feel as if they were part of an existence that was greater than them as an individual. They may have commented on, compared or even swapped amulets with family members and friends. Similarly, the beliefs surrounding the use of funerary amulets can also be considered to have been created and maintained with others. Ritual acts such as this would also have made ordinary ancient Egyptians feel part of a community.

The fact that amulets were worn by ordinary ancient Egyptians on a daily basis demonstrates the element of the universe of meaning which refers to everyday life. The symbolism and powers associated with the different shapes and materials, as well as the use of amulets in a funerary context,<sup>1167</sup> shows the part of the symbolic universe which refers to a world which transcends everyday life. The fact that the majority of the amulets discovered in non-mortuary contexts date to the New Kingdom could indicate the development of the social objectivation of the universe of meaning. By the New Kingdom it is possible that the universe of meaning was more defined, therefore making it easier to socially objectify certain elements of it. That is not to say that ordinary ancient Egyptians living prior to the New

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<sup>1167</sup> See Sections 4.6.1 to 4.6.2.



Kingdom were not individually religious, rather that they may have been more discreet regarding the social objectivation of the universe of meaning. Many amulets discovered in tombs and in the wrappings of mummies from the periods prior to the New Kingdom show signs of wear.<sup>1168</sup> Regardless of the time period, it is likely that, due to its social objectivation, those individuals who wore amulets in life had engaged with and internalised the universe of meaning to some extent. This engagement and internalisation is likely to have manifested itself in the form of individual religiosity. Consequently, an understanding of how the symbolic universe was objectivated and the degree to which individuals had engaged with and internalised certain elements of it can further the understanding of individual religiosity. With amulets, which were so present in everyday life, it is important to consider the historical element of the universe of meaning. It is possible that amulets were worn simply because it was traditional and had been done by an individual's ancestors. However, as discussed, the huge variety of amulets and the personal choice this infers means that this seems unlikely. Amulets may have been passed down from generation to generation but it is probable that this served only to increase the symbolism and power associated with such amulets. Individuals who wore amulets belonging to their ancestors would have been aware of their supposed power and would not be wearing them simply as a result of tradition or loyalty.

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<sup>1168</sup> Andrews 1994b: 6.

## 4.7 Conclusions regarding invisible religion and household and personal items

This chapter has demonstrated that household and personal items were a way in which religion became a social fact in ancient Egypt. Ritual is demonstrated by the presence of platforms, niches and so-called cultic furniture which show that ritualistic acts, such as the giving of offerings, were carried out in the home;<sup>1169</sup> the application of cosmetics for medicinal or magical purposes, as well as for beautification;<sup>1170</sup> the wearing of amulets by the living and placing of amulets within the mummy wrappings and tombs of the deceased.<sup>1171</sup> It has been argued that these actions can be considered institutionalised because of their links to state religion and its associated texts, rituals and activities. For example, giving offerings was an important element of state religion which occurred on a daily basis, the belief in the power of certain objects was an element of state religion, and the use of funerary amulets was largely governed by state religion through its texts and practices.<sup>1172</sup> The evidence for doctrine is less concrete but can be seen in: architectural features such as vertical niches or false doors and so-called cultic furniture which demonstrate a belief in the fact that contact with the deceased was possible;<sup>1173</sup> cosmetic items such as mirrors which suggest that those using them believed that the gods were able to influence the lives of humans;<sup>1174</sup> amulets which show the belief in the fact that

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<sup>1169</sup> See Sections 4.3.1, 4.3.2, 4.3.3 and 4.4.5.

<sup>1170</sup> See Section 4.5.

<sup>1171</sup> See Section 4.6.

<sup>1172</sup> See Andrews 1994b: 6-7, 50-2.

<sup>1173</sup> See Sections 4.3.3 and 4.4.5.

<sup>1174</sup> See Section 4.5.1.

individuals were able to gain power or protection from certain objects or beings.<sup>1175</sup>

However, as it is impossible to know for certain what an individual thought or believed, firm conclusions about doctrine and the information it can provide about individual religiosity cannot be reached.

Household and personal items provide a valuable insight into the way in which religion became a social fact for ordinary ancient Egyptians. They provide information regarding the religious influences that individuals faced on a daily basis, some of which were more obvious than others. According to Luckmann's theory, this means that those individuals who came into contact with and used such items would have had individual religiosity. However, there is not sufficient evidence to prove this.

The very existence of household and personal items shows the objective dimension of religiosity because it implies that these items were created, purchased or obtained, and used by individuals. The nature of the objects and the evidence of wear on the majority of them indicates that they were used in daily life, rather than acting as decorative items that were never used. The objective dimension of religiosity can be seen particularly clearly as a result of items such as cosmetic palettes and amulets.<sup>1176</sup> Signs of wear on these items demonstrate that they were used for the grinding up of pigments and that they were worn on the body respectively.<sup>1177</sup> The objective dimension of religiosity indicates that ordinary ancient Egyptians were compelled to act as a result of their individual religiosity because of the benefits they believed their actions would bring them. Household and personal items

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<sup>1175</sup> See Section 4.6.

<sup>1176</sup> See Sections 4.5.2 and 4.6.

<sup>1177</sup> For the grinding of pigments, see Patenaude and Shaw 2011: 1; Buszek 2012: 315. For the wearing of amulets, see Andrews 1994b: 6.

also give an indication of the religious opinions or attitudes of the individuals associated with such objects. The desire to wear an amulet, store cosmetics in a jar shaped like a deity, build a platform in one's home, and purchase furniture decorated with religious iconography all suggest a belief in the symbolism, mythology, deities or powers associated with such objects. However, it has been made clear throughout this thesis that it is impossible to know for certain the thoughts and feelings of ordinary ancient Egyptians. Subsequently, firm conclusions regarding the subjective dimension of religiosity cannot be drawn from the consideration of household and personal items as examples of invisible religion.

In order to learn more about individual religiosity more information is needed regarding the social objectivation of the symbolic universe; household and personal items are able to provide such information. These items are one of the ways in which the symbolic universe was socially objectivated and the huge diversity in their forms and uses shows how widely the symbolic universe was objectivated. Household and personal items demonstrate the numerous ways that individuals in ancient Egypt could come into contact with the symbolic universe or universe of meaning, and how many opportunities there were for engaging with and internalising the universe of meaning. Both elements of the symbolic universe are socially objectivated by household and personal items. These two elements are one that refers to the world everyday life and one that refers to a world that transcends everyday life. All the household and personal items discussed in this chapter refer to everyday life because they were used in everyday life. Many of them had a relatively mundane purpose such as storing cosmetics<sup>1178</sup> or providing a place for an individual to sleep,<sup>1179</sup> while some, such as

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<sup>1178</sup> See Section 4.5.2.

cultic furniture or amulets,<sup>1180</sup> had the function of linking everyday life to the world of the gods and the deceased. However, despite the functional primary purpose of many of the items, almost all of them refer to a world that transcends everyday life in one form or another. A bed may be decorated with images of the god Bes to ensure that its owner was protected during sleep,<sup>1181</sup> while a cosmetic jar might be decorated with Hathoric iconography to ensure that fertility was bestowed on the wearer of the cosmetics stored in the jar.<sup>1182</sup> The way in which the universe of meaning is socially objectivated can help to identify what ordinary ancient Egyptians considered to be key elements of the universe of meaning.

Household and personal items show the creation of an objective and moral universe of meaning. They are essentially simple and predominantly functional objects that can be interpreted subjectively by individuals depending on their individual religiosity. These items enable the universe of meaning to become a concrete social fact that is available for individuals to engage with and internalise. It could be argued that the more an individual interacts with such items, the more opportunity that individual has for engagement with and internalisation of the universe of meaning. The degree to which household and personal items fulfil the 'with others' criteria of Luckmann's argument is not clear. In general, it is not immediately apparent how the use of these objects can be considered to have involved other members of society. Of course, in some cases, such as the use of so-called cultic

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<sup>1179</sup> See Section 4.4.1.

<sup>1180</sup> For so-called cultic furniture, see Section 4.4.5. For amulets, see Section 4.6.

<sup>1181</sup> See Section 4.4.1. See also Killen 1980: 28-36, Plates 36-7, 39-42, 44.

<sup>1182</sup> See Section 4.5.2.

furniture,<sup>1183</sup> is likely to have taken place in the home with other family members present, whereas the use of many of the items, including mirrors, kohl pots and amulets, may have been a solitary affair.<sup>1184</sup> However, while the evidence does not explicitly demonstrate it, it is still possible that household and personal items were part of the process of creating a universe of meaning with others. These items would have been very present in ancient Egyptian culture and may have been the subject of conversations. It is likely that a particularly fine piece of furniture or a well-crafted amulet would have been admired or discussed by friends and neighbours. The decision to purchase a new household or personal item may also have been debated amongst family groups, as well as with friends. It was the presence of these objects within culture, not just their use by individuals or families, which helped to create a universe of meaning. Consequently, household and personal items can provide information about the universe of meaning and how it was created and maintained, as well as how it may have been engaged with and internalised by individuals.

Household and personal items are able to provide information regarding individual religiosity in ancient Egypt. They are able to offer evidence for how religion became a social fact, as well as for the objective dimension of religiosity.<sup>1185</sup> However, the subjective dimension of religiosity is not clearly expressed by the evidence. Household and personal items can also further the understanding of how the universe of meaning was created and how it was socially objectivated.<sup>1186</sup> The extent to which such items demonstrate the 'with others' aspect of Luckmann's views on the creation of a universe of meaning is not clear.

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<sup>1183</sup> See Section 4.4.5.

<sup>1184</sup> For mirrors and kohl pots, see Sections 4.5.1 and 4.5.2 respectively. For amulets see Section 4.6.

<sup>1185</sup> Luckmann 1967: 22, 24.

<sup>1186</sup> Luckmann 1967: 43-4, 48-9.

There is no firm evidence to support the view that household and personal items were discussed among family groups, friends, communities, etc. Household and personal items are able to demonstrate that individual religiosity was linked to state religion to some extent. While the ideas and rituals may have become diluted, it is clear that many of the elements that made up the universe of meaning and were socially objectivated through household and personal items, stemmed from the beliefs, texts and actions of state religion.

## References for Table 3

<sup>i</sup> **Ptah**: Ayrton et al. 1904: Plate LVII.3. *nfr*: Ayrton et al. 1904: Plate LVII.1.

<sup>ii</sup> **Amun-Re**: Pendlebury 1951: 99; Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 305; Stevens 2006: 29-30. **Anubis or Seth**: Petrie 1894: Plate XV.139, 142; Pendlebury and Frankfort 1933: 94, 96; Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 95; Stevens 2006: 30. **Aten**: Petrie 1894: Plate XIV.65-7, 71-5, 77-81; Pendlebury and Frankfort 1933: 47, 50, 56-8, 67, 74, 86; Pendlebury 1951: 19, 45, 56, 66, 82, 89, 98, 119-21; Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 69, 78, 147, 150, 164, 181, 242; Stevens 2006: 30.-1. **Bes**: Peet and Woolley 1923: 18-9, 21-4, 26, 28, 30, 32-3, 68-9, 85-8, Plates X.3, XIII.2, 6; Pendlebury and Frankfort 1933: 30, 78-97, Plate XXIX.1; Pendlebury 1951: 13, 20, 32, 85, 102-5, 110-2, 125-9, 142; Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 31, 46, 48, 71, 85-6, 102, 104, 110, 115, 122, 134, 147-50, 152, 162, 169, 174-8, 180-2, 184-6, 188-91, 195, 198, 200, 205, 207, 209, 214, 220, 232, 237, 241, 244, 248, 250, 253, 255, 262, 266, 273, 278, 286, 288, 290-1, 295, 299, 305, 315; Stevens 2006: 31-3. **Beset**: Bosse-Griffiths 1977: 98-9; Stevens 2006: 33-4. **Falcon or falcon-headed god**: Petrie 1894: Plate XV.140; Pendlebury and Frankfort 1933: 92; Boyce 1995: 355; Stevens 2006: 34. **Hathor**: Peet and Woolley 1923: 17, 28; Pendlebury and Frankfort 1933: 82-5, 87-8, 90-2, 94-6, 101, Plate XLVII.4; Pendlebury 1951: 82, 102, 105, 111, 126; Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 73, 75, 86, 90, 113, 122, 178, 180-1, 206; Boyce 1995: 365; Stevens 2006: 34-5. **Isis**: Pendlebury and Frankfort 1933: Plate XLIX; Stevens 2006: 36-7. **Maat**: Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 283; Stevens 2006: 37. **Mut**: Pendlebury and Frankfort 1933: 78-9, 83, 90; Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 90; Györy 1998: 501, 503; Stevens 2006: 37. **Ptah**: Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 84, 177; Stevens 2006: 37-8. **Re and Re-Harakhty**: Pendlebury and Frankfort 1933: 54, Plate XXIX.1; Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 225; Stevens 2006: 38. **Sekhmet or lioness goddess**: Samson 1978: 78, Figure 46; Boyce 1995: 350; Stevens 2006: 38-9. **Tawaret**: Petrie 1894: Plate XVII.299; Peet and Woolley 1923: 28, 77, 83, 86; Pendlebury and Frankfort 1933: 46, 57, 78-81, 83-7, 89-97; Pendlebury 1951: 85, 102, 104-5, 125-7; Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 18, 71, 89, 100, 168, 175, 183, 188, 198, 200, 203, 233, 248, 253, 255, 290; Kirby 1989: 31; Boyce 1995: 66, 69; Stevens 2006: 39-40. **Anthropoid busts**: Petrie 1894: Plate XVII.277; Pendlebury and Frankfort 1933: 84, 86, 92, 96; Pendlebury 1951: 85, 104; Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 90, 166-7; Keith-Bennett 1981: 254-69; Stevens 2006: 41-2. **Dwarf**: Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 106; Boyce 1995: 350; Samson 1978: 82, Plate 47(i); Stevens 2006: 42. **Ears**: Boyce 1995: 352; Stevens 2006: 42-3. **Foot**: Pendlebury 1951: 120; Stevens 2006: 43. **Hand**: Petrie 1894: Plate XVII.293; Pendlebury and Frankfort 1933: 89, Plate LXIX; Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 89; Stevens 2006: 43-4. **Heart**: Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 167, 242, 287; Stevens 2006: 44. **Royalty**: Petrie 1894: Plate XVII.273; Peet and Woolley 1923: 20-1, Plate XIII.2, 6; Pendlebury and Frankfort 1933: Plates XXVIII.6, XLIX?; Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 110, 271, 291; Boyce 1995: 355; Stevens 2006: 44-6. **Bird**: Petrie 1894: Plates XV.132?, 145-6, XVII.312; Peet and Woolley 1923: 84; Pendlebury 1951: 74?, 103, 127; Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 35, 89?, 203, 250, 295; Stevens 2006: 47-8. **Bovid**: Petrie 1894: Plate XVII.303; Peet and Woolley 1923: 169; Pendlebury 1951: 74, Plate LXXII.8; Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 52, 61; Stevens 2006: 48-50. **Cobra or ureaus**: Pendlebury 1951: 32, 82, 109, 126; Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 26, 198, 250, 255; Boyce 1995: 355; Stevens 2006: 50-1. **Crocodile**: Pendlebury and Frankfort 1933: 80, 96; Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 96; Boyce 1995: 348; Stevens 2006: 51-2. **Dog**: Pendlebury and Frankfort 1933: 65, Plate XLI.3; Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 35; Stevens 2006: 52. **Falcon-headed sphinx**: Peet and Woolley 1923: 25, 29, Plate X.3; Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 325; Stevens 2006: 52-3. **Feline**: Pendlebury and Frankfort 1933: 41, 83, 87, 93, Plate XXVIII.7; Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 121, 193, 285, 299; Boyce 1995: 355; Samson 1978: 77-8, Figure 46; Stevens 2006: 53-4. **Fish**: Petrie 1894: Plate XV.149-51; Peet and Woolley 1923: 32; Pendlebury and Frankfort 1933: 78, 81-90, 93-4, 96-7; Pendlebury 1951: 103-4, 110, 126; Martin 1974: 81, Catalogue 297; Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 83, 149, 236, 253; Stevens 2006: 54-6. **Fly**: Petrie 1894: Plate XVII.336; Peet and Woolley 1923: 22; Pendlebury and Frankfort 1933: 83, 95; Samson 1978: 80-1, Figure 46(iv); Stevens 2006: 56. **Frog or toad**: Petrie 1894: Plate XV.160; Peet and Woolley 1923: 17, Plate X.3; Pendlebury and Frankfort 1933: 79-85, 88-93, 95-7; Pendlebury 1951: 105, 127; Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 35, 69, 86, 122, 148, 151, 165, 175, 180, 182, 184, 186, 197, 201, 217, 225, 236, 241, 250, 264, 288; Stevens 2006: 56-7. **Gazelle or ibex**: Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 41, 78, 150, 220, 253; Stevens 2006: 57-9. **Horse**: Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 203; Stevens 2006: 59. **Jackal or fox**: Pendlebury and Frankfort 1933: 19, Plate XXIX.1; Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 46, 78; Boyce 1995: 67; Stevens 2006: 59-60. **Monkey or baboon**: Petrie 1894: Plate XVII.294; Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 89, 293; Stevens 2006: 60-1. **Scarab beetle**: Petrie 1894: Plates XV.147-8, XVII.335; Stevens 2006: 61-2. **Scorpion**: Pendlebury and Frankfort 1933: 81-2, 86, 93; Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 48; Stevens 2006: 62. **Turtle or tortoise**: Pendlebury and Frankfort 1933: Plate XXVIII.6; Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 129; Boyce 1995: 351; Györy 1998: 500; Stevens



- 2006: 62-3. **Royal names:** See Stevens 2006: 63-7 for information and additional references regarding specific royal names. **ꞥnh:** Pendlebury and Frankfort 1933: 82, 92-3; Pendlebury 1951: 83, 109, Plate CIX.1; Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 89, 253; Stevens 2006: 67-8. **dd:** Pendlebury and Frankfort 1933: 78, 80, 82, 85; Pendlebury 1951: 107, 129; Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 86; Stevens 2006: 68-9. **h:** Pendlebury 1951: 82, 84, 103; Samson 1978: 83, Plate 47(ii); Stevens 2006: 69. **hk3t-sceptre:** Pendlebury 1951: 83, 85; Stevens 2006: 69. **hs-vase:** Petrie 1894: Plate XVII.268; Peet and Woolley 1923: 15, Plate XIII; Pendlebury and Frankfort 1933: 81, 91; Pendlebury 1951: 85; Boyce 1995: 355; Stevens 2006: 69-70. **nfr:** Peet and Woolley 1923: 21, Plate X.3; Pendlebury and Frankfort 1933: 78-81, 85, 83, 86-9,90, 92, 93, 94; Pendlebury 1951: 83, 103, 104-5, 111, 125, 126, 129, 130, 142; Samson 1978: 83, Plate 47(ii); Stevens 2006: 70-1. **šw-feather:** Pendlebury and Frankfort 1933: 86, 94-5; Pendlebury 1951: 18, 52, 78, 82-3, 85, 88-9, 92, 96, 127-9; Stevens 2006: 71. **w3s-sceptre:** Pendlebury and Frankfort 1933: 80-1, 83, 87, 94; Pendlebury 1951: 111, 126; Stevens 2006: 71-2. **wd3t-eye:** Peet and Woolley 1923: 21-2, 28, 32, 76; Pendlebury and Frankfort 1933: 21, 79-87, 89-93, 95-7; Pendlebury 1951: 20, 84-5, 109, 111, 119, 127, 129; Martin 1974: 85, Catalogue Numbers 338-9; Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 19, 71, 73, 90, 95, 106, 122, 155, 186, 206, 217, 223, 246, 256, 305, 312, 330; Stevens 2006: 72-3. **Moon with crescent or horns:** Petrie 1894: Plate XX.555; Peet and Woolley 1923: 17; Pendlebury and Frankfort 1933: 60, Plate XLIII.4; Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 286; Bell 1986; Stevens 2006: 74. **Shell:** Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 80, 104, 129, 131, 149; Stevens 2006: 74-5. **Sistra:** Pendlebury and Frankfort 1933: Plate L.XLV; Stevens 2006: 75-6. **Plant forms:** Petrie 1894: Plates XVI, XVIII-XX; Pendlebury and Frankfort 1933: 115-6, Plate XLIX; Pendlebury 1951: Plate CXII; Boyce 1995; Stevens 2006: 76-7. **Beads:** Petrie 1894: Plates XVI, XVIII; Pendlebury and Frankfort 1933: Plate L; Boyce 1995: 75-82; Stevens 2006: 77.
- <sup>iii</sup> **Bes:** Rowe 1940: 80, Plate XXXIV.71; James 1966: 318, Figure 101.9; McGovern 1990: 19; James and McGovern 1993: 125-8, Figure 58. **Cobra or ureaus:** Rowe 1940: 80, Plate XXXIV.42, 61-2; James and McGovern 1993: 5. **dd:** Rowe 1940: 77, Plate XXXIII.27; James and McGovern 1993: 5. **Moon with crescent or horns:** Rowe 1940: 74, 77, Plates XXX.54, XXXIII.29; James 1966: 149-50; James and McGovern 1993: 5. **Shell:** Rowe 1940: 75, Plate XXXI.75-64.
- <sup>iv</sup> **Bes:** Hayes 1959: 88; Pinch 1993: 290-2. **Bovid:** Pinch 1993: 165, 170; Varga 1994. **Fish:** Pinch 1993: 287-8. **Gazelle or ibex:** Hayes 1959: Figure 48. **Scarab beetle:** Pinch 1993: 288-90. **Scorpion:** Pendlebury and Frankfort 1933: 81-2, 86, 93; Borchardt and Ricke 1980: 48; Stevens 2006: 62. **Royal names:** Hayes 1959: Figure 48; Pinch 1993: 289. **ꞥnh:** Carter and Carnarvon 1912: 32; Pinch 1993: 299. **dd:** Pinch 1993: 299. **wd3t-eye:** Pinch 1993: 254-5. **Shell:** Pinch 1993: 284, 5. **Sistra:** Pinch 1993: 145.
- <sup>v</sup> **Bes:** Bruyère 1939b: 93-108, 255-9, 330, Figures 131, 133, 136, 202. **Hathor:** Bruyère 1953: 54, Figure 11. **Tawaret:** Bruyère 1939b: 107; Bruyère 1953: 54, Figure 11. **Royalty:** Bruyère 1953: 54, Figure 11. **Cobra or ureaus:** Bruyère 1953: 54, Figure 11. **Feline:** Bruyère 1939b: 345; Bruyère 1953: 54, Figure 11. **Gazelle or ibex:** Bruyère 1953: 54, Figure 11. **dd:** Bruyère 1953: 54, Figure 11. **nfr:** Bruyère 1953: 54, Figure 11. **tit:** Bruyère 1953: 54, Figure 11. **wd3t-eye:** Bruyère 1939b: 334.
- <sup>vi</sup> **Bes:** Pinch 1993: 290-2. **Fly:** Pinch 1993: 288-9. **Frog or toad:** Griffith 1921: Plate XIX.23-4; Karkowski 1981: 109; Pinch 1993: 288. **Gazelle or ibex:** Griffith 1921: Plate XIX.40; Pinch 1993: 286, Plate 80.4. **Scarab beetle:** Pinch 1993: 288-90. **Royal names:** Pinch 1993: 289. **nfr:** Pinch 1993: 299. **šw-feather:** Pinch 1993: 299. **wd3t-eye:** Pinch 1993: 255. **Shell:** Pinch 1993: 284, 5. **Sistra:** Karkowski 1981: 109, Appendix I.10; Pinch 1993: 145.
- <sup>vii</sup> **Bes:** Pinch 1993: 290-2. **Feline:** Pinch 1993: 188. **Fly:** Pinch 1993: 288-9. **Frog or toad:** Castel et al. 1985 18-9, Illustration 9; Pinch 1993: 288. **Scarab beetle:** Pinch 1993: 288-90. **Royal names:** Pinch 1993: 290. **Shell:** Pinch 1993: 284.
- <sup>viii</sup> **Anthropoid busts:** Keith-Bennett 1981: 282.
- <sup>ix</sup> **Hand:** Engelbach and Gunn 1923: Plate LIV. **Turtle or tortoise:** Engelbach and Gunn 1923: 13, 17, Plate LIV. **Sistra:** Engelbach and Gunn 1923: Plate LXVVV.
- <sup>x</sup> **wd3t-eye:** Giddy 1999: 61, 63, 65.
- <sup>xi</sup> **Shell:** Petrie 1896: 13-4.
- <sup>xii</sup> **Bes:** Hayes 1959: 398. **Tawaret:** Hayes 1959: 398. **Hand:** Hayes 1959: 398. **Fly:** Hayes 1959: 398.
- <sup>xiii</sup> **Bes:** Hayes 1959: 252, 278. **Hathor:** Hayes 1959: 252; The Metropolitan Museum of Art: Object Number 11.215.203. **Tawaret:** Hayes 1959: 252, 254. **Heart:** Hayes 1959: 252, 398. **Feline:** Hayes 1951: Figure 33 S99-100. **Frog or toad:** Hayes 1959: 251. **Gazelle or ibex:** Hayes 1959: 251. **Scorpion:** Hayes 1959: 251. **Royal names:** Hayes 1951: 231-4.
- <sup>xiv</sup> **Royal names:** Hölscher 1939: 71, 83.

<sup>xv</sup> **Bes:** Pinch 1993: 290-2. **Dwarf:** Karlin 1970: 340, Numbers 11-2; Pinch 1993: 299. **Royalty:** Karlin 1970: 340, Numbers 16-7; Pinch 1993: 299. **Crocodile:** Karlin 1970: 344, Number 71; Pinch 1993: 288. **Fly:** Griffith 1921: Plate XIX.51-3; Pinch 1993: 288-9. **Scarab beetle:** Pinch 1993: 288-90. **Royal names:** Carter and Carnarvon 1912: 32; Karlin 1970: 352, Numbers 164, 167; Pinch 1993: 289. **ꜥnh:** Karlin 1970: 342, Number 49; Pinch 1993: 299. **dd:** Pinch 1993: 299. **nfr:** Pinch 1993: 299. **Shell:** Pinch 1993: 284.

<sup>xvi</sup> **Bes:** Pinch 1993: 290-2. **Anthropoid busts:** Keith-Bennett 1981: 299. **Fish:** Petrie 1906b: Figure 153.15. **Scarab beetle:** Pinch 1993: 288-90. **Royal names:** Pinch 1993: 290. **ꜥnh:** Pinch 1993: 18, 299-300. **dd:** Pinch 1993: 300. **hs-vase:** Pinch 1993: 300. **wꜥꜥt-eye:** Pinch 1993: 255.

<sup>xvii</sup> **Scarab beetle:** Fairman 1938: 153. **Beads:** Blackman 1937: 148.

<sup>xviii</sup> **Bird:** Petrie 1906b: 32, Plate XXXIII.29. **Royal names:** Petrie 1906a: 32, Plate XXXIII.

<sup>xix</sup> **Bes:** Pinch 1993: 290-2. **Sekhmet or lioness goddess:** Schulman 1988: 140, Figures 47.4, 48.7-8, Plate 118.1. **Feline:** Rothenberg 1972: 166, Plate 94; Schulman 1988: 125-7, Figures 33.1-5, 38.1-5, Plate 118.7; Pinch 1993: 188. **Scarab beetle:** Pinch 1993: 288-90. **Shell:** Pinch 1993: 284.



# Chapter 5

## COMMUNICATION WITH THE DEAD AND WITH GODS

### 5.1 Introduction

Communication with the dead and with gods was an important element of daily life in ancient Egypt. In order to learn more about invisible religion and individual religiosity, communication with the dead and communication with the gods will be considered separately. When considering communication with the dead, specific methods including letters to the dead, anthropoid busts, *3h ikr n R<sup>c</sup>* stelae and dreams will be examined. In terms of communication with the gods, prayer, votive offerings, oracles and dreams will be considered.<sup>1187</sup> Luckmann's theory of invisible religion<sup>1188</sup> will enable the methods of communication with the dead and with gods to be assessed in order to ascertain what information they can provide regarding individual religiosity in ancient Egypt.

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<sup>1187</sup> Communication with the gods via a 'wise woman' is not considered in this thesis. For more on this, see Karl 2000.

<sup>1188</sup> See Section 2.2.1.

## 5.2 Invisible religion and communication with the dead and with gods

When considering communication with the dead and with gods, it is clear that ritual and doctrine are involved. Making votive offerings, writing letters to the dead and creating prayer stelae are all examples of religious conduct. The belief in the ability to see the dead or gods in dreams, the concept that intermediary statues would pass a message on to the gods, and the idea that the deceased could affect the lives of the living are all examples of religious ideas. The extent to which communication with the dead and with gods can be seen as institutionalised is more difficult to ascertain. Some of the methods are similar to the activities carried out as part of state religion. For example, the king was able to contact those in the netherworld directly through ritual and dreams.<sup>1189</sup> Methods of communication carried out by ordinary Egyptians, such as the writing of letters to the dead and the interpretation of dreams, can be identified as institutionalised because they attempt to imitate the actions carried out as part of the state cult. Other methods of communication with the dead and with gods were facilitated by the state. For example, oracles and prayer at specific shrines attached to state temples. These methods could also be seen as institutionalised because they are not entirely separate from state religion. According to Luckmann's theory, the desire to mimic or somehow be involved with state ritual and doctrine suggests that ordinary Egyptians had engaged with the universe of meaning and therefore had individual religiosity. However, the theory of invisible religion does not take into account other factors that may have influenced why an individual communicated with the dead and/or gods, such as social norms or the desire to participate in shared activities.

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<sup>1189</sup> See Maspero 2003: 50; Szpakowska 2003b: 135; Szpakowska 2003c: 112.

Communication with the dead and with gods can be seen as an element of the historical and institutional reality of ritual and belief in ancient Egypt. The methods of communication would have been passed down from generation to generation, providing the historical element of reality. As demonstrated above, some methods of communication with the dead and with gods can be seen as being influenced by the state, which creates the institutional element of reality. Luckmann also states that this reality then offers itself for subjective internalisation.<sup>1190</sup> It is as a result of the internalisation of the historical and institutional reality that individual religiosity exists. It could therefore be argued that the greater the level of communication with the dead and/or with gods by an individual, the greater the level of internalisation and the subsequent development of individual religiosity. However, this is not clearly articulated in the available evidence and therefore cannot be stated with any certainty.

The objective dimension of religiosity is evidenced by the very existence of the specific methods of communication with the dead and with gods, which are discussed in more detail below. However, if only the existence of these methods of communication is used as evidence for individual religiosity, there will be uncertainty surrounding the degree to which these methods demonstrate religiosity versus inherited, habitual actions. It is by considering the methods in terms of what information they can provide regarding religious opinions or attitudes that a complete understanding of individual religiosity can be gained. In the following sections, both the objective and subjective dimensions of religiosity will be considered in order to gain as clear an understanding as possible.

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<sup>1190</sup> See Section 2.2.1 in this thesis.

Generally, communication with inhabitants of the netherworld occurred because living individuals needed help regarding everyday matters such as illness or a dispute with a neighbour. The acceptance of the fact that the world of everyday life and the netherworld were closely linked suggests an internalisation of the universe of meaning and implies a link between state and non-state religion because the idea that it was possible to communicate with those in the netherworld was very present in state doctrine and ritual.<sup>1191</sup> It could be argued that the communication with the dead and with gods carried out by ordinary Egyptians was a method by which they made state religion relevant to their own lives. This concept links closely to a statement Luckmann makes. He says, 'inequality in the distribution of religious representations will induce, at the very least, the consolidation of different versions of the sacred cosmos among occupational groups and social strata'.<sup>1192</sup> The desire to consolidate the sacred cosmos and make it relevant suggests individual religiosity in all those who participated in communication with the dead and/or with gods.

Communication with the dead and with gods was an important element of the universe of meaning as created by ordinary Egyptians. It is likely that much of this communication took place with others, such as family members or neighbours. It is possible that ordinary ancient Egyptians carried out acts of communication with the netherworld because of a subconscious desire to remain a Self. However, it is highly unlikely that any evidence will make it possible to reach firm conclusions regarding the subconscious minds of ordinary ancient Egyptians.

Similarly impossible to prove, although interesting to consider, is Luckmann's concept that

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<sup>1191</sup> Doctrine: the king was considered to be a constant intermediary between the world of the living and the netherworld (see Assmann 1970: 58-70; Maspero 2003: 50). Ritual: the daily temple ritual involved the feeding, watering and clothing of the cult statue of a god so that the *b3* of the god would enter the statue (see David 1998: 111-2).

<sup>1192</sup> Luckmann 1967: 65.

the construction and internalisation of a universe of meaning, as well as an individual's engagement with it, is an indication of that individual's religiosity and the degree to which an individual participated in activities that made him a Self directly correlated to the individual religiosity of that person.

Where possible, specific methods of communication with the dead and with gods in ancient Egypt will now be considered in relation to Luckmann's theory of invisible religion.

### 5.3 Invisible religion and specific methods of communicating with the dead

For the ancient Egyptians, communication with the dead was a normal part of their daily lives. It was their belief that the deceased passed into a concrete afterlife in which they had status and position.<sup>1193</sup> The boundary that separated the world of the living from the world of the dead could be traversed in either direction.<sup>1194</sup> Evidence for communication with the dead suggests that the ancient Egyptians usually contacted the dead in the hope that they would be able to receive help regarding everyday matters.<sup>1195</sup> The ancient Egyptians communicated with the dead via three main avenues. These were letters to the dead, the so-called ancestor cult (including anthropoid busts and *3h ikr n R<sup>c</sup>* stelae) and dreams. These methods of communication could be considered to be examples of visible religion rather than invisible religion. However, an individual writing a letter to his deceased wife or seeing an ancestor in a dream would simply have seen these acts as everyday methods of

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<sup>1193</sup> Assmann 2005b: 159.

<sup>1194</sup> Assmann 2005b: 159.

<sup>1195</sup> Teeter 2011: 148.



communicating with loved ones. It is the normality of these methods of communication that makes them suitable and, indeed, essential for consideration using Luckmann's theory.

### 5.3.1 *Letters to the dead*

Letters to the dead were first recognised as an independent ancient Egyptian literary genre by Gardiner and Sethe in their 1928 publication of six such letters, plus an additional two possible letters to the dead.<sup>1196</sup> In their publication the following letters to the dead were described, translated and provided with philological commentaries: the Cairo Linen; the Qau Bowl; the Hu Bowl; the Berlin Bowl; the Cairo Bowl; Leiden Papyrus I 371. The Oxford Bowl and the Moscow Bowl were also suggested as potential letters to the dead.<sup>1197</sup> However, it has subsequently been established that the Moscow Bowl is not a letter to the dead.<sup>1198</sup> Since the publication of these letters to the dead, an additional six letters have been published, bringing the total number of extant letters to the dead to 14<sup>1199</sup> (note that the Qau Bowl is inscribed with two separate letters to the dead<sup>1200</sup>). The six additional letters to the dead are: the Chicago Jar Stand;<sup>1201</sup> the Louvre Bowl;<sup>1202</sup> O. Louvre 698;<sup>1203</sup> P. Nag' ed-

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<sup>1196</sup> Gardiner and Sethe 1928.

<sup>1197</sup> Gardiner and Sethe 1928: 26-8. Gardiner and Sethe note that the Oxford Bowl is similar to the other letters to the dead in both its external form and the nature of its contents. However, they state that they do not have a deep-rooted conviction that the Moscow Bowl is a 'real' letter to the dead. The reasons given are that the Moscow Bowl is not addressed to a relative and that the text deals with multiple issues.

<sup>1198</sup> In Gunn 1930: 154, Gunn provides an additional argument against the Moscow Bowl being a letter to the dead. He quotes the following line from the text: 'let my lord send to Tay to say that if she comes to me I shall hit her'. He then argues, 'if Tay is dead, it seems both futile and imprudent to try to hit a ghost; if she is alive, why send her a message via the underworld?'. See also Wentz 1990: 211-19; O'Donoghue 1999: 88; Verhoeven 2003: 49.

<sup>1199</sup> See Wentz 1990: 211-9 for English translations of all 14 letters to the dead.

<sup>1200</sup> Gardiner and Sethe 1928: 3-5, 17-9, Plates II, IIA, III, IIIA; Wentz 1990: 211-12.

<sup>1201</sup> Gardiner 1930; Janák 2003.

<sup>1202</sup> Piankoff and Clère 1934.

<sup>1203</sup> Černý and Gardiner 1957: 22, Plates 80-80a (no translation); Černý 1973: 369-70 (partial translation); Frandsen 1992: 33-4 (full translation).

Deir N 3737;<sup>1204</sup> P. Nag' ed-Deir N 3500;<sup>1205</sup> the Mispaced Stela.<sup>1206</sup> All 14 letters to the dead are written in hieratic and have been the subject of fairly expansive study since their publication, especially in terms of philology.<sup>1207</sup>

Despite the fact that a relatively small number of letters to the dead exist, Gardiner and Sethe concluded that the writing of letters to the dead was a fairly widespread custom.<sup>1208</sup> They compared the number of letters to the dead with the number of other hieratic documents which have survived from the Old and Early Middle Kingdoms and found that the proportion of letters to the dead was higher.<sup>1209</sup> This conclusion has subsequently been corroborated by scholars and the general consensus is that letters to the dead were a prevalent phenomenon in ancient Egypt.<sup>1210</sup>

The idea that letters to the dead were a widespread phenomenon seems likely when the fact that the existing letters to the dead have been dated to the Sixth Dynasty up until the Twenty-First Dynasty (as can be seen from Table 4) is considered. This wide time span implies that letters to the dead were not an isolated example of ancient Egyptian practices,

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<sup>1204</sup> Simpson 1966; Gilula 1969.

<sup>1205</sup> Simpson 1970; Goedicke 1972.

<sup>1206</sup> Wente 1975-6.

<sup>1207</sup> For publications relating to specific letters to the dead, see: Gardiner 1930; Piankoff and Clère 1934; Černý and Gardiner 1957; Simpson 1966; Fecht 1969; Gilula 1969; Simpson 1970; Goedicke 1972; Simpson 1981; Willems 1991; Frandsen 1992; Janák 2003; Donnat 2009. For publications relating to letters to the dead generally, see: Gardiner and Sethe 1928; Gunn 1930; Guilmo 1966; Roccati 1967; Grieshammer 1974; Brier 1980: 200-4; Baines 1987: 86-7; Wente 1990: 211-19; Eichler 1991; Parkinson 1991: 143-5; Thériault 1992: 196-8, 205-6; Ritner 1993: 180-83; Robins 1993: 63-4, 173-74; Bommas 1999; Czerwik 1999; McDowell 1999: 106; O'Donoghue 1999; Donnat 2002; el-Leithy 2003; Pinch 2003: 445; Verhoeven 2003; Assmann 2005b: 159-71; Garcia 2010; Bommas 2011: 168-70; Teeter 2011: 153-8; Donnat 2012.

<sup>1208</sup> Gardiner and Sethe 1928: 9-10.

<sup>1209</sup> Gardiner and Sethe 1928: 9.

<sup>1210</sup> See Baines 1987: 87; O'Donoghue 1999: 92; Garcia 2010: 6. The publication of numerous books and articles on the subject of 'letters to the dead' (see Footnote 1207 above) is indicative of a general belief in the widespread use of these letters and the importance of the information they are able to provide scholars with in regard to ancient Egyptian religious beliefs and practices.

and further suggests that they were a common occurrence in ancient Egypt. The dates given in Table 4 are the dates suggested in the initial publications of each letter to the dead.<sup>1211</sup>

These dates were calculated using philological evidence. However, Bommas has considered the dating of some letters to the dead from a typological perspective in order to fully understand the *Sitz im Leben* of each letter.<sup>1212</sup> Bommas has taken four of the letters to the dead written on pottery bowls/plates (the Qau Bowl, the Hu Bowl, the Louvre Bowl and the Oxford Bowl), as well as the Moscow Bowl, and has calculated the 'vessel index' of each object. This is calculated in the following way: diameter x 100 ÷ height.<sup>1213</sup> This vessel index is then associated with a relative date between the First Intermediate Period and the Eighteenth Dynasty. This dating method works because during this time period, the forms of pottery bowls changed continuously throughout Egypt at the same time.<sup>1214</sup> Using this approach, Bommas concludes that the Qau Bowl dates from the Sixth to Eleventh Dynasty (consistent with the date suggested by Gardiner and Sethe),<sup>1215</sup> the Hu Bowl dates from the late Eleventh Dynasty or First Intermediate Period (also consistent with the date suggested by Gardiner and Sethe),<sup>1216</sup> the Louvre Bowl dates from the Twelfth Dynasty to the early Thirteenth Dynasty (different to the First Intermediate Period Date suggested by Piankoff and Clère)<sup>1217</sup> and the Oxford Bowl dates from the Twelfth to Thirteenth Dynasty (different

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<sup>1211</sup> Cairo Linen: Gardiner and Sethe 1928: 1; Qau Bowl: Gardiner and Sethe 1928: 3; Papyrus Nag' ed-Deir N3737: Simpson 1966: 49; Papyrus Nag' ed-Deir N3500: Simpson 1970: 62; Chicago Jar Stand: Gardiner 1930: 19; Hu Bow: Gardiner and Sethe 1928: 5; Misplaced Stela: Wente 1975-6: 599; Louvre Bowl: Piankoff and Clère 1934: 169; Berlin Bowl: Gardiner and Sethe 1928: 5; Cairo Bowl: Gardiner and Sethe 1928: 7; Oxford Bowl: Gardiner and Sethe 1928: 26; Leiden Papyrus I 371: Gardiner and Sethe 1928: 8; Ostraca Louvre 698: Černý and Gardiner 1957: 22.

<sup>1212</sup> Bommas 1999.

<sup>1213</sup> This method was introduced by Dorothea Arnold in 1982 (Arnold 1982: 51, Figure 14).

<sup>1214</sup> Bommas 1999: 54.

<sup>1215</sup> Bommas 1999: 55. For the date suggested by Gardiner and Sethe, see Gardiner and Sethe 1928: 3.

<sup>1216</sup> Bommas 1999: 55-6. For the date suggested by Gardiner and Sethe, see Gardiner and Sethe 1928: 5.

<sup>1217</sup> Bommas 1999: 56. For the date suggested by Piankoff and Clère, see Piankoff and Clère 1934: 169.

to the Seventeenth to Eighteenth Dynasty date suggested by Gardiner and Sethe).<sup>1218</sup> While the dates suggested by Bommas differ from the original dates given for some of the letters to the dead, they still imply the existence of a phenomenon that was spread across a wide time period. Bommas's dates also highlight the importance of considering the object upon which a text is written, as well as the text itself, in order to fully capture the historical dimension of a written piece.<sup>1219</sup> O'Donoghue emphasises the significance of this point when he considers the different views offered by scholars with regard to the wide date-range of the letters to the dead.<sup>1220</sup> He argues that scholars interpret the dating of the letters to the dead differently depending on their view of Egyptian history and its development.<sup>1221</sup> He states that, 'historical paradigms will have a significant impact on the interpretation of religious phenomenon'.<sup>1222</sup> If the historical dimension of an object is understood as fully as possible then it should limit the affect that historical paradigms will have on its interpretation.

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<sup>1218</sup> Bommas 1999: 56-7. For the date suggested by Gardiner and Sethe, see Gardiner and Sethe 1928: 26.

<sup>1219</sup> Bommas 1999: 53.

<sup>1220</sup> O'Donoghue 1999: 92-3.

<sup>1221</sup> O'Donoghue 1999: 93.

<sup>1222</sup> O'Donoghue 1999: 93.

**Table 4:** Letters to the dead – additional information (chronological order)<sup>1223</sup>

Letter name	Provenance	Date	Relationship of sender and recipient	Subject of letter
Cairo Linen (CG 25975)	Saqqara (possibly from tomb of Sankhenptah)	Sixth Dynasty	Wife and husband	Inheritance
Papyrus Nag' ed-Deir N3737	Tomb of Meru (Nag' ed-Deir N 3737)	Sixth to Tenth Dynasty	Son and father	A dream in which the deceased appeared
Qau Bowl	Qau el-Kebir (tomb 7695)	Sixth to Eleventh Dynasty	Interior: son and father Exterior: son and mother	Interior: inheritance Exterior: illness inflicted on sender
Chicago Jar Stand	Girga (or Dendera)	Sixth to Eleventh Dynasty	Son and father	Fertility
Papyrus Nag' ed-Deir N3500	Tomb Nag' ed-Deir N3500	Seventh to Tenth Dynasty	Son/wife and father/husband	Illness
Hu Bowl	Hu (Diospolis Parva)	First Intermediate Period	Sister/wife and brother/husband	Wrong inflicted on sender's daughter

<sup>1223</sup> Adapted from 'Table 1: Letters to the Dead – Detail' in O'Donoghue 1999: 88.

Chapter 5: Communication with the Dead and with Gods

Letter name	Provenance	Date	Relationship of sender and recipient	Subject of letter
Misplaced Stela	Unknown	Late First Intermediate Period	Main text: husband and wife Postscript: brother and sister	Main text: illness Postscript: wrong inflicted on family
Louvre Bowl	Unknown (likely Upper or Middle Egypt)	Late First Intermediate Period to early Middle Kingdom	Mother and son	Threat to family
Berlin Bowl	Unknown	Possibly Eleventh Dynasty	Husband and wife	Unspecified wrongdoing to sender
Cairo Bowl	Saqqara	Early Twelfth Dynasty	Wife and husband	Illness
Oxford Bowl	Unknown	Late Seventeenth or early Eighteenth Dynasty	Unknown	Possibly inheritance
Leiden Papyrus I 371	Possibly Saqqara	Nineteenth Dynasty	Husband and wife	Unspecified wrongdoing to sender
Ostraca Louvre 698	Possibly Thebes	Twenty-First Dynasty	Husband and wife	Unknown (due to lacunae)

As just discussed, certain dating of the letters to the dead is often difficult. This is partly due to the fact that the provenance of the majority of the letters to the dead is not known.

However, where the provenance is known, letters to the dead have generally been found in tombs.<sup>1224</sup> This, combined with the fact that the majority of the existing letters to the dead are written on pottery bowls, has led scholars to believe that letters to the dead would have been placed in tombs, probably along with other offerings, in order to ensure that they were read by the deceased individual.<sup>1225</sup> Bommas argues that the bowls would have been filled with food or drink offerings that would have absorbed the text written on the inside of the bowls. The offerings, along with the absorbed content of the letters, would then have been swallowed by the deceased. Thus, the content of the letter would have been incorporated into the personal sphere of the deceased and the writer could be certain that their letter had been read.<sup>1226</sup>

What is not clear is whether the letters were left in the tombs of the intended recipients or in the tombs of later burials, the occupants of which were presumably expected to transport or communicate the letters to the recipients in some way.<sup>1227</sup> The textual content of the letters themselves often implies that the letters were intended to be placed at the tomb of the recipient. For example, in the Cairo Linen text the writer, Irti, says, 'I have come to you here',<sup>1228</sup> which suggests that she is in the presence of her deceased husband in his tomb.

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<sup>1224</sup> The Cairo Linen (possibly the tomb of Sankhenptah at Saqqara), the Qau Bowl (Qau el-Kebir, tomb 7695), Papyrus Nag' ed-Deir N3737 (Nag' ed-Deir, tomb of Meru) and Papyrus Nag' ed-Deir N3500 (Nag' ed-Deir, tomb N3500).

<sup>1225</sup> Gardiner and Sethe 1928: 10; Gunn 1930: 147; Parkinson 1991: 143-45; Thériault 1992: 196; O'Donoghue 1999: 94-5; Bommas 2011: 168; Teeter 2011: 153.

<sup>1226</sup> Bommas 1999: 53-60; Bommas 2011: 169.

<sup>1227</sup> For further discussion of this point, see O'Donoghue 1999: 95-6.

<sup>1228</sup> Wente 1990: 211.

