

**THE ESSENCE AND USE OF PERFUME IN
ANCIENT EGYPT**

by

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I, Sheila Ann Byl, declare that *THE ESSENCE AND USE OF PERFUME IN ANCIENT EGYPT* is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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SUMMARY

The ancient Egyptians were famous for their exotic and luxury perfumes in the ancient world, even having cities that specialised in perfume production in the Ptolemaic Period, when they exported these perfumes all over the Mediterranean. They produced these perfumes, and other scented preparations, from aromatic plants, fats and oils. The deities were fragrant beings, imbued with the divine essence, and perfume was considered by the Egyptians to be the sweat of the god Ra. Some deities were specially linked to perfume, one of the most important being Nefertem, god of perfume and of the primordial fragrant blue lotus flower. Incense was to the Egyptians the 'eye of Horus', burnt as an offering to the deities in temples. Aromatic plant material was stored in perfume/unguent 'laboratories', and perfumers' workshops produced the precious perfumed oils and unguents, used in the funerary context, rituals, ceremonies, festivals and banquets.

KEY WORDS/PHRASES

ancient Egypt	perfume
incense	perfumers' workshops
perfume/unguent 'laboratories'	temples
ceremonies and rituals	funerary context
festivals	banquets

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my husband, Norman Byl. Norman, thank you so much for the constant encouragement and support you have given me, as well as the unfailing interest you have shown in my topic, throughout my research for, and writing of, this dissertation

AND

To the memory of my parents, the late Bob and Gwen Hobson

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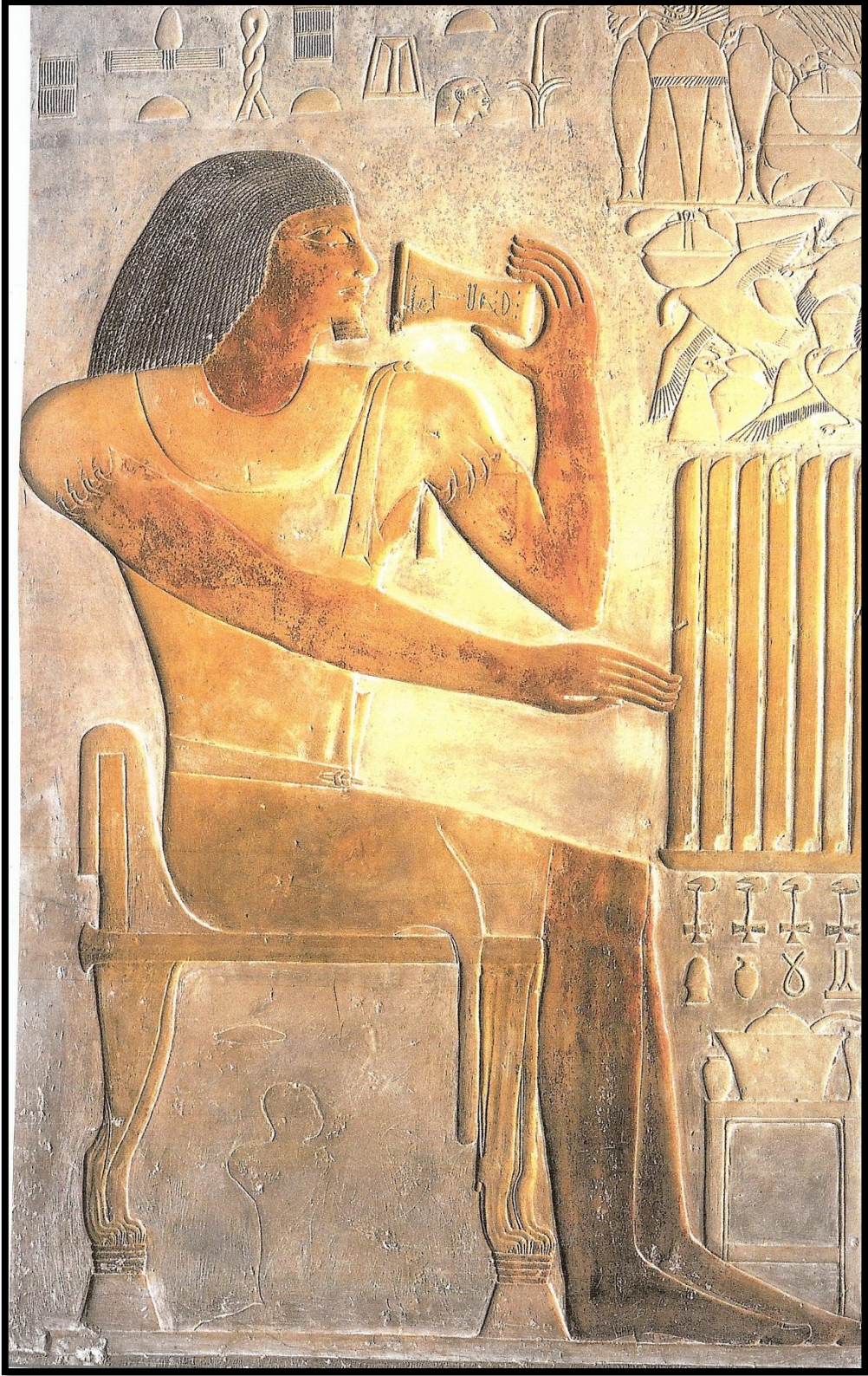


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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The ancient Egyptians highly prized their botanical treasures, in which Egypt was richly endowed and for the growing of which its climate was admirably suited, being moderate and uniform. The lack of a steady rainfall was counterbalanced by water being channelled from the Nile. The annual inundation of the Nile ensured that rich, fertile, soil was available for the cultivation of these treasures. The Egyptians made various types of perfumes from fragrant plants, oils and fats, employing various methods, and involving various professions¹. Egypt was famous for its luxury and exotic perfumes throughout the ancient world, where perfumes were traditionally named after their town of origin such as ‘The Mendesian’, or their main ingredient such as lily perfume or *susino*. One perfume was simply called ‘The Egyptian’. To the ancient Egyptians incense, another form of perfume, was the ‘eye of Horus’ and the fragrance released from burning it, the divine presence, with vast quantities thereof being required for use in temples, rituals, ceremonies and festivals.

The deities² of ancient Egypt were all fragrant beings, imbued with the divine essence. Some, however, had a special connection with perfume, the most important ones being Nefertum, ‘lord of perfume’, and youthful god of the fragrant blue lotus flower, which according to Egyptian mythology, was rooted in the Heliopolitan religious system; Shesmu, deity of the oil press, and lord of the perfume/incense ‘laboratories’; and Hathor, connected as she was with the various festivals of the dead, where perfume in its various forms was used. Some deities were linked with specific fragrances. Recipes of special fragrant unguents that were made to be applied to the limbs of the cult statues of deities still exist.

The classical authors³, the four most important of which are Theophrastus (fourth to third centuries BC), Dioscorides (first century AD), Pliny the Elder (first century AD) and Galen

¹ See Brun (2000:281); Dayagí-Mendels (1989:96-97 and 100); El-Shimy (2003:29-35 and 37-42); Forbes

² See Pinch (1982:25, 50, 132, 139-140, 142, 146); Watterson (1999:40, 115, 168); and Wilkinson, R H 2003 (77, 129,133, 135, 139-141, 143-146).

³See Nicolaides (2005:7, 11, 42-43 and 61-62) and Pavord (2005: 12, 21, 24, 42, 72 and 80).

(second century AD), provide us with the bulk of our knowledge of the types of perfume that were produced in the ancient world in general and by the ancient Egyptians in particular, the ingredients used and the methods involved. It was only during the Ptolemaic Period that detailed recipes for some of these perfumes were inscribed in hieroglyphs on the walls of what Egyptologists/archaeologists have dubbed perfume/incense ‘laboratories’⁴. These were special rooms, situated in large temples, in which to store aromatic material used to prepare incense and perfumed oils/unguents needed for cultic purposes. Perfumed oils/unguents, made locally and imported, were also stored in these rooms. Some of those rooms that have been identified through archaeological excavation, dating to various periods in the history of ancient Egypt, are adorned with reliefs in them, the subject matter of which points to the use of these rooms. One scene, on a wall in Theban tomb TT 135, in the el-Khokha necropolis, owner unknown, is thought by scholars to depict a perfumer’s workshop.

Ancient Egypt could not grow all the aromatic plant material it needed for the various forms of perfume it produced, including plant material used in oil production for the base material, so it had to resort to importing it from various sources⁵. The most important in the case of incense is the legendary ‘land of Punt’, to which trading expeditions were sent to obtain precious fragrant gum-resin to be used as incense, and even saplings of the trees themselves from whence they came, complete with roots, in the hope that they would take root and thrive in Egypt. Two ancient Egyptian cities, Mendes and Alexandria⁶, specialised in perfume production in the Ptolemaic Period, when luxury and exotic perfumes were exported all over the Mediterranean.

Exquisite objects, as well as utilitarian ones, were produced by the ancient Egyptians in which to keep their precious perfumed oils/unguents, both in the form of vessels and chests/boxes⁷. Many of these objects have been found in tombs. The Egyptians also

⁴ See Arnold (1962:80); Brun (2000 104 and 278); Manniche (1999:36-38 and 146); and Paszthory (1988: 4 and 10-11).

⁵ See Artzy (1994:121-124 128, 131-133 and 136-139); Bass (1986:269, 272, 274-275 and 295-296; Bass *et al.* (1989:1); Phillips (1997: 423, 425-426, 429-431 and 437-438; Serpico (1997:13-14, 406-408, 417, 440-442, 444-447, 470 and 488); Serpico & White (2000a:884 and 895); and Weinstein (1989:17-18; 20; and 29).

⁶ See Brun (2000:277); Hansen (1965: 31); Redford (2005:8); Manniche (1988:31-32, 35 and 37-38); Manniche (1989:57); and Manniche (1999:65-66).

⁷ See Fay (1998: 23-29, 33-36 and 46); Friedman (1998:15-17, 183, 209, 213-215, 220, 227-229, 239, 266 and 277); Killen (1994:41 and 52-54); Lilyquist *et al.* (2001:11 and 13-14); Mao (2001:17 and 21-22); Maravelia (2002:82-83); Newman (1998:49-52); Nicholson & Henderson (2000:195-196 and 205); Nicholson (1998:55,

produced other items connected to their use of perfume; these include unguent/cosmetic spoons and censers, the use of the latter being depicted in their tomb art.

The ancient Egyptians used perfume in a variety of forms and in several contexts, mainly in the social spheres of religion and the ‘ideology of the king’. In the context of temples,⁸ the deities were offered vast quantities of incense, perfume and fragrant flowers and had their cult statues anointed with perfumed oil in the daily temple ritual of the cult statues. During the Ptolemaic Period, cloth, which was considered by the Egyptians to be part of the divine essence, derived from the sweat of the god Ra, was offered along with perfume to the deities. Also in this period, the deities were offered the fragrant blue primordial lotus by the king in a ritual, symbolically represented by a lotus made of gold and lapis lazuli.

In the funerary context⁹, perfume was used extensively, which was essential to ensure the rebirth of the deceased and a successful afterlife for him/her. Amongst others, this took the form of fragrant gum-resins and the ‘seven sacred oils’ being used in the mummification process; varnish being applied to a range of funerary equipment, and coatings of cartonnages and coffins; anointing with fragrant oil; fragrant flowers being used at the funeral; perfumed unguent cones, liquid perfumes, and fragrant blue lotus flowers used at the funerary banquet; and gifts of perfumed oil placed in the tomb of the deceased.

In the context of rituals and ceremonies,¹⁰ perfume was used liberally. In the ritual of the ‘opening of the mouth’, perfume was used in the form of censuring with incense and anointing with the ‘seven sacred oils’. In the ‘ritual of the royal ancestors’/’ritual of Amenophis I’, perfume was used in the form of censuring with incense. The king conducted reward ceremonies where officials, the honourees, were given expensive perfume in the form of

60, 62 and 240); Nicholson & Peltenburg (2000:177-178, 181-184 and 189); Nicholson & Shaw (2000:203-204); Oppenheim (1973:259, 260-261 and 263); and Rehren & Pusch (1997:129, 132-133, 135 and 140).

⁸ See Borghouts (1983:253-255 and 257); David (1981:7, 58, 60-61, 63-66, 68 and 70-71); Derchain (1965:137); Meeks & Favard-Meeks (1997:126 and 128); Thompson (1991:224-227, 231-232 and 234-236); and Zabkar (1980:127-128).

⁹ See Altenmüller (1976:1 and 13-26); Altenmüller (1998:82); Baumann (1960:87-88); Brier (1999:45 and 71-72); Ikram & Dodson (1998:104-106); Niwiński (1992:465 and 457); Thompson (1991:170, 180 and 220-221); Serpico (1997:363 and 365-368); and Serpico & White (2000c:459).

¹⁰ See Ayad (2004:113); Bjerke (1965: 201-203); Bell (1997:137-140); Blackman (1924: 54, 56, and 58-59); David (1981:83 and 85-86); Fairman (1958: 100-102); Murnane (1980:82); Nelson (1949a:201,204, 208-209, 220-223, 229-230 and 232); Nelson (1949b:319-320 and 341); Roth (1992:113-147); Roth (1993:57-79); Roth (2001a:575); Roth (2001b 605-608); Schulman (1984:171-173, 177 and 187); Schulman (1988:51, 116-117, 140 and 154); Thompson (1991:92, 190-191, 193 and 230); Thompson (1994:22); and Thompson (2001:326).

perfumed unguent cones, which they wore on their heads. They were also anointed with perfumed oil.

In the context of festivals¹¹, joyous occasions, but primarily rooted in fertility, birth, and re-birth of the deceased, the use of perfume was paramount. This occurred in various forms, such as censuring with incense, anointing with fragrant oil and in the case of ‘The Beautiful Festival of the Valley’, a festival of the dead, the use of fragrant *ankh* bouquets, the pouring of oil scented with myrrh over a burnt sacrifice, and the offering of fragrant myrrh to the Theban triad.

Perfume played a vital role in the context of banquets.¹² Tomb scenes afford us a glimpse of what happened at these banquets, the majority of them dating to the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, and taking place during ‘The Beautiful Festival of the Valley’, a festival of the dead, where use of perfume was entwined with the re-birth of the deceased. Guests, both men and women, were pampered with gifts of fragrant unguent cones to wear on their hair/wigs, liquid perfume, garlands of flowers to wear around their necks containing the fragrant blue lotus flower, and fragrant blue lotus flowers to sniff.

The **medicinal use of perfume** in ancient Egypt, involving the fragrant remedies, such as those occurring in the medical papyri, will **not** be investigated in this dissertation.

As the written ancient Egyptian language (hieroglyphic, hieratic and demotic scripts) does not contain vowels, there is a discrepancy in the spelling of Egyptian words and the names used by Egyptologists and other scholars in secondary and tertiary sources. In addition, some translations follow the Egyptian form of the word, while others follow the Greek form. The author will use particular forms and particular spellings for particular words and names throughout the dissertation, except where different forms and spellings are employed in the titles of secondary and tertiary sources, and in quotations.

¹¹ See Blackman (1945:58-70 and 72); Bleeker (1967:22, 27, 44-45, 50, 70, 91, 107,120, 133 and 136-139); Fairman (1954:180, 184 and 190-191); Fairman (1958:78 and 80), Fox (1977:400); Gaballa & Kitchen (1969:2-4, 6-9, 19-21, 23, 26-27, 31,33-35, 36-41, 43-44, 48-49, 51-52, 54, 57, 71-73 and 97); Meeks & Favard Meeks (1997:167-170 and 172); Moens (1985:61.62 and 68); Murnane (1980:28-29, 31-34 and 36); Spalinger (1985:7 and 9); and Thompson (1991:219).

¹² See Cherpion (1994:81, 83, 86, 88 and 91), Desroches-Noblecourt (1954:32-42); Emboden (1978:401, 404 and 407); Emboden (1989:66); Fox (1977:395); Fox (1982:121, 269-273, 275, 277, 281, 288-289 306-307 and 309); Thompson (1991:159, 161-162, 165, 173-174 and 177); Thompson (1994:25); and Wente (1962:120-121).

Only the best examples of ancient Egyptian art will be used to illustrate various topics and not all the extant ones. Selected rituals, ceremonies and festivals are discussed in this dissertation, although perfume was used in various forms in all of them.

1.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The aim of this dissertation is to answer the following research questions:

- What types of perfume did the ancient Egyptians produce; what ingredients, methods and professions were involved in their production; and where did the production take place?
- Where were aromatic plant materials stored prior to perfume production; the perfumed unguents/oils, after production; and where were imported unguents/oils stored?
- In what vessels did the ancient Egyptians store perfume and what objects did they produce with regards to the use of perfume?
- In what kinds of chests/boxes did the ancient Egyptians store their precious perfumes and which classes in Egyptian society possessed them?
- What role did trade play with regards to the importing of aromatic and non-aromatic plant material, and the exporting of luxury and exotic perfumes?
- How did the ancient Egyptians use perfume in the '*Sitz im Leben*', or context, of temples, rituals, ceremonies, festivals and banquets, as well as in the funerary context?

1.2 HYPOTHESIS

Any study of an aspect of the culture of the ancient Egyptians cannot be carried out in a vacuum. This means that the research questions have to be answered against the background of several factors, the most important of which are:

- The deities, and how they are involved with perfume and its use;
- Mythology, woven into the fabric of ancient Egyptian society; and

- Symbolism, embedded in every aspect of ancient Egyptian society.

Although the scope of this dissertation is limited to ancient Egypt, the ancient Egyptians were thrust into an international *milieu* in various ways, a very important one being through trade, where they experienced interaction with other civilisations on the many trade routes on land that criss-crossed the Ancient Near East in their quest to obtain both aromatic and non-aromatic plant material that they themselves were not able to produce at all, or in sufficient quantities, to be used in perfume production. Travel by sea was also employed in this trade, most notably to the legendary 'land of Punt' to obtain precious aromatic gum-resins to be used as incense. Likewise, the exportation of luxury and exotic perfumes all around the Mediterranean in the Ptolemaic Period included sea travel. This too brought the ancient Egyptians into contact with other ancient civilisations beyond the Ancient Near East. Some of these other civilisations, both within and outside the Ancient Near East, were involved in their own production of perfumed oils/perfumes and the lucrative trade therein. It is because of this interaction that the ancient Egyptians experienced with these other civilisations that perfumers' workshops and perfume shops in ancient civilisations other than that of the ancient Egyptians are also discussed in this dissertation.

Many scholars have conducted detailed studies of various aspects of topics covered in this dissertation, the main ones being mentioned in footnotes in the first part of this introduction, prior to the research questions being stated. The author hopes to make a valuable contribution to our knowledge of the essence and use of perfume in ancient Egypt.

1.3 METHODOLOGY

The point of departure of the methodology employed by the author in this dissertation is that a **qualitative approach** is adopted, which involves gathering facts and interpreting them, which in turn reveals how people define their world views, as opposed to a quantitative approach, which involves numerical data being gathered, processed and finally interpreted, which is not suitable for this study. Embedded within the qualitative approach are various other approaches. The author is adopting a **cultural approach** in this dissertation, which investigates the essence and use of perfume in ancient Egypt. By adopting this approach, the *Weltanschauung* or **world view** of the ancient Egyptians regarding this aspect of their culture will be revealed.

Every society possesses its own *Weltanschauung* or **world view**. Vermaak (1999:17) defines this as:

... a set of concepts, held by most or all of its members, about the natural, human and supernatural worlds of which a society is part. It is also about the interrelationships which link these worlds into a meaningful whole. The world view is not an intellectual abstraction but rather a phenomenon which plays a major role in shaping the political, social and economic life of the society.

A world view model is a tool to aid in the reconstruction of a world view of a particular society. Embedded in a world view model adapted from Kraft (1986) are core themes that form the root of *Weltanschauung*, and correspond to the division of cultural categories into two philosophical levels. The first is the *meta* level (everything relating to metaphysics), to which myths, magic and world view itself belongs, involving social spheres/cultural categories such as religion and 'ideology of the king'. The second level is that of daily life, involving social spheres/cultural categories, amongst which are politics; kinship; economy; medicine; the military; education; and recreation (including sports, games, singing, music and dance) (Vermaak 1999:7).

All the cultural categories in the cultural model on both the *meta* and daily life levels, are to be understood against the background of geographical¹³ and historical¹⁴ awareness, cultural chronology¹⁵ and cultural change (the mechanisms being innovation¹⁶, diffusion¹⁷, acculturation¹⁸ and cultural loss¹⁹) (Vermaak 1999:6 and 13).

¹³ Geographical awareness involves being aware of the most important natural phenomena which have the greatest impact on the culture of a particular region being studied (Vermaak 1999:6). In the case of ancient Egypt these include: the Nile, the Nile Valley; the annual inundation; a moderate, uniform climate; sparse rainfall; *wadis* (dry river beds); cataracts; the Delta; swamps; lagoons; the Western desert; the Eastern desert; the Fayum; and oases (Knapp 1988:3-33).

¹⁴ Historical awareness is very important, as no culture can be studied in a vacuum. The particular people being studied must therefore be placed within a national and international *milieu*. Historical awareness, as opposed to 'pure history', is gained when only certain events having cultural implications as consequences are highlighted. These events have important cultural impetus, stimulating a further ripple effect within a people (Vermaak 1999:6).

¹⁵ This is divided into archaeological chronology; the various ages, for example the Late Bronze Age and historical/political chronology; and the various kingdoms/periods and dynasties, for example New Kingdom, Eighteenth Dynasty or Second Intermediate Period (Vermaak 1999:13).

¹⁶ Innovation is the ultimate source of all cultural change. Primary innovation occurs when something new is discovered by a person within a society, which subsequently gains widespread acceptance by other members of that society (Haviland 1996:420). Secondary innovation involves the expansion or modification of the initial chance discovery (the primary innovation) by the improvement of principles already in use or by combining various principles (Vermaak 2000a:4).

1.4 SOURCES

The author has adopted a **holistic approach** with regard to sources in this dissertation, which explores all possible avenues (Vermaak 1999:15). Therefore **textual, archaeological and iconographical** sources will be used. Occasionally a **multiplex approach** will also be used, which is so to speak more than the sum of its parts. In this approach the written (text) and unwritten (icon) are read as a unit (Vermaak 1999:16). Thus, for example, the reliefs and paintings in ancient Egyptian art and the texts accompanying them are treated as a unit and analysed as such. Secondary sources, such as books and articles from specialised journals, as well as tertiary sources, such as encyclopaedias and internet articles are used in this dissertation.

1.4.1 Textual sources

Many primary textual sources, dating to various periods in the history of ancient Egypt, although not directly used by the author, reveal the essence and use of perfume in ancient Egypt. These include:

- Hieroglyphic inscriptions in pyramids, such as the Pyramid Texts.
- Hieroglyphic inscriptions in temples, such as those on walls/door jambs/lintels/pillars. Special mention must be made of perfume recipes inscribed on the walls of perfume/incense ‘laboratories’ in temples dating to the Ptolemaic Period.
- Hieroglyphic inscriptions in tombs, such as texts accompanying ancient Egyptian art on walls.
- Texts written on papyri in hieroglyphic, hieratic and demotic scripts.

¹⁷ Diffusion occurs when an aspect of the culture of one society is adopted by another one (Haviland 1996:418).

¹⁸ Acculturation is the massive change in culture that occurs when intense, initial contact occurs between two peoples. This culture change occurs to one or both of the peoples and always involves force, either directly (conquest) or indirectly (through threats, implicit or explicit, that force will be used if the changes are not made) (Haviland 1996:425). Acculturation is also the process whereby extensive cultural change occurs from direct and prolonged contact between societies with different cultures, usually located almost adjacent to one another (Vermaak 2000b:3). This type of acculturation took place between the ancient Egyptians and the Nubians.

¹⁹ Sometimes the acceptance of a new innovation by a society leads to the loss of an older one (Haviland 1996:424). Cultural loss also takes place without replacement (Haviland 1996:425).

Primary textual sources comprising texts written by the classical authors, the most important being Theophrastus (Greek), Dioscorides (Greek), Pliny the Elder (Latin) and Galen (Latin), feature prominently in this dissertation. They are not used directly by the author but in the form of translations into English or comments about them found in secondary textual sources such as books and specialised journal articles. These texts are very important, as they form the bulk of our knowledge on the plant materials used in the production of perfume, the types of perfume produced, the recipes involved and the methods of production of perfume in the ancient world in general and in ancient Egypt in particular.

1.4.2 Archaeological sources

Archaeological excavation has uncovered many different elements that throw a light on the essence and use of perfume. These include the following:

- Rooms, or ruins thereof, in temples dubbed perfume/incense ‘laboratories’ by Egyptologists/archaeologists. Most of these that have been identified date to the Ptolemaic Period, while others date to the Middle and New Kingdoms.
- Many artefacts, dating to various periods of ancient Egyptian history and found in various places, but mostly in temples and tombs, deal with various aspects of the essence and use of perfume in ancient Egypt.
- Ancient Egyptian art, consisting of reliefs and paintings, found on temple and tomb walls, dating to various periods of ancient Egyptian history, is used extensively in this dissertation to illustrate various aspects of the essence and use of perfume in ancient Egypt.
- Remains of plants, found mainly in tombs.
- Remains of perfumed oils/unguents, found mainly in tombs.

1.4.3 Iconographic sources

Embedded in the art of the ancient Egyptians are iconographic elements. These are discussed under various chapters, where this art is used to illustrate various aspects of the essence and use of perfume in ancient Egypt.

1.5 OUTLINE

1.5.1 Chapters

Chapter 1 – Introduction.

Chapter 2 – discusses the classical authors Theophrastus, Dioscorides, Pliny the Elder and Galen, as the bulk of our knowledge about plants used for perfume production, the recipes involved and the methods employed in this production in the ancient world in general and in ancient Egypt in particular, stems from them.

Chapter 3 – discusses the deities connected with perfume in ancient Egypt. All the deities were fragrant beings but some were specifically associated with certain fragrances. Other deities had special links to perfume and unguents were made specifically to be applied to the limbs of cult statues.

Chapter 4 – investigates the trade with which the ancient Egyptians were involved in connection with perfume. Importation of aromatic plant material for perfumes and other plant material needed to be used for the base of these perfumes that the Egyptians could not produce at all or in sufficient quantities (this includes the gums and resins needed for incense), forms the first part of this investigation. The second part of this investigation involves the exportation of luxury and exotic perfumes to areas around the Mediterranean in the Ptolemaic Period.

Chapter 5 – investigates the main ingredients used by the ancient Egyptians for perfume production, which includes incense. These will be discussed under the headings of plants, shrubs and trees; gums and resins; fats, used as base materials; and oils, used as base materials.

Chapter 6 – investigates the various types of perfume used by the ancient Egyptians: luxury and exotic perfumes in their daily lives; unguent cones for banquets; incense and perfumed unguents/oils for the temples, ceremonies and festivals; and perfumed unguents/oils and resins for the afterlife.

Chapter 7 – investigates the various processes used by the ancient Egyptians in the production of perfume, the main ones being pressing, enfleurage and maceration; the professions involved in this production; and the cultivation of the aromatic plant material needed for this. In addition, it investigates the production of oils and fats, used as base materials for these perfumes and the professions involved in this process.

Chapter 8 – discusses special store rooms found in Egyptian temples for the storing of aromatic materials used for the preparation of incense, scented oils, unguents and other sacred scented preparations as well as imported unguents, dubbed by Egyptologists as perfume/incense ‘laboratories’, with decoration on their walls reflecting their use. Of the perfume/incense ‘laboratories’ dating to the Ptolemaic Period, which had perfume recipes in hieroglyphs carved on their walls, those in the temple of Horus at Edfu, the temple of Isis at Philae, the temple of Hathor at Dendera, and the temple of Sobek and Haroeris at Kom Ombo, are discussed individually.

Chapter 9 – investigates perfumers’ workshops in ancient Egypt from an archaeological point of view, which involves finding out whether any are still extant and whether they are portrayed in ancient Egyptian art. This chapter also discusses two ancient Egyptian cities that specialised in perfume production in the Ptolemaic Period, namely Mendes, in the Delta, and Alexandria.

Chapter 10 – investigates the use of perfume in the ‘*Sitz im Leben*’ or context of temples in ancient Egypt, both in the sphere of religion and in the sphere of the ‘ideology of the king’. To please the deities, offerings of perfume were made to them in the form of incense (censing), anointing with perfumed oil, and fragrant flowers, such as the blue lotus flower and the lily. In the Ptolemaic Period, cloth was offered to the deities along with perfume and a unique offering was made in a ritual involving the primordial lotus flower made of gold and lapis lazuli.

Chapter 11 – investigates the use of perfume in ancient Egypt in the funerary ‘*Sitz im Leben*’ or context. Here perfume was used in the form of fragrant gums, resins, perfumed oils/unguents and fragrant flowers such as the blue lotus flower.

Chapter 12 – investigates the use of perfume in ancient Egypt in the ‘*Sitz im Leben*’ or context of rituals and ceremonies, both in the sphere of religion and the ‘ideology of the king’. In these rituals and ceremonies, perfume was used in the form of censuring with incense, anointing with perfumed oil, and perfumed unguent cones.

Chapter 13 – investigates the use of perfume in ancient Egypt in the ‘*Sitz im Leben*’ or context of festivals, both in the sphere of religion and in the sphere of the ‘ideology of the king’. In this sphere, perfume was used in the forms of censuring with incense, anointing with perfumed oil, *ankh* bouquets, the offering of myrrh, and pouring myrrh-scented oil over a burnt sacrifice.

Chapter 14 – investigates the use of perfume in ancient Egypt in the ‘*Sitz im Leben*’ or context of banquets. Banquets depicted in ancient Egyptian art portray guests wearing fragrant unguent cones on their heads, being offered liquid perfume, wearing garlands around their necks containing fragrant flowers and sniffing fragrant blue lotus flowers.

Chapter 15 – Conclusion.



CHAPTER 2

THE CLASSICAL AUTHORS

The classical authors feature prominently in any study of perfume in the ancient world. This is particularly true in the case of the study of perfume in ancient Egypt, as they supply us with the bulk of our knowledge regarding the types of perfume produced, the ingredients and recipes used, and the methods of production involved. Four of the main classical authors involved in this regard are Theophrastus, Dioscorides, Pliny the Elder and Galen.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The most detailed perfume recipes for composite scented preparations were written down in ancient Egypt only during the Ptolemaic Period. During this period the doors to the classical world were opened wide to the ancient Egyptians and, besides the Egyptian language, Latin and Greek were understood. These were inscribed in hieroglyphs on the walls of perfume/incense 'laboratories' of temples. Other sources, such as actual remains of plants found in excavations and wall paintings and reliefs in temples and tombs, provide us with knowledge of the plants used by the Egyptians for perfume production and the methods they used (Manniche 1999:12). The bulk of our knowledge about perfume recipes of the ancient world and the plants used in them, however, is derived from various classical authors, both Greek and Roman. The author will discuss four of the most important ones in this regard.

2.2 THEOPHRASTUS

Theophrastus (Theophrastos) was born at Eresus in Lesbos (Mytilene) and lived c 372/1/0 - 288/7/6 BC (Hornblower & Spawford 2003:1504). He left Lesbos to go to Athens, where he studied under the Greek philosopher Plato, at the Academy (Pavord 2005:24). Plato, born in 427 BC, founded his philosophical school, called the Academy, in 387 BC, established in a garden, where a shrine had been erected to a hero of Athens called Academus, later named the School of Academic Philosophy.²⁰ This was the first such school dedicated to research and tuition in philosophy (Nicolaidis 2005:42-43). At the Academy Theophrastus encountered Aristotle, born in Stagira in 384 BC, who was also studying there. After the

²⁰ Nicolaidis (2005:11) states that the history of western philosophy began in Greece in the fifth century BC, not at first on mainland Greece but in the Greek colonies of Asia Minor and in the Greek towns in the south of Italy. The word philosophy is derived from the Greek word meaning 'lover of wisdom or knowledge', with *phil* meaning 'friend of' and *sophia* meaning 'wisdom'. Encompassing all thinking between the domains of theology and science, it is rooted in the three main areas of Methodology, Metaphysics and Theory of Value (Nicolaidis 2005:7).

death of Plato in 347 BC, Aristotle established his own philosophical school, called the Lyceum, where Theophrastus joined him later (Pavord 2005:24). The Lyceum was named after the god Apollo Lyceus, and became known as the Peripatetic school. It had a marvellous library, forerunner of the great library of Alexandria (Nicolaides 2005:61-62). Theophrastus inherited this library on Aristotle's death, which included works by Plato and Aristotle, providing a solid matrix for his work on plants. Both Aristotle and Theophrastus were influenced by Plato's philosophical distinction between the dichotomy of things that can be seen, for example plants, animals, birds and fish, and the universal forms of which they are an expression. Aristotle had already started on his work *Historia Animalium*, before Theophrastus began his work on plants (Pavord 2005:24).

Not much of Theophrastus' work is extant (Bowder 1982:200), botany being the field where most of it exists, a field where he so surpassed his predecessors, that the history of botany in the west can be said effectively to have begun with him (Hornblower & Spawford 2003:1504). His *magnum opus* is 'Enquiry into Plants'²¹, referred to as EIP in the text of this dissertation. It is a description and classification of plants in nine books. A minor work, an essay, or treatise, called *de Odoribus*, 'Concerning Odours', referred to as CO in the text of this dissertation (occurring in volume II of 'Enquiry into Plants'), deals with the production of perfume, written at the end of the fourth century BC (Brun 2000:281). 'The 'Enquiry into Plants', dealing mainly with plants from the eastern Mediterranean regions (Heniger 1986:139), lists twenty of them used for perfumes in the ancient world, including flowers, leaves, wood, resin and seeds, most of them relevant to ancient Egypt (Manniche 1999:12).

Pavord (2005:21) refers to this interest in botany by Theophrastus and the consequences of it, as follows:

Theophrastus is the first in the long list of men who fought to find order they believed must exist in the dizzying variety of the natural world. He lays out the puzzle, nudges together a few pieces that he thinks might fit. Fitfully, over the next 2,000 years, the puzzle is taken up by a series of philosophers, doctors, apothecaries, each of whom adds to the picture, links a few more pieces together, until finally, by the end of the seventeenth century, the whole picture begins to make sense ... Theophrastus was the first person to devote serious attention to the business of naming plant names. He was the first person to gather information about plants, and to ask the big questions: 'What have we got? 'How do we differentiate between these things?' ... The Greeks believed passionately in order.

²¹Theophrastus was the first person in history to produce a written body of work on plants (Pavord 2005:42).

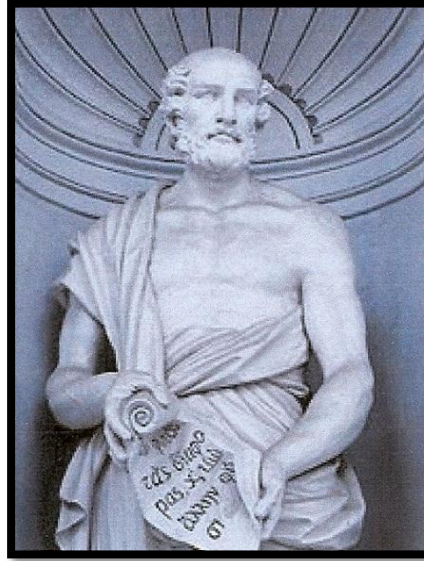


Figure 2.1: A statue of Theophrastus in the *Orto botanico di Palermo*, Palermo, Italy.

2.3 DIOSCORIDES

Dioscorides²² (Pedanius Dioscorides), who lived in the first century AD, came from Cilician Anazarbus, and studied under Areius of Tarsus, travelling extensively to collect information about the medicinal use of herbs, minerals and animal products, going to such places as the Greek mainland, Crete, Egypt and Petra, although he mentions plants from much further afield in his work *De Materia Medica* (On Medical Matters), referred to as OMM in the text of this dissertation. In the Preface to this work, he describes leading a ‘soldier-like’ life on his travels, which led later commentators to conclude, probably falsely, that he had once been a doctor in the Roman army. Manuscripts of the *De Materia Medica* have been written in Greek, Latin and Arabic and some, like the one in Arabic, have beautiful illustrations, indicating that Dioscorides’ original text was also accompanied by illustrations (Hornblower & Spawford 2003:483).

John Goodyer, an English botanist, between the years 1652-1655, wrote out the entire original Greek text of Dioscorides’ *De Materia Medica*, giving an interlinear English translation of it. This work was never printed, however, and landed up at Magdalen College, Oxford University, in England, where it remained for centuries, unnoticed by scholars.

²² Dioscorides remained the absolute authority on the field of medicinal plants until the seventeenth century, due to the sections on medical botany appearing in his *De Materia Medica* (Heniger 1986:139).

Eventually, it was published under the title ‘The Greek Herbal of Dioscorides’ by the University of Oxford Press in 1934, edited by R T Gunther, the English translation being left exactly as Goodyer had written it.²³ Subsequently it was reprinted in 1959 by Hafner Publishing of New York. Goodyer’s seventeenth century English is difficult to follow however. Consequently, the interpretations of Dioscorides’ recipes of perfumes given by the Danish Egyptologist Lise Manniche that the author will use in this dissertation, are important, especially her conversion of units of measure given by Goodyer into modern metric equivalents.²⁴

A representation of Dioscorides in eastern dress, taken from a thirteenth century AD Arabic²⁵ translation of his work *De Materia Medica*, which was richly illustrated in colour (Persian MS No. 2127, Topkapi Palace Library, Istanbul) (Figure 2.2).

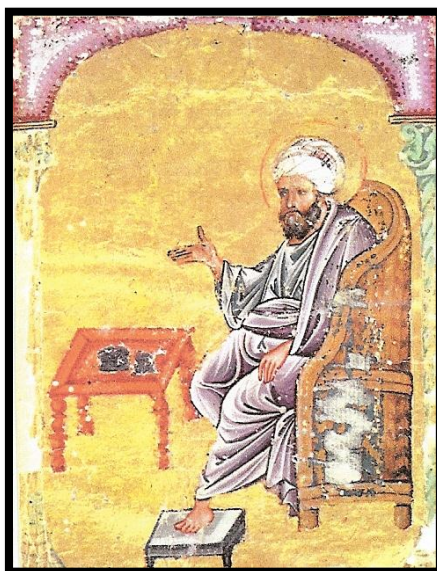


Figure 2.2: Dioscorides in eastern dress

Dioscorides collecting herbs with an assistant, taken from a manuscript made in Baghdad dating to 1224 AD (Pavord 2005:12) (Figure 2.3).

²³ This information comes from the Preface (no page numbers). See Dioscorides, *The Greek Herbal of Dioscorides*. Originally printed in 1934 and reprinted in 1955, Gunther, R T (ed.), which Dioscorides originally named *De Materia Medica* (On Medical Matters).

²⁴ Also important are interpretations by Lise Manniche of recipes of perfumes given by other classical authors and Egyptian recipes inscribed on the walls of incense/perfume ‘laboratories’ of temples in the Ptolemaic Period. Her conversion of Egyptian units of measure into modern metric equivalents, provides vital information.

²⁵ This manuscript was made in 1229 AD (Pavord 2005:72). In the thirteenth century AD, a Persian translation of Dioscorides’ *De Materia Medica* was also made (Manniche 1999:13).



Figure 2.3: Dioscorides and an assistant collecting herbs

2.4 PLINY THE ELDER

Pliny the Elder (AD 23/4 – 79), Gaius Plinius Secundus, was not a philosopher, but a prominent Roman equestrian from Novum Comum in Cisalpine Gaul, this equestrian command obtained through the patronage of Q. Pomponius Secundus (consul 41), serving in Germany alongside the future emperor Titus. During the reign of Nero he was active in legal practice and was then promoted by favour of the Flavians (and probably the patronage of Licinius Mucianus) through a series of high procuratorships, which included that of Hispania Tarraconensis. After being made a member of the council of Vespasian and Titus, he became commander of the fleet at Misenum. After the eruption of Vesuvius on 24 August 79 AD, he led a detachment to this area and landed at Stabiae, dying from inhaling fumes from the eruption. Two letters written by Pliny the Younger, his nephew, are the primary source of knowledge of his career and death. Throughout Pliny the Elder's career he produced a lot of literary work, but he is best known for his *Naturalis Historia* (Natural History) in thirty-seven books, referred to as NH in the text of this dissertation. In this work Pliny discusses aromatic plants (book XII, 41-135) and perfumes (book XIII, 1-25), it being an encyclopedia of contemporary knowledge of everything animal, vegetable and mineral, with much that is human also included (Hornblower & Spawford 2003:1197). No contemporary depiction of Pliny the Elder is extant.

2.5 GALEN

Claudius Galen (c. AD 129- c. AD 216) of Pergamum in Asia Minor/Anatolia, the son of a wealthy architect, rose from being gladiator physician there to court physician in the reign of Marcus Aurelius in Rome. He was highly regarded in his lifetime as a philosopher, having received an excellent education in philosophy and rhetoric in Pergamum (before he started studying medicine there), as well as a doctor. He began practising as a doctor in Pergamum in 157, having studied further in medicine in Smyrna and Alexandria, leaving for Rome in 162. There he remained in imperial service until his death (besides a break between 166 and 169, when he left Rome). He wrote many works, of particular interest in connection with perfume is his essay entitled ‘On Antidotes’, written about 200 AD (Hornblower & Spawford 2003: 621). This is the earliest alphabetical herbal to have survived, but this alphabetical order relates to medicines, and not the plants from which they were derived (Pavord 2005:80).

A lithograph of Galen by Pierre Roche Vigneron (Paris Lith de Gregoire et Deneux) c 1865 (Figure 2.4).

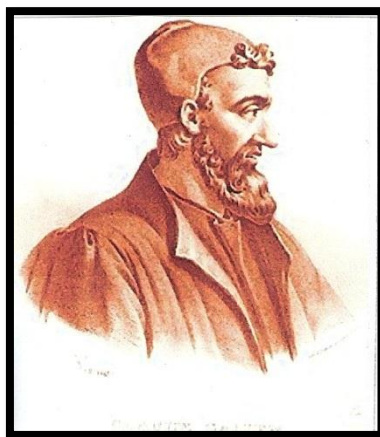


Figure 2.4: A lithograph of Galen

2.6 CONCLUSION

Without the information provided by classical authors, four of the most important being Theophrastus (fourth to third centuries BC), Dioscorides (first century AD), Pliny the Elder (a contemporary of Dioscorides) and Galen (second century AD), our knowledge about the perfumes that were famous in the ancient world, the plant materials involved, and the recipes

that were used to produce them, would be very scant. The same applies to our knowledge regarding these matters in respect of the ancient Egyptians.



CHAPTER 3

DEITIES CONNECTED TO PERFUME

The deities of ancient Egypt were fragrant beings, who left a trail of scent in the air behind them, the divine essence. Some deities were associated with specific fragrances, while others had special links to perfume. There are extant recipes for fragrant unguents specially made to be applied to the limbs of cult statues of deities.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The religious nature of perfumes in ancient Egypt is evident from the nomenclature used by the Egyptians. Although they had a term for smell, they always referred to perfumes as the ‘fragrance of the gods’, *stj-ntr* from *stj* to smell, indicating that perfumes were originally used for offerings (Forbes 1955:8).

Fletcher (1999a:51) states:

The gods who watched over Egypt were imagined ‘clothed in red linen and anointed with fine oil’. As the most fragrant beings imaginable, wherever they went was ‘inundated by the divine scent’. Many deities were also associated with a specific fragrance which could be used in rituals to invoke them.

Marjoram was sacred to Sobek, the crocodile deity, who symbolized the power of the king. The Egyptians called marjoram *semsobek* (the herb of Sobek), while the classical authors called it Sampsuchum, and the fragrant herb Black Horehound the ‘blood of Isis’ (Fletcher 1999a:54). The wonderful fragrance of the sacred blue lotus flower was to the ancient Egyptians the perfume of the sweat of the god Ra, the divine essence (Watterson 1999:40). In the iconography of the ancient Egyptians, the intense scent of flowers indicated the presence of a deity, therefore the deceased is depicted in many tomb scenes holding an open fragrant blue lotus flower in a hand. This is often held to the nose, in order that the deceased can breathe in the divine perfume (Germer 2001b:541). The ancient Egyptians believed that the deities consisted of a number of elements, amongst which, are vegetable, mineral and resinous substances. By transferring these substances to a cult statue, by means of anointing, which were absorbed by it, it was ready to undergo the ritual of the ‘opening of the mouth’ and function as a divine being (Manniche 1999:45).

Some deities were particularly linked with perfume however. Nefertem, ‘lord of the perfumes’/god of perfume and god of the sacred fragrant blue lotus blossom, played a very important role in this connection, as did Hathor, connected as she was to the various festivals of the dead, where perfume was used.

3.2 NEFERTEM

I fare north in the ferry
By the oarsman’s stroke
On my shoulder my bundle of reeds;
I am going to Memphis
to tell Ptah, Lord of Truth:
Give me my sister tonight!
The river is as if of wine,
Its rushes are Ptah,
Sakhmet is its foliage,
Iadet²⁶ its buds,
Nefertem its lotus blossoms.
[The Golden] is in joy
When earth brightens in her beauty;
Memphis is a bowl of fruit
Placed before the fair-of-face²⁷!



Extract from a love poem from Papyrus Harris 500²⁸, collection II.a.
Translated by Lichtheim (1976:189).

Nefertem (*Nfr-tm*), god of perfume (sometimes called ‘lord of the perfumes’), has an ancient origin. Wilkinson, R H (2003:133) argues that although Nefertem is often thought of as the god of perfumes, this association is a secondary one, the primary one being that he was the youthful god of the fragrant blue lotus blossom, in accordance with Egyptian mythology.

Munro (1968:38) states that the demotic papyrus Berlin 13603, dating to the late Ptolemaic Period, related to the myth of Nefertem. He points out that although the Egyptian language

²⁶ This deity is unknown (Lichtheim 1976:189).

²⁷ This is an epithet of the god Ptah (Lichtheim 1976:189).

²⁸ This papyrus, from the New Kingdom, is also known as P. British Museum 10060. It has three collections of love poems: (II.a), eight poems; II.b, eight poems; and II.c, three poems, a genre in ancient Egyptian literature. Collection II.a’s poems are un-connected, of which this is the fifth. This papyrus has many *lacunae* (filled in square brackets), scribal errors and other obscurities. There are only three other extant Egyptian manuscripts containing love poems. These are Papyrus Chester Beatty I, a Turin papyrus fragment and a fragmentary Cairo Museum vase (Lichtheim 1976:181).

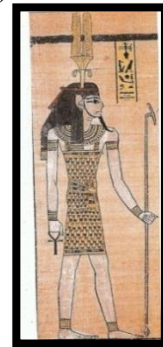
used in the papyrus pertains to this period, the content originates in a far older period of ancient Egypt's history. Here Nefertem is presented, not as a member of the Memphis triad, but as being connected to the sun god Ra and Heliopolis. The papyrus (page 4, column 13) states 'Heliopolis is the name of the Nefertem temple'. The essence of the myth is that a giant perfumed blue lotus flower first rose from the primeval waters (*nun*) at Heliopolis, which changes into the form of a child with a *uraeus* crown on his head. He is called 'the disc (*p3-itn*), who emerges from the lotus as the sun (*p3-r*)'. The papyrus (page 2, column 19) says of him 'the sun is born', referring to the sun god Ra. Nefertem therefore symbolises the radiant inception of creation (Bleeker 1967:61), the incarnation of the god Ra at dawn (Hawass: 2006a 84). This connection between Ra, the lotus and Nefertem, is reflected in the Pyramid Texts (PT 266), where Nefertem is called 'the lotus blossom which is before the nose of Ra', showing his early connection with perfume (Wilkinson, R H 2003:133).

This connection is also reflected in spells 81 (a) and 81 (b) of chapter 18 of the 'Book of the Dead'²⁹, 'for transforming oneself into a lotus':

I am this pure lotus which went forth from the sunshine which is at the nose of Re; I have descended that I may seek it for Horus, for I am the pure one who issued from the fen.

Spell 81 (a) from the 'Book of the Dead' of Ani³⁰ (Faulkner 1985:79).

O lotus, belonging to the semblance of Nefertem, I am the Man. I know your names, you gods, you lords of the realm of the dead, for I am one of you. May you grant that I see the gods who lead the Netherworld, may there be given to me a seat in the realm of the dead in the presence of the lords of eternity, may my soul go forth to every place in the Sacred Land, may I



²⁹ The 'Book of the Dead', known to the Egyptians as the 'Spells for Coming Out by Day', the full *corpus* of which has close to 200 spells (most examples included only a subset of these), varying in length from a few verses to over 400, was one of the most popular funerary texts (used in both royal and private contexts) in the New Kingdom. The language in which it was composed was classical Middle Egyptian and it was most often written on papyri, using a form of cursive hieroglyphics, falling halfway between full hieroglyphics and hieratic. It originated in the Middle Kingdom Coffin Texts, which, in turn, originated in the Old Kingdom Pyramid Texts and, like them, its main purpose was to guarantee the deceased a safe journey to the underworld. Papyri were originally put into coffins for the deceased to hold, mostly found in elite burial assemblages. These papyri were often placed into hollowed-out statues of Osiris, a practice beginning in the Ramesside period, Nineteenth Dynasty. Some of the elite had vignettes and texts from the 'Book of the Dead' included in the decoration of their tomb (Hawass 2006a:231-232). Non-royal individuals had this genre of funerary texts written on papyrus and placed in their tombs from the New Kingdom to the Ptolemaic Period (Russmann 2001:194).

³⁰ The papyrus of the 'Book of the Dead' of Ani, from Thebes, dates to the Nineteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom and is now housed in the British Museum (EA 10470), a splendid and complete document, with superlative polychrome vignettes (Russmann 2001:197). Faulkner (1985:9) translates Ani's main titles as 'Royal scribe', 'Accounting scribe for Divine Offerings of all the gods' and 'Overseer of the Granaries of the Lords of Tawer'.

receive offerings in the presence of the lords of eternity,
may my soul go forth to every place that it desires, without
being held back from the presence of the Great Ennead.

Spell 81 (b) from the 'Book of the Dead' of Ani. Translated by
Faulkner(1985:79).

Nefertem³¹, representing the fragrant blue lotus, was assimilated into the imagery of resurrection or rebirth (Wilkinson, RH 1994:12), his perfume being inhaled each morning by Ra (Friedman 1998:227). Among Nefertem's divine epithets are 'Protector of the Two Lands' (*khener tawy*) and 'Lord of Provisions' (Houser-Wegner 2001:516).

A Hymn to Nefertem is carved in thirteen columns on the south wall, lower register, of the chapel of Nefertem in the temple of king Seti I at Abydos, New Kingdom, as part of its decoration:

Utterance by Men-Ma'a-Ra praising the god:

Friendly of heart, the young man of (his) mother, Lord of the noses,
who causes the throat to breathe, the darling of the nose of the Gods,
filled with ointment, united to delightfulness, of constant activity,
enduring of delightfulness, chamberlain of the noble god.

May you adore the Henu (i.e. the barque of Sokar) and accompany
Horus on the way of his father. May you give him your mace
against the Gods. May you make them festive with the fragrance of
your hands so that they celebrate your wish with exultation and kiss
the earth at your feet. May you (then) restore the Henu barque to rest in its
house again.

Extracts from the hymn to Nefertem at the chapel of Nefertem, temple of
Seti I at Abydos, southern wing, Nineteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom.
Translated by Assmann (1975: 455).

³¹ Wilkinson, R H (2003:135) argues that Nefertem's association with the primeval creation myths means that he was primarily a deity of royal and divine monuments and was not commonly worshipped. At Memphis, in Lower Egypt, he was considered the son of Ptah and the lion goddess Sekhmet, with whom he formed an important triad. At Bubastis he was considered the son of the cat goddess Bastet and at Buto he was considered the son of the cobra goddess Wadjet. Wilkinson, R H (2003:133) states that in later times, Nefertem was closely associated with Horus, the two deities sometimes being merged. Nefertem is usually depicted anthropomorphically, as a male deity, wearing on his head either a lotus flower or a composite crown, composed of a lotus flower flanked with two feathers, with two *menat*-amulets suspended from them, acting as counterweights (Watterson 1999:168). In this form he is depicted wearing a long wig, a divine beard and a short pleated skirt (Friedman 1998:227), sometimes holding the *khepesh*-sickle sword in his left hand. Nefertem is also depicted as a child on a lotus blossom, sometimes only his head emerging from it (Wilkinson, R H 2003:135). Sometimes, Nefertem is depicted lion-headed, reflecting his connection to his mother Sekhmet, according to the Memphite tradition (Watterson 1999:168).

In the tomb of king Horemheb, Valley of the Kings (KV 57), Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, Nefertem is depicted anthropomorphically, wearing a short kilt. He has a lotus flower on his head (Figure 3.1).

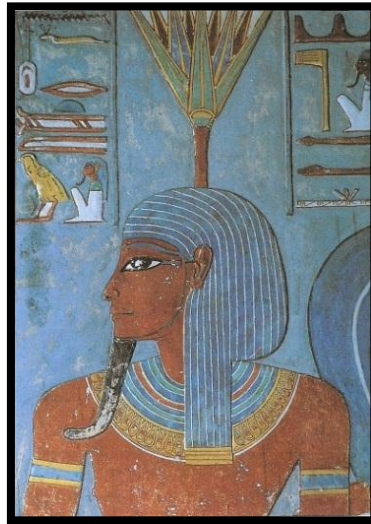


Figure 3.1: Nefertem in anthropomorphic form

3.3 HATHOR

He comes to dance,
 He comes to sing!
 His bread is in his hand,
 Clean are the foods in his arms'
 He defiles not the bread in his hand,
 Clean are the foods in his arms,
 They have come from the Horus Eye,
 He has cleansed what he offers to her!

He comes to dance,
 He comes to sing!
 His bag³² is of rushes,
 His basket of reeds³³,
 His sistrum of gold,
 His necklace of malachite.
 His feet hurry to the mistress of music,
 He dances for her, she loves his doing!

Hymn to Hathor in the Ptolemaic temple of Dendera³⁴. Translated by Lichtheim

³² This is a translation of the word *k3r.f* (Lichtheim 1980:109).

³³ It is not known which plants are meant by the words *twn* and *nnt*, so they have been rendered as 'rushes' and 'reeds' (Lichtheim 1980:109).

(1980: 108-109).

Hathor is one of the most ancient, important and complicated deities of ancient Egypt. Watterson (1999:115) argues that Hathor's head, in the form of a cow with a woman's face, appears on the top edge of the Narmer Palette, implying that her cult definitely dates to the Predynastic Period. Wilkinson, R H (2003:139-140), on the other hand, argues that her cult possibly originated in Predynastic or early dynastic times, although most of the evidence for her dates to later times. He is of the opinion, however, that the cow goddess depicted on the Narmer Palette most probably is not Hathor. Hathor is found in many contexts and had many roles, a few of which are directly linked to perfume ³⁵.

³⁴ This hymn is one of four, all part of a long text inscribed in vertical columns on the rear wall of the Hall of Offerings in this temple, accompanying a scene depicting the king offering the enthroned Hathor a *mnw*-jug filled with wine (Lichtheim 1980:107). This hymn links Hathor to her role as goddess of joy, music and happiness, together with her epithet 'mistress of drunkenness, song and myrrh'. It also links her to banquets where perfume in various forms was used and enjoyed.

³⁵ Hathor had many other roles, but there are six which are the most important. The first role is mother or consort of Horus, and it is in this role that she was worshipped at Dendera, her main cult centre, and elsewhere. Her name, *H.t-hr*, literally means the house of Horus (Wilkinson, R H 2003:140) or 'mother of Horus' (Buhl 1947:86).

The second role is cow goddess. An ivory engraving featuring a cow and inscribed 'Hathor in the marshes of King Djer's city of Dep' from the First Dynasty, points to an early use of her bovine form (Wilkinson, R H 2003:140). In this role she acted as intermediary between the dichotomy of the world of the dead and that of the living, and was involved with the afterlife and rebirth (Pinch 1982:139 and 142). The seven cows featured in spell 178 of the 'Book of the Dead' and elsewhere, the so-called 'seven Hathors', were sometimes identified as aspects of Hathor (Wilkinson, R H 2003:77). This role she later shared with Isis (Nunn 1996:102).

The third role is divine mother to the king, called the 'son of Hathor', dating to the Old Kingdom in her bovine form, acting as royal nurse and depicted as suckling him, even as an adult (Wilkinson, R H 200a:141). She later shared this role with Isis (Nunn 1996:102). Although only the king is depicted in Egyptian art as being suckled by the divine cow, it is possible, that by the time of the New Kingdom, her life-giving milk was thought to be available to all Egyptians. This role of Hathor's demonstrates that the imagery of the Hathor cow is not only connected with the afterlife, but also with birth (Pinch 1982:142).

The fourth role is solar sky-goddess and a goddess of the primeval sky waters, possibly functioning as a personification of the night sky or the Milky Way (Wilkinson, R H 2003:140). This link with the night sky also linked her to the underworld, reflected in her epithet's 'Lady of Heaven' and 'Mistress of Western Thebes' (Hawass 2006a:81 and 83).

The fifth role is goddess of women, female sexuality and motherhood. Often described as the 'beautiful one', she was believed to assist women in conception, labour and childbirth (Wilkinson, R H 2003:141). Pinch (1982:146) is of the opinion that the term 'fertility figurine' best describes terracotta figurines found at Deir el-Bahari, in the form of young girl, usually adorned with a girdle and necklace, some of them carrying babies. She believes it is possible that these were votive offerings to Hathor in this role.

The sixth role is '*uraeus*/daughter of Ra' and 'Eye of Ra'. Hathor had close connections with the sun god, Ra, whose disk she wears on her head and whose 'Eye' or *uraeus*/daughter she was said to be (Wilkinson, R H 2003:140). On the walls of temples of the Ptolemaic Period, a fairly common offering scene shows the king presenting two small bags to deities, one containing *msdmt* (black eye-paint) and one containing *w3d* (green eye paint), the former usually said to be for the left eye and the latter for the right eye, although black could be used for both (El-Kordy 1984:195). At the temple of Hathor at Dendera, various deities are depicted receiving offerings of eye-paint, either singly or in pairs. Hathor is depicted receiving these offerings alone five times and eleven times with other deities, this frequency indicating her solar connection with the 'Eye of Ra' (right eye), also indicated in offering texts, where she has epithets such as 'Lady of the two divine eyes, with painted brows' and 'Rayt, Lady of the circuit of the sun disc'. Hathor is also linked to the 'Eye of Horus (left eye)',

One of these roles is that she was goddess of joy, music and happiness³⁶ and was the ‘mistress of drunkenness, song and myrrh’, which links her to banquets, such as those held during the ‘Beautiful Festival of the Valley’ where perfume, in the form of unguent containing myrrh and liquid perfume, was used and enjoyed and where alcoholic beverages were consumed, often in excess, leading to drunkenness. In fact during this festival she was called ‘mistress of drunkenness’ (Wilkinson, R H 2003:143). Pinch (1993:132) states that ‘the dancing troupe of Hathor’ sang, danced and played during the ‘Beautiful Festival of the Valley’.

A second of these roles is that of goddess of the afterlife, identified with the tree goddess³⁷ in the Old Kingdom, especially in the Memphite region where she was worshipped as ‘mistress of the southern sycamore’ (*nb.t nh.t rs.t*) (Buhl 1947:86). In this role Hathor provided food and drink for the deceased, thus guaranteeing them eternal life (Hawass 2006a:81), also acting as their representative on their journey through the underworld (Pinch 1982:139). From at least the Eighteenth Dynasty, Hathor was patron of the Theban necropolises, protecting and nurturing both royalty and commoners, either in bovine form or as the anthropomorphic ‘mistress of the west’, wearing on her head a falcon perched upon a pole, which served as the hieroglyph for ‘west’, the headdress of the goddess Imentet, the goddess personifying the necropolises of the western side of the Nile Valley, depicted in tombs welcoming the deceased and giving them cool water to drink (Wilkinson, R H 2003:143 and 145-146). In Thebes Hathor was worshipped in a rocky cave as ‘mistress of the necropolis’ (Buhl 1947:97). Hathor received the dying sun each evening, which led to the desire of the deceased to be ‘in the following of Hathor’ (Wilkinson, R H 2003:143). This role links Hathor to the many festivals of the dead such as the ‘Beautiful Festival of the Valley’, when banquets were held and perfume was used and enjoyed.

demonstrating her lunar character. The offering of eye-paint to a deity was a cosmic rite, equivalent to restoring health to the two divine eyes, the ‘Eye of Ra’ and the ‘Eye of Horus’ (El-Kordy 1984:196 and 201).

³⁶ The *sistrum* and *menat*-necklace were both cult objects of Hathor, both having significance in this role of Hathor. The *sistrum*, derived from the Greek word *seistrion*, which means ‘a thing shaken’ (Roberts 1984:16), is an ancient rattle with a long handle, shaken by priestesses, female musicians and even the king on some occasions in chanted rituals in honour of Hathor. However *sistra* were also used in the cults of Amun and Isis (Friedman 1998:215 and 217). In the New Kingdom there were two standard forms of *sistra*, the naos *sistrum* and the looped, or arched, *sistrum*, although before this period there were seemingly a variety of types. It is unclear, however, how they relate to the two New Kingdom forms (Roberts 1984:16).

³⁷ Two other goddesses who played a major role in the tree cults are Isis and Nut (Buhl 1947:96).

A third role of Hathor's in this connection is that of goddess of foreign lands and their goods, from Byblos in the north to Punt in the south, overseeing trade and the acquisition of resources such as minerals, including gold and turquoise, from the deserts. A temple dedicated to Hathor was situated at Byblos (Wilkinson, R H 2003:144). Hathor was worshipped as the 'mistress of turquoise', *nbt mfk3t*, at sites in the mining regions of the Sinai, such as those in the Wadi Maghara and later at Serabet el-Khadim and elsewhere (Wilkinson, R H 2003:143). The Egyptians built a temple at Serabet el-Khadim, which was primarily dedicated to Hathor³⁸ (Pinch 1993:50). The votive offerings made to Hathor at Deir el-Bahari reflect this role of hers, the bulk of them consisting of strings of beads, small amulets and scarabs, mainly made of blue faience, echoing the colour of the bluish turquoise (Pinch 1982:139-140). Among the products obtained by the Egyptians from 'the land of Punt' were the fragrant products *'ntyw* and *sntr*, used as incense by them. Here Hathor had the epithet 'mistress of Punt'.

The perfume /incense 'laboratory' in the temple of Horus at Edfu has a recipe on its walls, carved in hieroglyphics, for the preparation of 1 *hin* (the equivalent of 0.5 litres) of 'tisheps made of *ab* resin', 'for anointing the golden goddess Hathor, the great mistress of Dendera and all the goddesses of the South and the North with its fragrant liquid'. The temple of Hathor at Dendera lies 177 km from the temple of Horus at Edfu and Hathor's statue travelled there on special occasions and it was probably on these occasions that the tisheps

³⁸ There were temples dedicated to Hathor throughout ancient Egypt. Galvin (1984:43) states that during the Sixth Dynasty, Old Kingdom, Cusae was a major cult centre of Hathor's, where within the nobility community, it was exploited for the religious, social and political potential it offered, many of them holding positions connected to this cult. Gillam (1995:211) states that priestesses of Hathor flourished only from the middle of the Old Kingdom to the early Middle Kingdom. Another cult centre of Hathor in the Old Kingdom was at Memphis, where she was worshipped as 'Lady of the Sycamore' (Hawass 2006b:185). Deir el-Bahari was an important cult centre of Hathor, where she was worshipped from at least the First Intermediate Period (Pinch 1982:139). In the Eleventh Dynasty, Middle Kingdom, Hathor was one of the principal deities of the mortuary temple of Nebeheptre Mentuhotpe, *Akh-isut* (Pinch 1993:25). In the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, Hatshepsut incorporated a chapel dedicated to Hathor in her mortuary chapel at Deir el-Bahari, *Djeser-Djeseru* (Hawass 2006c:188). Votive offerings to Hathor found in the vicinity of this temple include pottery vessels for burning incense (Pinch 1982:139). Deir el-Medina was another cult centre of Hathor in the Theban region in the New Kingdom, where a temple was dedicated to her and the goddess Ma'at (Finnestad 1997:186). In the Graeco-Roman period Hathor's main cult centre was at Dendera, where a temple was dedicated to her, housing a perfume/incense 'laboratory' where aromatic material for the production of perfume was stored.

Iconographically, Hathor is most often depicted anthropomorphically as a woman wearing a long wig bound by a file, or with a vulture cap with a low *modius*, surmounted by a sun disk between outward curving cow horns. Hathor can also be depicted in bovine form as the 'great wild cow', especially in the Theban area; as a woman with the head of a cow; or a composite human-bovine face, as in the case where she is depicted on the capitals of pillars. In the Theban area, Hathor is depicted as a cow emerging from a papyrus thicket at the foot of the western mountain of Thebes. Hathor could also be depicted in other zoomorphic forms, usually as a lioness or a serpent, or even in plant form, as a papyrus plant or sycamore tree (Wilkinson, R H 2003:144).

unguent was used. Like hekenu unguent, tisheps unguent was probably a generic type of fragrance and not a specific ‘brand’. It contains aromatic substances such as ‘ntyw. Tisheps unguent took two hundred and forty-one days (eight months and one day) to make, one day to prepare the base material and two hundred and forty days for the preparation to be left undisturbed.³⁹ Dry ingredients used (resins and herbs) amount to 20 deben 5 kite (1.865 kg) and the liquid ones to 1.227 kg (*tisheps* liquid, water and wine) (Manniche 1999:41-43).

Hathor depicted as a cow, wearing a sun disk flanked with plumes on her head and a Hathor-head sistrum around her neck, in a relief from Hatshepsut’s mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahari, Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom (Figure 3.2).

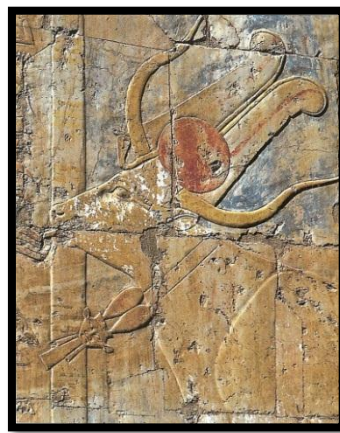


Figure 3.2: Hathor in the form of a cow

Hathor depicted anthropomorphically, with a sun disk between two outwardly curving cow horns on her head, in the Nineteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom tomb of Seti I, Valley of the Kings (KV17). Representing all aspects of regeneration, she is offering the king a collar. Her polychrome dress contains hieroglyphs, wishing the king well. Champollion had this scene cut out from the tomb and sent to the Musée du Louvre in Paris (Hornung 2001:197) (Figure 3.3).

³⁹ See Manniche (1999:41-43) for her interpretation of the ingredients and the method involved in this recipe, which she divides into various stages.

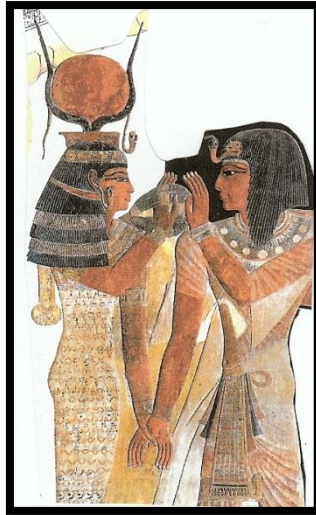


Figure 3.3: Hathor depicted anthropomorphically

3.4 SHESMU

Unas is he who eats men, feeds on gods,
 Master of messengers who sends instructions:
 It is Horn-grasper [in Kehau] who lassoes them for Unas,
 It is Serpent Raised-head who guards, who holds them for him,
 It is He-upon-the-willows⁴⁰ who binds them for him.
 It is Khons, slayer of lords, who cuts their throats for Unas,
 Who tears their entrails out for him,
 He the envoy who is sent to punish.
 It is Shesmu⁴¹ who carves them up for Unas,
 Cooks meals for them in his dinner-pots’.

Extract from utterances 273-274 of the Pyramid Texts found in the pyramid of Unas (antechamber, east wall). Translated by Lichtheim (1973:37).

Shesmu was the god of wine and oil presses, attested from Old Kingdom times, his name being written hieroglyphically with the design of the oil and wine press. He had a dual personality. On the one hand, he could be destructive. In the so-called ‘cannibal hymn’ of the Pyramid Texts (PT 403), Shesmu butchers and kills the gods, in order that the king might absorb their strength (Wilkinson, R H 2003:129). In this destructive role he was also known as the ‘crusher of enemies’ (Fletcher 1999a:52). Wilkinson, R H (2003:129) states that in the

⁴⁰ Lichtheim (1973:38) states that three divinities catch and bind the victims of the king: a ‘grasper of horns’, a snake and *hry trwt*. She translates *trwt* as ‘willows’ and takes ‘he upon the willows’ to be the demon that binds the victims with willow branches.

⁴¹ Khons slays the gods and then Shesmu cooks them in his pot (Lichtheim 1973:38).

Middle Kingdom Coffin Texts (CT VI,6) Shesmu ‘... lassoes the damned and corrals them for slaughter, squeezing their heads like grapes in a bloody image of destruction’.

On the other hand, Shesmu could also be beneficent, providing wine, oil and perfumes, particularly the fine oil of Ra, the sun god (Fletcher 1999a:52), becoming renowned in the New Kingdom as the provider of perfume for the deities. This beneficent role of Shesmu eventually overtook his destructive role and became his primary role in the Ptolemaic Period, when he presided over the perfume/incense ‘laboratories’, such as those at the temples of Edfu, Dendera, Philae and Kom Ombo, as the ‘master of the perfumery’ (Wilkinson 2003:129) and lord of the perfume/incense ‘laboratories’ (Paszthory 1988:10), featuring in many of the reliefs on the walls of these ‘laboratories’.

Bleeker (1962:62) states that although Shesmu⁴² undoubtedly belongs to the *dii minors*, at Medinet Habu he had the epithet ‘the lord of the sanctuary of Upper Egypt (*hntj pr wr*), which is no mean rank. He had the important role of supplying the fragrant unguents to be used in the mummification process, thereby becoming the protector of the mummy. He is of the opinion that as Khenty-Per-Wer, Shesmu was possibly the guardian of the god Sokar’s sanctuary or naos. Shesmu features in the reliefs dealing with the ‘Festival of Sokar’ in the mortuary temple of Ramesses III at Medinet Habu, where the king is depicted offering incense to him and other deities.

3.5 HORUS

The triad of Osiris, his sister/wife Isis and their son Horus, is deeply rooted in Egyptian mythology, the Osiride legends, also incorporating Osiris’ siblings Nephtys and Seth, representing the most extensive mythic cycle in ancient Egyptian culture (Wilkinson, R H 2003:119)⁴³. Horus, one of the most ancient Egyptian deities, appears in many forms, assimilated many other deities and has a complicated mythology.⁴⁴

⁴² Shesmu, rarely depicted in ancient Egyptian art, is usually depicted anthropomorphically, as master of a press but he is also depicted as a lion or with the head of a lion, reflecting his destructive aspect. A Twenty-first Dynasty mythological papyrus depicts hawk-headed deities working the presses of retribution, almost certainly referring to Shesmu. Some late representations of Shesmu depict him as being ram-headed (Wilkinson, R H 2003:129).

Some evidence indicates that Shesmu already had a priesthood in the Old Kingdom, but by the Middle Kingdom his cult was well established in the Fayum and probably in other places as well (Wilkinson, R H 2003:129).

⁴³ The first century AD Greek writer Plutarch gives the most complete account of these core myths in his *De Iside et Osiride* (Friedman 1998:245), where they appeared in their developed form (Wilkinson, R H 2003:119),

Some aspects of Horus⁴⁵ are directly associated with perfume. Horus is very much associated with the ritual use of perfume and fragrant myrrh was referred to as ‘the tears of Horus’. As Horhekenu (Horus-of-the-unguent) Horus was regarded as ‘lord of protection’ (Fletcher 1999a:52). Ivory labels, dating to the First Dynasty, have been found attached to jars containing ‘Horus fragrance’ (Manniche 1999:7). The temple of Horus at Edfu has a perfume/incense ‘laboratory’, where fragrant materials were stored.

An image of Horus as a falcon, with a gold head and headdress. His eyes are made of polished obsidian. Originally from Hierakonpolis, it is now housed in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo (Figure 3.4).

there being no recorded narrative of them in Egyptian literature, only scattered allusions to them (Friedman 1998:245).

⁴⁴ Essentially there are four main aspects to Horus. Firstly, he was originally a sky-god, the Egyptian word *her* from which his Egyptian name *Hor* is derived meaning ‘the one on high’ or ‘the distant one’. Mythologically, he was imagined as a celestial falcon, his left eye being the moon and his right eye being the sun (Wilkinson, R H 2003:200), worshipped in this form as ‘Horus the Elder’, called Haroeris by the Greeks. This falcon, as *Hor-Khenty-rn-Irty* (Horus-Foremost-one-without-Eyes), was worshipped as the face of the sky, when neither the sun nor the moon could be seen (Watterson 1999:81).

Secondly, Horus was a sun god. The Pyramid Texts refer to him as ‘god of the east’ and in this guise Horus was in three forms: Horakhty or ‘Horus of the two horizons’, the god of the rising and setting sun but particularly the god of the east and sunrise, eventually fusing with the sun god Ra, whose cult centre was Heliopolis, to become Ra-Harakhty; as Behdety he was a hawk-winged sun disk; and as Hor-em-aket (Harmarchis) or ‘Horus in the horizon’ he was a sun god in the form of a falcon or lion (Wilkinson, R H 2003:211).

Thirdly, Horus was worshipped as the son of Osiris and Isis as part of the Heliopolitan religious system, in this form variously being called *Hor-sa-Isis* (Horus-son-of-Isis), in Greek Harsiesis; *Hor-nedj-her-itef* (Horus-avenger-of-his-father), in Greek Harendotes; and *Hor-pa-khred* [Horus-the-child (of Isis)], in Greek Harpocrates (Watterson 1999:85).

Fourthly, Horus was intimately involved with the ‘ideology of the king’. From the earliest Dynastic Period the king’s name was written in a *serekh*, a rectangular device, which featured the Horus falcon sitting on a stylized palace enclosure. This was the king’s ‘Horus name’. Later the king acquired other titles, amongst which was the ‘Golden Horus’ name, featuring a falcon perched upon the hieroglyphic name for gold. As the son of Osiris and Isis, Horus was the heir of the kingship of Egypt (Wilkinson, R H 2003:201).

⁴⁵ Iconographically, Horus in his original avian form was depicted as a falcon, probably one of the four species of falcon in modern Egypt exhibiting similar features as those belonging to the ‘Horus falcon’, two of them being the Lanner Falcon (*Falco biarmicus*) and the Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*), both permanent breeding species (Houlihan 1986:46). As Behdety, Horus was hawk-winged. As Horakhty, Horus was depicted as a falcon or a falcon-headed crocodile. Horus is also depicted anthropomorphically, sometimes as an adult, but more usually as a child, the son of Isis, Harsiese. Most commonly, Horus is depicted as a falcon-headed man, often wearing the double crown (Wilkinson, R H 2003:202). In the form of Harchis, Horus was worshipped as the Great Sphinx of the Giza plateau (Watterson 1999:99). Apy was one of the forms of Horus at Edfu in the Graeco-Roman period, a scarab with falcon wings (Friedman 1998:246).

Horus had many cult centres. He was associated with the area of Nekhen in southern Egypt (the Greek Hierakonpolis) from very early times. In the north Horus was particularly venerated in the Delta at the ancient site of Khem (the Greek Letapolis, modern Ausim), since the beginning of the Old Kingdom, known there as Horus Kenty-irty ‘Foremost One of Khem’. The Delta city of Pe was another of his cult centres and he had an important temple dedicated to him in the Ptolemaic Period at Edfu. In Nubia he had temples dedicated to him at Quban (in the form of Horus of Baki) and Aniba (in the form of Horus of Miam) (Wilkinson, R H 2003:202-203).

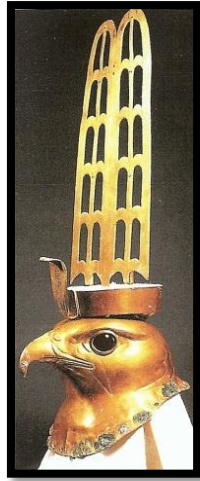


Figure 3.4: Horus in the form of a falcon

3.6 MIN

Recitation. The Deputy-treasurer Sobk-iry, born of the lady Senu the justified, Speaks as one clean and pure:

I worship Min, I extol arm-raising Horus:
 Hail to you, Min in his procession!
 Tall-plumed, son of Osiris,
 Born of divine Isis.
 Great in Senut, mighty in Ipu⁴⁶,
 You of Coptus, Horus strong-armed,
 Lord of awe who silences pride,
 Sovereign of all the gods!
 Fragrance laden when he comes from Medja-Land,
 Awe inspiring in Nubia,
 You of Utent, hail and praise!⁴⁷

Hymn to the god Min, inscribed on the verso on the stela of Sobk-iry⁴⁸.
 Translated by Lichtheim (1973:202 and 204).

Min, a god of fertility and regeneration, especially of the fields, and god of the eastern desert regions, throughout the dynastic period, was one of Egypt's most ancient and important deities (Wilkinson, R H 2003:115). The worship of Min had seemingly already begun in Predynastic times, evidenced by the three colossal headless statues of him, probably dating to

⁴⁶ *Snwt* was a sanctuary of Min located in the ninth *nome* of Upper Egypt. *Ipw* was a name for Akhmin, called Panopolis by the Greeks, one of the main cult centres of Min (Lichtheim 1973:204).

⁴⁷ Lichtheim (1973:204) states that the exact location of Utent is unknown, a region to the south or southeast of Egypt. She points out that the words *i3 hsw* were hitherto left untranslated and that she takes them to be two words for 'praise', as it is not uncommon that *i3* is used as a short form of *i3w*.

⁴⁸ This stela dates to the Middle Kingdom. The recto is inscribed with a hymn to Osiris. Both hymns are recited by the official Sobk-iry and both are preceded by the prayer for offerings. The hymn to Min equates him with Horus. This identification of Min was often made in the Middle Kingdom. The stela is now housed in the Musée du Louvre (C30) (Lichtheim 1973:202).

this period, discovered by Flinders Petrie at Coptos, during his excavations there in 1893 (Watterson 1999:191). Min wasn't mentioned by name in the Pyramid Texts but a reference in these texts to a deity 'who raises his arm in the east' possibly refers to him. His cult was firmly established however by the Fifth Dynasty, Old Kingdom, as a tomb at Giza dating to this dynasty refers to the 'procession of Min' (Wilkinson, R H 2003:93).

The god Min's connection to perfume is the secret Min unguent, containing aromatic ingredients, which was applied to the limbs of his cult statue, and his annual 'Festival of the going out of Min', where perfume was used. Min, tutelary deity of the city of Coptos, also held sway over the Eastern Desert up to the shore of the Red Sea (Bradbury 1988:131). Coptos was the point of departure for traders and miners travelling along the Wadi Hammamat to the Red Sea (El-Kordy 1984:197). This area covered part of the route that the Egyptians took to reach the 'land of Punt', with this god thus overseeing the trade that the Egyptians carried out with the Puntites to obtain precious *'ntyw* and *sntr* to be used as incense. It was also along this route that the minerals for eye-paint were conveyed. Min has a special role with regard to the eye-paint offering scenes, depicted on the walls of temples in the Ptolemaic Period, with Min sometimes having the epithet '*sr bi3*', which perhaps means 'dispenser of marvels' (see Section 3.3, Footnote 35) (El-Kordy 1984:197). One of the king's epithets in connection with these offerings is '*sr bi3* of *Pwnt* like Min' (El-Kordy 1984:199).