However, elements of the archaeological context, which are only recorded for two of the letters (the Qau Bowl and P. Nag' ed-Deir N3737), suggest that these letters could have formed part of later burials. P. Nag' ed-Deir N3737 was found above a pit in the courtyard of the tomb of Meru and so Simpson suggests that it could have formed part of a later secondary burial.<sup>1229</sup> Based on the current information available regarding the provenance of the existing letters to the dead, it is impossible to say for certain where letters to the dead would typically have been left. Perhaps the location in which a letter was left varied depending on the content of the letter and/or the nature of the deceased individual it was written to.

The majority of ancient Egyptians were illiterate<sup>1230</sup> and so it seems highly likely that letters to the dead were written for individuals by scribes, most probably for a fee.<sup>1231</sup> As discussed by Gardiner and Sethe, this helps to explain why letters to the dead usually follow the same style of composition and often include similar phrases.<sup>1232</sup> In terms of individual religiosity, this raises some questions: to what extent can letters to the dead provide information about individual religiosity if they were written by someone else? Is the fact that a letter to the dead was obtained and left in the tomb of a deceased person enough to prove that the individual responsible had individual religiosity? In order to attempt to answer these

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<sup>1229</sup> Simpson 1966: 47.

<sup>1230</sup> Baines 1983: 572; Baines and Eyre 1983: 65-72.

<sup>1231</sup> Gardiner and Sethe 1928: 2; Teeter 2011: 153.

<sup>1232</sup> Gardiner and Sethe 1928: 2. For further discussion of the characteristic features of the letter to the dead genre, see O'Donoghue 1999: 91. O'Donoghue lists the key features as:

- 1) The address identifying the recipient and sender, usually in the third person.
- 2) The greeting.
- 3) The claim the sender has on the dead from piety or self-interest.
- 4) The problem.
- 5) The appeal for help.



questions, three letters to the dead will be considered in more detail and from the perspective of invisible religion.

A letter from Shepsi to his deceased mother, Iy (Qau Bowl, exterior)<sup>1233</sup>

It is Shepsi who speaks to his mother, Iy.  
This is a reminder that you said to me, your son,  
'You will bring to me some quails so I can eat them'.  
I, your son, brought 7 quails to you therein  
and you ate them.  
Is harm being done against me in your presence,  
so that my children are discontented  
and I, your son, am ill?  
Who will pour water for you?  
Oh! If you would choose between me and Sobekhotep!  
I brought him from another town  
and I placed him in his town among his necropolis.  
I gave tomb-clothes to him.  
Why does he work against your son very wrongfully?  
There is nothing that I have said or done.  
Wrongdoing is grievous to the gods!<sup>1234</sup>

This letter gives an insight into the objective and subjective dimensions of religiosity. In this letter, the objective dimension of religiosity is clear; Shepsi is evidently being a dutiful son and maintaining his mother's mortuary cult by bringing offerings, such as quails and water, to her tomb. He also mentions that he brought the body of Sobekhotep, perhaps a brother or relative, back from a different city in order to bury him 'in his town among his necropolis'.

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<sup>1233</sup> See Plate 61.

<sup>1234</sup> See Appendix II: C i for a full transcription, translation and commentary.

Presumably this is the city of Sobekhotep's birth and where Shepsi lives.<sup>1235</sup> Although it cannot be proven, his actions imply an understanding and internalisation of the universe of meaning and world view, which, according to Luckmann's theory, would suggest that he had individual religiosity. This implication is further supported by the evidence for the subjective dimension of religiosity hinted at in the letter. Firstly, the fact that Shepsi made offerings at the tomb of his deceased mother suggests that he had accepted state doctrine and that he believed in the concept that the deceased needed offerings to sustain them in the afterlife. However, it is also possible that Shepsi was just carrying out these acts because they were social norms and were expected of him. Secondly, Shepsi believed that Sobekhotep was working against him from the afterlife. This provides evidence to suggest that Shepsi was of the opinion that the dead could interact with the living and affect them from the afterlife. Finally, the fact that he wrote (or, most probably, had written for him) a letter to his deceased mother implies that Shepsi was of the opinion that the living were able to communicate with the dead.

A letter from a sister to her deceased brother, Nefersefkhi (Hu bowl)<sup>1236</sup>

It is a sister who speaks to her brother,  
the Sole Companion Nefersehkhi.  
A great and beneficial cry of woe!  
Woe to the one who you appointed Upper Priest  
on account of that which is being done against my daughter very  
wrongfully.

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<sup>1235</sup> The place of one's birth was an important location in the minds of the ancient Egyptians. There are many references to individuals longing to return to the city or town of their birth. See, for example, Kemp 1989b: 372.

<sup>1236</sup> See Plate 62.

I have not done anything against him,  
nor have I consumed his possessions.  
He has not given anything to my daughter  
who makes invocation offerings to the spirit  
in return for (the protection of?) the survivor.  
Do to him what you have judged upon,  
together with someone who put illness onto me.  
Since I am more true of voice than  
any dead man or woman  
who acts against my daughter.<sup>1237</sup>

This letter demonstrates the existence of a symbolic universe because the author of the above letter makes reference to everyday life and a world that transcends everyday life interchangeably. There is no suggestion of separation between the world of the living and the world of the dead, for example, 'I am more true of voice than any dead man or woman who acts against my daughter'. There is also a hint of the historical institutionalisation of the symbolic universe (or universe of meaning). The sister almost seems to chastise her brother when she says, 'Woe to the one who you appointed Upper Priest'. The implication is that, traditionally, the deceased are supposed to protect or act on behalf of the living person who has provided offerings, etc. for them (in this case, the daughter of Nefersehkhî's sister). Presumably this sister believes this to be the case having seen her ancestors and peers maintaining the tombs of their deceased relatives. The letter suggests an internalisation of the symbolic universe or universe of meaning.

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<sup>1237</sup> See Appendix II: C ii for a full transcription, translation and commentary.

A letter from Merirtyfy to his deceased wife, Nebtetef (the Misplaced Stela)

A saying by Merirtyfy to Nebtetef:  
How are you?  
Is the west taking care of you,  
according to your desire?  
Since I am your beloved on earth,  
fight on my behalf  
and intercede on behalf of my name.  
I have not garbled a spell before you,  
when I caused your name to live on earth.  
Remove the illness of my body!  
Please become an *ꜥḥ*-spirit for me  
[before] my eyes so that I may see you  
and that you may fight on my behalf  
in a dream.  
I will deposit offerings for you  
[///] when the sun rises.  
I will set up offerings for you.<sup>1238</sup>

This letter can be used to demonstrate that religion was a social fact in ancient Egypt. The performance of ritual is evidenced by the phrases ‘I have not garbled a spell before you’, and ‘I will deposit offerings for you’. It is clear from this that Merirtyfy was maintaining his wife’s mortuary cult by performing rituals such as reciting prayers or spells and making offerings at her tomb. There is also evidence for religious doctrine in this letter. Merirtyfy refers to ‘the West’ and expresses the hope that it is taking care of his wife. This suggests a belief in the idea that the West was the realm of the dead, as opined in state religious ideas. He also asks

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<sup>1238</sup> See Appendix II: C iii for a full transcription, translation and commentary.

his wife to 'become an *ꜣḥ*-spirit' for him, which suggests acceptance of the concept that after death, part of a deceased individual's spirit or personality was manifested into an *ꜣḥ* or 'glorified spirit'.<sup>1239</sup> According to the theory of invisible religion, the multiple references to ritual and doctrine in this letter imply that Merirtyfy had individual religiosity. Although letters to the dead do not provide concrete evidence, this is in line with Luckmann's theory that once religion has become a social fact then it is far more likely that members of that society will internalise and engage with it. This internalisation and engagement usually leads to the development of individual religiosity within an individual.

Letters to the dead are helpful in providing information about a person's individual religiosity despite the fact that they were probably written by scribes. The fact that these letters exist and were left in tombs is alone not enough to provide valuable information about individual religiosity in ancient Egypt. However, if their existence and content is considered from the perspective of invisible religion then further insight into individual religiosity can be gained. It seems likely that those who commissioned letters to the dead had individual religiosity.

### 5.3.2 *Anthropoid busts and ꜣḥ iḳr n Rꜥ stelae*

Anthropoid busts<sup>1240</sup> were first discovered in Egypt during the 1911 and 1913 German excavations at Deir el-Medina.<sup>1241</sup> These excavations were directed by Georg Möller and

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<sup>1239</sup> Erman and Grapow 1926-1953a (Wb I): 15.17-16.10; Assmann 2005b: 15, 52, 88; Teeter 2011: 148-9.

<sup>1240</sup> For excavation reports and catalogues of the existing anthropoid busts, see: Bruyère 1939b: 168-74; Anthes 1943: 50-68; Keith (with contributions by S. Donnat, A. K. Stevens, N. Harrington) 2011: 121-326. For general studies on anthropoid busts, see: Boreux 1932; Keith-Bennett 1981; Friedman 1985; Kaiser 1990; Pinch 1993: 219; Teeter 1993: 35-6; Friedman 1994: 114-7; Andreu 2002: 136-43; Harrington 2005; Bochi 2010; Harrington 2013.

yielded seven anthropoid busts. However, the majority of the extant busts were excavated at Deir el-Medina during the 1929-32, 1934-35 and 1948-51 excavations of the Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale au Caire, under the direction of Bernard Bruyère.<sup>1242</sup> Circa 75 busts were discovered by Bruyère during these excavations. Since then, approximately 80 additional anthropoid busts have been discovered at 15 other sites across Egypt.<sup>1243</sup> These sites include Abydos, Amarna, Saqqara, Memphis, Karnak, the Fayum, Elephantine, Gurob and Sedment.<sup>1244</sup> However, as mentioned, the majority (almost half) of the existing anthropoid busts were discovered at Deir el-Medina.

Bruyère described the busts as 'bustes de laraires',<sup>1245</sup> a term derived from the Latin *lares familiares* which referred to a Roman domestic guardian god.<sup>1246</sup> Many terms have subsequently been used to describe the busts but they are now commonly referred to as ancestor or anthropoid busts,<sup>1247</sup> and are linked to an ancestor cult. However, the fact that only five of the known anthropoid busts bear an inscription makes it difficult to determine the exact use of the busts.<sup>1248</sup> Bruyère argues that the busts may have had wooden labels around their necks to identify them.<sup>1249</sup> However, this idea seems unlikely and is rejected by

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<sup>1241</sup> These excavations were not documented for some time after the event, see Anthes 1943.

<sup>1242</sup> Bruyère 1939b: 168-74.

<sup>1243</sup> For a catalogue of all the extant anthropoid busts, see Keith (with contributions by S. Donnat, A. K. Stevens, N. Harrington) 2011: 121-326. See also Kaiser et al. 1990: 211, Plate 43.B.

<sup>1244</sup> Giddy 1999: 43ff; Harrington 2005: 71; Bochi 2010: 71; Luiselli 2011b: 89-90; Harrington 2013: 52.

<sup>1245</sup> Bruyère 1939b: 168-74.

<sup>1246</sup> Adkins and Adkins 1994: 274. See also Weiss 2015: 34.

<sup>1247</sup> Keith-Bennett discusses the range of terms that have been used to describe anthropoid busts since Bruyère's use of '*bustes de laraires*'. She states the importance of avoiding the majority of these terms in order to prevent associating the busts with a specific function or meaning that may not be correct. Keith-Bennett uses the fairly general term 'anthropoid bust', which is also used in this thesis. See Keith-Bennett 1981: 43-44.

<sup>1248</sup> Keith-Bennett 1981: 48.

<sup>1249</sup> Bruyère 1939b: 173.

Keith.<sup>1250</sup> Meskell also disagrees as she believes that there would have been no reason to label the busts if those who were using them could not read the inscriptions.<sup>1251</sup> The inscriptions, or lack of, provide little indication regarding the meaning and purpose of the busts and consequently scholars have had to look elsewhere, such as the location in which the busts were discovered, in order to attempt to fully understand them. The busts were found in various locations including houses (often near wall niches in which they are assumed to have sat), votive chapels, tomb chapels, near tombs, and in and around temples.<sup>1252</sup> These find-locations imply a cultic or religious purpose of the objects and it is their discovery in homes and near wall niches that has maintained the concept that they are linked to an ancestor cult.<sup>1253</sup> If this was the case then the other find-places imply that the ancestor cult was not just carried out in the home, but in other places that were important to the families of the deceased ancestors as well. In their contribution to Keith's publication, Donnat and Keith argue that the numerous find-places and the lack of inscription on the busts suggest that they had more than one meaning for their users and that they had multiple functions.<sup>1254</sup> While this may have been the case, the general consensus among scholars is still that the busts were linked to an ancestor cult.<sup>1255</sup>

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<sup>1250</sup> Keith (with contributions by S. Donnat, A. K. Stevens, N. Harrington) 2011: 80.

<sup>1251</sup> Meskell 2002: 129. Literacy in ancient Egypt was very limited, especially among the non-elite. See Baines 1983: 572; Baines and Eyre 1983: 65-72; Bryan 1986: 17-25; Janssen 1992: 89-91.

<sup>1252</sup> See 'Chapter 1: Find places and current locations of anthropoid busts' in Keith (with contributions by S. Donnat, A. K. Stevens, N. Harrington) 2011: 7-25.

<sup>1253</sup> Friedman 1985: 83; Pinch 1993: 219; Friedman 1994: 115; Bochi 2010: 79; Harrington 2013: 57.

<sup>1254</sup> Keith (with contributions by S. Donnat, A. K. Stevens, N. Harrington) 2011: 15.

<sup>1255</sup> Pinch 1993: 219; Teeter 1993: 35-6; Friedman 1994: 114-7; Andreu 2002: 136-43; Harrington 2005: 85; Bochi 2010: 71-2, 77; Harrington 2013: 49-59; Weiss 2015: 111.

The busts vary in size, with the largest measuring 41.2 cm in height<sup>1256</sup> and the smallest just 1 cm in height.<sup>1257</sup> They are made out of a range of materials including limestone, sandstone, granite, wood, faience, clay and gold.<sup>1258</sup> The design of the busts is fairly simple (see Plates 63-8); Keith has divided the busts into three different categories, as follows:<sup>1259</sup>

- 1) Busts with heads wearing wigs.
- 2) Busts with shaved heads or very close-cropped hair or a cap.
- 3) Double or pair busts with two heads, one wigged and one wigless, side by side on the same base.

The heads of the busts are attached to shoulders and chests which usually have no anatomical characteristics and form the base of the bust. The fact that the bases of the busts only very loosely resemble the human torso has led Keith to describe them as 'aniconic'.<sup>1260</sup> The remains of polychrome decoration in the form of floral *wsh*-collars and water lily or lotus pendants can be seen on some of the busts.<sup>1261</sup> Consequently, Harrington suggests that during festivals or offering ceremonies, the busts could have been adorned with garlands of real flowers<sup>1262</sup> which is very possible. Harrington also proposes that, because the majority of the busts have non-striated tripartite wigs, it is likely that they represent women. She argues

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<sup>1256</sup> Held at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (MMA 66.99.45), see Keith (with contributions by S. Donnat, A. K. Stevens, N. Harrington) 2011: 4.

<sup>1257</sup> Several of the gold or faience pendants are this size. An example of a string of small gold pendants is held at the British Museum (BM EA 65574), see Keith (with contributions by S. Donnat, A. K. Stevens, N. Harrington) 2011: 4.

<sup>1258</sup> Harrington 2005:71; Bochi 2010: 71.

<sup>1259</sup> Keith (with contributions by S. Donnat, A. K. Stevens, N. Harrington) 2011: 4.

<sup>1260</sup> Keith (with contributions by S. Donnat, A. K. Stevens, N. Harrington) 2011: 2.

<sup>1261</sup> Harrington 2005: 71, 77. See also, Keith-Bennett 1981 – UC2401a, p.64; UC16553, p.65; Munich ÄS448, p.67.

<sup>1262</sup> Harrington 2005: 52. Harrington refers to a text from a New Kingdom sanctuary which contains a request for garlands of fresh flowers. This text can be seen in Clère 1995: 90-91, text G, line 6 (Ameneminet).



that this would provide a parallel to the *ꜣḥ ikr n Rꜥ* stelae (discussed below) which mainly represent men.<sup>1263</sup>

The anthropoid busts date from the Eighteenth to the Twentieth Dynasties.<sup>1264</sup> However, it is not clear where they originated from. Friedman argues that the busts developed from the ‘stelophorus statue type of the kneeling man presenting a stela’,<sup>1265</sup> while Harrington believes that the Eleventh Dynasty sarcophagus of ‘Ashyt from Deir el-Bahari provided the model for anthropoid busts.<sup>1266</sup> The application of the theory of invisible religion to anthropoid busts may enable the busts to provide further information regarding individual religiosity in ancient Egypt.

Luckmann stresses on several occasions the importance and relevance of a historically constructed universe of meaning.<sup>1267</sup> If history and the past was such a key factor in the development of a universe of meaning, it seems likely that an ancestor cult could have developed. The worship and reverence of ancestors would have kept the historical element of the universe of meaning at the heart of individual religiosity. An ancestor cult is certainly something that would have needed to have been developed and maintained with others, such as members of the family and the local community. It would have enabled ordinary ancient Egyptians to create a universe of meaning in which they were able to locate themselves as a living being, with a sense of how they would fit into the universe of meaning once they were deceased. The belief that one day they would be worshipped as ancestors

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<sup>1263</sup> Harrington 2005: 74. See also Harrington 2013: 56-7 for a section on ‘Gender and stage of life’.

<sup>1264</sup> Friedman 1985: 82; Friedman 1994: 114; Bochi 2010: 71; Keith (with contributions by S. Donnat, A. K. Stevens, N. Harrington) 2011: 104-6.

<sup>1265</sup> Friedman 1985: 94.

<sup>1266</sup> Keith (with contributions by S. Donnat, A. K. Stevens, N. Harrington) 2011: 74-5; Harrington 2013: 55.

<sup>1267</sup> See Section 2.2.1 in this thesis.

may help to explain why the busts are very rarely inscribed; perhaps they represented all of the ancestors of a family (both present and future), rather than an individual ancestor. The internalisation of the universe of meaning and its associated sacred cosmos would have given the ancient Egyptians the hope of an escape from the realities of daily life. The fact that many of the ancestor busts were found in Deir el-Medina could be explained by the higher level of literacy and concentrated skill-set that would have existed within the village. The inhabitants of Deir el-Medina may have been able to engage with the universe of meaning on a deeper level, and also have been able to express their perception of the universe of meaning more articulately. Perhaps those living in Deir el-Medina were able to comprehend, on some level, the importance of the historical element of the universe of meaning and developed an ancestor cult to maintain it.

As well as anthropoid busts, evidence for ancestor worship in ancient Egypt comes from *ꜣḥ ikr n R<sup>c</sup>* stelae. These objects were first discussed as an independent genre of mortuary stelae in an article by Bruyère in which he considered 29 examples of *ꜣḥ ikr n R<sup>c</sup>* stelae, many of which were discovered under his direction at excavations at Deir el-Medina.<sup>1268</sup> This corpus of *ꜣḥ ikr n R<sup>c</sup>* stelae was later added to by Demarée, who discussed the original 29 stelae along with an additional 28 examples known to him.<sup>1269</sup> Since Demarée's publication, a further 12 stelae of the *ꜣḥ ikr n R<sup>c</sup>* type have been published by Schulman, Demarée, Leahy and Griffin, taking the extant number of *ꜣḥ ikr n R<sup>c</sup>* stelae to 69.<sup>1270</sup>

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<sup>1268</sup> Bruyère 1939a: 151-67. See also, Weiss 2015: 157.

<sup>1269</sup> Demarée 1983. In this publication, Demarée established a numbering system for *ꜣḥ ikr n R<sup>c</sup>* stelae. The stelae were numbered A1 - A57.

<sup>1270</sup> Schulman 1986 (stelae A58 – A64); Demarée 1986 (stelae A65 – A67); Leahy 1990 (stela JE29258. N.B. Demarée's numbering system was not used here); Griffin 2007 (stela A68).

The *3ḥ iḳr n R<sup>c</sup>* stelae are similar in style to usual funerary stelae and it is the use of the formula *3ḥ iḳr n R<sup>c</sup>* that differentiates them from common funerary stelae. This formula is usually translated as ‘able spirit of Ra’, however *iḳr* can also mean ‘effective’, ‘perfect’, ‘skilful’ and ‘excellent’.<sup>1271</sup> It is likely that the use of the adjective *iḳr* refers to an elevated or august position held by the deceased dedicatee in the afterlife. The dedicatees are depicted on each stela in a manner which represents their elevated position; they are usually behind an altar, sometimes in a sitting position, and often with offerings being presented to them.<sup>1272</sup> The dedicatees are frequently shown holding or smelling a lotus flower, or holding items such as a cloth, a sceptre or an *ḥnh* symbol in their hands (see Plates 69-73; Figures 14-5). Demarée states that these items are all symbols of the special position the deceased dedicatees held in the afterlife.<sup>1273</sup> The majority of the depicted deceased individuals are men. In the case of the stelae from Deir el-Medina, other sources discovered in and around the village have led to the inference that the majority of the dedicatees were inhabitants of the village.<sup>1274</sup> It is not certain why they were selected to appear on *3ḥ iḳr n R<sup>c</sup>* stela after their death. They are only named very briefly on the stelae and no indication of their position in society or family ties is given; the name of the dedicator is very rarely inscribed. In

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<sup>1271</sup> For a full discussion of the translation of the formula *3ḥ iḳr n R<sup>c</sup>*, see Demarée 1983: 189-278. For other translations of the formula, see, for example, Bierbrier 1982: 95; Friedman 1994: 112; Griffin 2007: 138; Weiss 2015: 122-4. Note that Schulman disagrees with the translation of *3ḥ iḳr n R<sup>c</sup>* as, ‘able spirit of Ra’ (championed by Demarée 1983). Schulman sees *iḳr* as the active verb (rather than the attributive adjective) and *n R<sup>c</sup>* as expressing the dative (rather than the indirect genitive), which leads him to the translation of, ‘a spirit who is effective to/for/on behalf of Ra’. See Schulman 1986: 317 for the complete outline of his translation. For definitions of *iḳr*, see Erman and Grapow 1926-1953a (Wb I): 137.1-16; Gardiner 1957: 555.

<sup>1272</sup> Demarée 1983: 285. Note that some scholars (Martin 1982: 83; Friedman 1985: 89; Schulman 1986: 307) believe that the dedicatees shown on the stelae are actually statues. Demarée disagrees with this theory (Demarée 1983: 285, note 23) based on the fact that there are no existing statues which show an individual smelling a lotus flower. However, a fragmentary statue holding a bouquet has fairly recently been brought to light by Ogdon (Ogdon 1990: 66).

<sup>1273</sup> Demarée 1983: 285.

<sup>1274</sup> Bierbrier 1982: 95; Demarée 1983: 281-82.

instances where more than one dedicatee is depicted, their relationship is not specified.<sup>1275</sup>

A typical inscription on an *3ḥ ikr n R<sup>c</sup>* stela is as follows:

*3ḥ ikr n R<sup>c</sup> rm<sup>c</sup> m3<sup>c</sup>-ḥrw*

The able spirit of Ra, Roma, justified.<sup>1276</sup>

The stelae date from the late Eighteenth to Twentieth Dynasties and the majority were excavated at Deir el-Medina.<sup>1277</sup> However, they have also been discovered at Abydos, Memphis, Medinet Habu, Thebes and in Nubia.<sup>1278</sup> Demarée notes that most of the stelae discovered at Deir el-Medina were found in the village itself, rather than the adjacent necropolis.<sup>1279</sup> Five examples were excavated in homes at Deir el-Medina,<sup>1280</sup> which has led several scholars to believe that they were part of a domestic ancestor cult.<sup>1281</sup> It has also been suggested that the stelae would have been placed in special niches in the home (several were found nearby to such niches), which may explain the rounded or pointed tops of the *3ḥ ikr n R<sup>c</sup>* stelae.<sup>1282</sup> However, the fact that many of the stelae were also found elsewhere at the site, such as village chapels or temples, indicates that the use of the stelae, as with the anthropoid busts, was not restricted to inside houses.<sup>1283</sup>

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<sup>1275</sup> Bruyère 1939a: 152. See the catalogue in Demarée 1983: 15-172 for numerous examples of inscriptions translated into English.

<sup>1276</sup> Demarée 1983: 80. Demarée numbered this stela A28. It is currently held in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, SR13971.

<sup>1277</sup> Demarée 1983: 184, 187; Friedman 1994: 112; Griffin 2007: 138-9.

<sup>1278</sup> Demarée 1983: 184, 279; Friedman 1994: 113; Griffin 2007: 138.

<sup>1279</sup> Demarée 1983: 279.

<sup>1280</sup> Demarée 1983: 182. The stelae discovered in houses were A7, A23, A38, A40 and A41. See also, Weiss 2015: Cat. 11.27, Cat. 11.35.

<sup>1281</sup> Roccati 1979: 281; Schulman 1986: 311; Lloyd 1989: 129; Fitzenreiter 1994: 58; Taylor 2001: 1985.

<sup>1282</sup> Bruyère 1939a: 165; Bierbrier 1982: 95; Friedman 1994: 113.

<sup>1283</sup> Bierbrier 1982: 95; Holden 1982: 300; Demarée 1983: 182; Sadek 1987: 63; Bomann 1991: 72; Friedman 1994: 113; Janssen and Janssen 1996: 52; Meskell 2002: 70; Griffin 2007: 140.

Many scholars argue that *ꜣḥ iḳr n Rꜥ* stelae, along with associated objects such as statues, offering tables and libation tables, provide compelling evidence of an ancestor cult in ancient Egypt.<sup>1284</sup> If *ꜣḥ iḳr n Rꜥ* stelae are considered from the perspective of the theory of invisible religion then further light will be shed on the ancient Egyptian ancestor cult, which, in turn, will provide further evidence for individual religiosity in ancient Egypt.

The existence of *ꜣḥ iḳr n Rꜥ* stelae implies that at least some individuals living in Deir el-Medina during the Nineteenth Dynasty had engaged with and internalised the universe of meaning. They suggest that the individuals who created and/or dedicated these stelae had accepted some of the religious ideas as expressed in state ritual (for example, the creation of funerary stelae<sup>1285</sup>) and state doctrine (for example, the concept that the deceased lived on in the afterlife). However, these stelae also show that the inequality in the distribution of religious representations can induce 'the consolidation of different versions of the sacred cosmos among occupational groups and social strata'.<sup>1286</sup> The inhabitants of Deir el-Medina were certainly part of a specific occupational group and, it could be argued, a unique social strata consisting of highly-skilled, literate but non-elite individuals. According to Luckmann's theory, the desire to outwardly articulate their version of the sacred cosmos implies that individual religiosity existed within all those who dedicated and possibly created an *ꜣḥ iḳr n Rꜥ* stela. However, the extent evidence cannot prove this for certain and so it remains speculation. As with the ancestor busts, the *ꜣḥ iḳr n Rꜥ* stelae also imply an awareness of the

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<sup>1284</sup> Schulman 1986: 347-48; Friedman 1994: 113. Approximately ten offering tables inscribed with the *ꜣḥ iḳr n Rꜥ* formula have also been found at Deir el-Medina.

<sup>1285</sup> Funerary stelae dating to the time of the *ꜣḥ iḳr n Rꜥ* stelae are evidenced from sites throughout ancient Egypt. See, for example, British Museum Stela EA 155 (Trustees of the British Museum), British Museum Stela EA 303 (Trustees of the British Museum) and British Museum Stela EA 77395 (Trustees of the British Museum).

<sup>1286</sup> Luckmann 1967: 65.

importance of the historical significance of the universe of meaning. The creation of the stelae and their subsequent display in an individual's home or local shrine suggests the desire to internalise the historically given universe of meaning with others. If other individuals were not considered necessary for the stelae to be effective in helping the dedicatee to remain a Self in the afterlife, then it is likely that the stelae would have been discovered in far more private locations. According to the theory of invisible religion, the desire to communicate with and honour the dead through stelae such as these is an indication of individual religiosity in those who commissioned the stelae. Unfortunately, there is no concrete evidence in support of this application of the theory. It is also possible that the stelae show the individual religiosity of the deceased to whom the stelae were dedicated. It could be that the deceased requested one of these stelae to be made for them once they were dead while they were still alive, to outwardly express their internalisation of the universe of meaning and to ensure that they would continue to be a Self in the afterlife. However, there is not way of knowing if this was the case.

### *5.3.3 Dreams and the dead*

Dreams in ancient Egypt were positive experiences and were a method of communicating with the dead that would have been welcomed and requested by the living.<sup>1287</sup> This differs from nightmares which can be considered negative dreams that enabled frightening or

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<sup>1287</sup> For more on dreams in ancient Egypt, see Borghouts 1995: 1783; Szpakowska 2001a; Szpakowska 2001b; Szpakowska 2003b: 1-157. For the link between dreams and individual religiosity, see Szpakowska 2000: 198-220; Szpakowska 2003b: 123-51.

unwanted communication with the dead.<sup>1288</sup> It is the desire for dreams, rather than nightmares, to occur as a method of communication with the dead that can provide an insight into individual religiosity in ancient Egypt.

According to the ancient Egyptians, during sleep an individual could gain access to different plains of existence. While in these different plains, the individual was able to be contacted by the inhabitants of the netherworld.<sup>1289</sup> These included the justified dead (*3h.w*), the unjustified dead (*mwt.w*) and gods (*ntr.w*).<sup>1290</sup> Evidence for communication with the dead via dreams comes from two different sources: letters to the dead and dream books.<sup>1291</sup>

In the letter to the dead known as the Mislplaced Stela, a husband named Merirtyfy asks his deceased wife called Nebtetef to appear before him in a dream.<sup>1292</sup> He says, 'Please become an *3h*-spirit for me [before] my eyes so that I may see you and that you may fight on my behalf in a dream'.<sup>1293</sup> Despite the fact that this is the only extant example of a living individual requesting a deceased relative to appear to them in a dream, Szpakowska argues that the archaeological record probably only reveals a fraction of the attempts to

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<sup>1288</sup> For information regarding nightmares in ancient Egypt, see: Szpakowska 2000: 265-96; Szpakowska 2003b: 159-80; Szpakowska 2010; Szpakowska 2011a.

<sup>1289</sup> Szpakowska 2000: 198.

<sup>1290</sup> Szpakowska 2003b: 123.

<sup>1291</sup> For more information on letters to the dead, see Section 5.3 1. In particular, see also the Mislplaced Stela (Wente 1975-6; Wente 1990: 215) and P. Nag' ed-Deir N 3737 (Simpson 1966; Gilula 1969; Wente 1990: 212-3) which are letters to the dead that mention dreams.

For the only extant Dream Book from the Pharaonic Period, see Gardiner 1935a: 7-23. For later Dream Books (not discussed in this thesis because their later date makes them irrelevant to the current study), see Prada 2012a; Prada 2012b. Another possible example of evidence for communication with the dead via dreams is the concept of sending one's *b3*. This is discussed in detail by Gee 2003 who notes that 'texts discussing the summoning and sending of the *b3* to visit individuals in dreams are attested in both the Middle Kingdom (CT 89, 98-104) and the Roman Period (P. Louvre E 3229).' (Gee 2003: 230) However, this concept has not been included as evidence for communication with the dead via dreams by any other scholars and subsequently has not been included in the main body of this research.

<sup>1292</sup> Wente 1975-6. See also Section 5.3.1; Appendix II: C iii.

<sup>1293</sup> See Appendix II: C iii, lines 11-4.

communicate with the dead in this way.<sup>1294</sup> However, there are no examples of a living individual actually seeing a deceased relative in a dream, or initiating contact with the deceased in a dream.<sup>1295</sup> This implies that, certainly during the First Intermediate Period and early Middle Kingdom, contact with the dead via dreams was considered to be initiated by the dead rather than the living and that it was a psychological experience rather than a physical one. This is further emphasised by the Egyptian word *rsw.t* which is commonly used as the word for 'dream'.<sup>1296</sup> It literally means 'awakening'<sup>1297</sup> and implies that the dreamer awakened in a different plain and was able to see those who dwelled there. The ancient Egyptians had no verb for dreaming, which suggests that they did not consider it an activity but rather a visual phenomenon.<sup>1298</sup>

Szapowska states that, 'because of their unique standing outside the regular bounds of space and time, dreams have often been thought to contain hidden messages or secrets that need to be interpreted in order to be understood properly'.<sup>1299</sup> The so-called Dream Book is widely considered to be a tool for the interpretation of dreams,<sup>1300</sup> and it implies that during the New Kingdom a slightly more intimate and active form of communication with the deceased via dreams was possible.<sup>1301</sup> The Dream Book (P. Chester Beatty III, recto 1-11) was published by Gardiner in 1935 and dates to the Ramesside Period (see Plate 74).<sup>1302</sup> It can be seen as a manual for interpreting dreams and giving them meaning. Luiselli argues that the

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<sup>1294</sup> Szpakowska 2003b: 123.

<sup>1295</sup> Szpakowska 2001b: 100.

<sup>1296</sup> Szpakowska 2001b: 100.

<sup>1297</sup> Erman and Grapow 1926-1953b (Wb II): 452.1-4.

<sup>1298</sup> Szpakowska 2001b: 100.

<sup>1299</sup> Szpakowska 2003b: 61.

<sup>1300</sup> See Brier 1980: 217; Borghouts 1995: 1783; Bresciani 2005; Szpakowska 2011b; Szpakowska 2012.

<sup>1301</sup> Szpakowska 2003b: 124.

<sup>1302</sup> Gardiner 1935a: 7-23.



Dream Book was probably a written account of dream interpretations that circulated in oral form and was probably not an adaptation of a royal text.<sup>1303</sup> Both the beginning and the end of the papyrus are incomplete so it is impossible to know the original length of the document. What remains of the papyrus is laid out in a clear and orderly manner, presumably to make it quick and simple to refer to. A vertical line of hieratic text takes up the entire height of the right side of each column of text and says, 'If a man see himself in a dream....'<sup>1304</sup> This line is read before each of the separate horizontal lines to the left of the vertical line, which make up the columns. The horizontal lines are laid out in three distinct sections: the activity in the dream, the classification of 'good' or 'bad', and the meaning of the dream. An example of a dream interpretation from the Dream Book is as follows:

If a man sees himself in a dream being immersed in a river, good; it means this purity from all evil.<sup>1305</sup>

There are just over 140 dreams that are classified as 'good' and approximately 90 that are classified as 'bad'. This section of the papyrus is followed by a spell of protection for the dreamer. Then comes a list, set out as previously mentioned, of dream interpretations for a group of people known as 'the followers of Seth'. A follower of Seth is described in the papyrus as a red-headed man who drinks to induce turmoil and who is known to women as a result of his sexual prowess.<sup>1306</sup> Unfortunately, because so few dream interpretations for the followers of Seth remain, it is impossible to be certain why their dreams were given a separate section in the Dream Book. The inclusion of this section has led Gardiner to believe

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<sup>1303</sup> Luiselli 2011b: 230.

<sup>1304</sup> Gardiner 1935a: 9.

<sup>1305</sup> See Appendix II: D, *Recto 5, Line 19*.

<sup>1306</sup> Gardiner 1935a: 20.

that the preceding section was for ‘followers of Horus’ who would probably have had characteristics considered more desirable in the Ramesside Period.<sup>1307</sup> Regardless of the original layout of the Dream Book, what remains of it shows that dreams were considered a viable method of communicating with the inhabitants of the netherworld, including the deceased.

The New Kingdom Dream Book<sup>1308</sup> provides the meaning behind numerous dreams, including some that involve contact with the dead. For example:

If a man sees himself in a dream seeing barley and emmer (given) to those yonder,<sup>1309</sup> good; it means his protection by his god.<sup>1310</sup>

It is through doctrine such as the Dream Book that one can suppose religion became a social fact for ordinary Egyptians. They would have engaged with and internalised these institutionalised religious ideas and the extent to which this occurred would have been reflected in a person’s individual religiosity. The Dream Book was a clear articulation of the sacred cosmos which would have made it more likely for a person to have individual religiosity.

Although the majority of ancient Egyptians would have been unable to read a text such as the Dream Book, it is likely that its content was widely known as a result of the historical nature of religion and ritual. The concept of communicating with the dead would have been passed down from generation to generation, meaning that even if an individual never actually communicated with the deceased in a dream, they believed that they could. There

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<sup>1307</sup> Gardiner 1935a: 10.

<sup>1308</sup> Gardiner 1935a: 7-23.

<sup>1309</sup> Gardiner 1935a: 15 notes that ‘yonder’ is a common periphrasis for the dead.

<sup>1310</sup> See Appendix II: D, *Recto 6, Line 18*.

are very few records that refer to an individual communicating with the dead in a dream.<sup>1311</sup>

However, this does not disprove the concept that ordinary ancient Egyptians were individually religious; it is the belief in the possibility rather than its occurrence that indicates individual religiosity.

Communication with the dead through dreams is able to demonstrate both the objective and subjective dimensions of religiosity. On the Mislplaced Stela,<sup>1312</sup> when Merirtyfy asks his wife to appear before him in a dream, he has carried out some observable behaviour; he commissioned a letter to his dead wife to be inscribed on a stela, which was presumably erected at or nearby her tomb. The fact that he did so demonstrates the subjective dimension of religiosity. He was of the opinion that it was possible for his deceased wife to appear before him in a dream and 'fight' on his behalf.

The belief in the ability to communicate with the dead through dreams shows an acceptance of state ritual and doctrine as a consequence of a clearly articulated sacred cosmos.

According to Luckmann's theory, those (almost certainly the majority) ancient Egyptians who held this belief had individual religiosity.

#### **5.4 Invisible religion and specific methods of communicating with the gods**

The archaeological and literary evidence for communication with the gods in ancient Egypt suggests that it was a common occurrence. It appears that all those who wished to were

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<sup>1311</sup> The two extant records are the stela of Ipy and the biography of Djehutiemhab. See Section 5.4.4 for more information. See also Szpakowska 2003b: 135-41; Szpakowska 2003c: 116-21; Froot 2007: 91-4, 231-2.

<sup>1312</sup> See Section 5.3.1 for a summary of this text in relation to invisible religion. See also, Wente 1975-6; Wente 1990: 215; Appendix II: C iii.

able to communicate with the gods through a variety of channels. As with the deceased, the gods were generally contacted regarding everyday matters such as illness, theft and the well-being of family members or friends.<sup>1313</sup> An example of this is seen in P. Nevill from the late Twentieth Dynasty in which an individual says to the god, 'You must discard seclusion today and come out in procession in order that you may decide upon the issues involving seven kilts'.<sup>1314</sup> This extract also shows that the ancient Egyptians believed that the gods were able to intervene and provide solutions for individuals, if they were so inclined.<sup>1315</sup> The language used by individuals when communicating with the gods was often simple and direct. In a text written on an ostrakon (O. Gardiner 310) during the Nineteenth Dynasty, the individual, Hornefer, says to the god Amun-Re, 'If I see that you let success be with me, I shall provide you with...a jar of beer'.<sup>1316</sup> In this instance, Hornefer is bargaining with the god and trying to encourage him to do as Hornefer desires by promising to make offerings to the god. The use of language and the variety of communication methods available imply that the vast majority of ancient Egyptians would have viewed communicating with the gods as a normal occurrence. Four different methods of communication with the gods (prayer, votive offerings, oracles and dreams) will be discussed in terms of invisible religion in order to ascertain what information communication with the gods can provide regarding individual religiosity.

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<sup>1313</sup> Teeter 2011: 76.

<sup>1314</sup> Wentz 1990: 219. P. Nevill is one of two existing examples of so-called letters to gods from before the Late Period (the other is O. Gardiner 310 from the Nineteenth Dynasty, also in Wentz 1990: 219). While these letters imply a desire on the part of the ancient Egyptians to contact their deities in some way, the lack of extant examples suggests that this was not a common method of communicating with the gods. Consequently, letters to gods are not discussed in this thesis.

<sup>1315</sup> For more on divine intervention in ancient Egypt, see Borghouts 1982.

<sup>1316</sup> Wentz 1990: 219. O. Gardiner 310 is one of two existing examples of so-called letters to gods from before the Late Period. See also Footnote 1314, above.

### 5.4.1 *Prayer*

When considering personal piety in the Old Kingdom, Bommas discusses references to the worship of city gods as personal gods on mortuary stelae from the Old Kingdom.<sup>1317</sup> These stelae could be considered to be a form of prayer because they are intended to remind the specific god mentioned on the stelae of the worship carried out by the deceased while they were alive. If this is the case then archaeological evidence for prayer in ancient Egypt could date back to the Old Kingdom. However, it is difficult to reach concrete conclusions regarding prayer in ancient Egypt due to the sometimes intangible nature of the subject and the subsequent lack of clear and consistent evidence for prayer in the archaeological record.<sup>1318</sup> Nevertheless, it is important to consider prayer as a method of communication with the gods in order to further understand individual religiosity in ancient Egypt.<sup>1319</sup> For the purpose of this thesis, prayer will be considered as a private and personal method of communication with a deity. It will be seen as an address to a god which consists of a personal request of some form, in contrast to a hymn which addresses a god for the purposes of adoration and praise. In order to understand prayer in ancient Egypt and to be able to use it to develop thoughts regarding individual religiosity, the different elements affecting prayer and the evidence that exists for them need to be assessed. This section will briefly consider who prayed in ancient Egypt, what they were praying for, where they carried out their prayers, when their prayers took place and the methods used to pray effectively, in

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<sup>1317</sup> Bommas 2012: 28.

<sup>1318</sup> Baines 2001: 24; Eyre 2013: 109.

<sup>1319</sup> The subject of prayer in ancient Egypt has been considered in the following publications: Fecht 1965; Brunner 1977a; Brunner 1977b; Barucq and Daumas 1980; Sweeney 1985; Assmann 1999; Baines 2001: 23-5, 27-31; Bickel 2003; Luiselli 2007a; Luiselli 2008a; Pinch and Waraksa 2009: 2-6; Luiselli 2011b: 90-101; Eyre 2013; Knigge Salis and Luiselli 2013. As noted by Baines 2001: 24, the general approach to prayer in ancient Egypt focusses on 'written forms while acknowledging that these sit in a context of oral performance'.

relation to invisible religion in order to learn more about individual religiosity in ancient Egypt.

Evidence for prayer suggests that it occurred in state temples,<sup>1320</sup> local shrines and chapels,<sup>1321</sup> domestic settings<sup>1322</sup> and tombs.<sup>1323</sup> This range of archaeological evidence for prayer implies that the vast majority of, if not all, ancient Egyptians had access to the means necessary in order to pray effectively and therefore prayed in one form or another.

However, whether they actually did so is, of course, impossible to state for certain but it seems unlikely that the variety of evidence would exist if prayer did not occur widely across society. Eyre has looked in detail at women and prayer and has concluded that, while evidence for women at prayer is rare compared to men, women did pray. He states that the prayers of women focussed on family and were 'presented in a relatively low key and personal fashion', while men tended to use prayer to attempt to claim 'hierarchical and social credit from display of a personal relationship with god'.<sup>1324</sup> This difference in the way that men and women prayed could help to explain the unreliability and inconsistency of the

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<sup>1320</sup> In a Twentieth Dynasty letter from the scribe Dhutmose (see Černý 1939: 1-2 (letter no. 1) and Went 1990: 178-9 (letter no. 295)), he requests that the recipients of the letter 'go to the forecourt of Amon of the Thrones of the Two Lands...and coax him and tell him to keep me safe.' For more on letters as evidence for religious practice, see Luiselli 2011b: 108-17. For further discussion of letters as evidence for prayer occurring within temples, see Baines 2001: 9-10. For archaeological signs of human activity and devotion in temples such as grooving, see Kemp 1987b: 33; Traunecker 1987.

<sup>1321</sup> For Tell el-Amarna, see: Kemp 1984b; Kemp 1984c; Kemp 1985b; Kemp 1985c; Kemp 1985d; Kemp 1987b: 30-6; Kemp 1987c; Weatherhead and Kemp 2007. For Deir el-Medina, see: Sadek 1987: 59-84; Meskell 2002: 21, 111; Jauhiainen 2009: 153-4, 159-60. For general thoughts, see Bomann 1991: 39-99; Silverman 2003: 127; Eyre 2013: 110.

<sup>1322</sup> Friedman 1994; Meskell 2002: 114; Stevens 2003; Stevens 2006; Stevens 2009; Kemp 1989b: 29-33; Weiss 2009.

<sup>1323</sup> Several letters to the dead have been discovered in tombs (Papyrus Nag' ed-Deir N 3737, the Qau Bowl, Papyrus Nag' ed-Deir N3500, and possibly the Cairo Linen). Additionally, on the Misplaced Stela (see Went 1975-6; Went 1990: 215), Merirtyfy writes to his deceased wife Nebetiof and twice states, 'I have not garbled a spell in your presence'. The phrase 'in your presence' implies that Merirtyfy was at the tomb of his wife when he spoke spells (or perhaps prayers) in her name. For further information regarding letters to the dead, see Section 5.3.1.

<sup>1324</sup> Eyre 2013: 114.

archaeological record; female prayer was generally undisplayed and part of the private sphere, while male prayer was far more congregational and publicly displayed.<sup>1325</sup>

Nonetheless, it is clear that the majority of people in ancient Egypt communicated with the gods via prayer, certainly from the Middle Kingdom onwards.<sup>1326</sup>

As mentioned above, prayer is a form of communication with a deity in which a request is made. These requests are usually about and made on behalf of the person praying, or about and made on behalf of an individual known to the person praying. Prayers made on behalf of others are known as intercessory prayers.<sup>1327</sup> These occur frequently in ancient Egypt, especially as part of the formulaic greetings in the opening lines of New Kingdom letters.<sup>1328</sup>

It seems likely that the ancient Egyptians felt more comfortable asking the gods to do something in this indirect form. Typically, the writer of the letter would ask the gods to bless the recipient. For example, in a Twentieth Dynasty letter from the scribe Dhutmose to his son, the scribe Butehamun, and the chantress of Amun, Shedemdua, Dhutmose says:

(Every single day) I speak to Amun-Ra-Horakte,  
Arsaphes, the great god,  
Thoth, Lord of Hermopolis,  
and every god and every goddess,  
who I reverently pass by,  
to give to you  
life, prosperity and health,

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<sup>1325</sup> Eyre 2013: 114.

<sup>1326</sup> Luiselli 2011b: 235.

<sup>1327</sup> Brunner 1977a: 349-51; Sweeney 1985.

<sup>1328</sup> Sweeney 1985: 215-6; Baines 2001; Luiselli 2011b: 45-6; 108-17; 188-93.

an exalted lifetime  
and great and good old age.<sup>1329</sup>

Eyre notes that the frequent use of these formulaic prayer greetings suggests that thinking about and praying to god was a fairly normal and common occurrence.<sup>1330</sup> Luiselli discusses the possibility that the religious message of a letter was linked to the title and status of the recipient of the letter.<sup>1331</sup> Therefore, it could be argued that letters containing such religious messages should be seen as demonstrating individuals obeying the rules of convention rather than individual religiosity. However, the formulaic prayer greetings as used in letters could be a formal version of everyday prayers. They still demonstrate that it was possible to pray in ancient Egypt.

As well as praying for the recipients of letters, who may be unknown to the sender of the letters, relatives would also have prayed for each other. For example, a man records that the prayers his father made many years ago asking that his son should reach old age have now come true.<sup>1332</sup> Individuals in ancient Egypt also prayed for themselves. Letters to the dead show that individuals most probably prayed for help with personal matters ranging from inheritance and neighbourly disagreements to health and fertility.<sup>1333</sup> An example of this can be seen on the Chicago Jar Stand, on which a son beseeches his deceased father to 'let a

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<sup>1329</sup> See Appendix II: E i (Papyrus Leiden I 370) for a full transcription, translation and commentary; Plate 75. See also Černý 1939: 9 (letter no. 5); Wente 1990: 180 (letter no. 297). For other such greetings see the Late Ramesside Letters (Černý 1939; Wente 1990: 174-204).