3.6.1 The secret Min unguent

Manniche (1999:45-46) states that recorded on the walls of the perfume/incense 'laboratory' at the Ptolemaic temple of Horus at Edfu is a recipe for an unguent carved in hieroglyphs, intended to be applied to the limbs of the cult statues of the god Min-Amun and for [anointing] 'every statue of wood and stone. It is a secret unheard and unseen by any [ordinary] people. It has been transmitted from old folk to their sons.' She translates the recipe as follows, converting the Egyptian volume/mass units into modern metric ones and giving her interpretation of the method involved:

1. Take 0.5 l of prepared tisheps pulp from the nedjem tree.
2. Mix with 910 g memen. Grind together, pass through a sieve and stir during the night until dawn.

3. Place in a pot on a slow fire and stir until it sets. Leave for two days.
4. Place on the fire as the first time. Add 0.5 l incense concentrate. Boil together and leave for two days.
5. Place on the fire as the first time to boil it. Add sweet scented aromatic substances [as indicated below?] and pass through a cloth.
6. Add to this 182 g 'dry antiu', 18 g aspalathos, [18 g] sweet geget wood; 18 g sweet flag, 18 g pine kernels, 18 g juniper berries, 1 l sefy bitumen. Leave for two days.
7. Place on fire like the first time and boil. Leave for two days.
8. Place on fire like the first time. Leave for two days.
9. Place on fire like the first time. Leave to boil while stirring with a spoon made with Christ-thorn wood. Leave for two days.
10. Place on fire like the first time to boil. [Afterwards] add 18 g of each of all minerals, namely gold, silver, genuine lapis lazuli, genuine red jasper, genuine green feldspar, genuine turquoise, genuine faience and genuine carnelian.
11. Place on fire as the first time. Test the concoction with a wooden stick. If it is too weak, bind it together with dry antiu. If you find that it is too strong, dilute it with tisheps of the nedjem tree and reduce it by placing in on a fire of sycamore wood.

She states further that the preparation of this unguent took twenty-one days and it was done in secret, only by the purification priest who carried out the ritual of applying it, while still warm to the limbs of the statue, using a spatula, gathering up any surplus unguent and re-applying it, the statue then being ready for the ritual of the 'opening of the mouth' and to be

declared divine. As one of its main ingredients was wood tar (sefy bitumen), the Min⁴⁹ unguent would have been black and sticky, making the cult statues in appearance like the black statues found in the tomb of king Tutankhamun, in the Valley of the Kings, KV 62, Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom.

3.7 BASTET

The goddess Bastet, one of the cat goddesses of ancient Egypt, is linked to perfume because she is goddess of the *bas* or perfume jar (Spencer 2007:76). Rendered phonetically her name means 'she of the perfume jar', as in hieroglyphs the word *bas* is written using a picture of a sealed travertine perfume jar (Fletcher 2000:112). Watterson (1999:201) is of the opinion that it is possible that the fetish originally worshipped at Bast, the cult centre of Bastet, where the main temple was called Per-Bastet (House of Bastet), which gave its name to the town in the Greek period called Bubastis (modern Tell Basta), resembled such a jar. Fletcher (2000:113) states that whilst the reference to the travertine perfume jar may merely refer to the ritual purity of her cult, by tradition, Bastet was the mother of Nefertem, god of the lotus from which the sun rises, thus Bastet was literally the vessel that carries the lotus. This tradition that Fletcher is referring to emanated from Bast. Malek (2006:94) states that according to another tradition, Mahes (Miysis or Mios in Greek), the lion-god, was considered to be her son. Spencer (2007:76) states that Bastet acted exactly like the perfumed unguent/oil contained in the perfume jar, as a means of protection.

⁴⁹ Although Min was venerated throughout Egypt, he had two major cult sites. The oldest was called Coptos by the Greeks and Gebtu by the Egyptians (modern Qift), situated at the western end of Wadi Hammamat (Wilkinson, R H 2003:116), the capital of the fifth *nome* of Upper Egypt (Baines & Malek 1992:111). The second site was called Khent-Min (modern Akhmin), 'shrine of Min', by the Egyptians and Panopolis by the Greeks (Watterson 1999:194). From the Twelfth Dynasty, Middle Kingdom, Min was revered in the Theban area, especially in Luxor temple, as the ithyphallic Min-Amun-ka-mutef or Amun-ka-mutef, literally 'bull of his mother', sometimes known as Amun-Min, when he became essentially the manifestation of Amun of Thebes as primeval creator god (Wilkinson, R H 2003:93). At Abydos, in the Middle Kingdom, a cult of 'Min-Horus the Victorious' became popular, linking Min's cult with that of Osiris (Kemp 1999:85).

In Egyptian art Min is usually depicted anthropomorphically, as a mummified ithyphallic man (relating to his role as fertility god), standing up straight. His right arm, bent at the elbow and appearing from the wrappings, is raised up and its hand open. A flail is placed on or above this raised arm. The meaning of this raised arm gesture is not fully understood, but is possibly a protective or smiting gesture. His left hand holds his erect phallus protruding through the wrappings (Wilkinson, R H 2003:115). His headdress consists of two tall plumes and a streamer is falling to the ground (Mc Farlane 1990:69), which was later taken over by the god Amun (Romanosky 2001:414). When he is depicted in colour, his skin is always black, probably symbolising black soil and its fertility. At Min's two main cult centres, Coptos and Khent-Min, he was depicted as a white bull. In the fifth Upper Egyptian *nome*, Min was depicted as a falcon (Wilkinson, R H 2003:115-116). In a scene in the tomb of Thaty, one of a group of Twenty-sixth Dynasty tombs just outside El Bawati in the Bahariya Oasis, the ithyphallic Amun-Min is depicted as lion-headed (Hawass 2000:203 and 207).

A bronze statuette of Bastet, inlaid with gold, from the Late Period, originally from the Serapeum at Saqqara, is now in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo (CG 38991). She is depicted here as a woman with a cat's head⁵⁰, carrying a basket on her arm (Figure 3.5).



Figure 3.5: Bastet depicted anthropomorphically, with a cat's head

3.8 DEDWEN

Dedwen⁵¹, originally a Nubian deity, came to represent Nubia and its resources, especially incense which was imported into Egypt from the south, from a very early date. The Pyramid Texts (PT 803, 1017) indicated that Dedwen was identified as the supplier of incense for the deities and burnt incense at royal births. They also indicate that Dedwen was known in Egypt from at least the Old Kingdom, when the king was identified with 'Dedwen, who presides over Nubia' (PT 994, 1476) (Wilkinson, R H 2003:105).

⁵⁰ Watterson (1999:201) states that Bastet, being the benevolent counterpart of Sekhmet, the lioness goddess, was possibly originally a lioness herself. She argues that the wild cat (*Felis vercata maniculata*), native to Egypt, was probably the prototype for early depictions in Egyptian art of Bastet as a cat. From at least the Middle Kingdom, Bastet was depicted as a queen cat, a domesticated cat, or as a woman with a cat's head. The latter often held a sistrum or ritual *menat*-necklace (both associated with the goddess Hathor), or other objects such as an *aegis* or papyrus sceptre (Wilkinson, R H 2003:178).

⁵¹ Apart from this association with Egypt, through incense, the worship of Dedwen seemingly remained largely limited to Nubia itself, with many pharaonic temples built there dedicated to him. Amongst these is a small temple at el-Lessiya, dedicated to other deities as well, built by Tuthmosis III. Iconographically, Dedwen was depicted in various ways. Anthropomorphically, he was depicted as a male deity, his name occasionally in the Old Kingdom being written with the hieroglyphs sign for a certain type of bird, although he himself was never depicted in avian form, or with the head of a bird. Sometimes Dedwen is depicted in the form of a ram, being assimilated to the deities Amun or Khnum, whilst at Kalabsha he is depicted with the head of a lion (Wilkinson, R H 2003:105).

3.9 MERHET

Merhet was goddess of the embalming oil. During the preparation of the mummy for burial, the skin of the deceased was anointed with various perfumed oils and fragrant oils and fragrant resins, under her protection.

3.10 CONCLUSION

Religion and perfume in ancient Egypt were intricately entwined, with perfume itself being called ‘the fragrance of the gods’ and the deities imagined by the Egyptians as fragrant beings, imbued with the divine essence. This entwinement began at the dawn of the ancient Egyptian civilisation, as both Nefertem and Hathor, two of the two most important deities with special links to perfume, had ancient origins, and lasted until the end of the ancient Egyptian civilisation.

Nefertem was the most important deity with a special link to perfume, being as he was the god of perfume and of the sacred, primordial, fragrant, blue lotus. The god Shesmu, being provider of perfume to the deities in the New Kingdom and lord of the perfume/incense ‘laboratories’ in the Ptolemaic Period, also had an important special link to perfume. Together with the goddess Merhet, he was linked to the mummification process. Shezmu supplied the fragrant plant material required in this process and Merhet, goddess of the embalming oil, provided protection over it.

Unique in the religion of ancient Egypt were special fragrant unguents produced to be applied to the limbs of cult statues of deities. Tisheps unguent was destined for those of Hathor and ‘all the goddesses of the south and the north’, and a ‘secret Min unguent’ for those of the god Min-Amun. The god Dedwen was linked to the importation of incense into Egypt from the south. Nubia probably acted as an intermediary between Punt and Egypt in this regard. The goddess Bastet was uniquely specially linked to perfume, in that she was goddess of the *bas* or perfume jar.



CHAPTER 4

TRADE

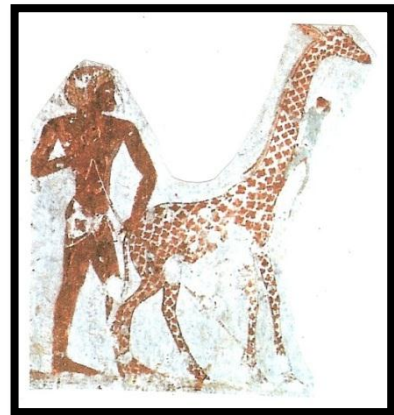
The ancient Egyptians could not produce all the plant materials (both aromatic and non-aromatic) that they required for the production of perfume, therefore they relied on trade to get the balance from various destinations. A very important part of this trade was the procuring of aromatic gum-resins from the legendary 'land of Punt', to use as incense. Various regions in the Ancient Near East supplied Egypt with *sntr* and aromatic coniferous plant materials. In the late Bronze Age, a major resin industry existed in the Levant (Syria/Palestine), with the resin being distributed via a network of trade in the Mediterranean, in which Egypt was involved. During the New Kingdom, Egypt received large consignments of aromatic resinous products from the Levant. After the collapse of the resin trade with Punt, the Egyptians possibly had trade links with Arabia to procure resin and there is evidence that Egypt had links with the Aegean, where the Mycenaean civilisation had an established perfume industry at Pylos. The discovery in 1982 of a Bronze Age shipwreck at Ulu Buran, off the southern coast of Turkey, has broadened our knowledge of international trade in the Ancient Near East in the late Bronze Age in general, and in the Mediterranean in particular. The Egyptians also exported exotic, luxury, perfumes around the Mediterranean during the Ptolemaic Period.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

You are not rich in myrrh and in all kinds of incense. But I am the lord of Punt, and myrrh is my very own. That *hknw*-oil you spoke of sending, it abounds on this island.

Then he gave me a load of myrrh, *hknw*-oil, laudanum, *hyst*-spice, *tspss*-spice, perfume, eye-paint, giraffe's tails, great lumps of incense, elephant tusks, greyhounds, long-tailed monkeys, baboons and all kinds of precious things.

Extracts from 'The tale of the shipwrecked sailor'⁵². Translated by Lichtheim (1973:214).



⁵² This belongs to a genre of ancient Egyptian literature called prose tales. It dates to the Middle Kingdom. The only preserved papyrus copy that contains it, also dating to the Middle Kingdom, P. Leningrad 1115, is now in Moscow. Nothing is known about its original provenance, as it was discovered by Golenischeff in the Imperial Museum in St.Petersburg, Russia (Lichtheim 1973:211). It is the oldest of the four extant more or less complete prose tales dating to the Middle Kingdom written in the late Eleventh or early Twelfth Dynasty in Middle Egyptian, the classical language of Egyptian literature. Two of the other three prose tales are: 'The story of Sinuhe' and 'The tale of the eloquent peasant'. The last great extant work of fiction written in Middle Egyptian exists in a single copy, a papyrus dating from the Fifteenth Dynasty, known as Papyrus Westcar, now in the Egyptian Museum in Berlin. The beginning and the end of the papyrus are missing but the surviving portion contains five related tales set in the reign of Khufu, Fourth Dynasty, Old Kingdom (Allen 2002:280-282).

The economists of the ‘substantivist school’, represented by Karl Polanyi and his followers, Dalton, Oppenheim, Renfrew, Zacagnini and Liverani, argue that there are three main models for the way exchange works in primitive and ancient societies, hierarchically arranged in order of complexity. The first is reciprocity⁵³, involving qualitatively homogenous or quantitatively superior counterparts. At its simplest, goods are exchanged between two parties on a basis of reciprocal obligation, not always immediately fulfilled. In time, reciprocity may become institutionalised and form a dependable part of the two economic systems (Aubet 1997:79). Gift trade is at the root of the reciprocity model, the organisation of trading being usually ceremonial, involving embassies or political dealings between chiefs or kings. The contacts between the two parties are tenuous and the exchanges are not frequent. The trade goods are luxurious in nature, objects of elite circulation (Polanyi, Arensberg & Pearson 1957:263). The social or prestige value of the gifts is all-important (Aubet 1997:79). Sometimes however they might be of a more ‘democratic’ nature (Polanyi *et al.* 1957:262). The trade carried out by the ancient Egyptians fits this reciprocity model, epitomised by their trading expeditions to the ‘land of Punt’.

Kemp (1999:246) argues that the dogmatic statement made by many scholars that ‘foreign trade was a royal monopoly in ancient Egypt’, cannot be given any direct support. One such scholar is Saggs (1989:134), who states that ‘In Egypt, foreign trade was always under state control’.

⁵³ The second model is redistribution, not appearing before the fourth century BC in the Ancient Near East and would not have involved Babylonia in Mesopotamia and Tyre in Phoenicia according to Polanyi. This model has at its root the collection of commodities at a central point and the sending of them out again, requiring a centre of social and economic power and huge systems of central storage, such as palaces. No counterparts are involved. One aspect of this model, characteristic of highly centralised societies such as Egypt and Mari in Syria, is a tribute or vassal relationship (Aubet 1997:79-80).

The third model is commercial exchange, involving equivalent counterparts, co-existing or superimposed on the first two models. According to Polanyi, there are two basic types of commercial exchange. The first is ‘treaty trade’ or ‘administered trade’, where there is no clear idea of a market or of profit but where prices are fixed beforehand, either by treaty or by prior agreement between the two parties. The concept of ‘port of trade’, the place where treaty trade develops, was introduced by Revere, Arnold and Chapman into Polanyi’s work, later extended by Dalton. ‘Port of trade’ is the place reserved for professional organisations of merchants, whose activities were developed under the authority of the state. In the Ancient Near East, Ugarit, Tyre and Carthage are classic examples of ‘ports of trade’ (Aubet 1997: 80 and 82). The second basic type of commercial exchange is market trade, not appearing before the fourth century BC according to Polanyi, where mechanisms of supply and demand, as well as the concept of price, are in operation (Aubet 1997:80).

On the other hand, the economists of the ‘formalist school’, Burling, Leclair and Belshaw, among others, opposed the theories of Polanyi and others of the ‘substantivist school’. For them, every ancient society had competitive procedures or markets. Thus the concept of ‘formal’ economics, explicitly created to explain the phenomena of the market economy, would equally apply, either wholly or in part, to the analysis of ancient societies (Aubet 1997:83).

To prove his point, Kemp cites a scene painted on the northern interior wall of the Twelfth Dynasty, Middle Kingdom tomb of Knumhotep III (BH3⁵⁴) at Beni Hasan in Middle Egypt, nomarch of the Oryx Nome and ‘Administrator of the eastern deserts’. The bottom register shows the arrival of a small ‘Asiatic’ trading group, a caravan consisting of men, women and children. He avers these are Palestinians, Moabites from Moab, bringing a quantity of eye-paint (*msdmt*) in the saddle bags of their donkeys for the nomarch, introduced by an Egyptian official ‘Chief huntsman Kheti’. The explanatory inscription dates the incident to the sixth year of the reign of Sesostris II (c 1880 BC) and names the group leader of the caravan as Abishai, ‘The ruler of the hill country’ (*heka-khaset*) (Bard 1999:169). Kemp (1999:246) is of the opinion that this was a trading group from Moab, Palestine, selling *msdmt* (eye-paint) to the Egyptians. Scheffler (2000:33), while agreeing with Kemp that this could possibly be the case, opines that since the location of *Shut* mentioned in the text accompanying the scene is unknown, it cannot be ascertained where in Asia the caravan originated. He points out that the fact that two donkeys in the scene are carrying bellows, has led to another theory, that we are dealing here with travelling metalworkers, and refers to Genesis 4:19-22 in the Bible. Shedid (1998:124), however, is of the opinion that the object between the two children that the one donkey is carrying may possibly be a musical instrument. Paszthory (1990:26) opines that the *msdmt* (malachite) mentioned in the text, probably came from the Sinai (Figure 4.1).

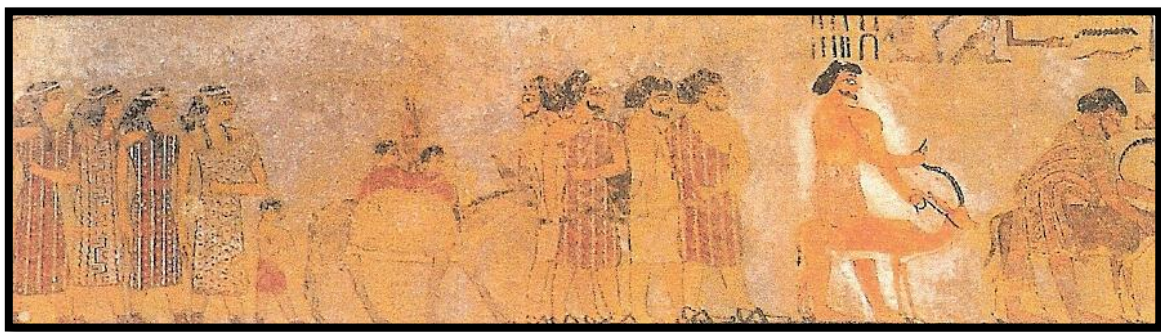


Figure 4.1: Scene in the tomb of Knumhotep III at Beni Hasan

⁵⁴ This tomb is one out of eight rock-cut tombs reserved for the powerful and wealthy nomarchs of the Oryx Nome, *nome* XVI of Upper Egypt, who held sway in the region during this period, in turn part of thirty-nine rock-cut tombs located up in the cliffs near the village of Beni Hasan, Middle Egypt. These tombs are situated in a necropolis for civil and military officials, dating from the Old Kingdom to the Thirtieth Dynasty, with a gap in the New Kingdom (Bard 1999:169).

Kemp (1999:247-248) concedes that one tomb scene does not make a pattern. He stresses, however, that these caravaneers are one example of small trading groups from further afield, making their way along the desert *wadi*-systems to provincial points of contact within the Nile Valley. They fulfilled a local demand for products out of reach of industrious valley inhabitants, albeit at a low level of satisfaction. Furthermore, the availability of raw materials and imported finished goods in Egypt, potentially points to a further example of where the balance lay between the state and the private domain, in respect of trade during the various periods.

The Theban tomb of Khaemhat (TT 57), in Qurna, has on the east wall of the transverse hall a scene representing a market, a theme only also found in the New Kingdom Eighteenth and Nineteenth Dynasties Theban tombs of Kenamon (TT 162); Ipuy (TT 217); Huy (TT 54), later usurped by Kenro; and possibly TT A4, although the theme was not infrequent in the *mastaba* tombs of the Old Kingdom. Two large registers depict twenty one ships with folded sails in the upper register (severely damaged) and twenty ships with hoisted sails in the lower register, with various activities happening in the scenes. The market scene proper, in three very short registers, the middle one severely damaged, is situated to the right of the ships. The buyers in all three registers are Egyptian sailors from the ships. The sellers, only preserved in the first and second registers, are Nubian men wearing hats garlanded with flowers and short feathers. One scene in the upper register, shows the Egyptians and the Nubians bartering in front of improvised stalls, situated by the riverside (Pino 2005:95, 97 and 102) (Figure 4.2).

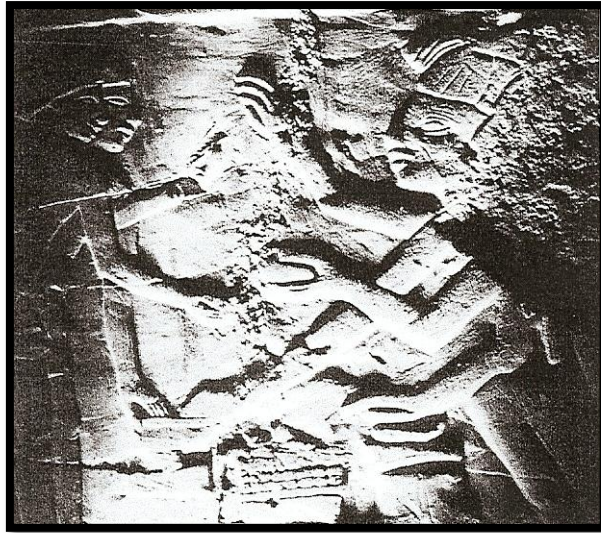
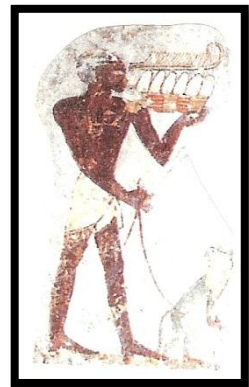


Figure 4.2: Bartering scene in the Theban tomb of Khaemhat (TT 57)

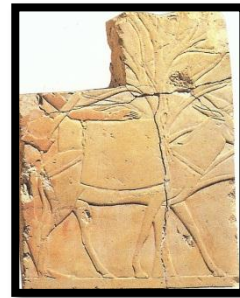
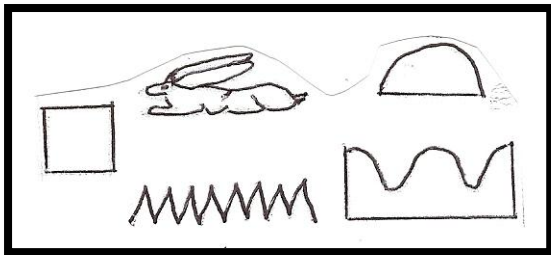
Pino (2005: 95, 97 and 101-102) states that in the absence of accompanying texts, an iconographic analysis of the scene reveals that it appears to depict a royal fleet disembarking in an Egyptian colony in Upper Nubia, more specifically Kush, intending to exchange grain provisions for luxury commodities (which normally included gold, ivory, ebony, ostrich feathers and eggs, semiprecious stones and fragrant gum-resins), or for paying officials working in Nubia. The wares the Nubian men are offering for sale are difficult to determine, but they appear to be foodstuffs. Thus they are villagers bartering the food grown in their gardens for other goods not generated by them, while the Egyptians are bartering their rations. She points out that two different kinds of trade involving the Egyptians is being portrayed here. The first is the official trade, organised by the state, the original purpose of the expedition to Nubia. The second is the private trade, being carried out in the market scene between the Egyptians and the Nubian men. She regards the market scene in this tomb as being unique, as it involves Nubian men, wearing headgear not normally shown in representations of Nubians in the New Kingdom. She believes this market scene may well reveal new information about commerce in ancient Egypt. The author argues that the Nubians are acting as intermediaries in barter trade, involving fragrant gum-resins, with the Egyptians, which would have come from other destinations, such as Punt.



4.2 IMPORTATION OF AROMATIC MATERIAL

The ancient Egyptians had to rely on trade for the procuring of a lot of the aromatic materials that they required for their perfume industry and for incense. Egypt had virtually no indigenous sources of resin (Serpico 1997:13). This they required in vast quantities to be used as incense in temple rituals, ceremonies and festivals. Trade in this commodity was, therefore, imperative for them.

4.2.1 Expeditions to the 'land of Punt'



Spencer (2007:261) states:

References to Punt form one of the most alluring and enigmatic problems presented by Egyptian texts. The word Punt is used to denote a foreign land from which the Egyptians procured exotic produce, in particular aromatic trees, incense and myrrh. The texts span the Old Kingdom to Graeco-Roman Periods ...



The Palermo Stone records the oldest known certain contact between the ancient Egyptians and *Pwn.t* or Punt, with which they traded lucratively, during the reign of the Fifth Dynasty, Old Kingdom, king Sahure, mentioning that products such as electrum, *sn-ssmt* (an unidentified product) and staves (presumably of wood, possibly of ebony) were brought back to Egypt (Phillips 1997:426). The last apparently historical account we have of trade with Punt in Egyptian texts, apart from a few archaizing ones, is found in the Great Harris Papyrus I, describing an expedition to Punt during the reign of Ramesses III, Twentieth Dynasty, New Kingdom (Phillips 1997:437).

Egyptologists generally believe that Punt existed between c 2600/2500 BC to c 600 BC (Phillips 1997:423 and 425). Nibbi (1981:32-33) states that texts from the Eleventh Dynasty,

Middle Kingdom, onward mention that Punt lay within the general geographical region of *t3 ntr*, to replace she believes *t3 ssmt*, an expression no longer used after the Middle Kingdom. This can be translated as ‘the land of the god⁵⁵’, ‘the land of the malachite’, ‘the land of the *ssmt*-girdle’ or even possibly ‘the fragrant land’, which is found in Pyramid Text 456c. Phillips (1997:430) states that *t3 ntr*, besides Punt, included such areas as *Irm* (Irem) and ‘*m*’, the latter probably being the same as *I’m* (Yam), reached by Harkhuf in the Old Kingdom.

The exact geographical location of the ‘land of Punt’ however is not known, in fact it is not even known whether the word Punt denoted the same place at all times⁵⁶. There has been an on-going debate amongst scholars about the location of Punt, with most of them arguing that it lay on the shores of the southern Red Sea, on the coasts of either modern Sudan, Ethiopia, Djibouti or Somalia.

Duffey (2005:4-5), however, takes a completely different stance, and argues that the people, the animals (giraffes, baboons, cheetahs and straight-backed oxen) and the products taken back to Egypt depicted in the Puntite reliefs and mentioned in accompanying texts, undoubtedly places Punt much further south on the African continent, in fact in southern Africa. He states that the features of the Puntite people show that they were black Africans but another race is also depicted in the reliefs, bearing much resemblance to the Egyptians themselves. He argues that the ancient Sumerian miners, having established a gold mining industry in ancient Meluhha (Punt, as he identifies it), could possibly have mingled with the local Khoisan (Waq Waq) people, the original inhabitants of southern Africa, to produce this race. To support this thesis, he refers to a fragment belonging to the Punt reliefs, mortuary temple of Hatshepsut, Deir el-Bahari, now in the Egyptian museum, Cairo, which depicts Ati, the wife of the chief of Punt, Perahu. She has a steatopygous build, a typical racial

⁵⁵ Nibbi (1981:33-34) argues that the Stela Northumberland 1935, emanating from the Wadi Gasus, strongly indicates that *t3 ntr* was ‘the land of Sopdu’, as it mentions this deity having titles such as *nb i3btt* ‘lord of the east’ and *nb t3 ssmt* ‘lord of the *ssmt*-land’, titles not shared by any other deities, except Horus. Sopdu is depicted on this stela wearing the *ssmt*-girdle, the significance of which and what it was made of being unknown. She proposes that the word *ssmt* is related to the mineral malachite. She states that if this is the case, then *ssmt*-land should be placed in the region of the ancient Egyptian mining areas of the Sinai, chiefly Mahara and Serebit El Khadim.

⁵⁶ Phillips (1997:438) is of the opinion that, like the elastic use of the terms ‘Abyssinia’ and ‘Aethiopia’ in the classical sources, the Egyptians possibly used the term ‘Punt’ for different localities at different times. He cautions, however, that even if archaeological exploration or excavation in the future reveals a specific site or area that can be readily identified with Punt, it would be wrong to limit Punt only to that one location, as other locations may be equally and independently acceptable.

characteristic of the Khoisan, who saw it as a sign of beauty. According to him, this feature links Ati to these people (see Section 4.2.1.1, Figure 4.7).

Duffey (2005:4) argues further that the ‘myrrh terraces’ mentioned in the texts is the extensive Nyanga terrace complex of eastern Zimbabwe, the largest known concentration of terraces of sub-Saharan Africa, for which archaeologists have no satisfactory explanation. These terraces are only 1.5 to 3 meters wide, proving that they were not used for planting grain, but rather trees. The Nyanga area is ideally suited to the cultivation of these trees. He also argues that the so-called ‘slave pits’ at Nyanga, were storage bins for stockpiling vast quantities of myrrh resin. The author argues that the fact that Phillips (1997:431) mentions that the Puntites are generally described as ‘cattle-herding pastoralists’ and that the Puntite reliefs at Deir el-Bahari clearly show domesticated cattle strolling and lying about (short-horned cattle in the areas around the Puntites and their housing, with long-horned cattle behind prostrating Nubians from *Irm* and *Nmy*), lends support to Duffey’s thesis, as the Khoisan people were also ‘cattle-herding pastoralists’, associated with short-horn cattle. Furthermore, Phillips (1997:429) states that Middle Kingdom texts often refer to the ‘mine’ or ‘mining region’ (*bi3* in singular form) of Punt, and often mention the presence of myrrh there.

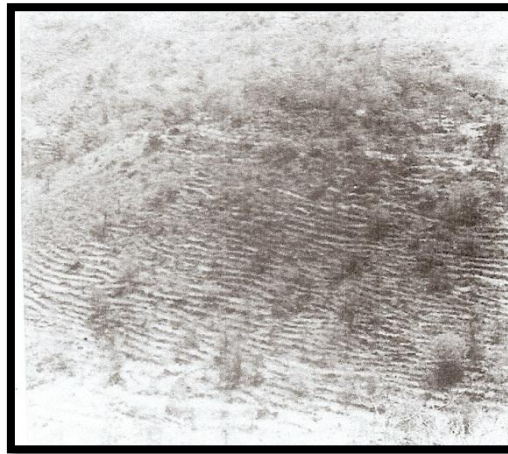


Figure 4.3: The terrace complex at Nyanga, eastern Zimbabwe

Duffey (2005:5) points out that there are various pieces of evidence to show that the ancient Egyptians penetrated the gold-rich region south of the Zambesi River, in search of raw materials. For instance, in May 1901 Dr Charl Pieters found an ancient Egyptian *shabti*

figurine in the vicinity of Tete (Mozambique), identified by Sir Flinders Petrie as belonging to the reign of Tuthmosis III, Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom. Pieters wrote in his report that the *shabti* had been buried in moist soil and therefore it could not have emanated from an Egyptian tomb. Duffey adds further that two Egyptian figurines, one a fertility figurine and one a *shabti*, were discovered at Schuinsdrift, near Mapungubwe, South Africa, in the 1930's (Figures 4.4 and 4.5).



Figure 4.4: The *shabti* found by Dr. Charl Pieters in 1901

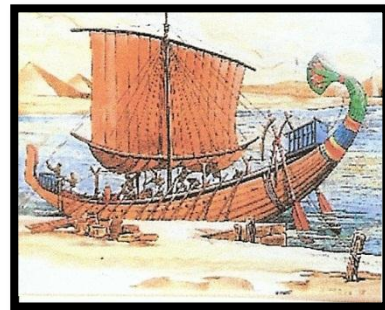
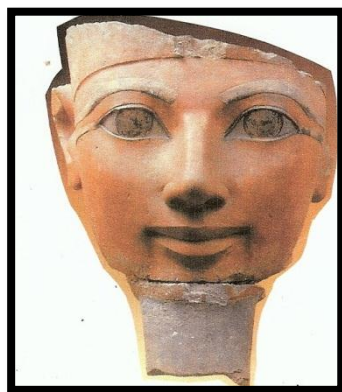


Figure 4.5: The fertility figurine and the *shabti* found at Schuinsdrift in the 1930's

The Egyptian's trade with Punt was usually done by means of barter, with gifts being presented to the local Puntite chiefs by the Egyptian expedition, in exchange for the luxury goods which the Egyptian's desired (Kuhrt 1998:191). Amongst others, these luxury goods included, southern leopard skins, ivory, baboons, monkeys, dogs, cattle, aromatic woods

called *tsps* and *hsyt*, eye-paint, the ‘green’ gold of ‘m and most importantly ‘*ntyw*-trees and raw incense. The gifts presented by the Egyptians included items such as bread, beer, wine, meat, fruit (Phillips 1997:430), raffia mats, tools, bronze axes (Wood 2005:155) and strings of beads, probably made of blue faience (Dixon 1969:63-64). Dixon (1969:62) notes that wherever Punt was, it appears to have been an emporium to which products the Puntites used for barter were brought from further afield.⁵⁷

4.2.1.1 Hatshepsut’s expedition to Punt and the Punt reliefs depicted on the walls of her mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahari



I brought to thee plentiful tribute of myrrh, in order to go around thy temple with the fragrance of Punt for thy august nostrils at early morning. I planted incense and myrrh-sycamores in thy great and august court in Ineb-Sebek, being those which my hands brought from the country of God’s-Land, in order to satisfy thy two serpent-goddesses every morning.

Extract from Papyrus Harris. Translated by Breasted (1962:169).

The most famous expedition by the ancient Egyptians to the fabled ‘land of Punt’, and the one providing the most extensive evidence, is the three-year one sent by Queen Hatshepsut just before the ninth regnal year of her reign in c 1482 BC, under the command of Nehesi, a Nubian, accompanied by Senmut (Duffey 2005:2). This voyage, involving five ships, is depicted in polychrome bas reliefs, divided into various themes, on the southern, western, and northern walls of the second portico of Hatshepsut’s mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahari in six registers, accompanied by texts describing the voyage (Phillips 1997:426). Breasted (1962:105) lists these themes as: I Departure of the fleet (west wall); II Reception in Punt

⁵⁷ For a discussion on whether there were intermediaries involved here see Saleh (1973:370-382). For a discussion on the location of Punt, see Nibbi (1981:99-102). For a discussion on the location of Meluhha, see Albright (1921:80-87).

(south wall); III The traffic (south wall); IV -1 Men carrying trees (two scenes, both on the south wall, one in a register below the other); IV-2 Loading the vessels (west wall); V The return voyage (west wall); VI Presentation of tribute to the queen (west wall); VII The queen offers the gifts to Amun (west wall); VIII Weighing and measuring (west wall); IX Formal announcement of the success of the expedition to Amun; and X Formal announcement of the success of the expedition before the court. Breasted (1962:103) points out that these reliefs and texts form the first and only full source for a study of Punt and the expeditions sent there by the Egyptians.

In the scenes the journey includes a voyage along the Red Sea. This has been identified by the sea-life depicted there and concurs with archaeological evidence of a Middle Kingdom Red Sea harbour at the end of the Wadi Hammamat, including textual references to Punt. The reliefs depict Punt having tropical flora and fauna, such as palms and giraffes, and conical mat huts built on stilts, with ladders leading up them (Spencer 2007:261).

Once the expedition had landed, a scene under theme II, Reception in Punt, depicts on the right ‘the king’s messenger’ advancing at the head of his soldiers with barter/trade goods that the Egyptians had brought with them piled up before him, amongst which are necklaces, hatchets and daggers. A frieze at the bottom of the scene depicts water with fish swimming in it (Breasted 1962:106) (Figure 4.6).

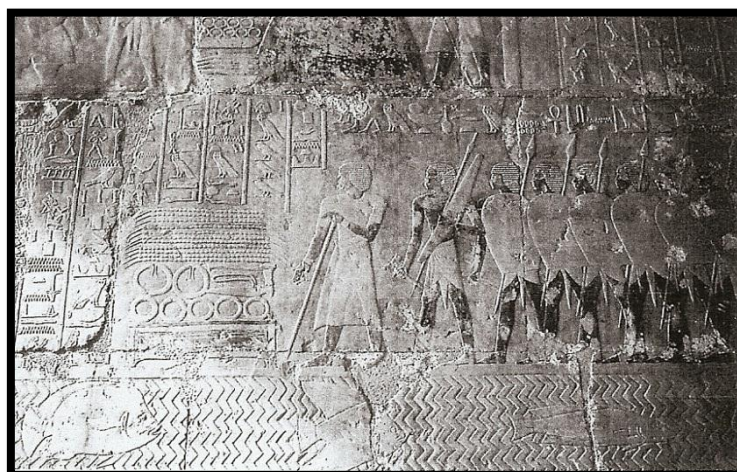


Figure 4.6: The Egyptians with their barter goods

The accompanying text over the Egyptians reads:

[The arrival] of the king's messenger in God's-Land, together with the army which is behind him, before the chiefs of Punt; dispatched with every good thing from the court, L. P. H., for Hathor, mistress of Punt; for the sake of the life, prosperity, and health of her majesty.

Translated by Breasted (1962:107).

A fragment of a bas-relief, also from theme II, Reception in Punt, depicts Parakhu, chief of Punt, and his wife Aty, advancing to greet the Egyptian envoys, accompanied by a Puntite (only partially preserved), carrying a big bowl of raw incense for the Egyptian delegation. This fragment is now housed in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo (JE 14276 -89664) (Wildung 2000:165) (Figure 4.7).

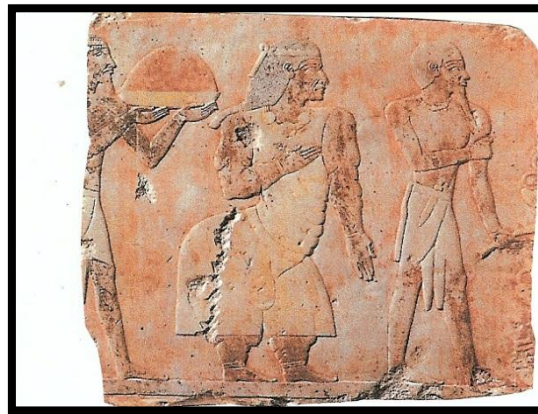


Figure 4.7: A Puntite carrying a bowl of raw incense behind Parakhu and his wife Ati

Another fragment from the same scene depicts two other Puntites, following the man carrying the bowl of raw incense, carrying big bags on their shoulders, containing other products from Punt for the Egyptian delegation. This fragment is also housed in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo (JE 14276 - 89664) (Wildung 2000:165) (Figure 4.8).

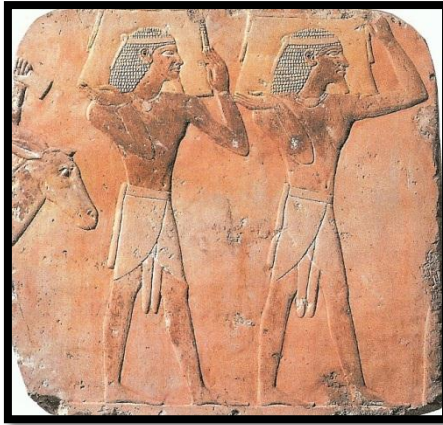


Figure 4.8: Puntites carrying goods for the Egyptian delegation

The *'ntyw* trees were the most precious of the luxury goods obtained by the ancient Egyptians from the 'land of Punt' (Phillips 1997:430), which provided the incense needed by them in large quantities for their temple rituals, ceremonies and festivals.

A scene (one of two) under theme IV-1, Men carrying trees, depicts Egyptian men carrying *'ntyw* trees on poles, with their roots placed in bags/ baskets to protect them, heading towards the awaiting Egyptian ships, where they will be placed on board. An accompanying text mentions that thirty-one *'ntyw* trees were taken back to Egypt (Schulz & Sourouzian 1998:185) (Figure 4.9).

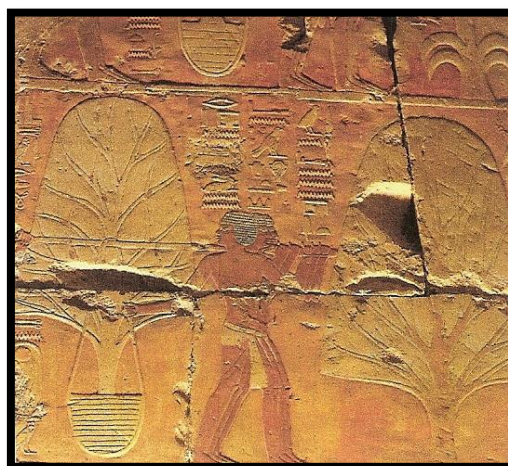


Figure 4.9: Egyptians carrying *'ntyw* trees in bags/ baskets

A line drawing of a scene under theme IV-2, Loading the vessels, depicts two ships heavily laden with *'ntyw* trees, ivory, wood and apes. On shore, as well as ascending the gang planks, men are carrying *'ntyw* trees placed in bags/baskets to protect their roots (Figure 4.10).

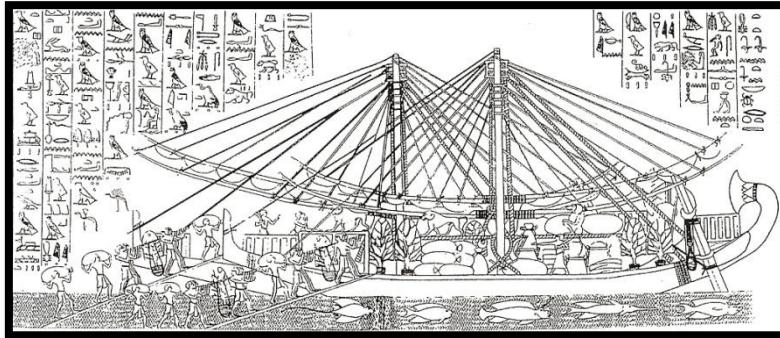


Figure 4.10: Egyptians loading their ships with trade goods

The accompanying text over the men with the *'ntyw* trees on shore reads:

One man: [Look to] your feet, ye people! Behold! The load is very heavy!
 Another man: Prosperity [be] with [us], for the sake of the myrrh tree in the midst of God's-Land, for the house of Amon; there is the place [where] it shall be made to grow for Makere (Ma'at ka ra Hatshepsut), in his temple, according to command.

Over the vessels:

The loading of the ships very heavily with marvels of the country of Punt; all all goodly fragrant woods of God's-Land, heaps of myrrh-resin, with fresh myrrh trees, with ebony and pure ivory, with green gold of Emu, (*'mv*), with cinnamon wood, kheyty wood, with ihmut-incense, eye-cosmetic, with apes, monkeys, dogs, with skins of the southern panther, with natives and their children. Never was bought the likes of this for any king who has been since the beginning.

Translated by Breasted (1962:109).



Besides the whole 'ntyw trees, the Egyptians also took back raw incense to Egypt. Two scenes deal with theme VIII Weighing and measuring. In the measuring scene, four men are scooping incense extracted from the trees into measures from two enormous heaps of it. A fifth man, whose figure has been erased, is Hatshepsut's favourite, 'the scribe and steward *Thuity*'. He is keeping record of the measure for Hatshepsut, while at the extreme right, the god Thoth is doing the same for Amun (Breasted 1962:113).

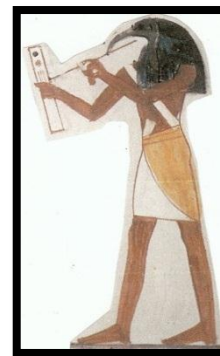
The accompanying texts read:

Over the heaps of incense: Heaps of myrrh in great quantities.

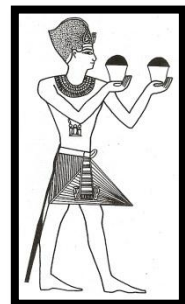
Over the men doing the measuring: Measuring the fresh myrrh, in great quantities, for Amon, lord of Thebes; marvels of the country of Punt, treasures of God's Land for the sake of the life, prosperity and health ...

Before Thoth: Recording in writing, reckoning the numbers, summing up in millions, hundreds of thousands, tens of thousands, thousands and hundreds; reception of the marvels of Punt, for Amon-Re, lord of Thebes, lord of heaven.

Translated by Breasted (1962:113-114).



The scene dealing with theme IX, Formal announcement of the success of the expedition before Amun, depicts on the extreme left the queen standing before Amun sitting on a throne at the extreme right. Behind the queen, Thutmose III is offering 'of the best of fresh myrrh' to the god Amun, being borne in his sacred barque by priests (Breasted 1962:115). Texts accompanying this scene make references to 'ntyw terraces (*htyw* 'ntyw) (Dixon 1969:63).



The inscription accompanying the scene dealing with Punt in a former time reads:

No-one trod the myrrh terraces, which the people (*rmt*) knew not; it was heard from mouth to mouth by hearsay of the ancestors ...

Translated by Breasted (1962:117).

The inscription accompanying the scene dealing with Punt under Hatshepsut reads:

But I will cause the army to tread them, I have led them on water and on land, to explore the waters of inaccessible channels, and I have reached the myrrh terraces.

Translated by Breasted (1962:117).

Dixon (1969:58 and 60) states that there is no reason to doubt that living '*ntyw*' trees were indeed brought back to Egypt by Hatshepsut's expedition. He cautions, however, that it cannot be assumed that Hatshepsut was the first person to import them, a practice which was continued by her successors. Phillips (1997:430) points out that the 'Punt reliefs' do include a relief of '*ntyw*' trees growing in a 'garden of Amun'. Spencer (2007:261) states that archaeologists have found remains of trees in the approach to Hatshepsut's temple at Deir el-Bahari and argues that they are perhaps the same trees planted there after the return of Hatshepsut's expedition to Punt. Dixon (1969:61) opines that the fact that Hatshepsut's successors continued the importation of '*ntyw*' trees, strongly indicates that the experiments of transplanting these trees were not successful. Siliotti (2000:109) is of the opinion that different climatic conditions probably prevented the trees from taking root in Egypt.

4.2.2 Other importations of aromatic material

The ancient Egyptians no longer sent trading expeditions to the 'land of Punt', after Egypt's power waned in the last quarter of the second millennium BC. The demand for aromatic plant material in the Ancient Near East and especially incense by the Egyptians for use in their temples, however, was as high as ever (Dayagi-Mendels 1989:114). Fragrant routes from other countries to Egypt existed from the Middle Kingdom onward (Manniche 1999:7). Texts indicate that various regions in the Ancient Near East supplied *sntr* and coniferous products to Egypt. These include: Retenu (*sntr*, *sft* and '*s*'); Djahy (*sntr* and '*s*'); Nagaw ('*s*);

and Naharin. In the Theban tomb of Amunezeh (TT 84)⁵⁸, the chief of Naharin is depicted offering an amphora of *sntr* as tribute (Serpico 1997:446-447).

4.2.2.1 Incense trade in the Levant

Serpico & White (2000a:895) state that there was a major resin industry in the Levant in the Late Bronze Age, with distribution of the resin taking place via a network of trade in the Mediterranean. Serpico (1997:13-14) points out, however, that although our knowledge of Egypt's southern contacts with the 'land of Punt' for gum-resin is quite comprehensive, the subject of resin trade between Egypt and the Mediterranean has received far less attention, and subsequently our knowledge of this trade is very limited. Furthermore, there is very little textual support for a resin industry during the Late Bronze Age in the Ancient Near East.

The two main textual sources are the Amarna Letters⁵⁹ and the archive which was excavated at Ugarit (Ras Shamra) (Serpico 1997:440). Serpico (1997:441-442) states that the word *su-ur-wa*, a jar of which the queen of Ugarit sent to the queen of Egypt, is mentioned in Amarna letter EA 48. Two tablets [PRU, V, 102 and U.V., Ug. 9 (RS.24.643)] found at the archive of Ugarit refer to *kat* measures of a product called *zrw* (Serpico 1997:442). These texts, however, are plagued by similar lexicographical problems to those encountered in Egyptian texts, with the aromatic products involved being difficult to identify (Serpico 1997:440). Serpico (1997:444-445) is of the opinion that just as resin is seemingly a 'hidden' commodity, so too is the resin industry in Syria/Palestine. In addition, there is very little evidence on archaeological sites in the Ancient Near East of resinous residues.

Textual and representational sources confirm, however, that during the New Kingdom Egypt received large quantities of resin from Western Asia. Two such sources are the annals of Tuthmosis III and the Great Harris Papyrus. In the former, mention is made that Egypt

⁵⁸ Serpico (1997:446-447) translates Amunezeh's titles as 'First Royal Herald', 'Overseer of the Gate', during the reign of Tuthmoses III, New Kingdom.

⁵⁹ Egyptologists call the cuneiform clay tablets found at Tell el-Amarna, occupied during the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, in Middle Egypt, mostly written in Akkadian, the diplomatic language in the Ancient Near East in the second millennium BC, the Amarna Letters. They mainly include letters sent to Amenhotep III and Amenhotep IV (Akhenaten). The senders were kings from regions such as Babylonia, Assyria, Hatti, Mitanni and Alashiya; minor princes and rulers in the Ancient Near East; and vassals of the Egyptian empire in the Levant (Izre'el 1997:86). The Amarna Letters at Tell el-Amarna appear mainly to have emanated from the 'House of Correspondence of Pharaoh' in the central city, the majority of the known ones now being housed in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, the British Museum, the Musée du Louvre in Paris and the Bodemuseum in Berlin (Shaw 2003:161).

received over 3000 storage jars of *sntr* resin from Syria/Palestine, 828 storage jars in one year alone. In the latter, an endowment by Ramesses III of 2 159 storage jars of *sntr* resin to the temple of Amun at Karnak is listed (Serpico 1997:13-14). Serpico & White (2000a: 884 and 895) state that frankincense does not grow in Syria/Palestine and the sole species of *Commiphora* present, *C. gileadensis*, grows very sparsely there. This they aver has led some scholars to believe that these texts provide early evidence of an overland trade route between Arabia and the Ancient Near East.

One of these scholars is Dayagi-Mendels (1989:114), who states that after the collapse of the Punt trading expeditions, the Egyptians imported myrrh and frankincense from Arabia by means of camel caravans using desert routes. Another is Artzy (1994:121), who argues that the origins of the camel-borne incense trade from Arabia to the Levant, which played a very important part in the economy of the eastern Mediterranean region in the first millennium BC⁶⁰, can be traced back to the Late Bronze Age in the second millennium BC. Artzy (1994:122 and 139) argues further that the anchorage site of Tell Nami on the northern coast of Israel, first occupied in the Middle Bronze Age IIa, abandoned, and again occupied in the Late Bronze II when it was extremely wealthy, especially in the LBIIb Period, is the most likely candidate for a centre for incense trade, where a land route from Arabia via Transjordan and a Mediterranean coastal distribution area converged. As far as the land route is concerned, Artzy (1994: 123, 131-133 and 139) states that the *'ntyw* from South Arabia probably travelled first via the Red Sea and was then trans-shipped to caravans, which brought the incense along the King's Highway to Beth Shan in central Transjordan. From there, the caravans travelled westward towards the Mediterranean coast to Megiddo and then on to Nami.

This trade took place during a period of expansion of trade, which happened in the latter part of the Late Bronze IIb, with its zenith occurring sometime after the middle of the thirteenth century BC, when for a brief period the small site of Tell Nami⁶¹ served as a principal port of entry for foreign goods in the Carmel Ridge area. It is possible that Nami took over this role

⁶⁰ This trade, involving camel caravans, took place on the Incense Route, which took incense from southern Arabia along the western side of the Arabian Peninsula to the Levant. In turn, this route was succeeded by the Indian Spice Route, which brought exotic spices from India, one of the two most important long distance supply routes that channelled luxury goods for the citizens of the ancient Mediterranean world. The other one was the Silk Route, bringing silk from China (Artzy 1994:121).

⁶¹ Artzy (1994:139) alludes to the possibility that Nami could have been an *entrepot*, belonging to a larger member of the trade network, such as Megiddo.

from the much bigger site of Tell abu-Hawam, although there were other possible harbour and anchorage sites in existence in this period, within a very short distance from Nami along the coast, such as Shiqmona, Atlit and Dor. This zenith did not last long however, as Nami was destroyed and abandoned not much later than the first years of the twelfth century BC (Artzy 1994:139).

Artzy (1994:137-138) argues that ‘collared rim’ storage jars (large ceramic pithoi) were used to store the Arabian *‘ntyw* in and to transport it to the Levant. These pithoi were much larger than ‘Canaanite amphorae’⁶², traditionally associated with the incense trade (Serpico 1997:470). Artzy (1994:137-138) avers that the size of these jars (when loaded they weighed 80-120 kg) meant that camels were used to carry them overland in caravans and not donkeys⁶³. These collared rim jars were found in several places at Tell Nami, including the necropolis, the sanctuary and in the form of sherds in pits, which preceded the construction of a rampart on the northern and eastern sides of the site during one phase of LB IIb, meaning that they are clearly datable to the thirteenth century BC (Artzy 1994:123-124 and 136). Artzy (1994:138) argues that the shape of the collared rim jars was local to Tell Nami but distribution in inland sites indicates they could be used for overland transport. Three bronze incense braziers (all different) were also excavated at Tell Nami, and a part of a fourth one (Artzy 1994:128).

Artzy (1994:132-133) states that during the months in which maritime navigation was possible, the incense would have been loaded onto ships at Nami, plying the coast to Egypt, Cyprus and Ugarit (Ras Shamra), from whence further distribution was possible. She opines that a possibility exists that in the months in which little or no navigation was attempted, the overland trade route changed its course. When the caravans reached Megiddo, instead of continuing on to Nami, they turned south to Lachish, then turned west to the coast at Deir el-Balah and so onwards to Egypt, along the northern Sinai route of the ‘Ways of Horus’, where a chain of Egyptian fortresses existed at that period.

⁶² These amphorae, large ovoid or piriform storage vessels with handles and pointed bases, first appeared in the Levant at the beginning of the second millennium BC (Moorey 1994:12).

⁶³ Artzy (1994:139) states that the use of camel caravans only relates to the transport of Arabian *‘ntyw* to the Levant.

Serpico (1997:469-470), while critiquing the arguments made by Artzy, states that, so far, there is very little evidence linking Tell Nami to the resin trade, besides the three bronze offering braziers found there, not even resin samples. She concedes that Canaanite amphorae have been found at the site but states that a detailed study needs to be made of them to determine whether Amarna clay fabrics III.10 or IV.6⁶⁴ occur there. Furthermore, Artzy is arguing that the camel may have been used in the caravan trade as early as the Late Bronze II period, whereas traditionally it is thought that regular Arabian trade using domesticated camels only took place in the Iron Age I period in Syria/Palestine. She concludes that while Artzy may be correct in her assumption that Tell Nami was an important port in the Late Bronze II period and had a role to play in incense trade, there is no reason to link this trade with Arabia, much less with collared-rim jars! For Serpico, ‘Canaanite amphorae’ offer the greatest potential for tracing resin trade in the Ancient Near East.

Serpico & White (2000a:895) argue, however, that there is no need to postulate early contact between Egypt and Arabia for *sntr* supplies. They are of the opinion that the supplies of *ntyw* resin received by Egypt from the Levant mentioned in New Kingdom texts possibly derives from Palestinian *Commiphora gileadensis* but caution that the idea that the Egyptians obtained frankincense or myrrh from Arabia during the New Kingdom, cannot be completely excluded.

4.2.2.2 Trade links between Egypt and the Aegean

There is evidence that Egypt had links with the Aegean. In 1990 Minoan wall-paintings were found at Tell el-Dab‘a (ancient Avaris) in the north-eastern Delta. These paintings survive as fragments on plastered bricks, emanating from a destroyed building dating to the end of the Second Intermediate Period when the Hyksos ruled Egypt, demonstrating that they had links with Minoan Crete (Spencer 2007:248 and 251). Many of these fragments of frescoes, all found in the Ezbet Helmi section at the western edge of the site, display Minoan motifs, such as bulls, bull-leapers, acrobats, floral motifs, leopards and lions. Minoan art is primarily ritual, pointing to a conclusion that Minoans lived in Avaris and were allowed to pursue their own ritual life (Bietak 1992:26-28).

⁶⁴ These are fabrics used for amphorae found at the site of Tell el-Amarna, Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, in Middle Egypt containing traces of pistacia resin. Amarna clay fabric III.10 was the fabric that was most used for this purpose (Serpico 1997:408).

A reconstruction of a fragmentary fresco excavated at Tell el-Dab‘a, depicts a bull-leaper over the back of a bull. The Minoans are famed for their bull cult, also depicted in frescoes at Knossos in Crete and at Akrotiri on the island of Thera (Figure 4.11).

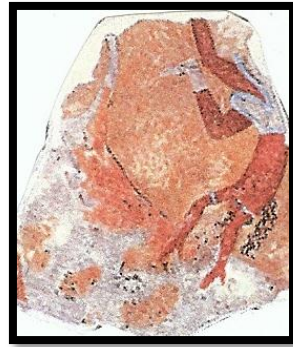


Figure 4.11: A bull-leaper leaping over the back of a bull

In the New Kingdom, some Theban tomb-chapel paintings dating to the reign of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III, depict people labelled as *Keftiu*, identified by scholars from their clothing and the goods that they carry to be Minoans.

A painted scene in the Theban tomb of Rekhmire (TT 100), Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, depicts Minoan tribute bearers carrying a variety of things, easily recognised by the style of the hair and the shapes of the vessels they are carrying (Figure 4.12).



Figure 4.12: Minoans bearing tribute

A tomb at Saqqara, dating to the early Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, contained pottery that included a Cypriot handled jug. Mycenaean pottery has been found on sites dating to the late Eighteenth Dynasty and the Nineteenth Dynasty. It was also found in vast numbers at Tell el-Amarna in Middle Egypt, Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom. Egyptian material has been found in the Aegean and in Cyprus. These include objects inscribed with the cartouches of Amenhotep II and III and late Eighteenth and Nineteenth Dynasty faience vessels (Spencer 2007:248 and 251-252). Manniche (1999:7) states that the Egyptians received shipments of scented material from the Mycenaean civilization during the New Kingdom. The author argues that these shipments were possibly connected with the perfume industry at Mycenaean Pylos (see Annexure A, Mycenaean Pylos). Spencer (2007:252) states that ‘... the Aegean material found in Egypt and the Egyptian material found in Cyprus and the Aegean provide general evidence of the network of trade links, but these cannot yet be reconstructed in detail’.

Exchanges between Egypt and Cyprus probably started at the beginning of the second millennium BC and expanded with the advent of the Mycenaean hegemony, which brought about organised, systematic, trade with the entire Eastern Mediterranean (http://www.erimiwine.net/erimiwine_g000002.pdf).

4.2.2.3 The Bronze Age shipwreck at Ulu Buran

The discovery in the summer of 1982 of the wreck of a Late Bronze Age ship that sank off the southern coast of Turkey at Ulu Buran near Kaş, has increased our knowledge of international trade in the Ancient Near East in the Late Bronze Age in general and in the Mediterranean in particular. Excavation of the shipwreck, sponsored by the Institute of Nautical Archaeology (INA), College Station, Texas, was begun under the direction of George Bass in early July 1984 through to the end of August (Bass 1986:269 and 272). A third excavation was undertaken in 1986 (after a second one in 1985), under the direction of George Bass and assistant director Cemal Pulak, sponsored by the INA, amongst other sponsors (Bass *et al.* 1989:1). The exact date that the ship was wrecked is not known.

The major discovery of the 1986 excavation season at Ulu Buran was a very small (1.4 cm long, 1.00 cm wide and 0.5 cm high) gold scarab (KW 772), bearing the name of Nefertiti, the wife of Amenhotep IV (Akhenaten), in the form of Nefernefruaten Nefertiti, who lived in

the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom. Gold and silver royal-name scarabs, not numerous at any time during the New Kingdom, were particularly scarce during the Amarna Period, Eighteenth Dynasty, due to the close mythological association of the scarab beetle with the solar deity Khepri, and the fact that the only deity officially worshipped during this period was the Aten (Weinstein 1989:17-18).

The gold scarab (KW 772) found in the Ulu Buran shipwreck bearing the name of Nefertiti, both the back and base views being shown (Figure 14.13).

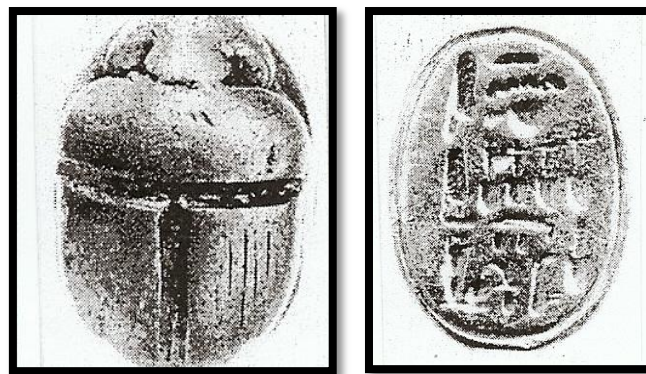


Figure 4.13: A gold scarab bearing the name of Nefertiti

Weinstein (1989:20 and 29) states that the 1985 and 1986 excavation seasons yielded another six Egyptian artefacts. These are two scarabs (KW 338 and KW 904), a rectangular stone plaque (KW 481), half a gold ring (KW 603), and a silver ring (KW 650). Weinstein (1989:29) is of the opinion that these artefacts, together with the gold Nefertiti scarab, point to the late fourteenth/early thirteenth century BC as the most likely date for the shipwreck. He opines further that the Egyptian finds from the Ulu Burun shipwreck fill a conspicuous gap in our knowledge of the history of Egyptian-Aegean trade relations in the Late Bronze Age, which while being limited in scope, and most probably indirect, persisted into the post-Amarna phase of the late Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom.

The port of embarkation of the ship has been widely debated by scholars. Serpico (1997:417 and 488) is of the opinion that the diversity of goods on board the Ulu Burun ship suggests that the ship might have been conducting a circuit of the Mediterranean. She points out that part of the difficulty in determining the route of the ship, is the fact that the identity of the individual/s that sponsored the voyage is/are unknown. Perhaps it was even state sponsored.

As a result, interpretations have been rooted in the role of the ship within the framework of Mediterranean trade in general. She is of the opinion that resin could have been loaded onto the ship, either somewhere along the Levantine coast or in Cyprus, which could have been acting as an intermediary for trade between the Ancient Near East and the Aegean. Bass (1986:275 and 295-296) suggests that the ship took a circular route from Syria or Palestine to Cyprus (or Cyprus to Syria or Palestine), then on to Greece via the southern Anatolian coast, to Egypt, and then returning to Cyprus or the Syro-Palestinian coast. He states that Cyprus is the most likely place of origin of the copper ingots found on the wreck, of which there are three basic shapes, the most numerous being the 'oxhide' four-handled one. This makes Cyprus a possible port of embarkation.

The destination of the ship has also been widely debated by scholars. Bass (1986:295) argues that it is almost certain that the ship's destination was west of Ulu Buran, perhaps Rhodes or one of the Mycenaean towns on the Anatolian coast, or perhaps even the Greek mainland. He ponders whether the ship intended trading some of its raw materials in mainland Greece for goods, such as, amongst others, Mycenaean pottery, and then set sail for Egypt, a market always eager for Cypriot, Syrian and Mycenaean pottery. These pottery types were also found in the wreck, along with other artefacts, such as elephant and hippopotamus ivory; gold, silver, faience and amber jewellery; and glass ingots (Bass 1986:274).

The largest part of the cargo consisted of metals (several tons of it, including copper and tin) but the second largest part consisted of a shipment of resin transported in over one hundred and twenty Canaanite amphorae, which had originally been arranged in rows in the central part of the hold, initially reported to be frankincense (*Boswellia* spp.). A subsequent analysis of seven samples of resin (taken from jars KW 165, KW 169, KW 179, KW 807, KW 957, KW 985 and KW 986) by Mills and White in 1989, however, securely identified it as *Pistacia* spp. The identification of species is very difficult to make by means of chemical analysis, however, Mills and White suggested that *Pistacia atlantica* Desf. is the likely source. Mills and White were also able to examine seventeen of the amphorae with a binocular microscope and found that all seventeen of them correspond with Amarna clay fabric III.10. It thus appears that whatever the geographical source of the resin cargo on the shipwreck is, this same source supplied pistacia resin to Egypt at Tell el-Amarna in the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom (Serpico 1997:406-408).

4.3 EXPORTATION OF LUXURY/EXOTIC PERFUMES AROUND THE MEDITERRANEAN

It was during the Ptolemaic Period, when the Delta city of Mendes was in its heyday, that the ‘Mendesian’ perfume was made there by the ancient Egyptians. From Mendes, this perfume was exported to Rome (<http://www.levity.com/alchemy/islam24.html>). Egyptian perfumes were famous in the ancient world and the classical authors knew about them and wrote about them. Other perfumes, made by the Egyptians during the Ptolemaic Period, would also have been exported by them, from Mendes and Alexandria, another centre of perfume production in ancient Egypt during this period, not only to Rome but all over the Mediterranean. This trade carried out in the Mediterranean, however, cannot at present be reconstructed in detail, although the discovery of a Late Bronze Age shipwreck off the coast of Turkey at Ulu Buran in 1982, contemporary with the New Kingdom, has helped our understanding of trade in the Late Bronze Age in the ancient world in general, and in the Mediterranean in particular.

A fresco from a villa in Rome dating from the first century AD, depicting a woman in ancient Rome, pouring perfume from a vessel into an *alabastron* (Figure 14.14).

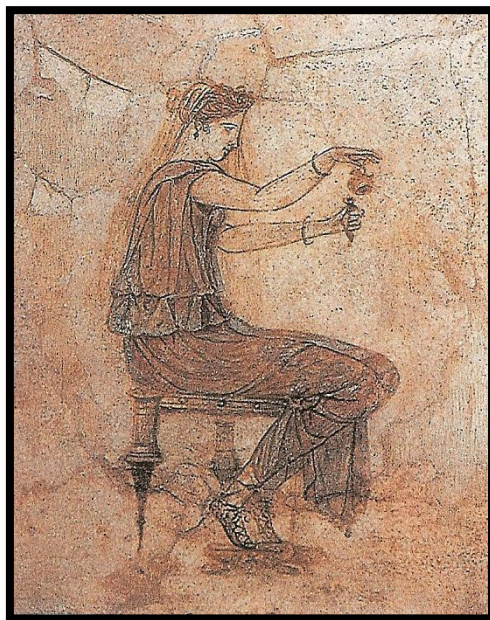


Figure 4.14: A Roman lady pouring perfume into an *alabastron*

A map, showing trade routes in the Ancient Near East, converging at the wealthy Syrian city of Qatna (modern Tell Mishrifeh) (Figure 14.15).

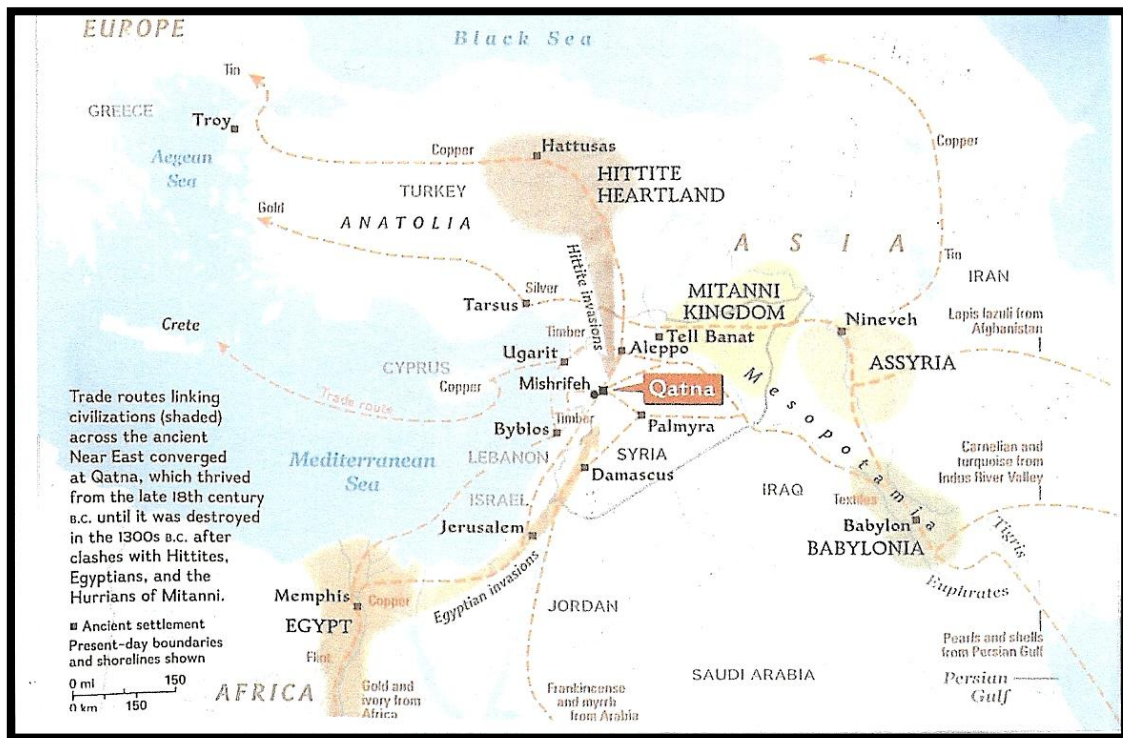


Figure 4.15: Trade map of the Ancient Near East

4.4 CONCLUSION

The ancient Egyptians, since they could not provide all the aromatic plant material that they needed to produce perfume (including incense) for various purposes, either because the plants or trees involved were in short supply in Egypt, or because they did not thrive in Egypt's climate, were very resourceful in their quest to obtain this material. They established trade links with many other civilisations, making use of the many trade routes that criss-crossed the Ancient Near East. They were prepared to travel vast distances to places such as the 'land of Punt', which also involved sea travel, to obtain the precious aromatic gum-resins, to be used as incense. We don't know how far away from Egypt Punt was, as its exact location is not known. They were not just content to bring these resins back to Egypt but on Hatshepsut's expedition to Punt even loaded live trees, complete with roots, onto their ships and planted them on their return to Egypt. Seemingly this experiment did not work out and the trees did not thrive in Egypt's climate, but this did not stop them trying again, and taking more live trees back to Egypt on later expeditions to Punt.

More research has to be done on trade that the ancient Egyptians carried out in the Mediterranean, either to obtain aromatic plant material or to export their luxury perfumes. Fortunately the discovery of the Late Bronze Age shipwreck at Ulu Buran off the southern coast of Turkey in 1982 has shed some light on this topic.



CHAPTER 5

INGREDIENTS

The ancient Egyptians used fragrant plant materials, as well as plant material used in the production of base material, to produce their perfumes. In addition, they needed aromatic gum-resins to be used for incense. Various sources provide us with knowledge of the ingredients used in the ancient world in general, and in ancient Egypt in particular, regarding perfumes. These include texts, plant remains and visual sources such as reliefs and paintings in temples and tombs.

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The ancient Egyptians had the ideal climate, with plenty of sunshine, for cultivating a lot of the plant material that they needed for the production of perfume, both in the form of fragrant plant material and other plant material used in the production of base material, such as oils. A sparse rainfall was compensated for by water being channelled from the Nile.

The animal group of perfume ingredients such as musk, civet and ambergris, so highly prized by modern perfumers, was unknown to the Egyptians (Kennet 1975:38). Animal fats were also used as the bases of perfume and fragrant gum-resins were used for incense.

The identification of ancient plants, in general, is not an easy task. Fortunately, however, there is more information available for ancient Egyptian flora than for most extinct civilisations. Despite this advantage, however, the identification of this flora poses a serious problem (Manniche 2006:167). There are two main sources from which we glean knowledge of the flora in ancient Egypt, in general, and the aromatic plants from which the Egyptians produced perfume, in particular. Scenes in wall paintings and reliefs on temple walls and in tombs comprise the first of these sources, which show plants growing in areas such as gardens, fields, or the desert (Germer 2001a:535). They also depict plants as being part of elaborate composite bouquets, or as decoration on excavated items such as jars. The identification of plants on a purely botanical basis in these cases often proves to be unsatisfactory. Very often it is only the idea of a plant that is being represented, with no botanical detail or accuracy and there is little or no attempt by the artists to make a distinction between the various species of trees (Manniche 2006:167-168). Archaeological remains are the second main source of our knowledge, of which tomb offerings are the most important.

Plant materials included in these offerings tend to be purposely cultivated. Furthermore, the chemical analysis of the aromatic oils and unguents forming part of these tomb offerings, provides insight into the aromatic material (local and imported) used by the Egyptians to produce them. Chemical analysis can also be made of the aromatic materials used by the Egyptians in the mummification process. Flower garlands adorning mummies also provide information on the scented flowers appearing in them. Tombs also contain other organic materials, such as wood or wickerwork, their composition providing information about local Egyptian flora and imported materials (Germer 2001a:535).

Even if these archaeological remains can be identified with certainty, their full use in ancient Egypt, can only be ascertained if the names of the plants can be established and references to them can be found in textual sources, especially in the corpus of the medical papyri. These were compiled before many new plants reached Egypt during the New Kingdom, meaning that these new arrivals were not recorded in the Egyptian pharmacopoeia (Manniche 2006:167). Another drawback, is that the ancient Egyptians chose the tomb offerings used in the funerary cult very carefully, focussing on the plants and flowers which they deemed to be appropriate for ensuring an auspicious afterlife for the deceased, with the result that tomb findings only represent some of the plants commonly found in Egypt at any given period (Germer 2001a:535).

Textual sources augment the two main sources of our knowledge of the flora of ancient Egypt. The works of the classical authors are the most helpful in this regard. The medical works of the Copts provide clues, in that the Coptic words are based on the ancient Egyptian ones, but written in Greek characters. When the Arabs conquered Egypt, they compiled a '*scala*' of plant names, listing the Coptic and Arabic nomenclature. The '*scala*' is very helpful in identifying Coptic plant names, which can then be traced back to the ancient Egyptian equivalents, as the Arabic names are often known from other sources, and some are still in use. A drawback, however, is that the Copts often borrowed names from Greek, in which case the ancient Egyptian equivalents cannot be traced back. Texts from contemporary neighbouring civilisations are also very helpful. The recipes written in hieroglyphs on the walls of the perfume/incense 'laboratories' in certain Ptolemaic Period temples pose their own problems as far as the identification of the plants mentioned in them is concerned. The hieroglyphic script employs determinatives, for instance, a miniature drawing of a plant after a word indicates that it is a plant. This is a big help but identifying individual plants is

difficult, and much research work still needs to be carried out in this regard. Furthermore, scholars do not agree on the translation of all the ingredients mentioned in the recipes, while some of them are completely unknown (Manniche 2006: 67).

It is for the abovementioned reasons that it is not possible to provide an exact list of ingredients that the ancient Egyptians used in the production of their perfumes. The author will therefore discuss a selection of the major plants, shrubs and trees providing material (both aromatic and non-aromatic), as well as animal fats, used for perfume production in the ancient world. This includes a selection of this material mentioned in *kyphi* recipes. Some of this material is definitely known to have been used by the Egyptians in their perfume production, either cultivated in Egypt (some indigenous to Egypt and some not) or imported, whilst with others there is a possibility, sometimes very strong, that they did so. These will be listed in alphabetical order, according to various categories.

5.2 PLANTS AND TREES

5.2.1 Plants and trees cultivated in ancient Egypt (indigenous and non-indigenous)

5.2.1.1 Balanos [*Balanites aegyptiaca* (L.) Del.] – family: *Balanitaceae* or *Zygophyllaceae*

Balanites aegyptiaca is a small thorny evergreen tree or shrub, sparsely covered with oval leaves, which are grey-green in colour and leathery in texture, the family of which is *Balanitaceae* or *Zygophyllaceae* (Serpico & White 2000b:392-393). The fruit has a brittle shell and includes a mass with a hard kernel (Manniche 2006:87). Theophrastus (IV, 2.6) states that the Egyptian perfumers used the husks of the fruit, bruising them.

Balanos oil was used by the ancient Egyptians as a base for perfume. In addition, the classical authors Dioscorides and Pliny list balanos oil as ingredients in Mendesium perfume.

Manniche (1999:30) states that the ancient Egyptian name of this tree or the oil produced from it (balanos oil), has not been established beyond doubt. She is of the opinion that the *isd* tree, mentioned in Egyptian texts, could possibly be this tree. Germer (2001a:539) is in agreement with Manniche and adds that this probably designates the *Balanites* as a tree of life,

linked to the deities Thoth and Seshat. Wilkinson (1999:90), on the other hand, is of the opinion that the perseia tree is the *isd* tree. The fruit has often been found through excavation in Egypt, the earliest known specimens being found in the Djoser pyramid complex at Saqqara (Lucas 1962: 331). In ancient Egypt this tree flourished inland in the desert (Germer 2001:538).

5.2.1.2 Cyperus grass (sedge) (*Cyperus* spp.) – family: *Cyperaceae*

There are about six hundred species of both annual and perennial sedges in the family *Cyperaceae*, which produce flower-heads supported by strongly upright flower stems (Lord 2003a:458). Manniche (1999:17-18 and 146) states that Greek versions of *kyphi* mention the ingredient *kypeiros*, which is in fact *Cyperus longus* L. It has been identified in plant remains as far back as the ancient Egyptian Old Kingdom.

Pliny (NH XIII, 8) talks of *cyperos*, the best of which comes from ‘the region round the temple of Hammon’. This refers to the temple of Amun in the Siwa Oasis in the Libyan desert (Manniche 1999:18). Pliny (NH XIII, 8) states that the second best *cyperos* comes from Rhodes, the third best from Thera (Santorini), while Egypt supplied the least desirable. Theophrastus (EIP IX, 7.3) lists ‘kypeiros’ amongst plants used in perfumery.

5.2.1.3 Henna (*Lawsonia inermis* L.) – family: *Lythaceae*

This evergreen shrub or small tree grows to a width of 2-35 m and a height of 3-6 m. It has elliptic to lance-shaped green leaves, which are smooth-edged and have thin tips. It has a large panicle of small pink, white or red flowers, which are fragrant, the petals being crumpled (Lord 2003b:804). The leaves are crushed to make the paste for henna dye, still used as a hair-dye today (Hepper 1990:25).

Manniche (2006:120) is of the opinion that it probably originated somewhere in Persia, and states that it now grows in Egypt and the Middle East. Germer (2001a:540) argues that it was brought to Egypt during the New Kingdom, from the coastal regions of the Indian Ocean.

Dioscorides (OMMI, 204) states that, in his day, the best henna is grown in Ascalon and in Canopus in the Delta, Egypt. Manniche (2006:120) notes that Henna leaves have been found in Egyptian tombs of the Late Period and of Ptolemaic date.

Pliny (NH XII.109) mentions that a perfume was made from a tree called *cypros*⁶⁵. The seeds he says are boiled in olive oil and then crushed. The resulting perfume, also called *cypros*, sells at 5 *denarii* a pound. He states that the best *cypros* is made from trees grown at Canopus on the banks of the Nile. The second best comes from those grown at Ascalon, and the third best quality comes from those grown on the island of Cyprus.

There is evidence that the ancient Egyptians coloured their fingernails and some mummies have had their hair dyed red. There is no proof, however, that henna was the colouring agent employed in either instance. The Egyptian name for the henna tree is not known for certain. The words *hnw* and *nh-imy* have been suggested (Manniche 2006:120).

5.2.1.4 Juniper (*Juniperus* spp.) – family: *Cupressaceae*

Two Greek *kyphi* recipes, one being that of Dioscorides, mention two words in the list of ingredients, *arkeuthos* and *brathy*, which have been translated as juniper, seemingly referring to large and small berries respectively of this plant. The hieroglyphic recipes for *kyphi* mention *wan*-seeds and reliefs dating from the Old Kingdom depict the harvesting of what the texts describe as *w'n*-berries. Actual berries were found in the tomb of Tutankhamun, those of *Juniperus oxycedus* and *Juniperus excelsa*. Berries from *Juniperus phoenicia* were found on Egyptian sites of all dates (Manniche 1999:21).

Manniche (2006:116) is of the opinion that juniper trees were probably never indigenous to Egypt proper, although *Juniperus phoenicia* L. now grows in the mountains of Sinai. The ancient Egyptians also used juniper berries for medicinal purposes.

⁶⁵ This Egyptian tree/shrub is now thought by scholars to be henna (Manniche 2006:120).

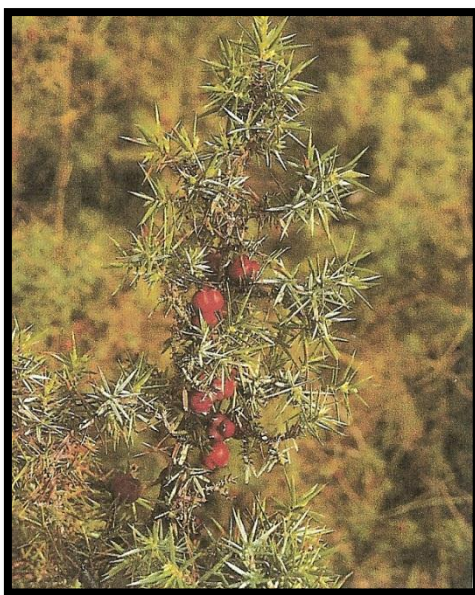


Figure 5.1: Branches of *Juniperus ocedus*, showing the red female cones

5.2.1.5 Lily (*Lilium candidum* L.) – family: *Liliaceae*

The plant of the white or Madonna lily⁶⁶, *Lilium candidum*, grows to 30-45 cm in width and 0.9-2 m in height (Lord 2003b:821). It has a bulb consisting of several scales, similar to the ‘cloves’ of a garlic bulb. This bulb puts forth leaves in the form of a basal tuft in winter, long before the flower stem arises. This stem can grow up to 1m tall, the leaves it bears decreasing in size towards the terminal cluster of beautifully scented white trumpet flowers (Hepper 1990:21). Up to twenty flowers can grow on each stem (Lord 2003b:821). This species is not native to Egypt but was imported into it during the Late Period, the provenance of which is recognized as northern Palestine and Libya (Pischikova 1994: 70). It was cultivated by the ancient Egyptians for susinum, the lily perfume, the fragrant flowers being used. Hepper (1990:21) states that these plants must have been cultivated in special gardens.

⁶⁶ Frescoes at Knossos, Crete, dating from around 1900 BC show, amongst other plants, the lily, narcissus, rose, myrtle and crocus (Pavord 2005:44). These are all plants that can provide aromatic plant material for perfume.

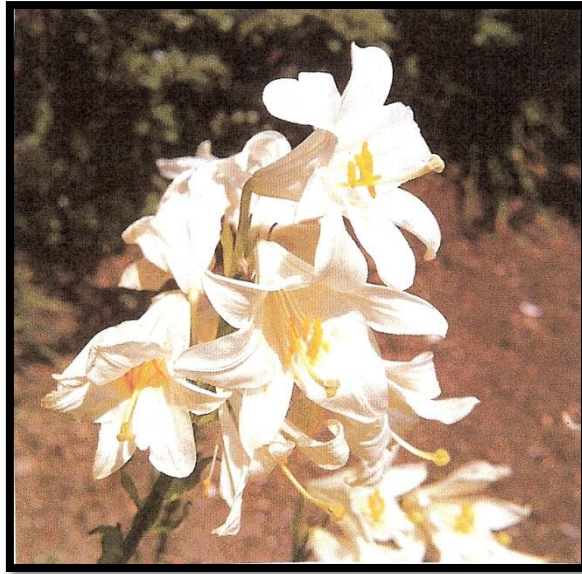


Figure 5.2: *Lilium candidum* L.

5.2.1.6 Lotus (*Nymphaea caerulea*) – family: *Nymphaeaceae*

This plant grows to a width of 0.9-3.5 m and a height of 8-38 cm and has round wavy-edged leaves which grow to 50 cm wide (Lord 2003b:937). The lotus flower was the most beautiful of the ancient Egyptian flowers, which the Egyptians considered to be the most perfect type of flower (Watterson 1999:40).

There has been confusion over the botanical identity of the lotus, however, dating back to the time of the Greek historian Herodotus, who wrote in the fifth century BC. The ones represented in ancient Egyptian art and motifs throughout the history of ancient Egypt, were the two indigenous species of water lilies of the genus *Nymphaeaceae*. The white *Nymphaea lotus* has rounded buds and petals and leaves, with toothed edges. The flowers open at night. The larger fragrant blue *Nymphaea caerulea* has more pointed buds and narrow petals and floating leaves, with smooth edges. The flowers open during the day. These two species grew in the Nile, mainly in its shallow branches, but were also planted in manmade pools (Germer 2001b:541).

These indigenous species were confused with the eastern sacred lotus (*Nelumbo nucifera*), with pink flowers and round leaves held high above the water surface, introduced to Egypt from India in the Persian Period (Hepper 1990:11). This confusion has continued ever since. The name lotus has become institutionalised and used by Egyptologists, inaccurately, to refer

to the two indigenous water lily species. Hepper (1990:16), a horticulturist, besides their botanical names, refers to them as the blue lotus waterlily and the white lotus waterlily respectively. Harer (1985:49) states that in modern botanical parlance the term 'lotus' specifically refers to the genus *Nelumbo*. The author will use the term lotus, the name given to the water lily by the Greeks (Watterson 1999:40), purely because the word has become so institutionalised, and to avoid further confusion. It is the fragrant blue lotus, *Nymphaea caerulea*, however that was used for perfume in ancient Egypt.

A *Nymphaea caerulea* flower cultivated by Ken Kandon at the International Water-lily Depository in Texas, USA, the exact variety that was found in ancient Egypt, the petals being more pointed and fainter blue than modern hybrids (Meader and Demeter 2004:62) (Figure 5.3).



Figure 5.3: The fragrant blue lotus, *Nymphaea caerulea*

Manniche (2006:132) states that it is difficult to distinguish the names the Egyptians gave to the blue and white lotus. She avers that some of the names might apply to the flower, some to the bud, or even the mythical lotus, as opposed to the real flower. Germer (2001a:536) states that it is unclear whether the hieroglyph depicting the word *seshen* (lotus) should be identified as the blue or white lotus. Wilkinson, R H (1994:121), however, is of the opinion that it is the fragrant day-opening blue lotus that is represented in this hieroglyph, where the flower head hangs to the side under its own weight, as it does in tomb scenes depicting it as an offering on offering tables and in those depicting banquets, where the revellers either sniff them or carry them.

5.2.1.7 Moringa (*Moringa* spp.) - family: *Moringaceae*

Moringa is a tall tree, its pods (*behen* nuts) having nut-like seeds, which have a bitter-sweet taste. *Moringa pterygosperma* is indigenous to Egypt and is still grown there today (Manniche 2006:128). Manniche (1999:30) is of the opinion that moringa must have been widely used in perfume making in ancient Egypt and grew in the desert around Thebes. She argues that the ancient Egyptian word for the oil obtained from this tree (*behen*-oil) is *b3k* (Manniche 2006:128) and states that it is recorded that vast quantities of it were imported from Phoenicia and Anatolia, in the New Kingdom (Manniche 1999:80).

Pliny (NH XII 100-102) refers to this plant as *myrobalanum*, which he says is grown for scent, perfumers extracting the oil (*behen*-oil) from only the shells of the fruit, a nut, whereas medical men also pound the kernels, gradually pouring water over them while doing so. The Theban variety he says has a black nut and produces a large yield, whereas the Syrian variety growing in Arabia has a white nut, which yields an excellent quality of oil. According to him the variety from Petra is the best, the nut having a black rind and a white kernel. He states that the Ethiopian variety yields *behen*-oil, which has a stronger scent than that from the other varieties. Manniche (2006:128) observes that *behen* or *ben* oil is odourless, yellowish and has a sweet taste.

5.2.1.8 Myrtle (*Myrtys communis* L.) – family: *Myrtaceae*

This shrub grows to a width of 3 m and a height of 3 m. It has leaves that are aromatic when crushed, dark green above and paler beneath. Its flowers, white, with reddish pink shading on the reverse, are solitary, in upper axils, and have numerous conspicuous stamens. The berries are oval (Lord 2003b:909).

Manniche (2006:130) states that the ancient Egyptian word *ht-ds* has been suggested by some scholars for the plant myrtle. She opines that if this is correct, there are many references to myrtle, which is native to the Mediterranean, in the Egyptian medical papyri. Pliny (NH XV, 37) states that the myrtle with the most powerful fragrance, was grown in Egypt. Theophrastus (EIP II, 8.5) claimed the same thing and says that it is marvellously fragrant there. Dioscorides (OMM I, 48) states that the myrtle leaves were steeped in olive oil, to make *myrtinum*, myrtle perfume.

Manniche (1999:78) is of the opinion that it is inconceivable that the Egyptians would not have put this highly fragrant plant of theirs to use, and make perfume from it. She argues that myrtle probably never grew wild in Egypt, but was cultivated in gardens there.

5.2.1.9 Rose (*Rosa ricardii*) – family: *Rosaceae*

The rose originated in northern Persia and appears to have been unknown to the Egyptians in the most ancient of times. From northern Persia it migrated to Mesopotamia (known to the Egyptians as Naharina), from whence through the Levant, possibly via the Aegean, it reached Egypt in Ptolemaic and Roman times, where it was cultivated in gardens. Petals of *Rosa ricardii* have been found embedded in mummy garlands and funerary bouquets (Manniche 2006:56). El-Shimy (2003:32) is of the opinion that the Egyptian name for the rose is *w3rtw*.

5.2.1.10 Sweet marjoram (*Origanum majorana* L.) family: *Lamoaceae*

This plant, which is native to Mediterranean region, grows to a width of 45 cm and a height of 60 cm and has greyish green roots. It produces white to pink flowers, which are small (Lord 2003b:956). Manniche (1999:22) states that its ancient Egyptian name has not been established with any certainty, and that it is grown on a large scale in modern Egypt. She is of the opinion that there is no doubt that it grew there in antiquity as well. Manniche (2006:138) points out that sprigs of marjoram have been found in mummy garlands dating from the first century AD.

Pliny (NH XXI, 61) states that Diocles, the physician, and the people of Sicily, call sweet marjoram the plant known in Egypt as *sampsucum*.

5.2.2 Plants and trees neither indigenous to ancient Egypt nor cultivated there, having to be imported

5.2.2.1 Alkanet (*Alkanna tinctoria* Tausch.) – family: *Boraginaceae*

Manniche (2006:74) states that alkanet, a shrub with a thick root and purplish root bark, grew in Egypt in the first centuries AD, and grows in Egypt today. The author has not found any evidence that it grew there in pharoanic times. Lucas (1962:150) notes that it is common in

the Mediterranean area. Lord (2003a:124) states that this perennial grows to a height of 30-90 cm and has bright purplish/blue flowers that grow to a width of 12 mm, with a funnel-shaped corolla. He adds that the leaves grow to the length of 8 cm and are linear to egg-shaped, being bristly and smooth-edged.

Theophrastus (CO VI, 31) states that alkanet was used to colour perfumes red. The root was used for this dye and added to both rose and iris perfume (Theophrastus CO VII, 33). Lucas (1962:150) notes that two papyri, Papyrus X (now in Leyden) and Papyrus Holm (now in Stockholm), both dating from about the third or fourth century AD, and found in Egypt, probably at Thebes, mention that this shrub was used to produce a red dye. Manniche (2006:74) states that it is the addition of oil or alcohol as a mordant to the crushed root that produces a red dye, whilst a grey-green dye is obtained with the addition of alum. She argues that the Egyptian name for this plant was *nsti*. She states that the Egyptians used alkanet to dye certain perfumes red and to colour the candles used to light the Ptolemaic temple of Edfu in Upper Egypt.

5.2.2.2 Aspalathus (Latin)/aspalathos (Greek)

Theophrastus (EIP IX, 7.3) lists aspalathos⁶⁷, as a plant suitable for making perfume. Elsewhere Theophrastus (CO, 33) states that it is ‘sweet scented’ and as astringent as ‘kypeiron’. The translator of the Loeb edition of Theophrastus’, ‘Enquiry into Plants’, identifies aspalathos as used by Theophrastus as thorny trefoil, *Calycotome villosa* (Manniche 1999:14). Pliny (NH XII, 110) states that the root of the shrub aspalathos⁶⁸ is red and firm and is used in perfume making. He describes the flower as that of a rose and refers to a white thorn the size of a moderate-sized tree. The shrub he says gives out a scent, which is indescribably sweet, resembling that of beaver oil. It is sold for five *denarii* a pound. He states that it grows in Egypt. Elsewhere (NH XXI, 73.121), he avers that aspalathos is used

⁶⁷ Miller (1995:58) refers to a personal communication she had with K. de Vries, who informed her that aspalathos, the Greek source of aspalathus, belongs to a class of nouns which consists particularly of plant and place names deriving from a pre-Greek Aegean language.

⁶⁸ The editor of the Loeb edition of Pliny’s ‘Natural History’, identifies the name aspalathos as used by Pliny as camel’s thorn, *Alhagi maurorum*. He states that elsewhere the name may refer to thorny trefoil (*Calycotome villosa*) (Manniche 1999:14). Miller (1995:56), on the other hand, argues that the aspalathos in Pliny’s ‘Natural History’ conforms closely to caper (*Capparis*), in all likelihood *Capparis sinosa* L., and is unlikely to be camel thorn. She argues further that the fact that the name aspalathos occurs sporadically in texts emanating from various ancient civilisations, indicates that an on-going, ethno-botanical, tradition, has persisted across the Ancient Near East from the dawn of history. Given the likelihood that folk nomenclature differs across time and space, it is impossible for modern scholars to be certain that the ancient authors were all referring to the same plant (Miller 1995:55).

as an ingredient in the ‘royal’ unguent⁶⁹ and mixed with rose and other ingredients for medicine.

Dioscorides (OMM I, 19) states that some people call this plant *Erysisceptron* (red sceptre), describing it as a woody shrub with lots of prickly thorns, which grows in Istrus, Nisyurus, Syria and Rhodes. He states further that the unguent-makers use it to thicken their unguents. His translator, Goodyer, identified it as broom. The Arabic translations give *dar shishahan*, the Latin for this being *Cystisus lanigerus* (Manniche 1999:14).

The three *kyphi* recipes written in Greek, mention Aspalathos as an ingredient. In the recipes inscribed in hieroglyphs on the walls of the temples of Edfu and Philae, the place is taken by a herb called *djeba*, with a synonym *djalem*. The older versions of *kyphi* do not include this word. Aspalathos also appears as an ingredient in other recipes, such as those for *medjet*, and *hekenu* (Manniche 1999:15)

5.2.2.3 Camel grass (possibly *Andropogon schoeanthus* L. in antiquity) – family: *Poaceae*

Camel grass, a fragrant rush, possibly *Andropogon schoeanthus* L. in the ancient world, is now known as *Cymbopogon citrates* (‘lemon grass’ or ‘ginger grass’). Theophrastus’ list of plants suitable for making perfume (EIP IX, 7.3) does not include this plant but elsewhere, (EIP IX, 7.1), he says that it grows east of Lebanon and refers to it as an aromatic plant. Dioscorides (OMM I, 16) states that the *schoinos* grows in Libya and Arabia but that growing in Libya is ‘unprofitable’. Pliny (NH XXI, 120) states that the most esteemed *shoinus* is that from Nabataeae, called *teuchitis*. The next best is the Babylonian, while that from Africa is the worst.

A plant called *schoinos* appears amongst the ingredients of: Greek *kyphi* recipes and it has been suggested that this plant is *Andropogon schoeanthus* L., whereas the equivalent for *schoinos* given in the hieroglyphic recipes for *kyphi* is *shut Nemti* (‘herb of Nemti’). Other parallel texts however give other designations, some possibly synonyms, others names of

⁶⁹ Pliny (NH XIII, 18) states that the kings of Parthia had a perfume specially prepared for them called ‘The Royal’, listing the ingredients as costus, amomum, cinnamon, cardomum, spikenard, cat-thyme, myrrh, cassia, styrax, ladanum, opobalsanum, sweet flag, camel grass, wild grape, cinnamon leaves, serichatrum, henna, aspalathos, all-heal, crocus, cyperus grass, marjorum and jujube.

interchangeable plants, all of them referring to other lands: ‘Kushite herb’ ‘Nubian herb’; ‘rush of Asia’; and ‘Syrian herb’. From this, it appears that *schoenus* was not indigenous to Egypt (Manniche 1999:15).

5.2.2.4 Cardomom [*Ellettaria cardomonum* (L) Maton] – family: *Zingiberaceae*

This tree, native to India, with a thick rhizome, grows to a width of 1.5-24 m and a height of 1.5- 2.4 m. Its leaves, narrowly lanceolate and hairy beneath, grow to 60 cm in length. Its flowers have a white corolla. There are violet or pink stripes on the lip, with a yellow margin (Lord 2003a:534).

Manniche (2006:106) states that the Egyptian word for the cardomom tree is unknown, and no traces of it have been found in Egypt. Classical authors, however, mention it as an ingredient in Egyptian perfumes. Dioscorides (OMM 1,5) states that it was supplied from India and Arabia, via the lands of the Eastern Mediterranean, and adds that it is used to thicken unguents. Theophrastus (CO IX, 7.2) states that cardomom was imported into his country from Media, although some people he says say it came from India and that it was used in perfumes. Galen’s version of *kyphi* suggests that cardomom can be used as an alternative to cinnamon.

An illustration of cardamom in the Arabic translation of *De Materia Medica* by Dioscorides, eleventh century AD, now housed in the Universiteitsbiblioteek, Leiden (Figure 5.4).



Figure 5.4: An illustration of cardamom

5.2.2.5 Cassia (*Cinnamomum cassia*) – family: *Lauraceae*

Manniche (1999:16) states that cassia resembles cinnamon in its nature (the quills of the bark of the two are similar, with that of cassia being the larger) and scent and that in classical texts, the two were often confused. She adds that it is possible that the ancient Egyptian texts also confused the two. Cassia is native to China and Burma (Manniche 2006:95).

Theophrastus (EIP IV, 4.14; IX, 5.3) lists it as an aromatic plant emanating from countries such as Arabia and India. Dioscorides (OMM I, 12) also states that Arabia (where many kinds grow) is a source of cassia. Here the inhabitants call it Achy, whereas the merchants of Alexander called it *daphnitis*. *Gizir* is a black, rose-scented kind. He emphasises its medicinal benefits and states that should there be no cinnamon at hand, two parts cassia is the equivalent of one part cinnamon. A *kyphi* recipe of Galen included cassia as one of its ingredients, whereas the original Egyptian recipe called for pine resin (Manniche 1999:16).

5.2.2.6 Cinnamon (*Cinnamomum zeylanicum* Nees) - family: *Lauraceae*

Manniche (2006:94) states that research done in 1988 suggests that the East African camphor tree (*Cinnamomum camphora* or *Ocotea usambarensis*) corresponds to the Egyptian word *ti-tps*. Traditionally, however, scholars have taken *ti-tps* to mean cinnamon (*Cinnamomum zeylanicum* Nees). The cinnamon tree is native to Sri Lanka and therefore had to be imported by the Egyptians. Cinnamon was one of the products obtained by the Egyptians from the ‘land of Punt’, which in turn was not grown there either, the Puntites acting as intermediaries.

5.2.2.7 Iris (*Iris* spp.) - family: *Iridaceae*

There are about three hundred species of iris in the *Iridaceae* family, the name of which derives from the Greek goddess of the rainbow. These occur in bulbous, rhizomatous and fibrous forms and are native to the northern temperate zones. The leaves are sword-shaped and are often arranged in fans and are sometimes variegated. The flowers, occurring in many colours, have six petals, usually arranged in the *fleur-de-lis* pattern, consisting of three upright standards, and three downward-curving falls. These could be bearded, beardless or crested (Lord 2003a:739).

Manniche (1999:19) states:

Petals of *Iris albicans* Lange or *I. florentina* have been identified in an Egyptian burial of Graeco-Roman date, and the dried root could well have reached the country, this being the part of the plant that is used in perfumery ('orris root').

Dioscorides (OMM I, 1) states that *nar* is the Egyptian name for the iris. Theophrastus (EIP IX, 7.3) includes it in his list of aromatic plants. Pliny (NH XXI,40; XIII,5) states that the best iris grows in Illyria in the woody parts around the Drinon and around Naronia, the second best was the white Macedonian iris and the third best was the African iris. He states further that in earlier times the best iris oil came from Leucas and Elis but in his day, Pamphylian and Cilician iris oil was superior. Theophrastus (EIP IX, 7.4) also states that iris from Illyria is very good.

5.2.2.8 Saffron (*Crocus sativus* L.) – family: *Iridaceae*

Crocus sativus is thought to be selection from wild populations of *Crocus cartwrightianus*, native to Greece. This plant, which grows to a width of 10 cm and a height of 5cm, is sterile and reproduces only by vegetative means. The flowers are fragrant, a pale to deep lilac-purple or white, the pistils producing the highly sought after spice of saffron. The leaves are grey-green (Lord 2003a:436).

Manniche (1999:23) states that the scented flower pistils of *Crocus sativus* relate to Egypt only as far as saffron occurs as an ingredient in the *kyphi* recipe provided by Galen and that it was cultivated in Persia in the tenth century AD. Pliny (NH XIII, 5; XIII, 10) states that the saffron from Soli in Cilicia was the best, later superceded by that from Rhodes. He gives a recipe for saffron perfume (crocinum), the other ingredients being cinnabar, wine and alkanet to dye it. Theophrastus (CO, 27) states, that in his day, the best saffron for perfume came from Celicia and from the island of Aegina.

5.2.2.9 Sweet flag (possibly *Acorus calamus* L. in antiquity) – family: *Araceae*

This plant grows to a width of 0.9-2 m and a height of 1.2 m and was originally native to temperate Asia and southeast U.S.A. Now it is widely naturalized in the northern hemisphere. Its leaves are iris-like, which grow to 1.5 m long and a narrow yellow-green

spadix grows to 10cm long (Lord 2003a:95). It grows by water, has rhizomes which are 3cm thick and small flowers (Manniche 2006:74).

Manniche (1999:23-24) states that there is no evidence that this reed was ever grown in ancient Egypt, nor does it grow there in modern times, but she is of the opinion that the root would have travelled well, especially if it was imported from Syria. She states further:

An 'aromatic rush' (*calamus aromaticus*) of classical antiquity, in late antiquity known as 'true rush' (*acorus verus* or *calamus verus*), it was called in the medieval Arabic translation of Dioscorides *qasab al-zoreira*, now known as *Acorus calamus* L. The identity of this calamus has yet to be confirmed, and the calamus known in antiquity may have been another, similar plant.

Pliny (NH XII 104-106) mentions a scented reed growing in Arabia, India and Syria called calamus. The one growing in Syria he says is superior to all the other kinds. He adds that the reed, which costs one *denarius*, has an especially fine scent, which even attracts people from a long distance away. The best varieties are those that are less brittle and are black, the white varieties being inferior. He states that scented rush has also been reported to be found in Campania, Italy. Manniche (1999:24) states that she identifies the scented reed described by Pliny as *Calamus odoratus*. Theophrastus (EIP IX, 7.1-2) notes that the plants sweet flag and schoinos have no fragrance when they are green. This only happens when they are dried, when they have a sweet smell. Dioscorides (OMM I, 17) states that *Acorus calamus* grows in India and that it is mixed with perfumes to make them smell sweeter. Manniche (2006:74) is of the opinion that the ancient Egyptian name for sweet flag is *kni* and was used by the Egyptians for perfuming oil.

5.2.2.10 Spikenard (*Nardostachys* spp.) – family: *Valerianaceae*

Galen's recipe for *kyphi* includes an ingredient called *nardostachys*, spikenard, also called nard. Theophrastus (EIP IX, 7.2; CO 28) states that the plant was imported to the Mediterranean from India and the root was the part that was used. Elsewhere (CO 38, 43) he states that *nardinon*, the perfume made from nard, is particularly suited to women, as it lasts a long time. However, Pliny (NH XII, 42; XII, 43; XIII, 10), referring to nard from India, states that it is the leaf that is fragrant and not the root, which has a musty smell and acrid taste. Similar plants he says were used instead of nard, but pure nard is distinguished by its light weight, its ruddy colour and its sweet scent. He states that *nardinon* holds a foremost

place among perfumes. He describes nard as a shrub with a heavy and thick root (short and black), with small leaves, which grow in clusters. Manniche (1999:23) states that it is possible that the root of spikenard/nard reached Egypt from India and that the name of this plant has not yet been identified in Egyptian texts.

5.3 GUMS AND RESINS

Hepper (1987:107) states that the words gums and resins are often used loosely and points out that it is easy to distinguish the one from the other. Gums mix with water, some actually dissolving in it, others only forming a jelly or mucilage. Resins, on the other hand, do not mix with water and are only soluble in alcohol, benzene and other organic liquids, which have no effect on gums. Sometimes gums and resins both occur on one plant, for instance frankincense should strictly be called an oleo-gum resin, as it consists of 60% -70% resin, 27% - 35% gum and 3% - 8% volatile oil.

5.3.1 Mediterranean coniferous resins

5.3.1.1 Fir resin [*Abies cilicica* (Ant & Kotschy) Carr.] - family: *Pinaceae*

Manniche (2006:70) states that, in the ancient world, Syria and Asia Minor were the source for fir timber and fir resin and were imported into Egypt from an early date, fir resin having been found in tombs dating to the Old Kingdom and a small travertine jar found in the tomb of Tutankhamun, Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, is labelled 'fir resin'. She is of the opinion that the ancient Egyptian name for fir was 's and the oil, extracted from the wood by steeping the chips in a liquid, which has now been identified as fermented plant juice, was probably called *sft*. She adds further that the Egyptians used fir resin for mummification but it was also used in medicine. Serpico & White (2000c:431) state that *Abies cilicica* is usually divided into the sub-species of ssp. *cilicica* and ssp. *isaurica*. Paszthory (1990:24) states that the determinative for *sft* consists of three grains of resin, reflecting, he believes, *Abies cilicica* Carr., added to oil to create 'anointing oil'.

5.3.2 Mediterranean non-coniferous resins

5.3.2.1 *Pistacia* (*Pistacia lentiscus* L. and *Pistacia terebinthus* L.) – family: *Anardiaceae*

There are two main species of pistacia that can be considered as primary sources of resin from the Mediterranean. The first is *Pistacia lentiscus* L., an aromatic shrub or tree, native of the Mediterranean area, grows to a width of 35 m and a height of 3.5 m. Its pinnate leaves are divided into two-seven pairs of glossy, leathery, dark green leaflets, terminated by a pair of leaflets. It produces panicles of small flowers and small black fruit (Lord 2003b:1053). It also produces pale yellow ‘tears’, known as mastic (Serpico & White 2000c:434). Dioscorides (OMM I, 90) states that the best grew on the island of Chios and was sweet-smelling when white and clear, and was not so good when it was green.

The second species is *Pistachia terebinthus* L., from which terebinth resin is derived. This large deciduous shrub or tree grows to a width of 45 m and a height of 8 m and is native to the Canary Islands, Portugal to Turkey and North Africa. Its pinnate leaves appear as glossy, aromatic, green leaflets. Its flowers appear in panicles and it has reddish purple fruit (Lord 2003b:1053). Dioscorides (OMM I, 91) states that the resin was supplied from Arabia Petraea but it was also grown in Judea, Syria, Cyprus, Africa, and in the Cyclades Islands.

5.3.2.2 Ladanum or Labdanum (*Cistus* spp.) – family: *Cistaceae*

The incense material ladanum is not a gum-resin but a true resin, and it exudes naturally from the leaves and branches of various species of *Cistus*, that grow in many parts of the Mediterranean region, including Asia Minor, Crete, Cyprus, Greece, Palestine and Spain (Lucas 1962:94). This dark-brown resin was imported by the Egyptians from the Levant and made into small cakes, to be used as incense (Fletcher 1999a:24).

Serpico & White (2000c:436-437) state that there are three species within this genus that are known throughout the Mediterranean, that are generally presumed by scholars to be the most likely sources of this resin in antiquity. These are *Cistus creticus* L., *Cistus laurifolius* L. and *Cistus ladanifer* L. Ladanum resin is obtained from the leaves, unlike trees such as myrrh, where the resin exudes from incisions made into the bark.

5.3.3 Burseraceous resins from East Africa and Arabia

5.3.3.1 Frankincense (*Boswellia* spp.) - family: *Burseraceae*

Hepper (1969:66) states that the oleo-gum resin known as frankincense has been obtained, from ancient times, from several species of *Boswellia* and distinguishes between Arabian and African species. All species of *Boswellia*, over two dozen of which are known in the genus (Serpico & White 2000c:438), are bush-like trees with several trunks and stout branches, covered by paper-thin outer bark (Hepper 1987:209).

Frankincense exudes from longitudinal incisions made in the bark of the trees, in the form of clear white 'tears' (Hepper 1969:71). Once the material has been collected and dried, it acquires a coating of its own fine dust, turning a milky white colour. In many languages, the name given to this material refers to its milky white appearance, for instance in Arabic it is called *liban* (Manniche 1999:26). Pliny (NH XII, 32) states that the white colour was a mark of quality. Manniche (1999:26) argues that when 'white incense' is mentioned in Egyptian texts, it is probably an exact reference to frankincense. Serpico & White (2000c:438-439) note that this milky-white colour dries further to a pale yellow in *Boswellia frereana* or yellowish-brown in *Boswellia sacra*. They state that commercially, frankincense is sometimes also called *olibanum*.

There are various sources of frankincense oleo-gum resin within the *Boswellia* species. Serpico & White (2000c:439) point out the main sources were in Arabia, such as *Boswellia sacra* Flueckiger, and in areas of Africa, south of Egypt, such as *Boswellia papyrifera* (Del) Hochst. Hepper (1969:66 and 68) states that in Arabia, *Boswellia sacra* Flueckiger grows only in a moist frankincense region, a restricted portion of the southern Arabian coast in Oman (Dhufar), and Yeman (eastern Hadramaut). It also grows in northern Somalia (Thulin & Warfa 1987: 487). As far as African frankincense is concerned, the resinous species of *Boswellia* occur in dry, rocky places, in the Horn of Africa. *Boswellia papyrifera* (Del) Hochst occurs in Ethiopia, Sudan Republic, Uganda and Central African Republic.

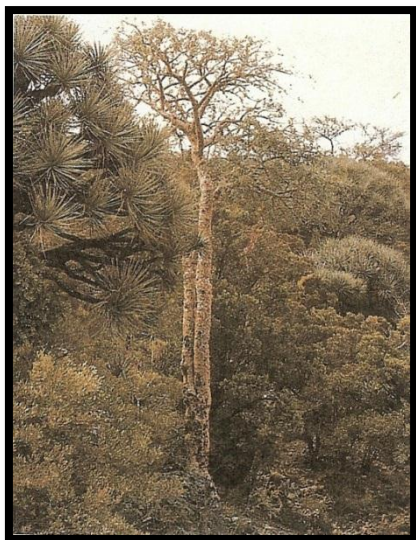


Figure 5.5: *Boswellia sacra* Flueckiger, growing in Somalia



Figure 5.6: Foliage of the frankincense tree, species *Boswellia sacra* Flueckiger



Figure 5.7: Globules of frankincense resin

5.3.3.2 Myrrh (*Commiphora* spp.) -family: *Burceraceae*

Wearers of my fine linen looked at me as if they were needy,
Those perfumed with my myrrh [poured water while wearing it].

Extract from 'The instruction of king Amenemhet I for his son
Sesostris I', Middle Kingdom. Translated by (Lichtheim 1973: 136)⁷⁰

There are over 190 species of *Commiphora*, spreading from Africa and India, making the taxonomy of it very complex (Groom 1981:100). It is generally accepted by scholars that myrrh is obtained from *Commiphora myrrha* (Nees) Engl.⁷¹ (Serpico & White 2000c:439), which grows on steep rocky hills in the semi-desert countries of Yemen (Arabia) and Somalia (Africa) (Hepper 1987:110). It is a thorny bush that grows about 2m high, its long stout branch thorns projecting in all directions. These bear small three-lobed leaves, beaked berries and small whiteish flowers. A green bark containing the fragrant myrrh is concealed beneath an outer thin papery bark, which peels away naturally from the stems. Reddish 'tears' of aromatic resin are encouraged to exude from the green bark by the cutting of the stem (Hepper 1990:24).

In ancient Egypt myrrh was used extensively for perfumes, incense and medicine, evidently less usually burnt than frankincense, and was more likely to be used in pink powder form (Hepper 1990:24). In Matthew 2:11 in the Bible, the wise men from the east presented baby Jesus with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

⁷⁰ Instructions/admonitions are a genre of ancient Egyptian literature, which first emerged in the Old Kingdom, primarily aristocratic, until they became 'middle class' in the New Kingdom (Lichtheim 1973:5).

⁷¹ Many other species of *Commiphora* are resinous however, for instance *Commiphora gileadensis* is the source of the resin variously known as the Biblical 'balsam-of-giliad', 'balm-of-Mecca' or opobalsam, chemically a kind of turpentine, strictly an oleo-resin (Hepper 1987:110-111).

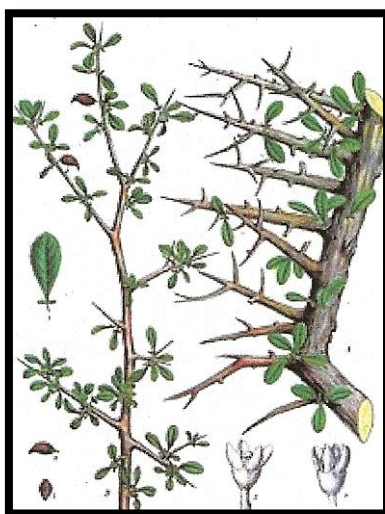


Figure 5.8: The foliage, buds and seeds of *Commiphora myrrha*



Figure 5.9: Globules of myrrh

5.3.4 Asiatic resins

5.3.4.1 Galbanum (*Peucedanum* spp. or *Ferula* spp.) –family: *Umbelliferae*

Manniche (2006:140) states that *Peucedanum* is an umbelliferous plant, native to Persia, which produces a fragrant gum resin known as galbanum, with the species *P. galbaniflora* and *P. officinale* probably being known in antiquity. She is of the opinion that the ‘green incense’ found in Egyptian texts was possibly galbanum imported from Persia. Manniche (1999:28-29) states that galbanum, in the form of brownish-yellow ‘tears’, often with a greenish tint, could also have derived from *Ferula* species native to Persia and was possibly available (the plant as well as the resin) to Egyptian perfumers of the New Kingdom and later. This would have been imported from Persia, as it was not native to Egypt (Manniche

1999:67). Lucas (1962:94) is in agreement with Manniche that *Peucedanum galbaniflora* is a source of galbanum and states that the Egyptians could easily have obtained galbanum from Persia in the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom. Serpico & White (2000c:443), while referring to Manniche's proposal that *Peucedanum officinale* (without attribution) is a source of galbanum, state that the taxonomy of this species is confusing and further information is needed in this regard. Galbanum was an ingredient in the metopium/metopion perfume.

5.3.5 Unidentified resins

The perfume/incense 'laboratory' in the Edfu temple contains an inventory of various resins, some of which cannot be identified. One of these is a resin called *ab*, said to derive from a tree called *nenib*, three kinds of which are listed: dark, red and white. The text refers to them as 'the ab resins which come forth from the two divine eyes, from the eye of Re and from the eye of Horus and which unite in the eye of Osiris. The splendid *medjat* unguent is made [from it]' (Manniche 1999:29).

5.4 OILS

The ancient Egyptians produced a number of oils that they used as base material in the preparation of perfumes. Paszthory (1990:25) points out, however, that the production of oils in ancient Egypt was never sufficient to cope with the demand for their use as fuel, foodstuff and for cosmetic/perfume purposes, leading to the importation of them as well. Texts dating from the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, indicate that they imported oils from Naharin (Mesopotamia), Retenu (Palestine) and Djahi (Lucas 1962:336). Theophrastus (CO IV,14) states that oil, because of its close and greasy nature, is not at all suited to preserve perfume. This is particularly true of the most viscous of oils, such as almond oil, with sesame and olive oil being the least preservative of perfume of all.

5.4.1 Almond oil

Theophrastus (CO, 16) states that almond oil was the very best, and that in Cilicia, where almond trees grew profusely, an unguent was made from them. Pliny (NH XIII, 2; XV, 7) mentions the oil of bitter almonds as an ingredient of the Mendesian perfume. The almond tree [*Prunus dulcis* (Miller) D.A. Webb], native to central Asia, possibly reached Egypt from

Palestine but was probably not extensively cultivated in Egypt (Serpico & White 2000b:401). Some almonds were found in Tutankhamun's tomb, Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, in a jar labelled 'wnt, so possibly this was the Egyptian name for the almond. Manniche (2006:58 and 146) states that almond oil would have originally been imported by the Egyptians from the Aegean.

5.4.2 Balanos oil (Greek)/balanus oil (Latin)

It is thought by scholars that the ancient Egyptians used kernels from the date-like fruits of *Balanites aegyptica* (L.) Del., to produce the slightly yellow balanos oil. The oval fruits have a thin skin and brown flesh, which is very sticky. Because the shell of the fruit is extremely hard, it probably needed to be cracked by hand, to avoid the crushing the prized kernel, making the oil processing very labour intensive (Serpico & White 2000b:393). Pliny (NH XIII, 2) states that the oil of *balanus* is one of the ingredients of the Mendesian perfume. Theophrastus (EIP IV, 2.6) states that the perfumers bruise the husks of the banos fruit, and mentions that the balanos oil is sweet-smelling. This odourless oil does not easily become rancid, making it very suitable for the production of perfumes (Lucas 1937:30).

5.4.3 Moringa oil

Moringa oil, also known as *behen*-oil, was imported from Cyprus and Syria as early as the Old Kingdom (Manniche 1999:30), supplementing local production (Germer 2001a:538). It is a yellowish colour, has no odour, has a sweet taste and must have been used for perfume making (Manniche 1999:30).

5.4.4 Olive oil

Manniche (2006:136) states that the olive tree *Olea europaea* L., family *Oleaceae*, probably originated in Asia Minor and is of the opinion that the Egyptian name for it was *ddtw*. Lucas (1962:333), however, argues that the name for the olive tree was *wb*.

Serpico & White (2003b:398) state that the date for the inception of oleoculture into Egypt is unclear, where environmental conditions are not conducive to the production of olives⁷². Suggestions have been made that this inception took place in the New Kingdom. Besides the fact that olive leaves⁷³ were found in the floral garlands placed on Tutankhamun's coffins, Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, these suggestions are largely based on linguistic evidence and the matter is still open to debate (Serpico & White 2000b:398-399). Theophrastus (EIP IV, 2.7) states that the olive tree was growing in Upper Egypt in the fourth century BC and that the oil produced in his day was not at all inferior to the Greek oil that he knew, the only exception being that it had a less pleasant smell. He advises that oil from 'coarse olives' is best used after freshly pressed. This is when it is least greasy (Theophrastus CO, 15). Dioscorides (OMM I, 29-30) distinguishes between oil made from unripe olives⁷⁴, and ordinary olive oil. Ramesses III, Twentieth Dynasty, New Kingdom, once tried to plant an olive grove near the temple of Ra at Heliopolis for the production of olive oil (Manniche 2006:136-137).

5.5 FATS

Despite the fact that animal-based perfumes such as musk and ambergris were unknown in ancient Egypt, animal fats were employed as a vehicle in the production of perfumes by the Egyptians, such fats generally being named in the texts as *segnen* or *adj*, for the most part being by-products of domestic and ritual butchery (cattle, sheep, goats, donkeys and waterfowl). The Egyptian name for the fat rendered from sacrificial animals specifically is *kn* (Fletcher 1999a:17).

5.5.1 Ox fat

Ox fat was used as a vehicle for scented preparations, such as unguents. A detailed description of how to prepare this is found on the temple walls of the temple of Horus at Edfu

⁷² In the New Kingdom both olives and olive oil were imported, first of all from Syria and then later from Greece (Manniche 2006:136-137).

⁷³ A fragment of a relief from the Amarna period, Eighteenth Dynasty, now in the Norbert Schimmel Collection, New York, shows Akhenaten's hand an olive branch with olives on it to the god Aten (Manniche 1999:31).

⁷⁴ This was known in the classical world as *omphacium*, also pressed from the seeds of grapes (Forbes 1955:34).

(Manniche 1999:31). Dioscorides (OMM 11,91)⁷⁵ gives a detailed recipe for the preparation of scented ox fat.

5.5.2 Goose and pork fat

Goose⁷⁶ fat was used as a vehicle for scented preparations, such as unguents (Manniche 1999:31). It is known to have been made for a religious festival at Tell el-Amarna (Fletcher 1999a:17). Pork fat was also used for this purpose. Dioscorides (OMM II, 91)⁷⁷ gives a detailed recipe for the preparation of scented unguent using goose or pork fat, whilst Manniche (1999:85) gives her version of the ingredients and method of this recipe, using modern metric units of volume/mass.

5.6 CONCLUSION

It is not possible to provide an exact list of the ingredients used by the ancient Egyptians in their perfume production. Instead, a selection of the ingredients used in perfume production in the ancient world is given. With some of these, it is definitely known that the Egyptians used them, whilst with others there is a possibility and sometimes a strong possibility that they did so. Besides the information gleaned from the classical authors about ingredients used for perfume production in the ancient world, there are two main sources from Egypt itself that inform us about its flora and the plant material, both aromatic and non-aromatic, that was suitable for perfume production. The first is scenes in reliefs and wall paintings in temples and tombs, and the second is archaeological remains. Most of the names that the Egyptians gave to the various plants, shrubs and trees are unknown.

The ancient Egyptians were very fortunate, in that they were able to grow a lot of the plant material (aromatic and non-aromatic) that they required for the production of perfumes, the

⁷⁵ See Manniche (2006:53) for her interpretation of the method involved in this recipe, using modern metric units of volume/mass.

⁷⁶ The famous frieze known as the 'Geese of Meidum' from the Fourth Dynasty *mastaba* tomb of Nefermaat and his wife Atet at Meidum (now housed in the Cairo Museum) is one of the finest examples of ancient Egyptian painting. The six geese depicted represent three different species: two White-fronted geese, two Bean geese and two Red-breasted geese (*Banta reuficollis*). These are the only extant examples of the Red-breasted geese in Egyptian art (Houlihan 1996:141).

⁷⁷ See Manniche (2006:53) for her interpretation of the methods involved in these recipes, using modern units of weight. She is of the opinion that it is possible that the ancient Egyptians could have used different ingredients from some of those mentioned by Dioscorides in the recipes, but the methods they used for preparing the scented unguents must have been very similar. This would also apply to the recipe of the scented ox fat given by Dioscorides.

plants, shrub/trees either being indigenous to Egypt, or suitable for cultivation in Egypt's climate. In instances where this material was in short supply, the balance had to be procured through trade, as did material coming from plants, shrubs and trees that were not suitable to be cultivated in Egypt's climate. Sometimes processed oil was also procured through trade. Animal fats were in plentiful supply in Egypt. The various gum-resins needed by the ancient Egyptians for incense mainly had to be obtained through trade, especially by means of expeditions to Punt, with very little of it coming from shrubs/trees grown in Egypt.



CHAPTER 6

TYPES OF PERFUME

The ancient Egyptians used perfumes in many different forms, the main ones being exotic and luxury perfumes, divided into oils and solid perfumes; incense; perfumed unguent cones; and sacred unguents/oils. Recipes of perfumes were only inscribed in hieroglyphs on the walls of the perfume/incense 'laboratories', situated in temples, in the Ptolemaic Period.

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The ancient Egyptians used two general words in connection with perfume. The first, for perfume/unguent/ incense, is *ndm.st*, derived from the root word *ndm*, meaning agreeable or pleasant. The second one, 'liquid', is *rdw*, derived from the root *dw*. This word harks back to the little jars in which perfumes and cosmetics were kept. There were also other, more specific, words used in connection with perfume. One of these is *mrht*, derived from the root *wrh*, which means anoint, in turn connected with the anointing of, for instance, cult statues with the aromatic 'seven sacred oils'. Another term, *mdt*, is possibly connected with *md3*. The Egyptian term for the offering of perfume/unguents/incense, *irj.mdt*, and the ritual connected with it, *ir.t dw mdt*, are derived from *mdt*, which in turn possibly derives from the name of the country just north of the Second Cataract near the border of Egypt and Nubia 'whence aromatic incense came' (Forbes 1955:4 and 43).

6.2 EXOTIC AND LUXURY PERFUMES

Pliny (NH XIII, 4) states that Egyptian perfumes were famous throughout the ancient world. Perfumes in the ancient world were traditionally named after their place of origin, their main ingredients, trees or occasionally something else. Their popularity waxed and waned during different periods. This was not only the result of the ingredients of the perfumes being combined differently in different periods but also the fact that the constituent ingredients gained supremacy, or fell into disfavour, in various ways in different places. For instance, at one stage the perfume from the island of Delos was the most highly praised but later on this honour fell on that from the Egyptian Delta city of Mendes.

Hawass (2006b:152-153) states:

Egyptian scents were not perfumes as we understand them today, but rather plant essences combined with oils and fats. Many of the ingredients were expensive – rare, or imported, or both, and were thus available only to the rich.

Ancient Egypt was the centre of production for many exotic and luxury perfumes. Reliefs/paintings in ancient Egyptian art do give us some idea of what types these were but it is only in the Ptolemaic Period that specific recipes were inscribed in hieroglyphs on the walls of the perfume ‘laboratories’ in temples. It is therefore not possible to give an exact list of the perfumes that the ancient Egyptians produced. The author will discuss a selection of perfumes that the classical authors inform us were famous in the ancient classical world. Some of them are definitely known to have been produced by the ancient Egyptians, while with others there is a possibility, sometimes a strong possibility, that they produced them, given the ingredients that were available to them, both cultivated in Egypt (indigenous and non-indigenous) and acquired through trade.

The exotic and luxury perfumes discussed in this section could only be afforded by the elite of Egyptian society (royalty and the upper classes, the nobility). The use of ordinary scented oils and unguents, not regarded as luxuries, were used by both women and men, applied to the face and the body to protect them from the harsh sun, wind and dryness (Dayagi-Mendels 1997:67). The author will in some instances use the units of volume/mass given by the Danish scholar Lise Manniche for those given by some of the classical authors, for the ingredients for luxury and exotic perfumes in their recipes, as she conveniently converts them into the modern metric units of volume/mass. The Greek and Roman classical authors sometimes use different spellings for the exotic and luxury perfumes.

6.2.1 Perfumed oils

Manniche (1999:64) states:

These fragrances correspond most closely to modern perfume in that they were concentrated and liquid, used in small quantities and stored in little bottles or phials such as have been found in great numbers all over the Mediterranean.

6.2.1.1 ‘The Egyptian’

‘The Egyptian’ was highly prized by women because it was one of the long-lasting perfumes that did not easily evaporate, due to its strength and substantial character (Theophrastus CO X, 42), as evidenced by a perfumer reporting in antiquity that ‘The Egyptian’ had lasted for eight years in his shop (Theophrastus CO IX, 38).

Theophrastus (CO VI, 28) states that ‘The Egyptian’ was made from several ingredients, which included cinnamon and myrrh steeped in fragrant wine, to remove the heavy quality of this perfume with its strong odour and to make it sweeter (Theophrastus CO X, 44). Theophrastus (CO VI, 30) adds that ‘The Egyptian’ (like Megaleion) is one of the most troublesome perfumes to make, because it involves a mixture of many expensive ingredients. ‘The Egyptian’ was left colourless and not dyed, one of the few expensive perfumes to be left undyed⁷⁸. It was felt that it was not worthwhile colouring the cheaper perfumes (Theophrastus CO VI, 31).

Manniche (1999:64-65) states it is not clear whether ‘The Egyptian’ was always made in Egypt itself, or in other places as well. She argues that it is possible that it was manufactured on licence in Greece, due to the fact that Theophrastus was so well informed about it.

6.2.1.2 Mendesium (Latin)/Mendesion (Greek)/ ‘The Mendesian’

Of all the perfumes known to the ancient classical world, ‘the Mendesian’, named after the Egyptian Delta city of Mendes, was one of the most famous. Pliny (NH XIII 4,17) states that at one stage this perfume was considered the most excellent but in his day (first century AD) metopium was even more popular. Pliny (NH XIII, 17), speaking about the method of production of composite perfumes, holds the same opinion as Dioscorides on this matter. He states that some people add a sprinkle of the most expensive ingredients after boiling the others down, in order to economise. The resulting mixture, however, does not have the same strength. He adds that Mendesium produces a black colour. Theophrastus (CO IV, 17), on the other hand, argues that the order in which the ingredients are added to the oil is important, the last one imparting the most pungent scent, even if it is just a small amount. Pliny (NH

⁷⁸ Quince-perfume and *kypros* are other expensive perfumes that were left colourless (Theophrastus CO VI 31).

XIII, 6) states that Mendesium⁷⁹ was a perfume that was appropriated by the Phoenicians, leaving the credit for Cyprus-scent (cypros) to Egypt.

Pliny (NH XIII, 8) and Dioscorides (OMM I, 72) provide ingredients for mendesium/mendesion, neither of them supplying quantities for it, or a method for producing it (Table 6.1).

Table 6.1: Pliny's and Dioscorides' mendesium/mendesion

Pliny's mendesium	Dioscorides' mendesion
behen-oil (balanos oil)	balanos oil
myrrh	myrrh
resin	resin
	cassia

Dioscorides (OMM I,72) adds that sometimes a little cinnamom is added, after the other ingredients have been weighed out. This, according to him, is unprofitable however, as ingredients which have not been beaten together are not very strong.

6.2.1.3 Metopium (Latin)/Metopion (Greek)/galbanum perfume

Dioscorides (OMM I, 71) states that the Egyptians prepared an ointment (actually perfumed oil), which they called metopion, because the wood of the plant Galbanum which they used for it, they called metopion.⁸⁰

Dioscorides (OMM I, 71) and Pliny (NH XIII, 8) provide ingredients for metopion/metopium, neither of them supplying quantities for it, or a method for producing it (Table 6.2).

⁷⁹ Manniche (2006:50) states that it is possible that 'The Mendesian' and the 'The Egyptian' were two names of the same perfume, which had been brought to the attention of the classical world by the Phoenicians.

⁸⁰ Elsewhere, however, Dioscorides (OMM I, 39) says that Metopion is the name for bitter almond oil.

Table 6.2: Dioscorides' and Pliny's metopion/metopium

Dioscorides' metopion	Pliny's metopium
bitter almonds	oil of bitter almonds
omphacium (green olive oil)	omphacium (green olive oil)
cardamom	cardamom
Schoenus (camel grass)	rush (camel grass)
Calamus (sweet flag)	flag (sweet flag)
honey	honey
wine	wine
myrrh	myrrh
balsamum seed	terebinth resin (turpentine resin)
galbanum	galbanum
resin	seed of balsam (balsamum seed)

Dioscorides (OMM 1,71) states that all the ingredients are mixed together and that the Metopion, which is the best, has a strong smell and is greasy, rather resembling cardamom and myrrh, than galbanum. Pliny (NH XIII.8) states, that in his day, (first century AD) Metopium was even more popular than 'The Mendesian'. Pliny (NH XIII, 6) states that Metopion was appropriated by the Phoenicians. Dioscorides (OMM I, 71) states that the best Metopion smelt more of cardomom than of galbanum.

6.2.1.4 Susinum (Latin)/Susinon (Greek)/lily perfume

Dioscorides (OMM I, 62) gives susinon as the name of a perfume, whose main ingredient is the lily flower, adding that some people call it Lirinum or Liliaceum. He states that the best susinon is made in Egypt and Phoenicia. Theophrastus (CO VI, 27) also refers to susinon, saying that it is made from the flowers of the lily. Further on (CO X,42), he states that lily perfume, being one of the lightest perfumes, is suitable for men. Forbes (1955:12) is of the opinion that as the lily was the heraldic flower of Upper Egypt, it is possible that the lily essential oil had some extra magical potency in ancient Egypt.

Manniche (1999:68) provides the ingredients provided by Dioscorides⁸¹ (OMM I, 62), converting his volume/mass units into modern metric volume/mass units, for susinon, and Pliny (NH XIII, 12) provides the ingredients for his version for this perfume, susinum (Table 6.3).

Table 6.3: Dioscorides' and Pliny's susinon/susinum

Dioscorides' susinon		Pliny's susinum
lilies	1,000 (x2)	lilies
balanos oil	4,226 kg	oil of behen nut (balanos oil)
sweet flag	2,354 kg	sweet flag
myrrh	140 g	myrrh
fragrant wine		saffron (crocus)
cardamom	1,530 kg	cinnamon
cardamom	37 g (x3)	honey
best myrrh	270 g (x3)	
crocus	37 g (x 3)	
cinnamon	281 g (x3)	
honey		
salt		

Dioscorides (OMM I, 62) states that the susinon which has excelled most is made in Egypt and Phoenicia.

6.2.1.5 Irinum (Latin)/Irinon (Greek)/iris perfume

Theophrastus (CO V.24) states that a superior kind of iris perfume is made by using the root of the iris dry⁸². According to him, better results are obtained in this way, than by steeping the roots in liquid or by subjecting them to fire. Dioscorides (OMM I, 1) states that Egyptians knew the root of the iris as a perfume. Manniche (1999:68-69) is of the opinion that although evidence of its use in Egypt is slender⁸³, it can be assumed that the ancient

⁸¹ See Manniche (1999:68) for her version of the method used by Dioscorides and some variations to the recipe. Pliny does not give quantities or method of preparation.

⁸² The method used to make Irinum is therefore maceration of bruised iris root, now known as orris powder (Manniche 1999:69).

⁸³ Remains of actual plants have been excavated in Egypt.

Egyptians knew the iris, which grows wild in Egypt at present, and that they would have used the fragrant root in perfume manufacture.

Iris perfume was dyed with the root of alkanet (Theophrastus CO VII.33). Theophrastus (CO VII, 34) states that the iris is in its prime for the manufacture of iris perfume three years after it has been gathered but it would last for six years at longest after being gathered. A certain perfumer claimed that he had iris perfume in his shop for twenty years and that it was still in good order, and in fact better, than fresh perfume (Theophrastus CO IX 38). Pliny (NH XIII.5) states that the iris perfume from Corinth was very popular for a long time but was later superceded by that of Cyzicus.

Manniche (1999:69 and 71) provides the ingredients⁸⁴ (converted into modern metric volume/mass units) of the two versions provided by Dioscorides (OMM 1,66) (Table 6.4).

Table 6.4: Dioscorides' irinon (versions I and II)

Dioscorides' irinon I		Dioscorides' irinon II	
palm tops	2.948 kg	wood balsum	2.326 kg
water	10 <i>heminae</i> (c. ¼ litre)	oil	31.92 kg
honey to smear the basin with		sweet flag	4.366 kg
bruised iris roots	6.356 kg	myrrh previously macerated in old fragrant wine – just a little	
oil	6.356 kg	bruised iris roots – not mentioned here by Manniche but by Dioscorides (OMM I, 66)	

Theophrastus (CO VI, 29) states, that of all the compounded perfumes, iris perfume is made from the smallest number of ingredients. Pliny (NH XXI, 42) observes that the best irinum used to come from Leucas and Elis but in his day (first century AD) the best comes from Pamphylia, although the Cicilian irinum is also highly praised.

⁸⁴ See Manniche (1999:69 and 71) for her version of the methods involved.

6.2.1.6 Myrtinum (Latin)/Mursinelaion (Greek)/myrtle perfume

Dioscorides⁸⁵ (OMM I, 48) and Pliny (NH XIII, 9) provide the ingredients for their versions of this perfume (Table 6.5).

Table 6.5: Dioscorides' and Pliny's mursinelaion/myrtinum

Dioscorides' mursinelaion	Pliny's myrtinum
omphacium (green olive oil)	myrtle-oil
water	pomegranate rind
black myrtle leaves	cypress
pomegranate	cyprus [<i>sic</i>]
cypress	reed (sweet flag)
camel grass	mastic-oil

Pliny (NH XIII, 10-11) states that cheaper kinds of oil are made out of a compound of myrtle and laurel, to which marjoram, lilies, fenugreek, myrrh, cassia, nard, rush, and cinnamon are added.

6.2.1.7 Lotus perfume

The luxurious scent of the blue lotus flower, which was in abundant supply and available throughout ancient Egypt, was primarily enjoyed and used to create a happy disposition by sniffing the open flower. Both genders are depicted doing this in Egyptian art, particularly in banquet scenes.

Furthermore, the lotus flower was too delicate to travel long distances and was not among the famous Egyptian perfumes exported around the Mediterranean in the Ptolemaic Period. It was therefore not accessible to classical authors such as Theophrastus, Dioscorides, Pliny and Galen, and was not commented on by them. The presence of the lotus flower in perfume can be surmised however from various sources. Two preparations made in the temple of Edfu, where the recipes are inscribed in hieroglyphs on the walls of the perfume/incense

⁸⁵ See Manniche (1999:78-79) for her version of the two methods of preparation given by Dioscorides (I.48). Pliny does not give a method.

'laboratory', have lotus extract as one of the ingredients, the one originally prepared for the twenty-second of the month of Khoiak and the other a madjet preparation (Manniche 1999:106). Lotus extract appears in a special Min unguent.

6.2.1.8 Cyprinum (Latin)/Kypros or Kuprinon (Greek)/ henna perfume

Manniche (1999:71) states:

In classical antiquity, cyprinum was a composite scent whose main fragrant ingredient was a plant called *cypros*. This has generally, and probably rightly, taken to be henna, among other things because the Arabic translation of Dioscorides and others equate it with that plant. The flowers of *Lawsonia inermis* L. are very fragrant, and nowadays an essential oil, known as *mehendi* is distilled from them.

Pliny (NH XII, 109) states that the best quality cyprinum (the finished product, the perfume, called *cypros* here by Pliny) is made from the henna tree (*Lawsonia inermis*), grown at Canopus on the banks of the Nile, the second best at Ascalon in Judea, and the third best on the island of Cyprus. The perfume is sold for 5 *denarii* a pound. According to Pliny (NH XIII, 12) the seed of the henna plant is boiled in olive oil and subsequently crushed. If oil of sesame is added he avers, the perfume will last as long as four years. A further addition of cinnamon, will bring out the scent. The best cyprinum he says is that made at Sidon and the next best in Egypt. Elsewhere, however, Pliny (NH XIII, 5) notes that the best cyprinum was from Cyprus, until Egypt started making it.

Theophrastus (CO V, 25-26) states that *kypros* is made from the flowers of the henna plant (not the seeds as argued by Pliny). The method involves putting cardomon and aspalathos into the cold base oil, along with the flowers, after they have been steeped in sweet wine. The flowers cannot be left in for too long, and have to be removed before they turn black, otherwise they will give the perfume a disagreeable smell.

Manniche (1999:72) provides the ingredients for Dioscorides'⁸⁶ *kuprinon* (OMM I,65) (using modern metric units of volume/mass). Theophrastus (CO V, 25) and Pliny⁸⁷ (NH XIII, 12) supply the ingredients for *kypros*/ *cyprinum* (Table 6.6).

⁸⁶ See Manniche (1999:72-73) for her interpretation of Dioscorides' method of making *kuprinon*, which she says has a greenish colour.

⁸⁷ Pliny (NH XII, 109) states that in order to make what he calls *cypros* (*cyprinum*), the white scented seeds (berries) of the *cypros* tree (henna) are boiled in olive oil and afterwards crushed. The perfume sells at five

Table 6.6: Theophrastus', Pliny's and Dioscorides' kypros/cyprinum/kuprinon

Theophrastus' kypros	Pliny's cyprinum	Dioscorides' kuprinon
henna	henna (called 'cyprus' here)	henna 21.108 kg
onphacium (green olive oil)	onphacium (green olive oil)	onphacium 12.712 kg (green olive oil)
aspalathos	aspalathos	rain water
cardamom	sweet flag	aspalathos 2.497 kg
	myrrh (sometimes added)	sweet flag 2.951 kg
	cardamom	myrrh 454 g
	southernwood	cardamom 1.614 kg
	all-heal (sometimes added)	old fragrant wine
		cinnamon (sometimes added)

6.2.1.9 Megalium (Latin)/Megaleion (Greek)

Manniche (1999:76 and 148) states that the origin of this perfume and of its name is unknown. She adds that there is nothing specifically linking this perfume to Egypt. The ingredients are, however, among those favoured by the Egyptians in their scented preparations. Theophrastus (CO X, 42) states that megaleion is a long lasting perfume, and is favoured by women for this quality. He adds that among the expensive perfumes, megaleion can cause headaches, as most of the cheaper ones do, especially those made from bay. Theophrastus (CO VI, 31) states megaleion was dyed red with alkanet.

Theophrastus (CO VI, 30), Pliny (NH XIII, 13) and Dioscorides (OMM I, 69) provide the ingredients for megaleion/megalium (Table 6.7).

denarii a pound. Manniche (1999:71) states that Pliny was misinformed here, as the berries of the henna tree are blue-black and not white. Theophrastus does not provide a method for his kypros.

Table 6.7: Theophrastus', Pliny's and Dioscorides' megaleion/megalium

Theophrastus' megaleion	Pliny's megalium	Dioscorides' megaleion
balanos oil	behen nut oil (balanos oil)	balanos oil
burnt resin	resin	resin
cassia	balsam	cinnamon
cinnamon	reed (sweet flag)	sweet flag
myrrh	rush (camel grass)	camel grass
	wood balsam	wood balsam
	cassia	costos
		carpobalsamum
		myrrh
		nard
		amomum

Theophrastus (CO VI, 30) states that megaleion, like 'The Egyptian', is one of the most troublesome preparations to make, because no others involve the mixture of so many ingredients, which are very costly. The method of preparing megaleion he says is to boil the oil for ten days and nights, as this renders the oil more receptive to the resin and the other ingredients, which are then put into it. Pliny (NH XIII, 18) states that megalium has to be constantly stirred when the mixture is boiled until it has no odour. When the preparation is cold it recovers its scent.

6.2.1.10 Cinnamominum (cinnamon and cassia oils)

Manniche (1999:77) provides the ingredients given by Dioscorides (OMM I, 74) and Pliny (NH XIII, 15) for Cinnamominum (Table 6.8).

Table 6.8: Dioscorides' and Pliny's cinnamominum

Dioscorides' cinnamominum	Pliny's cinnamominum
balanos oil	balanos oil
cinnamon	cinnamon
carpobalsamum	balsam seeds
myrrh	myrrh
xylobalsanum (wood balsam)	wood balsam
sweet flag	sweet flag
camel grass	camel grass seeds [<i>sic</i>]
honey	fragrant honey

Dioscorides (OMM I, 74) states that honey is used to bind all the ingredients together.

6.2.1.11 Rhodinon/rose perfume

Theophrastus (CO IV, 25) states that besides roses, ginger-grass, aspalathos and sweet flag, are also added to rose perfume. He adds that peculiar to this perfume, is the fact that salt is added (to prevent decay), which involves a great deal of waste, as twenty three gallons of salt is needed to produce eight and a half gallons of rose perfume. Rose perfume is dyed with the root of alkanet (Theophrastus CO VII, 33).

Theophrastus (CO X, 45) states that, although rose perfume is lighter and less powerful than any other perfumes, once a person has been scented with it, it destroys the fragrance of any other perfume that might be subsequently applied to that person's skin. He points out that wily perfumers, who have customers that are hesitant to buy rose perfume, scent them with it, so that they are not able to smell any other perfumes that are applied to them after that. Manniche (2006:57) alludes to the fact that none of the recipes for rose perfume quoted by the classical authors are specifically linked to Egypt and that rose oil only appears as an ingredient in Coptic medical texts in the first millennium AD. The author is of the opinion that it is highly likely that the Egyptians used the rose as an ingredient for perfume during Ptolemaic and Roman times, when it was grown in Egypt.

6.2.1.12 Myrrh oil and *stacte* (Latin)/*stakte* (Greek)

The identity of the substance known as *stacte*/*stakte* in classical times has long been debated by scholars. The classical writers provide the most ancient description of *stacte* (Lucas 1937:39). Theophrastus (CO, 29) states that, when myrrh is bruised, an oil called *stakte* (in drops) flows from it. He refers to the fact that some people argue that *stakte* is the only simple uncompounded perfume, with all the other perfumes being compound ones, made from a smaller or larger number of ingredients. Other people he says make *stakte* (myrrh-oil) by dissolving the bruised myrrh in oil of balanos over a gentle fire. They then pour hot water on it, with the myrrh and oil sinking to the bottom like a deposit. They then strain off the water and the sediment is squeezed in a press. Theophrastus (CO IX, 38) states that myrrh oil (*stakte*), has the longest life of any perfume. It is therefore best suited to women, as a long-lasting perfume is what women require. Theophrastus (CO X, 44) states further that myrrh oil (*stakte*), being a strong perfume, can have its heavy quality removed by being mixed with fragrant wine, becoming sweeter. Dioscorides (OMM I, 73) states that *stacte* is the name of the fat of fresh myrrh that is crushed with a little water and pressed out by an implement, itself being an unguent that has a very sweet taste. Elsewhere, Dioscorides (OMM I, 77) states that when myrrh is pressed, *stacte* is obtained. Pliny (NH XII, 35), on the other hand, states that the myrrh tree spontaneously exudes, before any incision is made in it, a liquid called *stacte*. Lucas (1937:31-33), however, argues that volatile, or essential oils, the essences, contained in small proportion in certain plants and plant products, unlike fixed oils, such as almond oil, balanos oil, olive oil, sesame oil, cannot as a rule be obtained by merely applying pressure, the exception being those found in fruit-rinds. As far as myrrh (and frankincense) is concerned, the essential oil is not present in cells in the plant tissue from which it may be released by pressure, but is intimately linked with the rest of the material, particularly the resin, which is partly dissolved in the oil, and from which is impossible to be separated by pressure. He is of the opinion that the only way in which a fragrant oil could have been obtained from myrrh or frankincense, apart from modern methods, such as steam distillation and extraction from solvents such as petroleum ether, unknown anciently, was to use a method described by Theophrastus. This involves warming the gum-resin with a fixed oil (balanos oil in this case), and once this had become impregnated with the fragrant essential oil, separating it from the exhausted residue by pressure, using a press. The Egyptians used a bag press in the production of perfumes.

Forbes (1955:23 and 45) states that myrrh was imported into Egypt in the form of heaps of small grains, called ‘dry myrrh’ but also in the form of semi-liquid gums or oleo-resins, such as the ‘fragrant liquid myrrh’. He states, further, that in certain cases it appears that the fragrant liquid components were expressed from the semi-liquid gums or oleo-resins. By compressing myrrh, a fragrant liquid (*mdt*) was obtained, called *stacte* by the Greeks. Manniche (1999:81) notes that in the pharaonic texts, the liquid expressed from the myrrh, which may itself be a perfume, is under the name of *mdt* (*madjet*), called *stakte* by the Greeks, which in Ptolemaic Period texts is a composite preparation, now apparently called *bss* (*bes*) instead of *stakte*.

6.2.1.13 Sampsuchinum/amarakinum/marjoram perfume

Manniche (1999:74) states:

There are several varieties of sweet marjoram or oregano, and in antiquity different names designate either the same variety or different ones. Pliny knows of ‘amarcus’ and ‘sampsuchum’ specifically declaring them to be synonyms; Theophrastus only mentions ‘amarakon’, whereas Dioscorides quotes recipes for oils of both ...

Manniche (1999:75) provides the ingredients⁸⁸ given by Dioscorides (OMM I, 58 and OMM I, 68) and Pliny (NH XIII, 10 and 14) for amarakinum and sampsuchinum (Table 6.9).

Table 6.9: Dioscorides’ and Pliny’s amarakinum/sampsuchinum

Dioscorides <i>amarakinum</i>	Dioscorides’ <i>sampsuchinum</i>	Pliny’s <i>amarakinum</i>	Pliny’s <i>sampsuchinum</i>
amarakon	myrtle leaves	amarcus	sampsuchum
oil of green olives or balanos	green olive oil	green olive oil	green olive oil
wood balsam (xylobalsamum)	sampsuchum	chaste tree leaves	sweet flag
camel grass	cassia	all-heal	
sweet flag	thyme	honey	
amarakon	southernwood	‘foreign substances’	
costus	bergamot mint flowers	salt	
amomum			
nard			

⁸⁸ See Manniche (1999:75) for her interpretation of the method given by Dioscorides for both amarakinum and sampsuchinum

cinnamon (sometimes added)			
carpobalsamum			
myrrh			
honey			
wine			
nard			

Theophrastus (CO VI, 30) states that, it is said, that the superior kind of sweet marjoram perfume (*amarakinon*) is made of all the best spices except sweet marjoram (*amarakon*)! He adds, that it is in fact the only spice not used for any perfume, and the name (*amarakinon*) is a misnomer. As a possible explanation for this curious statement by Theophrastus, Manniche (1999:75) notes that perhaps in his day the common marjoram was replaced by an exotic ingredient, either because of its luxuriousness or because of its medicinal properties. Because the resulting perfume was similar, the name was retained. Theophrastus (CO VI, 31) states that sweet marjoram perfume (*amarakinon*) is dyed red with a root called *khroma*, which is imported from Syria. He says that it is also one of the perfumes that lasts longest (CO IX, 38). Because of its strength and substantial character (it does not evaporate easily), it is suitable for women to use. An unfortunate side-effect of the strength of this perfume however, is that it causes headaches (CO X, 43; XI, 55). Dioscorides (OMM I, 68) states that the best *amarakinum* is made in Cyzicum.

6.2.2 Solid perfume

6.2.2.1 Amarakinon/sampsuchinon

Marjoram, apart from being found in perfumed oils named *amarakinon* and *sampsuchinon*, is also found in solid perfumes (unguents) under the same two names.

Manniche (1999:83 and 85) provides the following ingredients⁸⁹ (converted into modern metric volume/mass units) given by Dioscorides (OMM II, 92), who is our source for these two preparations (Table 6.10).

⁸⁹ See Manniche (1999:83 and 85) for her interpretation of Dioscorides' methods for making these two preparations. The fame of perfumes produced in ancient Cyprus, such as *cyprinum* (see Section 6.2.9) and *amarakinum* (see Sections 6.2.1.4 and 6.2.15.1) survived into medieval times and spread into Europe during the Renaissance (roughly 14th to 17th centuries). In the early 20th century Francois Coty gave the name *Chypre*

Table 6.10: Dioscorides' amarakinon/sampsuchinon

Dioscorides' amarakinon		Dioscorides' sampsuchinon	
fat (ox)	908 g	bruised marjoram	681 g (x2)
wine	1.5 litres	fat (ox)	454 g
jujube seeds	1.816 kg	wine	
bruised aspalathos	454 g		
marjoram flowers	1.816 kg		
myrrh (may be added)	28 g		

Marjoram, apart from being found in perfumed oils named amarakinon and sampsuchinon, is also found in solid perfumes (unguents) under the same two names.

6.3 INCENSE

Lucas (1962:90) argues that since the word incense, derived from the Latin word *incendere*, to burn or kindle, has the same literal meaning as the word perfume, derived from the Latin words *per fumum*, through smoke, the aroma given off with the smoke of any odiferous substance when burned, incense should be included in any description of ancient Egyptian perfumes. The first use of incense in ancient Egypt can be traced back to the Old Kingdom. Through excavation, incense-burners have been found dating to this period. Remains of incense have been found in Egypt dating back to about 1500 BC (Forbes 1955:21-22).

In ancient Egypt the use of incense is called the 'eye of Horus' and yet incense does not play any major role in the myths connected to Horus and Osiris. In addition, myths usually legitimise the use of specific materials for specific purposes, and yet there are hardly any traces of ideological myths in ancient Egypt explaining these origins. In fact, the only complete myth of the origin of materials used for incense, is found in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (10:298-518), explaining the origin of myrrh, and legitimises its use in the funerary context (Nielsen 1997:147). The use of incense in ancient Egypt had very strong symbolism, where it was referred to as 'the fragrance of the gods'. The fragrance resulting from the burning of incense, revealed the divine presence but also in one sense a manifestation of the deities for

(French for Cyprus) to one of the ten olfactory families in the world (http://www.pyrgos-mavroraki.net/pyrgos-mavroraki_000009.pdf). In 1917 he launched a perfume called Chypre de Coty (http://www.perfumeprojects.com/museum/bottles/Coty_0061.shtml).

whom it was burnt (Wilkinson 1999:92). As in many ancient civilisations, including ancient Egypt, the deities revealed themselves not only by sight and sound but also by smell (Wilkinson 1999:103).

The use of incense magically transformed the deceased into a divine state, reflecting the meaning of the word *senetcheri*, ‘to make divine’, whence the word for incense, *senetcher*, *sntr*, comes from. Thus representations of incense being offered to the deities, by among others, kings, symbolically indicate the interaction between the human and divine spheres, far more significant than the mere presentation of costly perfume, the incense taking on a specific identity, through the phenomenon of personification (Wilkinson 1999:93 and 103).

According to Manniche (1999:35) the burning and offering of incense ‘... would also serve as a link between a deceased king and the deities in whose company he was believed to travel across the sky every night in eternity, when he himself became part of the cosmos’.

6.3.1 Kyphi

The substance called *kyphi*, consisting of various ingredients and therefore a composite one, is the most famous scented preparation from ancient Egypt (Manniche 1999:46), and the best documented one (Manniche 2006:61), its primary purpose was to be used as incense, a fumigant, burnt in great quantities by priests in Egyptian temples. The name *kyphi* is the Latin version of the Greek transcription of the Egyptian word *kapet*, originally meaning any substance to be burnt, a category of scent, although by the end of the pharaonic civilisation it had come to designate a specific ‘brand’ of scent (Manniche 1999:47). *Kapet* was first mentioned in the Pyramid Texts (PT 404), as one of the items necessary to make life in the afterlife pleasant for the deceased king (Manniche 1999:55 and 147). *Kyphi*’s other main use was a remedy in the treatment for various ailments (Manniche 1999:47).

Manniche (1999:47-48 and 55) states that Galen, in his essay entitled ‘On Antidotes’ (written c 200 AD), gives a recipe (in Greek) for *kyphi* found by him on a scroll written by an Athenian physician called Damocrates, who lived a century earlier, in the days of Emperor Nero, which he had come across during his research into the medical wisdom of the past. Damocrates explains that he in turn had received the recipe from Rufus of Ephesus, who

lived around 50 AD and was next to Galen the most highly regarded physician in the Roman Empire.

Manniche (1999:52) states that Plutarch (who died c 125 AD), the Greek traveller, visited Egypt round about the time that the hieroglyphs were being inscribed in the temple of Edfu. He managed to gain access to a treatise written by the famous Greek historian Manetho, who lived in the third century BC, entitled ‘On the preparation of kyphi materials’, a work now lost.

Manniche (1999:48-49 and 52) provides her version of the ingredients for the *kyphi* recipes of Galen⁹⁰, Dioscorides⁹¹ (OMM I, 24) and Plutarch (using modern metric units of volume/mass) (Table 6.11).

Table 6.11: Galen’s, Dioscorides’ and Manetho’s *kyphi* recipe

Rufus of Ephesus’ <i>kyphi</i> (via Damocrates, via Galen) first century AD	Dioscorides’ <i>kyphi</i> first century AD	Manetho’s <i>kyphi</i> (via Plutarch) third century BC
raisins with skin and pips removed 90 g	‘sun’ raisins 5.448 kg	raisins
wine ‘a little’	old wine 4.828 litres	honey
honey ‘sufficient’	honey 1.136 litres	wine
‘burnt resin’ 90 g	myrrh 42 g	myrrh
‘nails’ of bdellium 45 g	pure resin 2.270kg	resin
camel grass 45 g	plump juniper berries 0.284 litres	mastic
sweet flag 33 g	sweet flag 0.454 litres	bitumen of Judea
pure cyperus grass 11 g	camel grass 0.454litres	cyperus grass
saffron 4 g	aspalathos 0.454 litres	aspalathos
spikenard 11 g	cyperus grass 0.284 litres	seseli ⁹²
aspalathos 2 ‘semis’		rush
cinnamon or cardamon 15 g		lanathos

⁹⁰ See Manniche (1999:48) for her version of the method given by Galen.

⁹¹ See Manniche (1999:49) for her version of the method given by Dioscorides.

⁹² Manniche (1999:147) states that this is usually translated as ‘hartwort’ or *Drachenwurz*.

good cassia	11 g		large and small juniper berries (arkeuthos)
			sweet flag
			cardamom

Plutarch cautioned that the ingredients were to be added one after the other into the mortar, while someone recited religious texts. According to him incense was burnt three times a day in Egyptian temples, frankincense in the morning, myrrh at noon and *kyphi* in the evening (Manniche 1999:52).

Recipes for *kyphi*, written in hieroglyphs, are found inscribed in the perfume/incense ‘laboratories’ at the temple of Horus at Edfu and Isis at Philae (on the jambs of the doorway), both built in the second century BC (Manniche 2006:61). Manniche (1999:51) provides a translation of these recipes, giving the quantities according to the modern metric system [the unguent makers aimed for the equivalent 910 grammes (or 100 *deben*) of finished *kyphi*], while pointing out the difficulty of identifying the hieroglyphic ingredients. There are two recipes for *kyphi* at Edfu (which she calls Edfu 1 and 2), the two differing slightly in the quantity of the various ingredients, suggesting to her that at this time *kyphi* was a category of scent rather than a specific ‘brand’. One of these versions was called ‘Recipe for the preparation of excellent *kyphi* for divine use’ and provided explanatory terms and synonyms of ingredients. The recipe for *kyphi* only occurred once at Philae. She lists the ingredients for the three Egyptian Ptolemaic Period recipes of *kyphi* (Table 6.12).

Table 6.12: Edfu 1, Edfu 2 and Philae *kyphi* recipes

<i>Kyphi</i> Edfu 1	<i>Kyphi</i> Edfu 2	<i>Kyphi</i> Philae
raisins from the oases 3.3 litres	2 litres	3.3 litres
wine 2.5 litres	2.5 litres	2.5 litres
‘fresh Horus eye’ i.e oasis wine 2.5 litres	2.5 litres	2.5 litres
‘sweet Horus eye’ i.e honey 3.3 litres	2.5 litres	3.3 litres
frankincense (<i>sntr</i>) 1,213 g	910 g	1,213 g
myrrh (<i>kar</i>) 1,155 g	910 g	1,55 g
mastic 273 g	182 g	273 g
pine resin 273 g	203 g	273 g
sweet flag 273 g	227 g	227 g
aspalathos 273 g	91 g	273 g
camel grass 273 g	227 g	273 g
mint 273 g	227 g	273 g
cyperus 1.5 litres	1 litre	1.5 litres
juniper 1.5 litres	1 litre	1.5 litres
pine kernels 1.5 litres	1 litre	1.5 litres
<i>peker</i> 1.5 litres	1 litre	1.5 litres
cinnamon 273 g	203 g	364 g

The only extant illustration of a burning bowl of *kyphi* can be found in an Arabic translation of De Materia Medica by Dioscorides, which was copied in the eleventh century from the original completed in 990 AD by Abu Abd Allah el-Natili in Samarkand, now housed in the Universiteitsbibliothek, Leiden (Manniche 1999:59) (Figure 6.1).

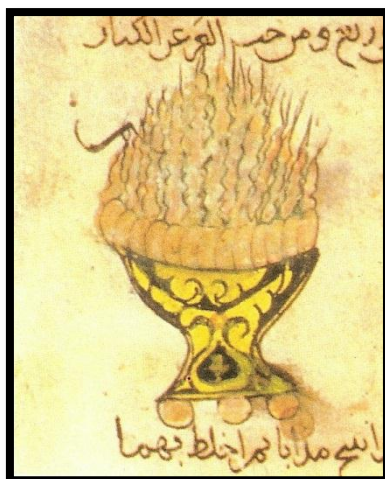


Figure 6.1: Illustration of a burning bowl of *kyphi*

6.3.2 The resinous products *sntr* and *'ntyw*

There is a debate amongst scholars about the lexicological problem of the translation of and botanical identification of words denoting resinous products, such as *sntr* and *'ntyw*, appearing in ancient Egyptian texts and reliefs, used as incense by priests in temples, ceremonies and festivals.