<sup>1330</sup> Eyre 2013: 110.

<sup>1331</sup> Luiselli 2011b: 108.

<sup>1332</sup> Sweeney 1985: 217.

<sup>1333</sup> For English translations of all 14 letters to the dead, see Wente 1990:210-19. For more detailed information regarding letters to the dead, see Section 5.3.1.



healthy son be born to me, for you are an able spirit'.<sup>1334</sup> The numerous votive offerings in the form of fertility figurines found dedicated to Hathor further imply that individuals often prayed to the gods regarding fertility and childbirth.<sup>1335</sup> Although it is impossible to know for certain what individual ancient Egyptians would have prayed for, the archaeological and literary evidence suggests that the majority of prayers would have been related to personal, everyday matters, much like the prayers of individuals today.

There is evidence for prayer taking place at various locations in ancient Egypt,<sup>1336</sup> although it is important to consider that many elements of prayer would have been considered private and not suitable for public display.<sup>1337</sup> Consequently, there may be very little or no evidence for such prayer in the archaeological record. Evidence for prayer taking place at state temples exists in the form of literary references, grooving, and designated areas or shrines.<sup>1338</sup> These shrines, for example the Eighteenth Dynasty 'shrine of the hearing ear' at Karnak, are often found with ears carved into the walls.<sup>1339</sup> It is likely that these ears represent the ears of a god, who was sometimes referred to as *sdm nḥ* or the god 'who hears prayers'.<sup>1340</sup> However, the prayers of ordinary Egyptians would only have been able to occur at the margins of the temple and would by no means have been a key element in the state cult.<sup>1341</sup> Statues and stelae also offer evidence for prayer occurring within state temples, as well as other locations. Intermediary statues (see Plate 77) and prayer stelae (see Figure 18)

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<sup>1334</sup> Gardiner 1930; Wente 1990: 213; Janák 2003.

<sup>1335</sup> Pinch 1993: 198-245; Robins 1993: 160-61.

<sup>1336</sup> Luiselli 2011b: 58-68.

<sup>1337</sup> Baines 1990; Eyre 2013: 109.

<sup>1338</sup> See Nims 1955: 116-7; Nims 1971: 108; Guglielmi 1994.

<sup>1339</sup> Givon 1982: 40-1; Straube 1989; Luiselli 2011b: 60; Teeter 2011: 79-84.

<sup>1340</sup> Pinch 1993: 345; Teeter 2011: 80; Eyre 2013: 109. For stelae with ears on them, see Figures 16-7.

<sup>1341</sup> Eyre 2013: 109.

have been discovered in temples, while prayer stelae have also been found at other locations, such as local shrines, tombs and domestic settings, suggesting that prayer took place in a variety of locations.<sup>1342</sup> Votive offerings, letters to the dead and anthropoid busts all offer evidence that prayer took place in the private, as well as the public, sphere.<sup>1343</sup> Finds such as these have been excavated in private houses, private chapels, local shrines and tombs. Although the archaeological evidence for prayer in ancient Egypt is somewhat inconsistent, the range of find-spots for objects that seem likely to have been linked with prayer suggest that communication with the gods via prayer took place in a wide range of settings, both public and private.

Literary sources such as letters and prayer stelae are able to give some indication of when prayer may have been carried out. A late Ramesside letter from the prophet of Amenophis, Amenhotep, to the scribe Dhutmose suggests that prayer may have been carried out daily when he says, 'every single day I speak to Amun-Re, king of the gods'.<sup>1344</sup> However, another late Ramesside letter refers to praying twice a day, once in the morning and once in the evening: 'I say to Amun-Re Horakhty, at his rising and his setting...'.<sup>1345</sup> The recitation of daily and nightly prayers is also mentioned in Papyrus Anastasi II.<sup>1346</sup> Taking water to Amun two or

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<sup>1342</sup> For more information regarding intermediary statues, see: Wildung 1977a; Wildung 1977b; Robins 1993: 162; Galán 2003; Silverman 2003: 163; Simmance 2014. For prayer stelae see: Lichtheim 1976: 104-9; Robins 1993: 157-162; Silverman 2003: 162-3.

<sup>1343</sup> For an introduction to votive offerings, see: Pinch 1993; Pinch and Waraksa 2009 (see also Section 5.4.2 for more detail). For an introduction to letters to the dead, see: Gardiner and Sethe 1928; Wente 1990: 210-19 (see also Section 5.3.1 for more detail). For an introduction to anthropoid busts, see: Keith-Bennett 1981; Friedman 1985; Harrington 2005; Keith (with contributions by S. Donnat, A. K. Stevens, N. Harrington) 2011 (see also Section 5.3.2 for more detail).

<sup>1344</sup> See Appendix II: E ii (Papyrus Phillips). See also Černý 1939: 28-30 (letter no. 15); Wente 1967: 47-9 (letter no. 15); Wente 1990: 196-7 (letter no. 318); Luiselli 2011b: 297-9 (B.20.12).

<sup>1345</sup> See Appendix II: E iii (Papyrus British Museum 10417); Plate 76. See also Černý 1939: 27-8 (letter no. 14); Wente 1967: 46-7 (letter no. 14); Wente 1990: 179 (letter no. 296); Luiselli 2011b: 289-91 (B.20.5).

<sup>1346</sup> See Luiselli 2011b: 50.

three times a week is also referred to in a late Ramesside letter.<sup>1347</sup> It is clear that while these letters provide valuable information regarding prayer, they do not provide evidence for a definite framework regarding when prayer occurred. It is highly likely that, as is the case with many modern religions, while there may have been set times for official prayer, truly personal and private prayer, which was carried out in the home or mind of an individual, could take place at any time.

From the evidence for prayer that exists, it is possible to gather information regarding what the ancient Egyptians may have done in order to pray effectively.<sup>1348</sup> As discussed, it seems likely that they would have visited special shrines that were incorporated into the outer areas of temples.<sup>1349</sup> It is difficult to be certain of when and why an individual may have visited such a shrine, but it can be speculated that this would have occurred when a prayer was of particular importance and the individual wanted to ensure that it was heard by the god. Statues and stelae also appear to have been a way of ensuring that a prayer was heard. As discussed, most ordinary Egyptians had very limited access to temples and the gods who dwelt within them. Consequently, a statue cult arose which involved individuals commissioning statues of themselves to be placed in the temple.<sup>1350</sup> The statues represented the individual and ensured that he or she was in the god's presence at all times. Some scholars have suggested that because the statues are usually made of stone and inscribed, this would have been a cult of more wealthy individuals.<sup>1351</sup> Statues were also

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<sup>1347</sup> See Appendix II: E iv (Papyrus Turin 1971). See also Černý 1939: 31-3 (letter no. 16); Wente 1967: 49-51 (letter no. 16); Wente 1990: 192-3 (letter no. 314); Luiselli 2011b: 297-9 (B.20.11).

<sup>1348</sup> See, for example, throughout Luiselli 2008a; Luiselli 2011b.

<sup>1349</sup> Silverman 2003: 127; Eyre 2013: 110.

<sup>1350</sup> Teeter 2011: 92.

<sup>1351</sup> Teeter 2011: 92.

used by less wealthy individuals as a method of communicating with the gods. For example, from the New Kingdom onwards,<sup>1352</sup> the use of intermediary statues became popular. These statues of Egyptian priests and officials<sup>1353</sup> were placed in areas of the temple that were accessible to ordinary Egyptians, such as the temple forecourt or outside of gateways.<sup>1354</sup> The statues bore inscriptions<sup>1355</sup> which promised to pass on an individual's prayers to a deity in return for offerings or libations (see Plate 77).<sup>1356</sup> The sign of wear on many of the statues implies that these statues were used in the way they were intended.<sup>1357</sup> Stelae, known as prayer stelae because they were inscribed with a prayer and often included a depiction of the dedicator worshipping a specific deity, were often erected in temple forecourts.<sup>1358</sup> From the numerous statuettes found in shrines and chapels, especially those relating to a deity linked with fertility, it seems fairly certain that individuals would sometimes have accompanied their prayer with the presentation of a votive offering.<sup>1359</sup> These votive offerings may have been intended to make the god happy and therefore more likely to answer the prayer, or perhaps act as a reminder to the deity that a prayer was made and needed answering. As mentioned above, one of the late Ramesside letters mentions taking

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<sup>1352</sup> Baines 1987: 90. Also see Baines 1987: 90-1 for a brief discussion of pre-New Kingdom intermediary statues.

<sup>1353</sup> Several prominent individuals from the New Kingdom had themselves depicted as intermediary statues. For example, Senenmut (see, Meyer 1982) and Amenhotep son of Hapu (Varille 1968; Wildung 1977a: 83-109; Wildung 1977b: 251-76; Galán 2003; Simmance 2014).

<sup>1354</sup> Pinch 1993: 336. For an intermediary text referring to prayers taking place in the *wb3*, which is usually translated as 'open court' (Erman and Grapow 1926-1953a (Wb I): 291.10-14) see, Borchardt 1930: 174, Plate 115. For evidence of intermediary statues being placed outside of the tenth pylon at Karnak, see Legrain 1914: 15-7, Plates 1-2.

<sup>1355</sup> See Pinch 1993: 333-6; Galán 2003: 222-3; Luiselli 2011b: 44; Simmance 2014: 81-95.

<sup>1356</sup> Pinch and Waraksa 2009: 4; Luiselli 2014: 108.

<sup>1357</sup> Baines 1991: 184, Figure 66.

<sup>1358</sup> Robins 1993: 157-162; Silverman 2003: 162-3; Eyre 2013: 111.

<sup>1359</sup> Pinch 1993: 198-245; Robins 1993: 160-61.

water to the god.<sup>1360</sup> This could also have been a way in which to please and placate the god in order to facilitate effective prayer. The extant evidence for prayer in ancient Egypt suggests that individuals sometimes used certain methods in order to help them pray effectively. They did not simply pray using their own minds but used a range of tools and tactics to ensure that their prayer was heard by the god.

The use of stelae demonstrates both the objective and subjective elements of individual religiosity. The objective element can be seen in the erection of these stelae at various sites. The display of prayer stelae, as well as the act of visiting them and making prayers and offerings to them, demonstrates individual religiosity in those individuals involved in these actions. It also implies that they had engaged with and internalised the universe of meaning in order to become Selves. The subjective element of religiosity is suggested if the reasons behind the existence of prayer stelae are considered. The stelae demonstrate the belief of individuals in the fact that the gods could hear their prayers and may act upon them.<sup>1361</sup> The discovery of prayer stelae both inside and outside of temple precincts suggests that ordinary ancient Egyptians believed that they could pray to the gods at any point and that their prayers would be heard, regardless of the individual's location. It could be argued that those who visited prayer stelae to give prayers and offerings to the gods more often had a higher level of individual religiosity than those who visited less frequently. However, there is no clear evidence to support this interpretation.

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<sup>1360</sup> Černý 1939: 31-3 (letter no. 16); Wente 1967: 49-51 (letter no. 16); Wente 1990: 192-3 (letter no. 314); Luiselli 2011b: 297-9 (B.20.11). For further discussion of this practice, see Sweeney 1985: 214; Baines 2001: 16; Luiselli 2011b: 45-6, 67.

<sup>1361</sup> For more on divine intervention in ancient Egypt, see Borghouts 1982.

The use of statues as a method of communicating with the gods is a clear example of ritual and doctrine. Ritual is evident in that fact that ordinary Egyptians were visiting state temples in the hope of getting a message or prayer to a god who was part of the state pantheon. The actions of the individual were influenced directly by the state which promoted the concept of communicating with the gods and yet made it very difficult for this to actually occur. This promotion of the concept that communication with the gods was possible through prayers and offerings by the state is an example of doctrine. Statues as a method of contacting the gods shows a clear link between state religion and individual religiosity.<sup>1362</sup>

The use of statues as a method of communication with the gods demonstrates an internalisation of and an engagement with the universe of meaning. This can be seen more clearly if the objective and subjective dimensions of religiosity as shown by this method of communication with the gods are considered. In the case of statue cults, the objective dimension of religiosity is shown in the act of commissioning a statue of oneself and placing it in the temple. In terms of intermediary statues, the acts of travelling to the temple, praying to the statue and making an offering show the objective dimensions of religiosity. The subjective dimension is not clearly articulated by the evidence, but is hinted at by the fact that the individuals who commissioned statues of themselves or made offerings to the intermediary statues believed that this would enable them to communicate with the gods.

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<sup>1362</sup> It is worth noting at this point that Luiselli 2011b: 78 argues that unofficial and popularly established prayer could be officially recognised by the state. She gives the example of the sanctuary of Meretseger and Ptah in west Thebes which was probably founded as an unofficial site for prayer by the members of the working community at Deir el-Medina. However, during the reign of Ramses III, two large royal stelae were erected in the outside area of the sanctuary which could indicate official royal patronage. In addition, on private stelae Meretseger is usually depicted as a snake, whereas on the stelae mentioned above she is depicted in anthropomorphic form incorporating iconographic elements including cow horns and a double feather crown. These elements are associated with official goddesses such as Hathor and Isis and could therefore indicate Meretseger's inclusion into the official Egyptian pantheon.

This is indicated on many intermediary statues where the inscriptions on the papyrus roll that such a statue usually held on its lap are almost completely worn down.<sup>1363</sup> Individuals were evidently touching the statue in an attempt to establish an even closer connection with a god because they believed that communication with the gods was possible. These individuals had accepted this element of religion as a social fact and were living their lives in a particular way because of it. Subsequently, if Luckmann's theory is applied then it seems likely that those individuals who attempted to communicate with the gods via statues, either via one of themselves or an intermediary statue, had individual religiosity. However, this cannot be proven for certain by the available evidence.

Communicating with the gods via statues can also be viewed as a way in which an individual was able to become a Self by creating a universe of meaning with others. Placing a statue of oneself in a temple or visiting an intermediary statue at a temple were both very public acts that would have been carried out, if not with others, then certainly in the presence of others. It would have enabled an individual to locate himself within the universe of meaning and consequently develop into a Self. The influence of the state on this method of communication with the gods could also count as creating a universe of meaning with others. The state would have provided clear parameters within which the universe of meaning could be set and consequently this may have helped to make the universe of meaning more concrete and stable. It is easier for an individual to become a Self if the universe of meaning they have created is solid and reliable. As a Self, an individual is able to internalise and engage with the universe of meaning and subsequently develop individual religiosity.

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<sup>1363</sup> Wildung 1977a: 88.

As discussed, it is impossible to know for certain if the ancient Egyptians prayed in the privacy of their own homes or inside their own minds, or how they did this. The concept that the ancient Egyptians prayed in this way could be a twenty-first century view. However, the literary evidence that exists suggests that prayer may have occurred in this manner. Assmann has noted the change in style of ancient Egyptian prayers in the New Kingdom. He theorises that, in the New Kingdom, the individual was able to have a closer relationship with god. He says that the Middle Kingdom model of the 'heart-guided individual' was replaced in the New Kingdom with the idea of the 'god-guided heart'.<sup>1364</sup> During the New Kingdom, ordinary ancient Egyptians were encouraged to take god into their hearts, an idea that is usually associated with an increase in personal piety.<sup>1365</sup> However, as Baines has pointed out, this could simply be a matter of decorum; prior to the New Kingdom it may not have been appropriate for individuals to openly discuss their personal relationship with god.<sup>1366</sup> Luckmann's theory supports such a view because it states that in order to become a Self, an individual needed to create, internalise and engage with a universe of meaning, no matter what period of ancient Egyptian history they were living in. The sacred cosmos and its central concepts, such as the ability to communicate with the gods through prayer, are part of the universe of meaning and are therefore internalised to an extent by all individuals. Consequently, it could be argued that the 'heart-guided individual' and the 'god-guided heart' are one and the same – they are simply different ways of expressing a person's individual religiosity, and are a product of the social norms of the time in which an individual existed. The existence of prayers in visible written and archaeological contexts in ancient

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<sup>1364</sup> Assmann 2002: 230.

<sup>1365</sup> Assmann 1995: 190; Assmann 2002: 230; Breasted 1912: 349; Erman 1911: 1986.

<sup>1366</sup> Baines 1987: 79.



Egypt implies that they also existed invisibly in the hearts and minds of ancient Egyptians.

The idea that individuals attempted to privately communicate with the gods through prayer suggests a deep internalisation of and engagement with the universe of meaning. This implies that all ancient Egyptians could be described as having individual religiosity to some extent. Unfortunately, the inability to know for certain what emotions individuals were experiencing, or what they did in their own homes makes it impossible to state this as fact.

#### 5.4.2 *Votive offerings*

The practice of dedicating small objects, known as votive offerings,<sup>1367</sup> to deities dates back to the Early Dynastic Period. Pinch and Waraksa suggest that this custom may have developed as a result of local temples being accessible to everyone at this time.<sup>1368</sup> Evidence for the tradition of the giving of votive offerings during the Early Dynastic Period and the Old Kingdom has been discovered at a range of sites, including Abydos, Elephantine, Hierakonpolis, Saqqara and Tell Ibrahim Awad.<sup>1369</sup>

This practice continued into the Middle Kingdom, although changes in the way that votive offerings were dedicated can be seen in the shift in the locations at which votive offerings

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<sup>1367</sup> For an excellent summary of the use of votive objects in ancient Egypt, see Pinch and Waraksa 2009. For general references to votive offerings, see Sadek 1987: 215-8, 245-67; Baines 1991: 180-4; Kemp 1989b: 118-21, 125-9; Kemp 1995b: 27-30, 32-3, 35, 41, 45-6; Heffernan 2014; Luiselli 2014: 107-8. For publications detailing specific sites at which votive offerings were discovered, see Castel et al. 1984: 104, Plates IV, V; Dreyer 1986: 99-153, Plates 11-36; Pinch 1993: 13-25, 37-40, 45-8, 53-8, 65-70, 74-7; Keller 1995; Eigner 2003: 163-4, 165, 166-7, 169; Yoshimura et al. 2005: 369-74, 378-80, 384-6, 390-96, Plate 52; Cialowicz 2009; Waraksa 2009; Teeter 2010: 5-197; Cialowicz 2012; Kopp 2013.

<sup>1368</sup> Pinch and Waraksa 2009: 2.

<sup>1369</sup> Pinch and Waraksa 2009: 2. For further information regarding the votive offerings discovered at Abydos, see Kemp 1989b: 124-6. For Elephantine, see Dreyer 1986: 99-153, Plates 11-36; Kemp 1989b: 116-21; Kopp 2013. For Hierakonpolis, see Baines 1991: 173-4, Figure 62; Kemp 1989b: 121-4. For Saqqara, see Yoshimura et al. 2005: 369-74, 378-80, 384-6, 390-96, Plate 52. For Tell Ibrahim Awad, see Eigner 2003: 163-4, 165, 166-7, 169; Kemp 1989b: 126-8. For a comparison of Elephantine, Tell Ibrahim Awad, Hierakonpolis and Abydos, see Bussmann 2013.

from this period have been discovered. This was probably due to the focus on the king during the Middle Kingdom; he was considered responsible for making all offerings to the gods<sup>1370</sup> and subsequently local temples and shrines lost their independence. They became state-run and were only accessible to a limited group of people such as the king and priests.<sup>1371</sup> Pinch and Waraksa note that 'no substantial deposits of votive offerings have been recovered from within Middle Kingdom state-run temples'.<sup>1372</sup> Instead, some votive offerings from this time and the Second Intermediate Period have been found outside of non-royal tombs<sup>1373</sup> and also close to a modest shrine to Hathor at the mining site of Gebel Zeit.<sup>1374</sup>

Another change in theology and also in decorum<sup>1375</sup> meant that votive offerings from the New Kingdom have been found in large quantities, especially at shrines to Hathor.<sup>1376</sup>

According to Assmann, during the New Kingdom god succeeded the role played by the king in the Middle Kingdom.<sup>1377</sup> Consequently, the relationship of the individual with god shifted and became more personal, which Assmann describes as the 'theology of will'.<sup>1378</sup> As a result of this new theology, it became acceptable for ordinary individuals to depict themselves worshipping a deity.<sup>1379</sup> Pinch notes that this change is demonstrated clearly by the stelae at Serabit el-Khadim.<sup>1380</sup> Only royal stelae survive from the Middle Kingdom and they offer prayers to Hathor on behalf of each expedition as one unit. However, the New Kingdom

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<sup>1370</sup> Baines 1991: 127-9. See also Assmann 1970: 17-22.

<sup>1371</sup> Assmann 1994a: 20; Pinch and Waraksa 2009: 2; Teeter 2011: 56; Eyre 2013: 109.

<sup>1372</sup> Pinch and Waraksa 2009: 2-3.

<sup>1373</sup> Pinch 1993: 218; Pinch and Waraksa 2009: 3.

<sup>1374</sup> Castel et al. 1984-: 104, Plates IV, V; Pinch and Waraksa 2009: 3.

<sup>1375</sup> For further information regarding the concept of decorum in ancient Egypt, see Baines 1990.

<sup>1376</sup> See Pinch 1993; Pinch and Waraksa 2009: 4.

<sup>1377</sup> Assmann 2002: 234.

<sup>1378</sup> Assmann 1995: 191; Assmann 2002: 230.

<sup>1379</sup> Pinch and Waraksa 2009: 3.

<sup>1380</sup> Pinch 1993: 349.

stelae show individuals such as scribes praying in front of Hathor. During the New Kingdom, many gods acquired epithets that reflected the new closer relationship between men and gods. For example, a common epithet attached to deities such as Hathor, Amun-Ra, Ptah and Thoth was ‘the one who hears petitions’.<sup>1381</sup> The fact that Hathor was evidently considered to be an approachable deity who would listen to an individual’s prayers could explain why so many votive offerings have been discovered at shrines and local temples dedicated to her. The most important votive offerings to Hathor were discovered at Deir el-Bahari, in the mortuary complexes of Nebhepetre Mentuhotep and Hatshepsut.<sup>1382</sup> Pinch and Waraksa note that during the New Kingdom votive offerings were also made at royal cemeteries such as the Valley of the Kings and, in addition, the Sphinx at Giza.<sup>1383</sup> The custom of dedicating votive offerings during the New Kingdom varied at different sites across Egypt; at some the practice seems to have continued throughout, while at others it was not resumed after a pause during the Amarna Period.<sup>1384</sup> According to Pinch and Waraksa, during the later New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period, ‘other types of votive practices arose, such as writing prayers on temple walls or columns, or carving “votive footprints” into temple pavements and roof blocks’.<sup>1385</sup>

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<sup>1381</sup> Pinch and Waraksa 2009: 3.

<sup>1382</sup> Baines 1991: 180-1; Craig Patch 2005; Roehrig 2005. For a publication detailing the main sites, including Deir el-Bahari, at which votive offerings to Hathor have been found and an interpretation of those offerings, see Pinch 1993.

<sup>1383</sup> Pinch and Waraksa 2009: 4. For further information regarding the practice of dedicating votive offerings at the Valley of the Kings, see Keller 1995. For votive offerings at the Great Sphinx, see Hassan 1953: 32-50.

<sup>1384</sup> Pinch and Waraksa 2009: 4.

<sup>1385</sup> Pinch and Waraksa 2009: 4. For further detail regarding the writing of prayers on temple walls, see Sadek 1987: 52-8. For the carving of ‘votive footprints’, see Jacquet-Gordon 2003: 5; Yoyotte 1960: 59-60.

In terms of the votive offerings themselves, there was a wide range of objects that could be presented to a deity as a votive offering (see Plates 78 -79). Pinch and Waraksa state that the majority of votive offerings fall into one of three categories.<sup>1386</sup> These are:

- 1) Representations of deities or divine powers/qualities.
- 2) Cult objects.
- 3) Objects associated with human fertility.

During the Old Kingdom, representations of deities in either human or animal form were common, as well as cult objects such as miniature vessels and amulets.<sup>1387</sup> Some types of figurines were specific to a certain site, which Pinch and Waraksa interpret as suggesting that there were diverse local traditions at this time.<sup>1388</sup> Kemp uses Old Kingdom votive objects to support the argument that, during this period, local beliefs were separate from state religion. He notes that Old Kingdom votive objects very rarely bear any similarity to the iconography of the main deity of the area in which they were found.<sup>1389</sup>

As well as amulets and plaques, female fertility figurines are often among the votive offerings dating to the Middle Kingdom.<sup>1390</sup> This could perhaps reflect that during this time ordinary ancient Egyptians played very little, if any, part in state religion and had extremely limited access to state temples.<sup>1391</sup> It could be that the votive offerings of the Middle Kingdom reflect individual religiosity in its purest form, undiluted by the state cult.

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<sup>1386</sup> Pinch and Waraksa 2009: 5-6.

<sup>1387</sup> Pinch and Waraksa 2009: 2.

<sup>1388</sup> Pinch and Waraksa 2009: 2.

<sup>1389</sup> Kemp 1989b: 111-28.

<sup>1390</sup> Pinch and Waraksa 2009: 3.

<sup>1391</sup> Assmann 1994a: 20; Pinch and Waraksa 2009: 2; Teeter 2011: 56; Eyre 2013: 109.

Towards the end of the Second Intermediate Period and during the New Kingdom, votive offerings that reflect the change in theology are present. Votive stelae showing individuals praying to a deity have been discovered in sacred areas, as well as models of ears and stelae with ears on them (see Plates 80-1).<sup>1392</sup> These votive objects demonstrate the new personal relationship that individuals were able to have with gods whom they believed would hear their prayers. The votive offerings found at Hathor-shrines are very often made of faience and include Hathor masks, cow figurines and fertility figurines (see Plate 82).<sup>1393</sup>

The huge range of votive offerings and the similarity of many of them at certain sites imply that systems to produce these objects existed throughout Egypt.<sup>1394</sup> Pinch argues that the uniformity of the votive offerings to Hathor during the New Kingdom suggests that some of the items were made at state or temple-run workshops.<sup>1395</sup> This is further implied by the appearance of royal names on many of the small faience objects dedicated at shrines to Hathor and the fact that numerous faience items resemble those found in royal tombs.<sup>1396</sup> It is likely that special rituals were carried out by those who made and decorated the votive objects in order to make them more effective. Pinch believes that some form of Opening the Mouth Ceremony was performed on certain objects such as Hathor masks and cow figurines.<sup>1397</sup> Objects inscribed with the name of the donor are relatively rare and so it is possible that rituals to link the donor to the object were also carried out.<sup>1398</sup> However, Pinch

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<sup>1392</sup> Sadek 1987: 245-68, Plates 1-28; Baines 1991: 181-2; Morgan 2004 (see also the review of this book by Luiselli 2007b); Pinch and Waraksa 2009: 3-4; Becker 2011: 66.

<sup>1393</sup> Pinch 1993: 142-8, 161-2, 198, 205, 207; Pinch and Waraksa 2009: 4.

<sup>1394</sup> Pinch 1993: 326-32; Pinch and Waraksa 2009: 4.

<sup>1395</sup> Pinch 1993: 329.

<sup>1396</sup> Pinch 1993: 329; Pinch and Waraksa 2009: 4.

<sup>1397</sup> Pinch 1993: 339-42. See also Pinch and Waraksa 2009: 6.

<sup>1398</sup> Pinch 1993: 340.

argues that the state-production of fertility figurines seems 'implausible' because such figurines belong to the sphere of 'folk religion'.<sup>1399</sup> Instead, Pinch suggests that hidden connections may exist between the donor and fertility figurines to improve their effectiveness, such as the incorporation of menstrual blood or semen.<sup>1400</sup> This implies that such votive offerings would have been home made. There is no evidence to support the concept that more valuable votive offerings were more effective. No mention is made of giving valuable or precious gifts to deities in either the New Kingdom Instruction Texts or the inscriptions on intermediary statues.<sup>1401</sup> While some objects appear to have been specially commissioned, it is the symbolic value of an object that seems to have been considered more important than its physical value.<sup>1402</sup>

Votive offerings could be dedicated by both men and women and can be seen as permanent memorials of prayer to a deity.<sup>1403</sup> Pinch and Waraksa expand on this concept when they state that votive offerings were made 'in anticipation of blessings or in order to appease a deity, rather than in fulfilment of a vow after a prayer had been answered'.<sup>1404</sup> During the New Kingdom, when ordinary ancient Egyptians were able to visit temples more freely there is evidence to suggest that votive offerings were made at temples during festivals and also during times of personal crisis, which Baines argues is more closely related to practical

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<sup>1399</sup> Pinch 1993: 329.

<sup>1400</sup> Pinch 1993: 340.

<sup>1401</sup> Pinch 1993: 355. For instruction texts, see Lichtheim 1976: 135-66. For intermediary texts, see Simmance 2014: 82-95.

<sup>1402</sup> Pinch 1993: 355.

<sup>1403</sup> Pinch 1993: 335, 342. Pinch notes that the definition of votive offerings as 'permanent memorials of a prayer to a deity' is taken from William H Rouse's book on Greek votive offerings, see Rouse 1902: 1.

<sup>1404</sup> Pinch and Waraksa 2009: 2.

religion and magic.<sup>1405</sup> It seems likely that votive offerings would have been made for similar reasons during other time periods as well, but perhaps not at state temples. It is almost impossible to say how votive offering would have been displayed at shrines, chapels or temples once they had been dedicated.<sup>1406</sup> It is likely that votive stelae were erected in temple forecourts and in the case of local shrines they may have been placed inside the sanctuary.<sup>1407</sup> Smaller offerings have been found in bowls or baskets and wrapped in linen.<sup>1408</sup> Pinch and Waraksa state that it is likely that such offerings were formally presented to the deity at some point.<sup>1409</sup> They also mention that many small votive offerings had holes in them and so could have been hung up on cords.<sup>1410</sup> Votive offerings were eventually disposed of, probably once they had been displayed for a sufficient amount of time. Pinch and Waraksa argue that it seems to have been considered sacrilegious to destroy or reuse votive offerings, which could explain the locations in which many votive offerings were found.<sup>1411</sup> Numerous votive offerings have been discovered in foundation deposits which the ancient Egyptians often made at the start of a new building project.<sup>1412</sup> This suggests that the votive offerings were considered to be powerful objects that could help sanctify a new

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<sup>1405</sup> Baines 1991: 182. See also, Sadek 1987: 167-198; Baines 1991: 196; Pinch and Waraksa 2009: 6.

<sup>1406</sup> Pinch 1993: 338.

<sup>1407</sup> Pinch 1993: 338; Pinch and Waraksa 2009: 6-7. For more on personal piety and crisis situations, see Becker 2011 and Footnote 243 above.

<sup>1408</sup> Pinch and Waraksa 2009: 7. See Davies 2007: Figures 76-77 and Smith 1974: Plate IVd for examples of votive offerings wrapped in linen.

<sup>1409</sup> Pinch and Waraksa 2009: 7.

<sup>1410</sup> Craig Patch 2005: 174, Images 98a-e; Pinch and Waraksa 2009: 7.

<sup>1411</sup> Pinch and Waraksa 2009: 7.

<sup>1412</sup> Roehrig 2005; Pinch and Waraksa 2009: 7.

building.<sup>1413</sup> Votive objects have also been discovered buried in pits within temple precincts along with old temple furniture.<sup>1414</sup>

The creation, dedication and eventual disposal of votive offerings show that they were an important part of ancient Egyptian culture and have both historical and institutional elements. It is clear from the archaeological evidence that the practice of creating votive offerings existed in ancient Egypt for thousands of years.<sup>1415</sup> The desire to create votive offerings would undoubtedly have been passed down from generation to generation and consequently have been deeply embedded in ancient Egyptian culture. In terms of institutional elements, the creating and giving of votive offerings could be seen to imitate the practice of giving daily offerings to the god that occurred in state religion. While the majority of ancient Egyptians would have been unaware of the exact processes that occurred inside the temple, it is highly likely that some of them would have filtered down to the general population. It is important to consider votive offerings as part of a historical and institutional reality of ritual and belief because they can aid the understanding of individual religiosity. To an extent, the creation and use of votive offerings could be considered to show the carrying out of actions inherited from an individual's ancestors and from the state, not necessarily individual religiosity.

However, votive offerings are also examples of ritual and doctrine. The act of giving a votive offering can certainly be seen as ritual, especially if the theory that votive offerings were made and sold at temples or state workshops is taken into account. The belief that a votive

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<sup>1413</sup> Pinch and Waraksa 2009: 7.

<sup>1414</sup> Kemp 1989b: 121-3.

<sup>1415</sup> See Footnote 1369 above.



offering would enable a prayer or message to be carried to a deity is an example of doctrine. As a result of making votive offerings, individuals were maintaining the universe of meaning within which religion was a social fact. The desire to maintain the universe of meaning suggests some internalisation of and engagement with the universe of meaning; the individuals believed that the ritual of making votive offerings would work and that the doctrine behind it was true.

The concept that those who made votive offerings had individual religiosity is supported if the information that votive offerings can provide regarding the objective and subjective dimensions of religiosity is considered. In terms of the objective dimension of religiosity, an individual had to create or purchase a votive offering and then take that offering to a temple, shrine, tomb or their home. The subjective dimension of religiosity can be seen in the fact that in order to make the choice to carry out the objective dimension of religiosity, an individual almost certainly believed in the doctrine behind the ritual. They thought that if they made a votive offering then their prayer would be heard by the god of their choosing.

The application of Luckmann's theory to votive offerings could suggest that votive offerings as a method of communicating with the gods would have been a key element in the creation of an objective and moral universe of meaning. It is likely that they helped to define the parameters of the universe of meaning and established what was possible and what was not. They also gave individuals the opportunity to locate themselves within the universe of meaning and outwardly express their internalisation of it. Votive offerings enabled the individual to be part of something wider and more important than just himself and to connect with his fellow man. The creation of a universe of meaning, with others, is an

essential element in the process of a human organism becoming a Self. As a Self, an individual is capable of possessing individual religiosity. Unfortunately, the available evidence does not support these interpretations clearly and therefore they cannot be stated with any certainty.

### 5.4.3 Oracles

Communication with the gods via oracles<sup>1416</sup> is generally considered to have begun fairly late in ancient Egyptian history, during the Eighteenth Dynasty.<sup>1417</sup> Evidence for the consultation of oracles suggests that this method of communication with the gods was only used by the king or high officials in relation to royal or state issues at this time.<sup>1418</sup> Černý notes that the first reference to an oracle is an account that tells how the god Amun publically recognised Thutmosis III as king when he was still a boy during a procession around the hypostyle hall of the god's temple.<sup>1419</sup> There are also accounts of Hatshepsut and Thutmosis IV having interactions with deities via oracles.<sup>1420</sup> During the Twentieth and Twenty-First Dynasties, oracular consultation filtered down to address everyday concerns and developed into a practice that was available to all ancient Egyptians.<sup>1421</sup> This was mainly due to the social changes that occurred at this time. There was a gradual shift in power from the king to the

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<sup>1416</sup> Note that oracular amuletic decrees are not discussed here. They refer to the unwanted and uncontrolled actions of the gods towards people, rather than the intentional and controlled communication of individuals with gods. For more information regarding oracular amuletic decrees, see Edwards 1960. For oracles as a form of communication with the gods, see Blackman 1925; Blackman 1926; Černý 1962; Ray 1981; Kákosy 1982; Baines 1987:88-93; McDowell 1990: 107-41; Römer 1994; Baines and Parkinson 1997; Valbelle and Husson 1998; McDowell 1999: 107-15, 172-5; Römer 2003; Shehab el-Din 2003; Garcia 2010.

<sup>1417</sup> Černý 1962: 35; Ritner 1993: 214; Baines and Parkinson 1997: 9; McDowell 1999: 107; Shehab el-Din 2003: 260; Garcia 2010: 15.

<sup>1418</sup> Shehab el-Din 2003: 260.

<sup>1419</sup> Černý 1962: 35. See also Sethe 1906a: 156-62.

<sup>1420</sup> Černý 1962: 35-6. For Hatshepsut, see also Sethe 1906b: 342-3. For Thutmosis IV, see also Helk 1957: 1545-8.

<sup>1421</sup> Baines 1987: 93-4; Ritner 1993: 214; Shehab el-Din 2003: 260.

gods, specifically to the priests in the temples of the gods.<sup>1422</sup> Shehab el-Din has described the Twenty-First Dynasty as the 'golden age of oracles' and argues that the oracle conformed to the theocratic principles of the time because it offered a convincing and acceptable method of introducing the god's will to the people and executing his wishes.<sup>1423</sup>

However, Baines and Parkinson reject the notion held by many scholars (including Assmann<sup>1424</sup> and Römer<sup>1425</sup>) that oracles did not exist in ancient Egypt prior to the New Kingdom. They argue that there is some evidence for oracles being consulted earlier than the Eighteenth Dynasty.<sup>1426</sup> Baines suggests that references to kings receiving divine commands as noted from the Middle Kingdom onwards could refer to commands in the form of oracles.<sup>1427</sup> Baines and Parkinson present Sinai Inscription 13 from the reign of Djedkare during the late Fifth Dynasty as a possible Old Kingdom record of an oracle.<sup>1428</sup> They interpret column 3, which includes the words 'in writing of the god himself', as a reference to an oracular consultation. Based on this evidence it seems likely that oracles existed before the Eighteenth Dynasty.

Oracles were an important part of Egyptian religion because they enabled interaction between the gods and all members of ancient Egyptian society.<sup>1429</sup> Oracles allowed the Egyptians to consult the gods regarding a range of issues such as political, social and judicial

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<sup>1422</sup> Trapani 1993: 541; Baines and Parkinson 1997: 9-10.

<sup>1423</sup> Shehab el-Din 2003: 260.

<sup>1424</sup> Assmann 1984: 188.

<sup>1425</sup> Römer 1994. This publication by Römer, which is predominantly a study of oracles, does not discuss any time periods before the New Kingdom.

<sup>1426</sup> Baines 1987: 89-90, 94; Baines and Parkinson 1997: particularly 9-10.

<sup>1427</sup> Baines 1987: 90.

<sup>1428</sup> Baines and Parkinson 1997.

<sup>1429</sup> Baines and Parkinson 1997: 9; Shehab el-Din 2003: 259.

matters.<sup>1430</sup> An oracle signified the god's will and at the same time provided an answer or reply regarding a certain subject, perhaps often confirming a decision that had already been made.<sup>1431</sup> According to Baines and Parkinson:

Because the information oracles provide is so important and the value of divine participation is so great, their institutional form can be used to confirm human decisions that have effectively already been taken, perhaps subject only to extreme denial when they are presented to the oracle.<sup>1432</sup>

Consultation with the god seems to have taken place during festivals when the statue of the god was removed from the sanctuary of the temple. The god was placed in a portable shrine and hidden from view by a curtain.<sup>1433</sup> The portable shrine was then placed upon a sacred barque which was carried by purified men.<sup>1434</sup> Shehab el-Din notes that in oracular texts the time during which consultations could occur was sometimes referred to as *sh<sup>c</sup> n hrw pn sh<sup>c</sup> n* (the day of ceremonial appearance), which referred to when the procession stopped for a short period of rest.<sup>1435</sup> During such a time, those members of the congregation wishing to receive an oracle were then able to approach the god and ask their question. Černý notes that an Egyptian would not speak *to* the god but would instead *stand before* or *say before* the god.<sup>1436</sup> The god would then respond to the question by providing an affirmative or negative answer. Several different verbs are used in relation to the giving of an answer by the

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<sup>1430</sup> Shehab el-Din 2003: 259.

<sup>1431</sup> Shehab el-Din 2003: 260.

<sup>1432</sup> Baines and Parkinson 1997: 9.

<sup>1433</sup> Römer 2003: 283.

<sup>1434</sup> Černý 1962: 36; McDowell 1999: 107.

<sup>1435</sup> Shehab el-Din 2003: 264.

<sup>1436</sup> Černý 1962: 43.

god and it is not clear exactly how the answer would have been provided.<sup>1437</sup> Most scholars agree that the barque would have moved forwards for a 'yes' answer and backwards for a 'no' answer.<sup>1438</sup> McDowell states that there may have been alternative and more simple ways of consulting an oracle but these are not well documented across the whole of Egypt.<sup>1439</sup> However, there is some evidence for other ways in which an oracle could be given. The cult of the deified king Amenophis I at Deir el-Medina is noted for giving oracles<sup>1440</sup> and approximately 100 ostraca with questions written on them have been recovered from the site.<sup>1441</sup> Many of the questions could have been answered with an affirmative or negative response, as discussed above, but some of the ostraca form pairs of opposites which may have been answered in a slightly different way.<sup>1442</sup> It is possible that in these cases the barque would have moved to point towards the ostrakon bearing the answer the god wished to convey. Papyrus BM 10335 provides evidence for another, slightly more complex way in which an oracle was used to resolve an issue.<sup>1443</sup> A workman named Amenemwia was in charge of a storehouse when several garments were stolen from it. Amenemwia asked the local god Amun of Pakhenty to help him find the thief. The god agreed to do so by moving forwards and so a list of the villagers' names was read out. The god moved when the name of the thief was read out. The accused man, Pethauemdiamun, initially denied stealing the garments but later admitted to the crime. It is rare for the results of an oracle consultation to

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<sup>1437</sup> See Černý 1962: 44-5 for a discussion of the different verbs used.

<sup>1438</sup> Černý 1962: 44; Ray 1981: 180; McDowell 1999: 107; Römer 2003: 284.

<sup>1439</sup> McDowell 1999: 107.

<sup>1440</sup> Ray 1981: 180; Sadek 1987: 134-5.

<sup>1441</sup> For a brief overview of the ostraca, see Černý 1962: 46. For full publications, see Černý 1935; Černý 1942; Černý 1972; Grandet 2003: 146-50.

<sup>1442</sup> McDowell 1999: 107.

<sup>1443</sup> For a summary, see Ray 1981: 1980. For a transcription, see Dawson 1925. For a full translation and discussion, see Blackman 1925: 250-5.

exist in written form as with the papyrus discussed above. Two additional examples of the results of an oracle consultation in written form are Papyrus BM 10417 and Ostrakon Florence 2619.<sup>1444</sup>

The Deir el-Medina ostraca, mentioned above, can also provide an indication of the sorts of questions that could be asked to an oracle.<sup>1445</sup> Generally, it appears that any question could be asked, from those referring to family matters to those relating to business deals.<sup>1446</sup> For example:

‘Is it he who steals the mat?’

‘Are they true, these claims?’

‘Do they have fears?’

‘Has Horus come into being in him? Oh! Send the truth!’<sup>1447</sup>

From Deir el-Medina there is a prevalence of questions relating to legal disputes, especially the ownership of houses and tombs.<sup>1448</sup> McDowell notes that this was possibly because the majority of the property in the village was state owned and therefore did not fall under the jurisdiction of the local court.<sup>1449</sup> Sadek has suggested that different statues of Amenophis I at Deir el-Medina could have been used to give oracles regarding certain issues.<sup>1450</sup> For example, one could have answered legal disputes, one could have responded to social issues, one could have dealt with cases of theft and so on. While this is a possibility worth mentioning, it is important to note that there is no evidence to support this theory. However,

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<sup>1444</sup> For more information on these examples of the results of an oracle consultation in written form, see Luiselli 2011b: 46-7.

<sup>1445</sup> Černý 1935; Černý 1942; Černý 1972; Grandet 2003: 146-50.

<sup>1446</sup> Černý 1962: 45; McDowell 1999: 107.

<sup>1447</sup> See Appendix II: F for a full transcription, translation and commentary; Plates 83-4.

<sup>1448</sup> Ritner 1993: 214; Trapani 1993: 541; McDowell 1999: 173.

<sup>1449</sup> McDowell 1999: 173.

<sup>1450</sup> Sadek 1987: 135.

what is evidenced is that oracles were an important method of communication with the gods from the New Kingdom onwards, and possibly earlier.<sup>1451</sup> They were probably used across the whole of ancient Egyptian society and were used to answer a range of questions.<sup>1452</sup>

Communication with the gods via oracles is an example of ritual and doctrine. Ritual can be seen in the process of posing a question to an oracle, which is completely institutionalised; the situation is created, managed and maintained by the state. Doctrine is also evidenced by the very existence of oracles. Oracles present to the public the concept that individuals are able to communicate with the gods and receive an answer.<sup>1453</sup> The strong state influence on the use of oracles in ancient Egypt would have helped to establish religion as a social fact because the act of communicating with a god via an oracle was a highly visible and public event. It seems likely, therefore, that this social fact would have helped individuals to create a universe of meaning. Communication with the gods via an oracle can certainly be seen as an activity that was carried out with others. As such, it would have been part of the process by which the universe of meaning was created, maintained and engaged with, and so it is clear that state religion was linked to individual religiosity. Although the evidence does not show it for certain, it is likely that those individuals who witnessed or took part in this method of communication with the gods had individual religiosity; they had accepted this element of religion as a social fact and had engaged with the universe of meaning.

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<sup>1451</sup> For the New Kingdom onwards, see Černý 1962: 35; Assmann 1984: 188; Ritner 1993: 214; Römer 1994; Baines and Parkinson 1997: 9; McDowell 1999: 107; Shehab el-Din 2003: 260; Garcia 2010: 15. For pre-New Kingdom, see Baines 1987: 89-90, 94; Baines and Parkinson 1997.

<sup>1452</sup> Černý 1962: 45; McDowell 1999: 107.

<sup>1453</sup> For more on divine intervention in ancient Egypt, see Borghouts 1982.

As discussed in the paragraph above, communication with the gods via oracles can be seen as a reality of ritual and belief, and the institutional elements of it are clear. There is also evidence for the historical elements of this method of communication with the gods if the fact that its popularity peaked in the New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period is considered. By this point in ancient Egyptian history, the use of oracles would probably have been well-established. The practice may have been passed down from generation to generation, even if it was as a result of their use in the royal sphere, making it an intrinsic part of the universe of meaning. However, whether this demonstrates individual religiosity or just habitual action is not clear.

If the objective and subjective elements of individual religiosity as shown by communication via oracles are considered, it seems likely that this method of communication does reflect individual religiosity more than just habitual action. Several objective dimensions can be noted; firstly, the attendance by individuals at the festivals or events during which questions could be posed to the oracle, and secondly, the asking of specific questions by individuals. Presumably those individuals who asked the oracle a question had to go through some sort of approval or application process managed by the temple priests. Both attendance at the festival or event and the asking of questions shows a physical need to be close to the god and to gain control over one's own life. These objective elements also give rise to the subjective dimension of religiosity. By attending the events at which the oracle was present and by asking questions, individuals were demonstrating their belief in state doctrine and the sacred cosmos. For them, communicating with the gods via oracles and receiving answers from the gods was a reality. This method of communicating with the gods was a



way in which individuals engaged with the universe of meaning and sacred cosmos, and attempted to make it relevant to their everyday lives.

#### 5.4.4 *Dreams and the gods*

As discussed in Section 5.3.3, the ancient Egyptians believed that sleep enabled an individual to access different plains of existence, such as the netherworld.<sup>1454</sup> Dreams were seen as a method by which the inhabitants of these alternative plains of existence, such as the justified dead (*ḥ.w*), the unjustified dead (*m.w.t*) or gods (*ntr.w*), could communicate with the living.<sup>1455</sup> As in the previous section on dreams (5.3.3), the discussion below will only focus on dreams that would have been welcomed by the living,<sup>1456</sup> rather than unwanted dreams in the form of nightmares.<sup>1457</sup> The evidence for communication with the gods via dreams that will be considered below is dream books and personal accounts of divine visitations.<sup>1458</sup> Incubation (the active seeking of divine contact in a dream by sleeping in a temple or holy place<sup>1459</sup>) will not be considered because there is very little evidence for this having taken place in ancient Egypt prior to the Late Period.<sup>1460</sup>

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<sup>1454</sup> Baines 1991: 171; Szpakowska 2000: 198.

<sup>1455</sup> Szpakowska 2000: 198; Szpakowska 2003b: 123.