6.3.2.1 The product *sntr*

The word *sntr* often appears with the word *'ntyw* in Egyptian texts, which indicate that *sntr* was used in Egypt from Early Dynastic times (2920-2575 BC). Studies in the past, involving botanical as well as archaeological evidence for *sntr*, have failed to produce an indisputable identification of it, although it has traditionally been translated as incense and botanically been identified more often as frankincense (*Boswellia* spp.) (Serpico & White 2000a:884). Steuer (1943:279 and 281) is one such scholar that advocates the botanical identity of *sntr* as frankincense. He is of the opinion that the meaning of *sntr* varied from time to time during the course of Egyptian history, but argues that during the reign of Hatshepsut, Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, it must be interpreted as frankincense. One of the indications of this he argues is that *sntr*-resin was represented in ancient Egyptian art, starting at the time of the Eighteenth Dynasty, in a conical shape.

Serpico & White (2000a:884) state that the discovery of resin preserved on pottery sherds at the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, site of Tell el-Amarna in Middle Egypt has facilitated a multidisciplinary approach to the problem, whereby botanical data, archaeological research as well as chemical analysis of resin samples takes place. Excavations by the Egypt Exploration Society under the direction of Barry Kemp during 1984-1995 at Tell el-Amarna yielded over 250 pottery sherds that have resin attached to them. This resin is remarkably consistent in appearance, medium to dark red-orange in colour and has a glossy surface, frequently exhibiting a fine craquelure on the interior surface. These sherds are widely distributed at the site, the primary locations being the small Aten temple; the workmen's village; building Q48.4 in the Main City (used as a workshop for pottery and faience manufacture); houses U.24.1 and U.25.20 in the North City; and the garden pits at the South Pavilion in an area to the south of the Main City known as Kom el-Nana, which were filled in with material which included large quantities of pottery vessels. According to Serpico & White (2000a:887-891), this indicates that access to resin, a valuable commodity which had to be imported, was not restricted to state temples or the royal enclave but also extended to domestic occupation and small chapels which were family-centred. They state that eleven samples of resin-coated sherds from various excavation seasons at Tell el-Amarna were analysed by GC/MS (gas chromatography/mass spectrometry). The botanical source of the resin of all eleven samples, in which no oils, fats, proteins or other resins were present, was found to be pistacia. Whilst cautioning that the pistacia resin may originally have had other volatile scented material added to it, such as herbs and spices (no longer detectable), they argue that the predominance of pistacia resin is beyond dispute, and therefore also the botanical identification of *sntr* as pistacia (*Pistacia* spp.).

6.3.2.2 The product 'ntyw

To date there is little evidence to help establish a botanical identification for the product 'ntyw appearing in Egyptian texts (Serpico & White 2000c:459), which traditionally has more often been translated as myrrh (*Commiphora* spp.) (Serpico & White 2000a:884). Steuer (1943:280) is of the opinion that the 'ntjw of the Punt reliefs at Hatshepsut's mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahari, Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, must be interpreted, both in the text and in the pictorial representations, as a specific variety of myrrh.

Serpico & White (2000a:895) state that the identification of resinous products obtained by the Egyptians from Punt is difficult to determine, because if *sntr* is pistacia resin (as they argue it is, see Section 6.3.3), then is 'ntyw frankincense or myrrh? Serpico (1997:67) is of the opinion that if the 'ntyw of Punt was indeed myrrh, it is possible that there may have been an overlap in the use of *Commiphora* myrrh and other species found in eastern Africa. Serpico & White (2000a:895) argue that there is insufficient evidence at present to resolve the problem of the identification of the word 'ntyw.

6.4 PERFUMED UNGUENT CONES

The cones (*hnb*) (Forbes 1955:44) seen worn either on the wigs or on the crown of the head of both men and women in Egyptian art, for instance revellers in banquet scenes, are generally believed to have been made of fragrant unguent, probably solid ox tallow, impregnated with aromatic material such as myrrh but there has also been a suggestion that they were made of beeswax (see Section 14.3). These unguent cones are thought by some scholars to have melted, releasing their fragrant contents over the wearer.

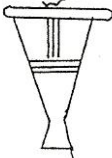
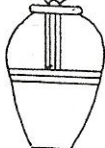


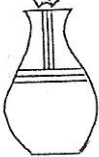
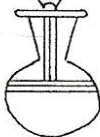
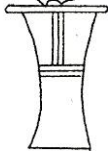
6.5 PERFUMED SACRED UNGUENTS/ OILS

6.5.1 The 'seven sacred oils'

The 'seven sacred oils', a modern term used by Egyptologists, were known to the ancient Egyptians as *mrht*, a generic word for any type of vegetable oil or animal fat (Serpico 2001:584) and also a term applied to scented mixtures (Serpico & White 2000c:462). Pischikova (1994:67) states that from the Old Kingdom onward, the Egyptians recognised seven different varieties of sacred oil, associating each of the seven with a jar of a different shape.

The following table gives the names of the 'seven sacred oils' as transliterated from the hieroglyphs by Pischikova (1994:67). The seven different shapes of the jars come from sources such as the New Kingdom mortuary temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahari, depicting the first representation of all seven types of oils, involving a scene of offering bearers carrying these jars; the Theban tomb of Basa (TT 389); and the Theban tomb of Ihy (TT 36) (Pischikova 1994:66) (Table 6.13).

Table 6.13: The ‘seven sacred oils’ and the jars they were stored in

Egyptian names of the ‘seven sacred oils’ as transliterated by Pischikova	The shapes of jars carrying the ‘seven sacred oils’ as provided by Pischikova
<i>sjt-h3b</i>	
<i>hknw</i>	
<i>sft</i>	
<i>nhnm</i>	
<i>tw3t</i>	
<i>h3tt nt 's</i>	
<i>h3tt nt thnw</i>	

Manniche (1999:152) is of the opinion that the ‘seven sacred oils’ and their hieroglyphic equivalents, are those appearing in Figure 6.2.

<i>hekenu</i>	
<i>seti heb</i>	
<i>sefet</i>	
<i>nekhenem</i>	
<i>tuat</i>	
<i>hat en ash</i>	
<i>hat en Tjehenu</i>	

Figure 6.2: The ‘seven sacred oils’ and their hieroglyphic equivalents

The names of the ‘seven sacred oils’ remained the same over millennia (Hughes 1959:165). Eventually three more sacred oils/unguents were added to the original ‘seven sacred oils’, making ten in total (Manniche 1999:43). Manniche (1999:108) gives a list of the ‘seven sacred oils’ and her translation of their ingredients, part of the corpus of recipes found in the perfume/ incense ‘laboratory’ in the Ptolemaic temple of Horus at Edfu, which does not specify quantities of the ingredients or give instructions on how to make the oils. According to her, the first seven oils on the list are the original ‘seven sacred oils’. She adds that numbers eight and nine are two of the three extra oils added later to make up the ten sacred oils/unguents and that the nine specified here at Edfu, were to be used in the ritual of the ‘opening of the mouth’:

1. Seti heb ‘festival scent’ (sefy bitumen, tekhu seeds, frankincense concentrate, white [frankincense], fir seeds, fresh frankincense, is flowers, him flowers).
2. Hekenu (menen wood pitch, fresh frankincense, dry white frankincense, acacia flowers)
3. Sefet ‘fir oil’ (wood pitch, white [frankincense], ges-fek, degem of] [...])
4. Nesmen (menen wood pitch, pine, sefy bitumen)
5. Tua (menen wood pitch, frankincense, pine, white [frankincense])
6. Hat-en-ash ‘best fir’ (menen wood pitch, sefy bitumen, fir seeds, him flowers)
7. Hat-en-tjehenu ‘best Libyan’ (menen wood pitch, fine peresh[?] oil, him flowers)
8. Madjet (best nedjem, lotus, white [frankincense])
9. Moringa oil (menen wood pitch, white [frankincense])

Fletcher (1999a:9) states that another sacred oil is myrrh, imported by the Egyptians from Punt, added to the original list of ‘seven sacred oils’ in the Middle Kingdom. This is thus the tenth sacred oil/unguent, one of three added to the original ‘seven sacred oils’.

The way the Egyptians portrayed jars containing the ‘seven sacred oils’ in tomb reliefs/paintings evolved over time. These jars were first depicted in tomb reliefs dating to the Fourth Dynasty, Old Kingdom. Here they appear on the lintel above the entrance to the innermost room, as well as on the walls flanking the false door, the latter becoming a standard feature of Sixth Dynasty chapel decoration, a tradition which continued into the Middle Kingdom (Pischikova 1994:65-66).

Provincial tombs of the Middle Kingdom depict a few examples of the jars for the ‘seven sacred oils’ appearing in new compositions, as can be seen in tomb no. 3 at Beni Hasan, Middle Egypt, where the jar for *h3tt nt thnw* oil appears twice behind the tomb-owner’s chair, nearly as big as its seat. In the New Kingdom tombs scenes depicting the jars are most frequently found either in the funerary shrine or in the chamber immediately preceding it, featuring only two or three of the ‘seven sacred oils’, although all seven of them are mentioned in accompanying offering lists. These scenes involve the presentation of these jars to the deities. Examples of these can be seen in the Theban tombs of Puymre (TT 39), Nakht (TT 52), Ramose (TT 55) and Rekmire (TT 100) (Pischikova 1994:66).

Two sections of a tomb scene in the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, Theban tomb of Rekmire (TT 100) depict attendants bringing the household and personal effects of Rekmire, in one of the sixty-eight different episodes of his funerary procession depicted on the west wall of his tomb. Here, one attendant is carrying a chest containing, amongst other things, a jar of *sft* oil and a jar of *tw3t* oil and two attendants are carrying a chest containing, among other things, two jars of *h3tt nt thnw* oil. According to the usual Egyptian artistic convention, the contents are depicted on top of the chests, to indicate what is inside them (Figure 6.3).

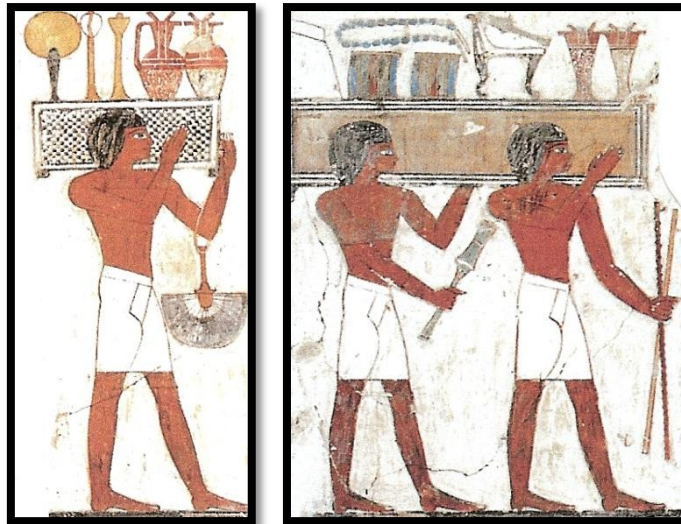


Figure 6.3: Attendants carrying grave goods, in the tomb of Rekhmire (TT 100)

A common motif in tombs of the late Twenty-fifth and Twenty-sixth Dynasties, the Kushite and Saite periods respectively of the Late Period, is the tomb-owner sitting on a chair with at least one of the jars containing the ‘seven sacred oils’ depicted beneath it (Pischikova 1994:66). Pischikova (1994:67-69) argues that the frequent depictions of the ‘seven sacred oils’ in Late Period tombs, especially placed under the tomb owner’s chair, where they had not been depicted before, cannot be accidental but must be connected with the symbolism of these oils, which has an ancient origin. They are mentioned in the Pyramid Texts. PT 51a, 51c, 52a and 139 identify sacred oil as the emblem of the eye of Horus; PT 742b and 742c mention that oil was poured on the head of the deceased as it was placed on the head of Osiris by Horus; PT 52c and 53a indicate that the deceased being anointed with oil provided the physical, as well as spiritual power for resurrection; and PT 51c indicates that a libation of oil secures the favour of the deities. It was by smelling the sacred oils, that the deceased was united with Ra and Osiris. The use of sacred oils thus symbolised rebirth in the afterlife for the deceased, rooted in concepts such as renewal of the body, cleansing, and union with Horus, Ra and Osiris.

In the Saite period, the Egyptians believed that this rebirth could only be achieved through divine favour, and not through the traditional food offerings, a belief that was reflected in tomb decoration of this period. These tombs had strong associations with the deities of the afterlife, such as Anubis, Hathor as patron of the Theban necropolis, and most importantly Osiris, the symbol of resurrection. The open courts of the tombs, the most important parts of

them in this period, were decorated to resemble the tomb of Osiris at Abydos. Basins containing lotuses, the plants of Osiris, were one of the main symbolic elements featured in these open courts. In addition, late Twenty-fifth Dynasty and Saite tombs, reflecting some of the forms and functions of temples, had as their most sacred areas, niches containing statues of deities, and not false doors, which had often been eliminated from the plans of these tombs. The statues were primarily of Osiris or Hathor, which served as the object of the deceased's worship for eternity.

A jar containing *h3tt nt thnw* oil is depicted under a chair in the Theban tomb of Iby (TT 36) (Figure 6.4).

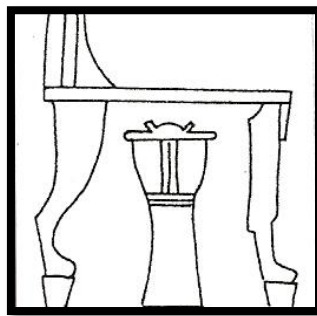


Figure 6.4: A jar of *h3tt nt thnw* oil, in the Theban tomb of Iby (TT 36)

Six jars containing *hknw* oil are depicted under a chair in the Theban tomb of Pabasa (TT 279), the top three with lotus flowers placed on them (Figure 6.5). The *hknw* oil jar was never depicted being carried in processions, but only under the tomb owner's chair (Pischikova 1994: 72).

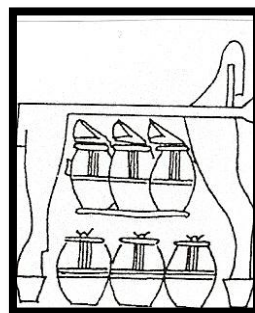


Figure 6.5: Jars of *hknw* oil, in the Theban tomb of Pabasa (TT 279)

Variations of this theme occur in these periods, such as in the Theban tomb of Petamenophis (TT 33), where seven jars of oil are depicted larger than the nearby offering table and scenes

of offering bearers carrying jars of the ‘seven sacred oils’, found in the Theban tombs of Nespekashuty (TT 312), Basa (TT 389), Iby (TT 36) and Pabasa (TT 279). Other variations include the jars being carried in a burial procession, seen in the Theban tombs of Mentuemhat (TT 34) and Iby (TT 36); and being offered to the deities, seen in the Theban tombs of Iby (TT 36), Ankh-hor (TT 414) and the tomb of Thery (Giza south) (Pischikova 1994:67 and 68).

Serpico (1997:109) states that damaged texts in the Theban tombs of Puyemre (TT 39) and Ramose (TT 55) mention the products *'ntyw* and *sntr*, and jars containing the ‘seven sacred oils’ are depicted on plinths above the offerings. She is of the opinion that although it is possible that the ‘seven sacred oils’ were burnt in offering scenes, these oils are seemingly distinct from the products *'ntyw* and *sntr* usually used in these scenes.

A set of jars for the ‘seven sacred oils’ that was used in mummification, now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (Figure 6.6).

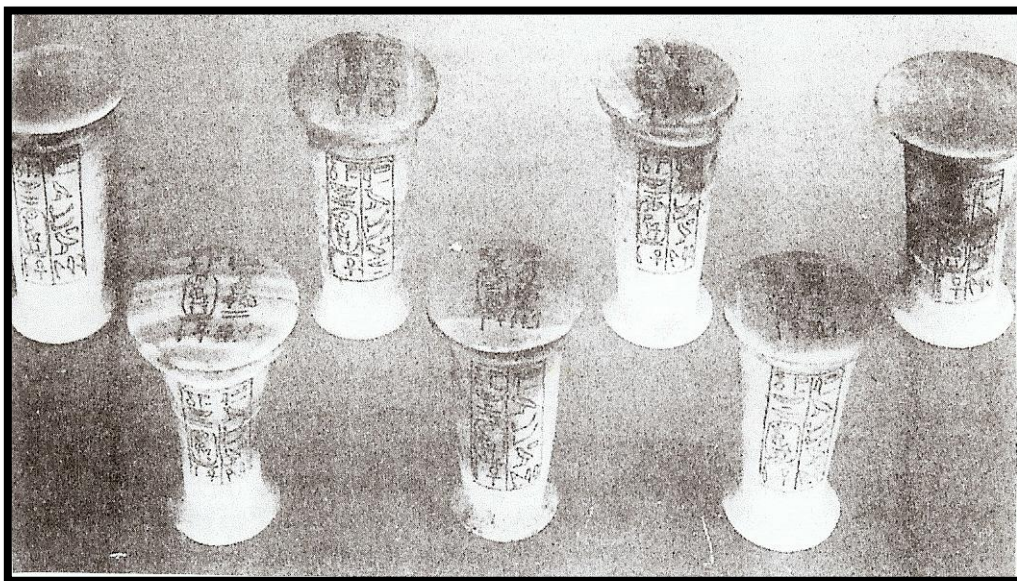


Figure 6.6: A set of jars for the ‘seven sacred oils’

The ‘seven sacred oils’ were used in the daily temple ritual, and the ritual of ‘opening of the mouth’ (Serpico & White 2000c:461). They were also used to anoint a substitute statue of the deceased placed in the tomb chapel (Hughes 1959:165) and in the mummification process.

Special compartmented offering tablets with seven depressions to hold these ‘seven sacred oils’ have been found in tombs of the Fifth to the Sixth Dynasties (Roth 1992:122), the name of each of them inscribed in hieroglyphs above them (Manniche 1999:37). Hawass (2004:198) states that two exquisite travertine objects were found during the 2000 excavations of his at the Teti pyramid complex at Saqqara. They were found in the burial chamber of the Sixth Dynasty, Old Kingdom, *mastaba* tomb of Tetiankh (also known as Tetiankhkem), Teti’s eldest son and therefore probably his crown prince, the one being a headrest. The other one is an offering tablet to hold the ‘seven sacred oils’ (Figure 6.7).

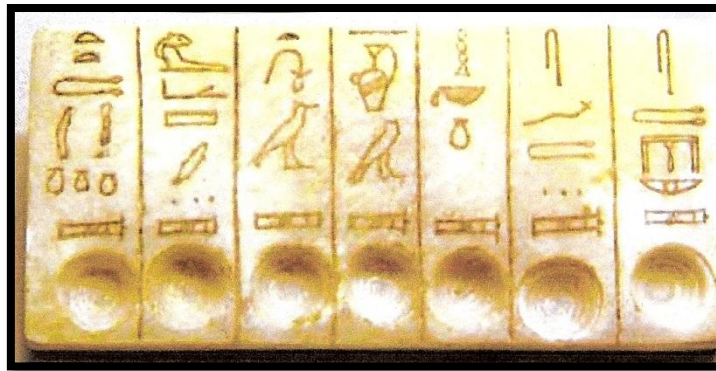
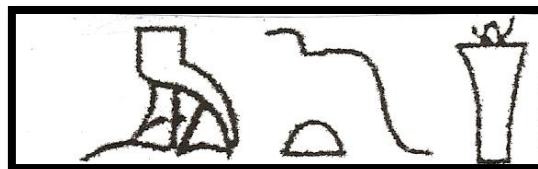


Figure 6.7: An offering tablet to hold the ‘seven sacred oils’

6.5.2 Madjet unguent



Madjet, the name composed with the Egyptian word for ‘fatty matter’ (*adj*), was a sacred unguent/oil, one of three sacred unguents/oils added to the original ‘seven sacred oils’ and would, like them, have been originally used in the funerary ritual but in time it came to play a central part in the temple daily cult ritual. A recipe for madjet in the perfume/unguent ‘laboratory’ of the Edfu temple specifies that it was a “recipe for preparing madjet for the room of the ‘First Feast’ in the temple by the unguent makers in the workshop of the temple” (Manniche 1999:43). Manniche (1999:43-44) states that:

This room was a special kiosk used for the celebrations of the most important feast when the statue of the deity was carried along a precise route imitating the course of the sun, to the roof of the temple to be exposed to the sun rays.

Such facilities existed in other Ptolemaic temples as for instance at Dendera and Kom Ombo.

The vehicle for this unguent was ox fat (Manniche 1999:43). The preparation of this essential ingredient was begun two years in advance. The fat of a specially chosen castrated bull, whose nostrils had not been pierced, was left in a stone vessel with a stopper in the temple treasury for a year. Before this bull had been slaughtered, to ensure it was physically and ritually clean, it had been washed in the sacred lake of the temple every morning and had its feet wrapped in palm fibres. After the fat had been in the treasury for a year, it could then be perfumed (Manniche 1999:44). It was then dyed red by the *nesti* plant (Manniche 1999:45), often translated as alkanet, based on references to it by the classical authors (Manniche 1999:147). Manniche (1999:43-45) translates the ingredients⁹³, using modern metric units of volume/mass, as 1 092 fat, 1 l wine from the oases, 1.5 l water, 91 g pine resin, 182 g cinnamon, 91 g aspelathos, 91 g Cyperus grass rhizomes, 91 g juniper berries, 91 g pine kernels, 182 g second class dry *'ntyw* and *nesti* plant (alkanet) to dye the unguent red. She believes in some contexts madjet unguent was a generic designation for a type of fatty unguent, rather than the name for a specific 'brand'.

6.5.3 Hekenu unguent

A long recipe for hekenu unguent is written down on the east wall of the perfume/incense 'laboratory' at the temple of Horus at Edfu (Manniche 1999:37). Although this unguent has the same name as that of one of the 'seven sacred oils', Manniche (1999:108) states that it is an open question as to whether this unguent had anything substantial to do with its namesake invented two thousand years earlier. Manniche (1999:38) is of the opinion that it is probably a generic type of fragrant unguent, rather than a specific 'brand', whereby ingredients could be substituted if required. She bases this opinion on the fact that it is described as being 'hekenu of first class *antiu* resin and *ab* resin' intended for 'anointing the divine limbs'. She states further that she finds the temporary identification of the *nedjem* tree (literally meaning 'sweet' in Egyptian) sometimes found in literature, the extracted pulp of the seeds of which are the basic ingredient (vehicle) of this unguent, as the carob tree (which grew in Egypt), implausible, as the ancient Egyptian texts make it clear that the *nedjem* tree was not native to Egypt but grew in Ethiopia. When pressed, *nedjem* seeds yielded a liquid known as *reben*

⁹³ See Manniche (1999:44-45) for her interpretation of the method involved.

(Manniche 1999:39). The exact botanical identification of the *nedjem* tree remains unknown. A batch of hekenu took 365 days to prepare, which took place in five stages: preparing the vehicle; making the base material astringent; preparing ‘liquid’; preparing ‘dry’; and adding *ab* resin and more ‘*ntyw*-resin (Manniche 1999:39-40). Manniche (1999:39) gives the ingredients⁹⁴ as *nedgem* seeds, *tit en qet* (possibly pine resin), *tisheps* (possibly cinnamon), aspalathos, tubers of cyperus grass, ‘*ntyw*-resin, resin from the nenib tree, water, and wine.

6.6 CONCLUSION

As far as the exotic, luxury perfumes are concerned, it is not possible to provide an exact list of them that the ancient Egyptians produced, instead a selection of these perfumes that were produced in the ancient world are discussed. With some of them it is certain that the Egyptians produced them, whilst with others there is a possibility, sometimes a strong possibility that they did. These perfumes were precious, with many of them being produced from expensive, imported, ingredients. Consequently they were only available to the wealthy elite, the upper classes of ancient Egypt society, namely royalty and the nobility. Women wore them predominantly but the classical authors mention that men wore the lighter perfumes.

No positive botanical identity by scholars has been made of the fragrant gum-resin ‘*ntyw*’ which appears in ancient Egyptian texts and which the Egyptians used as incense. This has traditionally more often been botanically identified as myrrh (*Boswellia* spp.) by scholars. As far as the fragrant gum-resin *sntr* is concerned, appearing alongside ‘*ntyw*’ in Egyptian texts, also used by the Egyptians as incense, and which has traditionally more often been botanically identified as frankincense (*Commiphora* spp.) by scholars, the discovery of pottery sherds with resin attached to them at the Eighteenth Dynasty site of Tell el-Amarna in Middle Egypt has facilitated a multidisciplinary approach to the problem. This involves using botanical data, archaeological research and chemical analysis, which together have revealed that it was pistachio resin attached to the pottery sherds. The scholars Serpico & White (2000a:887-891) argue that this finding undoubtedly means that the botanical identification of *sntr* is *Pistachia* spp. This approach has also revealed that fragrant resin,

⁹⁴ See Manniche (1999:39-41) for her interpretation of the method involved and the quantities of the ingredients involved. For the translations of all the recipes written in hieroglyphs in the ‘laboratories’ of the Ptolemaic temples, she has converted the volume/mass units to modern metric ones as follows: 1 Egyptian hin = 0.5 litres, 1 deben = 91g and 1 kite = 9.1g.

used as incense, a precious, expensive, commodity, which had to be imported, was not restricted to use in state temples and by royalty. Instead its use was extended to the domestic enclave, such as the workmen's village in Tell el-Amarna, and temples that were family-centred.

The 'seven sacred oils' were, from the Old Kingdom onward, each put into a jar of a different shape, clearly depicted in ancient Egyptian art. During the late Twenty-fifth to Twenty-sixth Dynasties, the Kushite and Saite periods of the Late Period respectively, the 'seven sacred oils' were depicted on tomb walls underneath the tomb-owner's chair. This depiction seemingly has a symbolic meaning, as in the Pyramid Texts sacred oil is referred to as the emblem of the 'eye of Horus' and that the deceased is united with Ra and Osiris after smelling the sacred oils. The texts also mention that the physical, as well as spiritual, power for resurrection is bestowed upon the deceased after being anointed with sacred oil. The use of the 'seven sacred oils' thus assured resurrection in the afterlife for the deceased, available to all classes of ancient Egyptian society, the other sacred oils/unguents being used by priests in temples.

CHAPTER 7



PRODUCTION METHODS AND PROFESSIONS

The ancient Egyptians, in the absence of the process of distillation at their disposal, used various methods for making perfumes, the three main ones being pressing, enfleurage and maceration. There were various professions involved in perfume making, including the processes leading up to the production of the various types of perfumes, such as the cultivation of the aromatic plant materials and the seeds for the oils that were used as base materials; the preparation of these materials for further processing; the production of oil; the production of fat (also used as a base material); and the production of the various types of perfumes.

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Perfumes, always referred to by the ancient Egyptians as the ‘fragrance of the gods’, *stj-ntr*, derived from *stj* ‘to smell’ (Lucas 1962:8 and 44), differed in ancient Egypt from our modern French perfumes such as ‘Coco Mademoiselle’ by Chanel, ‘Tendre Poison’ by Dior or ‘Anaïs Anaïs’ by Cacharel. Lucas (1962:85-86) states that these modern perfumes are derived from solutions in alcohol of various essential oils obtained from the flowers, fruits, wood, bark, leaves or seeds of plants, using the principal of distillation. The earliest evidence of the process of distillation for the production of perfume, was discovered by archaeologists from the National Council for Researches of Rome (Institute for Technologies Applied to Cultural Heritage), led by Dr. Maria Belgiorno, in Cyprus in 2003, at the village of Pyrgos-Mavroraki, when a ‘perfume factory’ was uncovered, dating to the early-middle Bronze Age, second millennium BC, part of an ‘industrial complex’. The identification of the earliest known still found there, was based primarily on the find of clay alembic heads. The site was destroyed by an earthquake in c 1850 BC (http://www.erimiwine.net/erimiwine_g00000.2.pdf) (see Annexure A, Cyprus). There is, however, no evidence that the ancient Egyptians used the process of distillation in perfume production.

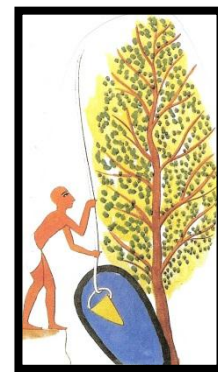
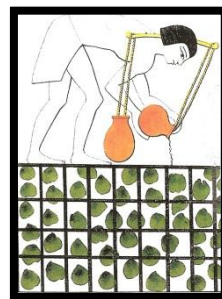
Serpico (1997:394) argues that although technically a perfume is produced by distillation (using alcohol), describing items such as scented unguents and scented oils, like those produced by the ancient Egyptians, as perfume, should not cause any confusion, as long as it is clear that the use of the word perfume in these cases is only general and does not imply a distilled product. The author thus uses the word perfume in this dissertation in this general sense, and it also includes incense.

El-Shimy (2003:29) states that although there is evidence that the use of perfume in ancient Egypt dates to the Predynastic Period, there are very few texts and tomb scenes for us to glean knowledge about how the Egyptians produced their perfumes.⁹⁵ Furthermore, most of the extant recipes concerning perfume date to the Graeco-Roman period. He argues that this lack of information suggests that the production of perfumed oils and unguents was a royal monopoly. This was especially so during the Graeco-Roman period, when perfume production in Alexandria was apparently in the hands of government bureaucrats. He is of the opinion that the perfumes used in daily life most probably had different methods of production than those used in the temple for the cults of the deities, the latter taking a longer time to produce. He states that the operations needed to produce perfumes in ancient Egypt, of which there were several, can be divided into two basic groups: those which took place outdoors and those which took place indoors in a workshop, although it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between the two (El-Shimy 2003:30 and 39).

7.2 OPERATIONS TAKING PLACE OUTDOORS

7.2.1 The cultivation of aromatic plant material and that used for oil production

The gardener carries a yoke,
 His shoulders are bent as with age;
 There's a swelling on his neck
 And it festers.
 In the morning he waters vegetables,
 The evening he spends with his herbs,
 While at noon he has toiled in the orchard.
 He works himself to death
 More than all other professions.



Extract from 'The Satire of the Trades'⁹⁶. Translated by Lichtheim (1973:187).

Despite the fact that Papyrus Harris I deals extensively with the farms and gardens of the estate of Amun during the reign of Ramesses III, Twentieth Dynasty, New Kingdom, and

⁹⁵ A set of Middle Assyrian clay tablets dating from the reign of Tukulti-Ninurtas I (1243-1207 BC) contains recipes for several different perfumes. They describe the processes of manufacture used by the Assyrian perfumers, as well as the ingredients and the pieces of equipment used (Shelmerdine 1985:11)

⁹⁶ From the Middle Kingdom, this is part of a genre of ancient Egyptian literature called 'instructions'. This satire deliberately gives a derisive characterisation of eighteen trades and professions, while speaking in glowing terms of the scribal profession (Lichtheim 1973:184-185).

texts from the Old and Middle Kingdoms onward mention titles of people carrying out agricultural duties, no extant Egyptian text specifically mentions the cultivation of flowers⁹⁷ (El-Shimy 2003:30).

Cornelius (1989:205) defines the ancient Egyptian garden as follows:

...an ordered space, usually enclosed by a fence or wall and accessible only through a gate or entrance, containing the following elements: water (streams, fountains, canals, dams, ponds or aqueducts), flora (plants, shrubs, flowers) and fauna (animals, birds, fish and human beings) and in some cases an artificial hill, terraces, as well as the buildings attached to the garden (temple, portico, garden house, kiosk).

Germer (1997:3-5) states that the layout of both the kitchen and temple garden, like all gardens in ancient Egypt, with their formal, strictly ordered arrangement, was chiefly determined by religious standpoints, intending to represent a *microcosmos*, a utopia in miniature, the pool often found in them, teeming with flora and fauna, symbolising the primeval ocean *nun*, from which all life originally emerged. Cornelius (1989:226) argues that the Egyptian garden linked the concepts of life, love, fertility and happiness, rooted in the notion of creation and nature in its ordered form, in fact a piece of idealized nature, created by man, which he used to control the order of the cosmos. Wilkinson, A (1994:1) states that ancient Egyptian gardens were designed with three elements in mind. These are function, which was entwined with meaning, which together dictated form.

Cornelius (1989:209) states that the Egyptian garden, being a concept that represents life, was the ideal place for funerary rites to be performed, which had the purpose of reviving the deceased for an existence in the afterlife. Tomb scenes depict the garden, which was usually surrounded by high walls, as the setting for funerary rituals of private individuals. Such a tomb scene is in the Theban tomb of Minnakht (TT 87), Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, a granary official (Figure 7.1).

⁹⁷ The ancient Egyptian word for flowers is *stj-s3*, literally garden scent (Germer 2001b:543).

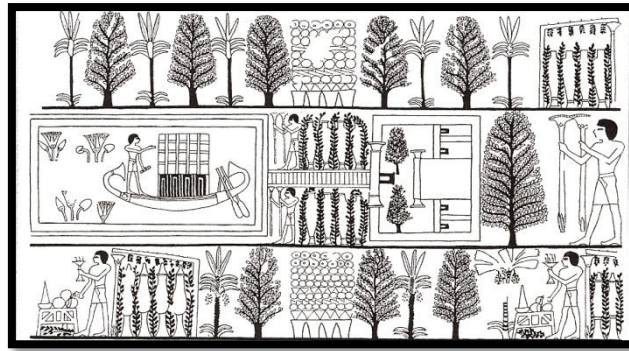


Figure 7.1: A garden for funerary rituals in the tomb of Minnakht (TT 87)

A scene in the Theban tomb of Sennefer (TT 99), Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, depicts a typical ancient Egyptian garden. A plan shows the layout of this garden (Figure 7.2).

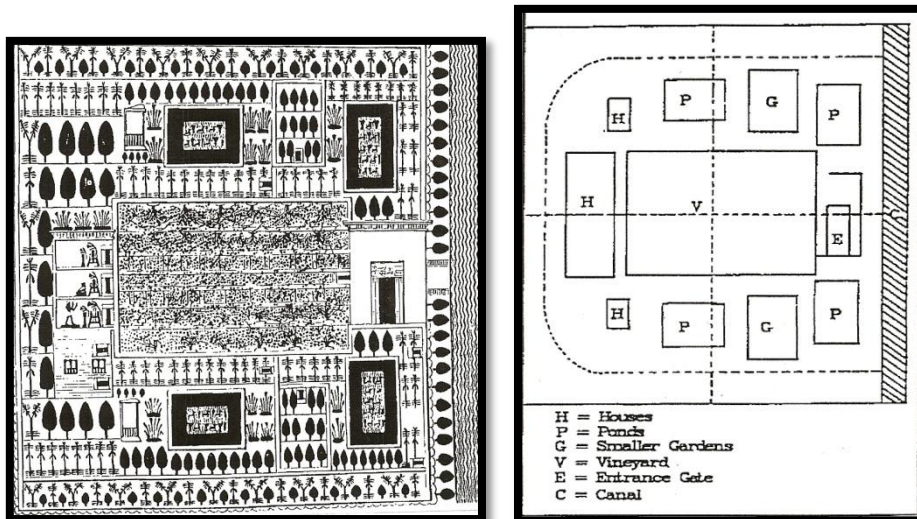


Figure 7.2: A garden in the tomb of Sennefer (TT 99) and a plan of it

The author argues that besides ducks and geese on ponds, it is possible that the Egyptians kept domesticated or captured European and Demoiselle cranes in their gardens, both of which can be seen in a relief in the Fifth Dynasty, Old Kingdom, *mastaba* tomb of Ti in Saqqara, with their keeper (Figure 7.3). Von Treuenfels (2006:21) states that from the earliest times, cranes served as pets and that the ancient Egyptians, along with the Chinese, Japanese, Greeks and Romans, regarded them as symbols of fate and heavenly messengers.

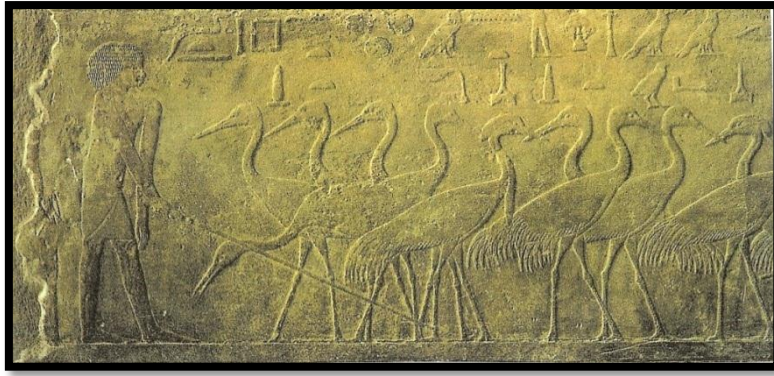


Figure 7.3: Cranes and their keeper, in the *mastaba* tomb of Ti, Saqqara

Besides fragrant flowers, and other fragrant material, needed for perfume production, flowers, many of them fragrant, were needed for the *ankh* bouquets, which were offered to the deities at festivals such as the ‘Beautiful Festival of the Valley’; floral bouquets needed for banquets; and garlands that decorated mummies at funerals, grown in kitchen gardens attached to houses (in addition to vegetables, fruit and herbs). It is difficult to establish the exact kind of flowers that were grown in these kitchen gardens, as no traces of them have been found during the excavation of settlements. A few Old Kingdom tomb scenes depict small plots of land, divided by raised mud paths. These kitchen gardens had to be watered, up until the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, with the help of a pair of ceramic jugs carried on a yoke by gardeners (*k3mw*, *k3nj*, or *k3rj*), the water being obtained from Nile canals, as they were situated beyond the area flooded by the annual inundation of the Nile. From the Amarna period (late Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom) onward, besides the ceramic jugs, they also used the *shaduf*, which allowed them to water larger areas. This consisted of a long pivot pole with a bucket or jar at one end and a counterpoise of mud at the other end (Germer 1997:3). A wall painting in the Theban tomb of Ipuw (TT 217), reign of Ramesses II, Nineteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, shows gardeners watering flowers and trees using the *shaduf*. Temple gardens also grew flowers for *ankh* bouquets or other wreaths offered to the deities, amongst which would have been fragrant ones (Germer 1997:3-5).

Numerous scenes, both in tombs and temples, show a great variety of flowers and trees growing in Egyptian gardens, but these are sometimes difficult to identify (El-Shimy 2003:30). Some tomb scenes, especially in the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, give an indication of what



flowers were growing in the country side, the most important as far as perfume is concerned, being the fragrant blue lotus (*Nymphaea caerulea*) and white lilies (*Lilium candida*). Later imports were grown in Egyptian gardens, which could well have been grown for perfume production (Germer 2001a:540). These include the narcissus (*Narcissus tazetta*), cultivated after the Persian period (El-Shimy 2003:32); and the rose (*Rosa ricardii*) and the jasmin (*Jasminum sambac*) in the Roman era, brought to Rome from the Asian provinces of the Roman Empire (Germer 2001a:540).

In ancient Egypt, unlike today, the Nile's surface was covered with the leaves and flowers of the blue (and white) lotus, making it easy for this flower to be harvested (Germer 2001a:536). The fragrant blue lotus is also depicted in tomb scenes as growing in ponds in gardens in an urban setting.

Wilkinson, A (1994:4) states that one of the functions of temple gardens was to produce the floral offerings (as well as the vegetable and fruit ones) needed for the rituals of the deities. This would have included the fragrant blue lotus flower. Another function was to grow plant material needed to produce the perfumes used for anointing the statues. This would certainly have included aromatic plant material.

Some of the oil-producing sources such as tubers, seeds and fruit were labour-intensive cultivated crops, grown annually, mainly maturing in spring. Nuts obtained from trees such as balanos and moringa didn't need cultivating. Olive and almond trees were either cultivated or grew in the wild (Serpico & White 2000b:405).

7.2.2 The gathering and storing of aromatic plant material and plant material used for oil production

Various parts of aromatic plant materials and plant material used for oil production had to be gathered and stored for further processing. Resin was the most expensive raw material and required special skills to gather it. Incisions had to be made in the bark of the tree, allowing the resin to exude from the trunk in viscous drops, which hardened into tear-shaped drops on contact with the air (Dayagi-Mendels 1989:96).

Nuts and fruits were stripped from trees such as the balanos and moringa, the uncracked nuts being stored until required for further processing. The various crops from which oil is

extracted, the most important parts of which are the seeds, fruits and tubers, had to be harvested. Seed crops and tubers could have been stored for months without appreciable loss of their oil content, provided they were kept cool, dry and pest free. Olives, after being gathered, with their delicate flesh, would not have been able to be stored for this length of time. The bulk storage of raw materials would have depended on the space available. A large crop for instance, with not enough space to store it in favourable conditions, would have led to it receiving priority as far as processing is concerned. Our knowledge of the seasonality of the oil industry in ancient Egypt is restricted, due to a lack of secure information about the sources for oil production in use. However these variables suggest that oil production could have taken place primarily twice a year, as the sources became available in spring and autumn. Alternatively, it could have been spread over much of the year (Serpico & White 2000b:405).

Essences were extracted from flowers and they had to be gathered from the fields, ponds or gardens where they grew. El-Shimy (2003:32 and 34) points out that very few tomb scenes in Egyptian art depict the gathering of fragrant flowers (mostly represented in the Late Period) or other plant material that could have been used in the production of perfumes.

A drawing of a scene in the Fifth Dynasty, Old Kingdom, *mastaba* tomb of Niankhkhnum and Khnumhotep⁹⁸, in the sector of the pyramid of Unas at Saqqara, depicts a man collecting *w'n*-berries (juniper berries) and putting them in a basket (El-Shimy 2003:33) (Figure 7.4).

⁹⁸ Siliotti (1997:136) translates their principal titles as 'Prophets of Ra in the sun temple of Niuserre' and 'Heads of the manicurists of the Great House'.

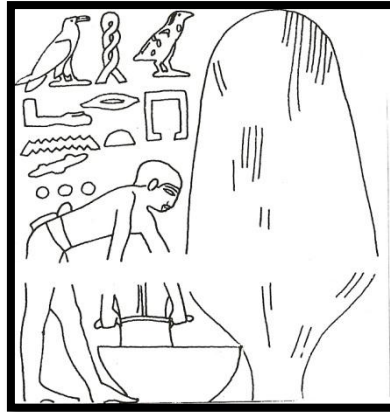


Figure 7.4: A man collecting *w'n* berries

A drawing by N de G Davies of a scene in the Sixth Dynasty, Old Kingdom, tomb of Djou at Deir el-Gabrawi, shows men wading in the marshes and gathering lotuses. Both the white and the fragrant blue lotus were used in floral bouquets, while only the fragrant blue lotus was used in perfume production (Figure 7.5).

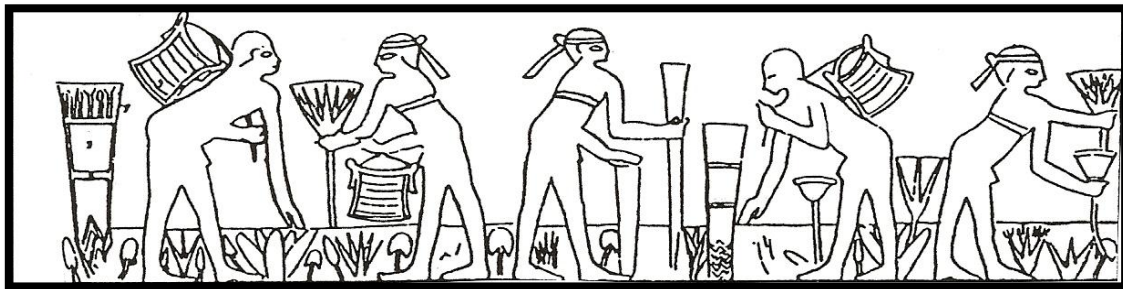


Figure 7.5: Men gathering lotus flowers, in the tomb of Djou

A scene, on a limestone relief from the Twenty-sixth Dynasty, Late Period, now in the Musée du Louvre, Paris, shows women gathering lilies for perfume and placing them in baskets (Figure 7.6).

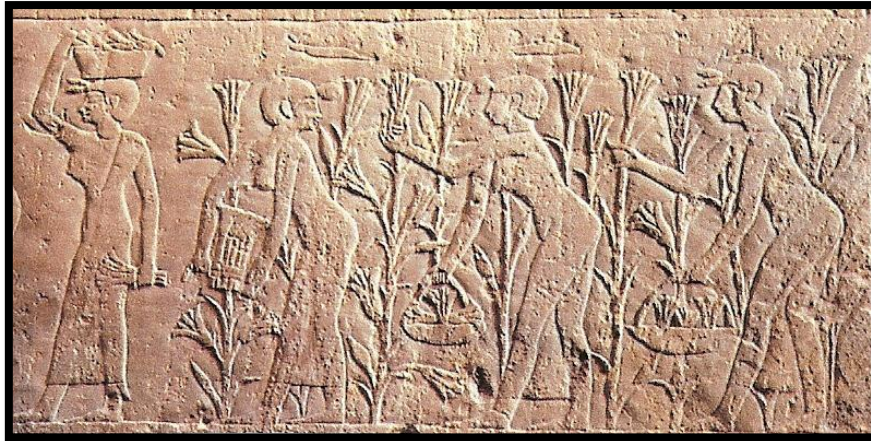


Figure 7.6: Women collecting lilies

Saffron is one of the ingredients of a *kyphi* recipe. The crocus plant, from which saffron is derived, was not grown in ancient Egypt, so there are no depictions in ancient Egyptian art of the crocus flower being gathered.

A fresco from the Minoan settlement of Akrotiri on the island of Thera (Santorini) from the east wall of room 3A, first floor of the 'Xesta 3' building, depicts what scholars believe is a crocus harvesting scene. Two women are depicted taking part in the harvesting. The woman on the left is holding a bucket to put the plant material in, while the woman on the right has one on the ground near her. It is not clear whether the women are gathering the whole crocus flower or only the stigmas from the flowers, from which the saffron is derived. It is not known whether the plant involved is the wild *Crocus cartwrightianus* or the domesticated *Crocus sativus* (Shaw 1993:674) (Figure 7.7).



Figure 7.7: Women collecting crocus flowers

7.2.3 The preparation of aromatic plant materials and that used for oil extractions for further processing

7.2.3.1 Chopping up of aromatic plant material

Various parts of aromatic plant materials, such as flowers, branches and resin had to be chopped up, ready for further processing. Presumably both men and women would have been involved in this process. El-Shimy (2003:39) is of the opinion that it is also possible that this process took place indoors in a perfume workshop.

7.2.3.2 Oil production

Serpico & White (2000b:406) state that very little is known about the methods concerning oil manufacture in ancient Egypt but using modern methods of oil extraction as a guideline, the preliminary stage of cleaning, dehulling, grinding or mashing and heating would have been necessary, after the preliminary process of harvesting the various crops. These were gathered throughout the year and kept in a cool, dry, place until processing of them could begin. Serpico (2001:583-585) is of the opinion that production of oils, as well as fats, was possibly carried out to some degree as a 'cottage industry'. However, texts clearly indicate that oil boilers were attached to major temples and that areas used for the processing of these two commodities formed part of the workshops in temple and palace precincts, with both of them

being stored in pottery amphorae, known as *mn*-jars, in their treasuries. The capacity of these jars, used for both storage and transport, given in fluid *hin* measures (roughly half a litre/quart), usually ranged from twenty to forty litres/quarts.

7.2.3.2.1 Cleaning

This would involve oilseeds, tubers and fruits having foreign material and botanical debris such as twigs, leaves, other seeds, sand and dirt removed from them, using the methods of hand-picking, sieving and/or winnowing (Serpico & White 2000b:405-406).

7.2.3.2.2 Dehulling (decortication)

This would involve removing the outer shell or thin seed coat found on many oilseeds, such as sesame for example. To facilitate pressing, the seeds would be soaked in hot water, dried and then rubbed (Serpico & White 2000b:406).

7.2.3.2.3 Grinding or mashing

Grinding or mashing oilseeds, tubers and fruits would have involved using a pestle and mortar to release the oils and to increase the yield (Serpico & White 2000b:406), or a palette (Fletcher 1999a:25).

7.2.3.2.4 Cooking or ‘conditioning’

The oleaginous pulp that resulted from the grinding or mashing process could then be mixed with water and cooked, the cooking time depending on various factors, such as the hardness of the seeds. Oil production today uses temperatures from 80-105 degrees C. In the absence of a press, oil extraction may have been achieved through this process alone, also known as the hot water flotation method. Oilseeds are boiled in water for at least thirty minutes. The oil floating on the surface is then collected with a shallow dish. Heating it removes any excess water (Serpico & White 2000b:406).

7.2.3.2.5 The tomb of Petosiris at Tuna el-Gebel

The superstructure of the tomb of Petosiris⁹⁹ and his family, early Ptolemaic Period, at Tuna el-Gebel, is in the form of a small temple, with a columned façade. There is an entrance portico with a cult chapel behind it and the burial chambers are underground (Baines & Malek 1992:128). The tomb is the best-known one of the Ptolemaic Period and is famous for its scenes exhibiting a mixture of Egyptian and Greek elements (Hawass 2006c:409). The reliefs in the entrance portico depict traditional Egyptian themes, such as agricultural activities and craftsmen at work, but the stylistic execution of the work and its iconographic details echo contemporary styles influenced by the Greeks. In addition, the figures wear Greek clothing. The tomb chapel and its four pillars however feature religious motifs entirely derived from Egyptian tradition (Seidel & Schulz 2005:278-279).

In the top register to the right of a line drawing of one of the scenes in the entrance portico, a man is emptying a jar of red berries onto a pile of these on the ground. A scribe is supervising other workers removing the stems and skins of the berries. In the bottom register, on the left hand side, two workers are piling aromatics onto a small table, said to have come from the 'land of Punt'. On the right hand side a substance called *h3w* is being pounded in pestle and mortars by two men. The text accompanying the scene identifies it as perfumers preparing 'ntyw' perfume (El-Shimy 2003:35) (Figure 7.8).

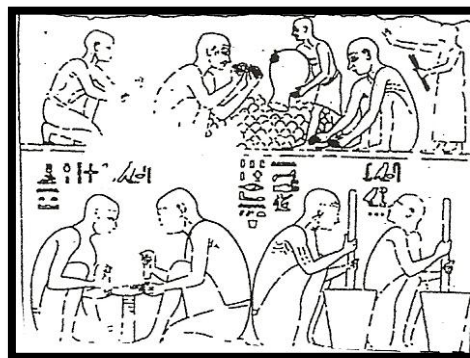
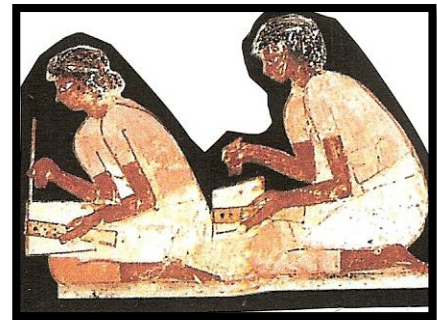


Figure 7.8: Perfumers preparing perfume, in the tomb of Petosiris

⁹⁹ Seidel & Schulz (2005:278) translate the title of Petosiris as 'high priest of the god Thoth in Hermopolis' (one of the important posts during this period), his Egyptian name being Pa-di-Usir, 'gift of Osiris', and his Greek name Petosiris being a Hellenized version of this. He served in this post during the reign of Philip Arrhidaeus (Baines & Malek 1992:127).

A line drawing of another scene in the tomb, in the top register, depicts on the left, a man seated on the ground, smelling the contents of a vessel, being brought to him by a worker. In the centre, a worker is pouring perfume into a jar with handles, watched by a supervisor. On the right, a worker is bringing two vessels to a man seated on a box-like piece of furniture. In the lower register, on the left, a man is stoking the fire in an oven. Another man is stirring the contents of a pan placed on top of the oven, the accompanying inscription mentioning that he is 'mashing the fruit of Punt'. On the right, two men are sitting on the ground around a table, filling jars with the help of little bowls, the accompanying inscription indicating that they are 'perfumers making resins of agreeable odour'

(http://www.reshafim.org.il/ad/egypt/trades/perfume_makers.htm) (Figure 7.9).

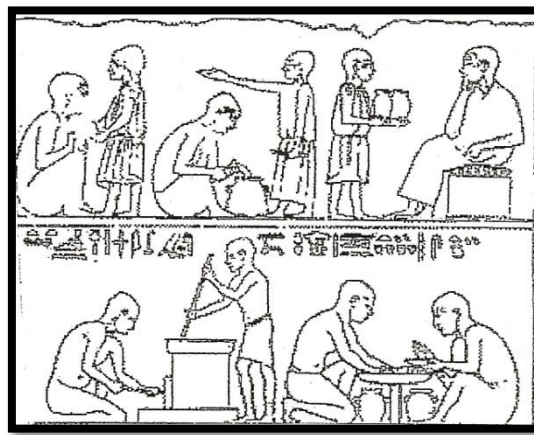


Figure 7.9: Perfumers preparing perfume, in the tomb of Petosiris

7.2.4 The production processes for making perfume and extracting oil

Serpico (2001:584) states that while many tomb scenes depict the various processes involved in making perfumed oils and unguents, there are no comparable scenes depicting oil manufacture and no oil/fat processing workshops have been archaeologically identified from pharaonic sites. She argues that it is feasible that oil processing was carried out in a similar manner.

7.2.4.1 Pressing

In the absence of the process of distillation, pressing was one of the three main processes that the ancient Egyptians used in making perfume, the other two being that of enfleurage and maceration. Dayagi-Mendels (1989:96) states that this method seems to have been the

earliest of the three. Forbes (1955:10) notes that the same presses that were used for pressing grapes for the making of wine, were used for pressing seeds for oil production, although there are more depictions of the former in Egyptian art, providing us with knowledge of how these presses evolved over time. The process of pressing probably took place near the field, garden or plantation where the base materials were grown, as was the case with the pressing of grapes, as tomb scenes seem to indicate that the installations involved were of a temporary nature (El-Shimy 2003:34).

The oldest form of this process involved treading the base material in a vessel such as a tub, often depicted in tomb scenes from the oldest times onward. The first real press however consisted of a linen cloth in which the grapes or seeds were placed, folded together in such a manner that the two corners on each side enfolded a stick (Forbes 1955:10), a bag press, called by the Egyptians *s3tt mrht* (El-Shimy 2003:37). These linen cloth bags, used for the production of perfumed oils, and acting as strainers, were not as big as those used for wine making but were wrung in the same way as wine bags (Vogelsang-Eastwood 2000:292). By turning the two sticks in opposite directions, pressure was exerted on the contents of the linen bag, releasing the juices or oils into a vessel. This is sometimes depicted in a curious way in tomb scenes. It is meant to portray two men on each side of the vessel twisting their sticks and a fifth man trying to keep these sticks apart, which converge when the cloth is compressed by torsion (Forbes 1955:10). This pressing technique is mostly depicted in Old Kingdom tombs, but is sometimes also depicted in Middle Kingdom and New Kingdom tombs (Murray, Boulton & Heron 2000:588).

The technique of using the bag press is depicted in a scene in the Fifth Dynasty, Old Kingdom, *mastaba* tomb of Iymery¹⁰⁰ at Giza (G6020) in the lower register towards the left, where an inscription mentions the pressing of *mrht* (oil). Also in the lower register, on the right, can be seen jars labelled for the ‘seven sacred oils’ (Serpico & White 2000c:462) (Figure 7.10).

¹⁰⁰ Siliotti (1997:84) translates the principal titles of Iymery as ‘Prophet of Khufu’, and ‘Overseer of the Great House, Son of Shepseskafankh’.

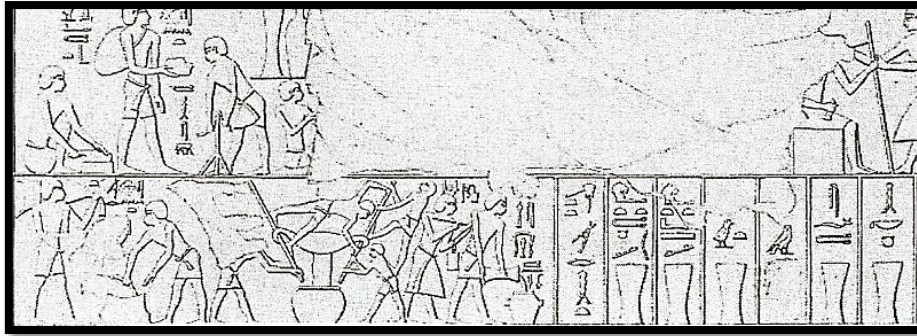


Figure 7.10: Men pressing oil with a bag press, in the tomb of Imyery

This pressing technique can be seen more clearly in a relief scene in the Fifth Dynasty, Old Kingdom, *mastaba* tomb of Ptahotep and Akhehotep (reigns of Djedkare and Unas) in the sector of the pyramid of Unas at Saqqara, showing the pressing of grapes (Figure 7.11).

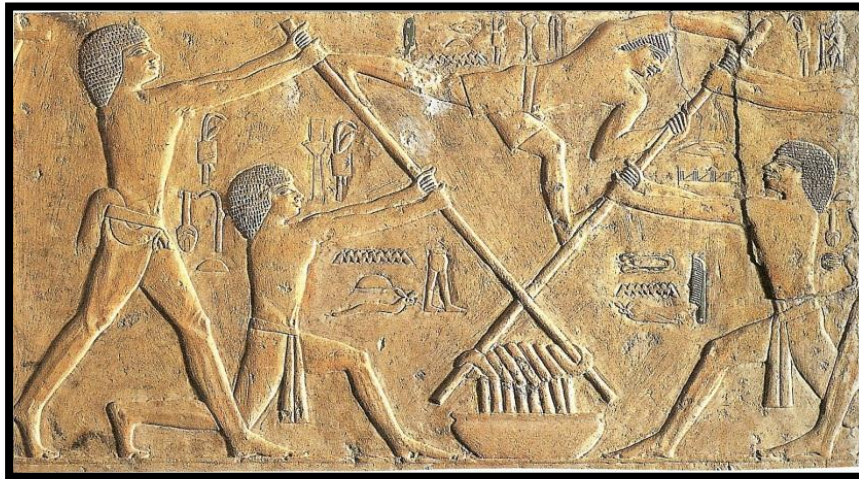


Figure 7.11: Men pressing grapes, in the tomb of Ptahhotep and Akhehotep

A limestone relief fragment from the Twenty-sixth Dynasty, Late Period, now housed in the Musée du Louvre, Paris, depicts two women squeezing lily blossoms using the bag press to obtain oil for *susinum*, the lily perfume. The oil is dripping into a large two-handled jar standing on a rectangular stool-like object. A woman standing to the left of these two women is carrying the freshly gathered lily blossoms in a basket/bowl on her head (Figure 7.12).



Figure 7.12: Women pressing lilies, to make susinum, lily perfume

Another relief from the Twenty-sixth Dynasty, Late Period, also depicts two women (one partially obscured) squeezing lily blossoms, using a bag press, to produce lily oil for susinum (lily perfume) to the right of the scene. To the left of the scene a woman is pouring the contents of a jar, possibly the lily oil produced by the press, into a larger jar with two handles, standing on the ground (Figure 7.13).

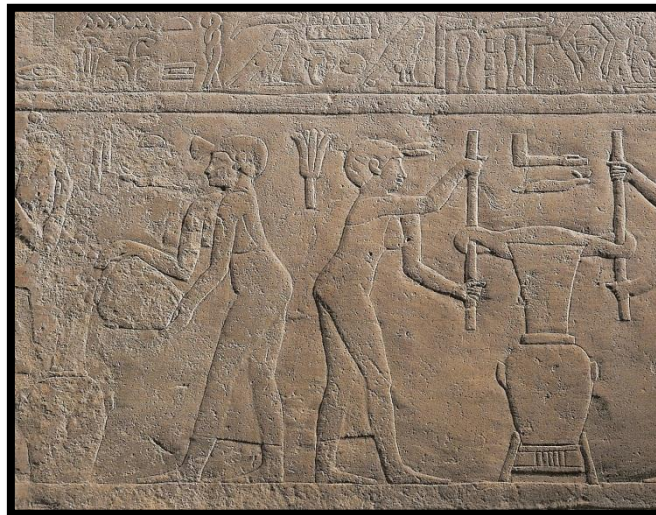


Figure 7.13: Women pressing lilies, using a bag press

Forbes (1955:10) states that as early as the Third Dynasty, Old Kingdom, the final stage of the mechanisation of the press is depicted, before the classical world invented the beam press

and the screw press¹⁰¹. An upright frame now holds the bag press. One of the sticks is replaced by a noose attached to one of the uprights of this frame. A set of workmen twist the stick that is attached by a loop to the other end of the frame. A large vessel catches the resulting liquid. He states, further, that an inspector is usually depicted testing the cloth, with his hand, looking out for possible holes or cracks.

This press is depicted in a scene in the Eleventh Dynasty, Middle Kingdom, tomb of Bakt III at Beni Hasan (BH 15), Middle Egypt. This scene is now apparently destroyed but was copied by Cailliaud in 1831 (Lucas 1937:32). Serpico & White (2000c:462) are of the opinion that this scene possibly shows oil pressing, as an inscription above the press indicates that this is a workshop of *nwd*. The context in which this word is used in other texts, indicates that it could refer to a scented cosmetic mixture. Two accompanying vignettes depict the stages that took place prior to pressing, namely the grinding or mashing of the raw material and the placement of this material in a bag. El-Shimy (2003:35 and 37) concurs with Serpico that oils are being pressed in this scene, commenting that the pressing device appears to be installed in a workroom reserved for the preparation of perfumes. In addition, he is of the opinion that the fourth man shown in the pressing scene (within the frame) is there to signal to the other three workmen when to stop twisting the stick. Lucas (1937:32) is also in agreement with Serpico and El-Shimy, by stating that the pressing being depicted in this scene is connected to the making of perfumes. Murray *et al.* (2000:589), on the other hand, believe that the straining and pressing of grapes is depicted in this scene (Figure 7.14).

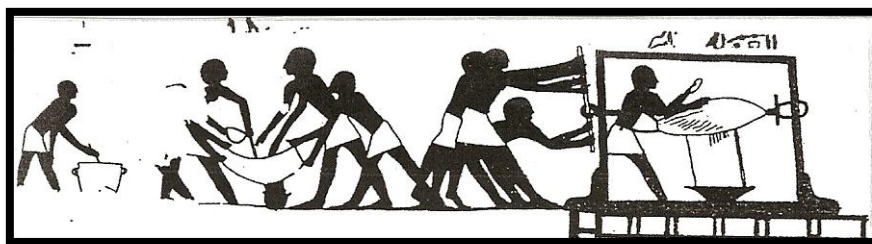


Figure 7.14: Men using a bag press with an upright frame

¹⁰¹ In Campania in Italy in antiquity an unusual type of wedge press was used in the perfume industry for which Campania was famed. This press (also used to press olives) was operated by wedges being driven into an upright frame. This wedge press is known from a painting found at Pompeii (Panetta 2004:193) (see Annexure A, Pompeii).

Forbes (1955:10) states that it appears that the ancient Egyptians did not obtain essential oil by means of expression very often, as the recipes usually involve the plant essences be directly incorporated into the carrier oil or fat, by the methods of maceration or enflourage.

7.2.5 Putting the extract in jars and transporting it to the perfume workshops and after processing, transporting the perfumed oils/unguents to storerooms or perfume/ incense ‘laboratories’ in temples

After the operation of pressing, the essence or oils now had to be put into jars and transported to the perfume workshops, where the master-perfumers mixed the various ingredients according to the traditional recipes, and other scented preparations were prepared. The filling of jars is the operation that is most frequently depicted in tomb scenes, especially in the Old Kingdom. After processing at the perfume workshops, the perfumed oils/unguents and other scented preparations had to be transported to storerooms or perfume/incense ‘laboratories’ at temples, the perfumed oils/unguents being put into jars.

A section of a painting on a wall in the Theban tomb of Neferenpet (TT 178), Nineteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, depicts officials in a store house taking delivery of vessels that are going to be used for the storage of oils and wines (Figure 7.15).

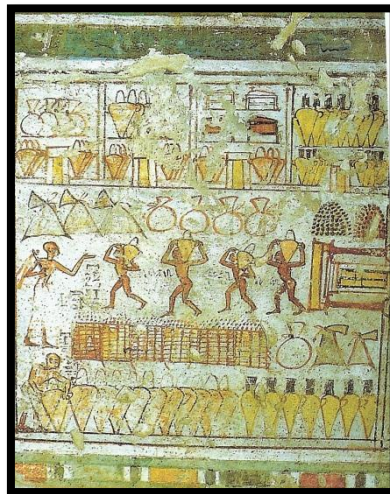


Figure 7.15: Officials in a store house, taking delivery of empty vessels

In the Sixth Dynasty, Old Kingdom, *mastaba* tomb of Kagemni¹⁰², sector of the pyramid of Teti, Saqqara, a scene shows labelled representations of perfumed substances being put into jars. Aromatics and oil are being placed in a cylinder jar with the use of a spatula (*h3w.t mrht m k.t*). The accompanying instruction is that it must rest until the next day (*jsk w3 r mnh dj w3h*), in the smaller rounded *b3s*-jar to which it is transferred. One worker says to another while mixing the substances ‘It is surely your perfume which will make it [the mixture] pleasant (*snd m sk r.s stj.k*)’, adding ‘Look, very pleasing oil (*mk mrht ndmt wrt*)’. The reply is ‘It is what we expect from a skilled craftsman (*mrh.w: mk sdm r3.wn hmww nfr*)’ (El-Shimy 2003: 38) (Figure 7.16).



Figure 7.16: Men filling jars with a perfumed substance, in the tomb of Kagemni

Another relief in the *mastaba* tomb of Kagemni depicts a team of four men (three shown here) pulling a sledge¹⁰³ with a rope, on which are tied down huge jars of scented oil. A fifth worker is making the ground in front of the sledge soft by pouring water onto it from a jar (Hawass 2003a :299) (Figure 7.17).

¹⁰² Siliotti (1997:120) translates Kagemni’s principal titles as ‘Vizier’, ‘Overseer of Prophets of the Pyramid’ and ‘Supervisor of the city of Teti pyramid’. He served in this post during the reign of king Teti (Hawass 2003:299).

¹⁰³ In the Sixth Dynasty tomb, Old Kingdom, of Meru at Sheikh Saad, the transporting of oils (*nhnm, tw 3wt, st-hb, hknw* and *sft*) is depicted, but instead of a sledge being used, men are carrying the cylindrical jars (El-Shimy 2003:39).

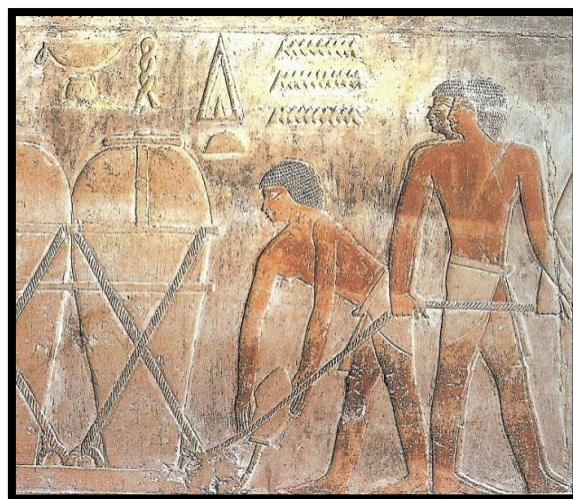


Figure 7.17: Men pulling perfume jars on a sledge with a rope

7.3 OPERATIONS TAKING PLACE INDOORS

Certain operations took place in a perfume workshop, where specialised staff were involved in the various operations needed to create perfumes, mixed according to recipes only known by the master-perfumer¹⁰⁴ (El-Shimy 2003:42) and the preparation of other scented preparations.

7.3.1 Enfleurage (cold steeping)

This was the easiest of the three main processes used by the ancient Egyptians to produce perfume from flowers, fruit and seeds, the other two being pressing and maceration. It was not however suitable for all plants. It was especially effective however with plants such as jasmine and roses. Petals were strewn on a layer of animal fat placed between two boards in order for the scent to be absorbed by the fat. After about twenty-four hours, the petals were replaced by fresh ones. After several weeks of repeating this process daily, the fat was saturated with scent (Dayagi-Mendels 1989:97).

¹⁰⁴ The tradition carries on in Egypt today in the Coptic Church, where during the 'Holy Week' the Pope in person, surrounded by other religious dignitaries, prepares and consecrates the holy oils. These consist of the *myron* (consecrated oil) and *ghalilaoun* (the oil of joy or chatechumenate oil). This only occurs when the supplies of these oils have run out. The *myron* is prepared from at least twenty ingredients, among which are: filipendula (dropwort); cassia; Chinese cinnamon with its bark; blue iris; *Calamus aromaticus*; costus; red roses from Iraq; lavender; white sandalwood; and wild ginger (El-Shimy 2003:42).

This process was used by the ancient Egyptians to make the fragrant unguent cones (*hnb*), which revellers wore on their heads at banquets. The unguent-cookers used a metal crescent-shaped knife (*bt*), the inner rim being formed by two semi-circles. Its precise use, however, is not known but it is thought that it was used to shape the fragrant fat, after solidifying and cooling, into balls or cones, as the name *bt* is connected with *bd*, mould for casting and *bd*, ball (Forbes 1955:13 and 44) (Figure 7.18).

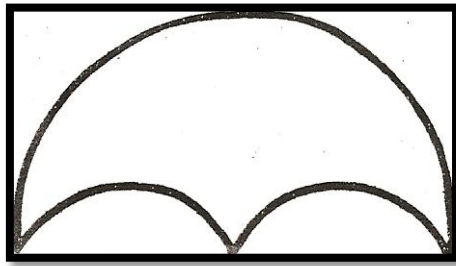


Figure 7.18: An unguent-cooker's crescent-shaped knife

7.3.2 The heating of aromatic substances

The earliest representations of the heating of aromatic substances can be found on the ivory or precious wood jar labels¹⁰⁵ found at Naqada and Abydos, dating from the Thinite Period, which often refer to sacred oils or perfumes.

The label of Iti-sen (First Dynasty), a royal carpenter, now in the British Museum, mentions the oil *h3tt (nt)* and shows its preparation. A stick-like man is depicted stirring a mixture in a cauldron with a large pestle (El-Shimy 2003:40) (Figure 7.19).

¹⁰⁵ Small labels such as this, usually made of ivory, bone or wood, are some of the most important artefacts from the Early Dynastic period, attached to objects such as jars (many containing fine scented oils) and boxes, in order to date them and to record their contents. The hieroglyphic signs on these labels represent a very early phase of writing in Egypt, contemporary with the earliest known writing from Mesopotamia. Many have been found at Abydos, especially in the area of the Umm el Qa'ab, where the kings of the First and Second Dynasties and their predecessors were buried. It is this area that German archaeologists, who have been excavating at Abydos since 1977, under the leadership of Gunter Dreyer, have concentrated on (Hawass 2004:158).

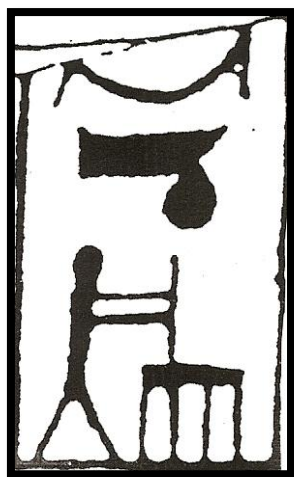


Figure 7.19: A man stirring a mixture in a cauldron with a pestle

Another label from the tomb of the First Dynasty queen Neithhotep, Naqada, now in the British Museum, appears to contain a scene representing heating¹⁰⁶. Several people are inside a structure that has a *kheker*-frieze¹⁰⁷ (representing the palace) on top of it. A man holding a staff leaves this structure and walks towards a man stirring something with a stick or ladle in a round-bottomed jar that is placed on a high stand. This is probably the *h3t(t)-thnw* oil mentioned in the register below. Two large sealed jars are standing on the ground behind this man, probably containing the ingredients needed for the preparation of the oil (El-Shimy 2003:40) (Figure 7.20).

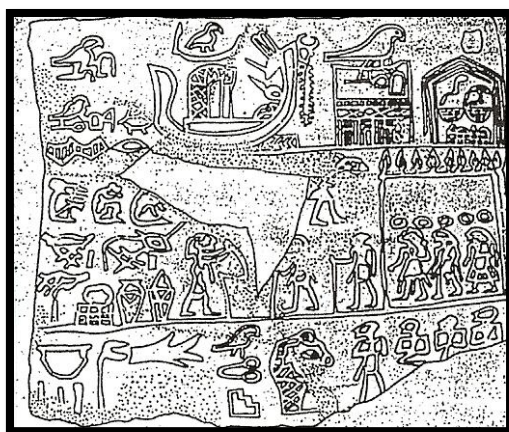


Figure 7.20: A scene representing heating, in the tomb of queen Neithhotep, Naqada

¹⁰⁶ No other extant scenes depicting the heating of perfumed substances occur in Egyptian art before the late New Kingdom (El-Shimy 2003:41).

¹⁰⁷ These are decorative designs (*kheker* is the Egyptian word for ‘ornament’) depicting stylized bundles of reeds or plant stems that typified mats hanging on the walls of ordinary houses. These friezes were originally only used in royal tombs but later they were usurped by ordinary people and featured in their tombs (Hodel-Hoernes 2000:28).

7.3.2.1 Maceration (hot steeping)

This is the third process that was most commonly used by the ancient Egyptians to make perfume from flowers, fruit and seeds using oil and fats. The oil had to be first pre-treated by adding a solution of astringent materials mixed with water or wine (Dayagi-Mendels 1989:100). Theophrastus (CO 14-15 and 55) states that pre-treating the oil was particularly essential when olive oil was involved, which does not retain scents well, or when the aromatic material involved was particularly volatile. Aromatic plant parts or resin was then steeped in this pre-treated oil or fat and was heated to about 65 degrees C in vats of boiling water (a double-boiler method). By not heating it over an open flame, the perfume would not evaporate rapidly or absorb unwanted smells from the fire. After standing for several days and being occasionally stirred, the floral components were strained off and replaced by fresh material, sometimes dye being added as well. When the stage was reached that all the aromatic materials were fully absorbed, the perfume was strained again and decanted into vessels (Dayagi-Mendels 1989:100).

7.3.3 The production of animal fats to be used as a base material

Animal fats, a by-product of the butchery process, were extracted in two ways. Either dry heat melted the fats, which were then poured into cold water to solidify or they were boiled in water, after which the fats were skimmed off the surface. At this stage these animal fats were not suitable for perfume manufacture. Wine and/or wine-soaked plant material, such as Cyprus or coriander had to be added, to neutralize their odour. After their removal, the final scents were added. This process was also used for some of the stronger vegetable oils. The resulting 'sweet' fats and oils, were now suitable to be used for the production of the various perfumes (Fletcher 1999a:27).

7.3.4 The making of incense discs, cakes and cones

Forbes (1955:23 and 46) states that the dry forms of incense appear to have been subjected to some form of heat moulding. Incense was sold as small balls or grains (*sr.w*), but scenes in Egyptian art depict discs, cakes or lumps of incense (*mrrj.t*). The 'incense shaper' was called *s3k sntr*. A late text states that the 'degree of compression of the mass was $\frac{1}{2}$ ', implying that some sort of scale was used in this regard. The incense was also shaped into high cones,

‘white breads’ (*t.hd*), by kneading or compression, possibly involving the use of moulds. These are depicted in scenes on the walls of temples and tombs.

7.4 PROFESSIONS

The cultivation and preparation of flowers was a proper profession and families working in this profession were buried in the Valley of the Queens during the Third Intermediate and the Saite-Persian Periods (El-Shimy 2003:31). Their tombs indicate that they had titles such as cultivator of lotus flowers (*hwtj ssn*); overseer of lotus cultivators (*hrj hwtj ssn*); perfumers [*wt(j)*]; and chief perfumers [*hrj wt(j)*] in the estate of Amun at Karnak (El-Shimy 2003: 31-32).

There were specialist gardeners to provide flowers, which included fragrant ones such as the blue lotus, for offerings to the deities. Nakht¹⁰⁸, who has a tomb in Thebes (TT 161), Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, was a specialist gardener, whose duty it was to cultivate these flowers especially for offerings to the god Amun, although in his tomb there are scenes of him making these floral offerings to other deities as well. It is probable that Nakht, besides growing the flowers, also made up the beautiful bouquets that were offered to Amun and other deities.

Everything which comes forth from on the offering table of Amun to the *ka* of the one revered with Osiris, the gardener of the divine offerings of Amun, Nakht, justified ...

Extract of a text appearing on a column in Nakht’s tomb, separating a scene dealing with the ‘Beautiful Festival of the Valley’ and one dealing with the funerary banquet (Manniche 1986:59).

Part of a scene, copied by Robert Hay, in Nakht’s tomb, depicts him, with his wife behind him, standing before a loaded offering table, holding a magnificent bouquet, taller than himself, in which the fragrant blue lotus features prominently. These offerings are being made to three figures sitting in a pavilion, the two nearest ones being the deities Osiris and Hathor (Figure 7.21).

¹⁰⁸ Manniche (1989:137) translates the title of Nakht as the ‘Bearer of floral offerings to Amun’, possibly during the reign of Amenhotep III.

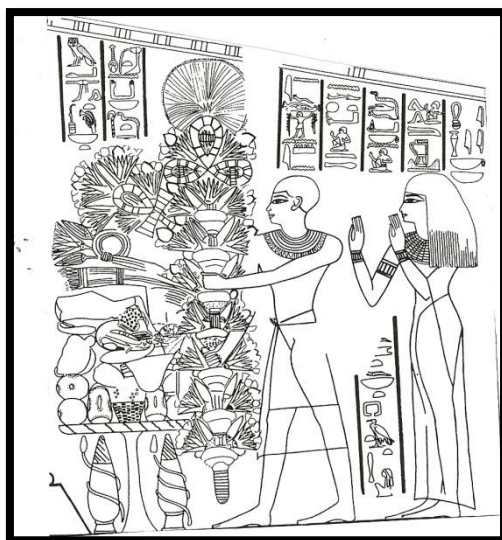


Figure 7.21: A large floral bouquet, in the tomb of Nakht (TT 161)

Serpico & White (2000b:406) state that the terms *ps sgnn* and *nwdw* appearing in ancient Egyptian texts have been translated as ‘oil boiler’, while Forbes (1955:4-5 and 43) states that the term *ps sgnn* translates as ‘unguent cooker’¹⁰⁹ derived from the word *sgnn* meaning ‘personal anointing at festivities and banquets’ and the term *nwd*, originally a medical term, whence *nwd.t* for wound-balsams, later came to denote ‘unguent cooker’ and also the ‘unguent kitchen’. Another term for ‘unguent cooker’, *mdtj*, only appeared in late Ptolemaic texts. Forbes (1955:14) states that while ‘unguent cookers’ were separate artisans, they had close connections with barbers, pharmacists, physicians and priests, to whom they supplied their wares, used for rituals in the temples. They possibly also provided them with incantations and recipes.

Serpico (2001:584) notes that the title of oil boiler can be applied to a person making raw oils and fats and/or making scented preparations¹¹⁰, making it difficult to distinguish between these two industries. She states further that Egyptian texts clearly indicate that ‘oil boilers’ were attached to major temples. At Tell el-Amarna, Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom,

¹⁰⁹ Nehemiah 3:8 in the Bible mentions that there was a special ‘street of unguent-makers in ancient Jerusalem’ (Forbes 1955:14).