<sup>1456</sup> See Borghouts 1995: 1783; Szpakowska 2001a; Szpakowska 2001b; Szpakowska 2003b: 1-157.

<sup>1457</sup> For information regarding nightmares in ancient Egypt, see: Szpakowska 2000: 265-96; Szpakowska 2003b: 159-80; Szpakowska 2010; Szpakowska 2011a.

<sup>1458</sup> For the only extant Dream Book from the Pharaonic Period, see Gardiner 1935a: 7-23. For later Dream Books (not discussed in this thesis because their later date makes them irrelevant), see Prada 2012a; Prada 2012b. For detailed discussions of personal accounts of divine visitations, see Szpakowska 2003a: 229-33; Szpakowska 2003b: 135-41; Szpakowska 2003c: 116-21 (see Appendix I, p. 122-3 for a transliteration of the Stela of Ipuy; see Appendix II, p. 123-4 for a transliteration of the Biography of Djehutiemhab).

<sup>1459</sup> Brown 1993: 1343; Szpakowska 2003b: 143.

<sup>1460</sup> See Szpakowska 2003b: 142-7. Szpakowska discusses and dismisses the possible evidence for incubation prior to the Late Period. However, Luiselli 2011b: 47-8 compellingly presents Stele BM 278, which dates to the Twentieth Dynasty, as evidence for an early form of incubation.

In Section 5.3.3, the Dream Book (P. Chester Beatty III)<sup>1461</sup> was considered as evidence for communication with the dead via dreams. However, in its capacity as a tool for the interpretation of dreams,<sup>1462</sup> the Dream Book also expresses the possibility of direct contact between an ordinary individual and a deity. Szpakowska uses the following couplet from the Dream Book as clear evidence that, during the New Kingdom, an individual other than the king could see a god in a dream:

If a man sees himself in a dream seeing a god who is higher, good; it means great sustenance.<sup>1463</sup>

Szpakowska logically states that the fact that such a dream was considered to be 'good' implies that an individual seeing a god in a dream was an acceptable and allowed occurrence.<sup>1464</sup> This could be due to the changes in theology that occurred during the New Kingdom. As mentioned, Assmann describes a shift during this period from the Middle Kingdom model of the 'heart-guided individual' to the idea of the 'god-guided heart'.<sup>1465</sup> He also describes the concept of the 'listening god' as an innovation of the New Kingdom.<sup>1466</sup>

As well as indicating that contact between an individual and a deity in a dream was possible, the Dream Book also implies that dreams could cause a god to directly affect the dreamer.<sup>1467</sup> Szpakowska details the different ways in which the Dream Book suggests that a god could act on behalf of an individual. God is depicted as a listener, a protector, a provider,

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<sup>1461</sup> Gardiner 1935a: 7-23. See also Plate 74.

<sup>1462</sup> See Brier 1980: 217; Borghouts 1995: 1783; Bresciani 2005; Szpakowska 2011b; Szpakowska 2012.

<sup>1463</sup> See Appendix II: D, *Recto 2, Line 14* for a full transcription, translation and commentary.

<sup>1464</sup> Szpakowska 2003b: 126; Szpakowska 2003c: 114.

<sup>1465</sup> Assmann 2002: 230.

<sup>1466</sup> Assmann 1995: 200-1.

<sup>1467</sup> Szpakowska 2003b: 126.

a personal promoter, a life-giver, a giver of justice and also as a punisher.<sup>1468</sup> The wide range of ways in which a god could affect an individual as a result of a dream suggests that, in the New Kingdom at least, the relationship between an ordinary Egyptian and god could be complex and deeply meaningful.

Although the Dream Book suggests that the gods could affect the life of an individual as a result of a dream, it is important to note that there is no mention of direct interaction between the dreamer and god.<sup>1469</sup> Indeed, any attempt by an individual to directly contact a deity is branded as a 'bad' omen.<sup>1470</sup> For example:

If a man sees himself in a dream entering into the temple of a goddess, bad: [///]<sup>1471</sup>

The dreamer is never described as talking to god and vice versa.<sup>1472</sup> It seems that during a dream an individual was able to provoke a response from his god that would occur at a later stage and not during the dream itself.<sup>1473</sup> In the Dream Book, dreams do not appear to be considered as divine messages from a god but rather as visual experiences.<sup>1474</sup>

However, there are two examples in the form of hymns that describe ordinary individuals receiving direct contact from a deity in a dream. Prior to the late Eighteenth Dynasty only Egyptian kings are recorded as having received divine visitations from deities in dreams.<sup>1475</sup>

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<sup>1468</sup> Szpakowska 2003b: 127-34. For discussion of god as a listener, see 127; as a protector, see 128; as a provider, see 128-9; as a personal promoter, see 129-30; as a life-giver, see 130; as a giver of justice, see 130-1; as a punisher, see 131-4.

<sup>1469</sup> Szpakowska 2003b: 132-3.

<sup>1470</sup> Szpakowska 2003b: 132-3.

<sup>1471</sup> See Appendix II: D, *Recto 7, Line 1*.

<sup>1472</sup> Szpakowska 2003b: 34.

<sup>1473</sup> Parlebas 1982: 19.

<sup>1474</sup> Szpakowska 2003b: 135.

<sup>1475</sup> See Szpakowska 2003b: 41-60.

Szapkowska believes that this was due to convention and decorum, and that before the late Eighteenth Dynasty it was not appropriate for ordinary Egyptians to publically express experiences of divine contact.<sup>1476</sup> It could also be the case that prior to this time, the ancient Egyptians did not believe that it was possible for an ordinary individual to be directly contacted by a god in a dream. Both theories could explain why the evidence for direct contact between an ordinary individual and a deity is limited to just two hymns.

The first hymn is inscribed on the front and back of a stela (Wien Inv. 8390) that was created by or on behalf of a craftsman from Thebes named Ipuy (see Plate 85).<sup>1477</sup> The text begins in a manner typical of a hymn but, as Szpakowska describes, the tone of the hymn soon changes and it becomes 'personal and presented in the first person'.<sup>1478</sup> Ipuy describes an event which possibly provided the motivation for the creation of the stela. The event is detailed as follows:

Thereto, upon this day I beheld (her) beauties.  
My heart was spending the day in festival thereof,  
when I saw the Lady of the Two Lands in a dream  
and she placed joy in my heart.  
Then I was refreshed with her food.  
None could say of it,  
'Would that I had, would that we had'.<sup>1479</sup>

Interestingly, Ipuy appears to have had this dream during the day rather than while he was asleep at night. It has been suggested that the use of the noun *ib*, meaning 'mind' or

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<sup>1476</sup> Szpakowska 2003b: 125; Szpakowska 2003c: 116.

<sup>1477</sup> First published by Satzinger 1985: 249-54, Plate I.

<sup>1478</sup> Szpakowska 2003b: 136.

<sup>1479</sup> See Appendix II: G for full transcription, translation and commentary.

'heart',<sup>1480</sup> could imply that Ipuy was not actually at a celebration, festival or shrine of the Lady of the Two Lands (Hathor) but was instead there in his imagination.<sup>1481</sup> An alternative interpretation of this section of the hymn is that prior to his dream, Ipuy had been in the presence of the deity Hathor at either a festival or celebration, and was now daydreaming about it.<sup>1482</sup> In either case, it is clear that Ipuy experienced direct contact with a deity in his dream and, while evidence for such an event is very rare, it was clearly considered possible for ordinary individuals to communicate with a god in this way.

The rarity of such an event is perhaps further emphasised by Ipuy's reaction to his dream.<sup>1483</sup> He is clearly very moved by the dream and states, 'One is washed and inebriated by the sight of her [Hathor]'.<sup>1484</sup> His decision to create a stela commemorating the event further accentuates the importance Ipuy placed on the dream. It is noteworthy that Ipuy provides very little information regarding what actually happened in the dream. It could be that he did not remember the specifics of the dream, merely that it happened, which is often the case when waking from a dream. It is also possible that while an individual stating that they had been contacted by a deity in a dream was acceptable, actually describing the exact events of the dream and the actions of the deity was outside of the bounds of decorum.

The second text which describes direct contact with a deity is also in the form of a hymn. The hymn is inscribed in the Theban tomb (TT 194) of Djehutiemhab, an official with the

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<sup>1480</sup> Erman and Grapow 1926-1953a (Wb 1): 59.10-60.11.

<sup>1481</sup> Satzinger 1985: 252.

<sup>1482</sup> Szpakowska 2003b: 137.

<sup>1483</sup> Szpakowska 2003b: 137; Szpakowska 2003c: 118.

<sup>1484</sup> See Appendix II: G, line 28.

responsibility of overseeing the fields of the temple of Amun.<sup>1485</sup> Szpakowska notes that Djehutiemhab's tomb is fairly unique among those of his peers and that it lacks many of the traditional funerary scenes often found in Ramesside tombs.<sup>1486</sup> The uncommon approach Djehutiemhab seems to have taken when selecting texts for his tomb could explain why he chose to include a hymn which details his experience of direct contact with a deity in a dream.

As with the text on the stela of Ipuy, the biography of Djehutiemhab begins in the manner of a traditional hymn and then becomes more personal when he describes his encounter with Hathor:

You are one who has spoken to me,  
with your mouth yourself:  
“I am beautiful Hely,  
my shape is that [///] of Mut.  
I have come to instruct you:  
See your place and fill yourself with it,  
without travelling north, without travelling south.”  
While I was in a dream,  
while the earth was in silence,  
in the beauty of the night.<sup>1487</sup>

Djehutiemhab's account of his dream differs that of Ipuy in that he claims that Hathor gave him direct instructions regarding where he should build his tomb. He states, 'You are the one

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<sup>1485</sup> For the text and a full discussion of it, see Assmann 1978. For further information regarding the tomb of Djehutiemhab, see Seyfried 1995.

<sup>1486</sup> Szpakowska 2003b: 138; Szpakowska 2003c: 118.

<sup>1487</sup> See Appendix II: H for full transcription, translation and commentary.

who foretold my tomb at the beginning'.<sup>1488</sup> Another difference is that Djehutiemhab's dream takes place in the middle of the night, rather than in the daytime as described on Ipuw's stela. It has been suggested that the line, 'How joyful is resting by your side for the one who enters your shade!' implies that Djehutiemhab fell asleep in the shadow of the cult statue of Hathor.<sup>1489</sup> However, it has also been proposed that this line could be 'taken figuratively, expressing the notion of being under the "protection" of a god'.<sup>1490</sup> Szpakowska argues that, in order to emphasise his close relationship with Hathor, Djehutiemhab may have intentionally chosen ambiguous wording which mirrored that of the famous text, the Dream Stela of Thutmose IV,<sup>1491</sup> in which the king falls asleep in the shadow of the sphinx and dreams of a god.<sup>1492</sup>

Much like Ipuw, Djehutiemhab expresses great joy and reverence at having seen Hathor in a dream; 'At dawn, my heart was joyful, I was rejoicing'.<sup>1493</sup> According to Seyfried, the great importance of Djehutiemhab's divine visitation from Hathor is indicated by the placement of the inscription far inside the tomb, on the north wall at the entrance to the burial chamber.<sup>1494</sup> The location of the text deep within the tomb could also explain why Djehutiemhab's biography provides more detail about Hathor's appearance and the events of the dream. It is possible that Djehutiemhab felt that the location of the inscription was private and special enough for him to push the boundaries of convention. Alternatively, as

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<sup>1488</sup> See Appendix II: H, line 25.

<sup>1489</sup> Szpakowska 2003b: 139. See also Appendix II: H, lines 23-4.

<sup>1490</sup> Szpakowska 2003b: 139-40.

<sup>1491</sup> For an English translation, see Breasted 1906: sections 810-5. For a partial English translation of the lines referring to the dream, see Szpakowska 2003b: 51. For a discussion of the stela, see Zivie-Coche 2002: 48-50.

<sup>1492</sup> Szpakowska 2003b: 140.

<sup>1493</sup> See Appendix II: H, lines 45-6.

<sup>1494</sup> Seyfried 1995: 70-2.

discussed above, Djehutiemhab's tomb was not in keeping with other Ramesside tombs and so it is possible that he personally did not feel bound by convention and decorum, which allowed him to describe the divine visitation in more detail.

As with other methods of communicating with gods, dreams helped religion to become established as a social fact within the universe of meaning. These methods suggested to ordinary ancient Egyptians that it was possible to communicate with the gods at any time, including while they were asleep. The methods ensured that communication with the gods became a concrete element of the universe of meaning, thus establishing religion as a social fact. The historical and institutional elements of communicating with the gods also contributed to making it a social fact. Sleep was considered a time during which communication with those in the netherworld could occur.<sup>1495</sup> This knowledge would probably have been passed down to individuals from their ancestors. The institutional element of this method of communication is shown through texts such as the Dream Book. It seems likely that such a document was created as a result of oral traditions that were passed down from generation to generation, and that these oral traditions would have stemmed from state religion in some way. The consideration of dreams enables a deeper understanding of individual religiosity because they help to explain how religion became a social fact and how the universe of meaning was outwardly expressed in society.

This method of communicating with the gods could certainly be seen as a way in which the sacred cosmos was consolidated in ancient Egypt. Dreams allowed the individual to transcend everyday life and to ask fairly mundane questions to those in the netherworld.

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<sup>1495</sup> Szpakowska 2000: 198.



Dreams enabled the individual to understand the sacred cosmos and their role in it, while at the same time providing them with a sense of hope and control over their own destiny.

## **5.5 Conclusions regarding communication with the dead/gods and invisible religion**

Methods of communication with the dead and with gods offer examples of religion becoming a social fact through ritual and doctrine. Letters to the dead can be seen as ritual because they were often left at the tombs of the deceased as part of maintaining the deceased's mortuary cult. Doctrine can be seen in the very existence of letters to the dead; they imply a belief in the concepts of the sacred cosmos as dictated by the state – that the living were able to communicate with the dead. Oracles also show the creation of religion as a social fact through ritual and doctrine. The ritual element is visible in the attendance of an individual at an event or festival at which an oracle was present and, in some cases, the presentation of a question to the oracle. As with letters to the dead, doctrine is shown in the belief that through this state controlled method, an individual was able to communicate with the gods and sometimes receive an answer. As a result of attempting to communicate with the dead and with gods, individuals were exposed to religion as a social fact. According to Luckmann's theory, communication with the dead and with gods would have encouraged individuals to internalise and engage with the universe of meaning which in turn would have created individual religiosity within them.

Communication with the dead via anthropoid busts would have ensured that the historical element of the universe of meaning remained at the heart of individual religiosity. This

method would undoubtedly have been passed down from generation to generation, making the internalisation of and engagement with this element of the universe of meaning a much easier process. The institutional element of reality is referred to in the belief that the dead could be communicated with. The use of votive offerings as a method of communicating with the gods also has both historical and institutional elements. Votive offerings existed in ancient Egypt for thousands of years<sup>1496</sup> and so the desire to create them would have been deeply embedded in culture. The creation of votive offerings could be seen as imitating the offering rituals that occurred daily in state temples. According to the theory of invisible religion, the historical and institutional reality offers itself for subjective internalisation.<sup>1497</sup> Therefore, individual religiosity exists as a result of this subjective internalisation. The historical and institutional elements of reality shown by some methods of communication with the dead and with gods can provide information regarding how individuals may have internalised various elements of the universe of meaning.

The objective and subjective dimensions of religiosity can be seen in all examples of communication with the dead and with gods. In terms of communication with the dead, dreams can be used as an example of both elements. In one instance, an individual requested that their deceased ancestor present herself in a dream.<sup>1498</sup> This can be considered to be an example of the objective dimension of religiosity. The fact that individuals attempted to communicate with the dead via dreams is an example of the subjective dimension of religiosity because it implies that they believed that communication

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<sup>1496</sup> See Footnote 1369 above.

<sup>1497</sup> See Section 2.2.1.

<sup>1498</sup> See Section 5.3.3.

with the dead was possible, and that one was able to communicate with the dead in dreams. Prayer as a method of communicating with the gods is a good example of both the objective and subjective elements of religiosity. The acts of visiting a temple or shrine, or erecting a prayer stela or statue, are evidence of the objective dimension of religiosity, while the belief in the idea that the gods could be contacted via these methods, and the desire to do so, is an example of the subjective dimension of religiosity. By considering the objective and subjective elements of individual religiosity as demonstrated by communication with the dead and with gods, further evidence for the concept that those individuals who attempted to communicate with the dead or with gods had individual religiosity is provided.

Both communication with the dead and communication with gods can be seen as elements in a symbolic universe in which the world of everyday life and a world which transcends everyday life are referred to simultaneously. Letters to the dead usually refer to fairly mundane, everyday occurrences for which the living individual is seeking help from the dead. In this method of communication, there is no separation between the world of the living and the world of the dead; it is considered to be entirely plausible that the deceased would be able to help the living, if they chose to do so. The same can be said of dreams as a method of communicating with the gods. While asleep, living individuals were considered to gain access to different plains of existence. It was believed that while they were there, individuals could provoke assistance from a god regarding matters of daily life, if the god chose to do so. Communication with the dead and with gods could be seen as a way of consolidating the symbolic universe and making it more relevant to the lives of ordinary ancient Egyptians. If the symbolic universe and associated universe of meaning were more relevant then it is likely that individuals would have engaged with it and internalised it to a greater extent.

Communication with the dead and with gods was an important part of the creation and maintenance of a universe of meaning. The creation, erection and maintenance of *3h ikr n R<sup>c</sup>* stelae by an individual is very likely to have taken place with other individuals. It seems likely that if the presence of others was not an important element in this method of communication with the dead, that *3h ikr n R<sup>c</sup>* stelae would have been discovered in far more private locations than they were found. According to Luckmann's theory, the stelae would have helped form a universe of meaning at the sites at which they were found, although this cannot be proven with any certainty. At sites other than Deir el-Medina, the stelae may indicate former inhabitants of the village attempting to recreate the same universe of meaning in their new town or city. However, there is no evidence to confirm that this was the case. Statues as a method of communicating with the gods would also have helped to form a universe of meaning. Both statues that formed part of the statue cult at temples and intermediary statues were located in public, visible locations at state temples. Using these statues to communicate with gods would certainly have taken place with others. Consequently, according to the theory of invisible religion, statue cults and intermediary statues would have helped to develop a universe of meaning that resulted in the creation of Selves.

Overall, the consideration of communication with the dead and with gods from the perspective of Luckmann's theory of invisible religion has suggested that those individuals who participated in the various methods of communication with the dead or with gods were individually religious. It is clear that individual religiosity was linked to state religion to an extent. Several of the methods of communication with the dead and with gods seem to imitate or be closely linked to the activities carried out in state institutions, or to reflect the

ideas presented in state ritual and doctrine. This implies that state religion played an important role in the development of religiosity within an individual.

# Chapter 6

## DISCUSSION

This research has considered three different aspects of ancient Egyptian culture from the perspective of invisible religion in order to learn more about individual religiosity. The three aspects (festivals, household and personal items, and communication with the dead and with gods) were selected because much of the evidence for these aspects of ancient Egyptian culture comes from domestic and settlement contexts, rather than funerary or mortuary contexts. In addition, these aspects of Egyptian culture have not previously been considered as a whole in terms of the information they can provide about individual religiosity. This research has shown that Luckmann's theory of invisible religion is applicable to the three aspects of ancient Egyptian culture discussed. Therefore, festivals, household and personal items, and communication with the dead and with gods can be considered to be examples of invisible religion.

In terms of festivals, which are considered in Chapter 3, there is a clear religious element because they were controlled by the state and linked to state religion to an extent. However, the average ordinary ancient Egyptian who attended and participated in a festival is likely to have been less aware of the religious elements and more focussed on the celebratory

elements and the fact that the festival offered a break from the routine of their daily life.<sup>1499</sup>

Although it may seem to a modern observer that festivals are an example of 'visible' religion, this thesis has demonstrated the importance of festivals in the creation of a universe of meaning with others.<sup>1500</sup> This concept is a key aspect of Luckmann's theory and the fact that it can be applied to festivals demonstrates that they are examples of invisible religion.

Household and personal items (see Chapter 4) can also be considered to be examples of invisible religion because they provide evidence of individual religiosity that would otherwise be hidden. When using a wall niche to make offerings to ancestors, applying cosmetics from a pot shaped like the god Bes, or wearing an amulet intended to imbue the wearer with a specific power, ordinary ancient Egyptians were carrying out acts that they believed were a normal part of ancient Egyptian culture.<sup>1501</sup> They would not have been aware of what information household and personal items would hold regarding their engagement with and internalisation of the universe of meaning, the social processes they had undergone in order to become a Self, or the objective and subjective dimensions of religiosity demonstrated by the items.<sup>1502</sup> Luckmann's theory has been successfully applied, to an extent, to household and personal items, meaning that they can be considered to be examples of invisible religion.

Communication with the dead and with gods, discussed in Chapter 5, could also be considered to be an example of 'visible' rather than invisible religion due to the fact that many of the methods of communication appear to be clearly identifiable as religious.

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<sup>1499</sup> See Bleeker 1967: 23; Teeter 2011: 56.

<sup>1500</sup> See in particular Section 2.2.3.

<sup>1501</sup> See Sections 4.3.2, 4.5.2 and 4.6.2 respectively.

<sup>1502</sup> See Section 2.2.1.

However, it is the fact that these methods of communication were considered to be normal daily activities by ordinary ancient Egyptians, and the fact that Luckmann's theory can be applied to them, that makes methods of communication with the dead and with gods examples of invisible religion. When an ordinary ancient Egyptian prayed to the gods in the first lines of a letter for the wellbeing of the recipient of the letter or wrote a letter to a deceased ancestor asking for help, they were not aware that they were performing religious acts.<sup>1503</sup> Instead, they simply thought that they were carrying out normal behaviour that was likely to have a positive influence on their life. Valuable information about the individual religiosity of ordinary members of ancient Egyptian society can be gained if acts of communicating with the dead and with gods are considered to be examples of invisible religion. Their role in shaping the universe of meaning can be understood and they provide examples of the ritual and doctrine that may have influenced ordinary ancient Egyptians.

### **6.1 Luckmann's theory of invisible religion applied to ancient Egypt**

Luckmann's theory of invisible religion provides an additional and not previously used tool for the study of the individual religiosity of ordinary ancient Egyptians. The use of his theory enables the archaeological and literary evidence for activities that occurred regularly, often daily, to be considered from a new perspective in order to gain information about individual religiosity. The application of Luckmann's theory to individual religiosity has both substantiated and opposed the existing views put forward by scholars on this subject. For example, studies into individual religiosity in ancient Egypt have historically considered

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<sup>1503</sup> See Sections 5.4.1 and 5.3.1 respectively.



ordinary ancient Egyptians at a macro level rather than as individuals.<sup>1504</sup> However, recent studies have emphasised the importance of focussing on the individual.<sup>1505</sup> The application of Luckmann's theory recognises the value of focussing on the individual; it facilitates the consideration of the individual and his relationship with the world view, of which religion formed a part, in order to understand more about their individual religiosity, rather than the religiosity of society as a whole. In addition, it is now widely accepted by scholars that individual religiosity existed in ancient Egypt before the New Kingdom.<sup>1506</sup> As discussed in more detail below, this is a view that is supported by the application of the theory of invisible religion. However, an opinion not corroborated by the application of Luckmann's theory is that of Kemp. He argues that life would have been a largely secular experience for the ancient Egyptians who would not have been required to make regular references to the mindset of religion.<sup>1507</sup> As outlined below, the consideration of individual religiosity from the perspective of invisible religion demonstrates that ancient Egyptians would have come into contact with religion on a daily basis via the universe of meaning. According to Luckmann's theory, the constant creation, maintenance, interpretation and internalisation of this universe of meaning would have caused them to consider religion on a regular basis. Consequently, it is not appropriate to describe ancient Egyptian society as 'largely secular'.<sup>1508</sup>

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<sup>1504</sup> See Chapter 1.

<sup>1505</sup> See Stevens 2003; Stevens 2006; Stevens 2009; Luiselli 2011b; Luiselli 2012; Weiss 2012; Luiselli 2014; Weiss 2015.

<sup>1506</sup> See, for example, Baines 1987: 96; Stevens 2009: 1; Weiss 2009: 207. See also Section 2.4.

<sup>1507</sup> Kemp 1995b: 50.

<sup>1508</sup> Kemp 1995b: 50.

As discussed briefly above, the concept that human beings create a universe of meaning or world view by which they lead their lives is a key element of Luckmann's theory of invisible religion is.<sup>1509</sup> This world view is extremely important as it affects that way in which individuals interpret everyday experiences and the way in which they interact with other people. The world view is, according to Luckmann, an objective and stable fact.<sup>1510</sup> It is internalised by the individual and subsequently communicated to other individuals, who validate its objectivity through their own actions.<sup>1511</sup> However, the internalisation of the universe of meaning is subjective and so one individual's interpretation of the world view may differ to another's. Two aspects of the universe of meaning that develop over time are the symbolic universe and sacred cosmos.<sup>1512</sup> The symbolic universe and sacred cosmos represent a reality that is part of everyday life, but at the same time transcends everyday life.<sup>1513</sup> As such, they give meaning to the lives of individuals and offer the hope of escape from the mundane realities of everyday life. In order to understand individual religiosity in ancient Egypt it is essential to consider how the universe of meaning or world view is created and maintained, and how it, as well as key elements of it such as the symbolic universe and sacred cosmos, are socially objectivated. Festivals, household and personal items, and communication with the dead and with gods are all able to provide evidence for the way in which the world view was created by ancient Egyptians. The Festival of Osiris and the Beautiful Feast of the Valley aided the creation of a universe of meaning because they assigned importance to specific events from state theology and made them relevant to

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<sup>1509</sup> Luckmann 1967.

<sup>1510</sup> Luckmann 1967: 69.

<sup>1511</sup> Luckmann 1967: 69.

<sup>1512</sup> Luckmann 1967.

<sup>1513</sup> Luckmann 1967: 44.

ordinary ancient Egyptians. They gave ordinary ancient Egyptians the hope of being reborn in the afterlife upon their death. Similarly, household and personal items made other ideas, such as the fact that certain objects could provide their owner or wearer with specific powers, a social fact and part of the universe of meaning. Methods of communication with the dead and with gods show how the symbolic universe and the sacred cosmos were socially objectivated. Physical items such as letters, statues, stelae and votive offerings were used and would have been familiar sights to ancient Egyptians. The majority of ancient Egyptians were illiterate and so it is likely that they would have been able to assign meaning to such items without being able to read what they were inscribed with.<sup>1514</sup> They would probably have been aware (although the evidence cannot prove this for certain) that these items were linked to the symbolic universe and sacred cosmos, and that they represented the notion that the world of everyday life and the world of the gods and the dead were connected. Consequently, such items socially objectivated the symbolic universe and sacred cosmos even when they were not actually being used by an individual for their intended purpose; simply seeing them would have been a subconscious reminder of the universe of meaning and its associated elements.

The concept that human beings are able to become Selves is an important aspect of Luckmann's theory of invisible religion. As a Self, the individual is able to engage with and internalise the universe of meaning, and this internalisation and engagement can be seen as the way in which individual religiosity is formed. In addition, Luckmann argues that the social processes by which the universe of meaning is formed can be seen as fundamentally

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<sup>1514</sup> Baines 1983; Baines and Eyre 1983.

religious. Consequently, the act of becoming a Self forms individual religiosity within each person. The evidence considered in this thesis implies that this aspect of Luckmann's theory occurred in ancient Egypt, but it is not able to prove it for certain.

The three aspects of ancient Egyptian culture discussed as part of this research are all examples of way in which the universe of meaning was created. Festivals were events that individuals would have attended and participated in with other members of the community. They helped establish universal truths, for example the fact that ancient Egyptians had the chance of being reborn in the afterlife.<sup>1515</sup> Consequently, festivals were an opportunity for ancient Egyptians to come together and establish, maintain, engage with, and internalise the universe of meaning. They would have reaffirmed each individual's sense of Self and would have facilitated the creation and maintenance of individual religion. According to Luckmann's theory, the desire to attend a festival and to participate in the activities associated with it can be considered to reflect an individual's subconscious need to continue to construct a universe of meaning and maintain the status of being a Self. However, this thesis has been unable to prove this using the evidence considered.

Similarly, methods of communication with the dead and with gods can be seen as ways in which a universe of meaning was created. These methods of communication helped to establish what was possible and what was not with regards to the everyday world and the netherworld. By using these methods of communication an individual was creating, maintaining, engaging with, and internalising the universe of meaning and continuing their existence as a Self.

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<sup>1515</sup> See O'Connor 2009: 16, 31.

Household and personal items can also be seen as ways in which ordinary ancient Egyptians became Selves. They aided the construction of an objective and moral universe of meaning because they helped to give structure and a sense of purpose to the daily lives of ordinary ancient Egyptians. They enabled individuals to establish themselves within the universe of meaning and to express this outwardly, if they desired. The extent to which household and personal items can be considered to have facilitated the creation of a universe of meaning with others is slightly less clear. Many of the activities associated with household and personal items, such as the wearing of amulets or the use of decorative cosmetic items, appear to have been relatively solitary acts. However, if an individual was to wear an amulet in public and was seen by other individuals who were also wearing amulets, this could be considered to fulfil the 'with others' element of Luckmann's theory. The same can be said of an individual who used a mirror with a Hathoric design and then compared her mirror with a neighbour's; a person who chose to purchase a bed with images of Bes on it and then discussed his purchase with a friend; a family who made offerings to their ancestors together rather than individually. All of these actions help to create and maintain the universe of meaning.

As mentioned above, the social processes by which a universe of meaning is created are considered by Luckmann to be fundamentally religious. Therefore, in order to understand individual religiosity in ancient Egypt, some consideration must be given to these social processes which make religion a social fact. Two of the key social processes are ritual (institutionalised religious conduct) and doctrine (institutionalised religious ideas). Ancient Egyptian examples of ritual and doctrine demonstrate the religious actions and ideas that ordinary Egyptians faced on a daily basis. However, it must be noted that it is often difficult

to find clear evidence of doctrine because an individual's thoughts and feelings are intangible and subsequently are not clearly articulated by evidence.

Examples of ritual can be seen in festivals. At the Festival of Osiris at Abydos, ordinary ancient Egyptians watched the procession taking Osiris to U-Pequer and joined in by shouting, singing, dancing, etc.<sup>1516</sup> They also made votive offerings and buried corn mummies, erected statues and stelae, and sometimes chose to be buried at Abydos despite the fact that it may not have been their birth town.<sup>1517</sup> All of these activities can be considered to be examples of ritual because of the festival's links to state religion. The festival was organised and controlled by the state and the actions of ordinary ancient Egyptians during the festival were guided by the state. The same can be said of the Beautiful Feast of the Valley during which ordinary ancient Egyptians joined in with the procession of Amun. They then held feasts in the necropolis to honour their deceased ancestors and to ensure eternal life for their ancestors, as well as for themselves once they died.<sup>1518</sup>

Household and personal items can also be considered to show evidence of ritual. The 'action' element of the definition of ritual is clearly demonstrated, for example the use of architectural features for making offerings to the dead or gods, the selection and use of furniture decorated with religious symbolism, the storing of cosmetic items in pots shaped like deities, and the wearing of protective amulets. These actions can be viewed as both religious and institutionalised because of their links with state theology. Many of the actions seek to mimic the activities that occurred as part of state religion, such as the giving of

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<sup>1516</sup> See Section 3.4.2.

<sup>1517</sup> See Sections 3.4.3, 3.4.5 and 3.4.7.

<sup>1518</sup> See Sections 3.6.2 and 3.6.4.

offerings which occurred daily in the temples, or the wearing of amulets which was a key element of state funerary beliefs.

Ritual is also evident when methods of communicating with the dead and with gods are considered. Each method of communication involves an action on the part of the individual wishing to communicate with the dead or the gods, from paying a scribe to write a letter to a deceased relative, to consulting the dream book (or an individual with the knowledge of the dream book) to find out the meaning of a dream. These actions can be considered to be institutionalised because they are linked to one of the most important beliefs of state religion; that communication with the dead and with gods was possible. Many methods of communication with the dead and with gods, such as the giving of votive offerings or the petitioning of oracles, attempt to emulate activities that would have taken place as part of state religion.

As mentioned above, doctrine is less certainly demonstrated by the three aspects of ancient Egyptian culture discussed as part of this research (festivals, household and personal items, and methods of communication with the dead and with gods). They all suggest, but cannot prove, that ordinary ancient Egyptians participated in these aspects of culture because they believed in a certain set of ideas. These ideas include the existence of the gods, the existence of an afterlife, the ability to communicate with the gods and those in the afterlife, the concept that inanimate objects could provide protection and power if in the correct form, and the fact that, from the New Kingdom onward, all ancient Egyptians had the opportunity to be reborn in the afterlife. Some of these concepts were directly linked to state religion,

while others developed and evolved from state religion. In both cases the concepts can be considered to be examples of doctrine.

Both the objective and the subjective dimensions of religiosity need to be considered in order to understand individual religiosity fully. The objective dimension is defined as observable behaviour and the subjective dimension is defined as religious opinions or attitudes.<sup>1519</sup>

The objective dimension of religiosity is demonstrated by the three aspects of ancient Egyptian culture considered in this thesis.<sup>1520</sup> With regards to festivals, the objective dimension is shown as a result of the specific acts that ordinary ancient Egyptians carried out during festivals. At the Festival of Osiris at Abydos, the archaeological evidence demonstrates that individuals travelled from different cities to attend the festival, that they participated in the procession from Abydos to U-Pequer, and that they buried corn mummies and erected stelae during the festival.<sup>1521</sup> At the Beautiful Feast of the valley, individuals participated in the procession and held a feast at the tombs of their ancestors.<sup>1522</sup> These are all examples of observable behaviour. The same can be said of household and personal items; the building of certain architectural features within the home, the use of cosmetic items decorated with religious symbolism, and the wearing of amulets. They can all be considered to show the objective dimension of religiosity and therefore be able to provide

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<sup>1519</sup> See Section 2.2.1.

<sup>1520</sup> For festivals, see Chapter 3. For household and personal items, see Chapter 4. For communication with the dead and with gods, see Chapter 5.

<sup>1521</sup> See Section 3.3.

<sup>1522</sup> See Section 3.5.



information regarding individual religiosity in ancient Egypt.<sup>1523</sup> Methods of communication with the dead and with gods also provide evidence of the objective dimension of religiosity. Examples of observable behaviour are provided by letters to the dead, anthropoid busts and *3h ikr n R<sup>c</sup>* stelae, prayer, votive offerings and oracles.<sup>1524</sup> According to Luckmann's theory, these three aspects of ancient Egyptian culture make it clear that individual religiosity existed in ancient Egypt and that some individuals chose to express their individual religiosity through observable behaviour.

Festivals, household and personal items, and communication with the dead and with gods show the subjective dimension of religiosity to an extent. However, due to this dimension's concern with opinions and attitudes, the evidence considered is unable to provide firm conclusions regarding the subjective dimension of religiosity. Each of these aspects of ancient Egyptian culture indicates that ordinary ancient Egyptians made choices regarding their participation. However, there may also have been other contributing factors such as peer pressure and following tradition. If an individual's actions are considered to show choice, then these choices can be considered to reflect the religious opinions or attitudes of those individuals making them. For example, the choice made by an individual to wear an amulet could demonstrate that they believed that certain objects could imbue them with powers, or the decision to write a letter to a deceased relative could indicate the belief that the living could communicate with the dead.<sup>1525</sup> Unfortunately, the evidence considered is unable to prove this for certain. The subjective dimension of religiosity, as suggested by the

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<sup>1523</sup> See Chapter 4, in particular Sections 4.3, 4.5 and 4.6.

<sup>1524</sup> See Chapter 5, in particular Sections 5.3.1, 5.3.2, 5.4.1, 5.4.2 and 5.4.3.

<sup>1525</sup> For amulets, see Section 4.6. For letters to the dead, see Section 5.3.1.

three aspects of ancient Egyptian culture discussed above, provides an insight into the religiosity of an individual. When combined with the evidence for the objective dimension of religiosity, a clearer understanding of individual religiosity can be gained.

In order to understand individual religiosity, the historical and institutional reality of ritual and belief must also be considered. Some of the social processes that make up the universe of meaning are historical in that they are passed down to individuals from previous generations. Therefore, it is important to note when considering the three elements of ancient Egyptian culture discussed in this research that some aspects of these elements could show inherited or habitual actions rather than invisible religion and subsequently individual religiosity. For example, an individual could have attended a festival because that is what his ancestors did and because it provided a break from his daily life.<sup>1526</sup> Similarly, a person may have believed that they could communicate with the dead through dreams because that is what other members of society believed.<sup>1527</sup> It is important to consider the historical element of the world view or universe of meaning in order to understand individual religiosity in ancient Egypt, but it is also essential not to dismiss certain acts as being the result of habitual or inherited actions and therefore unable to provide information about individual religiosity.

While it is clear that the application of Luckmann's theory to individual religiosity in ancient Egypt provides an additional methodology for the study of this subject, this research has also demonstrated that there are some limitations to this approach. Firstly, the concerns raised

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<sup>1526</sup> For festivals, see Chapter 3.

<sup>1527</sup> For communication with the dead via dreams, see Section 5.3.3.

by Weigert and discussed in Section 2.2.2 must be born in mind.<sup>1528</sup> When using Luckmann's theory, the researcher must remain self-conscious and ensure that he does not define the term 'religion' according to his own definition of religion.<sup>1529</sup> Secondly, Luckmann's theory was designed with modern (1960s) society in mind. Consequently, some of the issues that affected ancient Egyptian society (access to religion, restricted knowledge, low levels of literacy, etc.) are not considered by his theory. In order to utilise the theory of invisible religion effectively, it may be advisable to consider it alongside other theories, such as the agency theory.<sup>1530</sup> Finally, due to the nature of the archaeological and literary sources relating to individual religiosity in ancient Egypt, and due to the conceptual nature of Luckmann's theory, there is often not enough firm evidence to draw concrete conclusions from the application of the theory of invisible religion. Instead, sometimes only tentative and speculative conclusions can be drawn. However, notwithstanding these limitations, the focus on religious sentiment and the individual that occurs as a result of the application of Luckmann's theory makes it a valuable tool for the study of individual religiosity in ancient Egypt.

## 6.2 Key issues and individual religiosity in ancient Egypt

A question raised by the existing research into individual religiosity in ancient Egypt (as discussed in Section 2.4) is whether it had any connection to state or official religion.

Previously, scholars such as Assmann have argued that individual religiosity was distinct

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<sup>1528</sup> See Weigert 1974.

<sup>1529</sup> Weigert 1974: 184.

<sup>1530</sup> Weiss 2012: 196-7; Weiss 2015: 15-9.

from state religion.<sup>1531</sup> However, more recent studies such as those of Stevens and Weiss demonstrate that state religion and individual religiosity were linked.<sup>1532</sup> The research carried out in this thesis supports the more recent view of scholars. Festivals demonstrate the link between individual religiosity and state religion because they were controlled and run by the state.<sup>1533</sup> At the Festival of Osiris at Abydos, individuals participated in the procession from Abydos to the supposed tomb of Osiris at U-Pequer.<sup>1534</sup> During the procession a mythical play was performed in which key scenes from the myth of Osiris were re-enacted.<sup>1535</sup> This element of the festival developed from state theology and the participation of ordinary ancient Egyptians in this aspect of the festival would have influenced their creation of a universe of meaning. Although it cannot be proven for certain, according to Luckmann's theory the Osiris myth and its connotations regarding rebirth in the afterlife would have been engaged with and internalised by the individuals present at the festival. At the Beautiful Feast of the Valley at Thebes the state concept of rebirth in the afterlife was also highlighted.<sup>1536</sup> Individuals held feasts at the tombs of their ancestors and this served the purpose of unifying the living and the dead, as well as maintaining the memory of the deceased which would ensure that they would be resurrected in the afterlife.<sup>1537</sup> It is likely that those individuals who feasted at the tombs of their ancestors believed that rebirth in the afterlife was possible and wanted to guarantee it for their ancestors, as well as for themselves.

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<sup>1531</sup> Assmann 1995: 190; Assmann 2002: 2002.

<sup>1532</sup> Stevens 2009: 9; Weiss 2015: 183.

<sup>1533</sup> See Section 3.7.

<sup>1534</sup> See Section 3.4.2.

<sup>1535</sup> See Section 3.4.2.

<sup>1536</sup> See Section 3.5.

<sup>1537</sup> See Section 3.6.4.

The consideration of household and personal items from the perspective of invisible religion also suggests that individual religiosity was linked to state religion.<sup>1538</sup> If architectural features such as platforms and wall niches are interpreted as house altars and places for ritualistic actions respectively, then it is evident that ordinary ancient Egyptians were attempting to re-enact the activities that occurred on a daily basis in state temples.<sup>1539</sup> The giving of offerings to the gods was a key aspect of state religion and appears to have influenced the creation of a universe of meaning. In this case, the objective dimension of individual religiosity mirrors the objective dimension of state religion, therefore implying that they were linked. There are examples of wall niches found within domestic settings that have been interpreted as false doors.<sup>1540</sup> These are a common feature in funerary architecture and often appear within tomb complexes.<sup>1541</sup> A false door was intended to allow the *ka* of a deceased individual to accept offerings from the living.<sup>1542</sup> According to the theory of invisible religion, the presence of false doors within houses can be interpreted as showing that ordinary ancient Egyptians had engaged with and internalised this element of state religion; they believed that their deceased ancestors could accept the offerings they made within their homes through false doors. The wearing of amulets also shows a link between individual religiosity and state funerary beliefs. Amulets were placed within the wrappings of mummies in order to provide the deceased individual with protection and

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<sup>1538</sup> See Section 4.7.

<sup>1539</sup> For platforms as house altars, see Brunner-Traut 1955: 30; Badawy 1968: 65; Bierbrier 1982: 69; Robins 1996: 29; Koltsida 2006; Stevens 2006: 234; Kleinke 2007: 75-6; Koltsida 2007b: 24; Weiss 2009. For wall niches as places for ritualistic actions, see Peet and Woolley 1923: 86, 89-90; Stevens 2003: 152; Weiss 2009: 200.

<sup>1540</sup> See Section 4.3.3.

<sup>1541</sup> Taylor 2001: 156-8.

<sup>1542</sup> Taylor 2001: 156-8.

powers on their journey through the afterlife.<sup>1543</sup> The wearing of amulets by ordinary, living individuals implies that they believed in the concept, promoted by the state, that amulets could provide powers and protection to the wearer as they did for a mummy. With regards to furniture and cosmetic items, they are often decorated with religious symbolism that is linked to state theology. For example, the goddess Hathor and the god Ra, who often feature as part of mirror designs, are important deities in state religion.<sup>1544</sup> Rituals and beliefs surrounding such deities in state religion were filtered down to ordinary ancient Egyptians and subsequently formed part of their universe of meaning.

The link between individual religiosity and state religion is also evident when methods of communication with the dead and with gods are considered. The methods of communication all indicate that ordinary ancient Egyptians had engaged with and internalised an element of the universe of meaning which stemmed from state religion. This was the fact that communication with the dead and with gods was possible. This belief was not exclusive to individual religiosity and had its origins in state religion. The very existence of the different methods for communicating with the dead and with gods shows that ordinary ancient Egyptians believed it was possible. Some of the methods by which ordinary ancient Egyptians attempted to communicate with the dead or with gods mimic the activities that occurred in the state cult. The giving of votive offerings reflects the daily giving of offerings which occurred in the state temples and the consultation of oracles was something that was done by the king and the elite, as well as ordinary individuals.<sup>1545</sup>

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<sup>1543</sup> Andrews 1994b: 6.

<sup>1544</sup> See Section 4.5.1.

<sup>1545</sup> For votive offerings, see Section 5.4.2. For oracles, see Section 5.4.3.

In addition to the connection between state religion and individual religiosity, three key issues regarding individual religiosity have been identified by Luiselli.<sup>1546</sup> The first of these is the apparent 'intimacy and strong internalisation of the individual's emotions' regarding religiosity.<sup>1547</sup> The consideration of three aspects of ancient Egyptian culture from the perspective of invisible religion has suggested that the intimacy of each individual's emotions varied. The universe of meaning would have been slightly different for each individual and the social processes required to maintain their status as a Self would also have been different. Festivals, which were a form of ritual, clearly demonstrate that intimacy and internalisation of an individual's emotions could vary with regard to religiosity. Verbovsek, who considers the correlation of rituals, emotions and literature in ancient Egypt,<sup>1548</sup> demonstrates why it is not accurate to state that all ancient Egyptians had intimate and strongly internalised religious emotions:

Rituals generate and realise the affiliation with a group or society. They create individual, social or cultural identities and solidarities that are to be confirmed by the act of performance. Otherwise, even in the framework of rituals, community, solidarity, and concerted action stimulate, reproduce, or symbolise individual or collective emotions, both positive and negative, e.g. happiness (to the point of ecstasy), grief, fear, or fear relief. These can be increased by synchronised experience and sensual stimulation, for instance through music, vocals, dance, prayers, vows, and other forms of performance, and even by using meaningful insignia, signs, or symbols... Emotional intensity increases with a shared focus of

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<sup>1546</sup> Luiselli 2008b: 1-2.

<sup>1547</sup> Luiselli 2008b: 1-2.

<sup>1548</sup> Verbovsek 2011.

attention and concerted ritualised practices or experiences during the performance.<sup>1549</sup>

The consideration of festivals, household and personal items, and methods of communication with the dead in relation to Luckmann's theory of invisible religion also demonstrates that there were numerous opportunities for individuals to outwardly express their emotions regarding individual religiosity.<sup>1550</sup> That is not to say that none of their religious emotions were internalised; the internalisation of the universe of meaning is an essential step if an individual is to become and remain a Self. However, there is evidence for the objective dimension and, to a lesser extent, the subjective dimension of religiosity which implies that religious emotions were outwardly expressed.

Another issue regarding the study of individual religiosity identified by Luiselli is the particular attention paid by some scholars to the issue of individual religiosity as the religion of the lower class (non-elite and non-royal ancient Egyptians).<sup>1551</sup> The research carried out in this thesis shows that this was not the case. According to Luckmann's theory, all individuals need to create a universe of meaning in order to become Selves, regardless of their social standing.<sup>1552</sup> The archaeological evidence considered for festivals, household and personal items, and communication with the dead and with gods shows a wide range of quality both in terms of materials and craftsmanship. This could be interpreted as demonstrating that ordinary ancient Egyptians with a higher level of individual religiosity were willing to spend more money on outwardly expressing their individual religiosity. However, it is more likely

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<sup>1549</sup> Verbovsek 2011: 239.

<sup>1550</sup> See Verbovsek 2011: 240-52.

<sup>1551</sup> Luiselli 2008b: 1-2.

<sup>1552</sup> Luckmann 1967: 48-9.



that this demonstrates that individuals from a wide range of social backgrounds participated in acts of invisible religion. Luiselli states that different social classes would have used different methods to communicate with the gods; the non-elite would probably have favoured the giving of votive offerings, but that does not mean that their individual religiosity was inferior to that of elite individuals who could afford to communicate with the gods via written testimonials.<sup>1553</sup> It is important to remember that the social process experienced by elite ancient Egyptians would have differed to those experienced by ordinary ancient Egyptians, and that they may have been more closely linked to state religion. Therefore, elite ancient Egyptians may have experienced social processes that were more overtly 'religious' than ordinary ancient Egyptians. Luckmann states that 'inequality in the distribution of religious representations will induce, at the very least, the consolidation of different versions of the sacred cosmos among occupational groups and social strata'.<sup>1554</sup>

The final issue raised by Luiselli with regards to the study of individual religiosity in ancient Egypt is that it was an innovation of the New Kingdom.<sup>1555</sup> Many Egyptologists have already argued that this was not the case<sup>1556</sup> and the application of Luckmann's theory of invisible religion to festivals, household and personal items, and communication with the dead and with gods supports this argument. Ordinary ancient Egyptians would have needed to create a universe of meaning with others in order to become (and remain) Selves during all periods of ancient Egyptian history, not just the New Kingdom. As mentioned, ritual and doctrine are considered by Luckmann to be the key social processes by which the universe of meaning is

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<sup>1553</sup> Luiselli 2011b: 233.