¹¹⁰ Women called *murraqitu* were the perfumers in Assyria in the thirteenth century BC (Brun 2000:277). Administrative archives from the eighteenth century BC excavated at Mari, Syria, indicate that a perfume maker was called a *Lu raqqu* (Brun 2000:278). Hundreds of clay tablets from Knossos, Crete mention oil delivered to perfumers designated as *arepazoo* or *kuprijo*, ‘the Cypriot’ (Brun 2000:281). These tablets are in the Minoan Linear B script, the language being an early form of Greek.

perfumed oils and unguents were made by people with titles such as ‘oil boilers’¹¹¹ and ‘superintendent of unguents’. Some of them, such as Ramose, ‘unguent manufacturer in the house of Princess Meritaten’, worked on palace premises for various members of the royal family (Fletcher 2004:280).

7.5 CONCLUSION

Religion, medicine and perfume were entwined together in ancient Egypt. Perfume, the ‘fragrance of the gods’, was used in vast quantities in the form of incense in the temples. The fact that the word *nwd*, variously translated as ‘oil boiler’ and ‘unguent cooker’, was originally a medical term, demonstrates the involvement of medicine in the entwinement.

The paucity of information in ancient Egyptian texts about how the ancient Egyptians produced perfumes; how the base oils were manufactured that were needed in perfume production; how the flowers, a vital ingredient in perfume making, were cultivated and what types were involved; and the professions involved in perfume making, is fortunately tempered by the fact that there are several extant scenes in temples and tombs from which we can garner some information on these matters. These scenes have indicated that both men and women were involved in the gathering of flowers and in the pressing of oil from seeds and the pressing of flowers to obtain essence in order to produce perfume. Interestingly, they show that while two women could handle the original bag press on their own, a development of this, also a bag press, involving an upright frame, needed at least four men to operate it.

Oil production took place both indoors and outdoors, with the early stages, such as the gathering, cleaning of plant material and pressing taking place outdoors and further processing taking place at workshops attached to major temples, where ‘oil-boilers’ were employed.

¹¹¹ The title ‘oil boiler’ contains the hieroglyph symbol for fire (Fletcher 1999a:25), used to indicate that the process of heating is involved (Serpico & White 2000b:406).

CHAPTER 8



PERFUME/INCENSE 'LABORATORIES'

Temples in ancient Egypt used a vast amount of incense and various perfumed oils and unguents for cultic purposes. Special rooms were required to store aromatic plant material, both grown locally and imported, needed for the preparation of these. These storerooms were situated in large temples and have been dubbed perfume/incense 'laboratories' by Egyptologists/archaeologists. Many of them have been identified archaeologically, dating to the Middle Kingdom, New Kingdom, and the Ptolemaic Period. Reliefs and hieroglyphic texts carved on the walls, door jambs and lintels of these 'laboratories' have played a big part in their identification. In the 'laboratories' in temples dating to the Ptolemaic Period the reliefs carved on their walls make even more specific reference to the use of perfume and incense than they do in those dating to before this period. In addition, perfume recipes are also inscribed in hieroglyphs on these walls in this period.

8.1 INTRODUCTION

Aromatic material for the preparation of incense, unguents and other sacred preparations, as well as imported unguents, were kept in special store rooms in temples, which have been dubbed perfume/incense 'laboratories' by Egyptologists/archaeologists.¹¹² The preparations themselves were also stored there. Every large temple had one (Brun 2000:104) and they have been identified archaeologically at various sites in Egypt, often having decorations on their walls pertaining to the use of perfume.

8.2 PERFUME/INCENSE 'LABORATORIES' PRIOR TO THE PTOLEMAIC PERIOD

Perfume/incense 'laboratories' have been identified archaeologically at temples dating both to the Middle Kingdom and the New Kingdom.

¹¹² At the city of Mari, in Syria, excavations of the palace have uncovered rooms in which scented oils (as well as unscented oils) and clay tablets consisting of accounting records of scented oils were stored (Brun 2000:278). Mari was a considerable political power in the Ancient Near East in the mid third millennium BC (between 2600 and 2300 BC) (Kuhrt 1998 :96).

8.2.1 Temple of Amun-Ra at Karnak

At Karnak architectural elements of a perfume/incense ‘laboratory’ have survived from an early Middle Kingdom temple, despite the fact that the greater part of this temple has now been buried under later buildings. A door-jamb of this ‘laboratory’ bears inscriptions recording the delivery of precious unguents from various destinations in the eastern Mediterranean (Manniche 1999:36) (Figure 8.1).

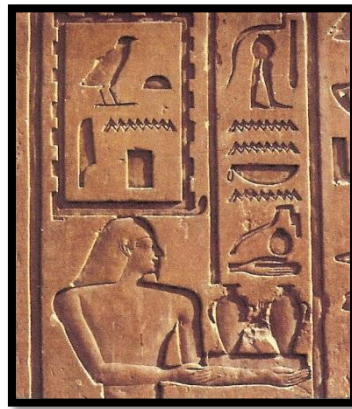


Figure 8.1: Inscription on door-jamb in a ‘laboratory’ at Karnak

Another door-jamb found at the temple of Amun at Karnak, later re-used in another monument, also comes from a perfume/incense ‘laboratory’, the exact position of which is unknown, but was probably in the heart of the Karnak temple. An inscription on it states ‘Her majesty had built a store room for antiu resin to produce pellets (of incense) every day so that the temple could be always enveloped in the scent of god’s land’, her majesty referring to queen Hatshepsut (Manniche 1999:36). This perfume/incense ‘laboratory’ thus dates to the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom.

A perfume/incense ‘laboratory’ at this temple dating to the reign of Tuthmosis III, Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, which replaced the ‘laboratory’ of Hatshepsut, situated in room 2, off the court north of the sixth pylon, has a fragmentary scene on the left (west) half of the back (north) wall depicting the king dedicating three incense trees in tubs and heaps of *‘ntyw* and *‘nd* to Amun-Ra (Arnold 1962:80). A drawing of it is shown here (Figure 8.2).

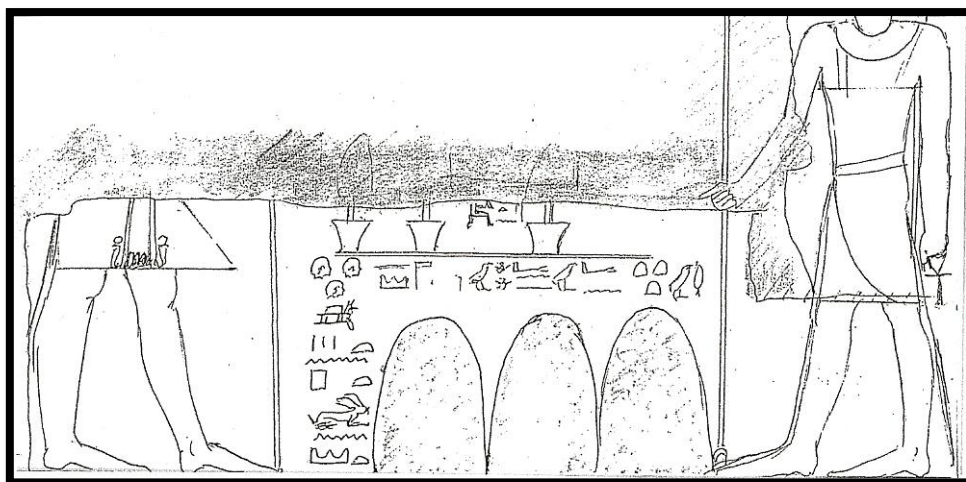


Figure 8.2: The king dedicating three incense trees

On the side walls of this perfume/incense ‘laboratory’ there are fragmentary remains of reliefs depicting the king offering *tw3wt* and *nbnm*; *sti-hb*; *hknw* and *sft* (these are all oils belonging to the ‘seven sacred oils’). There were other oils offered as well, these being *h3t nt* ‘s ‘first of cedar’ and *h3t nt thnw* ‘first of Libyan’ oil, as well as *ibr* and *mdt* (eye-paint) (Arnold 1962:80).

An inscription in this New Kingdom ‘laboratory’ in the Karnak temple, mentions that a precious substance called *nudj* was prepared in this room, *nudj* being one of the substances occurring in the so-called ‘Magic book of unguent making’ (Manniche 1999:36), an example of books found in temple libraries (Manniche 1999:146).

8.2.2 Mortuary temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahari

Arnold (1962:80) has identified a room in the south west corner of the upper terrace of this temple as a perfume/incense ‘laboratory’, a store room he argues for perfumed oils/unguents as well as clothing, based on his analysis of the relief carvings appearing in it. On one wall of the room, Tuthmosis III is depicted offering four travertine jars to Amun-Ra. On a lintel over the door of this room a row of perfume jars and jugs is depicted, labelled from right to left: *sti-hb* ‘festival perfume’, *hknw*, *tpt n.t ntyw* ‘first quality myrrh’ and *tw3*. A row of four boxes or chests are depicted in a register below the jars and jugs, labelled from right to left as: ‘first bag; *dmi* , possibly an error, which was meant to be *idmi* ‘red linen’; *tpy w3d* ‘first (bag) of green (linen) or eye-paint’; and *irtyw* ‘blue colour’.

8.2.3 Temple of Ramesses II at Abydos

Arnold (1962:80) has identified Room P (also known as room VII), situated off the south side of the hypostyle hall of this temple, as a perfume/incense ‘laboratory’, a storeroom he argues for perfumed oils/unguents as well as clothing. A shelf runs around two sides of the room for the purpose of holding objects. He bases this identification on the door inscriptions (unpublished), as well as a relief carved on the north (left) wall. This relief depicts Ramesses II holding a perfume jar and a libation vase, following a procession of priests. Priests depicted near the king are carrying an elaborate shrine/chest, below which is a text reading ‘conveying the *mnht*-clothing to the great shrine’. Other priests are presenting *menat*-necklaces to the god Thoth. A drawing of it is shown here (Figure 8.3).

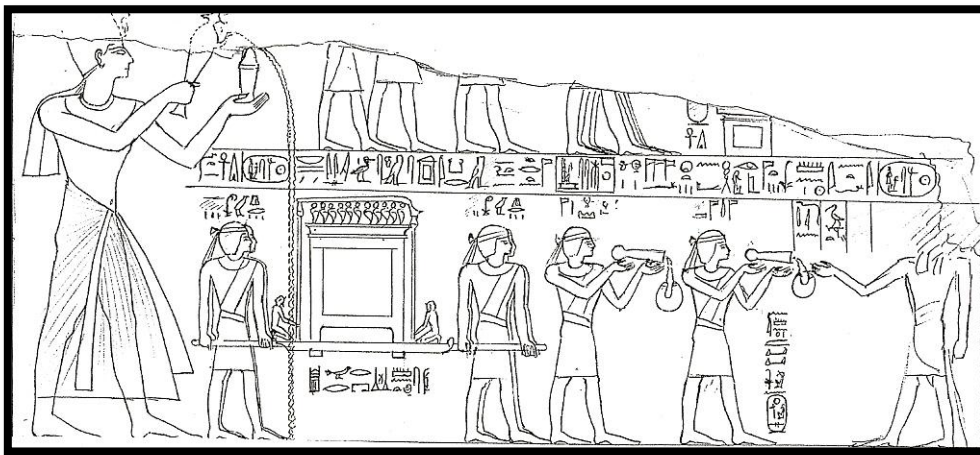


Figure 8.3: Conveying the *mnht*-clothing to the great shrine

8.2.4 Mortuary temple of Ramesses III at Medinet Habu

Arnold (1962:80) has identified room 16, off the south west corner of the first hypostyle hall at this temple, as a perfume/incense ‘laboratory’, a storeroom he argues for perfumed oils/unguents, as well as clothing. There are texts around the bottom of the walls of this room but they offer no evidence as to its use. Some of the relief scenes on the walls do, however, offer some clues about the use of it. One scene on the east wall depicts the king offering strips of cloth to the god Montu, and another one depicts the king offering flowers to Amun. One scene on the west wall depicts the king offering clothing to Montu.

The author is of the opinion that, based on an analysis of the relief scenes appearing on

the walls of this room, it is possible to come to the conclusion that it was used for the storing of cloth, but not so easily for that of perfumed oils/unguents. Only the one scene, on the east wall, depicting the king offering flowers to Amun, can possibly point to the use of storing perfumed oils/unguents in this room, and only if fragrant flowers such as the blue lotus are featured in it. The author argues that the rooms identified by Arnold as being store rooms for clothing and perfume, were store rooms for perfume and cloth, as cloth had a special connection with perfume for the ancient Egyptians, being considered by them to be part of the divine essence and derived from the sweat of the god Ra. The two commodities featured in scenes involving offerings to the deities by the king in temples dating to the Ptolemaic Period.

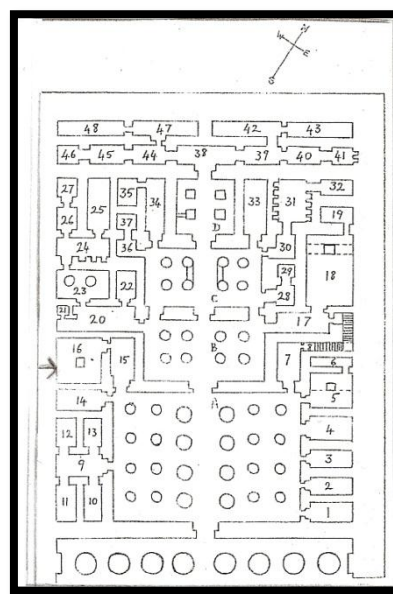


Figure 8.4: Plan of the temple of Rameses III at Medinet Habu, showing room 16

8.3 PERFUME/INCENSE ‘LABORATORIES’ IN PTOLEMAIC TEMPLES

The perfume/incense ‘laboratories’ that have been identified in temples of the Ptolemaic Period are better preserved than ones that existed prior to this period, and their wall decoration is even more specific, with references to the use of perfume and incense. During the Ptolemaic Period recipes for unguents and other sacred preparations were inscribed in stone in hieroglyphics in the ‘laboratories’, which were possibly copied from the ‘Book of unguents’, quoted on the walls of the temple of Hathor at Dendera. The identity of some of the ingredients in these recipes, however, poses a problem (Manniche 1999:37).

8.3.1 The temple of Horus at Edfu

Construction of the Ptolemaic temple of Horus at Edfu¹¹³, the best preserved of all the ancient Egyptian temples, began in 237 BC on the site of an earlier New Kingdom temple during the reign of Ptolemy III Euergetes I and continued during the reigns of Ptolemy IV Philopator and Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II. It was only during the reign of Ptolemy XII Neos Dionysos in 57 BC, that the external decorations were completed (Siliotti 1998:258).

This temple has a wonderfully preserved perfume/incense ‘laboratory’, adjoining (on the west), the second and smaller hypostyle hall (Manniche 1999:37). Several lengthy recipes for the preparation of perfumes and incense used in the daily temple rituals, are inscribed in hieroglyphs on the walls (Fletcher 1999b:109). This ‘laboratory’ is 6.2m in length, 2.6m in width and 10.5m in height and has no windows (Paszthory 1988:4).

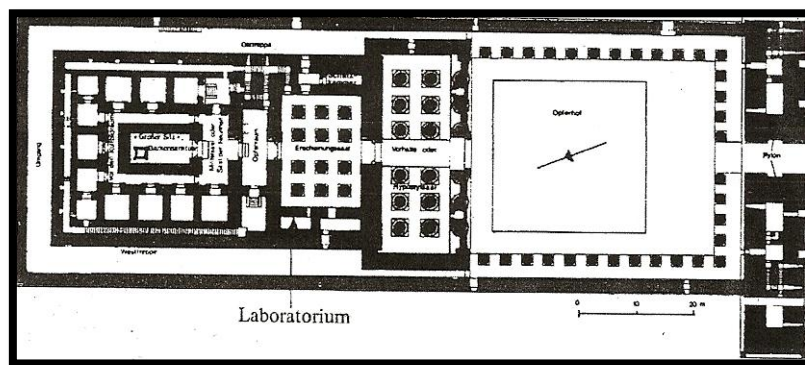


Figure 8.5: Plan of the temple of Horus at Edfu, showing the ‘laboratory’

Scholars are not in agreement in their opinions about whether perfumes (in the form of incense or scented oils/unguents) were actually prepared in these ‘laboratories’. Manniche (1999:38) is of the opinion that it is unlikely that perfumes or unguents were actually made in the perfume/incense ‘laboratory’ at the temple of Edfu, it being too small for lengthy preparations to have been made in bulk in it. Furthermore, it is not open to the sky and as most unguents required cooking, no soot is visible on the walls or the ceiling, indicating that fires had been lit there on a large scale. She concedes however that unguents may well have been stored there and the fact that recipes were written on the walls would have ensured the

¹¹³ Edfu is the Arabic name for the ancient Egyptian site of Djebu (Coptic Etbo), the traditional location for the mythical battle between the gods Horus and Seth (Wilkinson 2000:204). The Greeks identified Horus with their god Apollo and knew Edfu as Apollinopolis Magna (Siliotti 1998:258).

correctness of the preparations and perpetuated their supply, as well as establishing their sacredness and affiliation to the temple and the resident deity, in the case of Edfu, Horus. Paszthory (1988: 4) is in agreement with Manniche, that this could not have been the case, pointing out the fact that the walls of the ‘laboratory’ are not blackened and there are no windows in the room, which is also lacking a roof opening or a chimney. He argues that the ‘laboratory’ was a storeroom for unguents, perfumes and incense. On the other hand, Fletcher (1999b:109) and Wilkinson (2000:207) argue that incense was prepared in this ‘laboratory’. The author argues that besides being storerooms for aromatic material, incense and perfumed unguents/oils, scented preparations that did not require cooking were prepared in these ‘laboratories’. An inscription found in a ‘laboratory’ at the temple of Karnak indicates that a special unguent called *nudj* was prepared there, which presumably did not involve any cooking in its preparation (see Section 8.2.1).

Over the entrance to the perfume/incense ‘laboratory’, there is an offering scene on the exterior of the lintel where Ptolemy VI Philometor, with Cleopatra II standing behind him, is making offerings to the seated Edfu triad of the deities Horus, Hathor and Harsomptus. The king is holding an arm censer containing burning incense in his left hand, censuring, and a jar containing water in his right hand, making a libation. Between the king and the seated triad is a statue of the Ptolemy VI making an offering of perfume and two statues in the shape of sphinxes (one hawk-headed), also making offerings of perfume. Vessels containing burning incense (with wicks), perfume jars of various sizes, an arm censer and fragrant blue lotus blossoms can also be seen in this space (Figure 8.6).

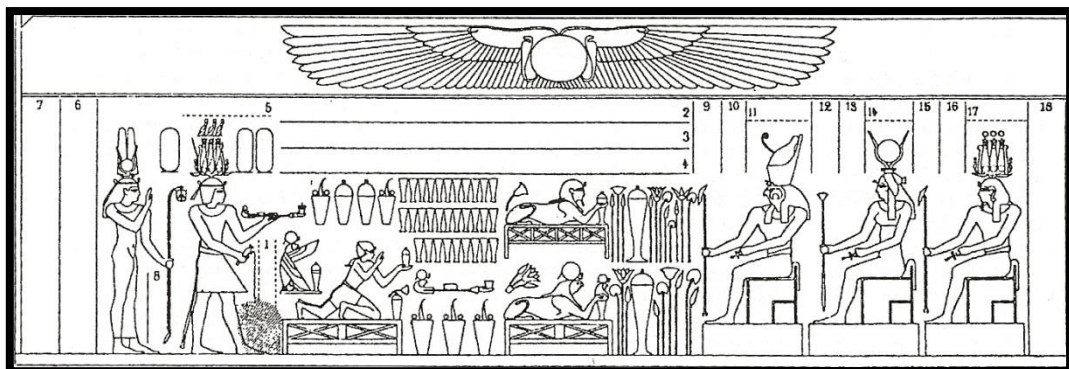


Figure 8.6: An offering scene on the exterior lintel of the ‘laboratory’

There is another offering scene, accompanied by texts, on the interior of the lintel over the entrance to the perfume/incense ‘laboratory’. A drawing of this scene depicts the king offering a statuette of a sphinx with a jar of perfumed oil/unguent in front of it to Horus and Hathor (Paszthory 1988:10-11). This object was called *sms-ntyw*, ‘conveyor of *antiu*’ (Aufreere 2000:415) (Figure 8.7).

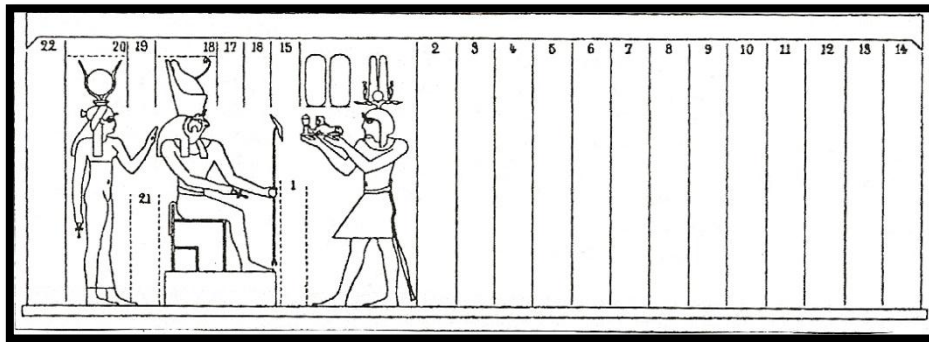


Figure 8.7: An offering scene on the interior of the lintel of the ‘laboratory’

Inside the perfume/incense ‘laboratory’ there are reliefs carved on each of the four walls, accompanied by hieroglyphic texts and recipes for perfumes and incense.

On the north wall there are reliefs in three registers. In the top register, Ptolemy VI is censuring, using an arm censer, before Horus and Hathor. In the second register, Ptolemy VI is offering two jars of perfumed oil, one in each hand, to Horus. Alongside this scene is a recipe for perfume/incense. In the bottom register there are two separate scenes. In the left hand one Ptolemy VI is offering a burning cup of incense with a wick in it to Horus. In the right hand one Ptolemy VI is offering a jar of perfumed oil in his right hand and what appears to be a fragrant blue lotus flower in his left hand to Hathor (Figure: 8.8).



Figure 8.8: Drawing of the offering scenes on the north wall

On the south wall, there are reliefs in three registers. In the top register Ptolemy VI is offering jars of perfume, one in each hand, to Osiris and two goddesses. In the second register Ptolemy VI is offering a tray of perfume jars to Horus. There is a recipe for perfume/incense to the left of this scene. In the third register Ptolemy VI is consecrating/dedicating offerings before Horus and Harsomptus. In this role the king is holding the *hrp*-sceptre, ‘the offering dedicator’, as well as the mace and long staff. There is a recipe for perfume/incense to the left of this scene, including twelve columns besides the doorway (Figure 8.9).

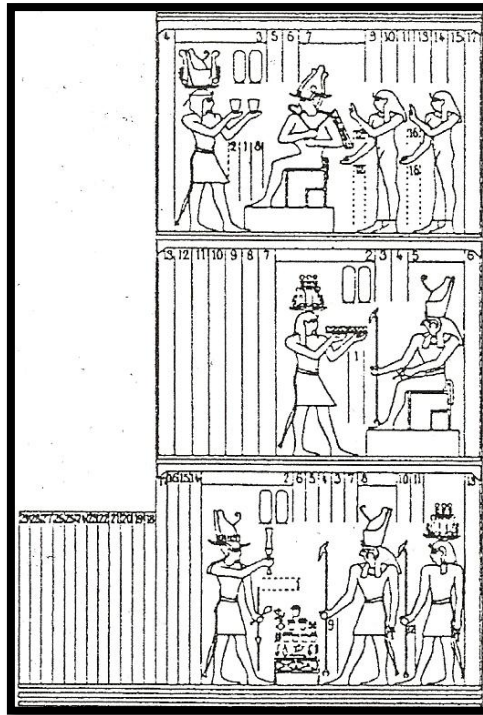


Figure 8.9: Drawing of reliefs on the south wall

On the west wall there are reliefs in three registers. In the top register Ptolemy VI is offering two jars of perfumed oil, one in each hand, to Min and Isis. There is recipe for perfume/incense to the left of this scene. In the second register Ptolemy VI consecrates/dedicates offerings before Horus and Hathor. The god Shesmu is standing behind the king, offering two jars of perfumed oil, one in each hand, to the same deities. There is a recipe for perfume/incense to the left of this scene. In the third register Ptolemy VI consecrates/dedicates offerings before Horus and Hathor. Nebneteru, standing behind the king, is offering two jars of perfume, one in each hand, to the same deities. There is a recipe for perfume/incense to the left of this scene (Figure 8.10).

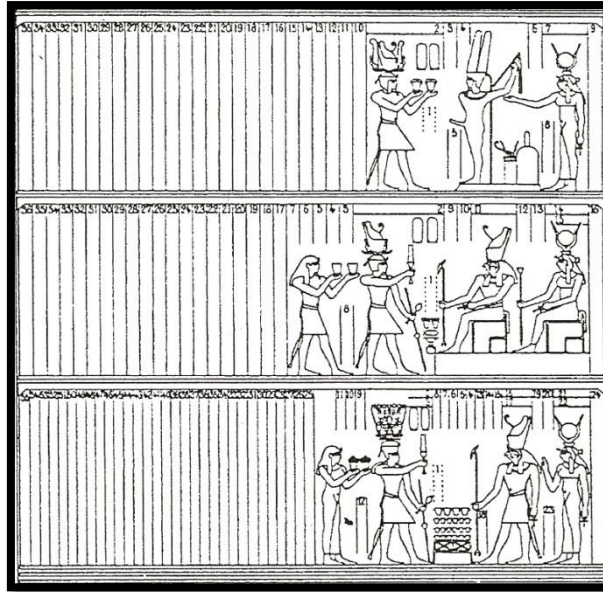


Figure 8.10: Drawing of reliefs on the west wall

On the east wall there are reliefs in three registers. In the top register Ptolemy VI, with the small deity Ihy in front of him, is offering a statuette in the shape of a sphinx with a jar of perfumed oil to Hathor and Harsomptus. The deity Shesmu, god of the oilpress, is standing behind the king, offering two jars of perfumed oil, one in each hand, to the same deities. There is a recipe for perfume/incense to the right of this scene. In the second register Ptolemy VI is offering various kinds of natron to Horus, Hathor, Nekhbet and Buto. There is a recipe for perfume/incense to the right of this scene. In the third register Ptolemy VI, followed by the god Shesmu, is offering a statuette of a sphinx with a jar of perfumed oil to Horus and Hathor. There is a long recipe for perfume/incense to the right of this scene (including twelve columns of text beside doorway) (Figure 8.11).

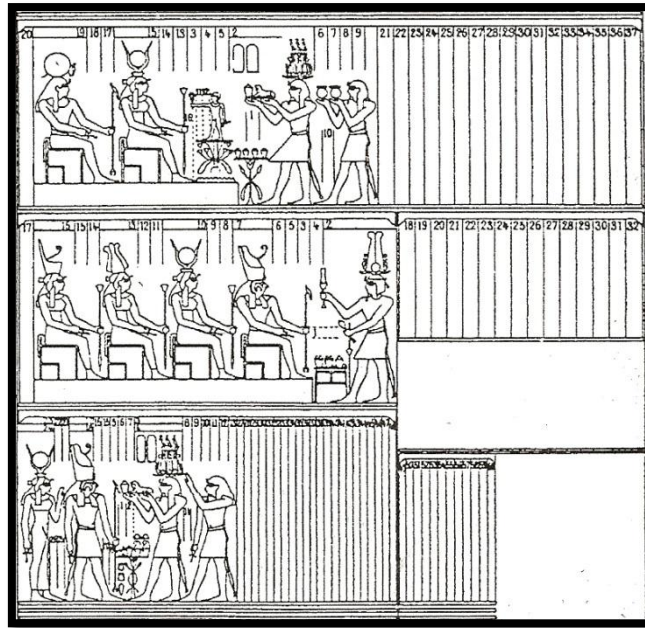


Figure 8.11: Drawing of reliefs on the east wall

There are also reliefs in the form of a frieze, running along the bottom of each of the four walls, accompanied by inscriptions.

The frieze at the bottom of the north wall is in two parts. In the left part, Ptolemy VI is offering a statuette of a sphinx with a jar of perfume to Horus and Hathor. In the right part, Ptolemy VI is offering a jar of perfume to Horus and Hathor. The king is followed in both directions by offering bearers, both male and female, bringing offerings to Horus and Hathor, forming the friezes at the bottom of the north, south, west and east walls (Figures 8.12, 8.13, 8.14 and 8.15).

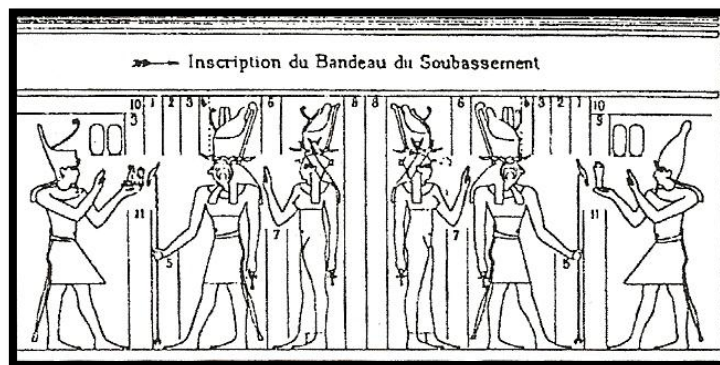


Figure 8.12: Drawing of the frieze at the bottom of the north wall

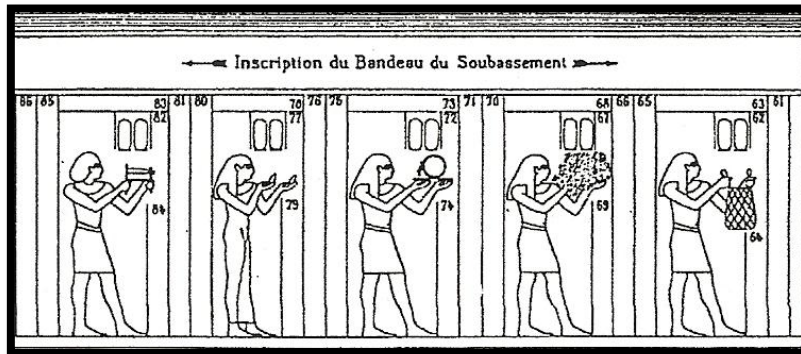


Figure 8.13: Drawing of the frieze at the bottom of the south wall

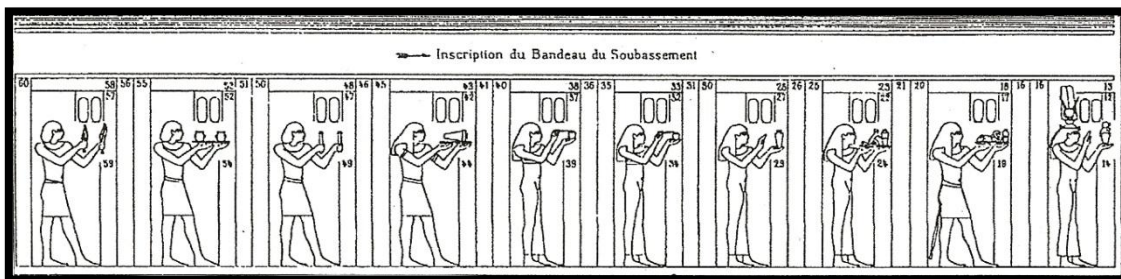


Figure 8.14: Drawing of the frieze at the bottom of the west wall

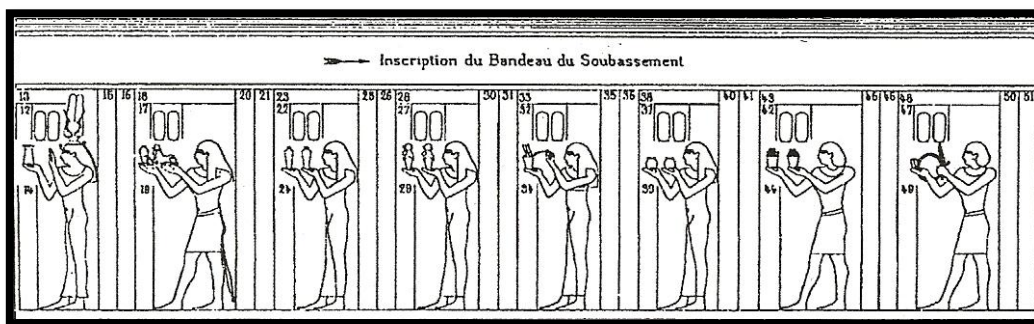


Figure 8.15: Drawing of the frieze at the bottom of the east wall

8.3.2 The temple of Isis at Philae

O Isis ... adornment and lady of the Ornaments of the Palace,
 Nurseling who fills the palace with her beauty,
 Fragrance of the palace, mistress of joy ...
 Whose face loves the joy of fresh myrrh.

Extract from one of six hymns to Isis in the sanctuary of the temple of Isis at Philae. Translated by Zabkar (1983:130), who notes that ‘fragrance of the palace’ and ‘mistress of joy’ are epithets of Isis, derived from those of the divine priestesses of Amun, rooted in their priestly function. He points out that the word ‘palace’ in the hymn refers to a real palace, where Isis executed her royal function, and to the temple itself.

The island of Philae in the First Cataract was called by the ancient Egyptians the ‘island of the time [of Re]’, the site recreating the primeval world ruled by the sun god, as opposed to the neighbouring island of Biga, which was the Abaton or ‘pure mound’, housing one of the many tombs of Osiris in Egypt (Baines & Malek 1992:73). Construction of the temple of Isis at Philae began during the reign of Ptolemy II Philadelphus. During the reigns of Ptolemies VI through to VIII the mammisi was extended and the eastern corners of the two pylons were linked, the area in between becoming a courtyard. During the course of the Ptolemaic and Roman periods, various temples and shrines were constructed around the temple of Isis (Hawass 2006b:244). Philae was an important pilgrimage site until the Roman emperor Theodosius ordered all the ancient Egyptian temples to be closed in 392 AD. The cult of Isis still flourished however, with Nubian tribes worshipping her at Philae. The Roman emperor Justinian finally suppressed the cult of Isis at Philae in 535 AD (Hawass 2006(c):244). Philae is the site of the last hieroglyphic inscription (394 AD) and the latest demotic graffiti (452 AD) (Baines & Malek 1992:73).

Between 1972 and 1980 the temple of Isis and other structures on the island of Philae were dismantled and reconstructed on the nearby island of Agilkia, in an operation involving UNESCO and the Supreme Council of Antiquities of Egypt, as these monuments were in danger of being totally submerged under the rising waters of the Nile, following the construction of the Aswan High Dam (Siliotti 1998:268).

The temple of Isis has a perfume/incense ‘laboratory’, which is situated at the south end of the east colonnade, between the pylons. The walls of this ‘laboratory’ have no texts or reliefs inscribed on them.

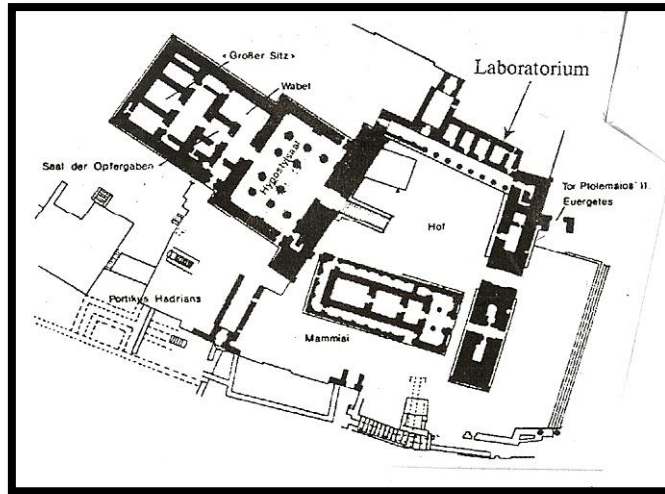


Figure 8.16: Plan of the temple of Isis at Philae, showing the ‘laboratory’

A recipe for *kyphi* is carved in hieroglyphs on the door jambs of the entrance to the perfume/incense ‘laboratory’ at this temple (Figure 8.17).

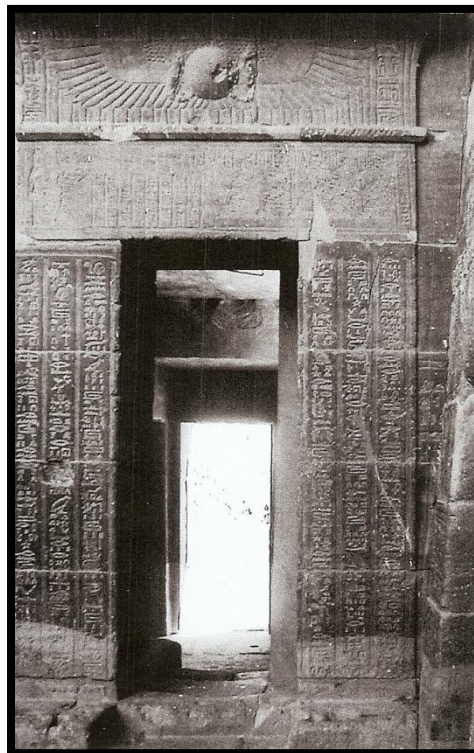


Figure 8.17: *Kyphi* recipe on the door jambs of the ‘laboratory’

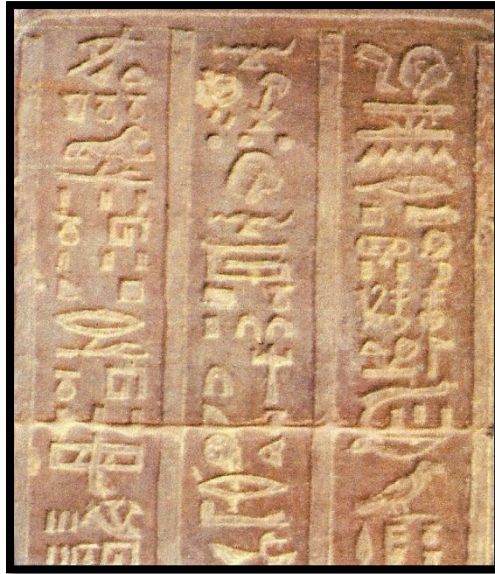


Figure 8.18: A close up picture of a section of the *kyphi* recipe

Carved on the second column outside the entrance to the perfume/incense ‘laboratory’ in the east colonnade of the second court in this temple is a relief depicting king Ptolemy XII Neos Dionysos offering jars of perfumed oils/unguents, one in each hand, to the goddess Ma‘at (not seen in this picture) (Figure 8.19).



Figure 8.19: Offering scene on a column outside the entrance to the ‘laboratory’

8.3.3 The temple of Hathor at Dendera

Dendera, called Iunet or Tantere by the ancient Egyptians and Tentyris by the Greeks, was the capital of the sixth *nome* of Upper Egypt. The earliest tombs in its necropolis date from the Early Dynastic Period but its most important phase was the end of the Old Kingdom and the First Intermediate Period, when notables built sizable *mastaba* tombs, despite the fact that the provinces were virtually autonomous and Dendera was not the most important of the factions of Upper Egypt at that stage. Construction on the earliest part of the temple of Hathor at Dendera, the rear, probably began at the end of the second century BC, with the earliest king named as Ptolemy XII Auletes. The outer hypostyle hall was only decorated between the reigns of the Roman emperors Augustus and Nero and bears a dedicatory inscription in Greek dating to 35 AD (Baines & Malek 1992:112-113).

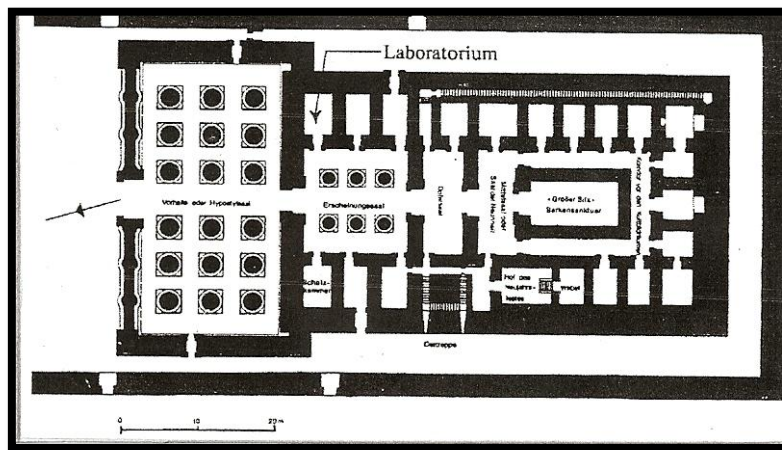


Figure 8.20: Plan of the temple of Hathor at Dendera, showing the 'laboratory'

Two offering scenes are carved on the north wall of the perfume/incense 'laboratory'. In the upper register, the king, Caesar Augustus, is offering perfume in a sphinx-shaped vessel to Hathor and Horus, followed by the god Shesmu, here lion-headed, offering two jars of perfume, one jar in each hand (Figure 8.21).

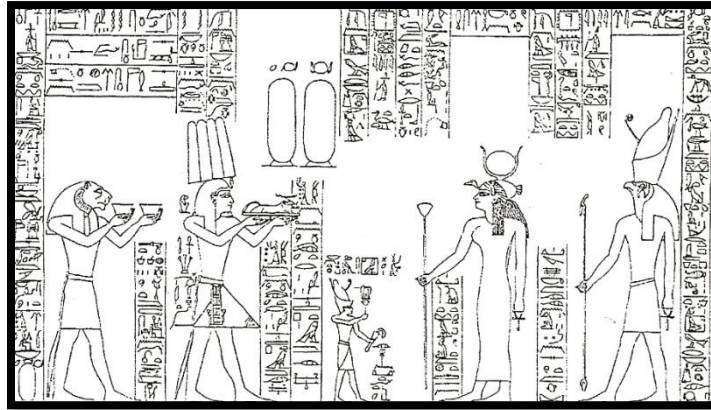


Figure 8.21: Offering scene in the upper register on the north wall

In the lower register the king, Caesar Augustus, is censuring with an arm-censer before the goddess Hathor. He is followed by Nebtmete offering perfume, carrying a tray containing three vessels filled with perfume, two of them with fragrant blue lotus blossoms balanced on top of them, and two figures of the god Shesmu, here ram-headed, each offering two jars of perfume, one in each hand (Figure 8.22).

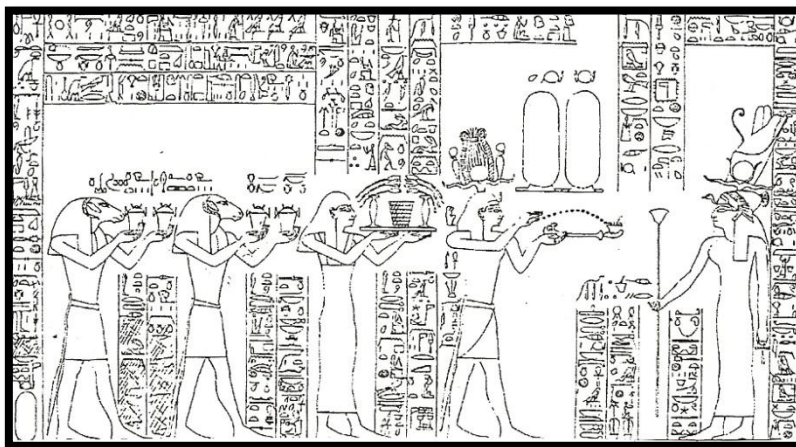


Figure 8.22: Offering scene in the lower register on the north wall

8.3.4 The temple of Sobek and Haroeris at Kom Ombo

The city of Kom Ombo (Greek Ombos), 65 km south of Edfu, near the mouth of Wadi Hammamat, the main artery between the Nile and the eastern desert and its gold mines, was called *Nubt*, ‘city of gold,’ by the Egyptians, reflecting the city’s role in the trading of gold. The temple of Kom Ombo was founded in the Eighteenth Dynasty, reign of Tuthmosis II, but construction of the double temple dedicated to the two gods Sobek (right half) and Haroeris

(left half) seen today, was started during the reign of Ptolemy VII Philometor and continued during the reign Ptolomy VIII Euergetes II (Siliotti 1998:261). Most of the decoration was carried out during the reign of Ptolemy XII Auletes (Baines & Malek 1992:75) and work on the temple was completed during the reigns of the Roman emperors Tiberius, Domitian and Caracalla. Sobek formed a triad with Hathor and Khonsu, while Haroeris formed a triad with his wife Tasenetrotet ‘the Good Sister’ and his son Panebtawy ‘the lord of the Two Lands’ (Siliotti 1998:261).

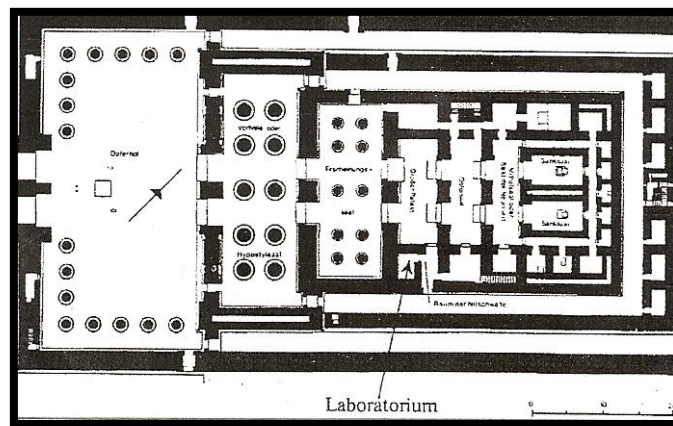


Figure 8.23: Plan of the temple of Sobek and Haroeris at Kom Ombo, showing the ‘laboratory’

The incense/perfume ‘laboratory’ in this temple is badly damaged. Over the entrance to the perfume/incense ‘laboratory’ there is a lintel. On the interior side of this lintel there is a carved relief featuring two sphinx figures, each holding a perfume jar (Figure 8.23).



Figure 8.24: Relief on the lintel over the entrance of the ‘laboratory’

8.4 CONCLUSION

The ancient Egyptians' practice of using vast quantities of incense and perfumed oils/unguents for cultic purposes, led to them needing space to store the aromatic plant material, either grown locally, or obtained through trade, in order to prepare these. The most natural place to store this aromatic plant material was in the temples themselves. Storerooms for this purpose, dubbed perfume/incense 'laboratories' by Egyptologists/archaeologists, have archaeologically only been identified in large temples, dating to the Middle Kingdom, the New Kingdom, and the Ptolemaic Period, leading to the conclusion that the smaller temples probably did not have them. These 'laboratories', housing as they did the aromatic plant material, needed to be close to the perfumers' workshops that produced the incense and perfumed oils/unguents required by the temples to fulfil cultic needs.

The decoration, such as reliefs, found on the lintels, both outer and inner, and walls of the incense/perfume 'laboratories', and even on columns standing outside them, which have aided in the identification of them, became more elaborate over time. The reliefs in the perfume/incense 'laboratories' dating to the Ptolemaic Period, together with their accompanying texts, leave no doubt as to their function, especially the recipes for incense, composite perfumes and other scented preparations inscribed in hieroglyphs on their walls and door jambs. These recipes were inscribed on the walls of the 'laboratories' during this period, as it was then that exotic and luxury perfumes were manufactured on a large scale in ancient Egypt in cities specialising in this manufacture, being exported all over the Mediterranean region.

The author argues that the rooms identified by Arnold as being store rooms for perfume and clothing, were store rooms for perfume and cloth, as cloth had a special connection with perfume for the ancient Egyptians, both being considered by them to be part of the divine essence and derived from the sweat of the god Ra.

CHAPTER 9



PERFUMERS' WORKSHOPS AND CITIES SPECIALISING IN PERFUME PRODUCTION

Perfume workshops have not been archaeologically identified in Egypt, apart from the various extant perfume/incense laboratories situated in temples, where some scholars argue perfume production took place. Fortunately a scene in Theban tomb TT 175, owner unknown, gives us a glimpse of what took place in these workshops. There are two known Egyptian cities that specialised in perfume production in the Ptolemaic Period, namely Mendes and Alexandria, both exporting luxury perfumes around the Mediterranean.

9.1 INTRODUCTION

In the ancient world¹¹⁴, it is archaeologically difficult identifying remains of workshops that were specifically used for the production of perfume, as this industry did not require heavy equipment (Brun 2000:277). Mendes and Alexandria specialised in the production of luxury and exotic perfumes in the Ptolemaic Period, which were exported all over the Mediterranean.

9.2 PERFUMERS' WORKSHOPS

In Egypt, apart from the perfume/incense 'laboratories', extant examples found at various temples, where some scholars believe perfume production took place, while others do not, no perfumers' workshops have been identified archaeologically. These workshops would have been situated among the buildings of the temple complex, manufacturing perfumed oils and unguents for cult purposes and also fulfilling the profane requirements of the Egyptians for these products. In the Ptolemaic Period perfumers' workshops would have been linked to larger production centres containing grain mills, breweries, bakeries and weaving shops, the predecessors of the early workshops belonging to monasteries in the Christian era, which first appeared in Egypt, then spread throughout the Mediterranean area and later into northern Europe. When king Ptolemy II Philadelphos established an oil monopoly, he forbade the temples to manufacture perfumed oils/unguents for profane purposes (Paszthory 1992:26). In the absence of the identification of these perfumers' workshops archaeologically, a scene in the Theban tomb TT 175 gives us a glimpse of what took place in them.

¹¹⁴ See Annexure A for a discussion on perfumers' workshops, other than Egypt, in the ancient world

9.2.1 The ‘*salbekuche*’ of the Theban tomb TT 175 in the necropolis of el-Khokha

Manniche (1989:56) states that it seems that the tomb-owner of the Theban tomb TT 175 at the necropolis of el-Khokha¹¹⁵ was in charge of the manufacture of fragrant oils/unguents, perhaps for one of the local temples or maybe even the royal household. This is because one of the many scenes squeezed into this tomb (only 1m x 1.60m) represents various processes of unguent making. The name of the tomb-owner is unfortunately unknown, as there are no texts accompanying the scenes. Furthermore, a stela or statue, once contained in the rear wall of the tomb, is no longer there (Manniche 1988:31). Manniche (1988:32) states that the exact date of this tomb is unknown and adds that most scholars agree that it belongs to the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom. Shelmerdine (1985:16) is of the opinion that it probably dates to the reign of Tuthmosis IV in this dynasty.

Manniche (1988:35) states that a scene showing the various processes of perfume making, unique to the Theban necropolis, is depicted on the middle register on the lower west wall, corresponding to what is generally the ‘north’ wall, that is to say the wall to the right of the entrance, devoted to representations of ‘daily life’. This middle register, unfortunately damaged, with missing pieces of plaster, contains what she calls the ‘*salbekuche*’ or ‘unguent kitchen’, with the tomb-owner sitting on a chair on the extreme left of this scene with a long stick in his hand, indicating his superior position, before a wooden offering table full of offerings. This is a depiction of a perfumers’ workshop.

A drawing of the scene in the middle register depicting the ‘*salbekuche*’, omitting the tomb owner to the extreme left of it seated before an offering table laden with offerings, is labelled 1-7, which is actually one continuous scene but is shown here in two parts (Figure 9.1).

¹¹⁵ El-Khokha is one of the necropolises housing the private tombs of the New Kingdom in Thebes, in an area stretching between the Valley of the Kings and the Valley of the Queens, usually referred to by Egyptologists as the ‘Tombs of the Nobles’. The other necropolises are Dra Abu el-Naga, Assasif, Deir el-Bahri, Sheikh Abd el-Qurna, Qurnet Murai and Deir el-Medina. These necropolises constitute a complex of more than five hundred tombs, decorated with paintings, which unlike royal ones, amongst other themes, contain scenes from ‘everyday life’ (Siliotti 2000:140).

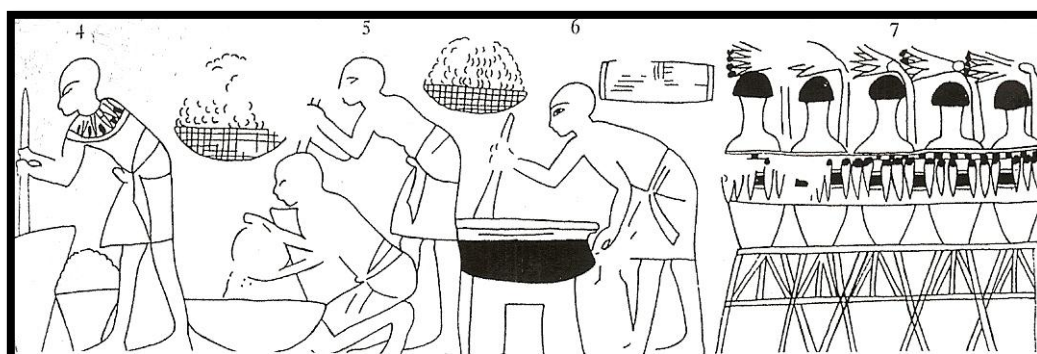
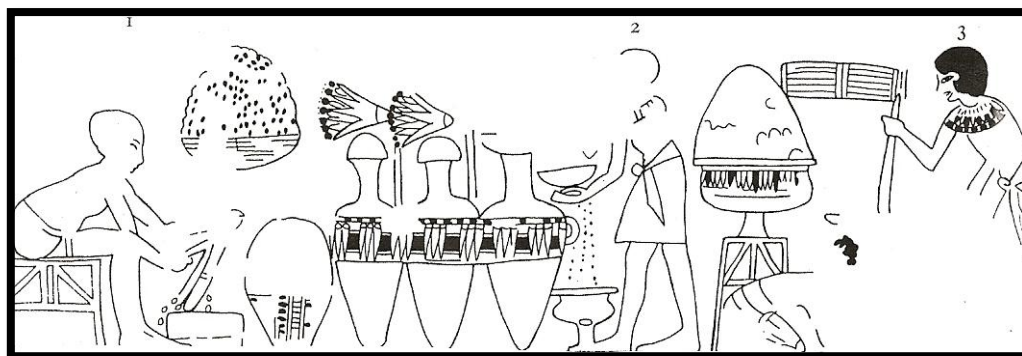


Figure 9.1: Drawing of the 'salbekuche', in Theban tomb TT 175

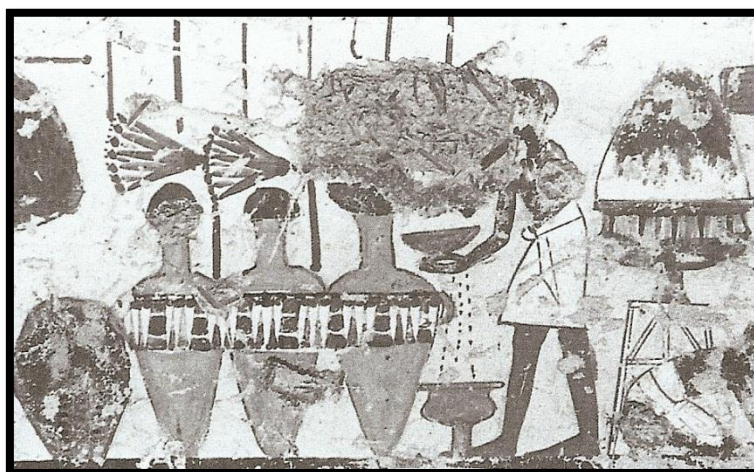


Figure 9.2: Part of the scene, labelled as 2 in Figure 9.1



Figure 9.3: Part of the scene, labelled as 4 in Figure 9.1



Figure 9.4: Part of the scene, labelled as 5 and 6 in Figure 9.1

In order to attempt to identify the various processes of perfume making in the ‘*salbekuche*’, Manniche (1989:57) proposes two scenarios. Either it represents various stages in the production of one type of a fragrant preparation (involving oil for the liquid form or fats for solid unguent, such as cakes or cones) or it represents individual stages of unrelated preparations.

Using the first scenario as a point of departure, Manniche (1989:57) proposes the following stages in the production of solid unguent cakes, which she gives in the form of a recipe, the numbered steps of which correspond to the numbers in Figure 9.1, the words in square brackets describing activities which cannot be directly read from the scene:

1. Prepare chips of fragrant wood [and leave them to macerate in] wine.
2. Strain through a sieve.
3. Melt a quantity of fat in a vessel. Add sweetrush (?) [and the liquid from the wood chips]. Keep a [slow but] steady heat, and stir continuously. [Cool and skim off the fat].
4. Grind herbs and spices carefully.
5. Mix herbs and spices with fat and shape to little cakes. [Leave covered overnight].
6. Place the cakes in a broad pot. [Pour water over and] boil gently, stirring all the time.
7. [Leave to cool and skim off the scented fat]. Store in earthenware pots.

Using the second scenario as a point of departure, Manniche (1988:37) is of the opinion that the ‘*salbekuche*’ could possibly be depicting sequences in the production of both liquid and solid fragrant unguents.¹¹⁶ Three people in the scene (nos. 4, 5 and 6 of Figure 9.1) are grinding what could be the oil-producing plant for the liquid unguent, which in the Eighteenth Dynasty, could have been almonds, balanos fruit, maringa, flax seeds or the seeds of the castor oil plant. Baskets, filled with a ground yellow mass, the result of this grinding, can be seen in the top part of the scene, to the right of nos. 5 and 6. This is in accord with the description by Dioscorides (DMM 1,38) of oil being extracted from castor oil seeds by grinding them with a mill, the resulting ground mass being put into baskets and then pressed. The final stages of the oil production process, Manniche believes, could be represented by the kneeling man (between nos. 4 and 5), squeezing a round sack from which something drips into a large vessel.

The man in the extreme right of the ‘*salbekuche*’, no. 6 in Figure 9.1, is stirring a substance in a large pot on the fire. Manniche (1988:38) believes he is possibly melting fat that will be mixed with fragrant material for the making of solid unguents, a large mass of which is shown in the scene. His left hand is near a tall jar, which could contain the concentrated scent, flowers steeped in oil and squeezed. Next to this jar there are three large jars resting on

¹¹⁶ A problem encountered by the author in secondary and tertiary sources is the fact that the term ‘unguent’ is used loosely by various scholars. Unguent, by definition, is a solid and therefore cannot be found in a liquid form. Many Egyptologists and other scholars in these sources speak of ‘unguent vessels’, when in fact they are referring to vessels used to store liquid perfumed oils in.

the ground. These possibly contain the flowers steeped in oil (flower motifs are depicted above the jars). The man working with an adze, no. 3, she believes could be making chips of fragrant wood to be macerated in oil. He appears to be working on a wooden plug with chips falling to the ground, and not making bungs for the jars, a procedure which would be unusual. The unguent, which solidified after cooling, was shaped into balls or cones using a metal tool.

Forbes (1955:13) points out that some of the workmen in the scene, are wearing curious collars and is of the opinion that this seems to indicate that they are preparing some kind of 'holy oil', as priests officiating in the temples are also depicted wearing such collars. He states that the Egyptians used both pestles in mortars and saddle-querns for the grinding of aromatic material, both devices being depicted in the scene. He adds that the ancient Egyptians do not appear to have used the rotary mill at all, however in ancient Mesopotamia this disintegrating device, used for pigments and flour, as well as pestles in mortars and saddle-querns, was employed.

9.3 CITIES SPECIALISING IN PERFUME PRODUCTION

There are two main known centres where the ancient Egyptians produced perfumes in considerable quantities. The cities of Mendes and Alexandria both specialised in the production of perfume in the Ptolemaic Period, exporting their luxury perfumes all over the Mediterranean.

9.3.1 Mendes

On-going excavations carried out on the 'twin' mounds at the site of the eastern central Delta city of ancient Mendes, Tell el-Rub'a (the pharaonic mound, Mendes) and Tell Timai to the south of it (the Graeco-Roman mound, Thmuis) (Hansen1965:31), have uncovered settlement remains from both the Predynastic and Early Dynastic Periods at the former (Wilkinson 2005:149). The site is about 20 km south-east of the modern city of Mansura on the Damietta branch of the Nile, the two mounds being originally joined, but now separated by an expanse of farmland (Redford 2005:8).

In later periods, Mendes became the capital of the sixteenth *nome* of Lower Egypt but suffered destruction in the First Intermediate Period (Ninth and Tenth Dynasties) and also at

the beginning of the second Persian Period (Thirty-first Dynasty). Mendes flourished again, however, in the early Ptolemaic Period, when it became a famous centre of wine production and perfume manufacture (Wilkinson 2005:149). The Mendesian branch of the Nile ran past the city, providing a riverine transit corridor for it, northwards to the Mediterranean and southwards to Memphis. Aiding east-west communication, a canal ran from Buto in the west Delta to the north-west corner of Mendes. The Mendesian branch, however, meandered over time, due to the varying strength of its discharge and from the second century BC, the city of Mendes began to decline, when this branch of the Nile weakened (Redford 2005:8). Mendes was largely abandoned by the middle of the Roman Period (Wilkinson 2005:149).

The classical authors inform us that the Egyptian delta city of Mendes¹¹⁷ produced the famous perfume known in the ancient classical world as ‘the Mendesian’, after which it was named. Manniche (2006:48) is of the opinion that whilst this perfume may have been originally made at Mendes, the Romans were able to produce it themselves, using a recipe quoted by Pliny. Manniche (1999:65) states further that in the Twenty-ninth Dynasty, the rulers of which were said to have originated from Mendes, making it once a ‘royal city’, and Thirtieth Dynasty, Late Period, Mendes was particularly prominent. This occurred during the same century that Theophrastus wrote about the ‘the Egyptian’, although he does not mention ‘the Mendesian’. Manniche (1999:60) argues that as there is no trace of any activity on the site of Mendes after the end of the Ptolemaic Period, this strongly suggests that the Mendesian spoke about by Pliny and Dioscorides, by which time the role of the city of Mendes as *nome* capital had been transferred to neighbouring Thisis, if available at all, did not come from Mendes itself. Pliny (NH XII, 4) states that this perfume was manufactured ‘in early times’. This was no doubt when Mendes was in its heyday, suggesting that the fame of ‘the Mendesian’ outlasted the fame of the city of Mendes itself (Manniche 1999:66).

During the Ptolemaic Period, when Mendes specialised in the production of luxury, exotic perfumes, presumably both perfumed oils and solid perfumed unguents were made, which

¹¹⁷ The ancient Egyptian name for the city of Mendes was Djedet (David 1981:122). The goddess Hatmehyt, whose name means ‘she who is before the fishes’, had Mendes as her main cult centre. Here she probably had a temple. She is depicted either as a fish or a woman wearing a fish emblem on her head, now believed to be the common Nile *Lepidotus* fish. Eventually Hetmehyt became the consort of the ram god Banebdjedet of Mendes and was incorporated into his cult. Banebdjedet was depicted as a ram (or the head of a ram alone) or as a ram-headed man. From the New Kingdom onward he was often depicted as having four heads, two facing forward and two facing backwards, symbolizing his various aspects as the souls of Ra, Osiris, Shu and Geb, the deities he represented (Wilkinson, R H 2003:192 and 228-229).

were exported all over the Mediterranean. More research needs to be done on the role that Mendes played in perfume production.

9.3.2 Alexandria

Alexandria, founded by Alexander the Great in 332/31 BC, developed after his death in 323 BC into the intellectual and cultural centre of the entire Hellenistic world (Seidel and Schulz 2005:35). It was built on the site of an earlier settlement called Ra-Kedet, Rakhotis, replacing Memphis as the capital of Egypt by 320 BC (Wilkinson 2005:18). After Alexander's death, his empire was divided into provinces, governed by a *satrap*, the Persian title for a viceroy of a province, under a central administration. His general, Ptolemy Son of Lagos, succeeded him as governor of Egypt, becoming the *satrap* of the province of Egypt, moving his administration to Alexandria in 320 BC. In 306 BC the *satraps* declared themselves to be kings over their various provinces, with Ptolemy Son of Lagos becoming King Ptolemy I Soter of Egypt. Alexandria eventually became the capital of Egypt, taking over this role from Memphis, and remained so for the next millennium (El-Abbadi 2000:38 and 40).

In the Ptolemaic Period, Alexandria became a city specialising in the production of luxury and exotic perfumes, exporting them all over the Mediterranean. More research needs to be done on Alexandria's role in this respect.

9.4 CONCLUSION

Fortunately a tomb scene in the Eighteenth Dynasty Theban tomb TT 175, owner unknown, in the necropolis of el-Khokha provides us with some knowledge of what processes in perfume production took place in ancient Egyptian perfumers' workshops, as none have been identified archaeologically, apart from perfume/incense 'laboratories'. Some scholars believe that perfume production took place in these 'laboratories', while others do not. 'The Mendesian' perfume was made in the Delta city of Mendes, after which it was named, but later on the Romans probably produced it themselves. More research needs to be done on the roles that both Mendes and Alexandria played in perfume production in the Ptolemaic Period.

CHAPTER 10

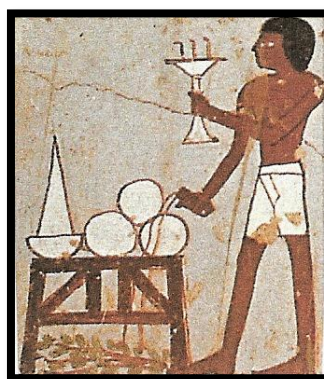


PERFUME IN THE 'SITZ IM LEBEN' OR CONTEXT OF TEMPLES

The smell of incense wafted through the temples of ancient Egypt. The offering of incense to the deities is just one of the important ways in which perfume was used by the Egyptians in the sphere of religion. Offerings of perfume and fragrant flowers, as well as anointing with scented oil, were other important ways in which the Egyptians used perfume in the context of temples to please the deities. Cloth was also offered to the deities, along with perfume, in the Ptolemaic Period, as cloth had a special connection with perfume, regarded by the Egyptians to be perfume from the sweat of Ra, part of the divine essence. Also in the Ptolemaic Period, there was a ritual of offering the fragrant blue primordial lotus by the king to the deities, symbolically represented by a lotus made of gold and lapis lazuli.

10.1 INTRODUCTION

The fire is laid, the fire shines
The incense is laid on the fire, the incense shines.
Your perfume comes to me, O Incense;
May my perfume come to you, O Incense.
Your perfume comes to me, you gods;
May my perfume come to you, you gods.
May I be with you, you gods.
May I live with you, you gods;
May you live with me, you gods.
I love you, you gods;
May you love me, you gods.



A censuring prayer, utterance/spell PT269 from the Pyramid Texts,
pyramid of Unas, Fifth Dynasty, Old Kingdom. Translated by Faulkner (1969:77).
This is a litany meant to accompany the act of censuring (Peck 1972:15).

The ancient Egyptians used a vast amount of perfume in their temples to please the deities. This took the form of anointing with scented oils, offerings of fragrant flowers and offerings of incense. Offerings were, above everything, a means to maintain the order of the cosmos, keeping evil forces in check threatening to bring it into chaotic disorder. The concepts central to the ideology of offerings, and both used to designate them, in the world view or *Weltanschauung* of the ancient Egyptians, is the dichotomy of 'the eye of Horus'¹¹⁸ (*irt Hr*) and *ma'at*. The 'eye of Horus' constitutes the ultimate gift and the fact that offerings were called this, indicates that they were considered to be vital participants in the preservation of

¹¹⁸ The healed eye in the Osiris myth is called the *wedjat* eye, 'the eye of Horus', which came to symbolise order out of chaos (Englund 2001:564).

life by the Egyptians. The ‘eye of Horus’, like *ma‘at*, represented what was sound and perfect (Englund 2001:564).

The most frequently used specialised word for the verb ‘to offer’ employed by the Egyptians was *htp*, represented by the offering slab hieroglyph (a loaf of bread), sometimes determined with the offering table hieroglyph. The word *wdn* also means ‘to offer’ and ‘offering’, its determining sign being a flower on a long stalk, flowers being an important part of the offerings. The word *hrp*, with the determining sign of an arm holding a baton of office, is connected to the provenance of the offerings, covering a large associative field, meaning, amongst other things; the special districts and estates from which the offerings came; the administration of them by the temples; the consecration of the offerings; and the dedication of them to the deities. Offerings had to be purified during rituals, and such offerings were called *wdhw*, the determining hieroglyphic signs being water flowing out of the recipient, as well as that for bread and beer (Englund 2001:566-567). The main official responsible for the offerings and ‘reversion of offerings’¹¹⁹ in temples had the title of ‘Overseer of the god’s offerings’ (*imy-r htpt-ntr*) or ‘Scribe of the god’s offerings’ (*ss htpt-ntr*) (Englund 2001:568).

There were two different kinds of temple offerings to the deities, given with the idea of ensuring the preservation of life. Firstly, these offerings consisted of ‘all good and pure things on which the god lives’, the deity concerned being regarded as the father or lord of the offerings. The offerings being returned to their rightful owner, supposedly strengthened the recipient, leading to a favour being given in return. These offerings thus operated on the principle of *do ut des*, meaning ‘I give in order that you give’. This principle, where offerings were part of a continuous exchange of energies, echoed the holistic *Weltanschauung* or world view of the ancient Egyptians, whereby everything in the universe was ecologically linked in a network of energies. Secondly, some offerings represented chaotic forces threatening the order of the cosmos, which consisted of animals connected to the god Seth, such as the ass, gazelle and goose (Englund 2001:564-565). Temple reliefs show offering tables laden with many different types of offerings, amongst which are those pertaining to perfume, such as the fragrant blue lotus flower.

¹¹⁹ The custom of the ‘reversion of offerings’ (*wdb h d*) (Thompson 2001:328) was established in the Old Kingdom. After the symbolic presentation of offerings, first to the main temple deity in the sanctuary, then to the deities with subsidiary cults in the temple, then to the statues of kings and private people in temple courts, the offerings were taken to the necropolis. This was followed by the distribution of the offerings to priests and staff involved in the rituals as a ‘salary’ for their work (Englund 2001:568).

10.2 THE OFFERING OF INCENSE TO THE DEITIES

A royal offering to Sokar-Osiris,
The god who presides over Sokar's chapel,
The great god in Rutisut;
(To) Apis-Osiris-Khentamenti, King of Gods,
Lord of eternity, ruler of everlastingness;
(To) Isis-the Great, the mother of god,
The eye of Re, the lady of heaven.
The mistress of all the stars;
(To) Nephys, the sister of the god;
(To) Horus, champion-of-his-father,
The great god in Rutisut;
(To) Anubis upon-his mountain,
The embalmer who presides over the shrine,
And to all the gods in Rostau,
The beautiful west of Memphis;
May they give an offering of bread, beer, oxen, fowl,
Incense, ointment, and clothing,
And everything good from their altar
To the *ka* of the Osiris, the princess,...



Extract from the stela of Taimhotep (British Museum 147), dating from the reign of Cleopatra VII, Late Period. Translated by Lichtheim (1980:59-60)¹²⁰.

The offering of incense to the deities was the most important activity in Egyptian temples. This activity led to the Egyptians needing ever increasing amounts of precious incense to please the deities. This need, in turn, led to the importation of vast quantities of *'ntyw* and *sntr* from the 'land of Punt', as Egypt itself produced very little fragrant resin that was suitable for censuring purposes.

10.2.1 The daily temple ritual of the cult statues

The daily temple ritual service of the gods, which tended to their daily needs, is one of the three basic classifications of rituals in ancient Egypt. The other two are the occasional, but regular, rituals which formed part of the recurrent festivals of the temple calendar and the

¹²⁰ This belongs to a genre in ancient Egyptian literature called biographical inscriptions, their main theme being a lament over an early death. It appears to be an innovation of the Late Period to introduce such a lament into the autobiography, which changed its whole character, the original purpose, which was to record a successful life, being nullified. The autobiography now became an epitaph, resembling Greek epitaphs in the Hellenistic Period (Lichtheim 1980:6).

irregular rituals, performed only on special occasions, or under special circumstances (Wilkinson, R H 2003: 43).

Before dawn, some temple assistants were busy preparing the offerings that would be made to the deity, while others collected water from the well in the temple enclosure in preparation of a purification process (Meeks & Favard-Meeks 1997:126). This process was necessary as everything that would come into contact with the deity had to be purified with this water originating in *nun*, along with natron and burning incense (Meeks & Favard-Meeks 1997:127). This ritual was carried out on the principal statue of the cult (made either of wood, stone or precious metals) which had undergone the 'opening of the mouth' ritual after completion, housed in a granite shrine called the *naos* in the deepest recesses of the temple, whose doors were sealed to protect this sacred space (Meeks & Favard-Meeks 1997:126).

The daily morning temple ritual was derived from the ritual for the sun god Ra at Heliopolis, which represented the rebirth of the sun each morning, and later incorporated elements of Osirian belief so that it also came to symbolize the restoration and revivification of the dismembered body of Osiris, essentially the same for every temple in ancient Egypt (Thompson 2001:328). By the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, the Heliopolitan and the Osirian rites had combined to form one ritual. It was performed for every temple deity in Egypt, for the purpose of this ritual all likened to Ra and Osiris, themselves not being objects of worship (David 1981:58).

The daily temple ritual of the cult statue is known from several sources, ranging from the New Kingdom to the Graeco-Roman Period. Scenes of this ritual are depicted on temple walls, where a single scene often represents the whole ritual. The most comprehensive are found in the temple of Seti I at Abydos¹²¹ (in six different chapels); in the Ptolemaic temple

¹²¹ Abydos is the Greek name for the town probably pronounced as Ebot by the ancient Egyptians (David 1981:7). It is an ancient site of religious significance, modern Kom el-Sultan, situated on the west bank of the Nile in northern Upper Egypt, near the modern Egyptian town of el-Arabah el-Mafuna. In the Predynastic Period a large necropolis (Cemetery U) was established on the low desert, which later became reserved for high-status individuals. At the start of the First Dynasty a necropolis in an area known as Umm el-Qaab, 'mother of pots', neighbouring on Cemetery U, was reserved exclusively for royalty and the town of Abydos itself contained further First Dynasty burials. It was at Umm el-Qaab where the Predynastic rulers of This, a nearby town on the west bank of the Nile, mentioned in texts from the Early Dynastic Period, whose precise location is unknown, and their successors were buried, the kings of the First Dynasty and the last two kings of the Second Dynasty. Abydos became one of the most important religious sites in ancient Egypt in the late Old Kingdom when a temple that had originally been dedicated to the god Khentiamentu became the principal cult centre of Osiris. The tomb of Djer, third king of the First Dynasty, was identified as the tomb of Osiris in the Middle

of Horus at Edfu (nineteen scenes), and in the Ptolemaic temple of Hathor at Dendera (six scenes) (Englund 2001:565). Descriptions of the ritual are also found in New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period papyri (Spencer 2007:92 and 94), as well as those dating from the Twenty-sixth Dynasty, Late Period, now in Berlin, describing scenes of the ritual for Amun and Mut at Karnak (thirty-six scenes) (Englund 2001:565). Whilst all these sources aid the reconstruction of the likely sequence of the ritual, they do not agree on the order of events, resulting in different reconstructions by various scholars (Thompson 2001:328).

The main officiating priest, an *hm-ntr*, ceremonially purified, on approaching the shrine housing the cult statue, declared that it was the king who had sent him to see the deity, as only the king was allowed to confront the deity. As the sun rose, the bolt of the shrine was drawn back and the door was opened, whereupon the priest prostrated himself before the statue, followed by the ritual purification of the chapel with water and incense before the cult statue could be removed from the shrine. A small figure of the goddess Ma'at was then presented to the statue and it was removed from its shrine (Thompson 2001:328). The cult image was then placed on freshly strewn sand, stripped of the clothing that had been put on it the previous day and cleansed with incense and water from sacred *nemset* and *deshret*-vases (Spencer 2007:94). The statue was then dressed in cloths of white, green, blue and red and presented with various objects, such as crowns, sceptre, crook, flail and *wsh*-collar (Thompson 2001:328). It was then anointed with the fragrant ten sacred oils/unguents and had two types of eye-paint applied to it (Spencer 2007:94).

The various reconstructions differ as to the point when the offering ritual takes place during this daily morning ritual, when the deity is presented with a meal, consisting only of a small proportion of the vast offerings of meat, bread, cakes, beer, milk, honey, vegetables and fruit heaped up in the altar room. Some scholars place it before the final purification of the chapel for replacing the statue in the shrine, while others place it before the undressing and dressing of the statue. The priest recited an offering formula, listing the various items of the offering, after which incense was burned and libations made to purify and sanctify the offerings. The deity did not actually consume the offerings, only partaking of their essence. These offerings were then re-used according to the practice of 'reversion of offerings' (Thompson 2001:328). The final rites having been performed, the priest put the cult statue back in its shrine and

Kingdom. An annual procession from temple to tomb took place along a ceremonial route to re-enact the myths surrounding Osiris (Wilkinson 2005:12, 245 and 254).

closed its doors. He then backed out of the sanctuary and bolted it, brushing away his footsteps with a broom. Texts from the Graeco-Roman Period reveal that in certain temples other rituals for the cult were performed at other points of the day, for example midday and evening at Dendera and even perhaps an hourly ritual at Edfu (Spencer 2007:94). These rituals were shorter than the morning rituals. They did not take place in the sanctuary but in an adjacent room. The main features of these extra rituals were libations, censings, additional purifications and simple offerings (Schafer 1997:253).

At the temple of Seti I at Abydos, six chapels have scenes of the daily morning temple ritual. These are the chapels of Ptah, Ra-Harakhte, Amun-Ra, Osiris, Isis and Horus, all well preserved, except those in the chapel of Ptah. There are certain differences between them with regard to the scenes, inscriptions and the order of the scenes (David 1981:60). The author will describe in detail those scenes from the chapel of Ra-Harakhte and only those dealing with perfume.

10.2.1.1 Scenes from the chapel of Ra-Harakhte at the temple of Seti I, Abydos

10.2.1.1.1 Entry

10.2.1.1.1.1 Episode 1 – spell for entering to uncover the face (in the interior of the palace and the chapels which are beside the sanctuary)

In this episode¹²², *r n 'k r wn hr*, Seti I, kneeling before the seated Atum, offers him a bowl of burning incense. In the accompanying inscription he says that he has been purified by Tefnut, he is a prophet and has come to perform the ritual, he has come 'to place the god upon his seat' (David 1981:60 and 64) (Figure 10.1).

¹²² This refers to one of a series of rites making up the ritual, as opposed to a scene indicating a particular relief on a particular wall in the chapel (David 1981:60).

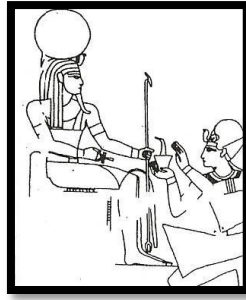


Figure 10.1: Episode 1, chapel of Ra-Harakhte, temple of Seti I

10.2.1.1.2 Opening of the shrine

10.2.1.1.2.1 Episode 5 – spell for incense to the *uraeus*

In this episode, *r n sntr n 'r'*, Seti I is kneeling before the seated god offering him a bowl of burning incense. In the inscription he invokes Edjo¹²³ (and various other deities as well) to be purified, just as the crowns of Upper and Lower Egypt are purified (David 1981:60 and 64) (Figure 10.2).

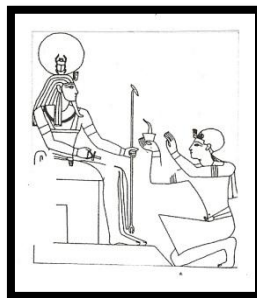


Figure 10.2: Episode 5, chapel of Ra-Harakhte, temple of Seti I

10.2.1.1.3 Adoration of the god

10.2.1.1.3.1 Episode 7 – spell for entering the sanctuary

In this episode, *r n 'k r shm*, Seti I is kneeling before a seated Atum and offering him a bowl of burning incense. In the accompanying inscription the king says to him that the great ones from the sky are waiting for him ‘...you enter into the hall as Osiris, having appeared as Lord of All’ (David 1981:60 and 64) (Figure 10.3).

¹²³ Edjo is the cobra goddess Wadjet of Buto, in the Delta region (Wilkinson, R H 2003:253).