<sup>1554</sup> Luckmann 1967: 65.

<sup>1555</sup> Luiselli 2008b: 1-2.

<sup>1556</sup> See, for example, Baines 1987: 96; Stevens 2009: 1; Weiss 2009: 207. See also Section 2.4.

formed.<sup>1557</sup> Examples of both ritual and doctrine can be seen before the New Kingdom. The facts that the Festival of Osiris at Abydos was taking place by the Middle Kingdom and that many mirrors decorated with religious symbolism date to before the New Kingdom demonstrate ritual existing prior to the New Kingdom.<sup>1558</sup> Evidence for doctrine existing before the New Kingdom can be seen in the fact that ordinary ancient Egyptians believed that it was possible to communicate with the dead and with gods throughout ancient Egyptian history.<sup>1559</sup> It is also possible to see examples of the objective and subjective dimensions of religiosity before the New Kingdom. The objective dimension is demonstrated by the wearing of amulets, the giving of votive offerings and the creation of furniture decorated with religious symbolism, all of which occurred prior to the New Kingdom.<sup>1560</sup> The subjective dimension of religiosity before the New Kingdom is shown by the belief that inanimate objects could provide protection and powers to their owner/wearer, and in the belief that individuals could communicate with the dead and with gods.<sup>1561</sup>

As can be seen from Table 5 (see below), the evidence use in this thesis is spread from the Old Kingdom to the New Kingdom. This research has found that Luckmann's theory is applicable, albeit sometimes only in part, to all the evidence considered as part of this research. However, what is also clear from Table 5 is the fact that a large percentage of the examples of invisible religion identified in this research date to the New Kingdom. This is likely to be because the universe of meaning and its associated sacred cosmos was socially

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<sup>1557</sup> Luckmann 1967: 22.

<sup>1558</sup> For the Festival of Osiris at Abydos, see Sections 3.3 and 3.4. For mirrors, see Section 4.5.1.

<sup>1559</sup> See Section 5.5.

<sup>1560</sup> For amulets, see Section 4.6. For votive offerings, see Section 5.4.2. For furniture, see Section 4.4.

<sup>1561</sup> For inanimate objects providing protection and powers, see Section 4.6. For communication with the dead and with gods, see Chapter 5.

objectivated in different ways during different time periods. During the New Kingdom, the universe of meaning may have been more clearly socially objectivated than during earlier periods. This was in part because the historical element of the universe of meaning became stronger as time passed meaning that the universe of meaning was more easily created and maintained. The clear social objectivation of the universe of meaning during the New Kingdom could explain why Egyptologists such as Erman and Breasted argued that the New Kingdom was the 'age of personal piety'.<sup>1562</sup> However, the clear social objectivation that occurred during the New Kingdom does not indicate that individual religiosity did not exist during earlier periods.

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<sup>1562</sup> Erman 1911: 1986; Breasted 1912: 349.

**Table 5:** Chronology of evidence used in this thesis<sup>1563</sup>

<b>Time Period</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Thesis Section</b>
Old Kingdom	Cosmetic palettes	4.5.2
Old Kingdom	Letter to the dead (Cairo Linen)	5.3.1
Old Kingdom	Mortuary stelae referring to the worship of city gods as personal gods	5.4.1
Old Kingdom to First Intermediate Period	Letters to the dead (Papyrus Nag' ed-Deir N3737, Papyrus Nag' ed-Deir N3500)	5.3.1
Old Kingdom to Middle Kingdom	Letters to the dead (Qau Bowl, Chicago Jar Stand)	5.3.1
Old Kingdom to New Kingdom	Beds	4.4.1
Old Kingdom to New Kingdom	Chairs	4.4.2
Old Kingdom to New Kingdom	Stools	4.4.3
Old Kingdom to New Kingdom	Boxes and chests	4.4.4
Old Kingdom to New Kingdom	Mirrors	4.5.1
Old Kingdom to New Kingdom	Cosmetic pots or vases	4.5.2

<sup>1563</sup> The time period given only refers to the relevant time period/s covered in this thesis (Old Kingdom to New Kingdom). Precise dates have been given for individual pieces of evidence where known.

<b>Time Period</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Thesis Section</b>
Old Kingdom to New Kingdom	Amulets	4.6.1, 4.6.2
Old Kingdom to New Kingdom	Votive offerings	5.4.2
First Intermediate Period	Letters to the dead (Hu Bowl, Misplaced Stela)	5.3.1
First Intermediate Period to Middle Kingdom	Letter to the dead (Louvre Bowl)	5.3.1
Middle Kingdom	The Ikhnofret Stela (The Festival of Osiris at Abydos)	3.3, 3.4
Middle Kingdom	Letters to the dead (Berlin Bowl, Cairo Bowl)	5.3.1
Middle Kingdom to New Kingdom	Cosmetic spoons	4.5.2
[Middle Kingdom to] New Kingdom	Communications with oracles	5.4.3
Second Intermediate Period to New Kingdom	Letter to the dead (Oxford Bowl)	5.3.1
New Kingdom	Theban temples and tombs (The Beautiful Feast of the Valley)	3.5, 3.6
New Kingdom	Platforms from Malkata, Medinet Habu, Deir el-Medina and Amarna	4.3.1
New Kingdom	Wall niches from Deir el-Medina and Amarna	4.3.2
New Kingdom	Vertical niches/false doors from Deir el-Medina and Amarna	4.3.3

<b>Time Period</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Thesis Section</b>
New Kingdom	Wall paintings from Deir el-Medina and Amarna	4.3.4
New Kingdom	So-called cultic furniture from Deir el-Medina and Amarna	4.4.5
New Kingdom	Furniture from the intact tomb of the architect Kha	4.4.6
New Kingdom	Amulets discovered in non-mortuary contexts	4.6.3
New Kingdom	Letter to the dead (Leiden Papyrus)	5.3.1
New Kingdom	Anthropoid busts (predominantly from Deir el-Medina)	5.3.2
New Kingdom	<i>3h ikr n R<sup>c</sup></i> stelae (predominantly from Deir el-Medina)	5.3.2
New Kingdom	The Dream Book (P. Chester Beatty III, recto 1-11)	5.3.3
New Kingdom	Formulaic greetings from Late Ramesside Letters	5.4.1
New Kingdom	Shrines at state temples (e.g. the 'shrine of the hearing ear' at Karnak)	5.4.1
New Kingdom	Intermediary statues	5.4.1
New Kingdom	Prayer stelae	5.4.1
New Kingdom	The biography of Djehutiemhab	5.4.4
New Kingdom	The biography of Ipuy	5.4.4

### 6.3 Suggestions for further research

There are some aspects of ancient Egyptian culture that have not been included in this research, due to the reasons discussed in Section 1.3. These are speech and language, gesture, art, different social groups, and a wider time period (pre-Old Kingdom and post-New Kingdom). The value of using Luckmann's theory to learn more about individual religiosity in ancient Egypt could be further explored by applying his theory to these aspects of ancient Egyptian culture.

Speech and language is one of the social processes that would have aided the creation of a universe of meaning. In addition, it would have been essential for the communication of the universe of meaning from one individual to another. Consequently, speech and language is highly likely to have reflected the individual religiosity of ordinary ancient Egyptians.

Changes in speech patterns and popular words over time could be identified and analysed in order to further the understanding of how individual religiosity developed in ancient Egypt.

Gesture can be considered to be the subconscious external expression of an individual's engagement with and internalisation of the universe of meaning. The consideration of all known ancient Egyptian religious gestures and the identification of these gestures used in non-religious situations would further the understanding of individual religiosity.

The use of specific colours, motifs and styles in art that would typically be associated with state religion should be compared and contrasted with the colours, motifs and styles used in art typically associated with a non-religious context. It is likely that this would add further weight to the argument that state religion and individual religiosity were linked. In addition,

art was a way in which ordinary ancient Egyptians created, maintained and engaged with the universe of meaning. Evidence of doctrine in supposedly non-religious art may further the understanding of individual religiosity in ancient Egypt.

Ancient Egyptian literature (stories and myths) has been considered from the perspective of Luckmann's theory by Bommas who focussed on the story of Sinuhe.<sup>1564</sup> The consideration of other examples of Egyptian literature in this way would highlight many more examples of invisible religion within the texts. As well as containing descriptions and discussions of invisible religion, the texts themselves are likely to be identified as examples of invisible religion and a way in which the universe of meaning was created and maintained. In order to glean as much information as possible from examples of invisible religion present in ancient Egyptian literature, it would be beneficial to collate all the examples into a table or catalogue. This would be a significant piece of research that would enable the examples to easily be compared and would also facilitate the identification of any patterns in the frequency and description of the examples of invisible religion.

The application of Luckmann's theory of invisible religion to the archaeological and literary evidence for different social groups (men, women, children, inhabitants of different towns and cities, individuals with different occupations, different social classes) would identify any pattern in individual religiosity that may exist between or within different social groups. This would further the understanding of individual religiosity. It would provide more evidence about the way individual religiosity is formed and the extent to which the creation of a universe of meaning with others influenced the individual religiosity of ordinary ancient

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<sup>1564</sup> Bommas 2014. See also Section 2.2.3.



Egyptians. It would also offer information regarding the way different social groups interacted and whether these social groups were clearly defined in ancient Egypt or not. The consideration of different social groups may also demonstrate the way in which the social processes that aided the creation of the universe of meaning, such as ritual and doctrine, were disseminated through society.

This thesis has presented evidence for invisible religion in ancient Egypt from the Old Kingdom to the New Kingdom (see Table 5). A suggested area for further research is the consideration of the theory of invisible religion in relation to individual religiosity both before the Old Kingdom and after the New Kingdom.<sup>1565</sup> Research in to the Predynastic Period, the Third Intermediate Period, the Late Period, and the Graeco-Roman Period would improve the understanding of how the historical reality of ritual and belief impacted the creation of a universe of meaning and, subsequently, individual religiosity. Research into the periods before the Old Kingdom and after the New Kingdom would also provide further evidence for the conclusions outlined in this thesis.

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<sup>1565</sup> To date, very little research has been carried out into personal religion before the Old Kingdom and after the New Kingdom (see Luiselli 2011a: 45-6). Notable exceptions to this are, Burkert 1996: 3-14; Bommas 2005; Del Vesco 2010; Adderley 2015.

# Chapter 7

## CONCLUSIONS

Through the application of Luckmann's theory of invisible religion to ancient Egyptian culture, this thesis has demonstrated that festivals, household and personal items, and communication with the dead and with gods can all be considered to be examples of invisible religion. Consequently, it can be stated that invisible religion did exist in ancient Egypt. Invisible religion can be defined as aspects of culture to which Luckmann's theory can be successfully applied. To the modern observer, the aspects of culture can sometimes be seen as religious and sometimes not. However, to ordinary ancient Egyptians they would have been normal occurrences. Ordinary ancient Egyptians would have had very little, if any, comprehension of the important role that these events and activities played in creating and maintaining their individual religiosity.

While there are some limitations to the application of Luckmann's theory to the study of individual religiosity in ancient Egypt, these can be mitigated if managed correctly. The application of the theory to individual religiosity is valuable because it enables information to be gained from aspects of ancient Egyptian life that would not usually be considered relevant to the study of individual religiosity. Luckmann's theory encourages the study of religiosity from an individual perspective because it focuses on the concept of the Self and

the importance of the way in which each member of society creates, maintains and internalises the universe of meaning. The application of Luckmann's theory builds on the more recent studies into personal religion that focus on the individual, in particular the work of Weiss in which she uses the agency theory.<sup>1566</sup>

The use of Luckmann's theory has shown that ancient Egyptians did have individual religiosity. However, it is also clear that each person would have created, maintained, engaged with, and internalised the universe of meaning to a different extent. This further emphasises the importance of focussing on the individual when considering the religiousness of ordinary ancient Egyptians.

The application of Luckmann's theory of invisible religion to festivals, household and personal items, and communication with the dead and with gods has enabled the key issues surrounding the study of individual religiosity (as identified in Section 2.6) to be considered.

The key issues, in the form of questions, are:

- Was individual religiosity connected to state or official religion?<sup>1567</sup>
- Did ordinary Egyptians have intimate and strongly internalised emotions regarding individual religiosity?<sup>1568</sup>
- Was individual religiosity a phenomenon of the lower classes?<sup>1569</sup>
- Was individual religiosity an innovation of the New Kingdom?<sup>1570</sup>

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<sup>1566</sup> Weiss 2012: 196-7; Weiss 2015: 15-9. See also, Stevens 2003; Stevens 2006; Stevens 2009; Luiselli 2011b; Luiselli 2012; Weiss 2012; Luiselli 2014; Weiss 2015.

<sup>1567</sup> See Section 2.6.

<sup>1568</sup> See Section 2.6. See also Luiselli 2008b: 1.

<sup>1569</sup> See Section 2.6. See also Luiselli 2008b: 1.

<sup>1570</sup> See Section 2.6. See also Luiselli 2008b: 1.

As already argued in more recent publications, this research demonstrates that there was a link between individual religiosity and state religion.<sup>1571</sup> The link is present in all three of the elements of ancient Egyptian culture considered. Festivals demonstrate the link between state religion and individual religiosity because festivals were controlled and run by the state. The themes and ideas represented during festivals came directly from state theology. However, ordinary ancient Egyptians were able to participate in festivals and their subsequent development of a universe of meaning would have been influenced by state religion. Household and personal items can be seen as an attempt to mimic the actions that would have occurred on a regular basis during state temples. For example, the presence of false doors in the homes of some ordinary ancient Egyptians, and their suggested use as part of an ancestor cult, is directly linked to the use of false doors in funerary architecture.<sup>1572</sup> The existence of methods of communication with the dead and with gods indicates that ordinary ancient Egyptians had engaged with and internalised an element of the universe of meaning. They had internalised the concept that communication with the dead and the gods was possible, which stemmed directly from state religion.

This research has shown that the intimacy of ordinary ancient Egyptians' emotions varied depending on the individual. Each person would have created a slightly different version of the universe of meaning and would have engaged with different social processes in order to maintain his status as a Self. It was possible for ordinary ancient Egyptians to engage with the universe of meaning and to outwardly express their emotions regarding individual religiosity, and some individuals did so more than others. Consequently, it can be said that

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<sup>1571</sup> See Stevens 2009: 9; Weiss 2015: 183.

<sup>1572</sup> Meskell 1998: 231-2. See also Taylor 2001: 156-8.

not all ordinary ancient Egyptians had intimate emotions regarding individual religiosity. The evidence suggests that there were opportunities for individuals to outwardly express their emotions regarding individual religiosity, by wearing amulets or actively participating in festivals. This implies that ordinary ancient Egyptians did not have strongly internalised emotions relating to individual religiosity. While it was important to internalise some elements of the universe of meaning in order to become and remain a Self, it was also possible for individuals to outwardly express their religious emotions.

The application of Luckmann's theory has shown that individual religiosity was not a phenomenon of the lower classes. All individuals in ancient Egypt needed to create a universe of meaning in order to become Selves, regardless of their social standing. The universe of meaning created by royal and elite individuals is likely to have been different to the universe of meaning created by ordinary ancient Egyptians but that does not mean that people of a higher social class were not individually religious. The elite would have engaged with various social processes in order to create a universe of meaning and, according to Luckmann, these social processes are fundamentally religious. In addition, the archaeological evidence for festivals, household and personal items, and communication with the dead and with gods shows great diversity in terms of both the materials and craftsmanship. This indicates that individuals from a wide range of social backgrounds participated in examples of invisible religion, including the king.

This research has shown that individual religiosity was not an innovation of the New Kingdom. Ordinary ancient Egyptians would have needed to create a universe of meaning in order to become and remain Selves at all periods of ancient Egyptian history, not just the

New Kingdom. The social processes, such as ritual and doctrine, which helped individuals to form a universe of meaning, existed both before and after the New Kingdom. Ordinary ancient Egyptians would have had the opportunity to internalise these social processes and subsequently develop individual religiosity. As shown in Table 5, this thesis has considered a range of evidence which dates from the Old Kingdom to the New Kingdom. However, Table 5 also illustrates that the evidence used predominantly dates to the New Kingdom. This is likely to be because the universe of meaning was socially objectivated more clearly during the New Kingdom, partly due to the historical element of the universe of meaning. The clearer social objectivation of the universe of meaning during the New Kingdom explains why this period was termed the 'age of personal piety' by Erman and Breasted.<sup>1573</sup> This research has substantiated the view held by many modern Egyptologists that Erman and Breasted's interpretation was not correct.<sup>1574</sup>

The application of Luckmann's theory has shown that individual religiosity was influenced by state religion and would have been experienced by ancient Egyptians from all social classes, both before and during the New Kingdom. However, the intimacy of each individual's emotions regarding individual religiosity varied and would have been outwardly expressed differently. The evidence for invisible religion in ancient Egypt demonstrates that ordinary ancient Egyptians would have referred regularly to the mindset of religion and did not lead largely secular lives.

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<sup>1573</sup> Erman 1911: 1986; Breasted 1912:349.

<sup>1574</sup> See, for example, Baines 1987: 96; Stevens 2009: 1; Weiss 2009: 207. See also Section 2.4.



APPENDIX I:  
DEIR EL-MEDINA AND TELL EL-AMARNA



A significant amount of the archaeological evidence discussed in this thesis originates from either Deir el-Medina or Tell el-Amarna. Consequently, it has been considered necessary to include a brief description of each site and to note the excavations carried out at each site to date. In addition, the key issues that arise when using archaeological evidence from both Deir el-Medina and Tell el-Amarna are considered.

## **Deir el-Medina**

Deir el-Medina is an ancient Egyptian village that was once home to the workers (and their families) responsible for building and decorating the tombs of New Kingdom royals in the Theban necropolis.<sup>1575</sup> The village is situated 'west of modern Luxor on the left (west) bank of the Nile about half a mile beyond the cultivated land bordering the river, and between the Valley of the Kings and the Valley of the Queens'.<sup>1576</sup> The village is located in a narrow valley and was surrounded by a wall.<sup>1577</sup> According to Lesko, it is unlikely to have been a pleasant place in which to live:

The barren hillsides that surrounded it [Deir el-Medina] reflect the heat of the desert sun on it, and the hill of Gurnet Murai effectively cuts off some of the prevailing north breeze and much of the view of

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<sup>1575</sup> There are a vast amount of publications relating to the site of Deir el-Medina, too numerous to list here. For publications relating to Deir el-Medina used in this thesis, see: Bruyère 1923; Schiaparelli 1923; Schiaparelli 1927; Bruyère 1930a; Bruyère 1937b; Vandier d'Abbadie 1938; Bruyère 1939b; Bruyère 1953; Bonnet and Valbelle 1975; Bonnet and Valbelle 1976; Keith-Bennett 1981; Friedman 1985; Valbelle 1985; McDowell 1990; Bomann 1991; Janssen 1992; Friedman 1994; Lesko 1994; Andreu 2002; Grandet 2003; Morgan 2004; Harrington 2005; Klotz 2006; Koltsida 2006; Luiselli 2007b; Janssen 2009; Jauhiainen 2009; Weiss 2009; Keith (with contributions by S. Donnat, A. K. Stevens, N. Harrington) 2011; Weiss 2015.

<sup>1576</sup> Lesko 1994: 2.

<sup>1577</sup> Lesko 1994: 2.

the verdant river valley below. The site had no trees, and all water had to be carried in from half a mile away.<sup>1578</sup>

The site consists of numerous buildings including houses for the workers, religious buildings such as temples or chapels (many of which were associated with specific local gods or the cult of the king), and tombs in the necropolis.<sup>1579</sup>

Deir el-Medina was established during the Eighteenth Dynasty, probably during the reign of Thutmose I but possibly slightly earlier.<sup>1580</sup> There is relatively little information regarding the Eighteenth Dynasty occupation of the site.<sup>1581</sup> However, it is known that the site was abandoned during the Amarna Period.<sup>1582</sup> The site was then re-occupied at the end of the Eighteenth Dynasty during the seventh year of the reign of Horemheb, who restarted work on the Theban necropolis.<sup>1583</sup> The village continued to be occupied and to thrive until the beginning of the Twenty-First Dynasty.

The Egyptian name for the site was *Set Maat* which translates as 'the Place of Truth'.<sup>1584</sup> The site is an unusually well-preserved example of an ancient Egyptian settlement and provided a substantial archive of documents relating to the daily lives of the workers that spans almost 400 years.<sup>1585</sup> Lesko clearly summarises the important information that the myriad of finds from Deir el-Medina are able to provide:

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<sup>1578</sup> Lesko 1994: 2.

<sup>1579</sup> See Bruyère 1937a; Bruyère 1937b; Bruyère 1939b; Bomann 1991; Jauhiainen 2009.

<sup>1580</sup> Lesko 1994: 7.

<sup>1581</sup> Lesko 1994: 7.

<sup>1582</sup> Lesko 1994: 7.

<sup>1583</sup> Lesko 1994: 7.

<sup>1584</sup> Lesko 1994: 7.

<sup>1585</sup> See Lesko 1994: 8.

The sales documents that survive provide important data on prices and exchange in the ancient economy. Private letters reveal details of social relations, parenting, and marriage. Charms and prayers say much of these people's approach to the divine, their beliefs and fears. Egyptologists seeking facts about the history of law and jurisprudence, early medicine and public health, or labour relations naturally turn to the records from Deir el-Medina and their wealth of detail.<sup>1586</sup>

In addition, Deir el-Medina provides archaeological evidence relating to the way in which individuals lived in the village and in their homes.

The majority of the finds from Deir el-Medina were discovered during the major excavations<sup>1587</sup> carried out at the site by the Italian archaeologist Ernesto Schiaparelli between 1905 and 1909<sup>1588</sup> and the French excavations directed by Bernard Bruyère between 1922 and 1951.<sup>1589</sup> Under Bruyère's direction, the entire site (the village, necropolis and rubbish dump) was excavated. However, many items from the largely unprovenanced nineteenth-century collections of the archaeologists Henry Salt and Bernardino Drovetti are believed to have originated from Deir el-Medina.<sup>1590</sup>

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<sup>1586</sup> Lesko 1994: 8.

<sup>1587</sup> For a comprehensive summary of the excavations carried out at Deir el-Medina, see Weiss 2015: 26-31.

<sup>1588</sup> See Schiaparelli 1923; Schiaparelli 1927.

<sup>1589</sup> See, for example, Bruyère 1924; Bruyère 1925; Bruyère 1926; Bruyère 1927; Bruyère 1928; Bruyère 1929; Bruyère 1930b; Bruyère 1931-1933; Bruyère 1934-1935; Bruyère 1937a; Bruyère 1937b; Bruyère 1939b; Bruyère 1952; Bruyère 1953.

<sup>1590</sup> Lesko 1994: 8.

## Tell el-Amarna

Tell el-Amarna is the modern name given to the capital city called Akhetaten, founded by the monotheistic king Akhenaten (Amenhotep IV).<sup>1591</sup> Akhenaten chose to move the capital city from Thebes to Amarna in order to honour the sun god Aten whom he worshipped exclusively, deviating from the traditional polytheism previously practiced in ancient Egypt.<sup>1592</sup> The new capital city was built during the late Eighteenth Dynasty and was abandoned shortly afterwards, approximately 15 years after it was built.<sup>1593</sup>

Amarna is situated on an area of flat desert on the east bank of the Nile, approximately halfway between Memphis and Thebes.<sup>1594</sup> The city is almost completely surrounded by cliffs that are approximately 100 metres high.<sup>1595</sup> The city has been divided into different zones by the modern archaeologists working at the site.<sup>1596</sup> The Central City contained the main buildings including palaces, temples, and administrative buildings.<sup>1597</sup> The Main City was a dense area of housing and another area of housing existed in the North Suburb.<sup>1598</sup>

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<sup>1591</sup> There are a vast amount of publications relating to the site of Tell el-Amarna, too numerous to list here. For publications relating to Tell el-Amarna used in this thesis, see: Petrie 1894; Borchardt 1911; Borchardt 1912; Borchardt 1913; Borchardt 1914; Woolley 1922; Borchardt 1923; Newton 1924; Bissing 1926; Assmann 1972; Martin 1974; Bosse-Griffiths 1977; Samson 1978; Kemp 1979; Borchardt and Ricke 1980; Seidlmayer 1983; Kemp 1984a; Crocker 1985; Kemp 1985a; Bell 1986; Kemp 1987a; Kemp 1987b; Ikram 1989; Kemp 1989a; Bomann 1991; Gyóry 1998; VanDijk 2000; Bickel 2003; Stevens 2003; Stevens 2006; Weatherhead and Kemp 2007.

<sup>1592</sup> Amarna Project 2000a.

<sup>1593</sup> Amarna Project 2000a.

<sup>1594</sup> Amarna Project 2000a.

<sup>1595</sup> Amarna Project 2000a.

<sup>1596</sup> Amarna Project 2000a.

<sup>1597</sup> Amarna Project 2000a.

<sup>1598</sup> Amarna Project 2000a.

The North Suburb lay just beyond the North Palace, which was an isolated building north of the Central City.<sup>1599</sup>

In its current state, a large percentage of the city is sanded over or has been eroded by wind and occasional rain.<sup>1600</sup> In addition, the stonework of the temples, palaces, and houses was completely removed at the end of the Amarna Period for reuse as building materials.<sup>1601</sup> All that remains of these buildings are walls of sun-dried mudbrick.<sup>1602</sup> However, despite the sanding over and erosion, 'because much of [Amarna] lies easily accessible beneath a thin cover of sand and rubble, and because of the excellent preservative properties of the dry desert soil, Amarna is a fundamental source of reference for the architecture and layout of cities in ancient Egypt and a source of evidence for aspects of the life of the times'.<sup>1603</sup>

The site was first excavated in 1892 after the outlines of the city were mapped earlier in the century.<sup>1604</sup> After the initial excavation, intermittent excavations occurred until 1936.<sup>1605</sup>

During these excavations the majority of the royal buildings and around half of the residential area were uncovered.<sup>1606</sup> The current phase of excavations, led by the Egypt Exploration Society, began in 1977.<sup>1607</sup> Amarna is the 'largest readily accessible living site

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<sup>1599</sup> Amarna Project 2000a.

<sup>1600</sup> Amarna Project 2000a.

<sup>1601</sup> Amarna Project 2000a.

<sup>1602</sup> Amarna Project 2000a.

<sup>1603</sup> Amarna Project 2000a.

<sup>1604</sup> Amarna Project 2000a.

<sup>1605</sup> Amarna Project 2000a. For excavation reports, see Petrie 1894; Borchardt 1911; Borchardt 1912; Borchardt 1913; Borchardt 1914; Woolley 1922; Newton 1924.

<sup>1606</sup> Amarna Project 2000a.

<sup>1607</sup> See, for example, Kemp 1984a; Kemp 1985a; Kemp 1986; Kemp 1987a; Kemp 1989a; Kemp 1995a. For a full list of the publications relating to Tell el-Amarna, see Amarna Project 2000b. N.B. Short annual reports appear in the Editorial section of the *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* annually from 1977.

from ancient Egypt' and provides invaluable information regarding the religious experiences and daily lives of ancient Egyptians.<sup>1608</sup>

### **Key issues regarding the archaeological evidence from each site**

Both Deir el-Medina and Tell el-Amarna are unique among the extant settlement sites in ancient Egypt. Therefore, it is essential to consider certain issues when utilising the archaeological evidence from each site:

- Deir el-Medina dates from the Eighteenth to the Twenty-First Dynasty and Amarna dates to the Eighteenth Dynasty. Therefore it is likely that they will be able to provide limited, if any, evidence for earlier and later time periods. It should not be assumed that artefacts from Deir el-Medina and Amarna are representative of earlier or later periods in ancient Egyptian history.
- During the initial excavations at both sites the archaeological methods used and the recording of finds were of a poor standard. Consequently, detailed information about artefacts, such as the exact locations in which they were found, is often unknown.
- Deir el-Medina was an isolated settlement which may have caused the residents to develop different customs to those of the ordinary ancient Egyptians living elsewhere in Egypt, especially regarding religion.<sup>1609</sup>
- Due to their professions, the residents of Deir el-Medina had a much higher level of literacy than the general population of ancient Egypt.<sup>1610</sup>

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<sup>1608</sup> Amarna Project 2000c.

<sup>1609</sup> Weiss 2015: 20-2. It is important to note here that Weiss 2015: 19-23 considers the issues relating to Deir el-Medina and concludes that 'a categorical difference between the inhabitants of Deir el-Medina and those of other settlements in terms of daily religious practice is...unwarranted'.

- Again, due to their professions, the residents of Deir el-Medina had access to state ritual and doctrine that ordinary ancient Egyptians living elsewhere in ancient Egypt would not have.<sup>1611</sup>
- Tell el-Amarna was founded specifically for the monotheistic king Akhenaten. Both before and after his reign, polytheism existed in ancient Egypt. Consequently, the archaeological artefacts produced and used by the inhabitants of Amarna may not be representative of the activities, beliefs, etc. of the rest of the ancient Egyptian population who lived further away from the new capital.
- Much of the artwork and artefacts produced at Amarna are dramatically different in style to that which was produced prior to and after the Amarna Period.<sup>1612</sup> Therefore, the extent to which they can provide evidence of daily life at other points during ancient Egyptian history must be considered carefully.

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<sup>1610</sup> Weiss 2015: 20. See also Haring 2003: 250.

<sup>1611</sup> Weiss 2015: 20.

<sup>1612</sup> Amarna Project 2000a.

# APPENDIX II: TEXTS



## A. The Ikhnofret Stela

Berlin 1204

### Bibliography of key publications

Mariette 1880: Plates 24-6; Schäfer 1904; Breasted 1906: 297-300; Anthes 1974; Lavier 1989; Lichtheim 1973: 123-5. Discussed in Section 3.3 of this thesis.

### Hieroglyphs (in original lines)<sup>1613</sup>

#### *Section 1 – Opening royal titulary*



#### *Section 2 – Titles of Ikhnofret*



#### *Section 3 – The royal command*



#### *Section 4 – Ikhnofret's relationship with the king*

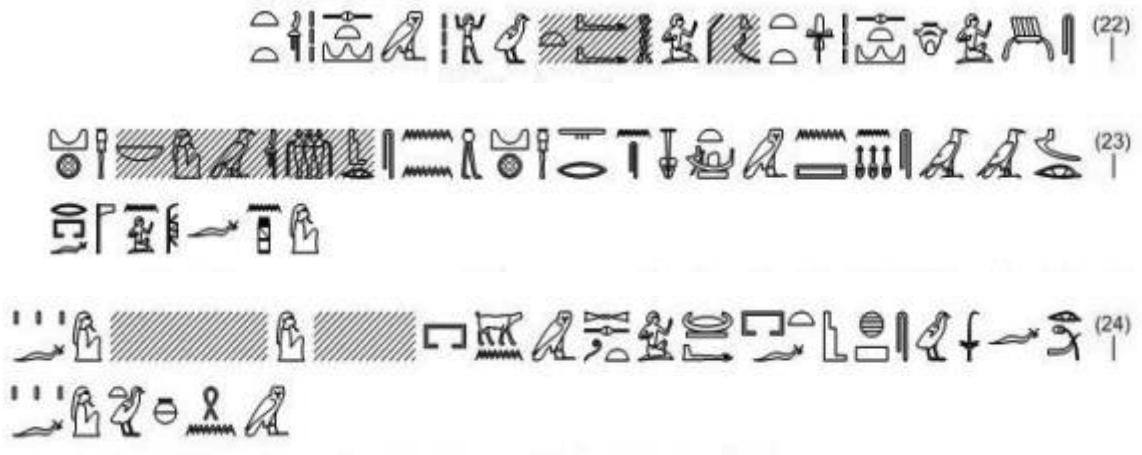


<sup>1613</sup> Adapted from Griffon 2010. This has been checked against the original publication of the stela in Mariette 1880: Plates 24-6. This version has been used because it is easier to interpret the hieroglyphs.





Section 10 – The resurrection of Osiris and the return to his temple at Abydos



Transcription and translation

Section 1 – Opening royal titulary

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| 1 | <i>ᵚnh Hr ntr hprw</i>                            | The Living Horus: Divine of Form;            |
| 2 | <i>nb.ty ntr ms.wt</i>                            | The Two Ladies: Divine of Birth;             |
| 3 | <i>Hr-nbw hpr</i>                                 | The Gold Horus: Being;                       |
| 4 | <i>n-sw-bity H<sup>c</sup>-k3.w-R<sup>c</sup></i> | The King of Upper and Lower Egypt: Khakaure; |
| 5 | <i>s3 R<sup>c</sup> S-n-Wsr.t</i>                 | the son of Ra: Sesostris,                    |
| 6 | <i>di ᵚnh mi R<sup>c</sup> d.t</i>                | given life like Ra forever.                  |

Section 2 – Titles of Ikhernofret

- |    |   |  |
|----|---|--|
| 7  | <i>wḏ n-sw.t n rp<sup>c</sup>.t</i>           | Royal command to the Hereditary Prince,    |
| 8  | <i>h3ty-ᵚ sd3wty bity smr-w<sup>c</sup>ty</i> | Count, Royal Seal Bearer, Sole Companion,  |
| 9  | <i>imi-r3 pr.wy nbw</i>                       | Overseer of the two gold-houses,           |
| 10 | <i>imi-r3 pr.wy ḥd</i>                        | Overseer of the two silver-houses,         |
| 11 | <i>imi-r3 ḥtm.w I-hr-nfr.t nb im3h</i>        | Chief Treasurer, Ikhernofret, the revered: |

Section 3 – The royal command

- |    |                     |                              |
|----|---------------------|------------------------------|
| 12 | <i>iw wḏ.n ḥm=i</i> | “My Majesty commands         |
| 13 | <i>di=tw ḥnt=k</i>  | that you shall journey south |

14	<i>r T3-wr 3bdw</i>	to Abydos in the nome of This
15	<i>r ir.t mn.w</i>	to make monuments
16	<i>n it(=i)Wsir</i>	for my father Osiris,
17	<i>hnty-imty.w</i>	Foremost of the Westerners,
18	<i>r smnh bsw=f</i>	to adorn his secret image
19	<i>št3 m d<sup>c</sup>m</i>	with the pure gold
20	<i>di.n=f in.t hm=i</i>	which he has caused my Majesty
21	<i>m hnt T3-Sti</i>	to bring from Nubia
22	<i>m nht m m3<sup>c</sup>-hrw</i>	in victory and in triumph.”

#### Section 4 – Ikhnofret’s relationship with the king

This section of the stela (the end of line 4 and lines 5 to 9) has not been translated because it only contains information about Ikhnofret and his relationship with the king. This information is not relevant to the study of the Festival of Osiris at Abydos.

#### Section 5 – Declaration by Ikhnofret

23	<i>ir(.n)=k mi wd.t.n nb.t hm=f</i>	I did everything that his Majesty commanded
24	<i>m smnh wd.t.n nb=i</i>	in executing my Lord’s command
25	<i>n it=f Wsir</i>	for his father, Osiris,
26	<i>hnty-imty.w</i>	Foremost of the Westerners,
27	<i>nb 3bdw</i>	Lord of Abydos,
28	<i>sh<sup>m</sup> 3 hr-ib T3-wr</i>	great power in the nome of This.
29	<i>iw ir.n=i s3-mr=f</i>	I acted as ‘His Loving Son’
30	<i>n Wsir hnty-imty.w</i>	for Osiris, Foremost of the Westerners.

#### Section 6 – Adorning the great barque

31	<i>smnh.n=i [wi3=f wr</i>	I adorned [his great barque
32	<i>n] nh<sup>h</sup> hn<sup>c</sup> d.t</i>	for] all eternity.
33	<i>ir.n=i n=f kniw</i>	I made for him the portable shrine,
34	<i>wts nfrw</i>	the bearer of beauty of
35	<i>hnty-imty.w</i>	the Foremost of the Westerners
36	<i>m nbw hd hsb<sup>d</sup> hsmn</i>	of gold, silver, lapis lazuli, bronze
37	<i>ssnd<sup>m</sup> mrw</i>	ssnd <sup>m</sup> —wood and cedar wood.

*Section 7 – Fashioning the gods and organising the priests*

38	<i>ms ntr.w imy.w ht=f</i>	The gods who attended him were fashioned
39	<i>ir k3rw=sn m m3w.t</i>	and their shrines were made anew.
40	<i>di.n=i [///] wnw.t hw.t ntr</i>	I caused the temple priests [to know how?]
41	<i>r ir.t ir.wt=sn</i>	to do their duties;
42	<i>di(.n=i) rh=sn</i>	I caused them to know
43	<i>n.t-<sup>c</sup> n.t hrw nb</i>	the ritual of every day
44	<i>hb.w tp tr.w</i>	and the festivals of the seasons.

*Section 8 – Preparing the neshmet-barque and the image of Osiris*

45	<i>iw hrp.n=i k3.t</i>	I directed the work
46	<i>m nšm.t</i>	on the <i>neshmet</i> -barque
47	<i>iw ms.n=i snty</i>	and I fashioned the cabin.
48	<i>iw shk3r.n=i šnb.t nb 3bdw</i>	I decked the chest of the Lord of Abydos
49	<i>m hsbđ hn<sup>c</sup> mfk3.t</i>	with lapis lazuli and turquoise,
50	<i>d<sup>c</sup>m <sup>c</sup>3t nb.t</i>	fine gold and every costly stone,
51	<i>m hkr.w n.w h<sup>c</sup>.w ntr</i>	which are the ornaments of a god's body.
52	<i>db<sup>c</sup>.n=i ntr m h<sup>c</sup>w=f</i>	I dressed the god with his regalia
53	<i>m i3.t=i n.t hri-sšt3</i>	in my rank of Master of Secrets,
54	<i>s3w.t=I n.t sm3</i>	and my duty of <i>sm3</i> -priest.
55	<i>ink w<sup>c</sup>b gb3</i>	I had pure arms
56	<i>m shk3r ntr</i>	in beautifying the god;
57	<i>sm twr db<sup>c</sup>.w</i>	a <i>sm</i> -priest with clean fingers.

*Section 9 – The procession to U-Pequer and the attack by the enemies of Osiris*

58	<i>iw ir.n=i pr.t Wp-w3.wt</i>	I conducted the procession of Wep-waut
59	<i>wđ3=f r nd it=f</i>	when he proceeded to vindicate his father.
60	<i>hsf.n=i sbi.w hr Nšm.t</i>	I repelled the attackers of the <i>neshmet</i> -barque,
61	<i>shr.n=i hfty.w Wsir</i>	I overthrew the enemies of Osiris.
62	<i>iwi r.n=i pr.t <sup>c</sup>3.t</i>	I conducted the Great Procession
63	<i>šms=i ntr r nmt.t=f</i>	and I followed the god in his steps.
64	<i>di.n=i skdy dp.t ntr</i>	I made the god's boat sail,
65	<i>Dhwty hr m<sup>c</sup>3 [skd]w.t</i>	Thoth steering the sailing.
66	<i><sup>c</sup>pr.n=i wi3 m H<sup>c</sup>-m<sup>c</sup>3.t-nb-3bdw m snty</i>	I equipped the barque "Truly-risen-is-the-Lord- of-Abydos" with a cabin.

67	<i>smn ḥ<sup>c</sup>w=f nfrw</i>	Made firm in his beautiful regalia
68	<i>wḏ3=f r T3-wr Pkr</i>	he proceeded to the region of U-Pequer.
69	<i>iw ḥrp.n=i w3.wt ntr</i>	I cleared the god's path
70	<i>r m<sup>c</sup>ḥ<sup>c</sup>.t=f ḥnt.t Pkr</i>	to his tomb in U-Pequer.
71	<i>iw nd.n=i Wnn-nfr</i>	I vindicated Wen-nofer
72	<i>hrw pf n ḥ3 ḥ3</i>	on that day of great combat.
73	<i>shr.n=i ḥfty.w=f nb</i>	I slew all his enemies
74	<i>hr ts[w] n Ndy.t</i>	on the shores of Nedyt.
75	<i>di.n=i wḏ3=f r-ḥnw wr.t</i>	I conveyed him to the great barque,
76	<i>wts.n=s nfrw=f</i>	which bore his beauty.

*Section 10 – The resurrection of Osiris and the return to his temple at Abydos*

77	<i>s3w=i ib sm.wt i3bt.t</i>	I gladdened the hearts of the eastern desert;
78	<i>[km3]=i [ḥ33]w.t m sm.wt imnt.t</i>	I caused rejoicing in the western deserts.
79	<i>m33=sn nfrw Nšm.t</i>	They saw the beauty of the <i>neshmet</i> -barque
80	<i>sm3.n=s t3 r 3bdw</i>	as it landed at Abydos.
81	<i>in.n=s [Wsir ḥnty-imty.w nb] 3bdw n ḥ=f</i>	It brought [Osiris Foremost of the Western Lord] of Abydos to his palace.
82	<i>šms.n=i ntr r pr=f</i>	I followed the god to his house.
83	<i>ir w<sup>c</sup>b=f</i>	His purification was done,
84	<i>swsḥ s.t=f</i>	his seat was made spacious
85	<i>wḥ<sup>c</sup>(.n)=i ts.t m-ḥnw</i>	I untied the knot
86	<i>[///]=f [///]=f</i>	his [///], his [///]
87	<i>m šnw.t=f</i>	among his courtiers.

Philological notes

Section 1 contains the typical fivefold titulary that would be expected from such a text.<sup>1614</sup>

Section 3 uses the *sḏm.f* form, hence why it has been translated in the present tense.

In Line 20 of Section 3 the suffix *f* is assumed to be referring to Osiris. The line should be interpreted as indicating that Osiris caused the king to bring gold back from Nubia.

Line 23 of Section 5 has been assumed to have been intended to contain the *sḏm.n.f* form of the verb, to correspond with the past tense of the rest of the stela.

<sup>1614</sup> Breasted 1906: 298.

In Line 31 of Section 6 and later in Line 75 of Section 9, reference is made to the ‘great barque’. It is possible that this may have been an actual river boat on which the smaller, portable barques were carried.<sup>1615</sup>

In Line 54, the reading of *sm3* is uncertain. However, this seems the most likely reading because a *sm3*-priest would have been responsible for clothing the god and this fits with the context of Section 8.<sup>1616</sup>

In Lines 64 and 65 of Section 9 it is unclear as to whether Ikhnofret is referring to the literal or metaphorical sailing of the god’s boat. The verb *skdy* (Line 64) is followed by the ‘boat on water’ determinative (Gardiner P1),<sup>1617</sup> while the verb *skdw.t* (Line 65) is followed by the ‘sacred barque’ determinative (Gardiner P3).<sup>1618</sup> The use of such determinatives is not unusual in relation to the sailing or voyages of boats on water. However, the ‘sacred barque’ determinative is often used when divine journeys are being referred to.<sup>1619</sup> If this is taken into consideration, along with the landscape of Abydos which shows no indication of waterways leading to the Osiris temple or the tomb of Osiris, it seems likely that Ikhnofret was describing the metaphorical sailing of the god’s boat.<sup>1620</sup> These two lines probably refer to the carrying and/or dragging of the boat across the desert to the tomb of Osiris at U-Pefer.

In Section 10, Lines 77 to 78 have been interpreted as the joyful reactions of those present at the festival to the successful rebirth of Osiris.

### Commentary

The Ikhnofret Stela, which is held at the Berlin Museum, was first published by Mariette in 1880.<sup>1621</sup> In 1904 Schäfer published a detailed commentary on the stela.<sup>1622</sup> The Ikhnofret Stela is round-topped and made of limestone. It is 104 cm in height, 65 cm in width and 20 cm in depth.<sup>1623</sup> The top section of the stela bears the image of Osiris standing underneath a winged sun-disk and facing the titulary of Sesostri III.<sup>1624</sup> Underneath this image is the main body of text which is written in hieroglyphs and arranged over 24 horizontal lines. At

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<sup>1615</sup> Lichtheim 1973: 125.

<sup>1616</sup> For *sm3*, see Ward 1982: 1288; Jones 2000: No. 3250.

<sup>1617</sup> Gardiner 1957: 498.

<sup>1618</sup> Gardiner 1957: 499.

<sup>1619</sup> Gardiner 1957: 499.

<sup>1620</sup> Eaton 2006: 88-9.

<sup>1621</sup> See Mariette 1880: Plates 24-6.

<sup>1622</sup> Schäfer 1904. For more information regarding the Ikhnofret Stela, see Breasted 1906: 297-300; Anthes 1974; Lavier 1989; Lichtheim 1973: 123-5.

<sup>1623</sup> Staatliche Museen zu Berlin.

<sup>1624</sup> Staatliche Museen zu Berlin.



the bottom of the stela is a depiction of Ikhnofret sitting in front of an offering table and facing members of his family.<sup>1625</sup> The titulary of Sesostri III and Ikhnofret's titles run in vertical columns along the outer edge of the stela.<sup>1626</sup> The stela is in relatively poor condition and there are several lacunae.<sup>1627</sup> The stela was commissioned by Ikhnofret, who was a Chief Treasurer under the reign of Sesostri III, to commemorate his achievements. It provides a unique description of the events of the Festival of Osiris at Abydos; Ikhnofret was sent to Abydos by Sesostri III to reorganise the festival.

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<sup>1625</sup> Staatliche Museen zu Berlin.

<sup>1626</sup> Staatliche Museen zu Berlin.

<sup>1627</sup> Breasted 1906: 297.

**B. Graffito from column four in the Temple of Amun (*Dsr-3ht*) at Deir el-Bahari**

Marciniak Text 31<sup>1628</sup>

Seyfried Text 56<sup>1629</sup>

Bibliography of key publications

Marciniak 1974: 87-8; Seyfried 2013: 88. Discussed in Section 3.5 of this thesis.

Hieroglyphs (in original lines)<sup>1630</sup>



Transcription and translation

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| 1 | <i>rnpt 22 3bd 2 šmw sw 23</i>          | Year 22, second month of the <i>Smw</i> -season, day 23. |
| 2 | <i>hrw n ii.t</i>                       | The Day of Coming,                                       |
| 3 | <i>iri n sš ʿš3-ḥrt</i>                 | performed by the scribe Asha-heret                       |
| 4 | <i>n pr Ḥnsw n ʿImn n ʿIp.t</i>         | of the temple of Khonsu, of Amun and of Ipet,            |
| 5 | <i>i r [i](š)mʿit n(t) ʿImn T3.y-ḥm</i> | and uttered from the songstress of Amun, Ta-y-hem,       |
| 6 | <i>r smʿ3 n nbt Ḥwt-Ḥrw</i>             | to pray for the lady Hathor,                             |

<sup>1628</sup> Marciniak 1974: 87-8.

<sup>1629</sup> Seyfried 2013: 88.

<sup>1630</sup> Taken from Marciniak 1974: 87-8, Number 31.

7	<i>nb.t Dsrt</i>	the lady of Deir el-Bahari,
8	<i>m ḥ3b nfr &lt;n&gt; int</i>	in the Beautiful Feast of the Valley
9	<i>n 'Imn-R<sup>c</sup></i>	of Amun-Ra,
10	<i>n-sw.t n ntrw</i>	king of the gods...

### Philological notes

The date formula in Line 1 is laid out in the typical format and refers to the reign of Ramesses II.

In Line 2 the 'Day of Coming' has been assumed to be the title of a song and/or dance that was performed for Hathor as part of the Beautiful Feast of the Valley.

Lines 3 and 5 have been translated in the past tense despite the lack of the *sdm.n=f* form of the verb.

The use of the preposition *m* in Line 8 implies that the performance of the 'Day of Coming' took place during or as part of the Beautiful Feast of the Valley.

### Commentary

This graffito is inscribed on the fourth column in the temple of Amun (*Dsr-3ht*) at Deir el-Bahari.<sup>1631</sup> It was first published by Marciniak in 1974.<sup>1632</sup> The graffito forms part of Seyfried's collection of all the extant texts relating to the Beautiful Festival of the Valley.<sup>1633</sup> Seyfried listed this graffito under the name Text 56. Seyfried believes that the graffito was written during the reign of Ramesses II.<sup>1634</sup> The graffito has an additional four lines, which takes the total number of lines to nine. These four lines have not been included as they are not relevant.

The text has been transcribed and translated as part of this research because it makes reference to the Beautiful Feast of the Valley and because Seyfried believes that it is an example of personal piety.<sup>1635</sup> The text gives an insight into the way in which ancient Egyptians reacted to the Beautiful Festival of the Valley. In this instance a performance of singing and possibly dancing in honour of Hathor has taken place.

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<sup>1631</sup> See Marciniak 1974: 87-8; Seyfried 2013: 88.

<sup>1632</sup> Marciniak 1974: 87-8.

<sup>1633</sup> Seyfried 2013: 88.

<sup>1634</sup> Seyfried 2013: 88.

<sup>1635</sup> Seyfried 2013: 39.

### C. Letters to the Dead

#### *i. The Qau Bowl (exterior)* *A letter from Shepsi to his deceased mother, Iy*

UC 16163

#### Bibliography of key publications

Gardiner and Sethe 1928: 3-5, 17-9, Plates II, IIA, III, IIIA; Wente 1990: 211-12; Bommas 1999. Discussed in Section 5.3.1 of this thesis.

#### Hieroglyphs (in original lines)<sup>1636</sup>





<sup>1636</sup> Taken from Gardiner and Sethe 1928: Plate III A.

Transcription and translation

1	<i>Špsi dd n mw.t=f'Iy</i>	It is Shepsi who speaks to his mother, ly.
2	<i>tn-r nw dd=t n s3=t im</i>	This is a reminder that you said to me, your son,
3	<i>in.t=k n p3<sup>c</sup>.wt wnm(=i) s.t</i>	'You will bring to me some quails so I can eat them'.
4	<i>ini n=t s3=t im p3<sup>c</sup>.wt 7</i>	I, your son, brought 7 quails to you therein
5	<i>m wnm=t s.t</i>	and you ate them.
6	<i>in irr.t(w) r=i r-gs=t</i>	Is harm being done against me in your presence,
7	<i>hrd.w=i šp.t n</i>	so that my children are discontented
8	<i>s3=t im mr</i>	and I, your son, am ill?
9	<i>in-m rf st=f n=t mw</i>	Who will pour water for you?
10	<i>h3 wp=t wi hn<sup>c</sup> Sbk-htp</i>	Oh! If you would choose between me and Sobekhotep!
11	<i>in.n(=i) sw m k.t niw.t</i>	I brought him from another town
12	<i>rdi=i m niw.t=f m-m sm.t=f</i>	and I placed him in his town among his necropolis.
13	<i>rdi=i n=f hbs.w h3.t</i>	I gave tomb-clothes to him.
14	<i>irr=f r s3=t im hr sy išs.t</i>	Why does he work against your son very wrongfully?
15	<i>n is dd=t n ir=t n nfy nfy</i>	There is nothing that I have said or done.
16	<i>mr nfy r ntr.w</i>	Wrongdoing is grievous to the gods!

Philological notes

In Line 3, the translation of *p3<sup>c</sup>.wt* as 'quails' has been used as a result of the comments made by Gardiner and Sethe regarding this word.<sup>1637</sup> The phrase *wnm(=i) s.t* has been translated as a virtual clause of purpose, which relates to *wnm=t s.t* in Line 5.<sup>1638</sup>

In Line 7, the word *šp.t* has been translated as 'discontented' in agreement with Gardiner and Sethe who argue that  was intended rather than .<sup>1639</sup>

Further detail on the future sense of the construction in Line 9 can be found in Gardiner's *Egyptian Grammar*.<sup>1640</sup>

In Line 15, as detailed in Gardiner and Sethe, *n is dd=t n ir=t n* has been translated as parenthetical because it seems highly likely that *nfy nfy* qualifies *irr=f*.<sup>1641</sup>

<sup>1637</sup> Gardiner and Sethe 1928: 19 III 2.

<sup>1638</sup> Gardiner and Sethe 1928: 19 III 2.

<sup>1639</sup> Gardiner and Sethe 1928: 19 III 3.

<sup>1640</sup> Gardiner 1957: 175, §227, 2.

<sup>1641</sup> Gardiner and Sethe 1928: 19 III 5.

The translation of the final line (Line 16) is not certain because for this translation to be accurate, the preposition *n* would be required.<sup>1642</sup> However, this seems the most likely interpretation given the context of the letter.

### Commentary

The Qau Bowl was first published in Gardiner and Sethe's 1928 publication of six texts which they termed 'letters to the dead'.<sup>1643</sup> The bowl was discovered during Petrie's 1924 excavations at Kaw el-Kebir and is held at the Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology at University College London.<sup>1644</sup> The bowl is made of red pottery and measures 19.5 cm in diameter and 6 cm in depth.<sup>1645</sup> The bowl is unusual in that it is inscribed with two letters to the dead.<sup>1646</sup> The letter on the interior of the bowl is from Shepsi to his deceased father, Inkhenmut. The letter on the exterior of the bowl (see above) is from Shepsi to his deceased mother, Iy. Both letters are written in hieratic text and Gardiner and Sethe have used the characteristics of the text to date the letters to between the Sixth and Eleventh Dynasties.<sup>1647</sup> This date is corroborated by Bommas who calculated the vessel index of the bowl (diameter x 100 ÷ height) which was then associated with a relative date between the First Intermediate Period and the Eighteenth Dynasty.<sup>1648</sup>

The letter on the exterior of the Qau Bowl contains the majority of the key features of a letter to the dead as outlined by O'Donoghue:<sup>1649</sup>

- 1) The address identifying the recipient and sender.  
Shepsi opens the letter by clearly stating his name and his relationship to the recipient (she is his mother).
- 2) The greeting.  
Shepsi does not greet his mother but instead moves straight into the claim he has on his mother.
- 3) The claim the sender has on the dead.

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<sup>1642</sup> Gardiner and Sethe 1928: 19 III 6.

<sup>1643</sup> Gardiner and Sethe 1928.

<sup>1644</sup> Gardiner and Sethe 1928: 3; University College London.

<sup>1645</sup> The Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology UCL.

<sup>1646</sup> For translations of the interior text, see Gardiner and Sethe 1928: 3-4; Wente 1990: 211-2. For alternative translations of the exterior text, see Gardiner and Sethe 1928: 4; Wente 1990: 212.

<sup>1647</sup> Gardiner and Sethe 1928: 3.

<sup>1648</sup> Bommas 1999: 55.

<sup>1649</sup> O'Donoghue 1999: 9

Shepsi describes bringing seven quails to his mother, presumably as offerings once she had died. He later asks his mother, 'Who will pour water for you?'. This implies that historically he had been making such offerings to his mother.

4) The case.<sup>1650</sup>

Shepsi states that his children are unhappy and he is ill because of some wrongdoing by Sobekhotep.

5) The appeal for help.

This occurs when Shepsi wishes that his mother would choose between him and Sobekhotep. This request suggests that Sobekhotep is a close relation of both Shepsi and his mother, Iy. Shepsi's father is named as Inkhenmut in the letter on the interior of the bowl, so it is clear that Sobekhotep is not Shepsi's father. Consequently, it seems likely that Sobekhotep is Shepsi's brother. References to Sobekhotep's necropolis and tomb-clothes imply that he is deceased.

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<sup>1650</sup> O'Donoghue 1999: 91 uses the word 'problem' instead of 'case'. However, 'case' is a more neutral term and so will be used in this thesis.

*ii. The Hu Bowl*

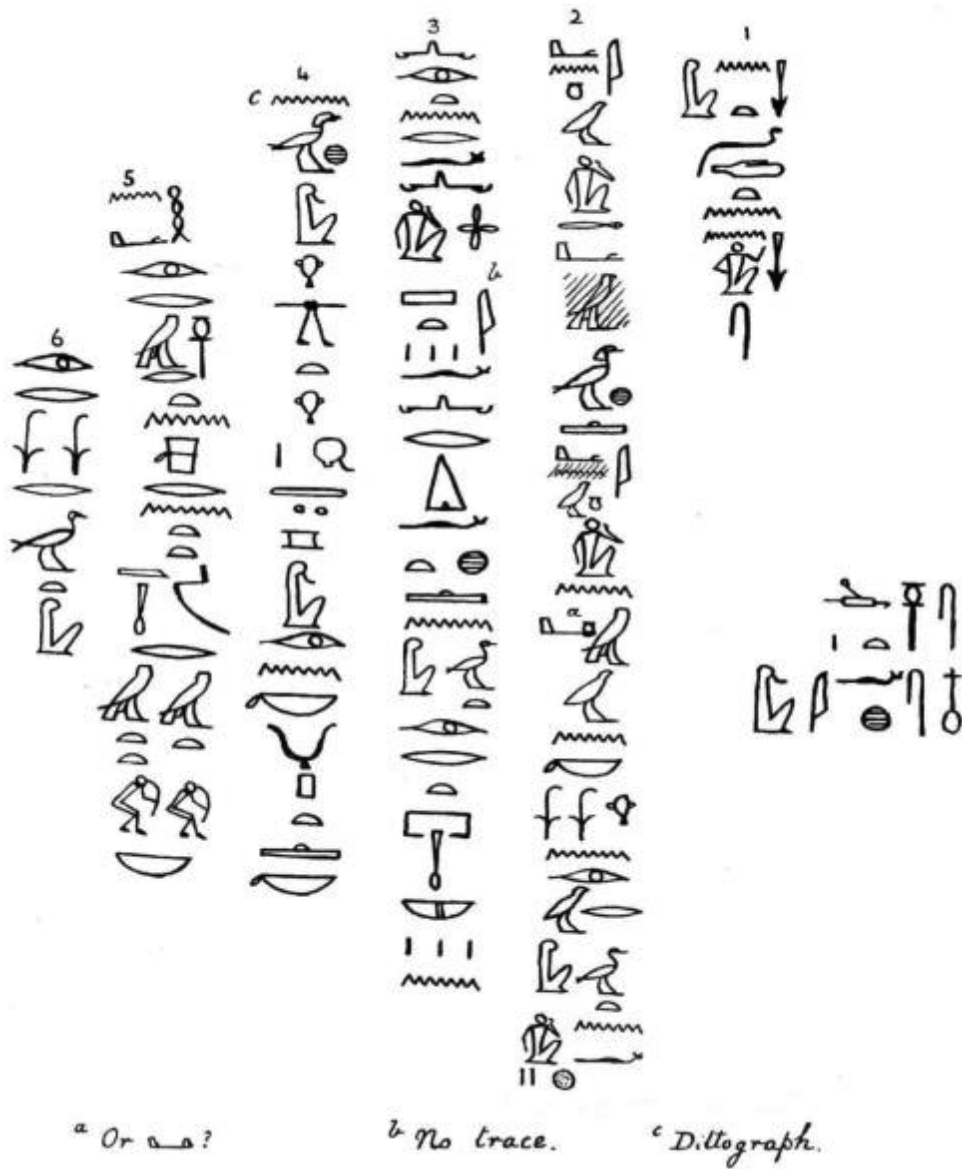
*A letter from a sister to her deceased brother, Nefersefghi*

UC 16244

Bibliography of key publications

Gardiner and Sethe 1928: 5-7, 20-1, Plates IV, IVa; Wente 1990: 215; Bommas 1999. Discussed in Section 5.3.1 of this thesis.

Hieroglyphs (in original lines)<sup>1651</sup>



<sup>1651</sup> Taken from Gardiner and Sethe 1928: Plate IV A.



Transcription and translation

1	<i>sn.t dd.t n sn=s</i>	It is a sister who speaks to her brother,
2	<i>smr-w<sup>c</sup>.ty Nfr-sfhi</i>	the Sole Companion Nefersekhki.
3	<i>i<sup>c</sup>nw ʕ3 šh</i>	A great and beneficial cry of woe!
4	<i>i<sup>c</sup>nw n mḥnk.w.n=k</i>	Woe to the one who you appointed Upper Priest
5	<i>ḥr n irrw s3.t=i nf nf</i>	on account of that which is being done against my daughter very wrongfully.
6	<i>n irt.n(=i) r=f</i>	I have not done anything against him,
7	<i>n wnm(=i) iš.t=f</i>	nor have I consumed his possessions.
8	<i>n rdi=f ḥ.t n s3.t=i</i>	He has not given anything to my daughter
9	<i>irr.t pr.t-ḥrw n 3ḥ</i>	who makes invocation offerings to the spirit
10	<i>ḥr sb.t ḥr tp(.y)-t3</i>	in return for (the protection of?) the survivor.
11	<i>ir n=k wp.t=k</i>	Do to him what you have judged upon,
12	<i>ḥn<sup>c</sup> irr mr.t n(=i)</i>	together with someone who put illness onto me.
13	<i>dr nt.t m3<sup>c</sup>-ḥrw(=i) r</i>	Since I am more true of voice than
14	<i>mwt mwt.t nb</i>	any dead man or woman
15	<i>ir nn r s3.t(=i)</i>	who acts against my daughter.

Philological notes

In Line 3, *i<sup>c</sup>nw* has been translated as ‘cry of woe’ as a result of the commentary provided by Gardiner and Sethe.<sup>1652</sup> Despite the negative connotations of the word ‘woe’, this translation can still be considered to be a greeting. The adjectives ‘great’ and ‘beneficial’ suggest that the cry of woe was a positive action, perhaps intended to express mourning and sorrow, and show sympathy for the deceased.

In Line 4, *mḥnk* has been translated as ‘Upper Priest’ as detailed in the *Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache*.<sup>1653</sup> This translation fits with Gardiner and Sethe’s view that *mḥnk* should be translated as a perfective relative form of a transitive verb.<sup>1654</sup>

*Nf nf* (Line 5) has been interpreted as being related to *ḥr n irrw s3.t=i*, despite the fact that this would require the preposition *r* to appear after *irr<sup>w</sup>*.<sup>1655</sup> This translation seems the most

<sup>1652</sup> Gardiner and Sethe 1928: 20 IV 2.

<sup>1653</sup> Erman and Grapow 1926-1953b: 129.

<sup>1654</sup> Gardiner and Sethe 1928: 20 IV 2.

<sup>1655</sup> Gardiner and Sethe 1928: 20 IV 2.

likely given the context of the letter and the ambiguousness of this line. Gardiner and Sethe discuss the alternative possibilities for the translation of Line 5.<sup>1656</sup>

In Line 11, *wp.t* has been translated as ‘punish’ in accordance with Gardiner and Sethe’s philological summary.<sup>1657</sup> This translation makes better sense in the context of the letter as a whole than the alternative translations, which are ‘judgement’, ‘business’ or ‘work’.<sup>1658</sup>

### Commentary

The Hu Bowl was first published in Gardiner and Sethe’s *Egyptian letters to the dead*.<sup>1659</sup> The bowl was excavated from a cemetery at Diospolis Parva and is held at the Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology at University College London.<sup>1660</sup> The bowl is made of red pottery and measures 21.7 cm in diameter and 9.5 cm in depth.<sup>1661</sup> It is similar in appearance to the Qau Bowl but it is only inscribed with one letter, which is on the inside of the bowl.<sup>1662</sup> The letter is written in what Gardiner and Sethe describe as ‘large and rather sprawling’ hieratic text which is used by them to date the letter to the First Intermediate Period.<sup>1663</sup> Bommas has used the vessel index system to substantiate this date; he dates the bowl to the late Eleventh Dynasty or First Intermediate Period.<sup>1664</sup>

The letter written on the bowl is from a sister to her deceased brother, Nefersefkhī. As with the Qau Bowl, the text on the Hu Bowl includes many of the key features of letters to the dead as described by O’Donoghue:<sup>1665</sup>

- 1) The address identifying the recipient and sender.

The sender begins the letter by stating her relationship to the recipient, as well as the recipient’s name (Nefersefkhī).

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<sup>1656</sup> Gardiner and Sethe 1928: 20 IV 2.

<sup>1657</sup> Gardiner and Sethe 1928: 20 IV 4-5.

<sup>1658</sup> Gardiner and Sethe 1928: 20 IV 4-5.

<sup>1659</sup> Gardiner and Sethe 1928.

<sup>1660</sup> Gardiner and Sethe 1928: 5; University College London.

<sup>1661</sup> The Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology UCL.

<sup>1662</sup> Gardiner and Sethe 1928: 5.

<sup>1663</sup> Gardiner and Sethe 1928: 5. Hannig 2003: 41 agrees with the translation of *iꜥnw* as ‘cry of woe’. However, Faulkner 1962: 11 states that it can also be translated as ‘greeting’. The word does not appear in Erman and Grapow 1926-1953a (Wb I).

<sup>1664</sup> Bommas 1999: 55-6.

<sup>1665</sup> O’Donoghue 1999: 91.

2) The greeting.

The sister greets her brother in Line 3 with the phrase, 'A great and beneficial cry of woe!'. See the philological notes above for why this can be considered to be a greeting.

3) The claim the sender has on the dead.

The sister does not clearly outline the claim she has on her dead brother. However, she does make it known that she has not done anything negative to the man that Nefersefkhi appointed as 'Upper Priest'.

4) The case.<sup>1666</sup>

It appears that the man Nefersefkhi appointed as 'Upper Priest' has not given anything to the sender's daughter, despite the fact that the daughter has been making offerings. This could possibly be a reference to an inheritance dispute which would imply that the 'Upper Priest' is also deceased.

5) The appeal for help.

The sister says, 'Do to him what you have judged upon'. She does not describe exactly what the punishment should be and it could therefore be assumed that she was confident that her deceased brother would know the appropriate punishment, if he decided to help her.

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<sup>1666</sup> See Footnote 1650 regarding the use of the term 'case'.

**iii. The Misplaced Stela**

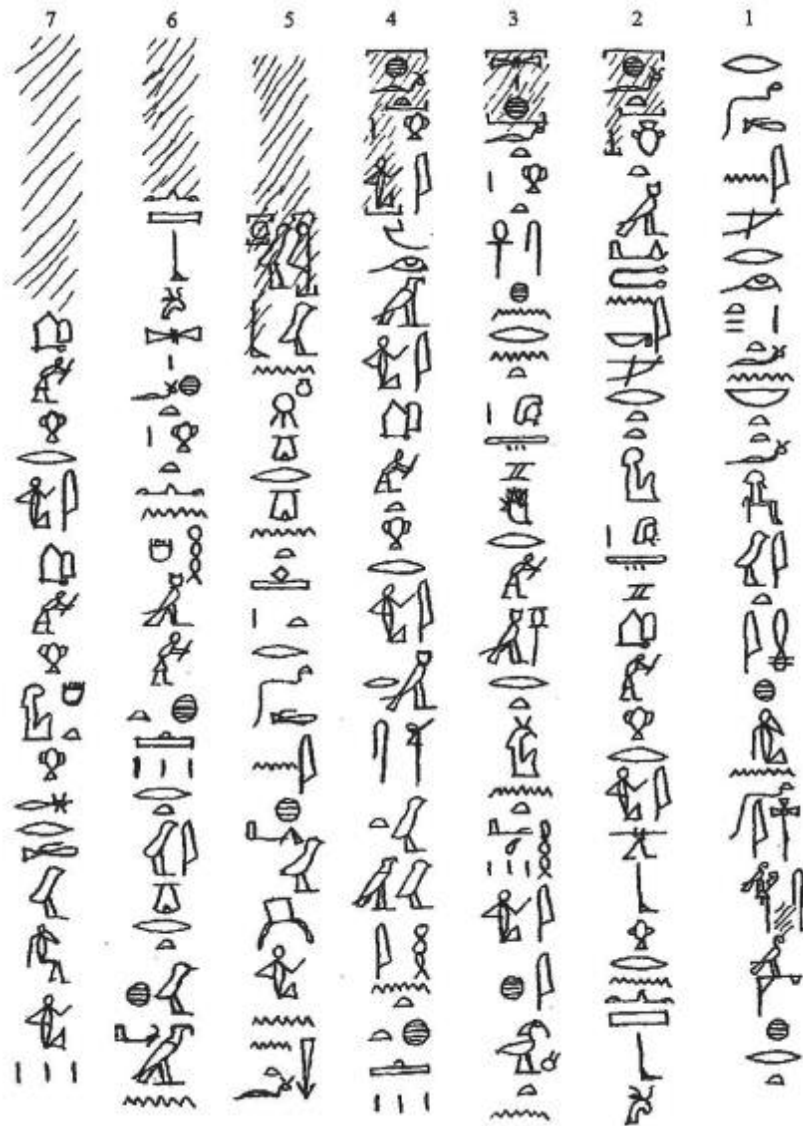
***A letter from Merirtyfy to his deceased wife, Nebtetef***

Harer Family Trust Collection

Bibliography of key publications

Wente 1975-6; Meltzer 2008. Discussed in Section 5.3.1 of this thesis.

Hieroglyphs (in original lines)<sup>1667</sup>



<sup>1667</sup> Taken from Wente 1975-6: 596.

Transcription and translation

*Section 1 – Letter from Merirtyfy*

1	<i>r-dd in Mrirtyfy n Nbtft</i>	A saying by Merirtyfy to Nebtetef:
2	<i>iwt mi-ih</i>	How are you?
3	<i>nd is imnty hr=t</i>	Is the west taking care of you,
4	<i>hft ib=t</i>	according to your desire?
5	<i>mtn ink mr(w).t(y)=t tp t3</i>	Since I am your beloved on earth,
6	<i>h3 hr=i</i>	fight on my behalf
7	<i>sbi hr rn(=i)</i>	and intercede on behalf of my name.
8	<i>n sbi(=i) ts hft hr=t</i>	I have not garbled a spell before you,
9	<i>s:h.n(=i) rn=t tp t3</i>	when I caused your name to live on earth.
10	<i>dr mr.t n.t h<sup>c</sup>w=i</i>	Remove the illness of my body!
11	<i>ih 3h.t n(=i)</i>	Please become an 3h-spirit for me
12	<i>[hft]-hr[=i] m3=i</i>	[before] my eyes so that I may see you
13	<i>h3=t hr=i</i>	and that you may fight on my behalf
14	<i>m rsw.t</i>	in a dream.
15	<i>w3h=i n=t ht.w</i>	I will deposit offerings for you
16	<i>[///] [šw] wbn</i>	[///] when the sun rises.
17	<i>grg(=i) n=t htp</i>	I will set up offerings for you.

*Section 2 – Postscript from Khuau*

18	<i>r-dd in Hw3w n sn.t=f</i>	A saying by Khuau to his sister:
19	<i>[///] n sbi(=i) ts hft-hr=t</i>	[///] I have not garbled a spell before you,
20	<i>nn nhm(=i) ht.w r=t</i>	nor have I recovered offerings from you.
21	<i>iw grt wh3.n[=i] [///]</i>	Moreover, I have procured [///]
22	<i>h<sup>c</sup> hr=i</i>	Fight on my behalf,
23	<i>h3 hr hm.t(=i)</i>	fight on behalf of my wife
24	<i>hr hrd.w=i</i>	and on behalf of my children.

### Philological notes

In Line 3, Wente sees the *n* of *nd* as serving a dual purpose.<sup>1668</sup> The first is a writing of the interrogative *in* and the second is the first consonant of the verb.<sup>1669</sup> This interpretation has been used in the translation above because it fits the ‘greeting’ feature of letters to the dead, as identified by O’Donoghue.<sup>1670</sup>

In Line 9, *s:nh* has been translated as a causative.

In Lines 11 to 12, Wente’s reconstruction of the lacuna as *ih 3h.t n(=i) [hft]-hr[=i]* has been used because it fits with the context of the letter.<sup>1671</sup>

Some scholars have suggested that the word *3h* in Line 11 should be translated as ‘beneficial’, making the phrase read, ‘Please be beneficial to me in my presence’.<sup>1672</sup> However, the translation of *3h* as ‘*3h*-spirit’ makes more sense when the context of Merirtyfy asking Nebtetef to appear before him in a dream is considered.

### Commentary

The letter to the dead on the Misplaced Stela was first published in 1975-6 by Wente, who came across it in 1958 during a visit to the Cairo Museum and was able to make a quick transcription of the text.<sup>1673</sup> According to Wente, the stela was part of a number of pieces being approved for export.<sup>1674</sup> Once exported, the location of the stela was unknown (hence its name) for almost 50 years until it was acquired by the Harer Family Trust Collection.<sup>1675</sup> Meltzer discussed the stela and its rediscovery in the paper he presented at the 2008 Annual Meeting of the American Research Centre in Egypt, held in Seattle.<sup>1676</sup>

The stela is made of limestone and is approximately 31 cm in height.<sup>1677</sup> On the front of the stela is an image of a woman holding a flower and an *ankh*.<sup>1678</sup> The image is surrounded by

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<sup>1668</sup> Wente 1975-6: 597, Note d.

<sup>1669</sup> Wente 1975-6: 597, Note d.

<sup>1670</sup> O’Donoghue 1999: 91.

<sup>1671</sup> Wente 1975-6: 598, Note j.

<sup>1672</sup> Szpakowska 2000: 317; Meltzer 2008: 9.

<sup>1673</sup> Wente 1975-6.

<sup>1674</sup> Wente 1975-6: 595.

<sup>1675</sup> Meltzer 2008: 2.

<sup>1676</sup> Meltzer 2008.

<sup>1677</sup> Wente 1975-6: 595.

<sup>1678</sup> Meltzer 2008: 3 states that it is an image of a woman. However, Wente 1975-6: 595 believes it to be a man. Given Wente’s brief encounter with the stela, in contrast to Meltzer’s more detailed study, it seems likely that Meltzer is correct.

two vertical lines of hieroglyphs on the left and two on the right, with one horizontal line along the bottom.<sup>1679</sup> On the reverse of the stela are seven lines of vertical hieratic text (the letter to the dead).<sup>1680</sup> Wente used palaeography to date the text to the late First Intermediate Period, which Meltzer agrees with.<sup>1681</sup> The provenance of the stela is unknown, although Parkinson suggests it may have come from a tomb chapel at Nag' ed-Deir.<sup>1682</sup>

The letter on the bowl is written by Merirtyfy to his deceased wife, Nebtetef. There is a postscript to the letter which is written by Khuau to Nebetef, who is his sister. Therefore the two authors are brothers-in-law. Both the main text and the postscript contain many of the key features of a letter to the dead:<sup>1683</sup>

- 1) The address identifying the recipient and sender.  
Merirtyfy clearly states who is sending the letter (he is) and who he is sending it to (Nebetef). Khuau also states who is sending the postscript and who it is for, although he does not name the recipient and simply refers to her as 'sister'.
- 2) The greeting.  
Merirtyfy greets his wife by asking how she is and also by asking if she is being well looked after in the afterlife. In the postscript, it is possible that the lacuna in Line 19 represents a greeting. The gap is sufficiently sized to have held the characters *iw t mi-ih* ('How are you?'), which would mirror the main letter, as much of the postscript does.
- 3) The claim the sender has on the dead.  
The claim that Merirtyfy has on Nebtetef seems to be that he is her husband and 'beloved on earth'. He also makes reference to correctly performing spells which ensure that Nebtetef's name is remembered. Khuau uses the same phrase as the main letter to imply that he has been performing spells on behalf of his sister. He also states that he has not taken back any offerings made to Nebetef.
- 4) The case.<sup>1684</sup>  
In the main letter the case appears to be fairly simple; Merirtyfy is ill. In the postscript, Khuau's case is not stated. It is possible that it was contained in the lacuna in Line 21.

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<sup>1679</sup> Meltzer 2008: 3.

<sup>1680</sup> Wente 1975-6: 596.

<sup>1681</sup> Wente 1975-6: 595; Meltzer 2008: 9.

<sup>1682</sup> Parkinson 1991: 142.

<sup>1683</sup> See O'Donoghue 1999: 91.

<sup>1684</sup> See Footnote 1650 regarding the use of the term 'case'.

5) The appeal for help.

Merirtyfy asks his wife to become a spirit and show herself to him in a dream. He asks her to fight on his behalf and remove the illness from his body. Khuau asks Nebtetef to fight on behalf of him and his family, although what she is to fight against is not clear.



### D. Papyrus Chester Beatty III (The Dream Book)

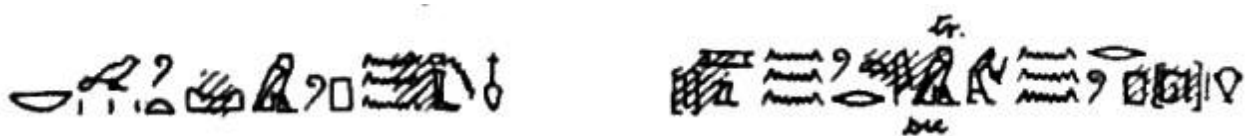
Papyrus BM 10683

#### Bibliography of key publications

Gardiner 1935a: 7-23; Brier 1980: 217; Borghouts 1995: 1783; Bresciani 2005; Szpakowska 2011b. Discussed in Sections 5.3.3 and 5.4.4 of this thesis.

#### Hieroglyphs<sup>1685</sup>

Recto 5, Line 19

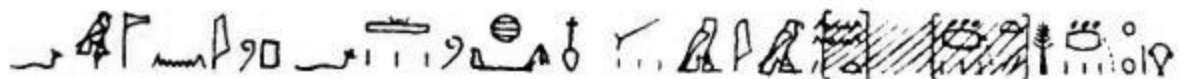


#### Transcription and translation

- |   |                                   |                                     |
|---|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1 | <i>(ir m33 sw s m rsw(t))</i>     | If a man sees himself in a dream    |
| 2 | <i>hr hrp m itrw</i>              | being immersed in a river,          |
| 3 | <i>nfr</i>                        | good;                               |
| 4 | <i>w<sup>c</sup>b pw m dwt nb</i> | it means this purity from all evil. |

Recto 6, Line 18

#### Hieroglyphs<sup>1686</sup>



<sup>1685</sup> Taken from Gardiner 1935b: Plate 6.

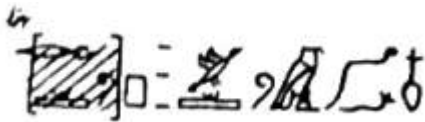
<sup>1686</sup> Taken from Gardiner 1935b: Plate 6.

Transcription and translation

- |   |                               |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1 | <i>(ir m33 sw s m rsw(t))</i> | If a man sees himself in a dream    |
| 2 | <i>hr it bty</i>              | seeing barley and emmer             |
| 3 | <i>[rdi] n nty 3im</i>        | [given] to those yonder,            |
| 4 | <i>nfr</i>                    | good;                               |
| 5 | <i>hwi=f pw in ntr=f</i>      | it means his protection by his god. |

Recto 2, Line 14

Hieroglyphs<sup>1687</sup>

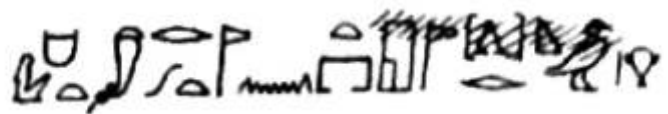


Transcription and translation

- |   |                               |                                  |
|---|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 | <i>(ir m33 sw s m rsw(t))</i> | If a man sees himself in a dream |
| 2 | <i>hr ntr hry</i>             | seeing a god who is higher       |
| 3 | <i>nfr</i>                    | good;                            |
| 4 | <i>df3w pw 3</i>              | it means great sustenance.       |

Recto 7, Line 1

Hieroglyphs<sup>1688</sup>



<sup>1687</sup> Taken from Gardiner 1935b: Plate 5.

<sup>1688</sup> Taken from Gardiner 1935b: Plate 7.

### Transcription and translation

1	( <i>ir m33 sw s m rsw(t)</i> )	If a man sees himself in a dream
2	<i>hr ꜥk r ḥw.t-ntr ntr.t</i>	entering into the temple of a goddess
3	<i>dw</i>	bad;
4	[///]	[///]

### Philological notes

In Line 3 of *Recto 6, Line 18* the verb *rdi* has been inserted in place of the lacuna as it makes the most sense in the context of the rest of the line.

Gardiner states that *3im* is a common periphrasis for ‘the dead’ (see Line 3, *Recto 6, Line 18*). His translation of *3im* as ‘those yonder’ has been used above. *3im* is not listed in the *Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache*.<sup>1689</sup>

In Line 5 of *Recto 6, Line 18* the *sdm=f* form of the verb is used twice. The second use of this form of the verb, which translates as ‘his god’, is noteworthy as it implies a close connection between the individual and a specific god as chosen by that individual.

### Commentary

The Dream Book is written on the *recto* of Papyrus Chester Beatty III, which is held at the British Museum. It was published by Gardiner in 1935.<sup>1690</sup> The Dream Book consists of vertical lines of hieratic signs, with the meaning ‘If a man sees himself in a dream...’, followed by numerous horizontal lines of hieratic signs that are set out in the same format each time:

If a man sees himself in a dream [doing so-and-so], good/bad; [it means that such-and-such will happen].

Both the beginning and the end of the papyrus are missing so it is not clear how many dreams were originally included in the Dream Book.<sup>1691</sup> The good dreams are described first and are followed by the bad dreams. In the list of bad dreams, the sign for ‘bad’ is written in red ink.<sup>1692</sup> At the end of the papyrus is the start of a list of dreams (only four dreams remain)

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<sup>1689</sup> Erman and Grapow 1926-1953a (Wb I).

<sup>1690</sup> Gardiner 1935a: 9-23; Gardiner 1935b: Plates 5-12a.

<sup>1691</sup> Gardiner 1935a: 9.

<sup>1692</sup> Gardiner 1935a: 9.

entitled, 'Beginning of the dreams of the followers of Seth'.<sup>1693</sup> This has led Gardiner to believe that the previous list of dreams, which forms the majority of the remaining text of the Dream Book, may have been called, 'Beginning of the dreams of the followers of Horus'.<sup>1694</sup> Gardiner states that the Dream Book may date to the Twelfth Dynasty, although he does note that this 'cannot be proved with certainty'.<sup>1695</sup>

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<sup>1693</sup> Gardiner 1935a: 10.

<sup>1694</sup> Gardiner 1935a: 10.

<sup>1695</sup> Gardiner 1935a: 9.

## E. Late Ramesside Letters

### Bibliography of key publications

Černý 1939; Wente 1990: 174-204. Discussed in Section 5.4.1 of this thesis.

#### *i. Papyrus Leiden I 370*

***A letter from scribe Dhutmose to his son, the scribe Butehamun, and the chantress of Amun, Shedemdua***

#### Hieroglyphs (in original lines)<sup>1696</sup>



#### Transcription and translation

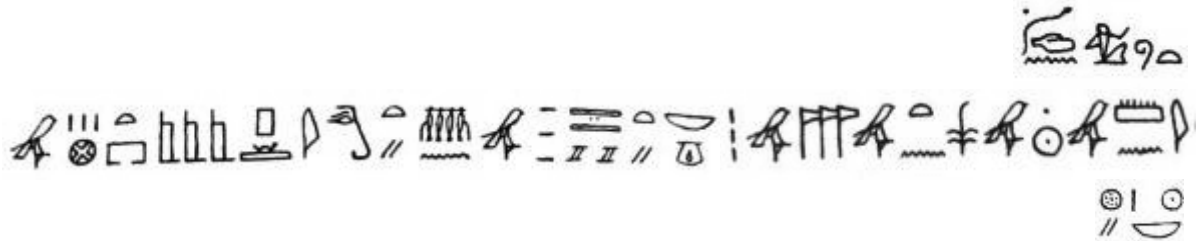
1	<i>tw=i dd n Imn-R<sup>c</sup>-Hr-3hty</i>	(Every single day) I speak to Amun-Ra-Horakte,
2	<i>Hry-š.f<sup>c</sup>3 ntr</i>	Arsaphes, the great god,
3	<i>Dḥwty nb Ḥmnw</i>	Toth, Lord of Hermopolis,
4	<i>ntr nb ntr.t nb[.t]</i>	and every god and every goddess,
5	<i>nty tw=i sny ḥr.yw</i>	who I reverently pass by,
6	<i>imi n.[t]tn</i>	to give to you
7	<i>ḥw wd3 snb</i>	life, prosperity and health,
8	<i>ḥw k3i</i>	an exalted lifetime
9	<i>i3w.t<sup>c</sup>3.t nrf.t</i>	and great and good old age.
10	<i>hrw nb sp sn</i>	Every single day. [See Line 1]

<sup>1696</sup> Adapted from Černý 1939: 9.

**ii. Papyrus Phillipps**

**A letter from the prophet of Amenophis, Amenhotep, to the scribe Dhutmose**

Hieroglyphs (in original lines)<sup>1697</sup>



Transcription and translation

1	<i>tw=i dd n</i>	(Every single day) I speak to
2	<i>'Imn-R<sup>c</sup> nsw.t ntr.w</i>	Amun-Ra, king of the gods,
3	<i>nb nst.y t3.wy</i>	Lord of the Thrones of the Two Lands,
4	<i>hnt.y Ipt-swt</i>	Foremost of Karnak...
5	<i>hrw nb sp sn</i>	Every single day. [See Line 1]

**iii. Papyrus British Museum 10417**

**A letter from the prophet of Amenophis, Amenhotep, to the scribe Dhutmose**

Hieroglyphs (in original lines)<sup>1698</sup>



Transcription and translation

1	<i>tw=i dd n</i>	I say to
2	<i>'Imn-R<sup>c</sup>-Hr-3hty</i>	Amun-Ra-Horakte,
3	<i>m wbn=f</i>	at his rising
4	<i>m htp=f</i>	and at his setting

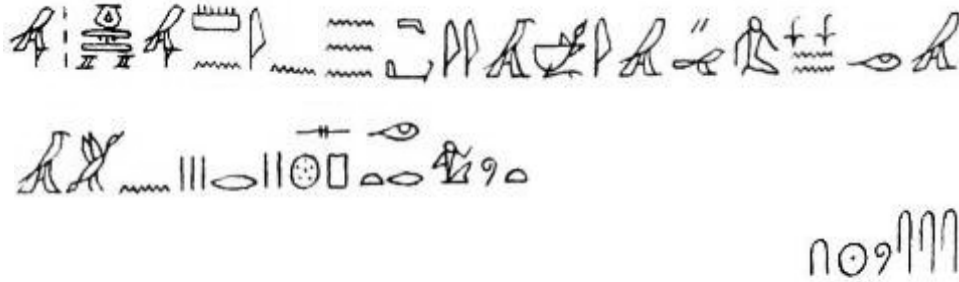
<sup>1697</sup> Adapted from Černý 1939: 28, 29.

<sup>1698</sup> Adapted from Černý 1939: 27.

**iv. Papyrus Turin 1971**

**A letter from the scribe Butehamun to his father, the scribe Dhutmose**

Hieroglyphs (in original lines)<sup>1699</sup>



Transcription and translation

1	<i>m ir nn.y</i>	“Do not be weary
2	<i>mi t'i n</i>	in relaying water to
3	<i>Imn nst(.w) t3.wy</i>	Amun of the Thrones of the Two Lands.”
4	<i>tw=i ir.t</i>	I do it
5	<i>sp(.w) 2 r 3 n p3 sw 10</i>	two or three times a week.

Philological notes

*Papyrus Leiden I 370*

In Lines 1 and 6 the *sdm=f* form of the verb has been used, meaning that the verb has been translated in the present tense.

Lines 7 to 9 contain typical, formulaic phrases relating to the well-being of others.

The phrase ‘every single day’ from Line 10 has been assumed to refer to ‘I say to...’ in Line 1.

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<sup>1699</sup> Adapted from Černý 1939: 27.

*Papyrus Phillipps*

In Line 1 the *s<sub>d</sub>m=f* form of the verb has been used, meaning that the verb has been translated in the present tense.

Lines 2 to 4 contain typical epithets relating to Amun-Ra.

As above, the phrase 'every single day' from Line 5 has been assumed to refer to 'I say to...' in Line 1.

*Papyrus British Museum 10417*

In Lines 1, 3 and 4 the *s<sub>d</sub>m=f* form of the verb has been used, meaning that the verb has been translated in the present tense.

*Papyrus Turin 1971*

In Line 4 the *s<sub>d</sub>m=f* form of the verb has been used, meaning that the verb has been translated in the present tense.

Line 5, *sp(.w) 2 r 3 n p3 sw 10* literally translates as 'two or three times in the time of ten'. It has been assumed in this translation that 'the time of ten' refers to an ancient Egyptian week.

Commentary

Late Ramesside Letters is the collective name for a number of Papyri (51 in total) discovered in Western Thebes. The letters mostly date from the end of the reign of Ramesses XI to the end of the New Kingdom.<sup>1700</sup> The letters were first published by Černý in 1939 and were subsequently published with full translations and commentaries by Wentz in 1967.<sup>1701</sup> Papyrus Leiden I 370 was written by the scribe Dhutmose to his son, the scribe Butehamun

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<sup>1700</sup> See Wentz 1967: 1-17 for a full discussion of the chronology of the letters.

<sup>1701</sup> See Černý 1939; Wentz 1967.



and the chantress of Amun, Shedemdua.<sup>1702</sup> It consists of 18 lines of hieratic text on the *recto* and 19 lines of hieratic text on the *verso*. Papyrus Phillipps was written by the prophet of Amenophis, Amenhotep, to the scribe Dhutmose.<sup>1703</sup> It consists of 17 lines of hieratic text on the *recto* and 1 lines of hieratic text on the *verso*. Papyrus British Museum 10417 was also written by the prophet of Amenophis, Amenhotep, to the scribe Dhutmose.<sup>1704</sup> It consists of 12 lines of hieratic text on the *recto* and 9 lines of hieratic text on the *verso*. Papyrus Turin 1971 was written by the scribe Butehamun (and the chantress of Amun-Ra, Shedsu, and the chantress of Amun, Hemesheri) to his father, the scribe Dhutmose.<sup>1705</sup> It consists of 14 lines of hieratic text on the *recto* and 12 lines of hieratic text on the *verso*. Only the relevant lines from the Late Ramesside Letters mentioned above have been translated. These lines have been selected for inclusion in this appendix because they demonstrate the formulaic manner in which ancient Egyptians made reference to praying to the gods in letters.<sup>1706</sup> They also give an indication of the frequency with which an individual may have prayed.

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<sup>1702</sup> See Černý 1939: 9-11a; Wente 1967:27-31; Wente 1990: 180.

<sup>1703</sup> See Černý 1939: 29-30a; Wente 1967:47-9; Wente 1990: 196-7.

<sup>1704</sup> See Černý 1939: 27-8a; Wente 1967:46-7; Wente 1990: 179.

<sup>1705</sup> See Černý 1939: 31-3a; Wente 1967:49-51; Wente 1990: 192-3.

<sup>1706</sup> For more on the use of formulas in ancient Egyptian texts, see Sweeney 2001; Luiselli 2011b: 45-6; 108-17; 188-93.

## F. Deir el-Medina Ostraca

### Bibliography of key publications

Černý 1935; Černý 1942; Černý 1972; Grandet 2003: 146-50. Discussed in Section 5.4.3 of this thesis.

#### *i. Ostrakon IFAO 501*

##### Hieroglyphs (in original lines)<sup>1707</sup>



##### Transcription and translation

1 *nm ntf*

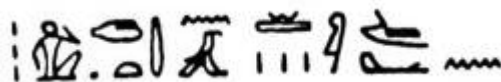
Is it he

2 *it̄3 p̄3.y tm̄3*

who steals this mat?

#### *ii. Ostrakon IFAO 198*

##### Hieroglyphs (in original lines)<sup>1708</sup>



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<sup>1707</sup> From Černý 1935: 43.

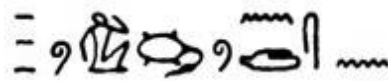
<sup>1708</sup> From Černý 1935: 44.

Transcription and translation

- 1 *n mʒ<sup>c</sup>* Are they true,  
2 *nʒ mdt.w* these claims?

**iii. Ostrakon IFAO 560**

Hieroglyphs (in original lines)<sup>1709</sup>



Transcription and translation

- 1 *n sn dw snd.w* Do they have fears?

**iv. Ostrakon Museum of Cairo J. 59465**

Hieroglyphs (in original lines)<sup>1710</sup>



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<sup>1709</sup> From Černý 1935: 46.

<sup>1710</sup> From Černý 1935: 48.

### Transcription and translation

- |   |                         |                                      |
|---|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1 | <i>m Ḥrw ḥpr.w im=f</i> | Has Horus come into being in<br>him? |
| 2 | <i>i wd.y m3̄.t</i>     | Oh! Send the truth!                  |

### Philological notes

#### *Ostrakon IFAO 501*

In Line 1 the third masculine independent pronoun (*ntf*) is used.

In Line 2 the singular masculine demonstrative (*p3̄.y*) is used.

#### *Ostrakon IFAO 198*

In Line 2 the plural definite article (*n3̄*) is used.

#### *Ostrakon IFAO 560*

In Line 1 the third plural dependent pronoun (*sn*) is used.

#### *Ostrakon Museum of Cairo J. 59465*

In Line 1 the preposition *m* and the third masculine suffix pronoun (*=f*) are used.

In Line 2 the interjection *i* is used.

In Line 2 the verb *wd.y* has been translated as an imperative.

### Commentary

These ostraca were discovered at Deir el-Medina and were published by Černý in 1935 as part of a group of ostraca that have questions addressed to oracles written on them in hieratic text.<sup>1711</sup> The translations of Černý have been used as a guide for the translations above.<sup>1712</sup> Ostrakon IFAO 501 is a potsherd measuring 5.5 cm in height and 7.5 cm in

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<sup>1711</sup> Černý 1935.

<sup>1712</sup> Černý 1935.

width.<sup>1713</sup> Ostrakon IFAO 198 is a potsherd measuring 6.5 cm in height and 7 cm in width.<sup>1714</sup> Ostrakon IFAO 560 is made of limestone and measures 3.5 cm high and 5.5 cm wide.<sup>1715</sup> Ostrakon Museum of Cairo J. 59465 is made of limestone and measures 6 cm in height and 11 cm in width.<sup>1716</sup> The four ostraca transcribed and translated above have been selected for inclusion in this appendix because they demonstrate the variety of questions posed by ancient Egyptians to oracles. The ostraca show that ancient Egyptians contacted the gods regarding a wide range of issues from the mundane to the spiritual.

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<sup>1713</sup> Černý 1935: 43-4.

<sup>1714</sup> Černý 1935: 44.

<sup>1715</sup> Černý 1935: 46.

<sup>1716</sup> Černý 1935: 48.