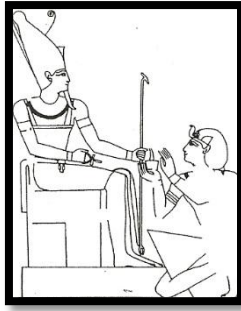


Figure 10.3: Episode 7, chapel of Ra-Harakhte, temple of Seti I

10.2.1.1.3.2 Episode 8 – spell for seeing the god

In this episode, *r n m33 ntr*, Seti I is kneeling before a standing Ra-Harakhte, offering him a bowl of burning incense. In the accompanying inscription the king says ‘I have opened the two doors in order that you may allow me to pass. It is the King who commanded me to see the god ... I kiss the ground, I embrace Geb, I have offered praises for Re-Harakhte that I may be pure for him thereby’. It appears as though a delegate is performing the rite on behalf of the king (David 1981:60 and 64) (Figure 10.4).

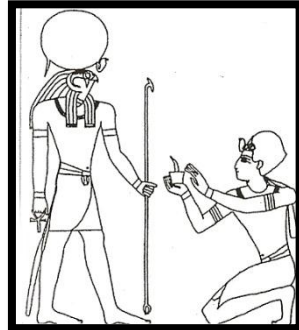


Figure 10.4: Episode 8, chapel of Ra-Harakhte, temple of Seti I

10.2.1.1.3.3 Episode 9 – spell for entering the great place

In this episode, *r n 'k r st-wrt*, ‘Seti I is kneeling before a seated Ra-Harakhte, offering him a bowl of burning incense. In the inscription the king says ‘May the god be in peace (twice), living spirit who strikes his enemies. Thy *ba* is with thee, thy power is at thy side. I have brought for thee the king, Lord of the Two Lands, Menmaetre, given life, thy living image associating with thee’ (David 1981:60 and 64) (Figure 10.5).

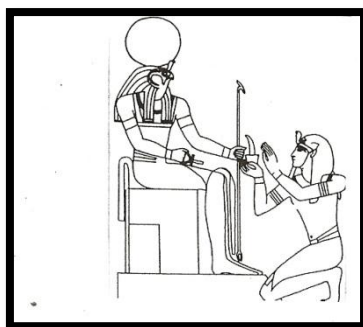


Figure 10.5: Episode 9, chapel of Ra-Harakhte, temple of Seti I

10.2.1.1.4 Purification

10.2.1.1.4.1 Episode 11 – spell for provisioning (?) the sanctuary

In this episode, *r n dfw pr-wr*, Seti I is kneeling before the seated Atum. - He is holding a burning censer in his right hand and with his left hand he is sweeping the dais with a cloth on which Atum is sitting. In the accompanying inscription he says: ‘I am Horus; I have come seeking for my two eyes; I shall not allow that it should be far from thee, Re-Harakhte. Atum, Lord of the Great Mansion, who resides in the Mansion of Menmaetre, behold me carrying it! May you come in peace! It has driven out all thy impurities, for thou hast assembled it, Atum, father of the gods, who resides in the Mansion of Menmaetre’ (David 1981:60 and 65) (Figure10.6).

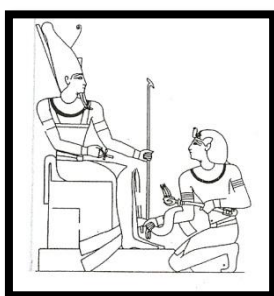


Figure 10.6: Episode 11, chapel of Ra-Harakhte, temple of Seti I

10.2.1.1.4.2 Episode 12 – offering incense when uncovering the face, while presenting the censer

In this episode, *irt sntr hft wn hr m shtpy*, Seti I, standing, is holding a burning arm censer in his right hand, while he is sprinkling a pile of food offerings with water from a container held

in his left hand, a rite he is performing for a statue of the god in a boat-shrine depicted on the adjoining section of the wall. In the accompanying inscription the king remarks how beautiful it is to see the flame and goes on to say ‘Welcome, thou awakest in peace, Re-Harakhte, the incense is in peace, thy awakening is peaceful, and thou arisest in peace ... the white eye of Horus is in peace, the sweet perfume of the incense enters the river in peace’. He then prays that the god may be great and victorious as desired by his *ka*. He concludes by saying ‘Re has made thee beautiful, according to that which Re did on the first occasion of searching for the corpse without finding it. It was the shadow only which was found’. Episode 26 in the chapel of Ra-Harakhte is a duplicate of episode 12, only a mirror image of it (David 1981:60 and 65) (Figure 10.7).

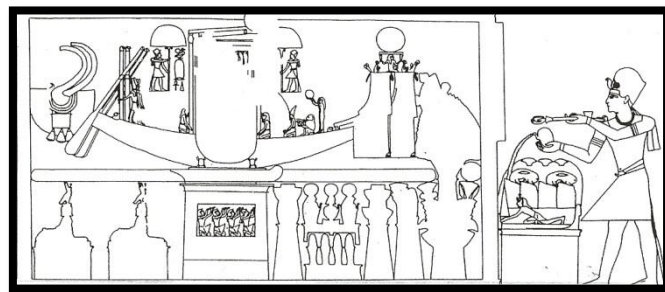


Figure 10.7: Episode 12, chapel of Ra-Harakte, temple of Seti I

10.2.1.1.5 Preparing the god

10.2.1.1.5.1 Episode 14 – spell for wiping off the *md*-ointment

In this episode, *r n sfh md*, Seti I, standing, is holding a jar of perfumed oil/unguent in his right hand. David (1981:66) is of the opinion that with his left hand he is wiping the ointment off the *uraeus* of the god with his finger. In the accompanying inscription the king says ‘I am come, and anoint thee with unguent which came out from the Eye of Horus ... may it bound they bones, may it re-unite thy limbs, may it reassemble thy flesh. It releases all thy evil fluids’. He entreats the god ‘Come thou! Seize the crown thereby, at the command of Horus himself, Lord of generations’ (David 1981:60 and 66) (Figure 10.8).

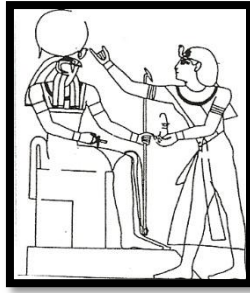


Figure 10.8: Episode 14, chapel of Ra-Harakhte, temple of Seti I

10.2.1.1.5.2 Episode 16 – adoring (the god) four times, offering incense when entering the palace

In this episode, *dw3 ntr sp 4 irt sntr hft 'k r stp-s3*, Seti I is standing before Ra-Harakhte, offering him a bowl of burning incense. In the accompanying inscription the king greets Ra-Harakhte and wishes that he sees what Horus (who is in the Eastern Mountain) saw. He continues ‘... Neith, who is in Sais, and Hathor, who is in her horizon, they pacify Re-Harakhte, who resides in the Mansion of Menmaetre, according to all the words uttered by the king Menmaetre, given life, on this day’ (David 1981: 60 and 66) (Figure 10.9).

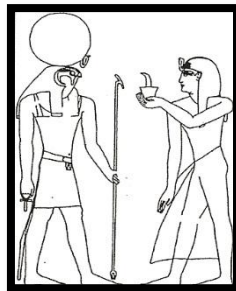


Figure 10.9: Episode 16, chapel of Ra-Harakhte, temple of Seti I

10.2.1.1.6 Robing outside the shrine

10.2.1.1.6.1 Episode 24 – making purification with a bowl of libation water, and with four pellets of incense

In this episode, *irt 'bw m hnt n kbhw m 4 t3a nw sntr*, Seti I, standing, is offering Ra-Harakhte a bowl of burning incense held in his left hand and at the same time is sprinkling him with water from a bowl he holds in his right hand. In the accompanying inscription the king says ‘Take for thyself the Eye of Horus, pure for thee is the water which is in it ... thy

incense is the incense of Horus, and vice versa. Mayest thou be established amongst thy brothers the gods'. The ritual act of the sprinkling of water (as well as ritual washing) symbolised new life and immortality. It was a regular feature of the Heliopolitan liturgy, whereby the image of Ra was regularly bathed by human officials impersonating Horus and Thoth (David 1981:61 and 68) (Figure 10.10).

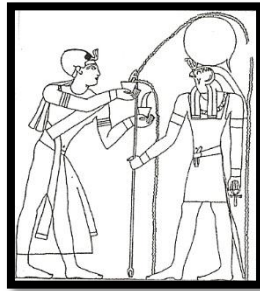


Figure 10.10: Episode 24, chapel of Ra-Harakhte, temple of Seti I

10.2.1.1.7 Robing inside the shrine

10.2.1.1.7.1 Episode 29 – spell for presenting unguent

In this episode, *r n rdit md*, Seti I, kneeling, is presenting Ra-Harakhte with two jars of perfumed oil/unguent. In the accompanying inscription the formula contains a list of ten different types of perfumes and unguents that the god is presented with, the the ten sacred oils/unguents. It begins with the king telling the god 'Oh Re-Harakhte, I have filled for thee the Eye of Horus with *md*-ointment. Festival perfume'. It goes on in a similar way to mention the eight other sacred oils/unguents, which include *safet* oil and perfume of cedar. The Egyptians believed that the cult image of the god would regain life through the potency of these sacred perfumes (David 1981:61 and 70) (Figure 10.11).



Figure 10.11: Episode 29, chapel of Ra-Harakhte, temple of Seti I

10.2.1.1.7.2 Episode 34 – making purification with incense upon the fire, walking around four times

In this episode, *irt 'bw m sntr hr sdt phr h3 sp 4*, Seti I, kneeling, is offering Ra-Harakhte a bowl of burning incense in his left hand. In the chapel of Ra-Harakhte the inscription relating to this episode is missing and so is part of the figures (David 1981:61 and 71).

10.2.1.1.8 Exit

10.2.1.1.8.1 Episode 35 – spell for wiping out the footprint with the *hdn*-plant

In this episode, *r n int rd m h3dn*, Seti I, standing alone, bends forward, holding an arm censer containing burning incense in his left hand and holding a bundle of *hdn*-plants in his right hand which trail along the ground behind him. The accompanying inscription says ‘Thoth comes, he has rescued the Eye of Horus from his enemies, and no enemy, male or female, enters into this sanctuary. Closing the door by Ptah, fastening the door by Thoth, closing the door and fastening the door with a bolt’ (David 1981:61 and 71).

10.2.1.1.9 Post-exit purification

10.2.1.1.9.1 Episode 36 – making purification with incense upon the fire, walking around four times

In the temple of Ra-Harakhte the scene is partly destroyed and the text is badly preserved. In this episode, *irt 'bw m sntr hr sdt phr h3 sp 4*, Seti I is kneeling and appears to be making an offering to Atum, possibly a bowl with burning incense or a jar containing perfumed oil/unguent. From the inscriptions in the other five chapels at the temple of Seti at Abydos containing depictions of the daily temple ritual corresponding to this episode, it has been possible to reconstruct the inscription as follows: ‘Take to thee the Eye of Horus, [its perfume comes towards you, the perfume of the Eye of Horus comes towards you. Spoken four times. You are pure (twice)]’ (David 1981:61 and 71).

10.2.2 Anointing scenes

Thompson (1991:218) puts forward ritual scenes as the third class of scenes depicting anointing with fragrant oil/unguent. The king is depicted in scenes anointing the head of the cult statues of deities with fragrant oil, which took place during the daily temple ritual. The

king performed this anointing to bring this ritual to a close. After having dipped his little finger into a jar containing the oil, he lightly touched the forehead of the statue, which revitalised it, readying it to bear the deity's earthly presence after it was once more hidden from view behind the locked and sealed doors of the *naos*. Having performed the anointing, the king left the sanctuary, effacing his footsteps with a broom (Meeks & Favard-Meeks 1997:128). Thompson (1991:224) states that many of these scenes are from the Ramesside Period, Nineteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, when the anointing gesture was once again used in scenes in Egyptian art, most of them being found on temple walls, represented by the outstretched right arm with the little finger of the right hand extended to the person or object being anointed. The majority of them depict the offering of fragrant oil to the deity (or his cult statue or other cult objects) in the context of the daily temple ritual of the cult statues. He states further that of the forty-seven examples of such scenes that he knows have been collected, sixteen are labelled *irt mdt*, 'performing the *mdt*-ointment (offering)', three are labelled (r)*dit mdt*, 'giving *mdt*-ointment (offering)', three are labelled (r)*dit mdt*, 'giving *mdt*-ointment', and three are labelled *hnk mdt*, 'offering *mdt*-ointment', *mdt* being one of the ten sacred oils/unguents. The remainder have no labels.

10.2.2.1 Anointing the *uraeus* of the cult statue of the deity

Thompson (1991:226) states that a text from Papyrus Harris (I, 49, 12-50, 2) reads as follows:

[Ramses III] shall restore your temple, (and) the temples of the sed-festivals which were ruined since the (time of) the previous kings. I shall work your ennead, the Lords of the sed-festival, with silver and gold and god's-stone as (was done) previously. I shall clothe them with clothing or royal linen and *mk*-linen. I shall anoint (*wrh*) them (with) *mdt*-oil on their uraei.

According to Thompson (1991:227), this text appears to refer to the ritual of the king anointing the *uraeus* of the deity, indicating that this activity can be described by the verb *wrh*. During the Ramesside Period, Nineteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, the verb *wrh* referred to anointing the head of a person or object. It was the head of the *uraeus* that was being anointed, itself being located on the head (or crown) of the deity. There are eight of these scenes extant in ancient Egyptian art, which date to the reigns of Seti I and Ramses II, six occurring at the Temple of Seti I at Abydos and two occurring elsewhere (Thompson 1991:225).

One scene in the temple of Seti I at Abydos, depicts the king holding a container of unguent in his left hand, his right arm outstretched and his right little finger (which he would have dipped into the unguent container) extended towards the deity (the ‘anointing gesture’) towards the *uraeus* of the crown of the seated deity facing him.

In another scene in the temple of Seti I at Abydos, the king is depicted anointing the ‘Abydene symbol’, which, seen in frontal view has two *uraei* on its head. The king is holding the container of unguent in his left hand (other containers of unguent are shown on a stand elsewhere in the scene), while his right arm is outstretched and his right little finger is extended (the ‘anointing gesture’) towards the two additional *uraei*, which the artist added in profile on the right side of the symbol. A sketch of this scene by A.R. David does not show the two *uraei* on the side of the Abydene symbol (Thompson 1991:226) (Figure 10.12).

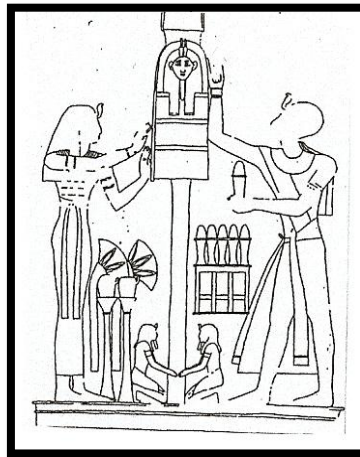


Figure 10.12: Anointing the uraeus of the ‘abydene symbol’

10.2.2.2 Anointing the head of the cult statue of the deity with the ‘anointing gesture’

A scene from the temple of Seti I at Abydos, Nineteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, shows the king anointing the head of the cult statue of Osiris. In his left hand he is holding a jar of unguent, whilst the little finger of his right hand is extended towards the head of Osiris, the ‘anointing gesture’ (Figure 10.13).

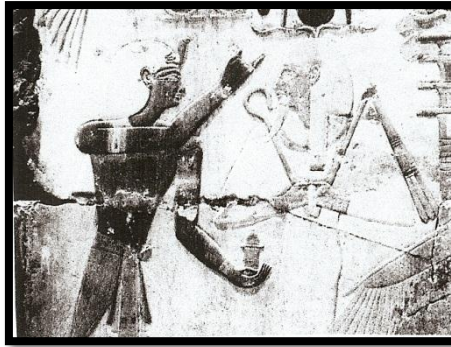


Figure 10.13: Using the anointing gesture, in the temple of Seti I

10.2.2.3 Anointing the head of the cult statue of the deity by means of pouring fragrant oil over it

Thompson (1991:235) states that in his studies on anointing in ancient Egypt, he has not discovered any anointing scenes from the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, which depict the ‘anointing gesture’, only those in which oil is depicted as being poured onto the deities, where the verb *whr*, ‘anointing’ can be used to describe the action. The Pyramid Texts give the earliest indication that pouring oil onto an object can be considered as anointing, with the first scene explicitly labelling this action as *whr* being found in the temple of Ptah at Karnak (Thompson 1991:236).

A scene in the hypostyle hall in the temple of Luxor depicts Amenhotep III, Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, standing before a seated figure of Amun-Ra. His arms are extended and he is holding a container of fragrant oil in his hands and tilting it towards the deity. A stream of oil can be seen issuing from the container, arching towards Amun-Ra’s crown (Figure 10.14).



Figure 10.14: Anointing the cult statue, by means of pouring fragrant oil over it

10.2.2.4 Anointing the head of other cult objects

At Medinet Habu a scene depicts of Ramesses III, Nineteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, anointing the head of the image on a cult standard of Horus, using the ‘anointing gesture’ (Figure 10.15).

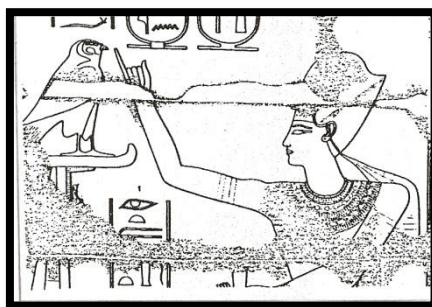


Figure 10.15: Anointing cult objects

10.2.2.5 Scenes of separation in anointing the head

This category can be further sub-divided. The first sub-division is those depicting the king standing before the deity, where there is sometimes an object placed between the two, imposing a distance between them, such as an offering stand. He is usually holding the jar of ointment in his left hand, his right finger extended in the ‘anointing gesture’. Both the king’s hands are usually raised to the level of the deity’s head. The second sub-division is those showing him kneeling before the deity whilst performing the ‘anointing gesture’ (Thompson 1991:231). Here his hands are usually raised to his eye-level, although in one scene the left hand holding the unguent jar is almost at the level of the deity’s knees (Thompson 1991:232).

In scenes of both sub-divisions, the position of the king’s hands in relation to one another is determined by the direction he faces (Thompson 1991:231-232). Thompson (1991:231) states:

When the king faces right, the left hand holding the ointment jar precedes the right hand with the anointing gesture, since the right arm must extend across the king’s body. When the king faces left, the right hand with the anointing gesture precedes the left hand holding the ointment jar, since the left arm now crosses the king’s body.

An unusual scene in the second sub-division of this category, at Karnak, shows a kneeling Seti I, Nineteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, facing right and presenting an image of himself depicted performing the ‘anointing gesture’ and presenting unguent to the god Amun-Ra. An *udjat*-eye is shown at the end of the right little finger of the image,¹²⁴ representing the eye of Horus, which in turn often represents an offering of unguent (Thompson 1991:232) (Figure 10.16).

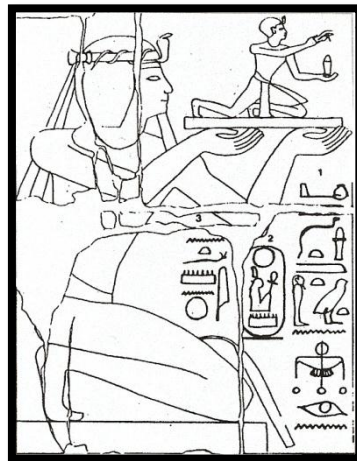


Figure 10.16: Anointing the head, involving separation

Thompson (1991:234-235) points out that the scenes of separation involving anointing evident during the Ramesside Period seemingly became the standard anointing scene during the Late Period, extending through the Ptolemaic and Roman Periods, with the direction the king faces still determining the positioning of his hands relative to one another.

10.3 OFFERINGS OF PERFUME, CLOTH AND FRAGRANT FLOWERS TO THE DEITIES

10.3.1 Offerings of perfume by the king to the deities

A scene on the north wall, upper register, in Room X in the Ptolemaic Period temple of Philadelphus at Philae depicts Ptolemy II Philadelphus offering the goddess Isis a sphinx-shaped unguent jar containing ‘*ntyw*’ (Zabkar 1980:127) (Figure 10.17).

¹²⁴ This representation of the *udjat*-eye at the end of the outstretched little finger occurred again in the temples of Edfu and Dendera during the Ptolemaic Period (Thompson 1991:232).

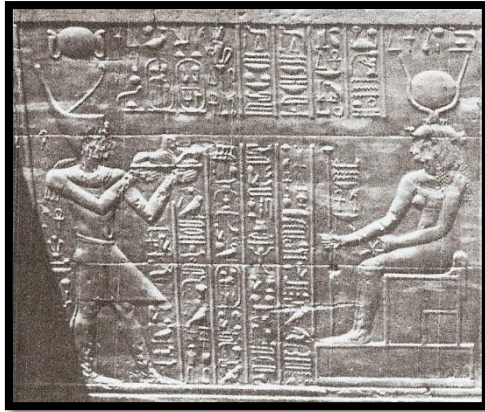


Figure 10.17: Ptolemy II Philadelphus offering a jar of *'ntyw* to Isis

This scene is accompanied by a hymn to the goddess Isis.

The hymn first introduces the officiant: 'The King of Upper and Lower Egypt *Wsr-k3-r'-mry-imm* has come to you, O Isis, bringing to you the myrrh which comes forth from Punt and which makes pleasant your fragrance for ever' then it continues:

O Isis, giver of life, who dwells in the Pure Island,
take to yourself the myrrh which comes from Punt,
the lotus (-fragrance) which issues from your body,
that your heart may be glad through it,
and that your heart may rejoice every day.

Osiris is in joy. His heart takes pleasure
when son of the Sun Ptolemy covers for you your head with the unguent
which issues from the Eye of Horus in that its name of Unguent.

The Eye of Horus is the fire which burns for you the followers of Seth;
Geb gives you your inheritance.

Translated by Zabkar (1980:127-128).

A relief at Karnak, Nineteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, shows Ramesses II offering Amun-Ra a tray of incense pots (Figure 10.18).



Figure 10.18: Ramesses II offering a tray of incense pots to Amun-Ra, Karnak

A relief from part of the west wall of a chapel built by Seti I for his father, Ramesses I, at Abydos, now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (MMA 11.155.3), depicts Seti I offering a small statue of himself holding a jar of perfume, to the god Osiris (Figure 10.19).

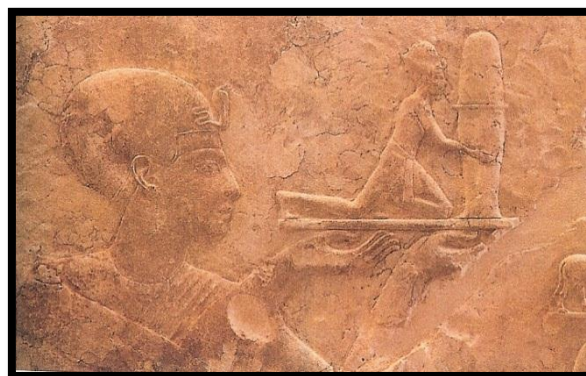


Figure 10.19: Seti I offering a statue of himself holding a jar of perfume to Osiris

At Behbet el-Hagar, a fragment of a relief shows Ptolemy II, Ptolemaic Period, offering a jar of sacred perfumed oil/unguent to the goddess Nephthys (Figure 10.20).

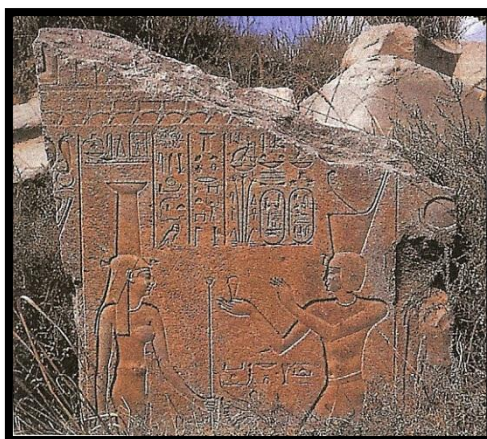


Figure 10.20: Ptolemy II offering a jar of sacred perfumed unguent/oil to Nephthys

An interesting twist to the motif of the king offering perfume to the deities, can be seen in the Chapelle Rouge of Hatshepsut, Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom. Hatshepsut, dressed as a king, is offering a tray containing jars of perfumed oil/unguent to Horus (Figure 10.21).

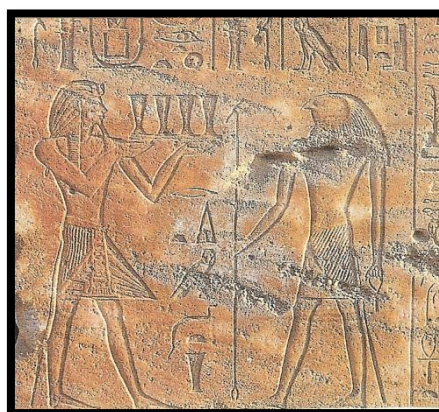


Figure 10.21: Hatshepsut offering a tray of perfume jars to Horus

10.3.2 Offerings of perfume and cloth to the deities by the king in temples dating to the Ptolemaic Period

Reliefs in temples dating to the Ptolemaic Period, depict the offering of perfume by the king to the deities in conjunction with the offering to them of perfume. Derchain (1965:137) states that Papyrus Salt 825 (col II, 7) indicates that cloth was considered by the ancient Egyptians to be part of the divine essence, perfume issued from the sweat of the god Ra. In addition to the offering scenes, there are among the texts in the *w'b.t* chapel (New Year chapel) at the temple of Hathor at Dendera references to clothing and perfuming Hathor. One text states 'Four Renenutet-goddesses carry out the work of dressing'. Another text in the frieze states that the room was built 'to clothe Hathor with the vestments of Renenutet ... and for the

anointing with the medjet ointment and the abundant essences coming from the hands of Shesmu' (Colin 2007:350).

10.3.2.1 The offering of perfume and cloth to the deities depicted in barque sanctuaries

In the barque sanctuaries at the temples of Horus at Edfu; the temple of Hathor at Dendera; the temple of Isis at Philae; the temple at Kalabsha, dedicated to the Nubian god Mandulis (accompanied by Osiris and Isis) and the god Dedwen; and the temple at Deir el-Shelvit, the offering of cloth to the deities by the king is connected with the presentation of Medjet oil¹²⁵ and other aromatic substances (Colin 2007:344).

The west wall of the barque sanctuary in the temple of Horus at Edfu contains four scenes, in the second register, in which the king is offering four kinds of cloth to various deities. On the east wall of this sanctuary (in the first and second registers) and on the north wall (second register) the king is offering perfume in the form of a jar of medjet (*mdt*) oil and 'ntwy (censing with an arm censer and holding a vessel with burning incense in it) to various deities (Colin 2007:344).

The king offering a jar of medjet oil to the god Horus, in the barque sanctuary of the temple of Horus at Edfu, Ptolemaic Period (Figure 10.22).

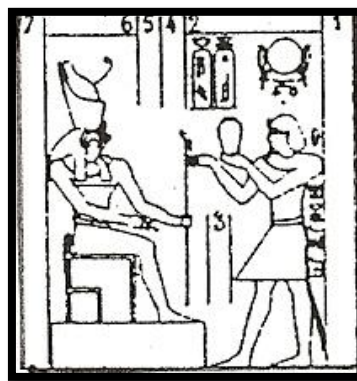


Figure 10.22: The king offering a jar of *mdt*-oil to Horus

On the east wall of the barque sanctuary at the temple of Hathor at Dendera, a scene depicts the king offering medjet unguent to Hathor, in her role as *uraeus*/daughter of Ra and 'eye of

¹²⁵ Medjet was one of the three sacred oils added to the original 'seven sacred oils' to make up the ten sacred oils/unguents. It contained lotus oil.

Ra', which links the action to the east and to sunrise. On the west wall of this sanctuary a scene depicts the king offering the linen *ins* to Isis, linking the action with sunset and night. These scenes demonstrate the solar and eastern nature of medjet oil (Colin 2007:344).

10.3.2.2 The 'horizon of lotus' cloth

In the *per nu* (house of water) at the temple of Hathor at Dendera, the offering of cloth by the king to the deities is connected to the fragrant blue lotus flower, in the form of the 'horizon of lotus' cloth. On the north wall a scene depicts the king offering to the goddess Hathor a horizon sign from which two threads emerge, 'the horizon of lotus' cloth. The title of the scene is 'offering the cloth horizon of the lotus (*3ht n ssn*)'. Formula: 'Take to yourself this white Eye of Horus, steeped ... in the divine perfume, this your cloth flooded with lotus ... The king says: 'I come before you Tayt¹²⁶, Lady of the *Per-nw* ... to bring you the *riw*-cloth flooded with lotus ... Hathor says: 'I give you these *srt*y-cloths of Horus'. Recitation: ... I take the Horizon cloth which is on your arms so that I clothe my body with what you bring. I give you the stagnant waters with the leaves and the river mouths with lotus' (Preys 2002:119).¹²⁷

The king offering the 'horizon of lotus' cloth to Hathor, in the temple of Hathor at Dendera, Ptolemaic Period. This cloth was seemingly steeped in lotus perfume (Figure 10.23).

¹²⁶ Tayet [*T3it (t)*] was the ancient Egyptian goddess of weaving and spinning cloth. Her place of origin was probably the weaving town of Buto (Dep) (El-Saady 1994:213). The whole process of weaving and bandaging of mummies in the mummification process was thought to function under her patronage. Her most important role was to supply her handmade bandages for the latter process, also called *tryt.t* (El-Saady 1994:215). A text in the temple of Hathor at Dendera states that Tayet has a green, or more likely turquoise, skin colour (El-Saady 1994:213). Although Tayet is first mentioned in the Old Kingdom Pyramid Texts (Wilkinson, R H 2003 :168), she had no iconographic form before the first millennium BC and was then more widely depicted in temples belonging to the Ptolemaic Period. She is depicted anthropomorphically, sometimes holding the hieroglyphic sign for linen (*ssr*) or the *w3st*-sceptre and *'nkh*-sign. In the Graeco-Roman period the goddess Hathor was given the name of Tayet (El-Saady 1994:215).

¹²⁷Preys (2002:119) calls the goddess being offered the 'the horizon of lotus' cloth by the king in this scene, Isis. The author has taken the liberty of substituting the name of Isis with that of Hathor, as this goddess was given the name Tayet in the Graeco-Roman period, the name mentioned in the inscription accompanying the scene. In addition, the goddess in the scene is wearing the cow horns of Hathor, although Isis also wore them occasionally.

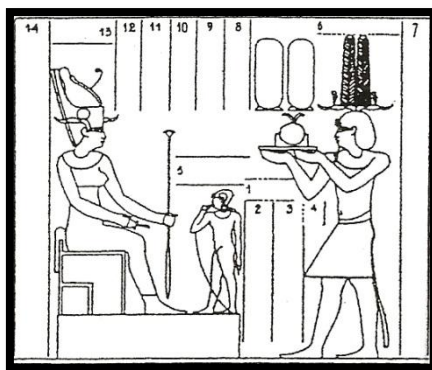


Figure 10.23: The king offering the 'horizon of lotus' cloth to Hathor

10.3.2.3 The offering of perfume and cloth depicted in the Chamber of Cloth

On the doorway of the side room X, 'The Chamber of Cloth', to the east of the inner vestibule in the temple of Hathor at Dendera, a scene depicts four standing figures offering before the seated deities Hathor, Harsomptus and Ihy. The standing figures include the king, offering a strip of cloth in his right hand and a perfume jar in his left hand; the god Shesmu, here lion-headed, holding two jars of perfume; and the goddess Tayet¹²⁸, holding two strips of cloth (El-Saady 1994:214) (Figure 10.24).

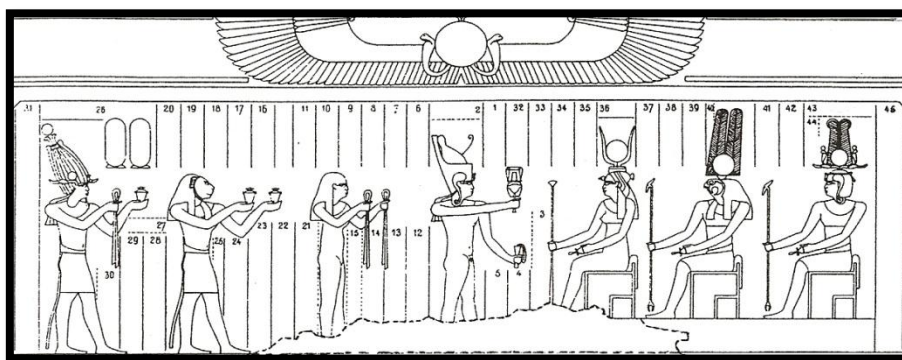


Figure 10.24: Scene involving the offering of perfume and cloth to three deities

10.3.3 The ritual of the offering of the fragrant primordial blue lotus by the king to the deities in the Ptolemaic Period

An artificial fragrant blue lotus flower, the whole inner part of which was made out of gold and the unfolding petals being made out of lapis lazuli, was offered to the deities by the king

¹²⁸ The goddess Tayet had connections with several deities but had a special connection with the god Shesmu relating to the mummification process. While Tayet supplied the bandages involved in this process, Shesmu supplied the fragrant oils and unguents involved in it (El-Saady 1994:216).

in a temple ritual during the Ptolemaic Period (Sauneron & Yoyotte 1990:35). The symbolism involved in this ritual is the mythical concept of the fragrant blue lotus emerging from *nun* (the primordial waters), from which the sun god Ra emerged. Thus by offering the artificial fragrant blue lotus flower to the deities, the king was symbolically offering them the primordial fragrant blue lotus flower. In return, the king received fertility for the land of Egypt, as the lotus represented all plants (Borghouts 1983:253). This ritual is mentioned in texts dating to the Ptolemaic Period, accompanied by scenes. The author will discuss the temple of Horus at Edfu but texts also exist at the temple of Hathor at Dendera and the temple of Khnum at Esna.

10.3.3.1 The temple of Horus at Edfu

A scene in the temple of Horus at Edfu depicts the king offering the god Ra (in the form of the solar child coming out of the lotus, the god Hor-Ra-Behdety) and the Ogdoad of Hermopolis, the primordial artificial fragrant blue lotus made of gold and lapis lazuli. The artist has depicted two sets of the four male frog-headed deities, instead of one set plus the four snake-headed female deities belonging to the Hermopolitan Ogdoad (Figure 10.25).

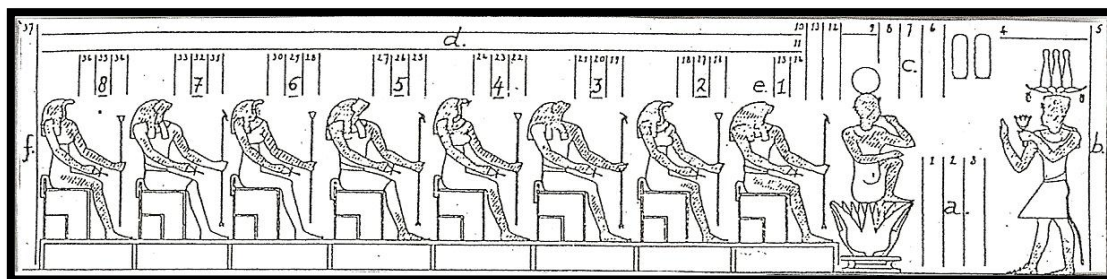


Figure 10.25: The king offering Ra and the Ogdoad the symbolic primordial blue lotus flower

- a. King says to Ra and the ogdoad: ‘Take to yourselves the lotus which came into being in the beginning, which drives away the clouds which he does not know. Place your seed in the fruit-embryo (*bnn*), ejaculate therein by opening the member that you aroused in Primordial water, (you all united into one so that your heir appears as a child)’
- b. (then, at the beginning:) ‘I have come before you in peace, Primordial gods, Ennead (*sic* – should be ogdoad) whom Atum made to bring to you the lotus from the island of the Egg, the place of your combustion. O Primordial gods, you are the gods who first began to exist, after whom all that exists came into being’.
- c. ‘Ra of Bhdt, variegated of plumage, the Great Lotus, Lord of rays, from whose mouth the gods came forth and the people from his Divine eyes, cattle

- and birds from his members, (says:) I give you every place on which I shine and all that grows on the Earth god’.
- d. (Subsequently) ‘the great ogdoad who give praise to Ra, who caused all to exist when they had not (yet) left the High Mound, the criers who cry out to their Heir, authorities of the boundary posts during the appropriate period ...the children of Tanen, the protectors of Ra, the mother(s) of Atum, the bulls of Msn, foremost of Eye-of-Horus, lords of the city Horus-the-justified’.
- e. 1 The ogdoad: ‘Nun, who existed first when the Great god in Wtst-Hr was not yet to be distinguished’.
- 2 ‘Nut, the ruler who bore all’
- 3 ‘Hh, Lord of sustenance, who subdues uproar. Great god in Wtst-Hr’.
- 4 ‘Hh.t, Lady of Horus-the-strong, who protects Horus against (evil)
- 5 ‘Kkw, Bull in Great-of-power, who overwhelms the enemies and defies them’.
- 6 ‘KK.t, the mighty woman in Wts-Hr, great of prestige in southern Bhd.t’.
- 7 ‘Niw, Lord of strength in Seat-of-Re, great of terror in Msen’.
- 9 ‘Niw.t, the holy, holy of awe, who protects her son in the House of the Falcon’.
- f. (They say): Welcome in peace, Lord of victory, child’s child of the child in the lotus. We accept your gift which fosters our heir whom Ra has caused to appear in the Great sea. We give you the Field of Sakhmet full of flowers, the bank of each lake full of blossoms’.

(Edfou IV, 139-141). Borghouts (1983:254-255).

10.3.4 Offerings of fragrant flowers by the king to the deities

A relief from the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, Tell el-Amarna tomb of Akhenaten, tomb TA26; CM TR 10.11.26.4, shows Akhenaten offering fragrant lilies or lotus flowers to the god Aten. Nefertiti is also offering these flowers to the Aten, not shown here (Figure 10.26).

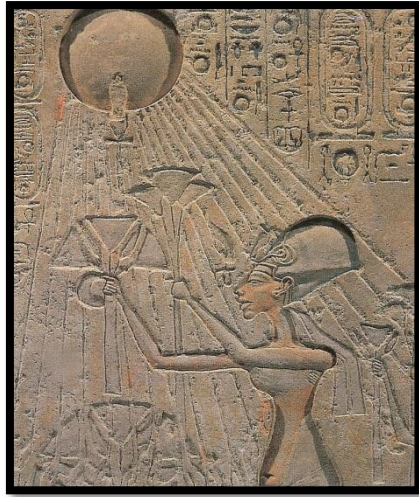


Figure 10.26: Akhenaten offering fragrant flowers to the Aten

10.3.5 Offerings of fragrant flowers by the queen to the deities

A relief in the pillared hall of Nefertari's Hathor temple at Abu Simbel shows Nefertari offering a *sistrum* and a bouquet of fragrant lilies or lotus flowers to Hathor, Lady of Ibshek (Figure 10.27).

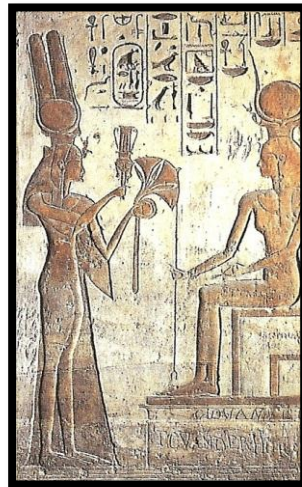


Figure 10.27: Nefertari offering a sistrum and fragrant flowers to Hathor

10.3.6 Offerings of fragrant flowers to the deities by *nome* deities

Nome deities (personifying *nomes*), carved on the walls of Egypt's temples, are depicted either as female or androgenous figures, usually the twenty-two *nomes* of Upper Egypt being depicted on the southern walls and the twenty *nomes* of Lower Egypt on the northern walls. They are depicted processionally carrying offerings (their gifts for the upkeep of the deities)

into the temple, the produce of their *nomes*, the emblems of which are usually depicted as being placed on top of their heads (Wilkinson R H 2003:84-85). Sometimes their skin is depicted as blue or green, symbolising the life-giving element of water and their connection with green plant life respectively, or even red (Wilkinson 1999:123).

A temple relief from the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, now in the Cleveland Museum of Art, depicts a *nome* deity with blue skin, bringing offerings of fragrant lotus flowers (amongst others) for the main deities of the temple (Figure 10.28).

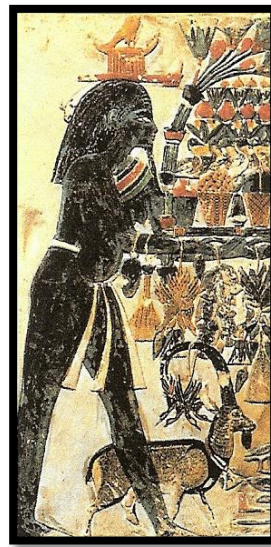


Figure 10.27: A *nome* deity offering fragrant blue lotus flowers

10.3.7 Fragrant flowers as offerings on offering tables

Flowers and especially fragrant flowers such as the blue lotus were popular offerings to the deities, frequently depicted on offering tables in tomb scenes.

A scene in the Theban tomb of Nakht (TT 52), Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, shows fragrant blue lotus flowers as one of the offerings on a laden offering table, which is flanked by two tree goddesses, only one of which is shown here (Figure 10.29).

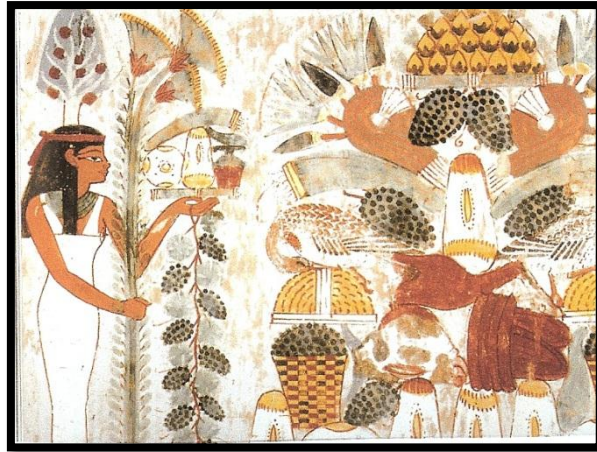


Figure 10.28: An offering scene in the Theban tomb of Nakht (TT 52)

10.4 CONCLUSION

The ancient Egyptians used vast quantities of perfume in their temples to please the deities, devising many ways of doing this, playing an essential role in the religion of ancient Egypt and in the *Weltanschauung* or world view of the ancient Egyptians.

The temple ritual of the cult statue was central to this practice, considered so important by the Egyptians that it was performed every morning on the principal cult statue of the cult in every Egyptian temple, and in some cases also at noon and in the evening. Rooted in this ritual, incorporating by the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, elements of both Heliopolitan and Osirian rites, was the anointing of the cult statues with the precious ten sacred oils/unguents, highlighting again the importance of this ritual.

Offerings of perfume, carried out by using various types and censers and vessels, and fragrant flowers to the deities, are depicted in the art of ancient Egypt as being carried out mainly by royalty, both kings and queens, but occasionally other beings are depicted bearing fragrant offerings to them, such as *nome* deities.

Of particular importance are the depictions in temples dating to the Ptolemaic Period of the king offering perfume as well as cloth to various deities. Just as the ancient Egyptians considered the exquisite fragrance of the blue lotus to be the perfume of the sweat of the god Ra, the divine essence, so did they consider cloth to be part of this, also issued from the sweat of Ra. These two elements, perfume and cloth, are entwined in a scene in the *per nu* in the

Ptolemaic temple of Hathor at Dendera, where the king is offering the 'horizon of lotus' cloth to the goddess Isis, thought to be steeped in lotus perfume.

Also important and also dating to the Ptolemaic Period, is the ritual of the offering of the fragrant blue primordial lotus to deities by the king. Uniquely, this offering of the lotus does not involve a fresh blue lotus flower. Instead, this is symbolically represented by a lotus flower made of gold and lapis lazuli, both very precious materials to the ancient Egyptians, highlighting the importance of this ritual to them. Mythologically, this ritual has as its central core the Heliopolitan concept of the lotus arising from the primordial waters, *nun*, from which the sun god Ra arose. This concept is in turn linked to the god of perfume, Nefertem, also the youthful god of the fragrant blue lotus flower, who symbolizes the creation of the god Ra at dawn.

CHAPTER 11



PERFUME IN THE FUNERARY 'SITZ IM LEBEN' OR CONTEXT

The ancient Egyptians used perfume, in the form of fragrant gums, resins, unguents, oils and flowers in the funerary context in a variety of ways, which included mummification; varnish applied to a range of funerary equipment; coatings of cartonnages and coffins; anointing; perfume used at the funerary banquet; offerings of perfume to the deceased; and funerary gifts for the afterlife.

11.1 INTRODUCTION

Copious amounts of precious perfume were used in the funerary context in ancient Egypt, with the aim of rebirth of the deceased in the form of offerings at the time of burial. These offerings to the dead continued perpetually thereafter, in the form of festivals of the dead. Another aim of the use of perfume in this context was to ensure a successful afterlife for the deceased.

11.2 MUMMIFICATION, WITH REFERENCE TO THE USE OF FRAGRANT GUM-RESINS AND PERFUMED OILS

No extant ancient Egyptian text gives a detailed explanation of how mummification in ancient Egypt was carried out, a procedure that changed during the course of its history, although the Rhind Magical Papyrus (c 200 BC) does have a discussion on the rituals associated with it. Three papyri, all dating to around the first century AD, now housed in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, Durham Museum and Musée du Louvre, respectively, discuss some spells to be recited while bandaging up every part of the body (Ikram & Dodson 1998:103). These three papyri are called 'The Ritual of Embalming', the Cairo papyrus being discovered in 1857 in the Theban tomb of Heter. Both the Cairo and the Musée du Louvre papyri instruct that the head of the mummy must be anointed with frankincense and 'sacred oil' must be poured over the rest of the body by a priest called 'Treasurer of the god' (Brier 1999:45). 'Sacred oil' refers to the 'seven sacred oils'. A papyrus in Berlin discusses the order in which limbs should be wrapped, which amulets should be inserted and which spells should be recited (Ikram & Dodson 1998:103).

It is works of the classical authors, who travelled to Egypt when a rudimentary form of mummification was still practised, however which provide a base for the study of mummification techniques. Herodotus, Greek historian of the fifth century BC, provides in book II of his *Historia* (Histories), a detailed account of the process of mummification as it was performed in his time. Later writers such as Diodorus Siculus (c 80 BC) and Porphyry (c third century BC) also wrote about Egyptian mummification techniques (Ikram & Dodson 1998:103).

Ikram & Dodson (1998:104 and 106) state that the gum-resins myrrh and frankincense were highly valued by the Egyptians for the fragrance they imparted to the mummy and that although classical authors refer to cedar oil as being the mainstay of mummification oils, tests have proved that the oil involved in mummification is more often juniper oil, with both of them probably being used. Ancient writers did not often differentiate taxonomically between the two coniferous trees, both found in the Syria-Lebanon region. They point out that the oils of neither tree can adequately dissolve the viscera, but their purpose was rather to deodorize and perfume the mummy.

The Greek Diodorus Siculus, who visited Egypt in 59 BC in the Roman Period, wrote his *Bibliotheca Historica* (Library of History), a work consisting of forty books, of which only fifteen are extant, the first dealing with Egypt and mummification, an account which mentions that there were three levels of mummification (Brier 1999:71-72). Describing the most expensive method, Diodorus Siculus mentions that the body was filled with aromatic substances for thirty days, emptied, and then filled again, before being wrapped up and put in a coffin (Ikram & Dodson 1998:104), the aromatic substances including myrrh and cedar oil (Brier 1999:73-74). A papyrus dating to the Graeco-Roman Period that has been found through excavation, includes an embalmer's price list, detailing aromatic embalming material, such as myrrh (four drachmae, four obals) and cedar (?) oil (forty one drachmae) (Ikram & Dodson 1998:105).

Serpico (1997:363) states that it appears that the practice of using resin¹²⁹ in ancient Egypt for mummification dates back at least to the Old Kingdom. During that time, the body cavity

¹²⁹ Lucas (1962:322) states he examined nine specimens of resin from mummies, five of them being royal mummies (two from the Eighteenth Dynasty, one from the Nineteenth Dynasty, two from the Twentieth Dynasty, three from the Twenty-first Dynasty and one from the Ptolemaic Period), which proved on analysis to

was packed with a mixture of resin and linen. Resin-coated linen bandages were also used to wrap the body. During the Middle Kingdom, the practice continued of packing the body cavity with resin and linen, although in extant examples of the Middle Kingdom mummies, only linen has been found. Sometimes during this period the faces of mummies (including their eyes) were smeared with a resinous substance. Also during this period resin was used to plug the embalming wound and to coat the bandages that the mummy was wrapped in, occasionally even being poured over the wrapped mummy or over the coffin. The practice of packing the cranium with resin and resin-coated packing materials began in the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom (Serpico 1997:365). The ears, nostrils and mouth were sometimes smeared or packed with resin, occasionally in powdered form (Serpico 1997:365-366). Most of the faces of the royal mummies prior to Ramesses II were covered with a comprehensive coating of resin (Serpico 1997:367). During the New Kingdom the use of resinous materials in mummification, for example the use of resin and resin-soaked linen to pack the body cavity, was extensive. The practice of packing resin beneath the skin of the legs, arms and neck and moulded to restore a natural shape to the body was common to the Twenty-first Dynasty, Third Intermediate Period, and the only known instance of this practice before that time can be seen in the mummy of Amenhotep III (Serpico 1997:368). During this period mummy bandages were often treated with resin and resin was sometimes poured over the wrapped body and was occasionally poured over the coffin itself (Serpico 1997:36). Baumann (1960:87-88) states that the black resinous material that the wrapped mummy was 'anointed' with as it lay in the coffin, was frequently the fragrant compound incense known as *kyphi*.

11.3 VARNISH ON FUNERARY EQUIPMENT

Serpico & White (2000c:459) state that two types of varnish were applied to a range of funerary equipment which included coffins, *shabtis*, *shabti* boxes, canopic chests, human and animal figures, statue bases and painted vases, throughout the New Kingdom. The one type of varnish was a translucent yellow coating, which was even used for coating tomb walls. The other type was a black, more opaque varnish. Both types of varnish were in use by the time of Hatshepsut/Thutmose III, New Kingdom. A GC/MS (gas chromatography/mass spectrometry) analysis of these varnishes by them on New Kingdom funerary equipment, has

be gum-resins, believed to be either bdellium or myrrh, both being very similar. Most probably they were fragrant myrrh.

revealed that the main component of the yellow varnish is the fragrant pistacia resin. Lucas (1962:359) points out that the black varnish, which was still in use as late as the Ptolemaic Period, is often called bitumen or pitch but he tested some specimens and found them to consist of a comparatively low-melting-point resin. He argues that the resin must have been a naturally black resin and not one blackened with age, as the varnished objects were originally and intentionally black. Niwiński (1992:457 and 465) states that some coffins and cartonnages dating to the Third Intermediate Period are coated with a black liquid substance over their previously richly decorated surfaces but he points out that it cannot be excluded that this practice was limited to an even shorter period, perhaps not exceeding the end of the ninth century BC. The botanical identity of the black resin and where the Egyptians obtained it is unknown. The author is of the opinion that there is a possibility that this black resin was also a fragrant resin.

11.4 ANOINTING SCENES IN TOMBS

11.4.1 Anointing scenes depicting the daily mortuary meal

Fox (1982:278) is of the opinion that one way in which to identify representations of the daily mortuary meal in what he calls ‘entertainment scenes’, is to look out for a phrase signifying that the entertainment takes place daily. To illustrate this he cites the colophon of the song in Abydos stela No. 20, where it states that the harper sings to his master every day. He cautions however that most ‘entertainment scenes’, including the ones in which the post-Amarna harper songs occur, belong in the daily mortuary meal category, even though not all of them specify that the merry-making is taking place every day. It is not known what daily rituals took place during this meal. He does not believe that a certain occasion, such as the ‘Beautiful Festival of the Valley’, can be regarded as the setting for any particular scene. He states that in his view, among many others, daily mortuary meal scenes can be found in the Theban tombs of User (TT 21), Nebamun and Ipuky (TT 181), Amenhotep Si-Se (TT 75), Puyemre (TT 39) and Haremhab (TT 78) but this does not mean that an actual offering was provided every day, and still less that family and friends gathered in the tomb every day (Fox 1982:279).

A banquet scene in the Theban tomb of Nebamun and Ipuky (TT 181)¹³⁰ involves the anointing of the head. A woman seated on a chair in a row of female guests has a female servant standing before her with a footed bowl of unguent in her left hand. She is extending her right hand towards the unguent cone on the guest's head (Figure 11.1).

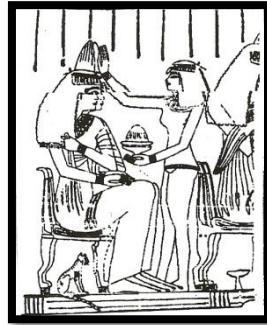


Figure 11.1: Anointing of the head, in the Theban tomb of Nebamun and Ipuky (TT 181)

11.4.2 Anointing scenes depicting the funerary offering ritual

Thompson (1991:220-221) states that in the Sixth Dynasty *mastaba* tomb of Qar (G 7101), at Saqqara, there is a depiction of anointing during the offering ritual. Here the 'anointing gesture' is used to anoint the head and face of an individual. He is of the opinion that in this scene it is probable that the outstretched little fingers were used to apply the 'seven sacred oils' to the seven openings of the head. Siliotti (1997:77) translates Qar's main titles as 'Regent of the pyramid of Pepy I, Overseer of the pyramid city of Khufu and Menkaure and Supervisor of priests in the pyramid of Khafre' (Figure 11.2).

¹³⁰ Manniche (1989:138) translates Nebamun's title as 'pharaoh's head sculptor' and that of Ipuky as 'pharaoh's sculptor', reigns of Amenhotep II-IV.

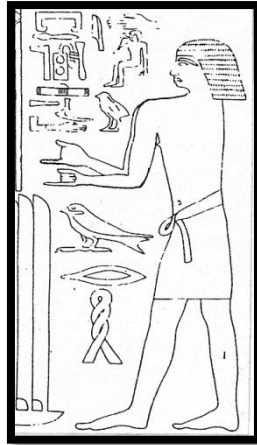


Figure 11.2: Anointing during the offering ritual, in the *mastaba* tomb of Qar

11.4.3 Anointing scenes depicting the funerary banquet

Thompson (1991:170) states that in the Old Kingdom, there is only one instance of a scene depicting anointing which occurs during a funerary banquet and that since apparently only the verb *whr* was used during this period to refer to anointing, which his studies on the subject have revealed, it can be inferred that this scene is a depiction of an action circumscribed by this verb. This scene can be found in the Sixth Dynasty tomb of Ni-ankh-Pepi¹³¹ at Meir¹³² (tomb A1) and depicts the anointing of the head. The tomb-owner, seated before an offering table full of offerings and watching servants performing the offering ritual, is depicted with a servant behind him, who is pouring oil onto his head from a jar with his left hand (Figure 11.3).

¹³¹ Ni-ankh-Pepi was a nomarch of Cusae, who served during the reign of Pepi I, Sixth Dynasty. He is also called Ni-ankh-Merire and his 'good names' are Sobekhotep and 'Hepi the black' (Blackman 1914:182). He had twenty-three titles in total, amongst which were 'Real Superintendent of Upper Egypt' and 'Superintendent of the Two Swamps' (Baines 1995:171).

¹³² Meir is the name of the present-day village situated approximately seven kilometres west of el-Qusiya, which gives its name to the necropolis of Meir, situated further west of it, on the west bank of the Nile, in Middle Egypt (Baines & Malek 1992:122). The most important tombs in this necropolis are the rock-cut tombs, with their decorated tomb chapels, of the influential nomarchs of Cusae, dating to the Sixth and Twelfth Dynasties (Wilkinson 2005:148). Ancient Cusae, capital of the fourteenth *nome* of Upper Egypt is now lost, its local deity, the goddess Hathor, being called the Lady (or mistress) of Cusae (Baines 1995:146). Hawass (2004:13) equates el-Qusiya on his map of ancient Egypt with the site of ancient Cusae/Kusai. Baines & Malek (1992:122), on the other hand, argue that there is nothing at el-Qusiya to suggest that it is the site of Cusae, called Qis by the ancient Egyptians.



Figure 11.3: Anointing of the head during the funerary banquet

Fischer (1977:161), on the other hand, is of the opinion that anointing is not being depicted in this scene and that the servant intended to sprinkle a few drops of perfumed oil on the tomb-owner's wig, the excess of which would have been wiped off. He bases this opinion on the fact that the jar in the scene has a distinctive neck and rim, suggesting it was made of travertine, used for the storage of greasy products.

In the New Kingdom, there are two scenes depicting the anointing of the head in a funerary banqueting scene in the Eighteenth Dynasty tomb of Paheri at El Kab. In one of the scenes Paheri and his wife are sitting in a kiosk watching two rows of servants bringing offerings. Behind these servants a female servant, holding a jar of perfumed unguent in her left hand, is using her right hand to apply unguent to the head of Paheri's father-in-law, who is sitting alongside Paheri and his wife (Figure 11.4).



Figure 11.4: Anointing of the head during a funerary banquet

11.5 PERFUME SERVED TO GUESTS AT THE FUNERARY BANQUET

The Theban tomb of Rekhmire¹³³ (TT 100), Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, is situated on the south-western face of Sheikh Abd el-Qurna (Freed 2001a:387). Freed (2001a:389) is of the opinion that the banqueting scenes in this tomb depict the banquet that took place at Rekhmire's funeral. In one of these banqueting scenes two women guests, with unguent cones on their heads and holding lotus flowers in one of their hands, are kneeling on mats. Two female servants are attending to their needs. One of the servants is bending forward, pouring a light coloured liquid (possibly beer) into a bowl held by one of the guests. The other servant is standing behind her offering perfumed oils in two small vessels to the two guests (Figure 11.5).

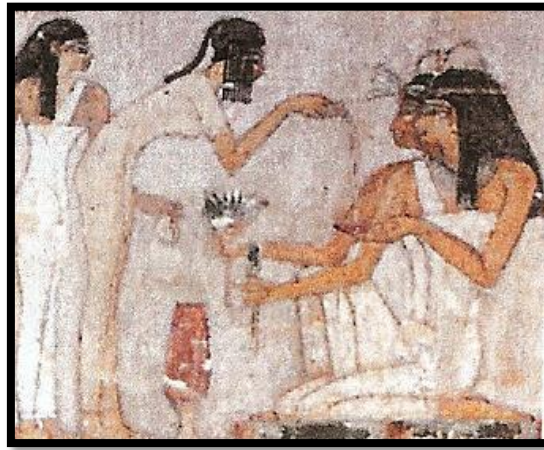


Figure 11.5: Perfume being served to guests at a funerary banquet, tomb of Rekhmire

11.6 OFFERINGS OF PERFUME TO THE DECEASED

Offerings¹³⁴ were given to the dead, with the purpose of the restoration of life on the occasion of the burial. In principle, offerings to the dead were to be renewed forever at certain

¹³³ Manniche (1989:135) translates Rekhmire's titles as 'Governor of the town' and 'Vizier', during the reigns of Tuthmosis III – Amenhotep II.

¹³⁴ In prehistoric and early dynastic times real offerings were made to the dead, including vessels, incense, oil, fruit and meat (Englund 2001:567). Next, in order to ensure there was no cessation of sustenance within the tomb, the offering formula appeared, first known from the Fourth Dynasty, Old Kingdom, one of the genres of texts found in ancient Egypt, magically guaranteeing an eternal supply of food and drink for the deceased. Another symbolic level that the offering formula operated on had its origins in the daily offerings in the temples to the deities. Here the offering formula grew out of the practice of the 'reversion of offerings'. The offering formula first appeared on the architrave of the false door of the tomb and accompanied funerary scenes in the form of a descriptive title. Later it appeared on offering tables, coffins and statues. Eventually the offering formula became the standard inscription found on funerary and commemorative stelae (Leprohon 2001:569-571). The earliest attested mortuary cult ritual, from the Old Kingdom, is the *htp di nsw* offering formula, which begins 'an offering which the king gives' (Roth 2001a:576). The offering list, which had its origins in the royal offering lists found in the Pyramid Texts (for instance Spells 22-57 and 72-171) and had fully developed by the

festivals during the year, which included, amongst others, the new year festival, the Thoth festival, the Wag festival and the Sokar festival (Englund 2001:566). These offerings included perfume in forms such as incense, the ‘seven sacred oils’, other perfumed oils and fragrant flowers.

11.6.1 Offerings of perfume at funerary banquets

In the Theban tomb of Ramose (TT 55)¹³⁵, located in Sheikh Abd el-Qurna, to the right and left of the entry into the broad hall, reliefs show Ramose and his wife and others taking part in his funerary banquet. Attendants bring offerings to Ramose and his wife. Fourteen men bring them magical substances, wearing long skirts and diagonal sashes of priests. Two of them offer jars containing fragrant *medjet* and *tchewa* oil (Freed 2001b:411) (Figure 11.6).

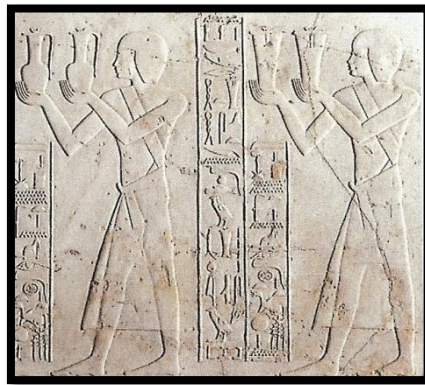


Figure 11.6: Attendants bringing offerings of *medjet* and *tchewa* oil, tomb of Ramose

In the same tomb an attendant, dressed in a tunic with a flouncy apron, brings Ramose and his wife offerings of fowl, vegetables and fragrant blue lotus flowers (Figure 11.7).

Fifth Dynasty, Old Kingdom, to consist of more than ninety items, often accompanied the offering formula. The items in the offering list were engraved within small rectangles consisting of the name and a pictorial representation of the offerings requested by the deceased. Both the offering formula and the offering list were meant to be read out loud, in order for them to magically come alive for the deceased (Leprohon 2001:569-571). During excavations by Zawi Hawass, Secretary General of the Supreme Council of Antiquities in Egypt, in 2001 at Saqqara in the late Fifth or early Sixth Dynasty *mastaba* tomb of the royal physician Qar, a beautiful round (diameter 31.5 cm) travertine offering table was found. The whole of the front of the offering table is covered by an inscribed offering list, listing items of food and drink, as well as cult material such as eye paint, incense and the ‘seven sacred oils’ that Qar would need in the afterlife (Hawass 2004:203).

¹³⁵ Manniche (1989:133) translates Ramose’s titles as ‘Governor of the town’ and ‘vizier’ reign of Amenhotep IV/Akhenaten. The relief work in this tomb is exquisite, typical of that of the second half of the Eighteenth Dynasty, which is unsurpassed in Egypt in its delicacy and attention to detail. Fortunately these reliefs were never completed, with only the elongated eyes having black paint applied to them. If paint had been applied to the whole of each relief, the beauty of their carving would have been obscured (Freed 2001b:409 and 411-412).

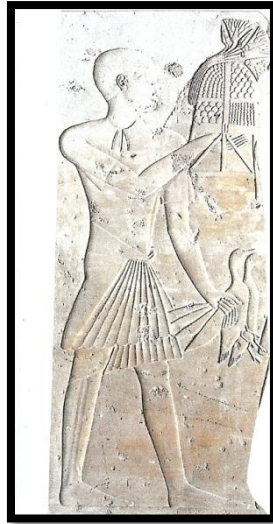


Figure 11.7: Attendant bringing offerings, in the Theban tomb of Ramose (TT 55)

11.7 FRAGRANT UNGUENTS AND OILS AS ESSENTIAL FUNERARY GIFTS FOR THE AFTERLIFE

Perfume was essential to the ancient Egyptians to ensure a successful afterlife for the deceased. Either actual jars of perfumed oil were placed in the tomb at the time of the funeral or representations of perfume jars were carved in relief or painted on tomb walls, magically making the perfume come to life. In both cases, the perfume was available for the deceased to enjoy in the afterlife. Occasionally the deceased is depicted sitting on a chair and sniffing a jar of perfume, sometimes in front of an offering table, in settings such as in a scene on a wall in his/her tomb, or in a scene on his/her sarcophagus.

11.7.1 Jars of perfumed oil placed in the tomb

11.7.1.1 Scene in the Theban tomb of Menna of jars of perfumed oil

In the Theban tomb of Menna (TT 69), Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, offering-bearers with various funerary gifts that Menna will need in the afterlife are depicted, including furniture, a fan, a jar of wine, various foodstuffs, perfumed blue lotus flowers and jars of perfumed oil. One offering-bearer is carrying a stand on top of which are two types of perfume jars. Another offering-bearer is carrying two perfume jars in his hands of a third type. Both offering bearers are also carrying fragrant blue lotus flowers (Figure 11.8).

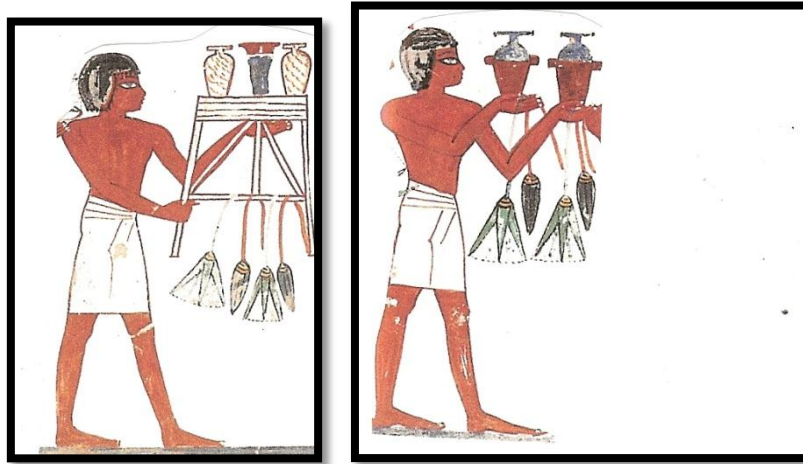


Figure 11.8: Offering-bearers carrying jars of perfume, tomb of Menna (TT 69)

11.7.2 Jars of perfume carved/painted on tomb walls

11.7.2.1 The tomb of Hesire with its *ölmagazin*

Hesire was a man of great distinction, a high-ranking official, the first authenticated doctor¹³⁶ in the world (c 2650 BC), holding many exalted titles under king Djoser in the Third Dynasty, Old Kingdom (Nunn 1996:124). His Third Dynasty *mastaba* tomb at Saqqara (QS 2405), located to the north of Djoser's step-pyramid, contained magnificent wooden relief panels. These were found in the chapel for funerary offerings, which together with the *serdab*, formed the superstructure of the *mastaba*. The chapel, a long narrow room decorated with patterns imitating mats, contained niches. The wooden relief panels contain a rectangular hole at the top enabling them to be attached to the walls of the niches (Ziegler 2000:48).

¹³⁶ Nunn (1996:116) states that the majority of doctors in ancient Egypt were probably simply designated as *swnw* and that six special grades of doctors can be identified. It is not known if there was a hierarchical order of these titles, which in other contexts would imply administrative authority. *Kherep swnw* seems to be the most exalted title, administrator of doctors, of which there is only one known example, Medu-nefer, an Old Kingdom court ophthalmologist. The other five grades are *hery swnw*, one with authority over doctors, most known examples being New Kingdom; *imy-r swnw*, overseer of doctors; *shedj swnw*, inspector of doctors, all known examples being Old Kingdom; *wer snsw*, chief of doctors, the most common known title, coming from all periods; and *imy-r geswy deet per aa swnw*, overseer of the two sides of the boat of doctors of the palace, the only known example being Old Kingdom. Nunn (1996:117) cautions however that it is possible that individuals with titles such as controller, inspector or overseer of doctors were not doctors themselves, only administratively involved with them. There are also known examples of specialists, most of them being Old Kingdom and none of them being Middle or New Kingdom. These had the title *swnw*, followed by qualifying words, usually parts of the body, some being involved in more than one speciality. Dentists had the separate title of *ibeh*, of which there are six known examples, three of the five Old Kingdom examples also carrying the title of *swnw*, one being the legendary Hesire.

One of these, panel CG 1426, shows Hesire seated on a stool with legs ending in lions' paws, facing right with an offering table before him, above which is a list of offerings (wine, bread, meat and incense) presented to the deceased. Above this are listed his numerous titles, including in the top right hand corner (running vertically) *weh ibeh swnw* (in hieroglyphs a swallow, a tusk and an arrow), Chief of dentists and doctors (Nunn 1996:124) royal scribe, Chief of Buto and priest of Horus (Tiradritti 2000:48). In this relief panel he has the tools of the scribe's trade hanging over his right shoulder, consisting of a palette with discs, containing black and red ink, tied by a ribbon to the water bottle and stylus. He is carrying a staff and sceptre (Figure 11.9).

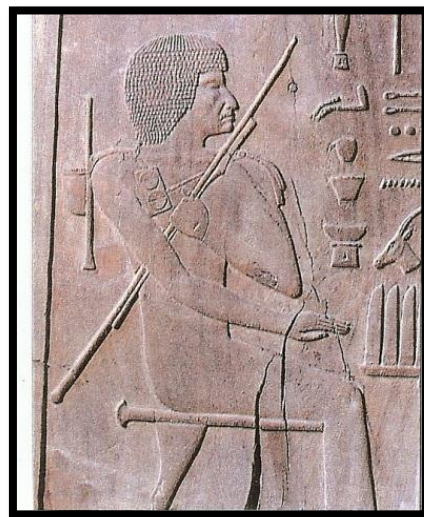


Figure 11.9: Wooden relief panel depicting Hesire in his *mastaba* tomb at Saqqara

The decoration of the inner corridor in Hesire's tomb has offerings as its theme. In the shallow recess in the east wall next to the entrance of it there is a painted offering list featuring oils, including the 'seven sacred oils', while the short wall at the northern end of the corridor has four offering stands painted on it (Wood 1978:9). The offering list is in a fragmented state and is arranged in two registers. Here, because Hesire is a doctor, the sphere of medicine is embedded in the sphere of religion. Altenmüller (1976:1) calls this depiction of thirty-nine fragrant oils, each in their own compartment, an *ölmagazin* or oil magazine, the oldest comprehensive list of such oils he argues. Manniche (1999:108) argues that the fragrant oils featuring in this list represent a longer version of the 'seven sacred oils' (Figure 11.10).

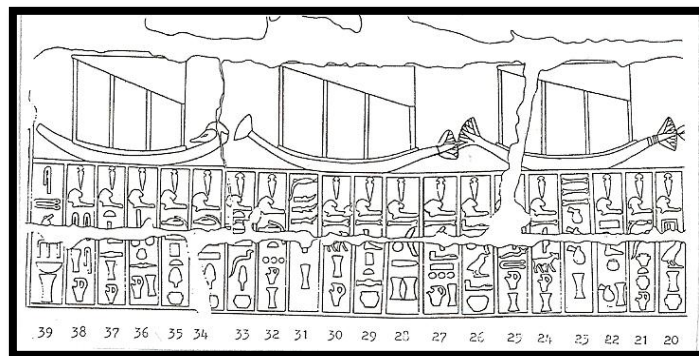
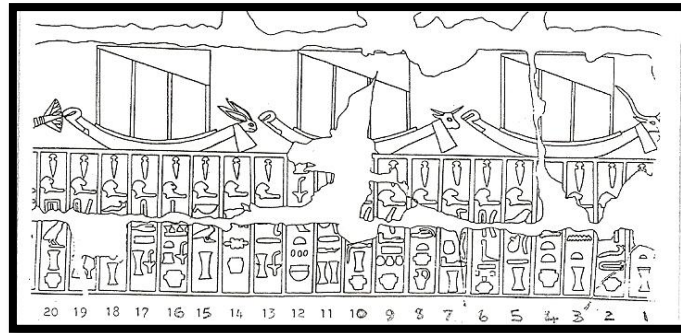


Figure 11.10: Ölmagazin in the mastaba tomb of Hesire

Each oil has its name written above it in hieroglyphs, although these are sometimes difficult to translate, due to the fragmentary nature of the relief. Altenmüller (1976:13-26) has translated the names of these oils and has made comments about them (Table 11.1).

Table 11.1: Oils in the ölmagazin, tomb of Hesire

No. of oil	Transliteration	Remarks
1	<i>tpj h3t ... t</i>	Damaged
2	<i>tpj h3t sft</i>	This oil is usually written only as <i>sft</i> . It is one of the 'seven sacred oils'
3	<i>tpj h3t ... nt</i>	Damaged
4		Name not fully preserved, possibly oil of the finest quality
5	<i>tpj h3t thnw stj wr</i>	Possibly the oil of the great

		one
6	<i>tpj h3t thnw sbs</i>	Unknown oil
7	<i>tpj h3t thnw nw(?) b3(?)</i>	Unknown oil. Does not allow a clear reading
8	<i>tpj h3t [thnw ?] jdt</i>	Incomplete oil, indicates a perfumed oil
9	<i>tpj h3t thnw 's</i>	Oil of the fir tree. First time this oil is found in this storeroom
10	<i>tpj h3t thnw ...mh</i>	Damaged
11	<i>tpj h3t thnw ht(?)</i>	Libyan oil
12		Difficult to read. Possibly oil of Upper Egyptian origin
13	<i>tpj h3t stj sm 'sm 'j</i>	Possibly a Nubian oil
14	<i>tpj h3t jb s3</i>	In archaic lists this oil comes from fruit leaves or wood of Upper Egyptian plant
15	<i>tpj h3t 'k k(3)</i>	Unknown oil
16	<i>tpj h3t bs3t sm 'jt</i>	Unknown
17	<i>tpj h3t sds(r) sm 'j</i>	Unknown oil. Comes from an unknown red-coloured bush from Upper Egypt
18	<i>tpj h3t fd</i>	Possibly <i>fdt</i>
19	<i>tpj h3t thnw s ...</i>	<i>thnw</i> tree oil of foreign origin
20	<i>tpj h3t h(3)w</i>	Unknown name
21	<i>tpj h3t mh-dt(?)</i>	Oil which fills the heart of the deity
22	<i>tpj h3t sbnw</i>	Unknown oil in a

		cylindrical jar. Possibly a kind of mixed oil
23		These are unguents and oils described as fats of the well-perfumed
24	<i>tpj h3t 'd jb (r)</i>	Pleasant smelling fat known as an unguent since archaic times
25	<i>tpj h3t sft</i>	<i>Sft</i> oil, one of the 'seven sacred oils'
26	<i>tpj h3 (?)</i>	Unknown oil
27	<i>tpj h3t 'd thnw 's</i>	'Fat of the fir tree'
28	<i>tpj h3t 'd thnw</i>	Libyan oil
29	<i>tpj h3t 'd bgt (?)</i>	In storeroom H called <i>bgt</i> . Probably older form of <i>bpt</i>
30	<i>tpj h3t 'd jb (r) (?)</i>	Ideogram of a young animal. Without extra signs cannot be interpreted clearly
31		Oil in number 12, appears to be repeated in number 31
32	<i>tpj h3t jdt</i>	Represented by <i>mrht</i> unguent from Lower Egypt
33	<i>tpj h3t jdt s(n)dt</i>	Perfumed oil from the acacia tree
34	<i>tpj h3t jdt d3</i>	Perfumed oil from the <i>d3</i> tree
35	<i>tpj h3t jdt spt</i>	Unknown oil from the <i>spt</i> tree
36	<i>tpj h3t bnw s</i>	Unknown oil
37	<i>tpj h3t tb</i>	Some sort of tree oil
38	<i>tpj h3t sw</i>	Unknown oil- probably

		some tree oil
39	<i>stj-h3b</i>	Festival scent. It is one of the 'seven sacred oils'

11.7.2.2 The tombs of Mehu and Metjetji

The *mastaba* tomb of Mehu at Saqqara, dating to the early Sixth Dynasty, has a false door with cavetto cornice and torus moulding and post, mimicking the entrance to a cult building (Altenmüller 1998:82). Flanking the false door on either side in colour are depictions of jars of the 'seven sacred oils' (Figure 11.11).

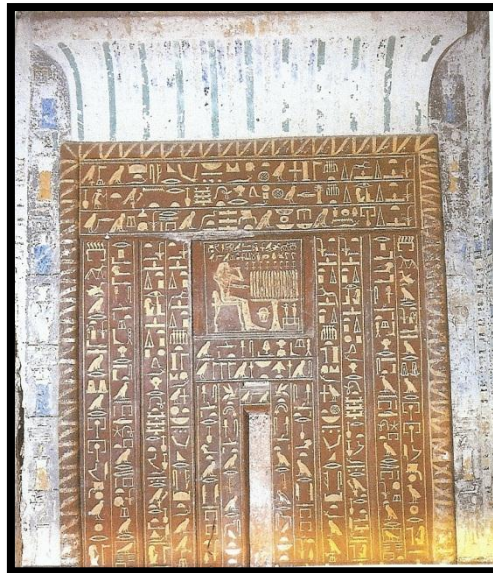


Figure 11.11: False door in the tomb of Mehu, depicting jars of the 'seven sacred oils'

The false-door stela from the *mastaba* tomb of Metjetji depicts the tomb owner sitting in front of an offering table on a slab in the middle of a recess, resting on the inscribed lintel of the false-door, flanked on either side by reliefs of jars containing the 'seven sacred oils' arranged on four shelves. This tomb is situated at Saqqara and dates to the reign of Unas, Fifth Dynasty, or early Sixth Dynasty, Old Kingdom. The stela is now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (64.100) (Arnold 2000:135 and 144) (Figure 11.12).

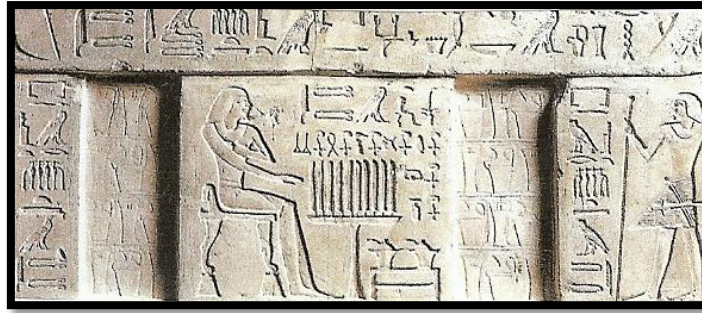


Figure 11.12: False door in the tomb of Metjetji, featuring the 'seven sacred oils'

11.7.3 Deceased depicted sitting on a chair and sniffing a jar of perfume

11.7.3.1 Tomb of Kemsit

Russmann (2001:88) states that Kemsit was one of the six 'Unique Royal Favourites' of king Mentuhotep II, Eleventh Dynasty, Middle Kingdom, that were buried in his funerary temple at Deir el Bahari. The exact status of these women is not known but some fragments of reliefs found in their cupboard-sized funerary chapels reveal that they had a definite conjugal relationship with this king, prompting her to suggest that Kemsit, who was a priestess of Hathor, was probably a minor wife of his. Her Theban tomb is TT 308 (Dodson & Hilton 2004:89).

A fragment of a painted limestone relief from Kemsit's funerary chapel, now in the British Museum (EA 1450), depicts her sitting on a low-backed chair holding a jar of perfume to her nose, which she is sniffing. Russmann (2001:88) states that she appears to be wearing a feather-patterned dress, and opines that this must have had religious significance, as feathered garments are associated with deities. This dress she argues aligns her with Hathor, whose priestess she was. A male servant was standing in front of Kemsit. Now only one of his hands remains. This holds a small cup that is receiving a stream of liquid that the servant is pouring with his other hand. The hieroglyphic inscription in front of the servant reads 'For your *ka* gifts and offerings' (Figure 11.13).