## G. The Biography of Ipuy

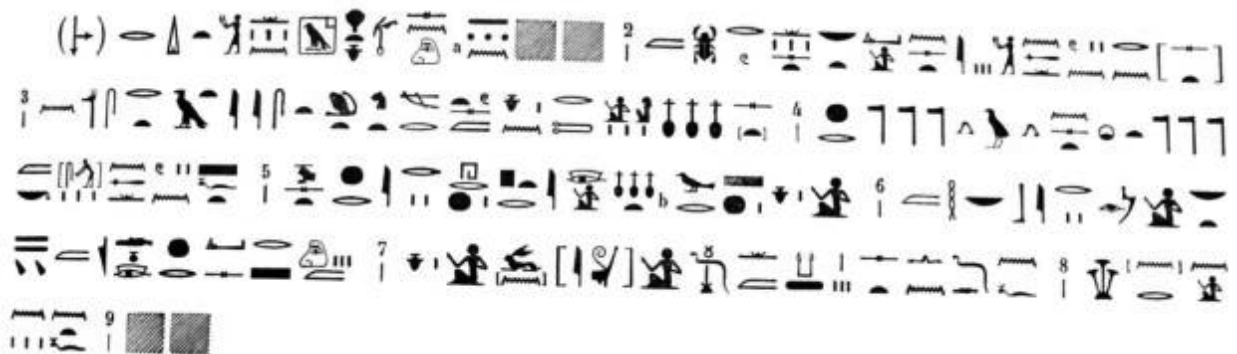
Wien Inv. 8390

### Bibliography of key publications

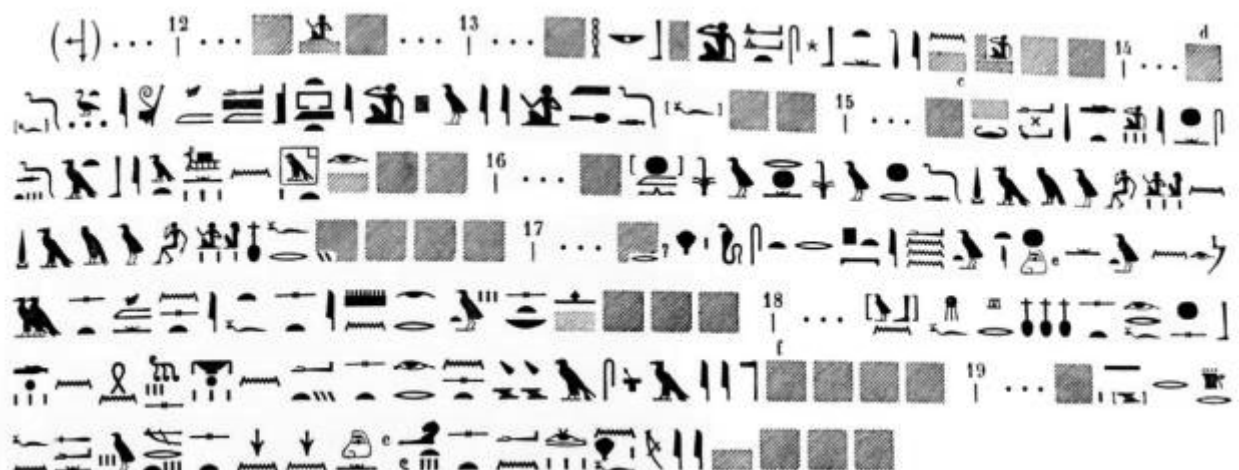
Satzinger 1985; Szpakowska 2003b: 135-7, 194-5; Frood 2007: 231-2. Discussed in Section 5.4.4 of this thesis.

### Hieroglyphs (in original lines)<sup>1717</sup>

#### *Section 1 - Front*



#### *Section 2 - Back*



<sup>1717</sup> Taken from Satzinger 1985: 251, 253.

Transcription and translation

## Section 1 - Front

1	<i>rdi.t i3.w n Hwt-ḥr ḥri.t-ib W<sup>c</sup>s.t</i>	Giving praise to Hathor who resides in Thebes:
2	<i>sn t3 n [///] m ḥpr.w=s(t) nb.t</i>	Kissing the ground to [///] in all her forms.
3	<i>dī=i n=s(t) i3.w</i>	May I give her praise,
4	<i>n <sup>c</sup>3.w n rn=[s(t)]</i>	for the greatness of her name
5	<i>n wsr.t t3y=s(t) ph.ti</i>	and for the power of her strength.
6	<i>mrw.t=s m ib(.w) n rmt</i>	Love of her is in the hearts of the people,
7	<i>nfr.w=s(t) ḥr ntr.w</i>	her beauty is with the gods.
8	<i>iw n=s(t) psd.t m k[s].w</i>	The ennead shall come to her,
9	<i>n <sup>c</sup>3.w n šf.t=s(t)</i>	bowing down before the greatness of her majesty.
10	<i>ḥr iry hrw ptri=i nfr.wt(=s)</i>	Thereto, upon this day I beheld (her) beauties.
11	<i>wrš ib=i m ḥb iry</i>	My heart was spending the day in festival thereof,
12	<i>m3=i nb.t t3.wy m kd</i>	when I saw the Lady of the Two Lands in a dream
13	<i>ḥr dī=s rš.w m ib=i</i>	and she placed joy in my heart.
14	<i>w[n.in]=i w3d m k3.w=s(t)</i>	Then I was refreshed with her food.
15	<i>nn dd n=f</i>	None could say of it,
16	<i>ḥnr n=i =n</i>	‘Would that I had, would that we had’.
17	<i>ntf [///]</i>	He [///]

## Section 2 – Back

18	<i>[///] ḥb [///]</i>	[///] festival (?) [///]
19	<i>ddi=t sb3.ti n [///]</i>	that which gives teachings to [///]
20	<i>[///] d[f]3.wt</i>	[///] sustenance (?)
21	<i>in sdm-<sup>c</sup>š m st-m<sup>c</sup>3t</i>	by the servant in the Place of Truth.
22	<i>Ipwy m<sup>c</sup>3-ḥrw dd[=f] [///]</i>	Ipuy, the justified, said [///]
23	<i>[///] wh<sup>c</sup> mdw.t</i>	[///] explain speech.
24	<i>iḥ s:dd.tw t3 bi3.wt n Hwt-ḥr iri</i>	The wonders that Hathor performed should be related
25	<i>[///] [h]m sw rh sw</i>	[to the?] ones who do not know and the ones who do know
26	<i>ḥr dd d<sup>c</sup>m.w n d<sup>c</sup>m.w</i>	and further, young men should say to young

	men
27 <i>nfr.wy</i> [///]	how beautiful [///]
28 <i>r hr=s(t) r pt</i>	her face to the sky.
29 <i>iri.tw th̄i.tw n m33=s(t)</i>	One is washed and inebriated by the sight of her.
30 <i>sdm n=s(t) iti=s(t) Imn</i>	Her father Amun listens to her
31 <i>spr.wt=s(t) nb ḥtp</i> [///]	and all her peaceful petitions [///]
32 [///] [ <i>wb</i> ] <i>n=f hr nfr.w=s(t)</i>	[///] [when] he rises with her beauty.
33 <i>iri=f ḥsbd n sn̄i.w=s</i>	He makes lapis lazuli for her hair
34 <i>nwb n ᵑt.y=s(t)</i>	and gold for her limbs.
35 <i>iri n=s(t) idb.y Hr</i>	The Two Banks of Horus were made for her,
36 <i>s3y ntr</i> [///]	that the god may prepare [///]
37 [///] <i>t3 r-dr=f</i>	[///] the land to its limits
38 <i>n ᵑ3.w mr.wt=s(t)</i>	because love of her is so great.
39 <i>snsn ḥ3.wt=s(t) ᵑn.w</i>	Her forehead shall associate with the beauty
40 <i>n hr=f mry</i> [///]	of his beloved face [///].

### Philological notes

In Line 11, *ib=i* is an example of the Late Egyptian verbal aorist *hr sdm=f* form.<sup>1718</sup> The use of *ib=i* in this line also implies that Ipuy was not physically present at a festival of Hathor.<sup>1719</sup> Instead, he was perhaps thinking about a festival and was therefore there in his heart.

The use of *m ḳd* rather than *m rsw.t* in Line 12 is unusual.<sup>1720</sup> The phrase containing *m ḳd* would more accurately be translated as, 'I saw the Lady of the Two Lands in slumber'.<sup>1721</sup> In this context, *m ḳd* does imply a dream is being referred to but does not make it as clear as it would be had *m rsw.t* been used. *M rsw.t* is used in the Misplaced Stela.<sup>1722</sup> However, *m ḳd* is used in the biography of Djehutiemhab.<sup>1723</sup> The use of two different nouns could suggest that deities and the dead were considered to appear to sleeping individuals in two slightly different ways.

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<sup>1718</sup> Szpakowska 2000: 348.

<sup>1719</sup> Satzinger 1985: 252.

<sup>1720</sup> See Satzinger 1985: 252.

<sup>1721</sup> Erman and Grapow 1926-1953d (Wb V): 79.7-8.

<sup>1722</sup> See Appendix II: C iii, Line 14.

<sup>1723</sup> See Appendix II: H, Line 42.



In Line 29, *thi.tw* has an unusual determinative that is usually reserved for expressions of joy.<sup>1724</sup> It is possible that Ipuy is trying to express the feeling of an elated high which could be considered similar to joyful drunkenness, rather than expressing literal drunkenness.

### Commentary

The biography of Ipuy is inscribed on a limestone stela which measures 33.7 cm in height, 26.3 cm in width and 7.6 cm in depth, in its current form.<sup>1725</sup> It is not known where the stela was discovered, but the titles of the stela's owner place him at Deir el-Medina.<sup>1726</sup> The stela is badly damaged, which has resulted in significant loss of the text, particularly on the reverse. On the front of the stela, in the upper register, there appears to be a scene depicting Ipuy worshiping Hathor in raised relief.<sup>1727</sup> A large section of the scene (the left side of the upper register) is missing. Originally there were nine vertical columns of hieroglyphic text in sunken relief beneath the scene in the lower register.<sup>1728</sup> However, the ninth column is missing due to the damage to the stela. The reverse of the stela seems to have originally been completely covered with ten vertical columns of hieroglyphic text in sunken relief.<sup>1729</sup> Due to damage, only the fragments of eight columns remain. The biography of Ipuy was first published in 1985 by Satzinger and has subsequently been discussed in detail by numerous scholars.<sup>1730</sup> The stela is noteworthy because it is inscribed with one of only two extant accounts of a non-royal individual encountering a deity in a dream.<sup>1731</sup> The stela is held at the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, Austria.

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<sup>1724</sup> Satzinger 1985: 254.

<sup>1725</sup> Satzinger 1985: 249; Froid 2007: 231.

<sup>1726</sup> Froid 2007: 231.

<sup>1727</sup> Satzinger 1985: 249; Froid 2007: 231.

<sup>1728</sup> Satzinger 1985: 250.

<sup>1729</sup> Satzinger 1985: 250.

<sup>1730</sup> Satzinger 1985. See also, Kitchen 1987: 201-2; Zibelius-Chen 1988: 292; Szpakowska 2000: 221-5; Szpakowska 2003b: 135-7, 194-5; Froid 2007: 231-2.

<sup>1731</sup> See Szpakowska 2003b: 41-60. See Appendix II: H for the other account of a non-royal individual encountering a deity in a dream (the biography of Djehutiemhab).

## H. The Biography of Djehutiemhab

TT 194

### Bibliography of key publications

Assmann 1978; Seyfried 1995; Szpakowska 2003b: 138-41, 195-6; Froid 2007: 91-3.  
Discussed in Section 5.4.4 of this thesis.

### Hieroglyphs (in original lines)<sup>1732</sup>



<sup>1732</sup> Taken from Assmann 1978: 26, Text I.



Transcription and translation

1	<i>dw3 nb.wt ir.t R<sup>c</sup>.w</i>	A hymn for the Golden One, Eye of Ra,
2	<i>sn t3 n k3[.s]</i>	who kisses the earth for her ka.
3	<i>[rdi.t] i3.w n hr=s(t) nfr</i>	A prayer to her beautiful face,
4	<i>sw3š=s [r<sup>c</sup>.w] nb</i>	paying honour to her every day,
5	<i>[in Ws]ir imi-r3 šhti</i>	[by Osi]ris, the overseer of the fields
6	<i>n pr-Imn</i>	of the temple of Amun,
7	<i>Dḥwti-[m-ḥ3b m3<sup>c</sup>-ḥrw]</i>	Djehuti[emhab, the justified].
8	<i>[dd=f]</i>	He said:
9	<i>[ii.n=i] ḥr.t t3 nb.t t3.wy</i>	'[I have come] before the Lady of the Two
		Lands,
10	<i>Ḥwt-ḥr wr.t mr.wt</i>	Hathor, Great of Love.
11	<i>mk.wi [///] n hr=t nfr</i>	Behold! I [///] for your beautiful face
12	<i>sn=i t3 n k3=t</i>	and I kissed the ground for your ka.
13	<i>ink ḥm=t n wn-m3<sup>c</sup></i>	I am your existing, real priest
14	<i>twi ḥr mw n wd=t</i>	and I am upon the water of your command.
15	<i>bw ḥ3<sup>c</sup>=i idd r=t</i>	I do not strike down the teachings of your
		mouth;
16	<i>bw ḥm=i sb3.wt=t</i>	I do not ignore your teachings.
17	<i>tw=i ḥr w3i.t</i>	I am upon the path
18	<i>n&lt;t&gt; ddi.t ds=t</i>	of that which you, yourself, have given,
19	<i>ḥr mtnw n ir.n=t</i>	upon the road which you have made.
20	<i>ḥy p3 sp nfr</i>	How beautiful is the moment
21	<i>n nty m rḥ=t</i>	for the one who knows you;
22	<i>p3 ptr=t nb ḥsi</i>	the seers of you are all praised.
23	<i>rš.wi ḥtp(w) r gs=t</i>	How joyful is resting by your side
24	<i>p3 ḥk n šwyt=t</i>	for the one who enters your shade!
25	<i>mnt=t sr m<sup>c</sup>ḥ<sup>c</sup>.t=i m š3<sup>c</sup></i>	You are the one who foretold my tomb at the
		beginning,
26	<i>iw=s m š3.w r-ḥpr</i>	as it was ordained to come into being.
27	<i>i:dd tw ḥpr</i>	What you said has happened
28	<i>šhr tw [///]</i>	through you [///]
29	<i>[///] st n d.t=i</i>	[///] a place for my mummy.
30	<i>iw=t r ddi n=i n i3w ḥtp=i</i>	You will give to me old age and my rest,
31	<i>iw=i w3d=[kw]</i>	while I am healthy
32	<i>s33=kw m ḥnh</i>	and satisfied with life;
33	<i>ir.t=i ḥr gmḥ</i>	my eyes able to see,
34	<i>ḥw.t nb.t tmm&lt;.ti&gt;</i>	and all my limbs are complete.

35 *mntt idd n=i*  
 36 *m r3=t ds=t*  
 37 *ink Hnrii nfr.t*  
 38 *iw iri.w=i [///] n Mwt*  
 39 *iri=i ii<.t> r mtr=k*  
 40 *ptr st=k imh.tw im=s*  
 41 *n hd n hnty*  
  
 42 *iw=i m kd*  
 43 *iw t3 m sgr*  
 44 *m nfrw grh*  
 45 *hd b ib=i h<sup>c</sup>.w*  
 46 *tw=i m ršř*  
 47 *di.n=i <wi> hr imi-wr.t*  
 48 *r ir.t mi dd=t*  
 49 *mntt ntr.t*  
 50 *n ir.t idd.t=s*  
 51 *šps.t n sdm n=s*  
  
 52 *bw wn=i r3=t*  
 53 *bw sn=i shr=t*  
 54 *irr=i mi idd=t*  
 55 *im hr=t rdi.t h3m wi*  
 56 *sw mnk n3y=t nfr.w*  
 57 *ht=i ir(w)=t m-hnw is=i*  
 58 *r s:dd=i phti=t*  
 59 *r di.t m d<sup>c</sup>mw*  
 60 *[///] nw*  
 61 *n k3 n Wsir*  
 62 *sh htp-ntr n pr Imn*  
 63 *mr-shiti n pr Imn*  
 64 *sh nisw.t [///]*  
 65 *Dhwti-m-h<sup>c</sup>b m3<sup>c</sup>-hrw m htp*  
 66 *sn.t=fmri.t [///]*

You are one who has spoken to me,  
 with your mouth yourself:  
 "I am beautiful Hely,  
 my shape is that [///] of Mut.  
 I have come to instruct you:  
 See your place and fill yourself with it,  
 without travelling north, without travelling  
 south."  
 While I was in a dream,  
 while the earth was in silence,  
 in the beauty of the night.  
 At dawn, my heart was joyful,  
 I was rejoicing  
 and I gave myself over to the west  
 in order to do as you said.  
 For you are a goddess  
 who does what she says,  
 a noble woman because obedience (is owed) to  
 her.  
 I have not neglected your speech;  
 I have not transgressed your plans.  
 I act like you have said.  
 Place your face and cause me to bow down.  
 Reward him (with) your goodness  
 that I may perceive your form within my tomb,  
 to cause your power to be spoken by me,  
 to make young men know (of it).  
 [///]  
 For the *ka* of Osiris.  
 Scribe of Offerings of the temple of Amun,  
 Chief of the Pastures of the temple of Amun,  
 Royal Scribe [///]  
 Djehutiemhab, justified in peace.  
 His beloved sister [///].

### Philological notes

*Sr* in Line 25 is written with the jackal determinative (Gardiner E17)<sup>1733</sup> which would usually be translated as *s3b*.<sup>1734</sup> However, Assmann believes (and Szpakowska agrees) that the jackal determinative was written in error and that the giraffe determinative (Gardiner E27)<sup>1735</sup> should have been written instead.<sup>1736</sup>

Loprieno notes the pun with *m š3c* (Line 25) and *m š3.w* (Line 26).<sup>1737</sup>

Line 27 is translated in accordance with Assmann's translation.<sup>1738</sup> Szpakowska suggests, 'That which you said has happened; your plan...'.<sup>1739</sup>

*Hnrīi*, as used in Line 37, is an informal name for Hathor.<sup>1740</sup> Perhaps it has been used in this instance to emphasise the informal and personal nature of Djehutiemhab's dream.

Line 42 has been translated as, 'while I was in a dream' because the verb 'dreaming' did not exist in the ancient Egyptian language.<sup>1741</sup>

Szpakowska translates Lines 49 to 51 as, 'For you are a goddess who does what she says, a noble lady to whom one owes obedience'.<sup>1742</sup> She also states that the literal translation is, 'You are a goddess for doing that which she said, a noble lady for obeying her'.<sup>1743</sup> In this translation a combination of both interpretations has been used, in order to provide the most likely literal translation.

Assmann suggests that *irr=i* in Line 54 could be the emphatic form.<sup>1744</sup>

Assmann argues that Lines 56 and 57 could have two meanings; that Djehutiemhab is referring to seeing Hathor again in the afterlife, and also to an actual depiction or statue of Hathor to be placed within his tomb.<sup>1745</sup> The latter makes sense if Line 55 is also considered.

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<sup>1733</sup> Gardiner 1957: 460.

<sup>1734</sup> Szpakowska 2000: 352 (b).

<sup>1735</sup> Gardiner 1957: 461.

<sup>1736</sup> Assmann 1978: 29 (d). See also, Szpakowska 2000: 352 (b).

<sup>1737</sup> Loprieno 1996b: 219, Footnote 86. See also, Szpakowska 2000: 352 (c).

<sup>1738</sup> Assmann 1978: 28.

<sup>1739</sup> Szpakowska 2000: 350.

<sup>1740</sup> Assmann 1978: 32 (t).

<sup>1741</sup> Szpakowska 2003b: 15.

<sup>1742</sup> Szpakowska 2000: 351.

<sup>1743</sup> Szpakowska 2000: 352 (g).

<sup>1744</sup> Assmann 1978: 30 (l).

<sup>1745</sup> Assmann 1978: 33 (y). See also, Szpakowska 2000: 352 (h).

### Commentary

The biography of Djehutiemhab is inscribed in the tomb of Djehutiemhab (TT 194).<sup>1746</sup> Djehutiemhab was an official in charge of overseeing the fields of the temple of Amun during the Nineteenth Dynasty.<sup>1747</sup> The original lines 1 to 14 of the biography are inscribed on the north facing wall of the tomb chapel and the original lines 15 to 18 are inscribed on the west facing wall.<sup>1748</sup> The biography is written in hieroglyphic text in vertical lines.<sup>1749</sup> The biography of Djehutiemhab was first published in 1978 by Assmann as an isolated text;<sup>1750</sup> it was subsequently discussed in the context of Djehutiemhab's tomb by Seyfried in 1995.<sup>1751</sup> As well as the biography of Ipuy, discussed above, the biography of Djehutiemhab is one of only two extant accounts of a non-royal individual encountering a deity in a dream.<sup>1752</sup>

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<sup>1746</sup> See Seyfried 1995: 70-1; Assmann 1978: 24; Szpakowska 2000: 226-32; Frood 2007: 91.

<sup>1747</sup> See Line 64 of the translation.

<sup>1748</sup> Seyfried 1995: 70. See also, Frood 2007: 91.

<sup>1749</sup> Seyfried 1995: 70.

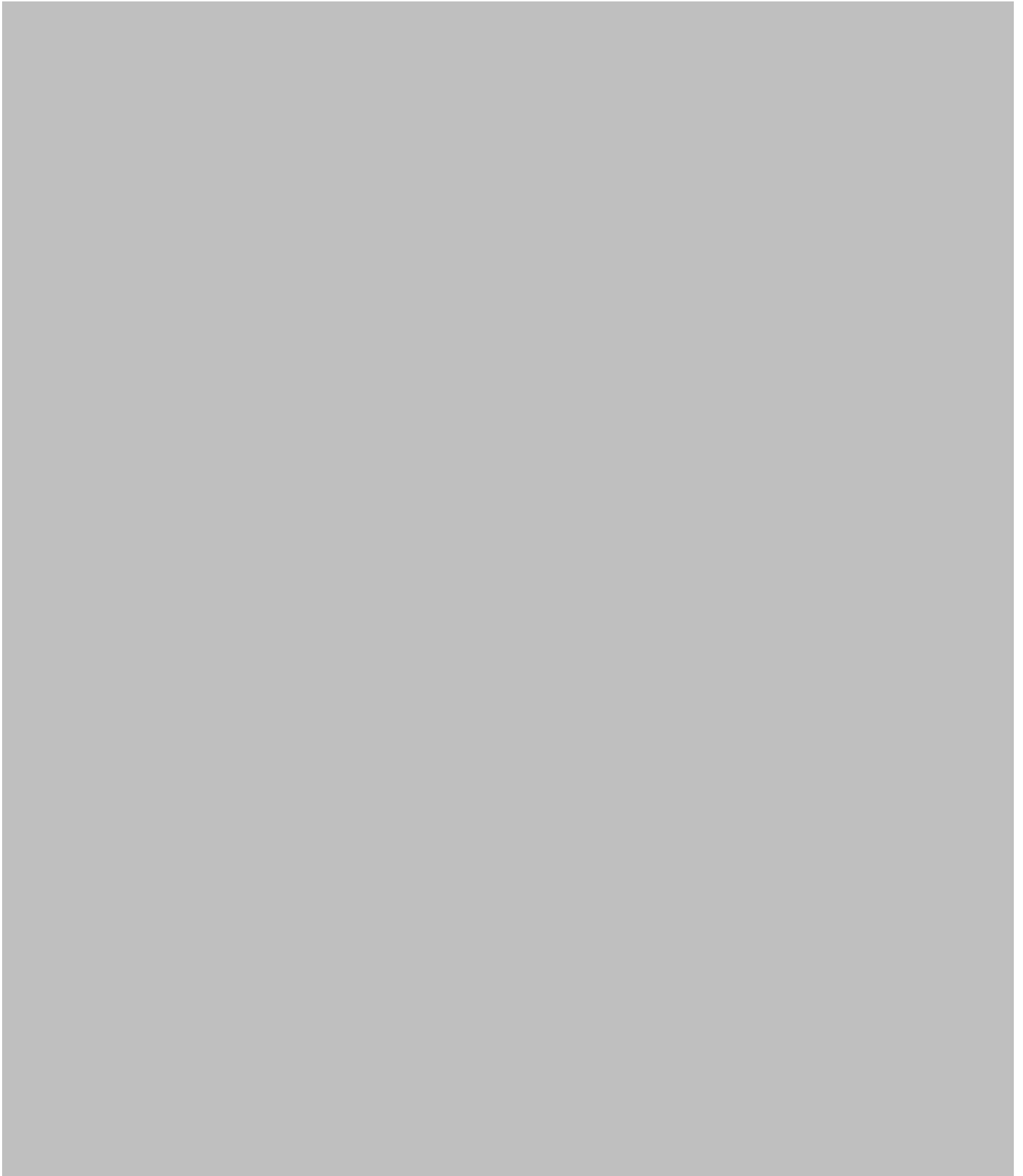
<sup>1750</sup> Assmann 1978.

<sup>1751</sup> Seyfried 1995.

<sup>1752</sup> See Szpakowska 2003b: 41-60; Frood 2007: 92.

# PLATES





*Plate 1: The Ikhernofret Stela.  
Information and image taken from Simpson 1974: Plate I.*

Plates



*Plate 2: A scene depicting the resurrection of Osiris from the Osiris Temple at the Temple of Hathor at Dendera.  
Information and image taken from Daumas 1969: Plate XVIII.*



*Plate 3: Corn mummies.  
A - Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden, Inv. No. AU 49. B - Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden, Inv. No. AU 50.  
C & D - Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden, Inv. No. F 1951/9.1.  
Information and images taken from Raven 1982: Plates I-II.*

Plates



*Plate 4: A scene from the tomb of Userhat (TT 56) depicting a banquet and Userhat's son presenting a bouquet of flowers to his parents during the Beautiful Feast of the Valley.  
Information and image taken from Seyfried 2013: Illustration 6.*



*Plate 5: Papyrus and lotus bouquets being presented during the Beautiful Feast of the Valley, as depicted in TT 161.  
Information and image taken from Schott 1953: Plate VI.*

Plates



*Plate 6: A singer at the Beautiful Feast of the Valley.  
Information and image taken from Schott 1953: Plate IV.*



*Plate 7: Acrobatic dancers performing during the Beautiful Feast of the Valley procession as depicted in  
Hatshepsut's temple at Deir el-Bahari.  
Information and image taken from Karkowski 1992: 160.*

Plates



*Plate 8: Offerings for the Beautiful Feast of the Valley depicted in TT 57.  
Information and image taken from Schott 1953: Plate II.*



*Plate 9: A depiction of individuals interacting during the Beautiful Feast of the Valley from TT 53.  
Information and image taken from Schott 1953: Plate XI.*

Plates



*Plate 10: Mrs J Tadema-Sporry sitting on top of a platform, probably in house SO I at Deir el-Medina.  
Information and image taken from Weiss 2009: 195.*



*Plate 11: Platform in house P46.24 at Deir el-Medina.  
Information and image taken from Stevens 2009: 4.*

Plates



*Plate 12: Wall painting from Main Street House 3 at Tell el-Amarna.  
Information and image taken from Kemp 1979: Plate VII.*



*Plate 13: Wall painting from Long Wall Street House 10 at Tell el-Amarna.  
Information and image taken from Kemp 1979: Plate VIII.*



*Plate 14: Bedframe, date and provenance uncertain.  
Held at the Medelhauseet, Stockholm, Inv. No. 10.232.  
Information and image taken from Killen 1980: 24, Plate 30.*



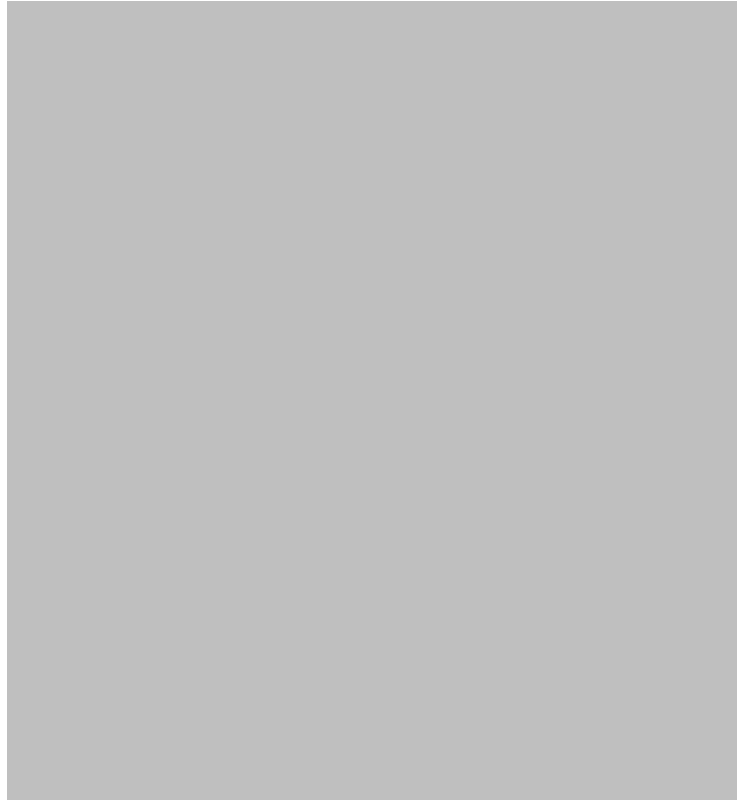
*Plate 15: Royal bedframe of Queen Hetepheres I, Fourth Dynasty, Giza.  
Held at the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, JE 53261.  
Information and image taken from Killen 1980: 28, Plate 36.*



*Plate 16: Bedstead, New Kingdom, Deir el-Medina.  
Held at the Narodowe Museum, Warsaw, Cat. No. 139068.  
Information and image taken from Killen 1980: 31, Plate 38.*



Plates



*Plate 17: Open-backed chair, Eighteenth Dynasty, provenance unknown.  
Held at the Brooklyn Museum, New York, Cat. No. 37.40E.  
Information and image taken from Killen 1980: 54, Plate 87.*



*Plate 18: Ceremonial chair, Eighteenth Dynasty, tomb of Tutankhamun.  
Held at the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, JE 62030.  
Information and image taken from Killen 1980: 61, Plate 100.*

Plates



*Plate 19: Animal-legged stool, Middle Kingdom, provenance unknown.  
Held at the Victoria Museum, Uppsala, Cat. No. B-2.  
Information and image taken from Killen 1980: 38, Plate 49.*



*Plate 20: Animal-legged stool, Eighteenth Dynasty, provenance unknown.  
Held at the Egyptian Museum, Turin, Cat. No. 8614.  
Information and image taken from Killen 1980: 38, Plate 50.*



*Plate 21: Folding stool with ducks' heads detailing, Eighteenth or Nineteenth Dynasty, provenance unknown.  
Held at the Royal Ontario Museum, Ontario, Cat. No. 914.2.1.  
Information and image taken from Killen 1980: 42, Plate 61.*



*Plate 22: Low stool, Eighteenth Dynasty, provenance unknown.  
Held at the British Museum, London, Cat. No. 46705.  
Information and image taken from Killen 1980: 43, Plate 65.  
Object reference number: YCA18784*



*Plate 23: Box with a gable lid, Eighteenth Dynasty, tomb of Kha.  
Held at the Egyptian Museum, Turin, Cat. No. 8617.  
Information and image taken from Killen 1994: 44, Plate 41.*



*Plate 24: Simple rectangular box, Twelfth Dynasty, Kahun.  
Held at the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford, Inv. No. L48.  
Information and image taken from Killen 1994: 13, Plate 5.*



*Plate 25: Jewel Box, Twelfth Dynasty, tomb of Sithathoriunet.  
Held at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Inv. No. 16.1.1.  
Information and image taken from Killen 1994: 23, Plate 11.*



*Plate 26: Entrance to the staircase that led down into Kha's tomb.  
Information and image taken from Schiaparelli 1927: 9, Figure 7.*



*Plate 27: One corner of the tomb of Kha at the time of discovery.  
Information and image taken from Schiaparelli 1927: 15, Figure 15.*



*Plate 28: Kha's straight-backed chair.  
Held at the Egyptian Museum, Turin, Cat. No. S. 08333.  
Information and image taken from Vassilika 2010: 59.*



*Plate 29: Kha's folding chair.  
Held at the Egyptian Museum, Turin, Cat. No. S. 08509.  
Information and image taken from Vassilika 2010: 103.*



*Plate 30: Two large, low cane tables piled with foodstuffs.  
Held at the Egyptian Museum, Turin, Cat. Nos. S. 08342 and S. 08343.  
Information and image taken from Schiaparelli 1927: 118, Figure 101.*



*Plate 31: Kha's bed.  
Held at the Egyptian Museum, Turin, Cat. No. S. 08327.  
Information and image taken from Schiaparelli 1927: 121, Figure 104.*





*Plate 32: Meryt's bed with two headrests.  
Held at the Egyptian Museum, Turin, Cat. S. 08329.  
Information and image taken from Schiaparelli 1927: 121, Figure 105.*



*Plate 33: Short sides of a chest decorated with geometric patterns and a funerary scene.  
Held at the Egyptian Museum, Turin, Cat. No. S. 08212.  
Information and image taken from Vassilika 2010: 93.*



*Plate 34: Chest with a flat top and decorated with floral and geometric patterns.  
Held at the Egyptian Museum, Turin, Cat. No. S. 08479.  
Information and image taken from Vassilika 2010: 46.*



*Plate 35: Lotus flower-shaped lamp stand and bird-shaped lamp.  
Lamp stand held at the Egyptian Museum, Turin, Cat. No S. 08628. Bronze lamp held at the Egyptian Museum,  
Cairo, JE 38642.  
Information and image taken from Schiaparelli 1927: 144, Figures 127, 128.*



*Plate 36*

*Plate 37*

*Plate 36: Mirror with Hathoric umbel, date unknown, Thebes.  
Held at the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, CG 44035.  
Information and image taken from Lilyquist 1979: Figure 35.*

*Plate 37: Mirror with lotiform umbel, date unknown, Abydos.  
Held at the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, E. 3296.  
Information and image taken from Lilyquist 1979: Figure 41.*



*Plate 38*

*Plate 39*

*Plate 38: Mirror with lotiform umbel, date unknown, Thebes.  
Held at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 26.7.1351.  
Information and image taken from Lilyquist 1979: Figure 56.*

*Plate 39: Mirror with Hathoric umbel, date unknown, Lahun.  
Held at the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, CG 52663.  
Information and image taken from Lilyquist 1979: Figure 64.*



*Plate 40*

*Plate 41*

*Plate 40: Mirror with a pair of falcons on the umbel, date unknown, Kerma.  
Held at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, NO.  
Information and image taken from Lilyquist 1979: Figure 84.*

*Plate 41: Mirror with a pair of falcons on the umbel, date unknown, Kerma.  
Held at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 20.1790.  
Information and image taken from Lilyquist 1979: Figure 86.*



*Plate 42: Rectangular grey palette with three incised lines around the edge, Naqada III to First Dynasty, Naqada.  
Held at the Manchester University Museum, Manchester, Cat. No. 2381.  
Information and image taken from Patenaude and Shaw 2011: 15, Figure 2381.*

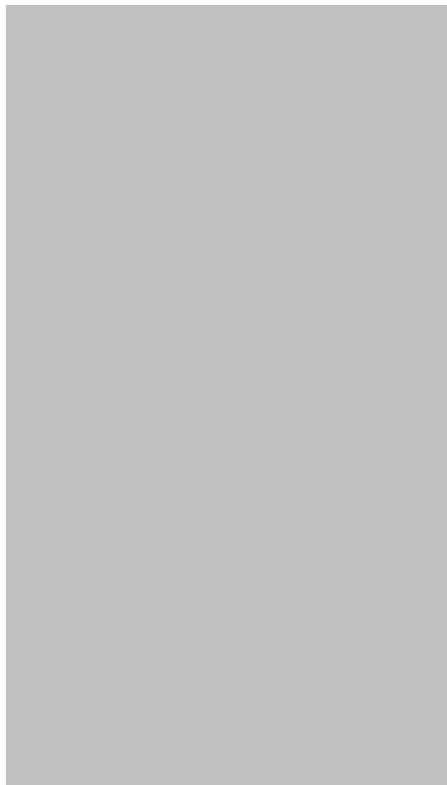


*Plate 43: Rectangular grey palette with notched edges, Naqada III to First Dynasty, Tarkhan.  
Held at the Manchester University Museum, Manchester, Cat. No. 5718.  
Information and image taken from Patenaude and Shaw 2011: 37, Figure 5718.*

Plates

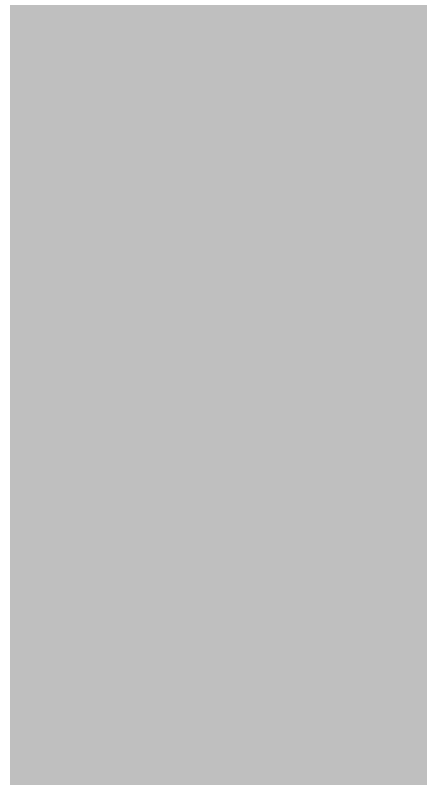


*Plate 44: Spoon in the form of a swimming girl, Eighteenth Dynasty, provenance unknown.  
Held at the Musée du Louvre, Paris, N. 1704.  
Information and image taken from Vandier d'Abbadie 1972: OT 5, 12-3.*



*Plate 45*

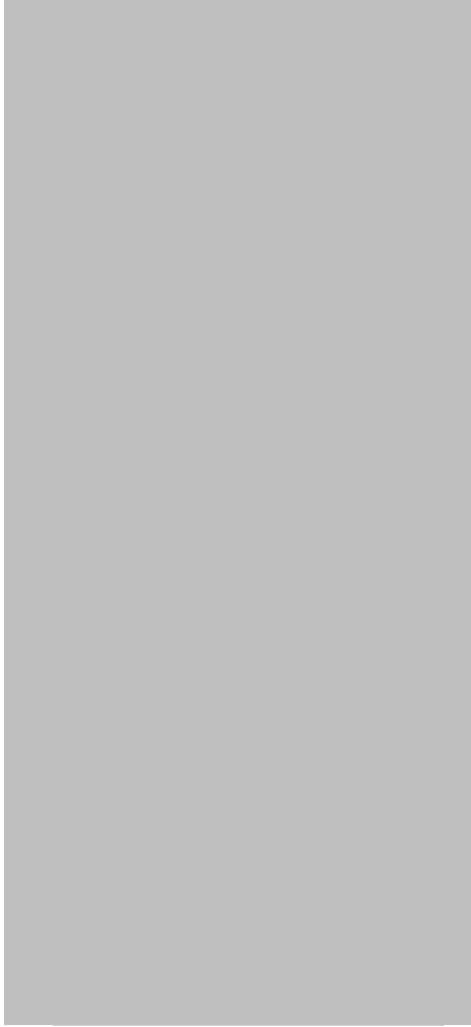
*Plate 45: Cosmetic spoon in the shape of a bearded foreigner, Eighteenth Dynasty, Gournah.  
Held at the Musée du Louvre, Paris, N. 1738.  
Information and image taken from Vandier d'Abbadie 1972: OT 26, 12-3.*



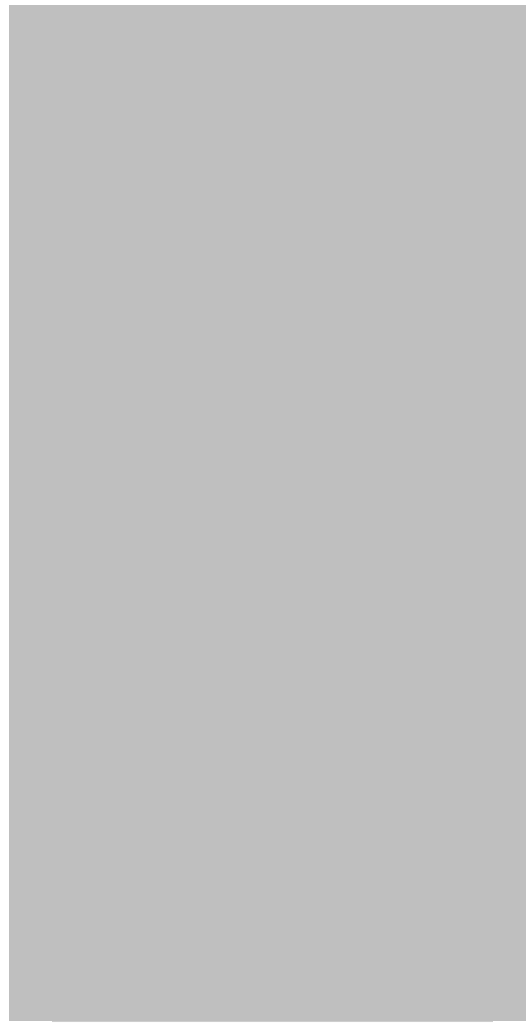
*Plate 46*

*Plate 46: Cosmetic spoon in the shape of a walking foreigner, Eighteenth Dynasty, Gournah.  
Held at the Musée du Louvre, Paris, N. 1735.  
Information and image taken from Vandier d'Abbadie 1972: OT 28, 18-9.*

Plates



*Plate 47*



*Plate 48*

*Plate 47: Cosmetic spoon in the shape of a cartouche with papyrus and lotus flower decoration, Eighteenth Dynasty, provenance unknown.*

*Held at the Musée du Louvre, Paris, N. 1744 b.*

*Information and image taken from Vandier d'Abbadie 1972: OT 34, 22-3.*

*Plate 48: Cosmetic spoon in the shape of a cartouche with papyrus and lotus flower decoration, Eighteenth Dynasty, provenance unknown.*

*Held at the Musée du Louvre, Paris, N. 1744 a.*

*Information and image taken from Vandier d'Abbadie 1972: OT 33, 21-2.*



Plates



*Plate 49: Cosmetic spoon in the form of an oryx, Nineteenth to Twentieth Dynasty, provenance unknown.  
Held at the Musée du Louvre, Paris, E. 3217.  
Information and image taken from Vandier d'Abbadie 1972: OT 69, VII, 30.*



*Plate 50: Cosmetic spoon in the form of an ibex, Eighteenth Dynasty, Fayum.  
Held at the Musée du Louvre, Paris, E. 11124.  
Information and image taken from Vandier d'Abbadie 1972: OT 65, 29.*

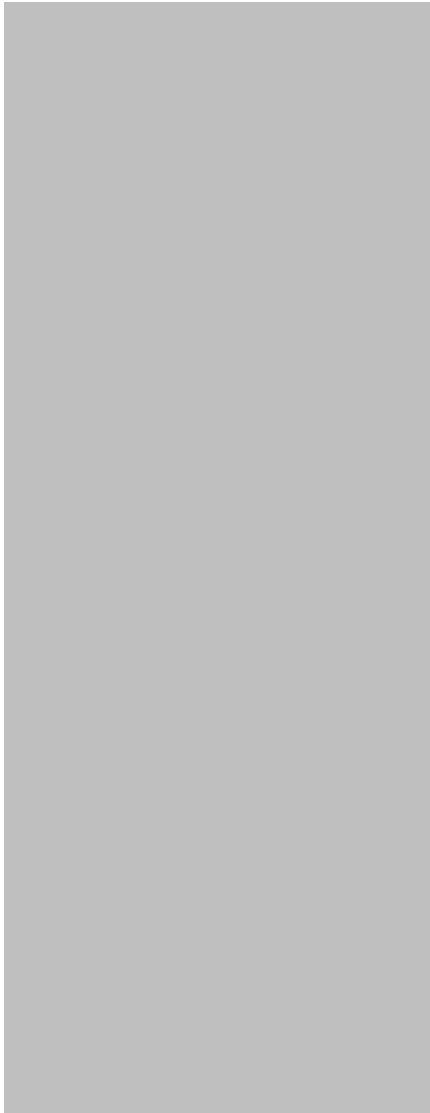
Plates



*Plate 51: Cosmetic spoon in the form of an ibex, Eighteenth Dynasty, provenance unknown.  
Held at the Musée du Louvre, Paris, E. 22916.  
Information and image taken from Vandier d'Abbadie 1972: OT 68, 30.*

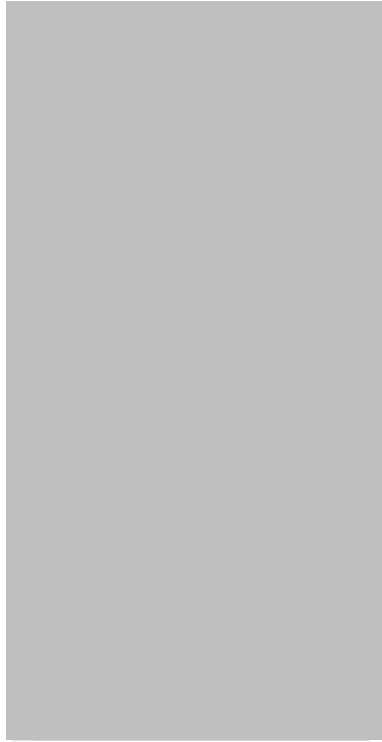


*Plate 52: Cosmetic spoon in the form of a trussed goose, New Kingdom, provenance unknown.  
Held at the Musée du Louvre, Paris, E. 1318.  
Information and image taken from Vandier d'Abbadie 1972: OT 77, 31, 33.*



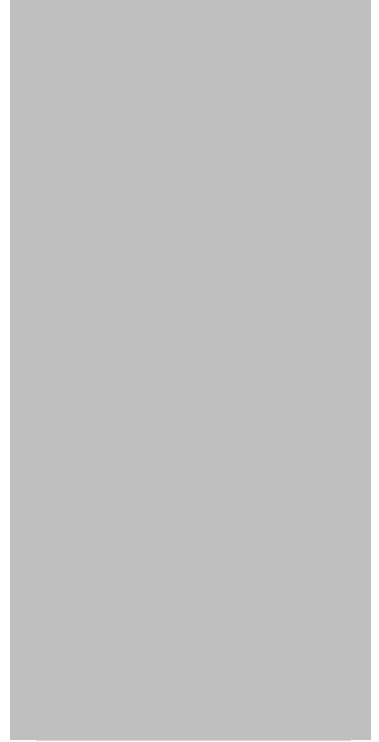
*Plate 53*

*Plate 53: Kohl pot in the form of Bes, New Kingdom, provenance unknown.  
Held at the Musée du Louvre, Paris, E. 1339 b.  
Information and image taken from Vandier d'Abbadie 1972: OT 172, 58-9.*



*Plate 54*

*Plate 54: Kohl pot in the form of Bes, late New Kingdom, provenance unknown.  
Held at the Musée du Louvre, Paris, E14693.  
Information and image taken from Vandier d'Abbadie 1972: OT 160, 55-6.*



*Plate 55*

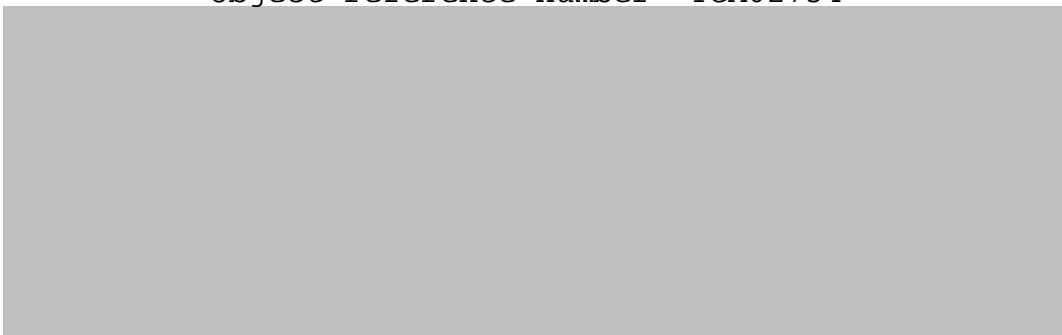
*Plate 55: Kohl pot in the shape of Bes, Eighteenth Dynasty, provenance unknown.  
Held at the Musée du Louvre, Paris, N. 4469.  
Information and image taken from Vandier d'Abbadie 1972: OT 164, VII, 30.*



*Plate 56: Old Kingdom and First Intermediate Period amulets in various forms.  
Held at the British Museum, London.  
Information and image taken from Andrews 1994b: Figure 46.*



*Plate 57: Djed-pillar amulets.  
Held at the British Museum, London.  
Information and image taken from Andrews 1994b: Figure 84.  
Object reference number: YCA62754*