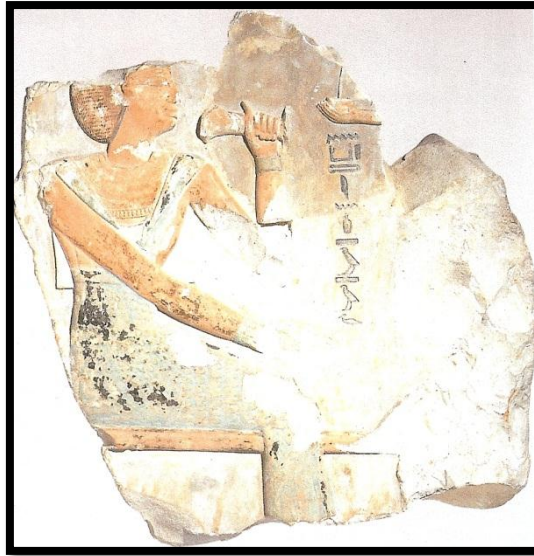


Figure 11.13: Kemsit sniffing a jar of perfume

11.8 THE TOMB OF TUTANKHAMUN (KV 62) IN THE VALLEY OF THE KINGS

11.8.1 Anointing scenes

Thompson (1991:180) is of the opinion that there are two scenes depicting anointing of the body with scented unguent on the treasure which comes from the tomb of Tutankhamun, Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom. The first scene is on the back of the gold-plated throne (Egyptian Museum, Cairo JE 62028), which he argues is queen Ankhesenamun, anointing the left shoulder and also presumably the collar of the seated Tutankhamun with her right hand, whilst holding the jar of unguent in her left hand (Figure 11.14).

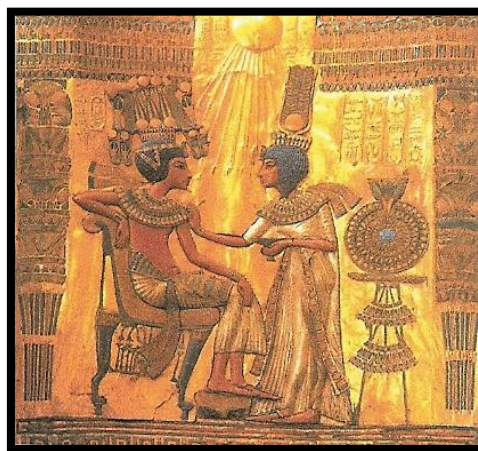


Figure 11.14: Tutankhamun and Ankhesenamun

James (2000:288) agrees with Thompson that Tutankhamun is being anointed by his queen with perfumed unguent. Emboden (1989:74), on the other hand, is of the opinion that this scene does not depict anointing. He points out the pectorals that both the king and the queen are wearing contain mandrake fruits and petals of the fragrant blue lotus. He argues that what is being shown is the queen pouring the *didi*¹³⁷, the elixir of life onto the king, made from these narcotic plants. This *didi*, which often also included the opium poppy as one of its ingredients, would lead to a profound hypnotic state ending in an extended period of somnolence, the symbolic death necessary to shamanic tradition (Emboden 1989:63).

The other scene is found on the upper scene on the back of the small gilded shrine (Egyptian Museum, Cairo JE 61481). The queen is stooping, leaning towards the king. She touches the king's left arm with her right hand. In her left hand she is holding an unguent cone holder mounted on a stand, decorated with lotus flowers. A bunch of fragrant blue lotus flowers and buds are also hanging over her left arm.

11.8.2 Fragrant oils and unguents

Large amounts of perfume in the form of fragrant oils and unguents were put in the tomb of Tutankhamun at the time of burial for him to enjoy in the afterlife and ensure its success. Magnificent perfume vessels, most of them made out of travertine (see Annexure C for a discussion of some of them) were found in his tomb, some being designed to hold perfumed oils, having tall slender necks and narrow openings, with others being designed to hold perfumed unguents.

The vessels for oils have together the capacity to hold some 350 litres of perfumed oil. So precious were these oils to the ancient Egyptians (used in everyday life to anoint the head and body), that the tomb robbers who entered Tutankhamun's tomb soon after burial, tipped out the contents of the vessels. It is not known what perfumed oils were originally in the vessels, but balanos and ben oils were likely to have been among them. In addition, about 'two

¹³⁷ Dawson (1927:497 and 503) argues that the word *didi*, which occurs in numerous Egyptian medical papyri and also other texts, amongst which is the medical text Papyrus Ebers (39/10), dealing with the diagnosis and treatment of stomach disorders, and mentioning an ingredient 'pounded *didi* of Elephantine', should be translated as 'Nubian haematite', a mineral. He points out that the notion that the word *didi* should be translated as the fruits of the mandrake, held for many years, was discounted in 1904, when M. Henri Gautier published an article in the *Revue Egyptologique*, titled 'Le Nom Hieroglyphique de l' Argile Rouge d' Elephantine', where he demonstrated quite conclusively that *didi* was not the mandrake, or indeed even a plant, but a mineral.

bucketfuls' of fragrant oils had been poured over the king's mummy (excluding the head and feet) as it lay in its sarcophagus, which eventually formed a solid mass (Hepper 1990:19).

11.9 INCENSE BURNING IN THE 'BUTO BURIAL' RITUAL

An ancient ritual is depicted in the Theban tomb of Sennefer¹³⁸ (TT 96), which has been interpreted by scholars to be the 'Buto Burial'. It is thought that this ritual was originally performed for the predynastic rulers of the Delta, Buto being a Delta city, which rapidly became no more than the symbolic ritual centre. After the Fourth Dynasty, Old Kingdom, this ritual, which was once a royal prerogative, was usurped by private people, its original meaning becoming lost in the course of time. A purification scene, part of the ritual, is depicted in two registers. Shown are the *muu*-dancers, who usually wear tall crowns, but not in this depiction, identified here as the ancient kings of Buto, offerings, incense burning, the *tekenu*¹³⁹ and men erecting two obelisks (Hodel-Hoenes 2000:122). Because the ancient kings of Buto are involved here, the sphere of the 'ideology of the king' is embedded in the sphere of religion.

11.10 CONCLUSION

The ancient Egyptian's use of perfume in the funerary context, which was paramount to them, ensuring as it did rebirth for the deceased, as well as a successful life in the afterlife, was first and foremost rooted in the mummification process and connected items, occasions and rituals, such as funerary equipment; the ritual of the 'opening of the mouth'; the funerary banquet; and the daily mortuary ritual.

The 'seven sacred oils' played a dual role in the funerary context, firstly being poured over the mummy in the mummification process, prior to it being wrapped, and secondly being depicted on tomb walls in two different scenarios. Firstly they were depicted in their different shaped jars on offering lists and secondly they were depicted on either side of the false door. These depictions, occurring in both instances in *mastaba* tombs dating to the Old

¹³⁸ Hodel-Hoenes (2000:112) translates Sennefer's title as mayor of the 'southern city' (Thebes), reign of Amenophis II.

¹³⁹ The *tekenu* forms part of the funerary ritual (usually drawn on a sled), known to exist since the Old Kingdom, the name possibly deriving from the word *teken*, to be near. It is a symbol of rebirth and may originally have been, before the wide use of coffins, the body of the deceased in the foetal position wrapped in a skin (Hodel-Hoenes 2000:53).

Kingdom, had a common purpose, their contents magically coming available for the deceased to enjoy in the afterlife.

The use of perfume in the funerary context was available to all social classes in ancient Egypt, with some of these uses being employed for only one period of the history of ancient Egypt and then they faded from the scene. For instance tomb scenes depicting the 'seven sacred oils' in offering lists and flanking the false door of tombs, are only found in *mastaba* tombs dating to the Old Kingdom.

CHAPTER 12



PERFUME IN THE ‘*SITZ IM LEBEN*’ OR CONTEXT OF RITUALS AND CEREMONIES

Rituals formed a very important part of the culture of the ancient Egyptians in the sphere of religion and the sphere of the ‘ideology of the king’, both on the metaphysical *meta* level. Perfume played a pivotal role in the ritual of the ‘opening of the mouth’ in the former sphere, in the form of censuring with incense and anointing, and in the ‘ritual of the royal ancestors’/‘ritual of Amenophis I’, in the latter sphere, in the form of censuring, with incense. Ceremonies in ancient Egypt were in the sphere of the ‘ideology of the king’, the reward ceremonies conducted by the king being one of them, whereby the king rewarded officials with, amongst other things, gold *shibuyu*-collars and expensive perfume in the form of perfumed unguent cones that were worn on their heads. Honourees were also anointed with perfumed oil.

12.1 INTRODUCTION

Religion in ancient Egypt consisted of interactions of people with their deities, called ‘cult’. When ‘cult’ is used in this way it is roughly synonymous with ‘ritual’, for which there is no specific word in the Egyptian language. Ritual was variously referred to as *irt ht*, ‘doing things’, *irw*, ‘things done’ or *nt-*, ‘regular procedure’. The focus of Egyptian ritual was an entity called *ntr*, translated since the Ptolemaic period as *theos* or ‘god’. The rituals took place in a temple, *hwt-ntr*, ‘the house of the god’. Two main classes of priests presided over Egyptian temples. The higher class was the *hm-ntr*, ‘god’s servant’, who carried out rituals before the god’s statue and the lower class were the *w’bw*, ‘the pure ones’. The function of these *wab*-priests was to carry the barques of the deities, pour water for libations during the temple service, oversee craftsmen and artisans and even to act as craftsmen themselves, making sacred objects such as sandals for the deities (Thompson 2001:326). Wilkinson (1999:180) states that ritual actions in ancient Egyptian religion, which also made use of myth, were very important, in that they preserved and maintained the underlying nature of reality portrayed by myths and had as their aim, what has been termed ‘transformation of state’, achieved by magical means.

Funerary rituals performed by the living for the dead, of which there are two sets and which overlap, making it sometimes difficult for Egyptologists to distinguish between them, were one of the main ways in which the deceased were guaranteed immortality. The first set of funerary rituals were performed only once, either prior to the funeral, such as those connected

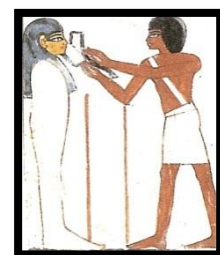
with the mummification process, or at the funeral itself. The second set of funerary rituals belonged to the realm of the mortuary cult, performed after the funeral, either daily, such as those carried out in the mortuary temples of dead kings of the Old Kingdom period, or on special occasions, such as festivals of the dead like the ‘Beautiful Festival of the Valley’. It is sometimes not easy to determine which of the rituals depicted in Egyptian art as taking place in funerals, later formed part of the mortuary cult. An example of one known case is the offering ritual. Our knowledge of these rituals is garnered through them being depicted, or partially depicted, on the walls of tomb chapels and through ritual scripts being preserved, inscribed in underground portions of tombs, such as those in the Pyramid Texts or on papyrus. Administrative accounts and references in non-mortuary texts, are amongst further ways in which this knowledge is garnered. In most periods of Egyptian history, a distinction has to be made between funerary rituals performed for the king and those performed for other Egyptians. Seemingly these rituals first appeared in a royal context, were then adopted by the elite, and later by the rest of the population (Roth 2001a:575).

The king was the central figure in ceremonies in ancient Egypt in the sphere of the ‘ideology of the king’. Reward ceremonies for the rewarding of his officials epitomised them, with honourees receiving, amongst other things, expensive perfume. The author will discuss one ritual in both the sphere of religion and the ‘ideology of the king’ and one ceremony in the ‘ideology of the king’, where perfume played a role.

12.2 IN THE SPHERE OF RELIGION

12.2.1 The ritual of the ‘opening of the mouth’

The ritual or complex of rituals called by the ancient Egyptians the ‘opening of the mouth’¹⁴⁰ (also called the ‘opening of the mouth’



¹⁴⁰ There was also a Babylonian version of the ‘opening of the mouth’ ritual called *pit pi*, performed on statues and other cult objects to prepare them for rituals (Roth 1993:75). This ritual (which began during the night and lasted until sunrise) consisted of a series of ten episodes, enacted at least in three places: the sculptors’ workshop; a building on the river bank; and on the river bank itself (Blackman 1924:49). As in the ancient Egyptian ritual, there were various fumigations with incense during the course of this ritual (Blackman 1924:54). In episodes 7 and 8 incense is offered to nine deities (Blackman 1924:56). The *pit pi* was also performed on Babylonian priests at their consecrations. Two classes of priests (the two most important classes) are known to have had the *pit pi* performed on them, seemingly not at their consecrations but when they had lost power over demons or favour with the deities. These two classes are the *asipu* (sacramental priests, representatives of the water god, who alone operated in magical ceremonies) and the divination priests, *baru* (Blackman 1924: 58). Blackman (1924:59) is of the opinion that the ancient Egyptians did not get their

ceremony), which changed and evolved over time, is possibly the most important ritual of ancient Egypt. This ritual, in which various speeches and actions, involving several implements¹⁴¹, were used, was performed on the mummies of humans, as well as Apis bulls, to reanimate them. It was also performed on cult statues of deities, kings and private individuals, entire temples (Roth 2001b:605), ritual instruments (Hodel-Hoenes 2000:169) and on various healing and protection images, including the heart scarab, placed upon the mummy to animate it (Wilkinson 1999:180).

When performed on mummies and cult statues it allowed them to partake in offerings (Roth 1992:113), with mummies also being enabled to live, breath and see in the afterlife (Hawass 2000:143), with his/her eyes and mouth being touched by the various instruments. Wilkinson (1999:180) states that in all forms of the expression of this ritual, animation and reanimation were achieved symbolically and magically.

The ritual was performed at the end of the funerary ceremony, where a deceased individual was concerned. It took place at the tomb entrance, just before the mummy in its coffin was laid in its final resting place in the tomb (Schulman 1984:172). On mummies, the ‘opening of the mouth’ ritual was traditionally carried out by sons for their deceased fathers, in early funerary cults in association with *sm*-priests, wearing a leopard skin and the sidelock of youth on their heads. By the Third Dynasty, Old Kingdom, the title of *sm*-priest was applied to professional priests, who performed this role in this ritual and other funerary rites (Wilkinson 2000:91). When the ritual of the ‘opening of the mouth’ involved a statue, it usually took place in the workshop (*hit-nb*) where it was fashioned, otherwise in the natron house (*h.t.t.bd*), the forecourt of the tomb (*wsh.it*) or the *hd*-chapel where the statue was set up. This ritual is attested in the Pyramid Texts. In the Old and Middle Kingdoms, it was depicted in private tombs and in the New Kingdom and later, it was depicted on royal and private tomb walls, papyri, coffins, ostraca and stelae (Schulman 1984:171-172). The ritual was preserved well into the Graeco-Roman Period (Hawass 2000:142). The Egyptian terms for

‘opening of the mouth’ ritual from the Babylonian *pit pi* ritual, despite the many features the two rituals have in common

¹⁴¹ Archaeologically, sets of model implements, mainly made of stone, placed in recesses of special limestone platters called ‘opening of the mouth sets’ or *psš-*kf** sets, were found in some private tombs of the Fifth and Sixth Dynasties, Old Kingdom. They continued to occasionally appear in the late Middle Kingdom and in the New Kingdom (Roth 1993:58). See Roth (1992:113-147) and Roth (1993:57-79) for a discussion on the nature and significance of the various implements that were used in the ritual of the ‘opening of the mouth’, as well as her interesting theory regarding the origin of this ritual.

the ritual are *wpt-r* and *wnt-r*, both literally translating as ‘opening of the mouth’, with two verbs *wpi* and *wn* being used in conjunction with it, the verb *wpi* predominating however, seemingly connotating an opening involving splitting, dividing or separating, as the ritual entails the dividing of the lips. The verb *wn*, on the other hand, means ‘see’ or ‘be seen’ (Roth 2001b:606).

The earliest Old Kingdom textual references of the ceremony, a statue ritual, are found in the Palermo stone, which mentions that the ritual takes place in the *hwt.nbw* or quarter of the goldsmiths. In the captions of the decoration in the tomb of the royal official Metjen, mention that the ritual is performed four times in conjunction with censuring and the ritual of transforming the deceased into an *3h*. In these two instances, the ritual is not depicted however. The Pyramid Texts in the burial chamber of the pyramid of the Fifth Dynasty, Old Kingdom, king Unas, provide the next clear textual reference to this ritual. On the north wall a spell PT 30b describes an offering ritual in which two *ntrwy*-blades (one Lower Egyptian and one Upper Egyptian) are said to open the mouth (Roth 2001b:606). These blades, which usually occur as a pair, are said to be made of *bj3* (meteoric¹⁴² iron) and are roughly rectangular in shape (Roth 1993:59). The offering ritual grew by accretion, with many additions and revisions being made to it (Roth 1993:63).

During the Middle Kingdom, the implements used in both the original and later redactions of the ‘opening of the mouth’ ritual in the Pyramid Texts, continue to appear in private tombs, in both offering lists and friezes of objects. Ptah and Thoth appear in a version appearing in the Coffin Texts (CT 1,65), in which they open the mouth of the deceased, both doing the ritual of transfiguration, while Thoth alone replaces the heart in the body (Roth 2001b:607).

The German Egyptologist Eberhard Otto made an extensive analysis of the New Kingdom version of this ritual and published his seminal work on this subject in 1960, *Das Ägyptische*

¹⁴² Wilkinson (1999:84-85) states that because of the meteoric, cosmic, origin of most iron used in Egypt before the end of the Eighteenth Dynasty (not manufactured), iron was known as *bia-en-pet*, ‘metal of the sky’. This meteoric, cosmic, origin gave iron a sacred significance and he opines that this is probably why iron blades were used in the ‘opening of the mouth’ ritual. The word *bj3* is also used for marvel or miracle by the Egyptians and the word frequently has a star determinative. This indicates that the Egyptians saw meteoric iron as coming from ‘falling stars’. The *ntrwy*-blades are sometimes called *sb3wj*, ‘stars’. The adze theoretically had a blade of meteoric iron and its Egyptian name, *dw3-wr*, is written with a star, clearly related to the *dw3t*, the abode of stars. The constellation of *Ursus Major*, called *mshtjw* by the Egyptians, was compared in shape by them to both the adze and the foreleg (Roth 1993:70). The adze was used as a determinative for *mshtjw* in the late Old Kingdom (Roth 1993:76).

Mundöffnungsritual in two volumes, in which he identified seventy-five separate scenes of this ritual belonging to this period (Ayad 2004:113). Otto reconstructed a complete text, incorporating these seventy-five scenes, identified after studying the scenes representing this ritual in more than eighty tombs, most of them situated at Thebes. These include the fifty-one scenes appearing in the Theban tomb of Rekhmire (TT 100) (Bjerke 1965:201-203), the forty-five scenes appearing in the tomb of Seti I (KV 17) and the forty-five scenes appearing in the chapel of Amenirdis I, the first Nubian woman to become a ‘god’s wife of Amun’, in the vicinity of the mortuary temple of Ramesses III at Medinet Habu (Ayad 2004:113). Amenirdis I was a daughter of the Nubian king Kashta and her chapel is one of four dating to the Saite period of the Late Period (Twenty-sixth Dynasty) for the ‘god’s wives of Amun’, also known as ‘Divine Votresses’ (Murnane 1980:82). The Theban tomb of Menna (TT 69), Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, has a delightful scene in two registers showing various stages of the ritual of the ‘opening of the mouth’. Ayad (2004:113) states that each scene depicted in ancient Egyptian art represents a separate ritual act, with a frame typically enclosing both the pictorial representation and the accompanying texts.

The New Kingdom redaction of the ritual of ‘opening of the mouth’ has two different traditions. The first tradition, which is clearly different from the conception of the ritual of the ‘opening of the mouth’ developing in the Pyramid Texts ritual and the related offering list sequence, is the tradition of the Coffin Text spell developing into spell 23 of the ‘Book of the Dead’. Here Ptah and the local god of the deceased opens the mouth, with Thoth standing by equipped with magic. The god Shu also opens the mouth with a harpoon of iron, whilst the deceased is identified with the goddess Sakhmet and the constellation Orion. The second New Kingdom tradition is, however, clearly derived from the Old Kingdom version of the ritual of ‘opening of the mouth’, which incorporates several elements of it, including the adze (the *dw3-wr*), the fingers and the *psš-*kf** (Roth 2001b:607).

During the Late Period the ‘opening of the mouth’ ritual continued the traditions of the earlier periods, a peculiar feature being the depiction of the ritual in temple dedication ceremonies, although the ritual may have been performed on temples long before this period (Roth 2001b:608).

12.2.1.1 Anointing scenes

A scene in the tomb of Seti I (KV 17), Valley of the Kings, Nineteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, depicts an episode from the ritual of ‘opening of the mouth’ where a lector priest (*hry-hb*) with both arms raised and fists clenched is facing a statue of Seti I, which holds an *ankh*-sign in its right hand and a staff in its left hand. The lector priest is extending the little finger of his right hand towards the statue. The accompanying text reads *mh.n.i n.k irt.k m mdt*, ‘it is with *mdt*-oil that I have filled your eye for you’. The context of the use of *mh* to refer to the application of scented oil, is the Eye-of-Horus myth, and the action of applying this oil is described by *wrh*, anointing (Thompson 1991:230). *Mdt*-oil is one of the ten sacred oils/unguents (Figure 12.1).



Figure 12.1: Anointing scene, in the tomb of Seti I (KV 17)

Scene fifty-five of the New Kingdom redaction of the ritual of ‘opening of the mouth’, as distinguished by Eberhard Otto, depicts the statue being anointed, in some instances with the ‘seven sacred oils’, known from the Old Kingdom ritual (spells 72–78) (Roth 2001b:608).

12.2.1.2 Censing scenes

12.2.1.2.1 In the seventy-five scenes of the New Kingdom redaction of the ritual, as distinguished by Eberhard Otto

In scenes two to seven of the seventy-five scenes the mummy, which was placed on sand facing south in scene one, is purified with poured libations, incense and natron, the purification spells being recited four times, one each for the deities, Horus, Thoth, Seth and Dewen-‘anwy, each representing one of the four cardinal directions, and offerings are made, reminiscent of spells 16-29 in the earliest Pyramid Texts sequence in the Old Kingdom. In

scene forty-six, incense is once more burnt. Scenes fifty-eight to sixty-one involve censuring the statues in various ways. Scene sixty-four also involves censuring of the statues. In scenes sixty-five to seventy-two, although they deal with the preparation and presentation of the food offering, censuring, together with libation, is interspersed. Scene seventy-one involves an offering of incense to the god Ra-Harakhti (Roth 2001b:607-608).

12.2.1.2.2 On stelae

Schulman (1984:171) points out that on stelae, the ritual of the ‘opening of the mouth’ is always shown being performed over the mummy, and never over a statue. Usually, but not always, there is a cone of perfumed unguent, with or without a lotus flower, on the heads of the mummies, a pectoral on their chests and sometimes their bandages are indicated (Schulman 1984:172). Usually, but not always, the ritual priest conducting the ceremony is dressed in a leopard skin garment, one even wearing the sidelock of youth (Schulman 1984:173).

On stela Cairo JE 44722, provenance, the tomb of Apuia, Memphis, the scene depicting the ritual of the ‘opening of the mouth’, occupies the lower register. Episode seventy-two of the New Kingdom version of the ritual as identified by Eberhard Otto, depicts the lector priest Merysenamun censuring the mummy of Apuia, ‘the overseer of gold workers of the lord of the Two Lands’. He uses an arm censer and simultaneously pours out a libation from a *kbh*-jar over an offering table, piled high with offerings of various types, including what appears to be a bouquet of fragrant blue lotus flowers. A second priest is wearing a jackal mask, playing the role of ‘Anubis, he who is over the secrets’. A troupe of professional female mourners witness the actions (Schulman 1984:177) (Figure 12.2).

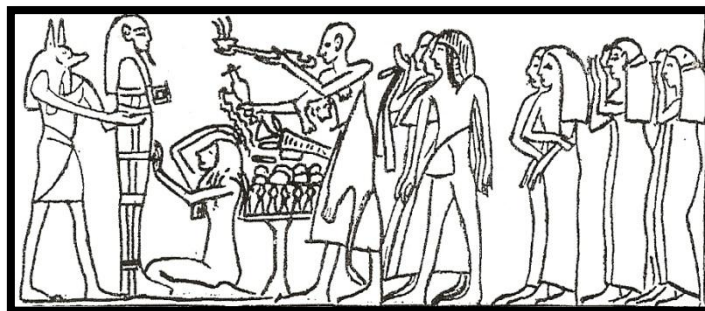


Figure 12.2: Censuring scene on stela Cairo JE 44722

On the stela of Ptahemheb, *in situ* in his Theban tomb (TT 193), the ritual of the ‘opening of the mouth’ is performed outside the tomb. Two episodes of the New Kingdom version of the ceremony occupy the second register of the *stela*. Nearest to the mummy the *Iwn-mwt.f*-priest is censuring it while at the same time pouring a libation from a *kbh*-jar over a pile of offerings. At the extreme right of the scene a lector reads the following from a roll of papyrus:

O Osiris, O overseer of the seal of the treasury of Amun, O justified Ptahemheb! Take for yourself the incense! Take (them) for yourself!
 The *Iwn-mwt.f* (says): You are pure, you are pure, O Horus, you are pure. You repeat: you are pure! Pure, O Set, pure! You are pure, you are pure.

Both the text and the priest with a censer, indicate that one of the censuring episodes is being depicted here and since *sntr*-incense is specifically mentioned in the text, it is probably episode seven (as distinguished by Eberhard Otto), the censuring with *sntr* that is being depicted. Behind the *Iwn-mwt.f*-priest, another or perhaps the same priest, is holding up the *ntr.tj* tool to perform the ritual of the ‘opening of the mouth’. This is either episode twenty-six or forty-six (as distinguished by Eberhard Otto), both involving the *ntr.tj* tool. The mummy is wearing a perfumed unguent cone on its head (Schulman 1984:187) (Figure 12.3).



Figure 12.3: Censuring scene during the ritual of the ‘opening of the mouth’

12.2.1.2.3 In spell 23 of the ‘Book of the Dead’

Spell 23 of the ‘Book of the Dead’, dealing with the ritual of the ‘opening of the mouth’, is illustrated in a vignette of the ‘Book of the Dead’ of Hunefer¹⁴³. A *sm*-priest is censuring with

¹⁴³ Faulkner (1985:9) translates Hunefer’s main titles as ‘Royal Scribe and Steward of King Sety I’ and ‘Overseer of Royal Cattle and Scribe of Divine Offerings’. He states that the hieroglyphic ‘Book of the Dead’ papyrus of Hunefer dates to the Nineteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, and is now housed in the British Museum (EA 9901). His tomb has not been found but he was possibly buried at Memphis. This is a very fine example of a polychrome ‘Book of the Dead’ papyrus.

an arm censer, while bowls of burning incense can be seen on a pile of offerings (Figure 12.4).

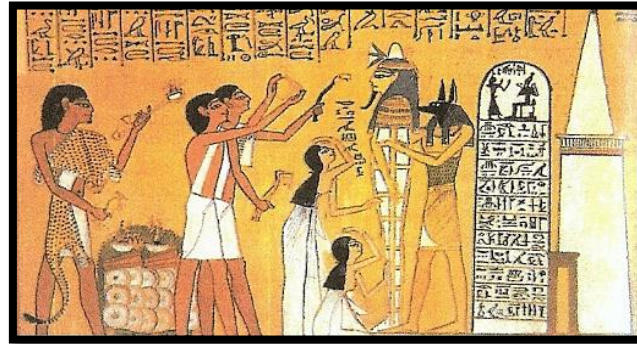


Figure 12.4: Censing scene, in the 'Book of the Dead' of Hunefer

12.3 IN THE SPHERE OF 'THE IDEOLOGY OF THE KING'

12.3.1 The concepts of 'royal ancestors' and the 'royal *ka*'

Rooted in the 'ideology of the king' in ancient Egypt, is the concept of 'royal ancestors'. This represents a sort of monarchical family line, a continuum, between the living king, his deceased 'forebears' and ultimately, the gods who ruled as kings at the beginning of the world.¹⁴⁴ No direct lineage was implied however. Most of the past kings were chronicled in the king-lists, such as the one inscribed on a wall of the temple of Sety I at Abydos, their cartouches receiving veneration and offerings (Wilkinson, R H 2003:61).

The concept of the 'royal *ka*' was central to the concept of the 'royal ancestors' (Wilkinson, R H 2003:61-62). The 'royal *ka*' can be defined as the divine aspect of a mortal king, who could be worshipped legitimately in his own cult only as an incarnation of the 'royal *ka*', as a manifestation of divine kingship (Bell 1997:140). This doctrine of divine kingship was the central, dynamic principle underpinning the social, political and economic structures of ancient Egypt (Bell 1997:137). The Egyptian king had the potential of possessing and being possessed by the royal *ka* at the time of his birth but this potential was only actualised at his coronation, when his legitimacy upon the Horus Throne of the Living was confirmed and publically acknowledged, demonstrating a king's divine origins (Bell 1997:140). In this

¹⁴⁴ The Egyptians called this period *Zep Tepi* (the 'first time') (Bauval & Hancock 1996:79).

The semi-legendary pre-unification kings were called the *smsw Hr*, 'followers of Horus' according to the Turin Canon. Standards found in scenes depicting the sed-festival from the solar temple of Niuserra (Fifth Dynasty, Old Kingdom) are also named the *smsw Hr*, which have been linked to the royal ancestors, the worship of whom have been an important element of kingship since the earliest times (Wilkinson, T A H 2003:199).

sense, the royal *ka* provided the platform for the symbolic and spiritual meeting between the king and his deified ancestors (Wilkinson, R H 2003:62).

12.3.2 Ritual of the royal ancestors/Ritual of Amenophis I

The ‘royal ancestors’ played an important role in rituals connected to the ‘ideology of the king’. One such ritual is called the ‘ritual of Amenophis I’ by early commentators, especially the version contained in Papyrus Chester Beatty IX, but is now usually called the ‘ritual of the royal ancestors’ (David 1981:83). Fairman (1958:101-102) states that the fact that the ‘ritual of Amenophis I’ first became known through the papyrus versions, has led to the impression that it was merely a ritual for Amenophis I, possibly celebrated above all in his mortuary temple. He argues that the fact that this ritual was celebrated for Amenophis I, does not mean that it was exclusively his ritual or that it was primarily connected to mortuary temples. To avoid confusion, the author will use the term the ‘ritual of the royal ancestors’, irrespective of what each commentator calls it.

The ‘ritual of the royal ancestors’ was performed by the king, or the high priest. It involved the presentation of certain offerings which had previously been offered to the deity at the conclusion of the daily temple ritual of cult statues to the royal ancestors. Thus the episodes comprising this ritual occurred immediately after those performed exclusively for the deity during the daily temple ritual, in the first ‘reversion of offerings’, the *wdb ht*, having a predominantly mortuary association, and celebrated only within the sacred area of the temple proper. The *wdb ht* is first attested in the tombs of the Fifth Dynasty, Old Kingdom. These episodes, besides those from the *wdb ht*, also include the preparatory rites that preceded it. The offerings in the *wdb ht* came from the deity’s table, as opposed to those that came from table of the royal ancestors in the second ‘reversion of offerings’, the *wdb htpw ntr*, ‘the reversion of the divine offerings’, celebrated at the end of the entire service (David 1981:83).

The most extensive sources for this ritual are two papyri, both dating to the reign of Ramesses II, Nineteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom. The first is papyrus Chester Beatty IX¹⁴⁵ (Papyrus British Museum 10589, which will be referred to as B). The first few pages of this papyrus are lost. The other papyrus containing this ritual was cut in half by its discoverers,

¹⁴⁵ One of nineteen papyri donated by Mr. and Mrs. Chester Beatty to the British Museum, edited with translation, transcription and commentary in 1935 by Dr. Alan Gardiner to form the third series of ‘Hieratic Papyri in the British Musuem’ (Nelson 1949a: 201).

the top half being acquired by the Egyptian Museum in Cairo (which will be referred to as C) and the bottom half being acquired by the Turin Museum in Italy (which will be referred to as T, the whole papyrus being referred to as C-T). A series of eleven scenes (which will collectively be referred to as MH), depicting 'The ritual of the royal ancestors' is found on the upper register of the first court in the temple of Ramesses III at Medinet Habu. In addition, a series of twenty-three ritual scenes, accompanied by spells to be uttered when the acts depicted were performed, can be found on the north half of the east wall of the hypostyle hall at the temple of Amun at Karnak, dating to the reign of Seti I, which will be referred to as K. MH and K do not mention the name of Amenophis I and are much shorter and less complete versions of the ritual than is found in the two papyri (Fairman 1958:100). Both MH and K contain scenes that deal with rites belonging to the beginning of the daily service and have nothing to do with the 'ritual of the royal ancestors'. The 'ritual of the royal ancestors' is also depicted in the Ptolemaic temples of Edfu (in the Hall of Offerings), Denderah, Kom Ombo and Philae (David 1981:85). The accompanying texts in these Ptolemaic temples, during which period the ritual was possibly extended, preserve the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, rites but also provide additional texts, depicted more fully than in earlier temples (David 1981:86). Certain episodes of the ritual are preserved on the stelae of Amlamani, Aspelta, Amaniastabarqa and Si Aspiqa, which were found in the Nuri pyramids (David 1981:85).

Nelson (1949a:204), who has made a study of the two papyri and MH and K, states that the combined rites, which he calls episodes, of the 'ritual of the royal ancestors' and the temple reliefs (sixty-two in all) fall into four groups, to which he has assigned letters and numbers. Letters A-E are connected to the beginning of the daily service, the opening of the shrine, concluded before the 'ritual of royal ancestors' takes place. These are only found in MH and K. Numbers/episodes 1-31 deal with the presentation of food offerings, after which the shrine was closed. Numbers/episodes 32-40 deal with the 'reversion of offerings'. Here the MH reliefs cease. Numbers/episodes 41/57 deal with a miscellaneous collection of rites, mostly to do with festivals (Nelson 1949a: 229). The author will only deal with episodes 1-57 in detail, that are found in MH and K, and only those connected to perfume. The spells and reliefs in MH and K are fragmentary, so the *lacunae* in the spells are filled in between square brackets, which come from B, C and T (C-T).

12.3.2.1 Presentation of roast-meat offering

12.3.2.1.1 Episode 3 – spell for putting incense upon the fire

[Take] to thyself the Eye of Hor[us, its perfume comes to thee],
(T ends here) as a gift to thee from the king, Lord [of the Two
Lands], Men[mare, Son of Re, Seti-merenamin, given life].¹⁴⁶

Translated by Nelson (1949a:208).

This spell comes from K 1 and the relief from K 1 depicting both episodes 3 and 4, (spell for placing fat upon the fire), unusually two in one scene, is very fragmentary. It is not known therefore how the Egyptian artists portrayed these two rites (Nelson 1949a:209). This spell is also dealt with in T XII 4-5 (Nelson 1949a:230).

12.3.2.2 The deity's daily repast

12.3.2.2.1 Episode 18

Spoken by the king: Comes the incense, comes the perfume of the god, its perfume comes to thee, the perfume of Nekhbet which comes forth from Nekheb. It washes over thee, it adorns thee, it takes place upon thy two hands. Hail to thee, O sonter-incense, sonter-incense. Hail to thee, O menur-incense, which is the [members] of the Eye of Horus, which I diffuse for thee, in this thy name of pellets of incense. O Amen-Re, I give to thee the Eye of Horus, its perfume comes to thee.¹⁴⁷

Translated by Nelson (1949a:221).

This spell comes from MH 7 and the accompanying scene shows Ramesses III pouring a libation, instead of offering incense, illustrating the carelessness of the Egyptian artists during this period (Nelson 1949a:221).

12.3.2.2.2 Episode 19 – spell for thurification¹⁴⁸ with 'ntyw

To be recited: Pure, pure is Amen-Re Ka-mutef on the Great Seat.
Pure is the *Ka* of Amun, Lord of the Thrones of the Two Lands, Usimare-meriamun, gives. The one who belongs to the sky, thy arm is to the earth; the one who belongs to the earth, thy arm is to the sky. The king is vigorous

¹⁴⁶ Incense is offered here to Amun-Ra and Amun-Ra Kamutef. The text from K is very fragmentary but has been restored from the corresponding passage in T XII4-7 (Nelson1949a:208).

¹⁴⁷ This spell comes from MH 7, but here it has no rubric. In C-T this spell is headed 'Performing the incense-rite' (Nelson 1949a:221). It is also dealt with in C III 9 and T XIV 4 (Nelson 1949a:230).

¹⁴⁸ This is the same as fumigating or censuring with incense.

with life, thou being pure¹⁴⁹, alert, youthful, revered in the contentment which is in thee with what thy son, Ramesses-Ruler-of-Heliopolis, gives thee.

There is proclamation concerning it by Thoth. As for Hapi, he gives a flood of what he spews forth, the divine offerings for Amen-Re Lord of Gods, in accordance with this writing which Thoth made in the House of Divine Writings, [being pu]re (for) Amen-Re on his Great Seat. (MH ends here but T continues:) [consisting of 1,000's of bread, 1,000's of beer, 1,000's of cattle, 1,000's of fowl, 1,000's of cloth 1,000's of linen, 1,000's of incense, of ointment, 1,000's of offerings, 1,000's of provisions, 1,000's of everything beautiful, 1,000's of everything sweet and pure, pure for King Djeserkare, Son of Re, Amenophis, triumphant, in every seat, in every place where his *Ka* is.¹⁵⁰

Translated by Nelson (1949a:223).

The accompanying scene in MH 8 shows Ramesses III performing a thurification with *'ntyw* (Nelson 1949a:220) (Figure 12.5).



Figure 12.5: Episode 19

¹⁴⁹ The text at this point is untranslatable as it stands, seemingly a corruption of the text as found in T (Nelson 1949a:223).

¹⁵⁰ Nelson (1949a:222-223) states that this spell comes from MH 8 but his translation of it is tentative, based in some places on T, where the text of MH is especially corrupt, due to careless and unintelligent copying by the Egyptian scribes. This spell is also dealt with in T XIV 4-13 (Nelson 1949a:230).

12.3.2.3 Rites for the reversion of offerings

12.3.2.3.1 Episode 37 – spell for [making incense after] the reversion of offerings¹⁵¹

[This is th]at [White Crown of Re, th]is [incense] which purifies [thee. The flood places itse]lf upon thy head, it purifies [thre. Hail to thee, O Ptah; hail to thee, O Thoth], the two de[puties] of Re.

Translated by Nelson (1949b:319).

The accompanying scene in K 8 shows king Seti I offering incense to a deity after the reversion of offerings (restored from B, II53, Rt. 7, 2-5 and C, IX 1-3) (Figure 12.6).

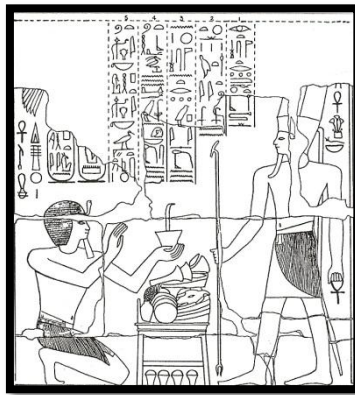


Figure 12.6: Episode 37

12.3.2.4 The festival of Mut

12.3.2.4.1 Episode 57 – spell for making incense to Mut

Arise in glory, O Manifest One, Buto pleased with going forth therein on high. The Great Ennead and the Little Ennead are pleased with the perfume of her fragrance, happy with that which the Eye of Horus, the Bright One, did. The gods came into being from her tears, (and) Atum is vivified in [her fl]esh. (This incense is for Mut) as a gift of King Menmare, son of Re, Seti-[merenamun], given life, stability, good fortune, like Re.

Translated by Nelson (1949b:341).

The accompanying scene in K 19 shows king Seti I burning incense to Mut, here lion-headed, obviously identified with Sekhmut, the spell seemingly giving her a celestial character by

¹⁵¹ This spell comes from K 8, the upper part of which is destroyed, with much of the rubric and text being lost. It is presumed that the rubric reads 'Making incense after the reversion of offerings'. Sufficient amounts of the text survives to permit its restoration (Nelson 1949b:319), from B, II 53, Rt. 7, 2-5 and C, IX 1-3 (Nelson 1949b:320).

identifying her with the sun, her wearing a sun-disc on her head (Nelson 1949b: 341). This spell is also dealt with in B II 9-III 3 (Nelson 1949a:232) (Figure 12.7).

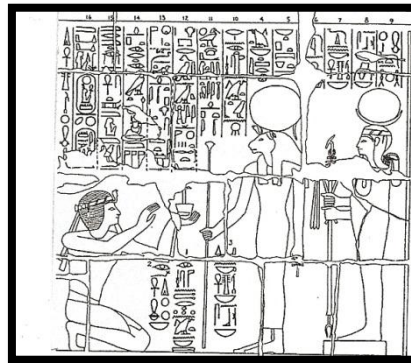


Figure 12.7: Episode 57

12.3.3 Reward ceremonies

The practice of reward ceremonies conducted by the king in the sphere of the ‘ideology of the king’, is attested in Egyptian texts as early as the Sixth Dynasty, Old Kingdom, but was not depicted in tombs until the middle of the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom (Thompson 1991:190). From the time of Horemheb, Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, each mortuary temple on the south side of the west bank contained a small palace, situated near the front of the temple on the south side, accommodating the king and his *entourage* during his visits to Thebes. This contained a formal balcony, the ‘window of appearance’, at the point that it faced into the temple forecourt or towards the avenue leading into the temple. This ‘window of appearance’ was the setting for the Theban reward ceremonies, which would have occurred no more than once or twice a year, a local version of a general gift-giving ceremony performed by later New Kingdom kings (Kemp 1999:212).

It was at this balcony where the king made his appearances. Courtiers and high officials, accompanied by several friends and attendances, were led before it to be presented by the king with gold *shebiyu*-collars¹⁵². Other luxury gifts were also bestowed on honourees,

¹⁵² The *shebiyu*-collar comprised of up to four strands of tightly-strung, heavy, biconical gold beads, immediately recognisable in Egyptian art by the fact that the overlapping curves of these collars, when more than one of them is worn at the same time, present a scalloped effect across the chest and shoulders of the honouree and the last visible bead in each strand of the collar presents a curved profile above the line of the shoulder (Schulman 1988:117). It first appeared during the New Kingdom, probably during the reign of Tuthmosis III (Ertman 1972:26). The awarding of these collars by the king during the New Kingdom to individuals for meritorious service may be rooted in the fact that the king himself wore such a collar. A royal

although these are not actually shown being conferred by the king in reward scenes, since he is only depicted when he is casting down the *shebiyu*-collars. Accompanying texts and a series of ancilliary tableaux and sub-scenes, which included the honouree, wearing his *shebiyu*-collar returning home in his chariot; being lauded by his friends, colleagues, family and servants upon his arrival home; and enjoying a feast at a table, indicate that these, amongst other things, included additional gold jewellery, cattle (Schulman 1988:117), silver bowls (Schulman 1988:154), red-brown leather gloves (Desroches-Noblecourt 1965:109) and even grants of land (Schulman 1988:51). What links this ceremony to perfume is that honourees were also given expensive perfumes, evidenced by the perfumed unguent cones appearing on the heads of some of them in reward scenes.

Schulman (1988:116) states that the scene in which a faithful official is rewarded by the king in person, and even in one instance his wife by the queen, with luxury items, such as gold *shebiyu*-collars and perfumed unguent cones, although it is found in at least two instances on temple walls (once at Beit el-Wadi and once at Karnak), is one of the most popular and important autobiographical motifs to be found in the private tombs of the New Kingdom, dating from shortly after the middle of the Eighteenth Dynasty through to the Ramesside Period, Nineteenth Dynasty, with most of them appearing in the rock-cut tombs of Tell el-Amarna. Schulman (1988:140) argues that the reason for this is that it is primarily a genre belonging to the repertoire of tomb art and what is being commemorated is essentially private in nature.

Part of a limestone wall scene cut from the tomb of king Ay at Tell el-Amarna (no. 25 in the southern nobles' cemetery) shows Ay and his wife Ty being rewarded with gold *shebiyu*-collars, what could be faience collars, of which they wear several around their necks, and expensive perfumes by Akhenaten and Nefertiti. Both Ay and Ty have perfumed unguent cones on their heads. Queen Ty's hands are raised in an attitude of jubilation (Reeves 2001:17 and 88) (Figure 12.8).

shebiyu-collar has survived from the reign of Psusennes I, Twenty-first Dynasty, possibly connected with the cult of Amun (Ertman 1972:27).

The king also awarded a military decoration to soldiers who had distinguished themselves in battle, known as the 'order of the golden fly'. A beautiful example of one was found in the Eighteenth Dynasty tomb of Queen Ahhotep in the dra abu el-naga necropolis, now housed in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo (JE 4694). It is in the form of a golden chain to which are attached, as pendants, three large golden flies, depicted as though they are resting on the ground (Tiridritti 2000:286).



Figure 12.8: Reward ceremony scene, in the tomb of Ay

12.3.3.1 Anointing scenes

Thompson (1991:92) is of the opinion that anointing, done with scented oils, a sign of distinction and an honour bestowed on an official, does not appear to be a necessary part of the reward ceremony, being attested in only thirteen depictions of reward ceremonies, the earliest dating from the reign of Thuthmosis IV, Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, the latest from the end of the Twenty-first Dynasty, Third Intermediate Period. These scenes are found in tombs, temples, and on stelae (Thompson 1994:22). The depiction of the anointing varies little, with the honouree usually standing with both arms raised and the official doing the anointing usually having both hands on the honouree's middle. There is a container, supported by a stand, nearby him, presumably holding the scented oil. There are however exceptions (Thompson 1991:191).

12.3.3.1.1 Anointing of the body

A scene in the tomb of Parennefer at Tell el-Amarna, Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, shows a servant with one hand on Parennefer's (the honouree) midriff, with the other extended in the opposite direction, dipping a finger into a bowl of perfumed oil held by another servant (Figure 12.9).



Figure 12.9: Reward ceremony scene, in the tomb of Parennefer

12.3.3.1.2 Anointing of the head

The only instance of a reward scene depicting the anointing of the head is in the Theban tomb of Khaemhet¹⁵³ (TT 57), Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, in which he and his officers are depicted being rewarded by Amenhotep III for having collected a good harvest tax (Thompson 1991:193), at the first *heb-sed* of this king (Aldred 1986:169). Khaemhet is depicted bowing before the king, wearing a gold *shebiyu*-collar and a perfumed unguent cone on his head. In another part of the scene, one of his officers is depicted having unguent applied to the perfumed unguent cone on his head by a servant, while another officer has a gold *shebiyu*-collar tied around his neck by a different servant (Figure 12.10).

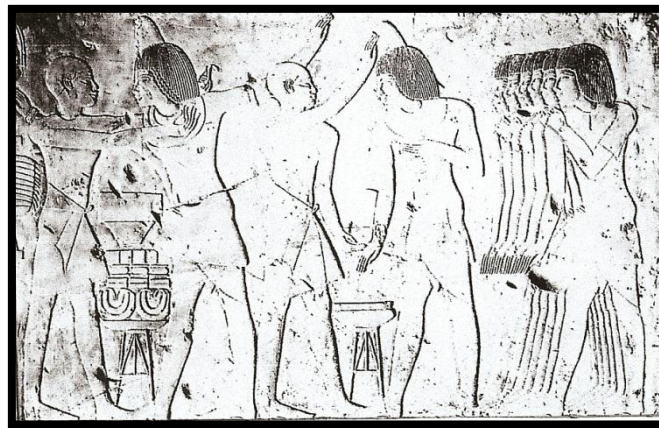


Figure 12.10: Reward ceremony scene, in the Theban tomb of Khaemhet (TT 57)

12.4 CONCLUSION

The use of perfume in rituals in ancient Egypt, epitomised by the ritual of the ‘opening of the mouth’ in the sphere of religion and by the ‘ritual of the royal ancestors/ritual of Amenophis I’ in the sphere of the ‘ideology of the king’, is first and foremost rooted in the form of censuring or the offering of incense. In addition, perfume in the form of anointing was an essential part of the former ritual. Here the use of the ten sacred oils/unguents highlights the importance that the ancient Egyptians attached to this ritual.

Scenes of reward ceremonies conducted by the king feature prominently in the private rock-cut tombs at Tell el-Amarna, Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom. King Amenhotep IV (Akhenaten) appears to have been very keen to reward his officials, perhaps in a bid to draw

¹⁵³Manniche (1989:133) translates the title of Khaemhet, called Mahu, as ‘Overseer of the granaries of Upper and Lower Egypt’ during the reign of Amenhotep III.

attention away from the fact that he had banned the worship of all deities at Tell el-Amarna, with the exception of the Aten.

If reward ceremonies had been depicted in places such as tomb scenes prior to the middle of the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, they would have contributed to our knowledge of whether luxury perfumes in the form of perfumed unguent cones also formed part of the luxury gifts that were bestowed by the king on honourees at these ceremonies in earlier periods of the history of ancient Egypt. The same applies to the anointing of honourees with perfumed oil.

CHAPTER 13



PERFUME IN THE '*SITZ IM LEBEN*' OR CONTEXT OF FESTIVALS

Festivals in ancient Egypt were joyful occasions. Their main aim was to concentrate on aspects of fertility, birth and the continued renewal of life (rebirth), ensuring that the deceased enjoy a good afterlife. Some were in the sphere of religion, such as 'The Beautiful Festival of the Valley', the 'Festival of the Going out of Min' and the 'Festival of Sokar'. Others were in the sphere of the 'ideology of the king', such as the 'Sed Festival' and the 'Festival of the Coronation of the Sacred Falcon' at Edfu. Both these spheres are on the Metaphysical *meta* level. Perfume had a vital role to play in these festivals, in various forms, such as censuring with incense, anointing with scented oil, the use of fragrant *ankh* bouquets, the pouring of a heavy myrrh-scented oil over a burnt sacrifice, and the offering of fragrant myrrh.

13.1 INTRODUCTION

The ancient Egyptian word for a festival is *hb*, followed by a determinative consisting of a primitive hut, the simplest form of tabernacle (Bleeker 1967:27). The central themes of Egyptian festivals were fertility, birth and the continued renewal of life (rebirth of the deceased). They also emphasised the confirmation of the existing world-order, personified by the king, and the victory over the forces of chaos (Coppens 2009:1).

Egyptian religious festivals, events of great pomp and splendour and the recognised climatic moments of cultic life, had three main *dramatis personae*: the deities, the king and the dead (Bleeker 1967:144). Therefore three types of these festivals can be distinguished: festivals of the deities, festivals of the king and festivals of the dead (Bleeker 1967:91). There were, however, no festivals in ancient Egypt that were exclusively designated for the dead, so the deceased played a prominent part in the festivals of the dead (Bleeker 1967:133). The mythic idea of the festivals of the dead and their *raison d'être* was that they elevated the deceased to the status of an *3h* (a living divine being, a being of light) and thus assured renewal of life (Bleeker 1967:139), the Egyptian word *s3h* meaning 'to make (the deceased) an *3h*' (Bleeker 1967:136). All three types of festivals were rooted in the desire for religious renewal (Bleeker 1967:36), which is in essence the magic effect of the cultic rites performed during the various festivals (Bleeker 1967:44), achieved through their actualisation of mythical ideas (Bleeker 1967:22), a mythical truth which has creative power (Bleeker 1967:44).

Some festivals were ‘travelling festivals’¹⁵⁴, where cult statues of the deities were usually placed in their shrines on small portable barques and then borne on the shoulders of priests to their destination or to the nearest quay for further transportation in a real boat by river. The purpose of these ‘travelling festivals’ was for the cult statues of particular deities to meet other deities at their temples, after which rituals were enacted (Wilkinson 2000:95). Other festivals took place in the outlying temples of the deities concerned (Wilkinson, R H 2003:45). Some festivals were held annually and the essence of these festivals, as well as that of the daily temple ritual, was rooted in ‘seeing the god’ or ‘seeing his face’ (*m33 ntr/wn-hr*), and the ‘appearance’ (*h‘w*) and ‘coming out’ (*prr*) of the cult statue of the deity. Recurring parts of both the annual festival and the daily temple ritual include the cult statue’s purification, anointment with scented oil, clothing with linen and the adornment with regalia (Coppens 2009:2).

Many aspects of the festival, as well as that of the daily temple ritual and special rituals, were called ‘mysteries’ (Egyptian *shetau*) by the ancient Egyptians (Wilkinson, R H 2003:45). An example is the ‘mysteries’ of Osiris that took place in Abydos in the Middle Kingdom. These were internal secret rites. Bleeker (1967:45) states that the mysteries proper only materialised in the Hellenistic period, which he presumes were partly an imitation of the prototype of the mysteries of Eleusis in ancient Greece.

Many types of festivals were held throughout the year, with special provision being made for each new moon and festivals anchored to specific seasons. The dates of festivals which occurred on an annual basis and the offerings involved in each, were inscribed on temple walls from the Old Kingdom onward. These ‘festival calendars’ appeared from the Old Kingdom onward, and are found in valley temples of pyramids and the sun temples of the Fifth Dynasty from this period. None have yet been found dating to the Middle Kingdom. This does not mean, of course, that they did not exist then. Examples from the New Kingdom can be found at Karnak, Abydos, Elephantine and at western Thebes in the Ramesseum and at Medinet Habu. Similar ones can be found in the temples of Dendera, Edfu, Esna and Kom Ombo dating from the Ptolemaic and Roman periods (Wilkinson 2000:98).

¹⁵⁴ Examples of travelling festivals are the ‘Beautiful Festival of the Valley’, the ‘Beautiful Festival of Opet’ and the ‘Festival of the going out of Min’.

Reproduction of a sculpted bas relief featuring a ‘festival calendar’ in the form of a circular zodiac, originally situated on the ceiling of one of the eastern chapels located on the roof of the Temple of Hathor at Dendera, Ptolemaic Period, was removed during Napoleon’s Egyptian expedition in 1798-1801, and is now housed in the Musée du Louvre, Paris (Figure 13.1).

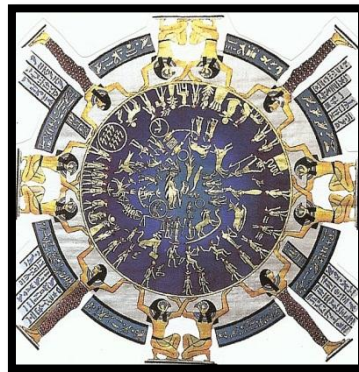


Figure 13.1: The zodiac ceiling, from the temple of Hathor at Dendera

The author will not discuss the use of perfume in the family banquets, held in tomb chapels, during festivals of the dead, such as the ‘Beautiful Festival of the Valley’, as this will be discussed in detail in Chapter 14.

13.2 IN THE SPHERE OF RELIGION

13.2.1 The ‘Beautiful Festival of the Valley’

Follow thy desire while thou livest!
 Put myrrh upon thy head,
 Clothe thyself in fine linen,
 Anoint thee with the genuine wonders
 Which are the god’s own.

Extract from the ‘song of Antef’, a Harpers’ song¹⁵⁵.
 Translated by Lichtheim (1945:192).



¹⁵⁵ Part of a poem entitled ‘the song that is from the tomb of Antef, which is before the harper’, from Papyrus Harris (a Twentieth to Twenty-first Dynasty text 500 6,7 – 7,3 lines 9-11 (the only complete version of this poem), part of a genre called harpers’ songs (Thompson 1991:107). Fox (1977:400) is of the opinion that the ‘song of Antef’ was possibly composed in the Amarna Period, Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom. Lichtheim (1945:191), on the other hand, states that that it is generally believed to be a Middle Kingdom text by scholars. The Eleventh Dynasty is the most favoured amongst these scholars (Fox 1977:400).

This annual travelling festival of the dead, known as *heb nefer en inet*, the ‘Beautiful Festival of the Valley’, the desert valley now known as Deir el-Bahari, was one of the most important festivals in the New Kingdom ‘festival calendar’. This festival was the Theban version of a popular Hathor festival, which was celebrated throughout Egypt from at least the Old Kingdom (Bell 1997:136), with Hathor in her cow form often being depicted in the Theban necropolis emerging from the hills to receive the dead as ‘Mistress of the West(ern Mountain)’, although the main *dramatis persona* was not the goddess Hathor but the god Amun-Ra, in accordance with the Theban religious system (Bell 1997:137). Bleeker (1967:139) states that during the ‘Beautiful Festival of the Valley’, the deceased was wished the power of Ra who rises each day from the underworld. German scholars call this festival *Talfest* (Valley Festival), a word also used by many English-speaking Egyptologists (Shafer 1997:286).

Spencer (2007:96) states that this festival originated in the Eleventh Dynasty, Middle Kingdom, during the reign of king Nebhepetra Mentuhotep II with a visit of Amun from Karnak on the east bank to this king’s temple on the west bank, the only extant evidence for this being a group of graffiti which Mentuhotep’s priests left on the hillside. These priests were responsible for forewarning the temple of Amun’s approach. It took place annually during the month of *Payni*¹⁵⁶, the second month of the season *Shemu*, between the harvest and the annual inundation (Bleeker 1967:137). The actual date was dictated by the appearance of the new moon (Morkot 2000:319). This festival endured until Greco-Roman times (Englund 2001:566). It assumed considerable importance during the New Kingdom (Spalinger 2001:521) and there was a renaissance of the festival’s importance under the Saite and Kushite kings, with Deir el-Bahari being the focal point of the rites (Morkot 2000: 249).

Scholars do not agree on the duration of this festival. Leblanc (2001:89) states that it lasted for twelve days, whilst Hartwig (2001:393) states that it lasted for two days. Glimpses of this festival can only be gained by piecing together information garnered from texts and

¹⁵⁶ The months of the year, four for each of the three seasons of *Akhet* (inundation), *Peret* (planting and growth) and *Shemu* (harvest and low water), did not acquire individual names until the New Kingdom, which eventually evolved into the Hellenistic names of the months still used by the Coptic Church at present. The Egyptian name for the Coptic month of *Payni* is *Hnt/Htj* (Lewis 2006:356). The Sixth Dynasty *mastaba* tomb of Mereruka, Vizier, Supervisor of the City, Overseer of Prophets in the Pyramid of Teti, located to the northwest of this pyramid at Saqqara, is the largest known tomb of the Old Kingdom (Siliotti 1997:118). A relief at the entrance of this tomb shows Mereruka seated before the three seasons, divinely personified as male deities. They are each sitting before four crescent moons in a cartouche, symbolizing the four lunar moons of each season (Gahlin 2001:89).

reliefs, such as on temples, among which are Hatshepsut's temple at Deir el-Bahari; the Nineteenth Dynasty Gurna temple of Seti I, which also had cultic space dedicated to this festival; the Nineteenth Dynasty mortuary temple of Ramesses III at Medinet Habu, which had the procession of the festival depicted on the south wall of the first court and on the north side of the second court, both courts being festival spaces, especially for this festival; the early Ptolemaic granite shrine in the Karnak temple; and in private Theban tombs. This festival was celebrated in order to honour the ancestor-kings as well as the deceased (Leblanc 2001:89).

The statues of Amun-Ra, his consort Mut and their son Khonsu, the divine triad of Thebes, dressed in festal regalia, were taken from the temple of Amun at Karnak, carried on the shoulders of priests, enclosed in their gilded portable boat-shaped shrines, called sacred barques. Immediately they were ferried across the Nile to the west bank at Thebes in the great gilded barge of Amun-Ra¹⁵⁷, where from early New Kingdom times, mortuary temples were designed to accommodate it (Wilkinson 2000:95). Once there, early in the Eighteenth Dynasty, the procession continued its journey along the old path to Deir el-Bahari, site of the mortuary temple of Queen Hatshepsut, the procession resting *en route* at the mortuary temple of Mentuhotep II (Bryan 2001a:57). Elaborately worked '*nkh*-bouquets¹⁵⁸ were stacked around the cult statue of Amun-Ra as it rested overnight in the holy grotto of Deir el-Bahari, in order to receive his regenerative power (Bell 1997:137), consisting of papyrus stems, fragrant blue lotus flowers, mandrake and poppies (Manniche 1989:46), as the ancient Egyptians believed that flowers such as the lotus, lilies, cornflowers and poppies contained the very essence of the deities themselves (Fletcher 1999a:55). Every annual festival ended with a New Year's celebration, a symbolic rebirth (Bell 1997:130) and on the dawn of this day, a lighted torch was extinguished in a bowl of cow's milk (itself a symbol of rebirth) to

¹⁵⁷ Called the *userhat* by the Egyptians (Leblanc 2001:89).

¹⁵⁸ These bouquets could assume a variety of different forms, sometimes being in the shape of an '*nkh*-sign. Besides being used at the 'Beautiful Festival of the Valley', they were also associated with related festivals celebrated at such places as Elkab, Gebel el-Silsila, Saqqara and Tell el-Amarna. In the New Kingdom they were used during the 'ritual of Amenosis I'/'ritual of the royal ancestors'. In the Theban necropolis, their use persisted into Saite times. In the Ptolemaic Period they had special significance at the temple of Edfu. Besides coming from the altars of the Theban triad (Amun-Ra, Mut and Khonsu), they also came from those of Ra-Harakhti, Hathor, Ptah, Herishef and the Aten (Bell 1997:183). Manniche (2006:26) calls these bouquets Amun bouquets, whilst Hodel-Hoernes (2000:78) calls them stalk-bouquets. These bouquets were but one of the life-giving sacred objects employed in the New Kingdom. Others included the tall *mdw-spsy* pole or standard, also called *ankh*, frequently shown being held upright, either singly or in pairs, by the king and private individuals or portrayed as an independent object of veneration and particularly important at Luxor temple, a manifestation of the royal or divine *ka* (Bell 1997:183); the sistrum; and *menat*-necklaces, their use in this role being attested at Meir and also in the Theban tombs which persisted into Saite times (Bell 1997:184).

signify the successful return of the dead to Hathor (Bell 1997:137), patroness of the festivals of the dead, who bestowed great happiness to the deceased in the afterlife (Bell 1997:138). Manniche (1999:94) is of the opinion that Amun-Ra celebrated a ritual wedding with Hathor before the statues of the Theban triad returned home to Karnak.

As the New Kingdom progressed however, each new mortuary temple¹⁵⁹ on the west bank, provided a new terminus for the ‘Beautiful Festival of the Valley’, extending the route (Bryan 2001a:57)¹⁶⁰. This enabled the portable barques with their statues to rest overnight in the memorial temple of the reigning king (Kemp 1999:210). During the Nineteenth Dynasty the memorial temple of Seti I, dedicated to the cult of both Amun-Ra and the divine king himself, at modern Gurna, was a prime setting for the ‘Beautiful Festival of the Valley’ (Brand 2001:77). Also in the Nineteenth Dynasty, in the reign of Ramesses II, this festival appears to have attained special importance, when the Ramesseum was used for the overnight stop of the Theban triad, with this use of the Ramesseum still being observed a thousand years after Ramesses II’s reign, evidence for which is found from the early Ptolemaic granite shrine in the Karnak temple (James 2002:278).

The ‘Beautiful Festival of the Valley’ was a time of great joyousness for Thebans, with relatives or ancestors wealthy enough, the upper middle class, to be buried in the Theban necropolis, which from the Old Kingdom onward, but especially during the New Kingdom, became Egypt’s foremost cemetery (Weeks 2001:29-30). There is evidence, particularly from the Late Period, that high ranking officials wanted to ensure that their tombs were placed as near as possible to the processional route and that their tomb entrance faced it (Willeitner 1998:456), as central to this festival was the celebration of the continuum of existence that joined this life with the afterlife (Weeks 2001:26).

¹⁵⁹ Some Egyptologists prefer to call them ‘memorial temples’. The ancient Egyptians called them ‘temples of millions of years’. There were nearly thirty mortuary temples lining the Theban west bank lying in desert *wadis* at the edge of civilisation, extending from el-Tarif in the north to Deir el-Chelvit in the south (Weeks 2001: 22 and 26). Rooted in the theology of the New Kingdom, the foreparts of the mortuary temples celebrated the king’s closeness with Amun-Ra, while their deepest sanctuaries stressed the association with Ra and Osiris, paralleling the texts in the separated tombs in the Valley of the Kings, guaranteeing the king’s rebirth with the solar deities (Bryan 2001a:56). In fact the inclusion of Amun-Ra in the mortuary temples was the result of festivals such as the ‘Beautiful Festival of the Valley’, which brought statues of the Theban triad to the west bank from Karnak (Bryan 2001a:57).

¹⁶⁰ The mortuary temple of Tuthmosis III (*Henket Ankh*), perched on the rising rock of the Deir el-Bahari cliffs, functionally replaced the mortuary temple of Hatshepsut, as it received the barque of Amun-Ra during this festival (Wilkinson 2000:179)

The Thebans¹⁶¹ seized the opportunity to line the route and hail the procession of the Theban triad, accompanied by priests, priestesses shaking their *sistra* and rattling their *menat*-necklaces (emblems of the goddess Hathor, both symbolic of rebirth and renewal), gymnasts, singers and musicians, as it snaked its way among the winding paths of the tombs (Manniche 1989:46). The music and dancing involved in this festival, were performed under the patronage of Hathor (Vischak 2001:85), the ‘mistress of music’ and ‘mistress of dance’ (Manniche 1991:57). The musical instruments particularly linked to the celebrations of Hathor are the lyre, angular harp, lute, double oboe and round tambourine (Manniche 1991:118). Here the sphere of recreation (including games, dance, singing and music) is embedded in the sphere of religion. Some officials could in the afterlife expect the privilege of joining in the festivities, by having their images included amongst those that joined the procession that accompanied that of the Theban triad. During the Nineteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, the practice developed of including the images of previous kings in this procession, which was later extended to notable state officials, for example viziers (James 2002:278).

Priests made the distinctive offering of this festival, the holocaust, a burnt sacrifice consumed entirely by flames, by pouring a myrrh-scented oil over the holocaust, releasing thick, sweet-smelling smoke (Bell 1997:136). The tomb owner himself was visualised as making an offering to the Theban triad, lifting up braziers with bread, fowl and incense and pouring myrrh on their path as the procession passed by his tomb’s entrance (Manniche 1989:46). This motif can be found in the Theban tomb of Nahkt (TT 52), necropolis of Sheikh Abd al-Qurna, which dates to the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom. A scene flanking the tomb entrance on the left depicts Nakht, accompanied by his wife, pouring perfumed oil containing myrrh (hence its reddish-brown colour) onto a pile of offerings made to the Theban triad during the ‘Beautiful Festival of the Valley’. Depicted above the pile of offerings are four jars of perfumed oil, with fragrant blue lotus flowers balanced on top of them (Figure 13.2).

¹⁶¹ The craftsmen, such as stone cutters, plasterers, draftsmen, sculptors, colour-painters, carpenters, goldsmiths and those specialising in funerary equipment, involved in the construction of royal tombs, from the village of Deir el-Medina (known to the ancient Egyptians as *Ta Set Ma’at* or The Place of Truth), cradled in a small valley between the Theban mountains and the hills of Quernet Murrai, also partook in the ‘Beautiful Festival of the Valley’. Scenes from this festival adorn the walls of the vaulted-roofed burial chambers of tombs in this village’s necropolis, cut deep in the mountain (Siliotti 2000:133). Deir el-Medina, founded at the start of the Old Kingdom, was not the only workmen’s village in ancient Egypt but it is the best preserved. Others include a complex housing workers who built the pyramids on the Giza plateau, a Middle Kingdom village at Fayum founded at the el-Lahun site and a whole town district for royal craftsmen at Tell el-Amarna (El-Bialy 2001:327).

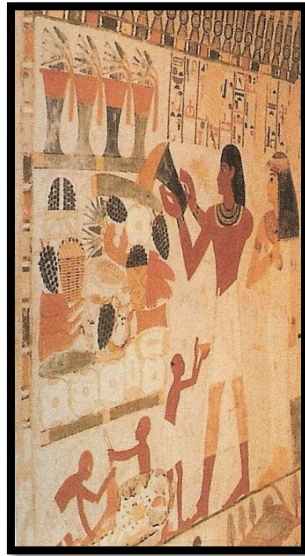


Figure 13.2: Pouring fragrant myrrh oil over offerings, in the tomb of Nakht (TT 52)

The Thebans then made a pilgrimage to the family tombs (Manniche 1989:46). In the tombs, which became ‘houses of the joy of the heart’ on that occasion, where they kept a night vigil, they held a family banquet in the tomb chapel¹⁶². The deceased also participated in the family banquet, the mortuary statue of the deceased having been returned to the tomb, after having joined the procession, in those cases where it was applicable (Bleeker 1967:137). Representations depict the statue returning, bearing a sceptre and wearing a garland of flowers (Bleeker 1967:138). During the family banquet, *sistra* and *menat*-necklaces were swung, accompanied by blessings, after which they were presented to the tomb owner (Hodel-Hoenes 2000:87).

The motif of the sistrum and the *menat*-necklace being presented to the tomb owner by his daughter can be seen in a painting in the Theban tomb of Menna¹⁶³ (TT 69) (Figure 13.3).

¹⁶² Wentz (1962:121) refers to texts in the Theban tomb TT 96b, mentioning that the ‘Beautiful Festival of the Valley’ banquet was held in an underground chamber. Manniche (1989:135), in her list of Theban tombs, however, does not speak of TT 96b, only a TT 96, belonging to Sennefer, whose main title she translates as ‘Mayor of the Southern City’ during the reign of Amenophis II.

¹⁶³ Manniche (1989:133) translates Menna’s title as ‘scribe of Pharaoh’s fields’, possibly during the reign of Tuthmosis IV, New Kingdom

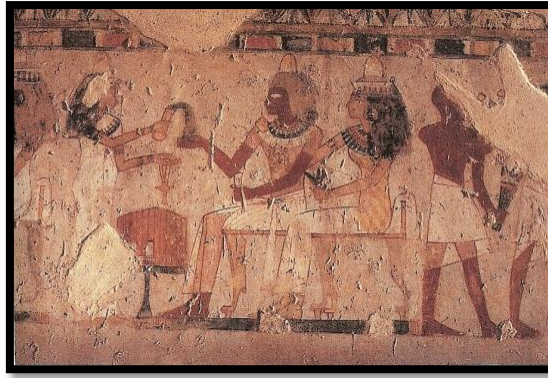


Figure 13.3: The sistrum and *menat*-necklace being presented to the tomb owner

Large ‘*nkh*-bouquets were then placed in the tomb chapel, for the tomb owner to enjoy, purchased from priests, and still full of Amun-Ra’s regenerative perfume and infused with the divine essence, their presentation, and of other offerings connected to this festival, being typically introduced by the phrase *n k3.k* ‘For your *ka*! The *ka*’s of both the living Thebans and their dead ancestors were revived, by bringing them near these highly scented bouquets, as well as the *wasek*-collar or garland made from fragrant petals (Bell 1997:137).

In the Theban tomb of Userhet¹⁶⁴ (TT 56), a painting depicts an ‘*nkh*-bouquet being presented to Userhet and his wife Mut-neferet, both wearing perfumed unguent cones on their heads, by their son on the occasion of the ‘Beautiful Festival of the Valley’. The text includes the remark that one should enjoy the day of celebration as ‘Amun-Re praises you when he rests in the *Ab*-Horizon (the mortuary temple of Amenhotep II) at his festival of the western valley’ (Hodel-Hoenes 2000:78). Bleeker (1967:138) states that it was the son’s duty to present this bouquet to his deceased parents (Figure 13.4).

¹⁶⁴ Manniche (1989:133) translates Userhet’s titles as scribe and ‘Child of the nursery’ during the reign of Amenhotep II, New Kingdom.

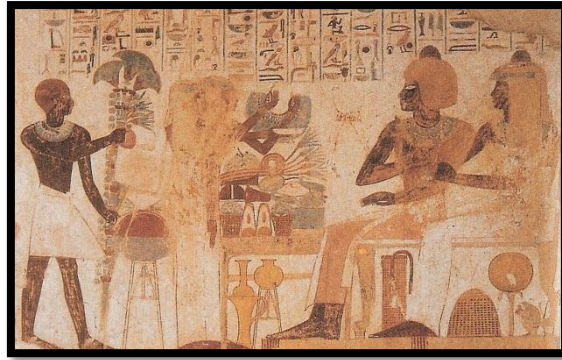


Figure 13.4: The son presenting the *ankh*-bouquet to the deceased

Kemp (1999:313) is of the opinion that there can hardly be any doubt that provincial towns and their cemeteries had their equivalents. As an example he cites the Middle Kingdom contracts of offering of Hapdjefa at Asyut. Hapdjefa was nomarch of Asyut. His tomb, no.1 at Asyut, has preserved on the northeast wall of the second chamber ten contracts (Spalinger 1985:7). Contracts 1 to 6 deal with the Wepwawet temple and contracts 7 to 10 deal with the Anubis temple, both at Asyut and of which he was the high priest (Spalinger 1985:9). Hapdjefa dealt with in these contracts, as well as with contracts with the *ka*-priest (which were unrecorded), among other things, the complete annual round of ceremonies and offerings due a statue of a nomarch of such stature as himself, all to ensure the cult of his tomb (Reisner 1918:93).

Reisner (1918:91), assuming that there was only one portable statue of Hapdjefa that was taken to the various locations, has drawn up his reconstruction of the yearly cycle of festivals of the dead carried out for the service of the statue. Included in this cycle is the first intercalary day, when the statue of the god Wepwawet was carried from his temple for his annual visit to Anubis at the Anubis temple, to which the statue of Hapdjefa was brought by the *ka*-priest and his servants. Also in this cycle, was the Wag festival, and two ceremonies conducted on New Year's Eve of the lighting of lamps, one in the temple of Wepwawet and another involving a procession from the Anubis temple to the necropolis. The author is of the opinion that it was on occasions such as these, as with the 'Beautiful Festival of the Valley', that the people of Asyut would probably gather in the tombs of their families and enjoy a banquet. Manniche (1999:102) states that besides Thebes, other places in Egypt, as for instance in the contemporary tombs at Memphis, banquet scenes are found, but without the adjoining motifs of the tomb owner worshipping Amun-Ra.

13.2.2 The festivals held for Sokar/Osiris during the month of Khoiak

Gaballa & Kitchen (1969:35) distinguish three phases in the history of the ‘Khoiak’ festivals held for Sokar/Osiris during the month of Khoiak, the fourth month of the season called Peret (*pri*). The first is the so-called ‘mysteries’ of Osiris, the internal secret rites, attested for Abydos in the Middle Kingdom, mentioned on Ikhnofret’s¹⁶⁵ stela, which they call Khoiak ‘A’. These ‘mysteries’ also took place during the Ptolemaic Period. The second phase is the celebrations from eighteenth to thirtieth Khoiak, attested in the New Kingdom, which they call Khoiak ‘B’. The third phase involves the more extended celebrations in the Late Period under the Romans from seventeenth to thirtieth Khoiak, taking place at Dendera, which they call Khoiak ‘C’.

13.2.2.1 The festival of Sokar

Of all the festivals held at Thebes, the ‘Festival of Sokar’, held during the month of Khoiak, the fourth month of the season Akhet, was one of the greatest. This festival is attested at least from the Old Kingdom, when it regularly appeared in the list of annual feasts often appearing in the *htp-di-nsw* offering formulae for Anubis and Osiris found in Memphite *mastabas* and tombs, probably already falling on day twenty-sixth of the month of Khoiak (Gaballa & Kitchen 1969:19-20). This festival was celebrated right down to the Ptolemaic Period, when it was linked with the winter solstice (Bleeker 1967:70). It linked the reign of the king with the resurrection of Sokar as a solar deity (Bryan 2001b:107).

Besides being celebrated at Memphis, this festival was recognised in funerary formulae at, amongst other places, Sheikh Said, Meir in Middle Egypt, at Dendera in upper Egypt, and as far as Aswan. In the New Kingdom, it appeared in the ecclesiastical calendars at places such as Imet (Nebesheh) in the North-East Delta and at Karnak in the Akhmenu temple (Gaballa & Kitchen 1969:21 and 26-27). This festival was also celebrated in the royal mortuary temple, wherever that happened to be. For example in the Twentieth Dynasty, New Kingdom, it was held at Medinet Habu, western Thebes, the mortuary temple of Ramesses III (Watterson 1999:171).

¹⁶⁵ Ikhnofret was a high official appointed by Sesostri III to organise the annual festivities, the ‘mysteries’ of Osiris, when the statue of Osiris was taken from this god’s temple to his tomb. His stela is important, as its text affords us the earliest account of the ‘mysteries’ of Osiris, detailing a whole series of episodes that re-occur right to the end of pharaonic civilisation, which are elaborated on in later texts (Meeks & Favard-Meeks 1997:167-168).

Gaballa & Kitchen (1969:36) opine that whatever the nature and content of the festival of Sokar in the early Old Kingdom was, its assimilation in some measure to the rites, mythology and festal usages of Osiris in all probability occurred not later than the later part of the Old Kingdom, was well established during the Middle Kingdom, and became the norm in the New Kingdom, after which Sokar increasingly became little more than a name or aspect of Osiris, and for up to a thousand years thereafter. Thus the festival of Sokar in the fourth month of Akhet, increasingly became assimilated to what eventually became the 'Khoiak' festivals of Osiris (Gaballa & Kitchen 1969:23).

The mortuary temple of Ramesses III at Medinet Habu contains the most complete and most beautiful scenes of the festival of Sokar. Gaballa & Kitchen (1969:34) state that in terms of the Medinet Habu Calendar, the phrase 'festival of Sokar' is in a sense ambiguous in that it has ten days of offerings to Ptah-Sokar-Osiris (as Sokar was called from the Middle Kingdom onwards) from the twenty-first to the thirtieth Khoiak (corresponding closely to their Khoiak 'C') and yet the festival of Sokar *par excellence* is the celebration enacted on the twenty-sixth day of Khoiak. They argue that as the 'Khoiak' festival (their Khoiak 'A', Khoiak 'B', at least) at Memphis and also at Medinet Habu, was celebrated for Ptah-Sokar-Osiris by name according to the calendar headings, rather than simply for Osiris, even though the rites were greatly Osirianized, one can combine the Medinet Habu Calendar and scenes (together with sundry scattered references), for both the ten days and the twenty-sixth day of Khoiak for Sokar with that for the Khoiak festivities of Osiris (their Khoiak 'A', Khoiak 'B' and less easily their Khoiak 'C'), keeping in mind both the external, 'public' displays and the internal 'secret' rites, the so-called mysteries. Gaballa & Kitchen (1969:37) point out that although the rites at Medinet Habu only appear to have started on the twenty-first day of Khoiak, sources such as the Theban tomb of Neferhotep (TT 50) and Papyrus Musée du Louvre 3176 suggest that the eighteenth day of Khoiak was the real first day of the Khoiak festivities from at least the New Kingdom until the days of Alexander the Great. An exception was at Dendera in the Late Period, where they started on the twelfth day of Khoiak. The twenty-sixth of Khoiak, the actual feast-day of Sokar, was the only day at Thebes recognised as a holiday and festival for the general populace, such as the workmen's village of Deir el Medineh (Gaballa & Kitchen 1969:48).

The first five days of the 'festival of Sokar', beginning on the eighteenth day of Khoiak, are not depicted at Medinet Habu. Temples and tomb-chapels adhering to the rites of Abydos

witnessed Osiris beds being prepared (Gaballa & Kitchen 1969:38). These consisted of wooden frames in the shape of the god Osiris lined with linen, filled with silt from the Nile and planted with grain. As this festival officially took place on the eve of the inundation and planting season, the preparation of these beds and the subsequent germination of the grain seeds, ensured a good harvest in the coming year, whilst their connection with Osiris symbolized the idea of resurrection in the agricultural cycle (Murnane 1980:29).