*Plate 58: Amulets in the form of shrines.  
Held at the British Museum, London.  
Information and image taken from Andrews 1994b: Figure 98.*



*Plate 59: Wedjat-eye amulets.  
Held at the British Museum, London.  
Information and image taken from Andrews 1994b: Figure 46.  
Object reference number: YCA50397*



*Plate 60: Amulets in the shape of Tawaret.  
Held at the British Museum, London.  
Information and image taken from Andrews 1994b: Figure 39.*



*Plate 61: The Qau Bowl, exterior.*  
*Held at the Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology, London, UC 16163.*  
*© The Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology UCL.*

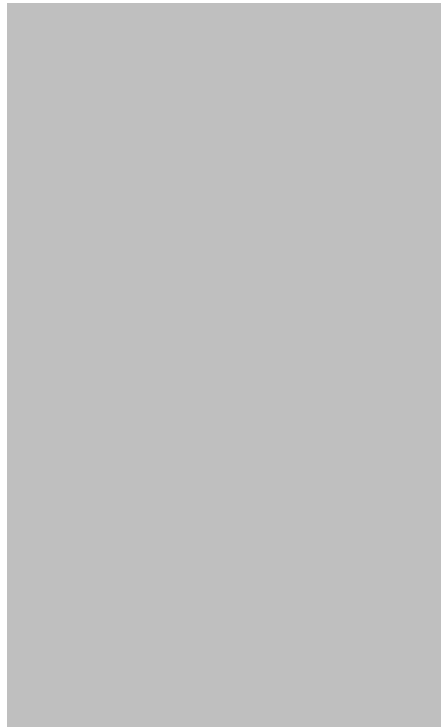


*Plate 62: The Hu Bowl.*  
*Held at the Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology, London, UC 16244.*  
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Plates

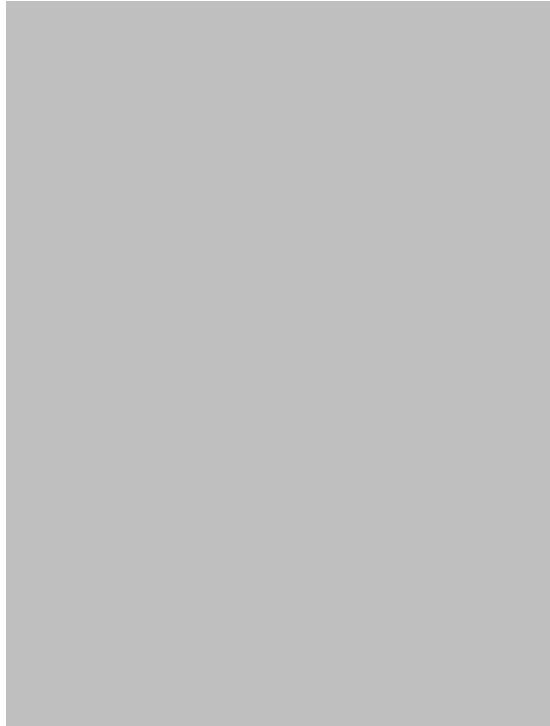


*Plate 63: Anthropoid bust with three-part wig, possibly New Kingdom, Fayum.  
Held at the Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology, London, UC 16550.  
Information and image taken from Keith (with contributions by S. Donnat, A. K. Stevens, N. Harrington) 2011: FI,  
275, 277-8.*



*Plate 64: Anthropoid bust with tripartite wig and inlaid eyes, date unknown, Karnak.  
Held at the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, JE 64911.  
Information and image taken from Keith (with contributions by S. Donnat, A. K. Stevens, N. Harrington) 2011: KI,  
285-6.*

Plates

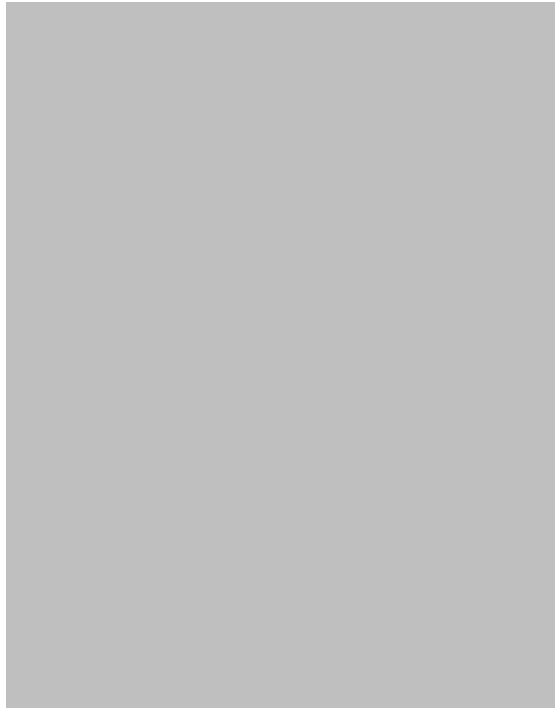


*Plate 65: Anthropoid bust with tripartite wig, possibly Eighteenth to Twentieth Dynasty, possibly Deir el-Medina.  
Held at the Brooklyn Museum, New York, 54.1.  
Information and image taken from Keith (with contributions by S. Donnat, A. K. Stevens, N. Harrington) 2011:  
220-1.*



*Plate 66: Anthropoid bust with three-part wig and deep collar with lotus, possibly Eighteenth to Twentieth  
Dynasty, possibly Deir el-Medina.  
Held at the Egyptian Museum, Turin, Cat. 3080.  
Information and image taken from Keith (with contributions by S. Donnat, A. K. Stevens, N. Harrington) 2011:  
227, 229.*

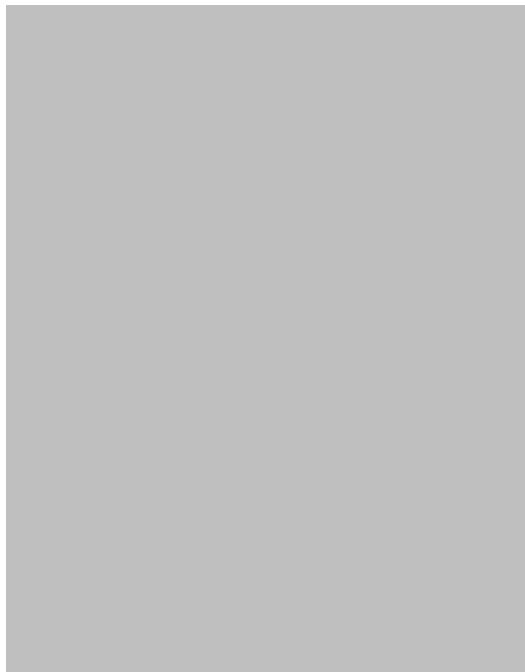




*Plate 67: Painted anthropoid bust with tripartite wig, probably Eighteenth or Nineteenth Dynasty, probably Deir el-Medina.*

*Held at the Regional Art Museum named after I N Kramskoy, Voronezh, Cat. 29.*

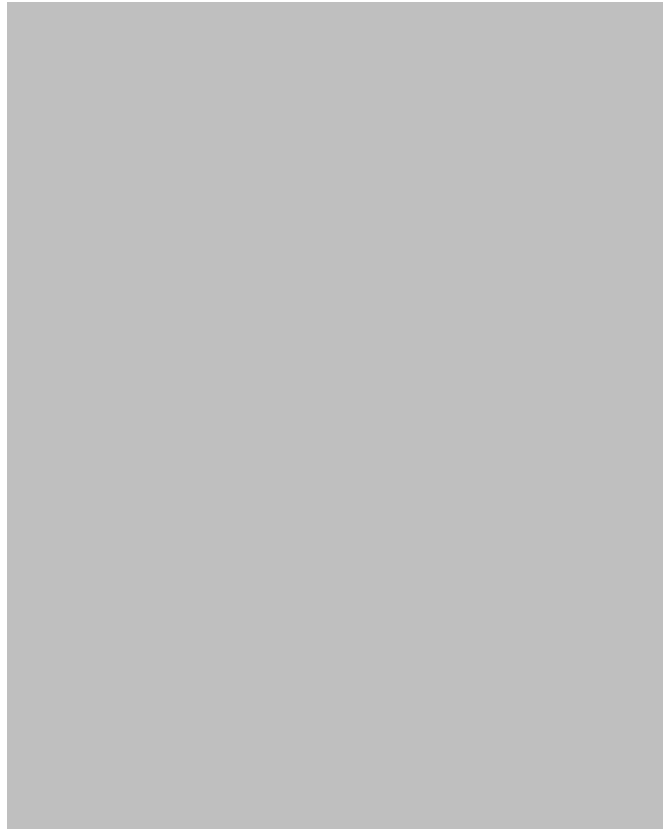
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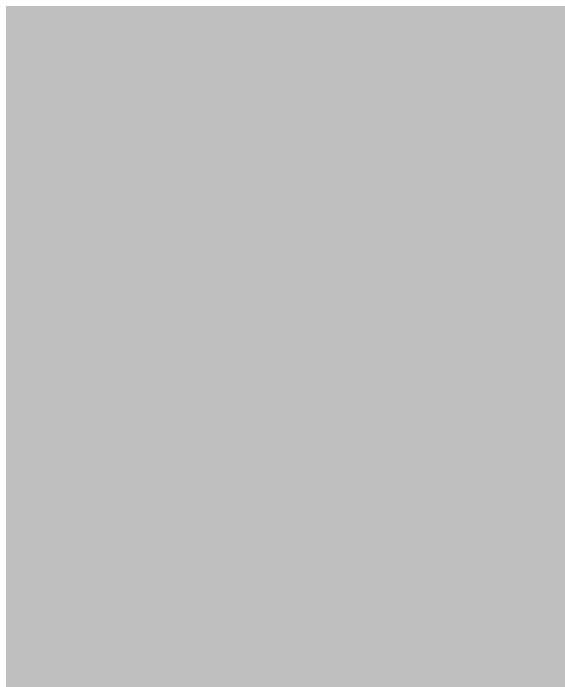
*Plate 68: Anthropoid bust with three-part wig and an elaborate painted collar, probably Eighteenth to Nineteenth Dynasty, Deir el-Medina.*

*Held in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, JE 43980.*

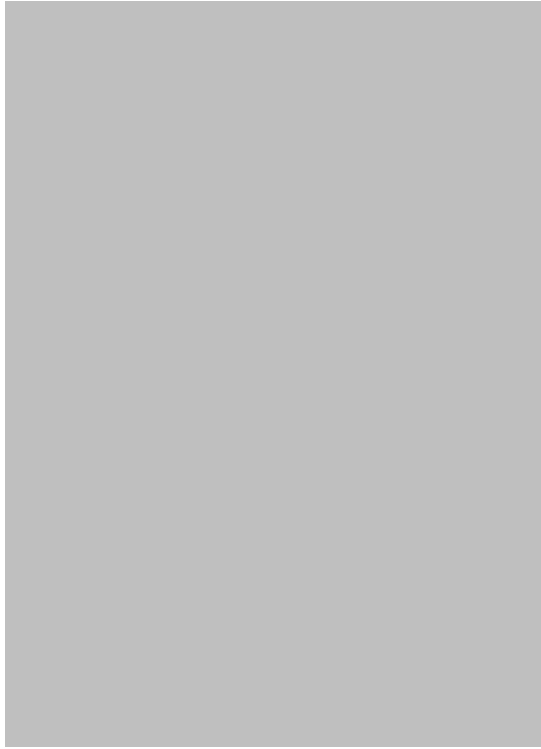
*Information and image taken from Keith (with contributions by S. Donnat, A. K. Stevens, N. Harrington) 2011: DMC I, 204-5.*



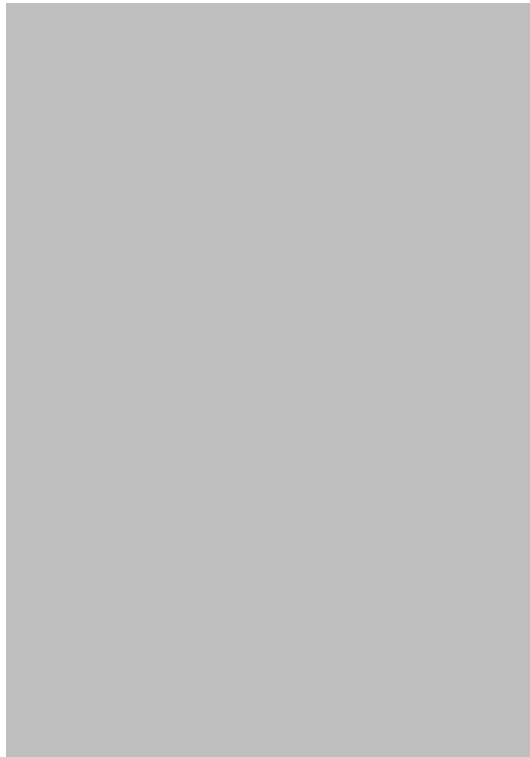
*Plate 69: An ꜥꜣ iꜣr n Rꜥ stela dedicated to Bukentef, Nineteenth Dynasty, Deir el-Medina.  
Held at the National Museum, Warsaw, NM 143341.  
Information and image taken from Demarée 1983: 31-3, Plate XIV.*



*Plate 70: An ꜥꜣ iꜣr n Rꜥ stela dedicated to Ptah-hesi, Nineteenth Dynasty, Thebes.  
Held at the Manchester Museum, Manchester, No. 1554.  
Information and image taken from Demarée 1983: 60-2, Plate XIV.*



*Plate 71: An 3h ikr n R<sup>c</sup> stela dedicated to Nekh, Nineteenth to Twentieth Dynasty, Thebes.  
Held at the Oriental Institute Museum, Chicago, 14287.  
Information and image taken from Demarée 1983: 75-7, Plate XV.*



*Plate 72: An 3h ikr n R<sup>c</sup> stela dedicated to Nesamun, Nineteenth to Twentieth Dynasty, Thebes.  
Held at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, E.SS.38.  
Information and image taken from Demarée 1983: 78-9, Plate XV.*



*Plate 73: An  $\text{3}^{\text{h}}$   $\text{i}^{\text{kr}}$  n R<sup>c</sup> stela dedicated to Khamuy, Nineteenth Dynasty, Deir el-Medina.  
Held at the Musée Archéologique, Cannes, 7.  
Information and image taken from Demarée 1983: 93-4, Plate XV.*

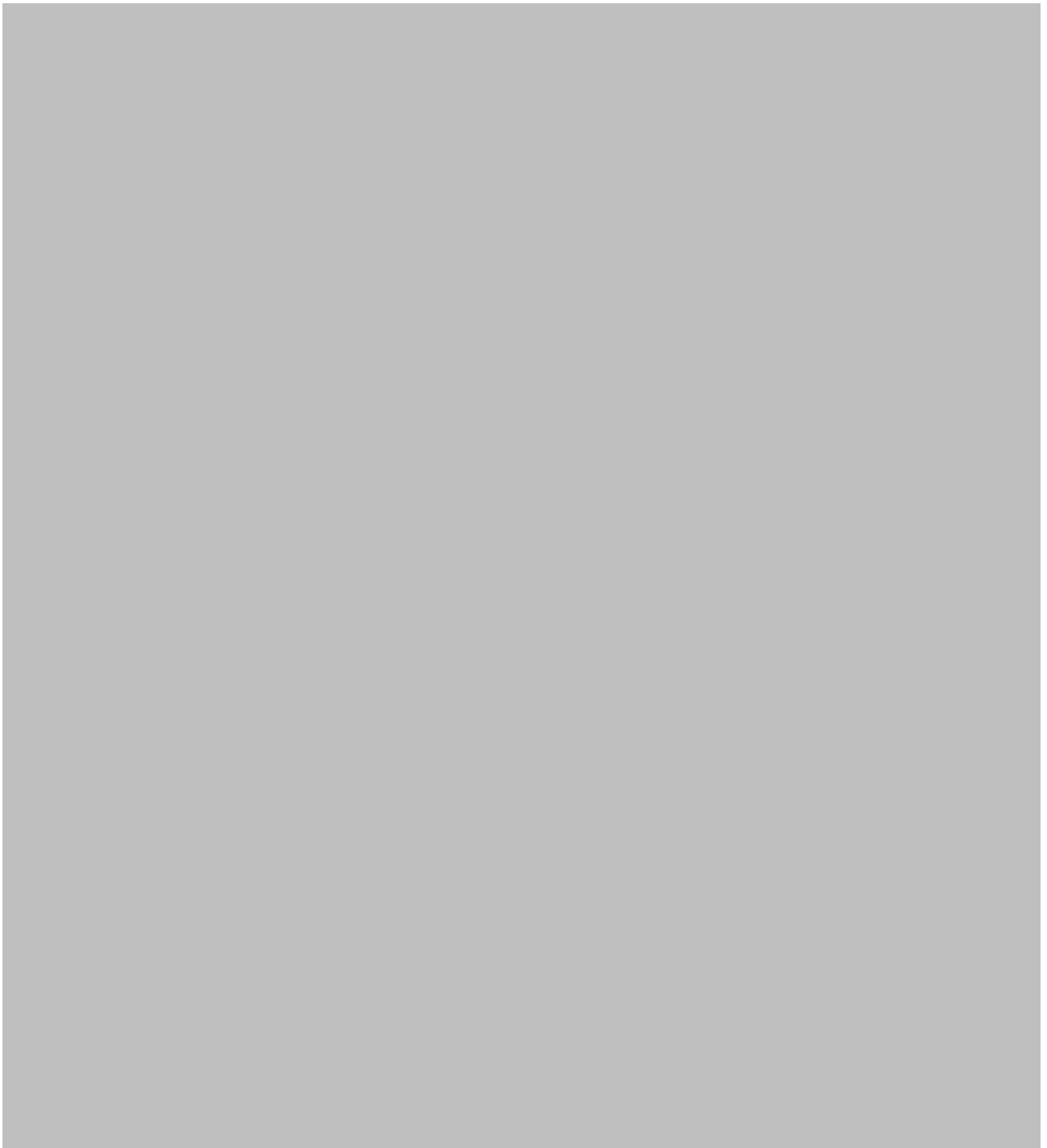


*Plate 74: Papyrus Chester Beatty III (the Dream Book), Nineteenth Dynasty, Deir el-Medina.*

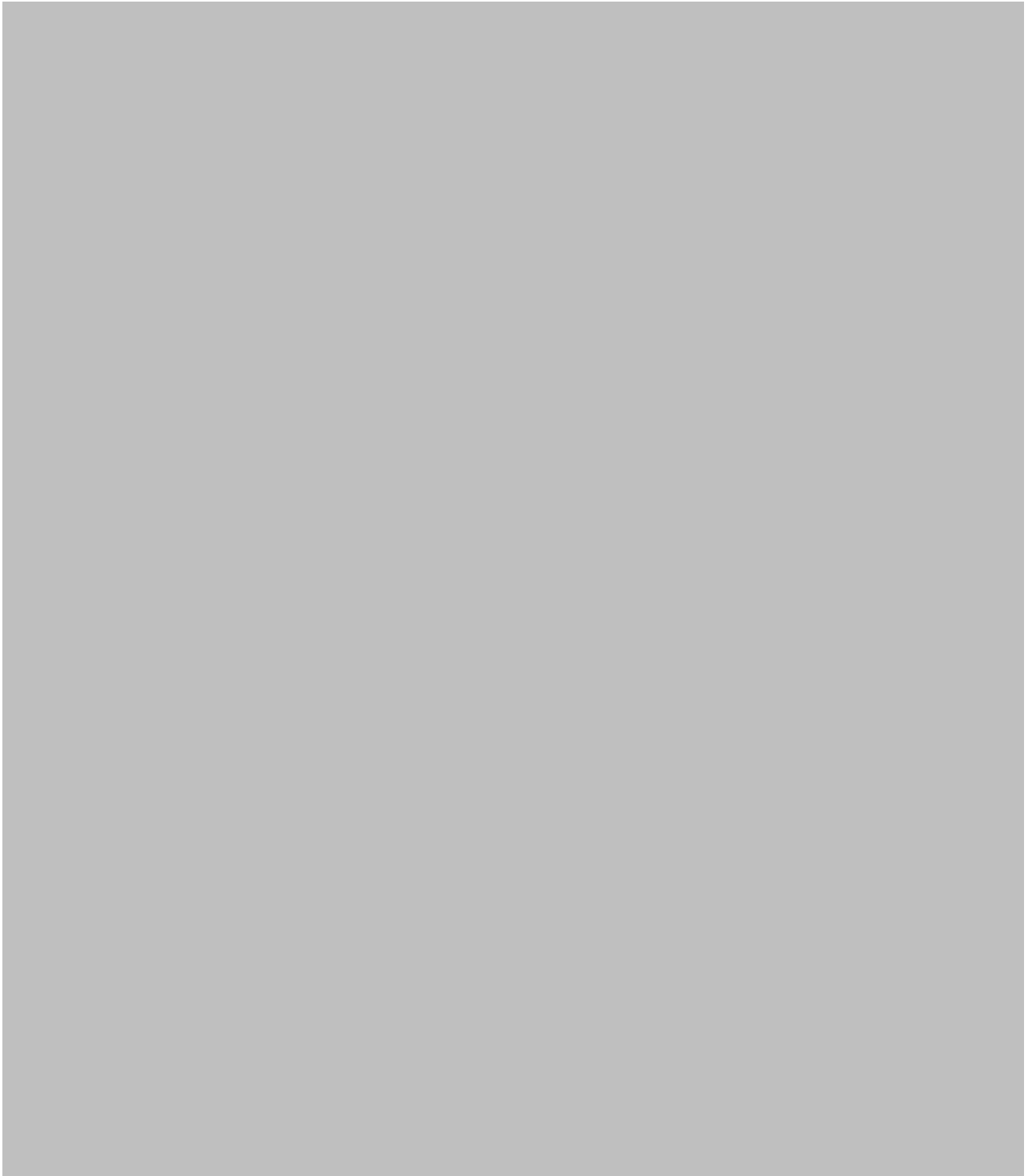
*Held at the British Museum, London, EA10683.*

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Object reference number: YCA63181



*Plate 75: Papyrus Leiden I 370 (Late Ramesside Letter), late New Kingdom, Thebes.  
Held at the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden, AMS 38B.  
© Rijksmuseum van Oudheden.*

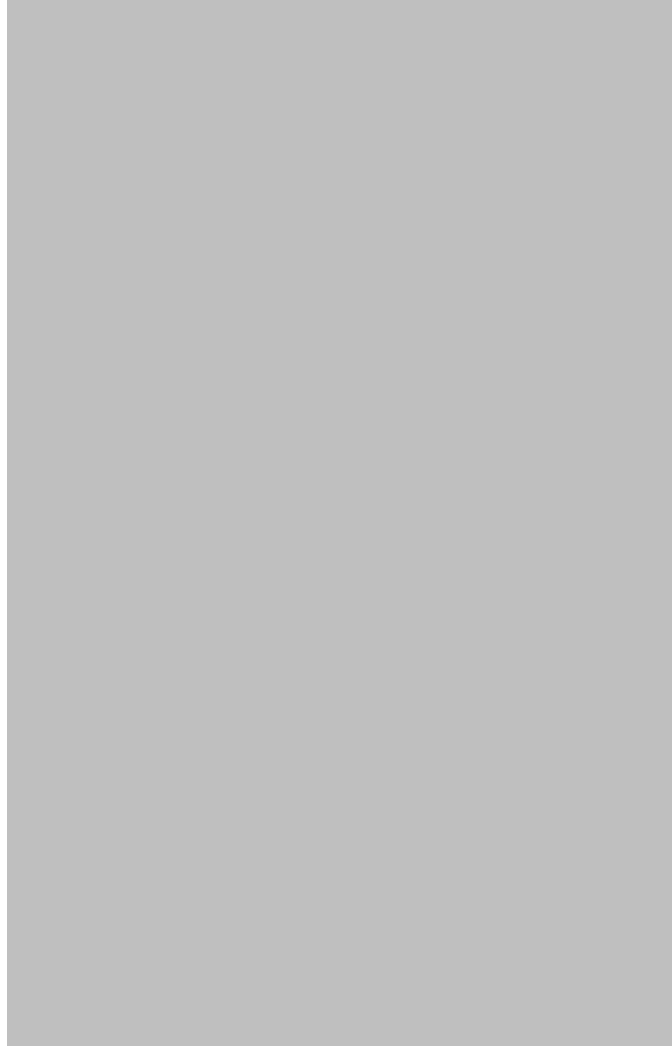


*Plate 76: Papyrus British Museum 10417 (Late Ramesside Letter), Twentieth Dynasty, Thebes.*

*Held at the British Museum, London, EA 10417.*

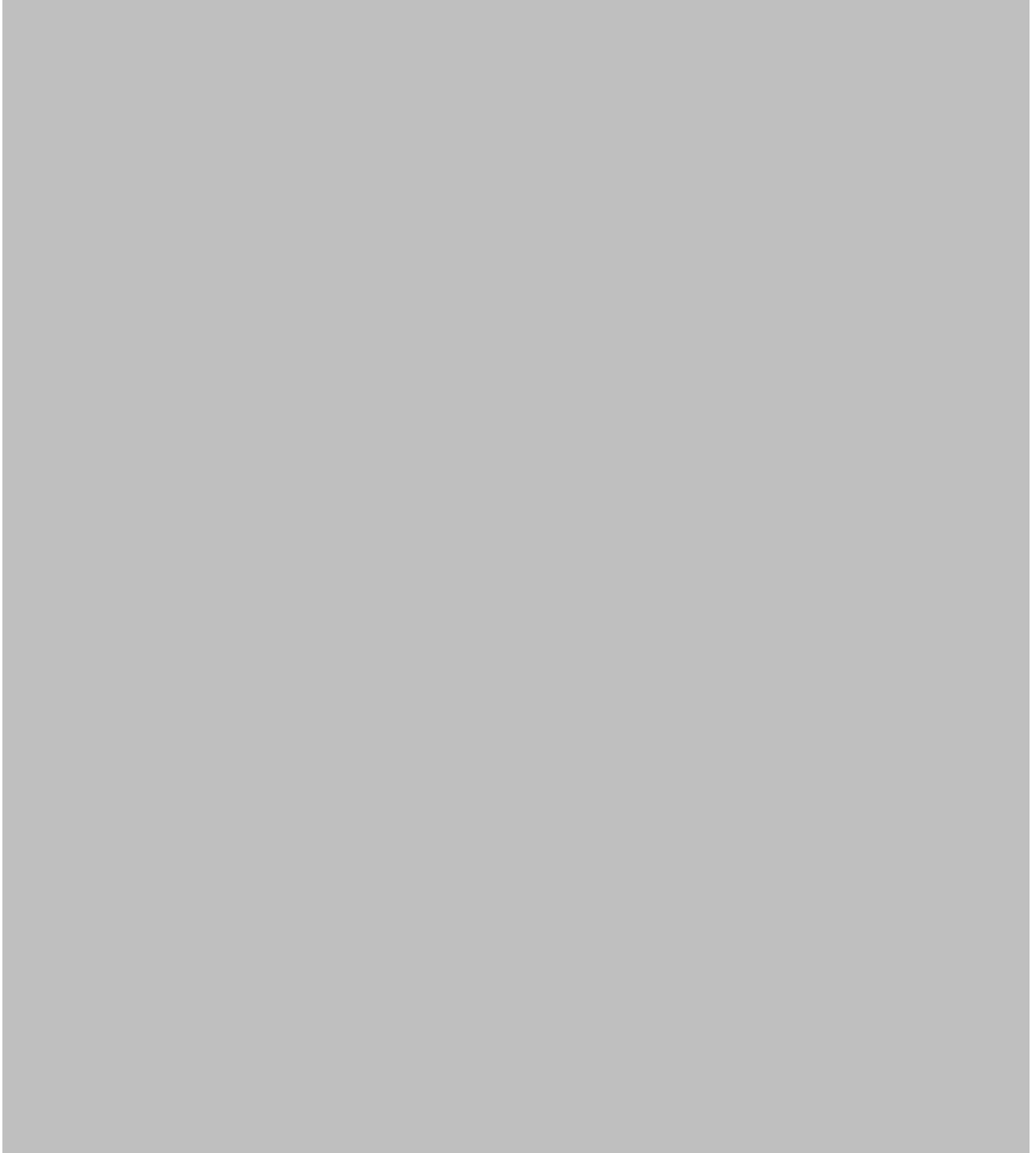
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Object reference number: YCA67140

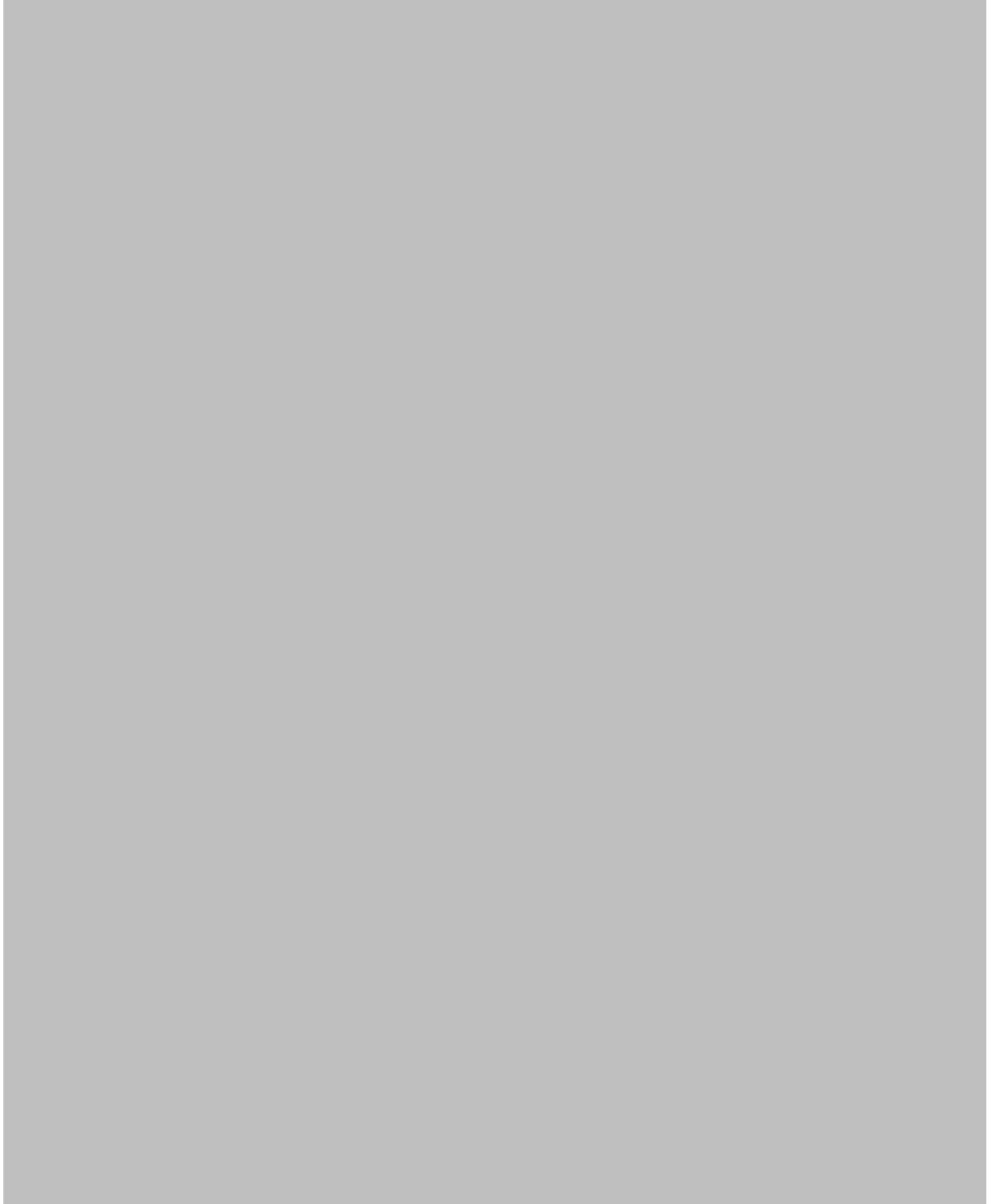


*Plate 77: Intermediary statue of Amenhotep, Son of Hapu, date unknown, Karnak.  
Held at the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, No. 42127.  
Information and image taken from Varille 1968: Plate I.*





*Plate 78: Votive offerings from Deir el-Bahari, date unknown.  
Information and image taken from Pinch 1993: Plate 6.*



*Plate 79: Votive offerings from Faras, date unknown.  
Information and image taken from Pinch 1993: Plate 7.*

Plates

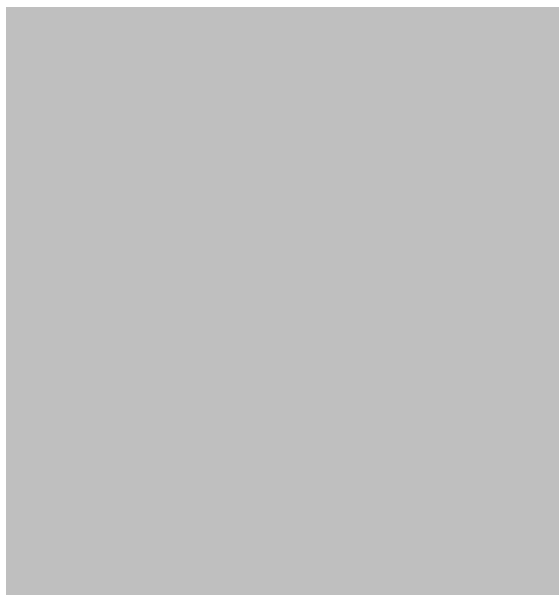


*Plate 80: Votive stone ears.*

*Left: date unknown, Faras. Centre: date unknown, Deir el-Bahari. Right: date unknown, Faras. All held at the British Museum, London, BM 5125 (left), BM 47527 (centre), BM 512516 (right).  
Information and image taken from Pinch 1993: Plate 55.*



*Plate 81: Faience votive ears and eyes, date unknown, Deir el-Bahari.  
All held at the British Museum, London, BM 41075, BM 41081, BM 41068, BM 41071.  
Information and image taken from Pinch 1993: Plate 55.*



*Plate 82: Two fertility figurines, date unknown, Deir el-Bahari.  
Both held at the British Museum, London, BM 41107 (left), BM 41108 (right).  
Information and image taken from Pinch 1993: Plate 49.*



*Plate 83: Oracle ostrakon (Ostrakon IFAO 198), Eighteenth to Twentieth Dynasty, Deir el-Medina.  
Held by the Institut français d'archéologie orientale, Cairo, 9615.  
© Institut français d'archéologie orientale.*



*Plate 84: Oracle ostrakon (Ostrakon IFAO 560), Eighteenth to Twentieth Dynasty, Deir el-Medina.  
Held by the Institut français d'archéologie orientale, Cairo, 12027.  
© Institut français d'archéologie orientale.*



*Plate 85: The biography of Ipuw, Eighteenth Dynasty, Deir el-Medina.  
Held at the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Wien, Austria, Inv. No. 8390.  
Information and image taken from Satzinger 1985: Plate I.*

# FIGURES

Figures



*Figure 1: A map of Abydos.*

*The route from the temple of Osiris to U-Pequer is shown in grey. The route from the temple of Osiris to the memorial temples along the edge of the floodplain is shown in black.*

*Information and image taken from Eaton 2006: 76.*

Figures



*Figure 2: The Osiris Fetish, as depicted on the south wall of the barque chapel of Osiris in the temple of Seti at Abydos.  
Information and image taken from Eaton 2006: 85.*



*Figure 3: A barque carrying the Osiris Fetish, as depicted on the north wall of the barque chapel of Osiris in the temple of Seti at Abydos.  
Information and image taken from Eaton 2006: 89.*



Figures



*Figure 4: Mentuhotep II steering the barque of Amun during the Beautiful Feast of the Valley, as depicted in the temple of Mentuhotep at Deir el-Bahari.  
Information and image taken from Seyfried 2013: 123.*



*Figure 5: Musicians and acrobats in the procession during the Beautiful Feast of the Valley, as depicted in the Red Chapel at Karnak.  
Information and image taken from Seyfried 2013: 124.*

Figures



*Figure 6: Torches by the barque of Amun in the barque room during the Beautiful Feast of the Valley, as depicted on the northern wall of the upper court in the temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahari. Information and image taken from Karkowski 1992: 161.*

Figures



*Figure 7: Types of lit clos.  
Information and image taken from Bruyère 1939b: 57, Figure 18.*



*Figure 8: Decoration of the platform in house NO12, Deir el-Medina, depicting a papyrus boat.  
Information and image taken from Bruyère 1939b: 286, Figure 157.*



*Figure 9: Decoration of the platform in house C6, Deir el-Medina, depicting a so-called morning toilet scene.  
Information and image taken from Bruyère 1939b: 311, Figure 182.*

Figures



*Figure 10: Decoration of the platform in house NE12, Deir el-Medina, depicting Bes.  
Information and image taken from Bruyère 1939b: 257, Figure 133.*



*Figure 11: A wall niche in a house at Deir el-Medina.  
The detail shows the partly preserved decoration depicting the owner worshipping the cartouche of Ahmose  
Nefertari.  
Information and image taken from Stevens 2009: 5, Figure 7.*

Figures

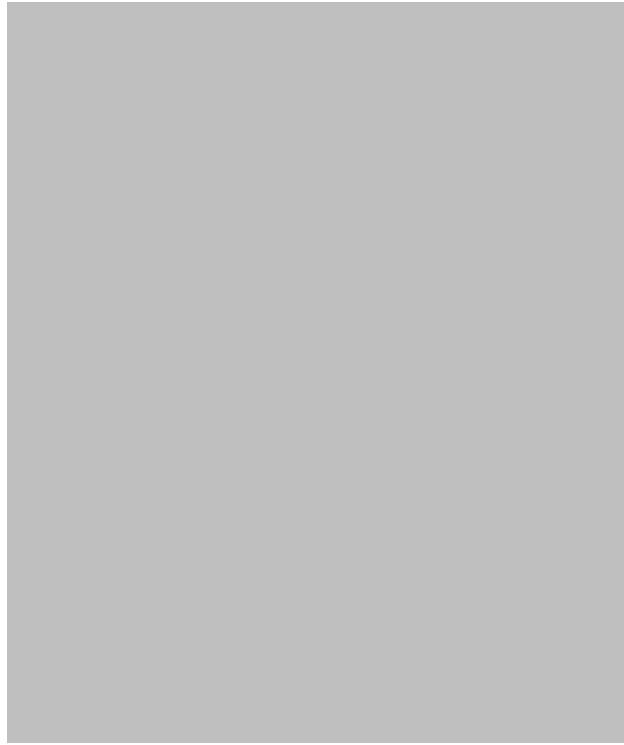


*Figure 12: Wall painting from Main Street House 3 at Tell el-Amarna.  
Information and image taken from Kemp 1979: 40, Figure 1.*

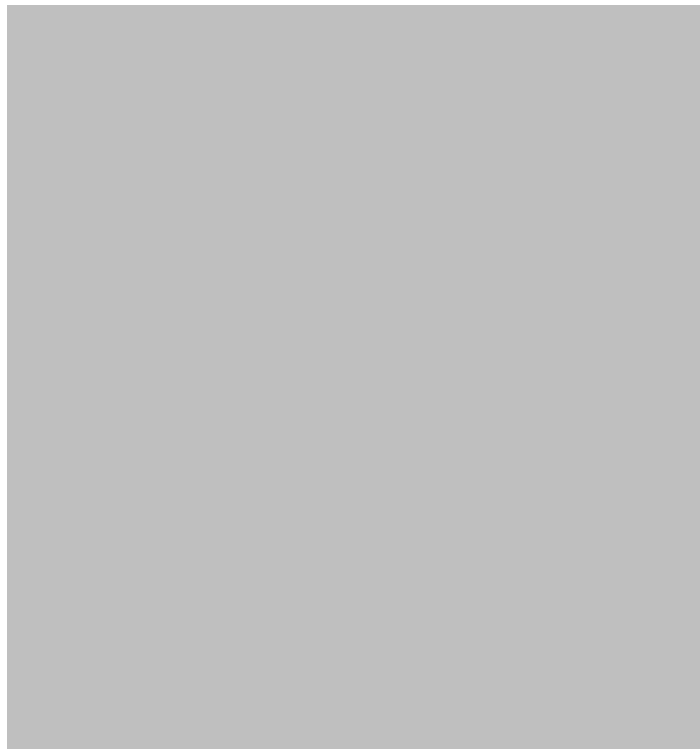


*Figure 13: Wall painting from Long Wall Street House 10 at Tell el-Amarna.  
Information and image taken from Kemp 1979: 49, Figure 2.*

Figures

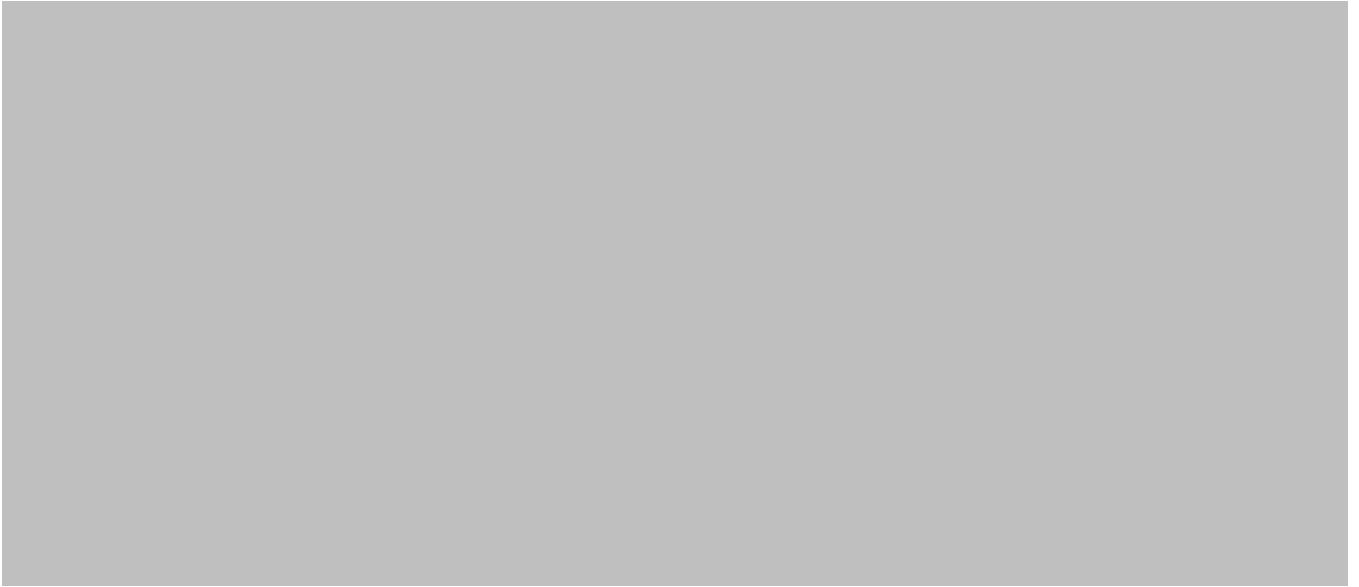


*Figure 14: An 3ḥ iḳr n R<sup>c</sup> stela dedicated to Baki, early Nineteenth Dynasty, Deir el-Medina.  
Held at the Musée du Louvre, Paris, E 16369.  
Information and image taken from Demarée 1983: 29-30, Plate III.*



*Figure 15: An 3ḥ iḳr n R<sup>c</sup> stela dedicated to Anhotep, Nineteenth Dynasty, Deir el-Medina.  
Held at the Museo Egizio, Turin, No. 50019.  
Information and image taken from Demarée 1983: 23-26, Plate III.*

Figures

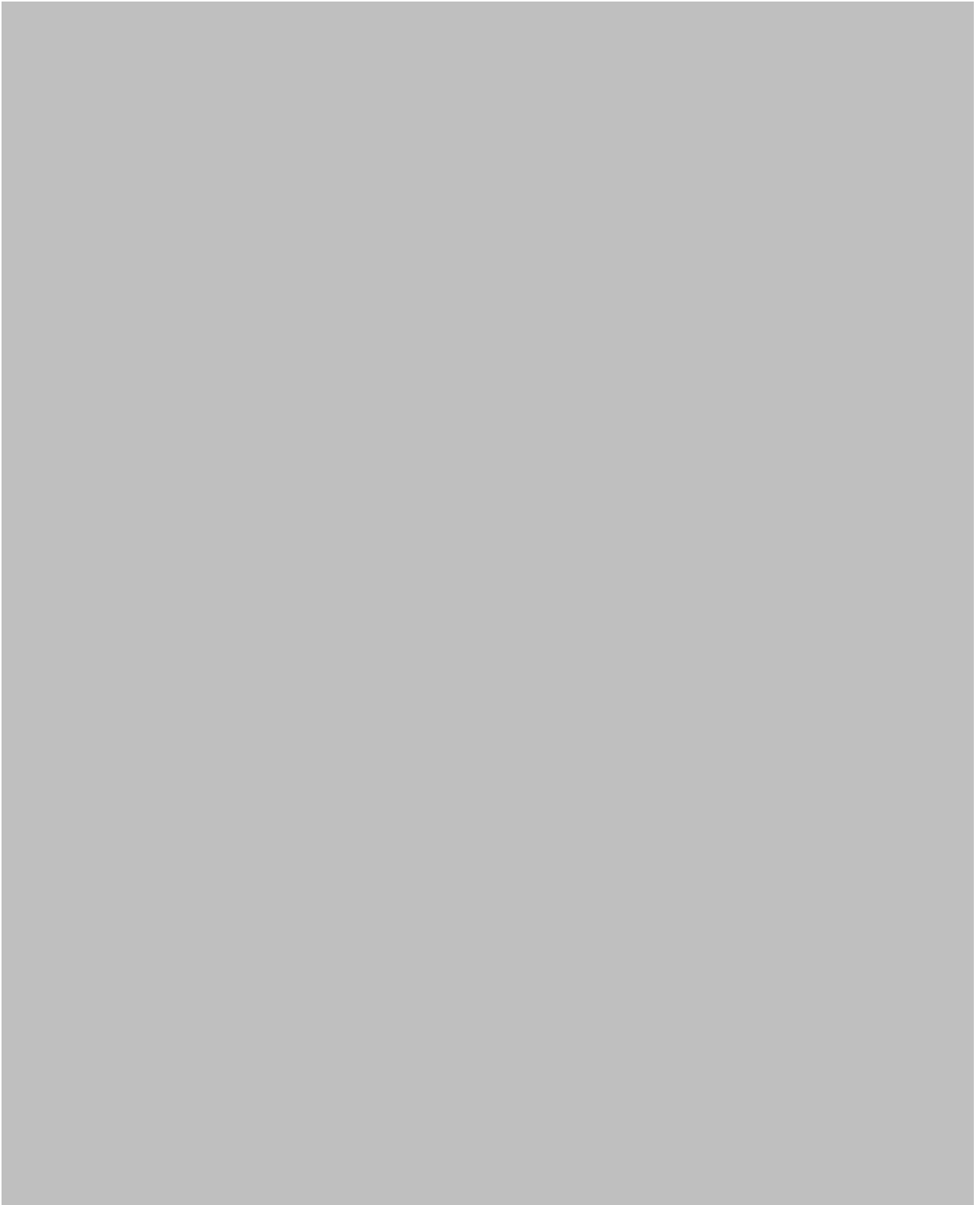


*Figure 16: Ear stela from the temple of Ptah at Memphis.  
Information and images taken from Pinch 1993: Figure 14.*



*Figure 17: Ear and eye stela from Deir el-Medina.  
Information and image taken from Pinch 1993: Figure 15.*

Figures



*Figure 18: Votive stelae from Serabit el-Khadim.  
Information and images taken from Pinch 1993: Figures 8-9.*





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