The Medinet Habu calendar begins its Ptah-Sokar-Osiris festival on the twenty-first day of Khoiak with the ‘Day of Opening the Aperture (*wn wst*) in the Shetayet Shrine’ (Gaballa & Kitchen 1969:38). The calendars of western Thebes (Medinet Habu) and eastern Thebes (Akhmenu) record the twenty-second day of Khoiak as the ceremonial act of ‘hoeing up the earth’, *hbs-t3* (Gaballa & Kitchen 1969:39). The Medinet Habu calendar records the twenty-third day of Khoiak as ‘Preparing the way in the Shetayet Shrine’, and the twenty-fourth day of Khoiak as the ‘Day of placing Sokar in their midst’ (Gaballa & Kitchen 1969:40-41). Festival calendars and Theban tombs record the twenty-fifth day of Khoiak as the day of the *Ntryt* feast, the origin and meaning of which is obscure (Gaballa & Kitchen 1969:43). Although it had already happened in the morning ceremonies, the night of this day was the time *par excellence* for revellers to wear garlands of onions, while the *ka*-priests probably offered onions and performed censuring and libations in Theban tomb-chapels (Gaballa & Kitchen 1969:44).

The twenty-sixth day of Khoiak, the ‘festival of Sokar’ proper, is dealt with in the scenes of this festival at Medinet Habu, the only day of the festival they portray. The remaining four days of the festival were restricted to the temple ritual. On the twenty-seventh day of Khoiak the Medinet Habu calendar records a festival of ‘Anointing the Ennead’, which involved offering to ‘Ptah-Sokar-Osiris and his Ennead’, followed by the ‘Day of drawing forth (*st3*) the Benben’ on day the twenty-eighth day of Khoiak (Gaballa & Kitchen 1969:71). This calendar had an entry for the twenty-ninth day of Khoiak but unfortunately the title is now lost and records the thirtieth day of Khoiak, the last day of the ‘festival of Sokar’, as the day when the raising of the *djed*-pillar¹⁶⁶ took place (Gaballa & Kitchen 1969:72). The raising of

¹⁶⁶ Reliefs in the Theban tomb of Kheruef (TT 192) and a relief in the hall of Osiris, temple of Seti I at Abydos are good examples of depictions of the raising of the *djed*-pillar. See Hawass (2006b:81) and Mikhail (1984:66) for a discussion on the meaning of the *djed*-pillar. Mikhail (1984:51) states that it is only from the New Kingdom onward that there is clear evidence that the ceremony of the raising of the *djed*-pillar formed part of the Osirian Khoiak festival.

the *djed*-pillar was an essential element of the royal cult (Hodel-Hoenes 2000:222). Its presence at the ‘festival of Sokar’ means that the sphere of the ‘ideology of the king’ is embedded in the sphere of religion. Also included in the ceremonies of this day was the driving of oxen and asses four times round the walls, probably an agricultural rite that was later Osirianised (Gaballa & Kitchen 1969:73).

Gaballa & Kitchen (1969:2) state that scenes at Medinet Habu, occupying the whole of the register on the south wall of the second court, continuing on the south half of the east wall, can be conveniently divided into six separate scenes. Scenes I – III form part of the initial rites which occurred before the processional, public part of the festival depicted in scenes IV – VI, scene I dealing with the vital *f3iht* (the ‘elevation of offerings’) directed to Sokar himself during the morning service of the daily ritual. According to Gaballa & Kitchen (1969:52), scenes V and VI depict what was possibly the full procession that ‘went round the walls’, whether at Memphis or Medinet Habu. Sokar is referred to as Sokar-Osiris at Medinet Habu, highlighting the fact that his festival was both Memphite and Osirian in nature (Gaballa & Kitchen 1969:49). The sanctuary of Sokar, housing his sacred barque, in Room 4 of the Medinet Habu temple, off the first hypostyle hall, also contains scenes pertaining to the ‘Festival of Sokar’ (Gaballa & Kitchen 1969:33). The author will only describe in detail the scenes in the temple at Medinet Habu appearing in the second court, and only those involving perfume.

13.2.2.1.1 The scenes at the Medinet Habu temple - south wall, second court

13.2.2.1.1.1 Scene II – the offering of incense to Khnum, Her-remenwy-f(y) and Shesmu

The king, Ramesses III, wearing the *atef* crown, is ‘performing a censuring for his father Khnum’ who ‘presides over his walls’, Her-remenwy-f(y)¹⁶⁷ ‘resident in the Great Mansion’ and Shesmu, god of the oil press, ‘presiding over the Per Wer¹⁶⁸’, the latter two offering the king the *ankh* sign (Gaballa & Kitchen 1969:3). Gaballa & Kitchen (1969:51)

¹⁶⁷ Her-remenwy-f(y) can sometimes also be referred to as Horus-hery-remenwt-f(y). Perhaps he was linked with Ra and with the fertile powers of nature (Bleeker 1967:50).

¹⁶⁸ All three gods are Sokar’s co-templar gods found on the Memphite Shetayet god-list from Abydos, where they are so-styled (Bleeker 1967:50). Gaballa & Kitchen (1969:49) are of the opinion that possibly they had their own special role to play during the beginning of the festival. Murnane (1980:29) points out that all these gods have links with Osiris, either as fertility figures or as protectors, and for this reason they may have been co-opted into Sokar’s feast.

state that the role of censuring in this scene is not clear but are of the opinion that possibly it was part of the terminal rites to the ‘Reversion of Offerings’ after the daily ritual (Figure 13.5).

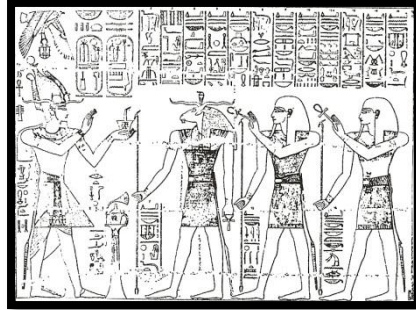


Figure 13.5: Scene II at Medinet Habu

13.2.2.1.1.2 Scene III – a ‘litany of offerings’ involving censuring

Wearing the *nemes*-headcloth, the king, Ramesses III, is ‘performing a Litany of offerings to Sokar in all his names’ and stands before Sokar’s Henu-barque housed within a shrine in the Per-Henu, which took the form of a *htp-di-nsw* with the setting up of braziers and censuring¹⁶⁹ (Gaballa & Kitchen 1969:4).

13.2.2.1.1.3 Scene V

This scene can be divided into two parts. In front, the first part, the standard of Nefertem, god of perfume, described as ‘Nefertem-Nebkau-Har-hekenu’ is borne by eighteen priests accompanied by a *sm*-priest (Gaballa & Kitchen 1969:6). This standard consists of a long pole capped with an open fragrant blue lotus flower which has two plumes projecting from it, here also ‘wearing’ a broad collar. The standard is secured to its carrying poles by an ornamental sling, decorated with alternating figures of kings and deities (Murname 1980:31). Behind this entourage a priest carries a falcon on a standard labelled as ‘Horus upon his papyrus-staff’ (Gaballa & Kitchen 1969:6) (Figure 13.6).

¹⁶⁹ In the late rites celebrated at the Akhmenu temple at Karnak there was included a ‘union with the solar disc’ (*hnm-iten*) when Sokar faced east in the procession to receive the sun’s rays with accompanying rituals (Gaballa & Kitchen 1969:51).

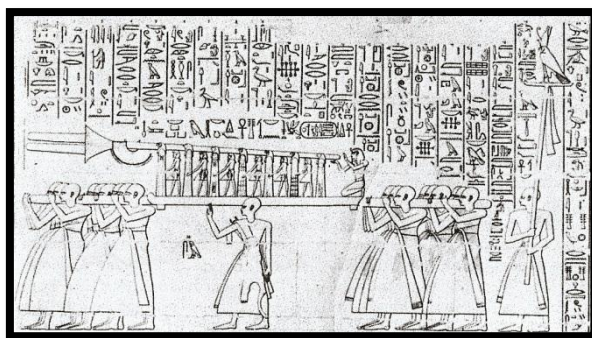


Figure 13.6: Scene V (part one) at Medinet Habu

In the second part two lines of courtiers, royal sons and prophets pull a rope, the middle part of which is held by the king following after them. Preceding them a lector priest recites from a scroll, the main text of a scene, which speaks of drawing along Sokar¹⁷⁰.

Gaballa & Kitchen (1969:57) opine that the presence of Nefertem, god of perfume, in this procession can superficially easily be explained by the fact that Nefertem, like Sokar, was a Memphite deity and like Sokar became closely associated with Ptah. On a deeper level, however, they state that Nefertem is described in the Pyramid Texts (PT 266) as the lotus from the earth at the nose of Ra, when he daily rises on the horizon, therefore it is appropriate that he accompanies dawn ceremonies such as Sokar's. Lines 14-15 that the lector priest is reciting from the scroll in the second part of the scene read: '... How pleasant is the fragrance of Abydos, Abydos is protected, protected' (Gaballa & Kitchen 1969:7). This is a reference to the standard of Nefertem.

13.2.2.1.1.4 Scene VII

This is the final and biggest scene, on the east wall, representing the closing episode of the procession (Murnane 1980:31). It is divided into two registers. On the upper register, out in front, two priests are beating time, while other priests are purifying the god's way by carrying out censuring and libations (Gaballa & Kitchen 1969:8-9). Behind them other priests are carrying the barques of five Memphite goddesses, each accompanied by a small Nefertem standard (Murnane 1980:32), and a box containing five geese. There follow *wb*-priests

¹⁷⁰ Gaballa & Kitchen (1969:54) are of the opinion that as the Sokar-barque appeared in scene IV, the artists possibly omitted it in scene V behind the king, to avoid duplication and loss of space.

bearing offerings, as well as standards and a 'scribe of the roll of divine offerings' (Gaballa & Kitchen 1969:8-9).

On the lower register the rearmost *wb*-priest is offering incense to Ramesses III, who is following the procession, accompanied by two rows of personal servants (Gaballa & Kitchen 1969:8-9). A shorter procession on the right side features the deities Wepwawet, Khonsu, Horus and Thoth, the canonical 'openers of the ways', before the king, wearing the double crown. A priest in front of the king censes the double *uraeus* on the crown (Murnane 1980:32).

13.2.2.1.2 The 22nd Khoiak unguent

Manniche (1999:110-111) states that this unguent was used during the rites accorded to the god Sokar/Osiris, which took place during the month of Khoiak, at temples built where dismembered parts of the body of Osiris had at some time been buried. Details of the proceedings concerning this unguent are written on the enclosure wall of the temple of Horus at Edfu. The ingredients used in it, including aromatic substances such as extract of lotus oil and '*ntyw*, and the method of preparation of it, was top secret knowledge, a mystery, knowledge of which was handed down from father to son. It was prepared in temples to be applied to the limbs of cult statues and it would have been black and sticky, rooted in the concept of regeneration, through its blackness and the presence of lotus extract. The name 22nd Khoiak unguent contains the date on which its preparation is completed, with mixing of it commencing on the fifteen and cooking taking place on the eighteenth to twenty-first of Khoiak. Manniche states further that this unguent is known from several sources in connection with embalming and gives her interpretation of the ingredients and amounts thereof and steps involved in its preparation, using modern units of volume/mass:

- 1 Place in a pot for cooking 0.5 l of carefully ground menen and 0.5 l of bitumen.
2. Add 0.5 l first class lotus extract,
0.5 l first class antiu,
0.5 l fine oil
0.25 l wax,
0.5 l fresh senet,
0.5 l dry do,
0.5 l tisheps of nedjem,
aromatics.
- 3 Mix with 0.25 l wine and 0.5 l oil.

4. Add all minerals finely ground.
5. Mix with honey.
6. Add 0.5 l dry antiu.
7. Combine and apply on the day of the funeral.

13.2.2.1.3 The annually produced figurines of Osiris and Sokar

The ‘mysteries’ of Osiris, held between the twelfth to the last day of the month of Khoiak, are attested for Abydos in the Middle Kingdom , although it is not known what form these took, and also in the Ptolemaic Period, when for the first time details of what happened during these ‘mysteries’ were recorded in texts Meeks & Favard-Meeks (1997:168-169). In the Ptolemaic Period the ‘mysteries’ of Osiris were performed in the roof chapels of temples, the walls of which contain texts pertaining to these events, with the texts on those of the temple of Hathor at Dendera providing the most comprehensive details (Kuhrt 1998:300 and 306).

The texts on the walls of the roof chapel of the temple of Hathor at Dendera record that rites connected with the mysteries, carried out in great secrecy, began with a big procession of priests who had gathered from all parts of Egypt, headed by the king (Manniche 1999:111).

The seventh chapter (as classified by Loret) is headed ‘To know a mystery that is not seen or heard, but is handed down from father to son’. The text relates that on the twelfth of Khoiak sixteen figurines of Osiris were made. They were composed of barley, sand and incense, mixed with water from the sacred lake, kneaded into the shape of a mummiform Osiris and placed into moulds of gold. They were then set on gold pedestals, one in each district which was a cult centre of his (Hornblower 1937:172). On the twenty-first of Khoiak the mummiform Osiris figurines were removed from the moulds, with incense being placed on their two constitutive parts before being joined together. On the twenty-third of Khoiak the bandaging of these figurines began, amongst which were placed fourteen amulets (Meeks & Favard-Meeks 1997:170).

Similar figurines were made in the shape of the falcon-headed god Sokar, comprising soil, date pulp, incense, resin and aromatic substances, as well as a small quantity of ‘all minerals’, mixed with water from the sacred lake. The aromatic substances were pine resin, ‘sweet wood (cinnamon?)’, cyperus grass (rhizomes?) from the oasis, a black wood producing a

resin (used for sacred unguents) called gaiuma, sweet flag, camel grass, juniper berries, mint, aspalathos and two substances that are unknown, one being peker (Manniche 1999:111). Preparation of the Sokar figurines began on the fourteenth of Khoiak, the moulds for them also being made of gold. During the night of twenty-fourth of Khoiak, the figurines of Sokar were placed in a chest and then in a chapel that would serve as their tomb for the coming year, joined with those of Osiris, that had been placed there on twenty-second of Khoiak, the day of the nautical procession. At this stage the figurines of the gods made the previous year had to be removed, and finally buried in a necropolis (Meeks & Favard-Meeks 1997:170 and 172).

At Dendera the baking of the 22nd Khoiak unguent began on the eighteenth of Khoiak and was completed by twenty-third Khoiak (Meeks & Favard-Meeks 1997:171).

Figurines of Osiris and Sokar from the Late Period, now in a private collection in New York (Figure 13.7).

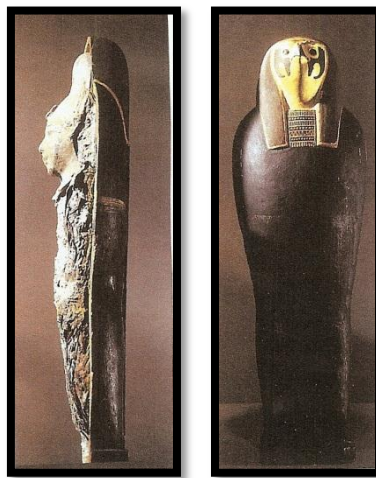


Figure 13.7: Figurines of Osiris and Sokar

13.2.3 The festival of ‘The going out of Min’

Moens (1985:61) states that a festival called *mswt Mnw*, that is mentioned on the Palermo Stone, despite the fact that *mswt* can be translated as ‘birth’ or ‘the shaping of a statue’, presumably deals with what was later to be called *prt Mnw*, ‘Going out of Min’. She adds that evidence for this festival has been found throughout the entire history of ancient Egypt.

Scholars are not in agreement as to how long this festival lasted. Murnane (1980:28 and 32)) states that it was celebrated on one day only, its arrival coinciding with the first day of the lunar month, which heralded the beginning of *shemu*, whilst Willeitner (1998:457) states that it lasted for several days.

Texts accompanying the depictions of the festival in the Ramesseum and in the mortuary temple of Ramesses III at Medinet Habu call the festival the ‘Going out of Min to the *htjw*’ (*pwt Mnw r htjw*) and it is often given this name in festival lists until Roman times (Moens 1985:62). The raising of Min to the *htjw* is a rite central to the festival, the word being written with a stairway as determinative and means terrace with stairway (Moens 1985:68). Scholars are not in agreement about the significance of the *htjw* in this festival. Murnane (1980:36) interprets it as a dais. Moens (1985:68) argues that the *htjw* is the garden (the levee, the raised fields) where lettuce (and other vegetables) was grown. To substantiate her argument, Moens refers to representations of the Old Kingdom where the statue of Min is placed on lettuce beds, the lettuce being one of Min’s symbols. Depictions of this festival, evidence for which has been found throughout the whole history of ancient Egyptian history (Moens 1985:61), can be found in many places, some very fragmentary. Murnane (1980:33) states that a good idea of the course of this festival can be gleaned from studying the reliefs and the ‘programme text’ inscribed above the scenes in the mortuary temple of Ramesses III at Medinet Habu, situated on the north and east walls of the second court, despite the fact that the reliefs offer different and at times contradictory details about the festival than the text does. These depictions of the festival are based on the reliefs depicting the festival at the Ramesseum (now incomplete), although not all the details are the same. The series of scenes begins on the west end of the north wall. The author will only discuss those scenes that involve the use of perfume.

13.2.3.1 Scenes portraying the ‘Festival of the going out of Min’ in the mortuary temple of Ramesses III at Medinet Habu

13.2.3.1.1 Scene I

This scene shows the cortege of the king leaving the palace for the festival, the king, wearing the blue crown, being carried by high officials and royal children on a portable lion throne. Leading the procession are musicians and two clapping priests, beating out the rhythm. Two priests, facing backwards towards the king, ‘perform a censuring in front of majesty during the

royal appearance on the carrying chair on the way to the house of father, Min', with the use of arm censers (Murnane 1980:33) (Figure 13.8).

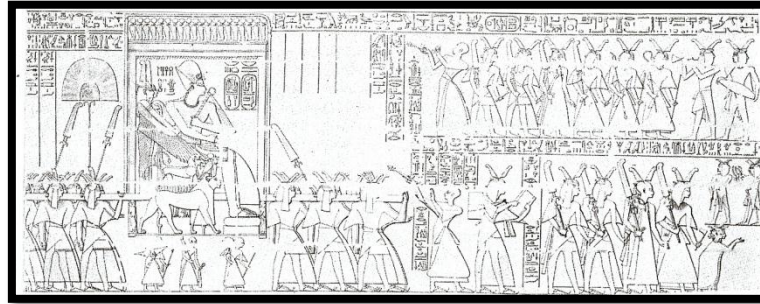


Figure 13.8: Scene I at Medinet Habu

13.2.3.1.2 Scene II

The second scene at Medinet Habu, depicts Ramesses III, in the chapel of Min (if located at Medinet Habu, probably Room 46), making offerings before Min, whose statue is already on carrying poles, ready for the forthcoming journey. The king is censuring before Min, using an arm censer, as one of the offerings, performing 'his rituals in the house of his father Min: a great sacrificial offering ... consisting of bread, beer, oxen fowl, and every good thing' (Murnane 1980:34).

13.2.3.1.3 Scene III

To the right of the main procession in this scene a number of accompanying rituals are depicted, a distinctive feature of them being a series of 'mimed hymns'. The first of these hymns is read by a lector priest. He is censuring the king and the White Bull (probably representing an aspect of Min) 'during the arising of Min in the doorway of the temple', using an arm censer. Part of the hymn reads: 'Be exalted, O Min, my lord! Arise, O Min, my lord, for you are vindicated in the presence of Re-Atum!' (Murnane 1980:34).

13.3 IN THE SPHERE OF THE ‘IDEOLOGY OF THE KING’

13.3.1 The *sed*-festival

Wilkinson, T A H (2003:212) states that the rituals of the *sed*-festival¹⁷¹ (Egyptian *hb sd* or *heb sed*), the most important festival of divine kingship and part of the ‘ideology of the king’, originated in the Predynastic Period and were still celebrated by the Ptolemaic kings. James (2002:200), concurring with Wilkinson, is of the opinion that the practice of the celebration of the *sed*, or something similar, undoubtedly predated the unification of Upper and Lower Egypt in c 3100 BC, at the beginning of the First Dynasty. Mikhail (1984:55) states that the *sed*-festival celebrations lasted for about six months.

There is little explicit evidence of where, when, and how often, the *sed*-festival was celebrated, nor is there for the precise order of events and their symbolic significance (Wilkinson, T A H 2003: 212). There is no text which accurately describes the course of this festival, which grew more elaborate over time, although the basic elements remained the same. Furthermore, extant sources on the festival are very fragmentary and derive from the reigns of kings widely separated in time (Bleeker 1967:97). There are only three extant series of detailed representations of the *sed*-festival, only two of which are sufficiently comprehensive enough to be used as the basis for a study of the purpose and meaning of this festival. These are found in the reliefs of the chapel of the sun temple of king Niuserre at Abu Gurob (Fifth Dynasty, Old Kingdom), once the fullest and most important extant scenes of the *sed*-festival but now very fragmentary, and the scenes in the temple at Bubastis showing king Osorkon II (Twenty-second Dynasty, Third Intermediate Period), usually described as being in the ‘Festival Hall’¹⁷². The Abu Gurob scenes are now more fragmentary than the Bubastis scenes. A third set of scenes existed in the great temple built by Amenhotep III at Soleb (Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom). These are now incomplete,

¹⁷¹ The goddess Hathor played a significant role during this festival, designated during the Middle Kingdom as the ‘lady of the *per-hay*’, ‘house of jubilation’ a specially built hall at Malkata to be used at *sed*-festivals. In the Theban tomb of Kheruef (TT 192) there are scenes depicting the *sed*-festival of Amenhotep III in the thirtieth year of his reign. In one instance the king, wearing the double crown, is seated, his feet resting on the *heb*-hieroglyph for ‘festival’. Hathor is sitting next to him with her cow-horn attribute (Hodel-Hoernes 2000:207). Seshat, the ancient goddess of writing and notation (including record keeping) (Wilkinson, R H 2003:166), a form of the goddess Nephtys, was intimately involved with the ‘ideology of the king’. The granting of *sed*-festivals to the king was her most important task, together with the marking of his life-period on the primitive palm-stick (Wainwright 1940: 30-32).

¹⁷² This is a mis-nomer, as they were carved on the sides of a granite gateway, situated within the two great courts or halls within the temple (Uphill 1965:365).

due to their fragmentary condition, and furthermore, in addition to the *sed*-festival, they also dealt with the foundation and dedication of the building (Uphill 1965:365- 367).

Scholars are not in agreement about the origin of the name *sed*. Wilkinson, R H (2003: 212) states that it is thought to be named after the ancient jackal-like god Sed, closely related to the ‘ideology of the king’, who was perhaps an independent deity or related somehow to the jackal god Wepwawet. The name *sd* first appears on the Fifth Dynasty Palermo stone. Bleeker (1967:120), however, is of the opinion that the name *sd* means cloth, and therefore the *hb sd* means the festival of the cloth, of the clothing, the re-investiture, as one of the central rituals of the festival in his opinion, if not the main one, is the king’s wearing of the *sd* robe of archaic design.

Two First Dynasty kings (Early Dynastic period), Den and Qaa are known to have celebrated *sed*-festivals (Wilkinson, T A H 2003:212), in later tradition celebrated in the thirtieth year of the king’s reign, evidenced by the fact that on the Rosetta stone the Egyptian *hb-sd* (*sed*-festival) is rendered as *triakontaeteris* ‘thirty-year festival’ in Greek. In the Dynastic period however there are definite exceptions to this rule, with some kings known to have reigned for more than thirty years and seemingly not celebrating a *sed*-festival, for example Senusret III (Wilkinson, T A H 2003:213). Other kings, on the other hand, celebrated a *sed*-festival long before they had reigned for thirty years, for example Osorkon in the twenty-second year of his reign, c 865 BC (Galan 2000:255). The reasons which lay behind each decision to celebrate the *sed*-festival are not known (Wilkinson, T A H 2003:213). After a king’s first *sed*-festival, it was typically celebrated triennially (Bell 1997:27). Wilkinson, T A H (2003:213) is of the opinion that the translation of *hb-sd* as ‘jubilee’, which is often made, may not be appropriate, due to the irregular way in which it was celebrated, at least in the early periods of ancient Egyptian history.

Scholars are not in agreement about what the significance of the *sed*-festival was. Mikhail (1984:52) is of the opinion that the origin of the *sed*-festival was possibly an internal historical event, such as the unification of Egypt, or an external historical event, such as a victory over Libya, or even possibly a manifestation of a social phenomenon, such as the renewal of powers of the king. Wilkinson, T A H (2003:214) argues that the symbolism of what is to him the ritual heart of the *sed*-festival, the dual enthronement of the king (wearing the *hb-sd* robe), once as king of Upper Egypt (wearing the red crown) and once as king of

Lower Egypt (wearing the white crown) in the distinctive *sed*-festival pavilion, with two staircases, is unambiguous. It is an echo of the coronation ceremony and proclaimed the duality of kingship. Thompson (2001:330) is of the opinion that the purpose of the *sed*-festival was for the king to reconfirm his relationship with the royal *ka*, as well as to restore his flagging vitality. Bell (1997:130) opines that the living king, as part of his eternal cycle, underwent a ritual death and rejuvenation, returning fleetingly to the chaotic state, which was Egypt's time of greatest danger, when its fate hung in the balance. He then experienced the nadir of his strength.

The funerary complex of king Djoser, Third Dynasty, Old Kingdom, at Saqqara in Lower Egypt, surrounded by a niched wall¹⁷³ 277 x 544 m and 1.5 km long, has at its heart the step pyramid, the king's funerary monument, and the various components of the great *sed*-festival court. This is a *wsh*²⁰ broad court on the eastern side of the complex and stretching before the step pyramid, which allowed the king to participate in the eternal celebration of the *sed*-festival in the afterlife. The surviving evidence of this complex indicates a complex series of rituals whose symbolism is rooted in the very centre of the 'ideology of the king' (Wilkinson, T A H 2003:212-213).

One aspect of the *sed*-festival at the Djoser complex was the ritual of territorial claim, known as 'encompassing the field' (Wilkinson, T A H 2003:213). Two sets of horseshoe-shaped markers or 'cairns' (*dnbw*¹⁷⁴), arranged in pairs, two pushed together at the north end and two at the south end, can be seen in the great *sed*-festival court and also in the smaller court in front of the 'House of the South' (Wilkinson, T A H 2003:214). Friedman (1995:11) states that it seems reasonable that king Djoser performed a run between these two markers, placed about fifty-five meters apart. One corridor under the step pyramid and one under a *mastaba*-like tomb to the south of it, known as the south tomb, together contain a total of six limestone

¹⁷³ This name was used by the Egyptians for both open courtyards and large halls (Spencer 1978:54).

¹⁷⁴ Spencer (1978:53) remarks that occasionally the word *dnbw* is used in a wider context to mean 'boundaries' or 'limits' of a land. He is of the opinion that this use of the word developed from its use as the name of the boundary-marker and not the other way round, otherwise the name of the boundary marker would not have acquired the divine status it enjoyed as being part of such an important ritual. He states further that the name *dnbw* probably derives from the verb *dnb*, to 'turn away' or 'turn around' because during the running ritual the king would have turned back having reached these markers. The boundary markers are deified in the temple of Seti I, included in a list of divinities set out in vertical columns, below which is a text to be recited by priests when offering incense to each divinity in turn (Spencer 1978:52).

panels¹⁷⁵ showing king Djoser. The second panel under the step-pyramid shows him wearing only a belt and central flap¹⁷⁶ carrying a flail in one hand and a container called the *mks* holding the *jmjt-per* in the other. The *jmjt-per* ‘that which is in the house’ served in the secular domain as a legal document authorising the transfer of goods and property but here appearing to entitle the king to claim over the property he circuits, the land of Egypt. Flanking the feet of the king are two sets of three semicircles, representing the *dnbw* or cairns (Friedman 1995:24). These act as a diachronic *leitmotif*. Normally in depictions these semicircles appear ankle-high but occasionally they occur at the waist (Decker 1992:25). The *dnbw* and the *jmjt-per* were already known in the First Dynasty (Friedman 1995:24). So was the ritual act of running, the ‘circuit of the walls’ or *phr h3 jnbw*, from First Dynasty references of the Palermo Stone, itself seemingly produced in, or shortly after, the Fifth Dynasty (Friedman 1995:14).

In the New Kingdom the rites of the *sed*-festival were seemingly conducted at Thebes and Memphis (Uphill 1963:123). Memphis was the place where according to custom a *sed*-festival was first announced, under the tutelage of the deity Ptah-Tatanen, a combination of two local Memphite gods. Starting with the New Kingdom the royal spouse played an ever-increasing role in the *sed*-festival, the two of them being shown together in reliefs celebrating the event. An example of this is in the second court, temple of Amenhotep III in Soleb, Nubia, where Tiye, wife of Amenhotep III, is seen standing behind him in a relief depicting his *sed*-festival (Willeitner 1998: 451).

Two of Amenhotep III’s *sed*-festivals, which were held at Malkata, are immortalised, the first in his thirtieth regnal year and the third in his thirty-seventy regnal year, in scenes in the Theban tomb of Kheruef (TT 192) (Hodel-Hoenes 2000:205). Scenes in Kheruef’s tomb of his third *sed*-festival, show that the ritual of the erection of the *djed*-pillar¹⁷⁷ (for Ptah-Sokar-

¹⁷⁵ Friedman (1995:42) argues that the panels may represent an extension in both format and subject matter of year names appearing on Early Dynastic ivory labels and perhaps even those appearing on the Narmer macehead and palette (if indeed they are year names). This also applies to the year names appearing on Palermo Stone entries referring to the *sed*-festival.

¹⁷⁶ The king would also have worn the *hb sd* robe and the red, white or double crowns (Wilkinson, T A H 2000b:214). This robe was retained in Egypt for more than fifteen centuries (Bleeker 1967:107).

¹⁷⁷ Mikhail (1984:55), on the other hand, argues that the raising of the *djed*-pillar was not an episode of the *sed*-festival. He argues that as far as the scene in the tomb of Kheruef is concerned, it is possible that the raising of the *djed*-pillar (which usually occurred on the thirtieth day of Khoiak) coincided with the *sed*-festival. This coincidence in itself, he avers, does not mean that the raising of the *djed*-pillar was a regular feature of the *sed*-

Osiris on the morning of the *sed*-festival) was accompanied by dancing, music and combat sport, such as boxing and stick fighting (Decker 1992:87- 88). Here the sphere of recreation (which includes dancing, music, singing and sport) is embedded in the sphere of the ‘ideology of the king’. Scenes from the first *sed*-festival in this tomb and their accompanying texts show that generous gifts were awarded such as gold *shebyu*-collars, gold figurines of fish and duck and ribbons of green linen (Fletcher 2000:137-138).

Amenhotep III introduced water ceremonies as a new element in his *sed*-festivals at Malkata, which was equipped with an artificial lake (Kuhrt 1998:215). Guests consisting of nobles, officials, servants and the common people consumed a lavish feast below the royal balcony in the king’s presence (Ikram 2001:163), accompanied by dancing and singing. After the guests had lined up according to their rank, they were led to the lake where they rowed the king’s barque (Fletcher 2000:137).

13.3.1.1 Anointing

Scenes depicting anointing during a specific ritual are one of the three classes of scenes depicting anointing in Egyptian art distinguished by Thompson (1991:218), one instance being during the *sed*-festival. A fragment of a relief from the sun temple¹⁷⁸ of Niuserre at Abu Garob, Fifth Dynasty, Old Kingdom, depicts the king Niuserre wearing the short *sed*-cloak and the white crown of Upper Egypt participating in the ritual procession of the *sed*-festival. In front of him a priest of the *b3w* of *Nhn* is holding up a standard of Wepwawet. The king’s clenched fists are protruding from the *sed*-cloak with the exception of his little fingers, which are extended towards the Wepwawet standard. The text accompanying this scene reads *dd mdw di mdt* ‘words to be spoken, offering *mdt*’ (Thompson 1991:219). The *mdt*-oil that is being offered here is part of the ten sacred oils/unguents. Thompson (1991:219) is of the opinion that the little fingers of the king in this scene, extended towards the Wepwawet standard, represent the anointing gesture, and that the king appears to be anointing (*wrh*) the standard with fragrant oil.

festival. Furthermore, the text accompanying the scene talks of it taking place in the *styt*, often associated with the Osirian Khoiak festival.

¹⁷⁸ Six sun temples were built by a number of Fifth Dynasty, Old Kingdom, kings, at various sites in the general area of the Memphite necropolis, which were additional to the pyramid cult complex, their purpose being to establish an eternal cultic locus for the king ‘in the domain of Ra’. Only two have been located, that of Niuserre being the only one to survive to any recognisable extent. Like the standard pyramid complexes, these sun temples had a valley temple, causeway and model solar barque. Instead of a pyramid being the focal structure of the complex, they had a masonry-built obeliskoid monument (Wilkinson 2000:20).

13.3.1.2 Illuminating the thrones

Wilson (1936:293-294) states that the most important reliefs at Amenhotep III's temple at Soleb in Nubia, between the second and third cataracts, are four badly damaged scenes on the pylon depicting scenes from the *sed*-festival, involving a ceremony of illuminating the two *hb-sd* thrones with torches. He labels them A-B-C-D running from left to right. Scenes B and C and their inscriptions appear to be identical and deal with the illumination of the two thrones (the throne in scene B is depicted as back to back with that in scene C), each contained in a shrine or baldachin, the central feature of the *sed*-festival. Both scenes show Amenhotep III and Queen Tiy facing the baldachins, with the king holding out a torch towards the open doors, apparently illuminating the thrones contained therein. The bottom of these two scenes depict the *sm*-priest Merire facing the king, holding out a torch to him, while Neberutef, the chief lector priest, recites the ritual.

Wilson (1936:294) has translated the hieroglyphic text in two vertical lines accompanying scenes B and C describing the act of the king, *hf* (with fire determinative) and *tnt3t* (with stairs determinative), as 'illuminating the baldachin'. In both of these scenes a chest or booth containing unguents stands between the king and the baldachin labelled 'The booth of mysterious ointment which was brought for the illumination of the baldachin'. Wilson (1936:295) states that the booth, the function of which it performed at the ceremony of the illumination of the thrones is unknown to him, contains six small compartments at the top, each containing a named deity. Difficult to read, they appear to him to be: "1. Perhaps a seated figure of a falcon (name lost); 2. a bull or cow (name lost); 3. a seated 'ape' ('*n*): 4. an 'ibis' (*thn*); 5. a seated 'Anubis'; 6. a crouching lioness 'Pakht' ". The booth contains seven small bowls at the bottom. Wilson translates the texts immediately in front of the king as 'The King. Words to be spoken four times: 'Oh King Nebmare, Son of Re: [Amenhotep]! Oh Horus, the Son of Re brings his eye! Oh Horus, make sound his eye!'

Wilson (1936:296) is of the opinion that the illuminating of the thrones was certainly an important ceremony of the *sed*-festival and that on the surface of it, the significance of it appears to be not fire but the illumination of two baldachins which have long been closed to light. The author is of the opinion that the 'ointment/unguent' mentioned in the text was actually the fragrant 'seven sacred oils', each one being placed in one of the seven small bowls, which played an important role in the ceremony of illuminating the thrones at the *sed*-

festival and could possibly be linked with the texts appearing immediately in front of the king.

13.3.2 The ‘Festival of the coronation of the Sacred Falcon’ at Edfu

The annual ‘Festival of the Coronation of the Sacred Falcon’ (*h‘ w nswt*), was held at the Ptolemaic temple of Horus at Edfu¹⁷⁹, during the first days of the month of Tybi, falling in the season of Peret (Coppens 2009:5). Fairman (1958:80) argues that although this festival was ostensibly the coronation of a new Sacred Falcon, there can be no doubt it was intimately connected with the kingship. He bases his argument on the following facts: the texts make it clear that throughout the festival the Sacred Falcon, Horus and the king are one; the texts also make it clear that another purpose of the festival was to celebrate the annual renewal of the coronation of the reigning king. Furthermore, the date of the festival is significant. In ancient Egypt the proper time for the coronation of the king was at the beginning of one of the three seasons, the most favoured being the first day of the first month of Peret, Tybi, the same date as this festival (Fairman 1958:78). Coppens (2009:5) is in agreement with Fairman, by stating that this festival immediately followed the feasts surrounding the burial and resurrection of the god Osiris, in his role as ruler of Egypt and father of Horus at the end of the month of Khoiak. Horus then, as the legitimate heir of Osiris, assumed the kingship of the two lands on the first day of the fifth month of the year. The ‘Festival of the Sacred Falcon’ can thus be viewed, he avers, as a re-enactment of both Horus and the ruling king assuming their rightful place on the throne of Egypt. It means that this festival was embedded in the sphere of the ‘ideology of the king’.

Fairman (1954:180) states that a set of eight magnificent scenes, accompanied by long texts, found on the first two registers of the inner face of the north wall of the enclosure of the temple of Horus at Edfu, as well as numerous, scattered, texts in other parts of the temple, allow for a relatively easy reconstruction of this festival.

The first part of the ceremony was concerned with the selection of the Sacred Falcon (a live falcon) to represent Horus as king of Egypt, uniting the ancient falcon deity with his form as Horus the son of Osiris and the living king (Wilkinson, R H 2003:203). The statue of Horus

¹⁷⁹ A similar festival was celebrated at the temple of Isis at Philae (Fairman 1958:80), and at the temple of Hathor at Dendera. Sacred falcons were bred at both these temples (Shafer 1997:311) and also at the temple of Horus at Edfu (Coppens 2009:7).

was taken from the naos in the sanctuary of the temple and placed on a portable litter, carried by masked priests, the ones in front wearing falcon masks and those behind wearing jackal masks, representing the ancestors, the kings of the archaic kingdoms of Hierakonpolis in Upper Egypt and of Buto in the Delta, Lower Egypt. A procession, consisting of priests carrying the standards, Horus in his litter, and finally priests bearing the statues of the gods in their shrines, made its way to the Temple of the Sacred Falcon (Fairman 1954:189). Here the litter faced the assembled shrines of the gods, borne by porters. The selection by Horus then proceeded by means of an oracle. The name of each deity was called out one by one but Horus did not choose any of them. The procession then entered the court of the temple (either the forecourt or the hypostyle), where falconers brought in several sacred falcons bred in a sacred grove within the temple precincts. Horus then chose one of them, his heir, to reign for a year. The second part of the ceremony was the Recognition. The newly chosen Sacred Falcon was publically displayed from the 'Balcony of the Falcon' or 'Window of Appearance' situated between the two wings of the pylon of the temple of Edfu, when litanies were sung. The first was the Litany of the Happy Year, greeting the freshly inaugurated New Year and the second was the Litany of Sekhmet, to ensure the protection of the Sacred Falcon and the king (Fairman 1954:190).

The Coronation was the third part of the ceremony and took place in the temple of Horus at Edfu itself, in two stages. In the first stage the Sacred Falcon was placed on a canopied elaborately carved rectangular block, imitating the *serekh*, the primitive palace façade. This stage involved anointing with perfumed oil, investiture with a ceremonial collar, the presentation of the symbol of eternity and the presentation of the four posies of Horus the Behdetite, Ra, Hathor and Atum. In the second stage the Sacred Falcon and Horus are placed on seats, each being on the back of a figure of a lion (the Sacred Falcon in front of Horus). The Sacred Falcon was then presented with the royal insignia and several amulets. His lips were then touched with milk (Fairman 1954:191). An elaborate ritual then followed, aimed at the protection of the god, the Sacred Falcon (Fairman 1958:80).

The final part of the ceremony, the banquet, took place in the temple of the Sacred Falcon, concluding the official ceremonies. After the banquet Horus was carried back to the sanctuary in the temple of Horus at Edfu, while the Sacred Falcon remained in the temple of the Sacred Falcon. It was now the turn of the populace to indulge in merry-making and feasting (Fairman 1954:191).

13.3.2.1 Burning myrrh, bringing the god to his meat

Fairman (1954:191) states that the scene in the temple of Horus at Edfu dealing with the banquet at the 'festival of the coronation of the Sacred Falcon' is entitled 'Burning myrrh. Bringing the god to his meat'. Here the offering of myrrh was symbolic of an actual meal. An accompanying text says: 'The scent of myrrh is for thy nose, it fills thy nostrils, thy heart receives the meat-portions on its scent'.

This relief is in the second register on the inner face of the northern section of the girdle-wall of the temple of Horus at Edfu shows the king, Ptolemy XI, wearing the *hmhm*-crown, offering a tray containing two trussed ducks and various joints of meat to the sacred hawk of Edfu temple. The king is accompanied by Horus of Behdet, Hathor and Harsomtus. The sacred hawk is standing on a *serekh* immediately in front of Horus of Behdet, who is seated on a throne holding the '*nh*' symbol and a *was*-sceptre. Hathor is standing behind Horus of Behdet, her right hand uplifted in the gesture of protection. She is followed by her son Harsomtus. The Queen, Cleopatra III, is standing behind the king (Blackman 1945:57). Blackman (1945:58) states that legends in front of the king and the Sacred Hawk say respectively: says 'Presenting pieces of flesh. To be spoken: Pieces of the flesh of they foes have been cut up in thy presence, Great Falcon (*si3w wr*), pre-eminent of the Great Seat'. The legend above the Sacred Hawk says 'To be spoken by the Living Falcon (*P[3]- 'sm- 'nh*) who is on his Serekh, the Living Emanation of Re, pre-eminent on the Balcony every day, his son Shu bending up for him his hand. 'I provision thy table by day and by night, the Twin Children protecting thee' (Blackman 1945:58).

Two texts (one much longer than the other) accompany the relief from the 'Grace before Meat' (Blackman 1945:59), which was recited at the banquet at the 'Festival of the Coronation of the Sacred Falcon' at Edfu. According to Blackman (1945:72) these two texts possibly date back to the Twelfth Dynasty, Middle Kingdom, or even earlier, as the language employed in them suggests a Middle Egyptian or possibly Old Kingdom archetype as the source from which they ultimately derive. The longer text was to be spoken by the king when partaking of a meal (Blackman 1945:59). Blackman (1945:70) is of the opinion that this longer text must originally have been a formula that the king recited before partaking of a meal, the scribe having adapted the text for use in the cult of the sacred hawk. It begins with 'O Table-god, thou hast spat forth Shu from thy mouth. Shu hath not ejected himself, he hath

been ejected' (Blackman 1945:59). Blackman (1945:70) states that several Edfu texts describe one of the duties (if not the main duty) of the Servant of the Falcon (*hm gmhsw*) as being the overseeing of the feeding of the sacred hawk and impersonating Shu when he did so. Shu was entitled 'Master of Largess' *hry-idb*. He is of opinion that there is no doubt therefore that he was supposed to recite this formula when laying the bird's meal before it. The shorter text begins 'O Sakhmet of yesterday, Edjo of to-day, thou hast come and hast replenished this table (*wdhw*) of the Living Falcon, King of Upper and Lower Egypt, even as thou didst for thy father Horus, when thou camest forth from Pe'. This shorter text has affinity with a litany addressed to Sakhmet and only mentions the sacred hawk's (the king's) meal in the opening verse. The rest of the text deals mainly with a series of petitions to Sakhmet, asking her to protect the hawk (the king) from his enemies and to destroy them.

13.4 CONCLUSION

Festivals in ancient Egypt, both in the sphere of religion and in the sphere of the 'ideology of the king', very important in the *Weltanschauung* or world view of the ancient Egyptians, all used perfumes in different ways to achieve their main aims, namely to focus on the themes of fertility and birth, as well as re-birth of the deceased to ensure a good afterlife. Certain usages of perfume were more suited to 'travelling festivals' and others were more suited to festivals that took place in the precincts of a temple. The 'Beautiful Festival of the Valley' for instance, an annual 'travelling festival', a festival of the dead, presented unique opportunities for the use of perfume. These included the priests in the procession of the Theban triad offering the holocaust, unique to this festival, a burnt sacrifice consumed with flames by pouring a heavy-scented oil over it, which released sweet-smelling smoke; Thebans making a pilgrimage to the family tombs, keeping a night vigil there and holding a family banquet in the tomb chapel, in which the deceased participated, where perfume was used in the form of perfumed unguent cones, fragrant blue lotus blossoms being sniffed, liquid perfume being served to guests; and fillets being tied around the necks of guests containing fragrant flowers such as the blue lotus. The deceased is depicted in tomb scenes making offerings to the Theban-triad, holding up braziers with, amongst other things, incense, and pouring fragrant myrrh on their path as the procession passed by his tomb. Large *ankh*-bouquets were placed in the tomb chapels for the deceased to enjoy, full of Amun-Ra's regenerative perfume, infused with the divine essence. The 'Festival of the going out of Min', although also a

travelling festival, did not have its own distinctive use of perfume as did the 'Beautiful Festival of the Valley', where only censuring was involved.

The *sed*-festival involved anointing with perfumed oil but also involved the use of a distinctive 'mysterious ointment/unguent' used to illuminate the two *hb-sd* thrones with torches, which the author believes is the 'seven sacred oils', due to the presence of seven bowls at the bottom of a booth depicted in reliefs on the pylon of Amenhotep's temple at Soleb in Nubia.

The use of perfume in the 'Festival of the coronation of the Sacred Falcon' at Edfu is unusual, in that it involved symbolism, with the burning of fragrant myrrh symbolically representing a meat meal.

Some of these festivals, such as the *sed*-festival, are of great antiquity, while others emerged at a later date, such as the 'Beautiful Festival of the Valley', which has its origins in the Eleventh Dynasty, Middle Kingdom.

CHAPTER 14



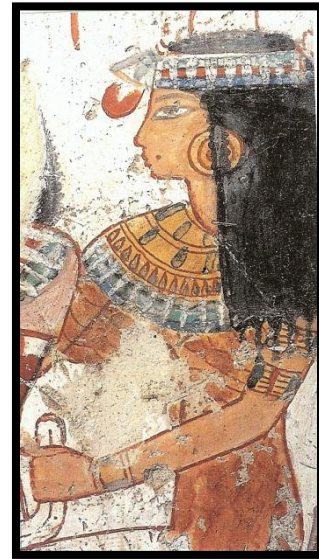
PERFUME IN THE ‘*SITZ IM LEBEN*’ OR CONTEXT OF BANQUETS

Banquets in ancient Egypt were a time for the Egyptians to enjoy themselves. Copious amounts of food and alcoholic beverages such as wine, *sdh* and beer were served at these banquets. Entertainment was provided in the form of dancers and musicians playing instruments such as harps, lutes and double oboes. Perfume in various forms were offered to guests and played a central role in the banquets, such as perfumed unguent cones; liquid perfume; and fragrant blue lotus flowers, either placed in garlands tied around the neck, in filets tied around the head, or open ones held in the hand to be sniffed. In settings such as the funerary banquet and banquets held during festivals of the dead, for example, the travelling ‘Beautiful Festival of the Valley’, the use of perfume ensured the rebirth of the deceased and a successful afterlife.

14.1 INTRODUCTION

Priestesses richly adorned,
Anointed with myrrh, perfumed with lotus,
Their heads garlanded with wreaths,
All together drunk with wine¹⁸⁰,
Fragrant with the plants of Punt,
They danced in beauty, doing my heart’s wish,
Their rewards were on their limbs¹⁸¹.

Extract from an inscription on the sarcophagus lid
in the tomb of Wennofer, Saqqara (Cairo Museum
29310)¹⁸². Translated by Lichtheim (1980:56).



The ancient Egyptians used perfume lavishly at banquets, in the form of perfumed unguent cones, liquid perfume and fragrant blue lotus flowers. Ikram (2001:162) states that there is no word in Egyptian that can be clearly translated as ‘banquet’, the closest being *hby* (‘to make a festival’ or ‘to be festal’, with *hb* translated as ‘feast’ or ‘banquet’. Furthermore, the term *ir hrw nfr* (make holiday!) often implied that a banquet was being held. Very few myths deal with banqueting, the tale of Seth entrapping his brother Osiris being one of them.

¹⁸⁰ Lichtheim (1980:58) states that the word translated as wine here, is the ‘the green Horus eye’.

¹⁸¹ The reward they received was jewellery (Lichtheim 1980:58).

¹⁸² Wennofer’s tomb dates to the Ptolemaic Period. The sarcophagus itself was never found. The inscription on the white limestone lid belongs to the genre in ancient Egyptian literature called ‘biographical inscriptions’. The theme of Wennofer’s biography is praise of a life that was thoroughly enjoyed. This biographical inscription appearing on Wennofer’s sarcophagus lid is unusual, as normally the sarcophagi of the Late Period had inscriptions on them emanating from the ‘Book of the Dead’ or other mortuary texts (Lichtheim 1980:13 and 54).

14.2 BANQUETING SCENES IN TOMBS

Banqueting¹⁸³ scenes featured as tomb decoration in all periods of Egyptian history (Thompson 1991:159). As early as the first dynasties, the deceased was depicted before an offering table, with an inscription next to it listing the various offerings. In the latter part of the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, scenes in tombs in the Theban necropolis indicate that this simple but copious meal had evolved into a more elaborate banquet with many participants and which resembled the family banquet in the tomb chapel held during the ‘Beautiful Festival of the Valley’ (Englund 2001:566). The Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, was a period that provided the single richest source of banqueting scenes, which in later dynasties appeared relatively infrequently (Ikram 2001:163). In fact, banquet scenes constituted an essential part of tomb decoration in the Eighteenth Dynasty, with few tombs not featuring them (Manniche 1991:40). Whilst acknowledging that scenes pertaining to the ‘Beautiful Festival of the Valley’ as celebrated in the tomb chapel are exceedingly rare in the Ramesside tombs, Wente (1962:121) argues that banqueting in the tombs to celebrate this festival continued into the Ramesside Period. He bases his argument on the fact that although scenes in the Ramesside tombs were far more mortuary in nature than those of the Eighteenth Dynasty, the ‘Beautiful Festival of the Valley’ as celebrated in the temples during this period, had additional divine barques making the visit with the Amun barque, thus rendering it more magnificent. Harer (1985:52) argues that the fact that the blue lotus, which opens at sunrise but is tightly closed before noon, is portrayed in the New Kingdom banquet scenes as being open blooms, suggests that the banquets took place in the morning.

The Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, banqueting scenes in tombs depict the deceased and his wife, the guests of honour, seated either on chairs or stools before a table filled with offerings, such as food and flowers, with several registers of guests seated facing them (Thompson 1991:159). These elegantly dressed guests, wearing elaborate wigs and rich jewellery, were greeted by the image of the deceased if the banquet took place in a tomb,

¹⁸³ In ancient Rome the banquet was the heart of every social activity. On 29th September, 2009, archaeologists in Rome uncovered what they believe to be the remains of a sumptuous banquet room, a circular space that rotated day and night. This was part of the sprawling palace known as the Domus Aurea (Golden House), completed in 68 AD, belonging to the Roman emperor Nero, who ruled from 37-68 AD. The room has a diameter of more than 16m and rests upon a 4m-wide brick pillar. It has four spherical mechanisms underneath it that rotated the structure, probably powered by a constant flow of water. The archaeologists believe that the ceiling of the rotating room is possibly what the Roman writer and historian Suetonius, who wrote a biography of Nero, was referring to when he described ivory panels sliding back and forth to shower flowers and perfumes on the guests below, who were enjoying a banquet (The Star 2009:4). Suetonius described Nero’s circular banqueting room as being one which ‘revolved continually day and night, as does the world’ (Stierlin 1996:78).

otherwise, by the host at the door, before being seated on chairs, stools, mats or even the floor, hierarchically according to rank (Ikram 2001:164).

Most of these New Kingdom banquet scenes portray female and male guests on separate registers, with the females generally being served by female servants and the males being served by male servants (Thompson 1991:159). It is unclear whether this means that the sexes were seated in different areas of one room, in different rooms (Ikram 2001:164) or even in a courtyard (Manniche 1989:45). There were, however, exceptions to this rule. This initially strict gender differentiation increasingly became diffuse, with female and male guests being depicted as mingling in the registers, while sometimes female servants are portrayed as serving male guests and *vice versa*. The parents of the guests of honour were seated next to each other (Thompson 1991:159). The most important element of a banquet scene, however, is the figure of the ‘master’ of the tomb, the deceased, sitting before an offering table (rarely omitted), with his wife beside him if she too was dead. If his wife was still alive, she and the children were shown serving him (Fox 1982:269).

Upon the arrival of the guests, the servants tied wreaths and filets around their necks, gave them fragrant blue lotus flowers to sniff (sometimes seen hanging over the arms of the guests), placed perfumed unguent cones on their heads, offered them liquid perfume, all of which applied to both genders, and served food and beverages, both of which were in plentiful supply (Thompson 1991:159). The food on offer included ducks, geese, pigeons, various other birds, entire oxen, fish stews, bread, vegetables, fruit and cakes sweetened with dates and honey (Ikram 2001:164). The alcoholic beverages served included wine¹⁸⁴, which had myrrh and pistacia resins added to it in order to preserve it (Fletcher 1999a:39), a drink called *sdh*¹⁸⁵; and beer flavoured with date juice for taste (Jané 2006:20). The consequences of overindulging in alcoholic beverages, by both men and women, are depicted in the banqueting scenes of the Theban tombs of Djoserkaraseneb (TT 38) and Neferhotep (TT 49), where guests are portrayed as vomiting. Wente (1962:121) is of the opinion that the large

¹⁸⁴ Grapes were cultivated from the Predynastic Period onward, with the vineyards being mainly located in the Nile Delta and the western oases. The Egyptian name for (grape-) wine is *irp* (Jaé 2006:20).

¹⁸⁵ The exact meaning of the word *sdh* is unknown, a beverage highly prized in ancient Egypt, served in the most valuable vessels and described in the Salt papyrus 825 (British Museum, BM 10051), from the Late Period, as a gift from the god Ra to his sons. Jané (2006:20-21) states that to ascertain the botanical origin of *sdh*, she was permitted by the Egyptian Supreme Council for Antiquities to remove a small quantity of black dry residue from a *sdh* amphora from the burial chamber of Tutankhamun (KV 62), now in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, JE 62.315, for analysis. The tests revealed that *sdh* was made from red grapes, although the exact process for making it is still unknown.

part played by alcohol and drunkenness during the banquets connected to the ‘Beautiful Festival of the Valley’, probably had its origins in the association with the goddess Hathor, the ‘Mistress of drunkenness’, who had close ties with the official version of this festival.

A fragment of a painted banquet scene in the Theban tomb of Nebamun ¹⁸⁶, now housed in the British Museum (BM 37981), in one register, depicts female guests sitting on high-backed chairs with perfumed unguent cones on their heads, mingling with male guests sitting on open-work stools with perfumed unguent cones on their heads, floral collars around their necks and sniffing fragrant blue lotus flowers. A female servant is in attendance. In the lower register, musicians with perfumed unguent cones on their heads, and dancers are depicted, all of whom are females, providing the entertainment (Figure 14.1).

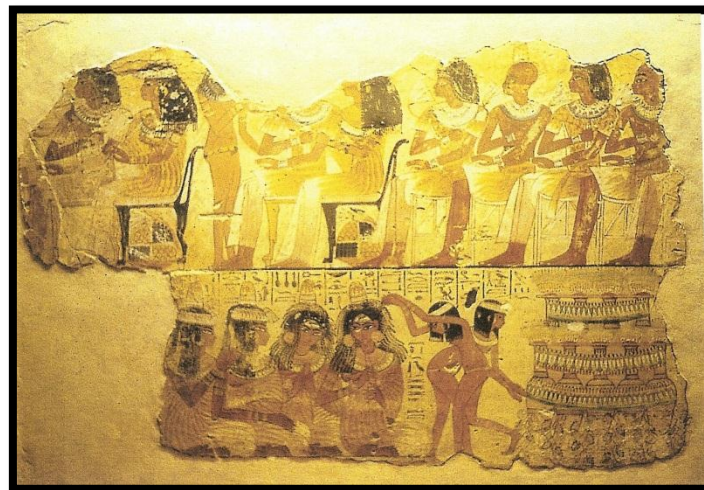


Figure 14.1: Banquet scene in the Theban tomb of Nebamun

The second register of another fragment of a painted banquet scene in the Theban tomb of Nebamun depicts a row of female guests, sitting on ebony chairs with cushions, with perfumed unguent cones on their heads, lotus filets on their heads and floral garlands around their necks. The women guests have orange/brown stains on their white dresses, probably caused by the perfumed unguent cones containing myrrh melting and the fat dripping onto

¹⁸⁶ This is one of eleven painted fragments (on plaster) that come from this tomb, all housed in the British Museum and now all beautifully restored by it. James (1997:26) states that this Theban tomb has never been identified to the complete satisfaction of Egyptologists. It belonged to an official whose titles he translates as ‘scribe and counter of grain’. The official’s name, Nebamun, has been restored from damaged contexts. He is of the opinion that stylistically, the tomb can be dated to the reign of king Amenhotep III, Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom.

them. To the right of the scene a seated man, possibly the tomb owner, is being offered refreshments by a male servant (Figure 14.2).



Figure 14.2: Banquet scene, in the Theban tomb of Nebamun

14.2.1 The division of ‘mundane’ and ‘mortuary’ scenes as distinguished by Michael Fox

According to Fox (1982:271), the primary division of these banqueting scenes is between those in which the ‘master’ of the festivities is perceived as being still alive, which he calls ‘mundane’¹⁸⁷ scenes, and mortuary scenes, in which the ‘master’ is dead, as he is of the opinion that it is not useful to analyse these scenes according to the dichotomy of being secular and religious. The reason for this is that banquets in this life could occur during religious festivals as well as on other occasions, which in turn could contain religious elements, such as hymns and prayers. On the other hand, ancient Egyptians could hope to enjoy banquets every day in the afterlife, not only on religious occasions. Fox (1982:272) states that ‘mundane’ banquets were held on secular occasions as well as during religious festivals, while mortuary banquets were held on three different occasions: the funerary meal, one of the rites accompanying burial; mortuary festivals; and the daily mortuary meal provided for the deceased. He stresses that it is difficult, and at times impossible, to determine which specific occasion, if any, is represented in any given banqueting scene.

¹⁸⁷ Fox (1982:273) cites as an example of a ‘mundane’ banqueting scene that in the Theban tomb of Rekhmire (TT 100), which apparently took place when he went to greet the new king, Amenhotep II, upon his accession to the throne. Hodel-Hoernes (2000:173) opines, however, that the banquet depicted in this tomb is most probably related to the ‘Beautiful Festival of the Valley’. Manniche (1989:135) translates Rekhmire’s titles as ‘Governor of the town’ and ‘Vizier’, during the reigns of Tuthmosis III – Amenhotep II. Fox (1982:274) is of the opinion that the banqueting scene in the tomb of Kenamun (TT 93) also borders on this genre, which he states is essentially biographical, illustrating the intimacy of his family and Amenhotep II, who is the guest of honour at the banquet and not the tomb owner himself, Kenamun (Fox 1982:275). Fox (1982:309) states that he has not located any scenes of mundane religious festivals in tomb paintings but sees no reason why they should not exist, except perhaps that they served neither a mortuary nor a biographical function.

Indicators are, he avers, in descending order of significance, the scene labels, illustrating how the artists conceived the overall meaning of the scene; the *htp di nsw* offering formula, definitely linking the scene with the mortuary cult; the words of the participants, although a mixture of motifs is possible here; and the nature of the surrounding scenes, the significance of which varies from tomb to tomb and is often left to the caprice of individual artists.

Fox (1982:277) therefore is of the opinion that these banquet scenes should not be regarded as depicting a specific festival but rather as an abstraction that may be applied to all festivals. As justification for this opinion, he refers to texts such as one in the Theban tomb of Nakht (TT 52), where his daughter says:

For your pleasure! Enjoy a pleasant day, O blessed of Amun. He lets you go in and out of his temple to see the beauty of his visage. Take the food from the gifts of his *ka*, in all festivals of heaven and earth.

Willeitner (1998:456) argues, however, that although it is never explicitly stated that the banquet scenes in Theban tombs of the Eighteenth Dynasty depict the ‘Beautiful Festival of the Valley’, it can safely be assumed that this was almost always the case. Wente (1962:121) opines that the banquet scenes and songs of the Eighteenth, Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasties were associated with the ‘Beautiful Festival of the Valley’. Critiquing Wente, Fox (1982:270) states that prior to making this hypothesis, Wente affirms the secularity of both the songs and the banquets, thus rendering his statement contradictory. Manniche (1999:102) argues that in most cases the banquet scenes in the Eighteenth Dynasty Theban tombs are directly or indirectly related to the ‘Beautiful Festival of the Valley’.

14.2.2 Liquid perfume

In part of the banqueting scene of the Theban tomb of Rekhmire (TT 100), Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, a female servant is pouring out a red coloured perfume from a small jar for a female guest, who is kneeling on a mat, in a bowl and says ‘for your *ka!*’. In the servant’s other hand she is holding another jar of perfume (Fletcher 1999b:35) (Figure 14.3).

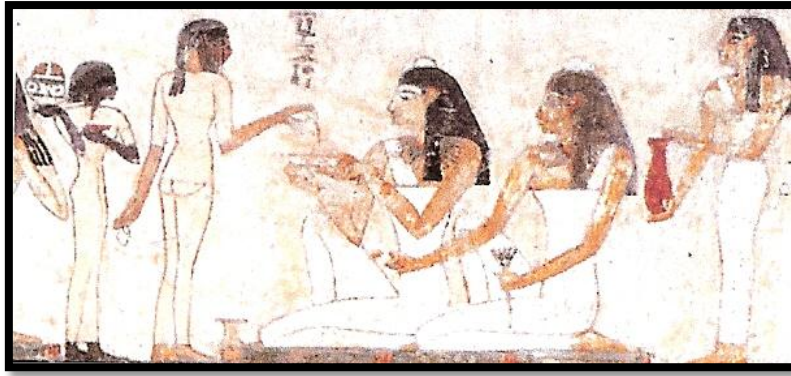


Figure 14.3: Banquet scene, in the Theban tomb of Rekhmire (TT 100)

In the Theban tomb of Djehuti (TT 45), Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, two female guests with perfumed unguent cones on their wigs, fragrant blue lotus flowers in filets on their heads, and holding open fragrant blue lotus flowers (one guest has it in the crook of her arm and the other in her right hand) are kneeling on mats. A female servant using both hands, is pouring perfume from a small container into the hands of one of the guests (Figure 14.4).

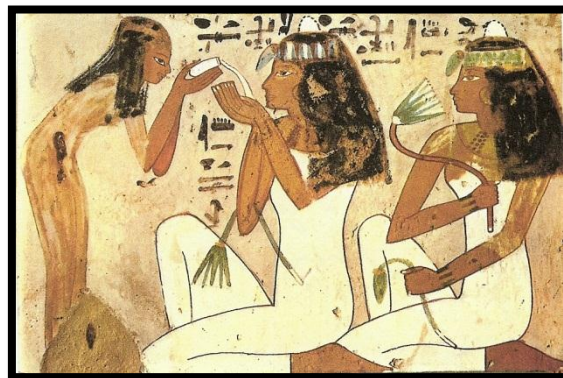


Figure 14.4: Banquet scene, in the Theban tomb of Djehuti (TT 45)

14.2.3 Anointing

Papyrus. Anast. 4, 3/8, dating to the reign of Seti II, indicates that, at least in the New Kingdom, an official known as the ‘the overseer of anointers’ (*imy-r wrhw*) was responsible for anointing guests, in the context of a banquet, with fragrant unguent/oil, derived from gum-resins, on their heads and their bodies. Such anointing in the context of banquets is depicted in tomb scenes dating to the Old and New Kingdoms, but none are preserved in Middle Kingdom tombs. However, the Middle Kingdom tomb of Senmery at Riqqeh depicts

perfumed unguent/oil as one of the items prepared for the banquet in a scene (Thompson 1994:25).

14.2.3.1 Anointing of the head

Banqueting scenes in Egyptian tombs, particularly those of the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, which generally portrayed the banquet of the ‘Beautiful Feast of the Valley’, frequently depicted the anointing of individuals with fragrant oil¹⁸⁸, some depicting the anointing of the head¹⁸⁹.

In the Theban tomb of Ptahemhet¹⁹⁰ (TT 77), on the right front wall, there is a unique banqueting scene, which is at present very damaged, the upper half of the figures having disappeared. Fortunately the scene was copied in a line drawing by Prisse d’Avennes in the 1830s (Manniche 1991:95). Facing Ptahemhet and his wife, the guests are depicted in four registers. In the second register from the top, two female guests are kneeling on a mat, the one offering a mandrake fruit to the other, who has a female servant pouring a liquid onto her head from a jar, which she grasps with both hands. A second female servant, standing alongside this servant, is touching this guest on the shoulder with one hand and grasping the guest’s right forearm with her other hand (Figure 14.5).

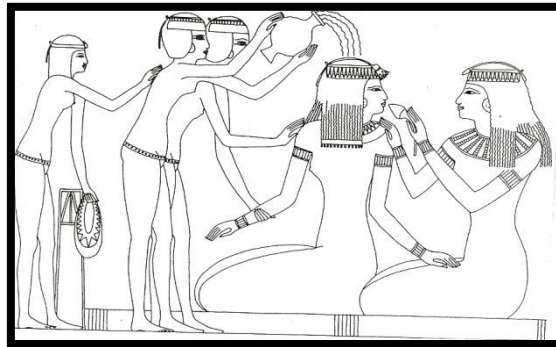


Figure 14.5: Banquet scene, in the Theban tomb of Ptahemhet (TT 77)

¹⁸⁸Liquid perfume for personal anointing was obtained by heating gum-resins with refined oil, which then became fragrant (Hepper 1987: 107).

¹⁸⁹At Ebla, a city-state and important trade centre in northern Syria in the third millennium BC, a ritual called the *i-giš sag* ritual, ‘oil (for) the head’, was carried out involving the anointing of the head with olive oil (Viganò 2000:13-14). It was used in various contexts such as the anointing of the head of the bride during the wedding ceremony (Viganò 2000:15); the anointing of the queen (*ma-lik-tum*) during the enthronement ritual (Viganò 2000:17); a funeral ceremony (Viganò 2000:18); *mu-tum*, the ‘contribution’ of foreign kings (Viganò 2000:19); and the anointing of a cult statue of a god on his feast day (Viganò 2000:20). Viganò (2000:22) states that he has not found any examples in which the *i-giš sag* ritual points to it being a purification ceremony.

¹⁹⁰ Manniche (1989:134) translates Ptahemhet’s titles as ‘Child of the Nursery’, ‘Overseer of works in the temple of Amun’ and ‘Pharaoh’s standard-bearer’ during the reign of Tuthmosis IV, Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom.

Manniche (1988:18) states that Wilkinson¹⁹¹, an early visitor to the tomb, thought that the scene portrayed a lady having a bath and that the servant to the left of the one pouring the liquid over this guest was removing her clothes and ornaments. She adds that Champollion¹⁹², who had also viewed the scene, when it was in a better condition, noted that the liquid being poured from the jar was red. Manniche (1999:95) therefore is of the opinion that the servant is busy pouring a whole jar of red perfume over the guest, perhaps dyed with alkanet, and rubbing it into her skin, assisted by the servant next to her. Furthermore, she believes that the servant behind these two servants is not removing the clothes of the guest, as Wilkinson suggested, but rather, is bringing her a necklace (Manniche 1988:18). Thompson (1991:173), referring to this opinion held by Manniche, argues that this scene appears to depict the anointing of both the head and the body.

In the Theban tomb of Nebenma'at¹⁹³, (TT 219), Ramesside period, New Kingdom, a banquet scene depicts a seated Nebenma'at and his wife. A male servant is standing facing Nebenma'at with a large footed unguent jar in his left hand, while his right hand is about to touch the unguent cone on his head, having dipped his fingers into the bowl (Figure 14.6).

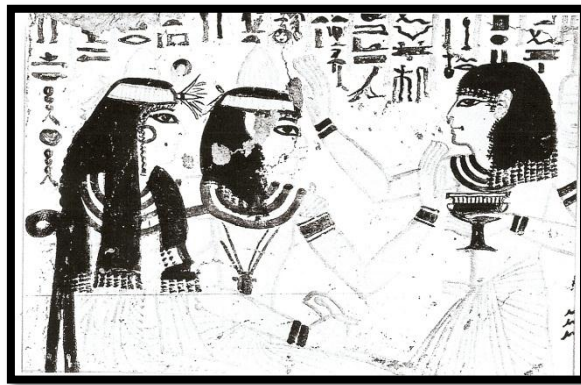


Figure 14.6: Banquet scene in the Theban tomb of Nebenma'at (TT 219)

¹⁹¹ J.G. Wilkinson (1797-1895) (Manniche 1988:65), a British Egyptologist.

¹⁹² Jean-Francois Champollion, born on 23rd December, 1790 deciphered the hieroglyphs in 1822 (Adkins 2000:43 and 182).

¹⁹³ Manniche (1989:139) translates Nebenma'at's title as 'Servant in the Place of Truth on the west of Thebes', Ramesside period, Nineteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom.

14.2.3.2 Anointing of the body

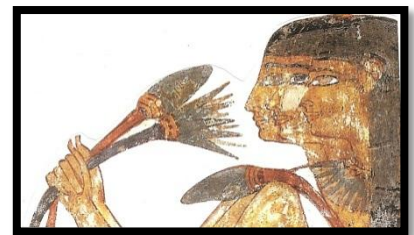
In the Theban tomb of Zeserkarsonb¹⁹⁴ (TT 38) there is a scene of the anointing of the body at a banquet. A female guest is depicted sitting on a low chair holding a lotus flower in her right hand and with an unguent cone on her head. A female servant stands before her and grasps the right forearm of the guest, whilst her left hand touches the left shoulder of the guest, apparently applying unguent to it. A second female servant stands behind this servant holding a bowl of unguent in both hands. An accompanying text states that they are ‘diverting the heart seeing beauty’ (*shmh ib m33 bw nfr*) (Thompson 1991:174). This scene is typical of the scenes depicting the anointing of the body of a guest at a banquet, which required the services of two servants (Thompson 1991:177).

14.2.3.3 Anointing mentioned in the genre of entertainment / orchestra songs in ancient Egyptian literature

Thompson (1991:165) has identified nine songs belonging to this genre which mentions anointing. One of these occurs as a label to a banquet scene in the tomb of Kenamun¹⁹⁵ (TT 93), featuring a female lute player, the song apparently being played by this lute player. The text reads as follows in translation:

Diverting the heart seeing beauty, praising, dancing, singing, rejoicing. Joy is in the heart at seeing [the company] of his majesty in the presence of the funerary workshop. Anointing (*whr*) (with) myrrh, anointing (*gs*) with moringa-oil, making holiday, tying on garlands in your orchard, while a lotus is at your nose.

(Urk IV¹⁹⁶, 1396, 1-4).



14.3 PERFUMED UNGUENT CONES

In Egyptian art, the cones worn on the heads of people, for instance on the wigs of guests in banquet scenes, are generally believed to have been made of fragrant unguent, probably solid

¹⁹⁴ Manniche (1989:133) translates Zeserkarsonb's title as 'Counter of grain in the granary of divine offerings of Amun' during the reign of Tuthmosis IV, New Kingdom.

¹⁹⁵ Manniche (1989:135) translates Kenamun's title as 'Chief Steward of the king', during the reign of Amenhotep II, Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom.

¹⁹⁶ Urkunden des ägyptischen Altertums, Abt. IV: Urkunden der 18 Dynastie (K. Sethe, W. Helck eds.) Leipzig, Berlin 1906-1958 (Kuhrt 1998:xxiv).

ox tallow, impregnated with aromatic material such as myrrh; however, there has also been a suggestion that they were made of beeswax¹⁹⁷ (Green 2001:414).

14.3.1 The significance of the perfumed unguent cones

Scholars are not in agreement regarding the significance of these cones portrayed in Egyptian art. Cherpion (1994:81, 83 and 91) argues that it is incorrect to interpret these cones as being ‘unguent cones’ or to translate the Egyptian word *b.t* as cone, as some scholars do, as it is simply the term for ointment/unguent. She points out that no vestiges of an actual cone or a mould for making one have been found through archaeological excavation. She queries how such cones could have been affixed to wigs, which would have been especially difficult in the case of dancers, also shown wearing them in scenes. She wonders whether they were perhaps a holder for some sort of scented content, made of wood and attached with resin. To support her argument she offers, amongst others, the following reasons that they were not ‘unguent

¹⁹⁷Beeswax in ancient Egypt played an important part in symbolism and magic. The symbolism of beeswax forms part of the iconography of resurrection (Raven 1983:7). Beeswax was a material that was rare and hard to find and thought by the Egyptians to have ‘proceeded from the eye of Re’, along with other materials, honey being one of them (Raven 1983:23). Raven (1983:9) is of the opinion that it is possible that the symbolism of beeswax in ancient Egypt first developed in the Old Kingdom or even before that period, due to the fact that the earliest representation of beekeeping in Egyptian art dates to the Fifth Dynasty. This is to be found in the solar temple of Niuserre at Abu Gurab (Raven 1983:7). The Late Period, Twenty-sixth Dynasty, Theban tomb of Pabasa (TT 279) is famous for its beekeeping scenes. In one, a man can be seen working with hives, constructed from large numbers of clay pipes piled on top of each other. To retrieve the honey, smoke was blown into the pipes to drive the bees out (Strauss-Seeber 1998:382). In Papyrus Bremner-Rhind (BM 10188), the ‘Book of overthrowing Apep’ (or Apophis), one of the four separate parts of the papyrus, details an account of a ritual performed daily in the temple of Amun-Ra at Karnak, Ra and Apophis being the mythic opponents in a cosmic battle. The ritual involved the total destruction of wax figurines, which had to take place at fixed hours each day and at certain religious festivals (Raven 1983:10). The Ptolemaic Papyrus Louvre 3129 and the Papyrus British Museum 10252, dating to the Thirtieth Dynasty contain a text for a Ritual for the Protection of the Divine Barque, a composition which can be traced back as early as the Nineteenth Dynasty, originally destined for use in the Abydos procession of the *nsmt*-barque. The text was recited over a red wax statuette of the god Seth to thwart his evil actions. The text was then burnt, or fettered with a black string, after which it was pierced with a harpoon (Raven 1983:14).

Wax was used in the mummification process from the Middle Kingdom onward and the Egyptians strived to achieve a preservative effect similar to that observed on intruders in the bee-hive, guaranteeing an afterlife for the deceased. This is an example of the defensive use of wax (Raven 1983:23 and 30). During the Twentieth Dynasty the mummified viscera (heart, lungs, intestines and stomach) were no longer deposited in four canopic jars but instead, the four embalmed packets were returned to the abdominal cavity. During the Twentieth Dynasty, these packets were accompanied by four wax figurines of the four ‘sons of Horus’, whose heads originally appeared on the stoppers of the canopic jars, a custom which generally ceased after the Twenty-first Dynasty. During the succeeding dynasties canopic jars were once again used or the parcels with the four embalmed packets were placed between the thighs of the mummy (Raven 1983:15). An example of the productive use of wax is productive magic, a distinct aspect which concerns prosperity and commercial or social success. This can be seen in the use of wax *shabtis* placed in the tomb to do work on behalf of the deceased, for example agricultural work in the fields, which resulted in the improvement of his/her status in the afterlife (Raven 1983:26). The destructive use of wax, is the destructive or black magic which can be seen in spell 37 of the Coffin Texts, where wax figurines (execration figures) were buried and possibly netted in various instances, for example, as a means of vindication against one’s personal enemies in the afterlife (Raven 1983:24). The magic use of wax is attested from the Ninth Dynasty onward (Raven 1983:32).

cones': A. Often these cones are depicted in tomb scenes on the heads/tops of coffins standing upright before a tomb. She is of the opinion that in such a case the cone could not have been intended as an unguent, benefitting the wearer in some way; B. Sometimes a mummy with a cone on its head is depicted being carried horizontally but the cone does not fall off; C. In the Theban tomb of Ipuy (TT 217) there is a scene depicting a coffin being painted, with a cone already on its head; D. From the time of Amenhotep II, Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom onward, the cone is regularly decorated with a garland of lotus flowers. She finds it difficult to believe that flowers would have been combined with wax that was melting; and E. A panel on the small gilded shrine of Tutankhamun depicts the queen wearing a complex crown with a cone on top of it. She wonders how the cone could have melted in this position if it were an unguent cone.

An example of A can be seen in a painting in the Theban tomb of Nakhtamun (TT 335), where his mummy and that of his wife Nubemsha, with fragrant unguent cones on their heads, are standing before their rock-cut tomb in the necropolis of Deir el-Medina (Gahlin 2001:235). Manniche (1989:142) translates Nachtamun's titles as 'wa'b-priest of Amenhotep I', 'Chiseller of Amun', 'Servant in the place of truth', Nineteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom (Fig.14.7).

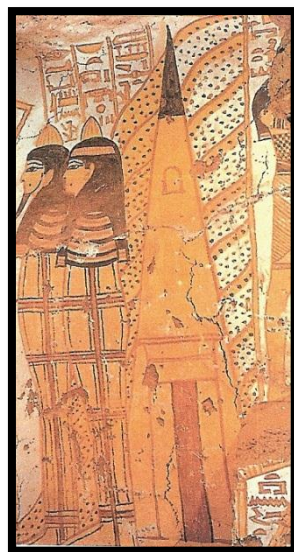


Figure 14.7: Painting in the Theban tomb of Nakhtamun (TT 335)

An example of B can be seen in a painting in the Theban tomb of Amenemonet (TT 277) dating to the early Nineteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom. Manniche (1989:141) translates his titles as ‘Divine father of the mansion of Amenhotep III’ (Figure 14.8).



Figure 14.8: Painting in Theban tomb of Amenemonet (TT 277)

The example of C can be seen in the Theban tomb of Ipuy (TT 217) (Figure.14.9).

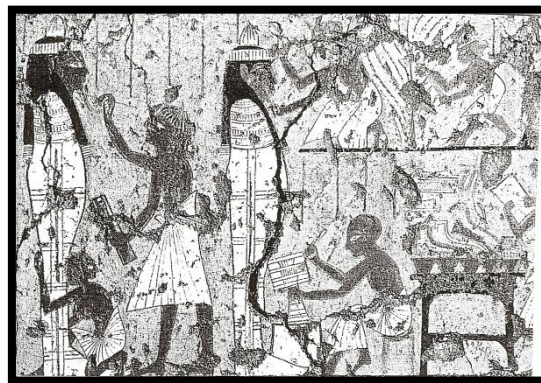


Figure 14.9: Scene in Theban tomb of Ipuy (TT 217)

Tyldesley (2000:170) argues that given the practical difficulties in manufacturing a substance that would melt satisfactorily at just above normal room temperature, it may be more prudent to interpret these cones as symbols of fragrance, the informal observer realising that when a cone was being worn, the wearer was exquisitely perfumed.

Some scholars believe that unguent cones were actually placed on the heads/wigs of guests on occasions such as banquets. Manniche (1989:51) opines that the fragrant fat, made into cones, softened or melted during the festivities, enveloping the wig, clothes and body of the wearer with its grease and perfume. Elsewhere, however, Manniche (1999:96) states that it is

possible that the Egyptian artists found that the lump of fat was the easiest way to indicate that an amount of scented fat had been rubbed into the hair. She adds that the unguent cone did not necessarily stay on the head for any length of time, if at all. James (1997:28) opines that the scented unguent cones placed on the head/wigs of guests were intended to melt as the banquet continued, with the desired result of scenting and cooling their bodies. Serpico (2001:584) states that these cones, often worn on the heads/wigs of guests at banquets, anointed the bearer with perfumes or insect repelling substances blended into the fat as they melted.

Cherpion (1994:86), referring to the fact that interpretations by various scholars of the perfumed unguent cone range from those that are purely material to those that are symbolic, argues that the Egyptians would have embraced both, with reality having a symbolic meaning, and that the cone was a physical object chosen by them to convey an abstract notion, the fragrance of the unguent. She concedes, however, that several factors concerning depictions of cones in Egyptian art give weight to the thesis of some scholars that they were purely symbolic. Amongst these are: A. From the time of Amenhotep II, Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, and even more so in the Ramesside period, Nineteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, the lotus flower (loaded with symbolism) is depicted in conjunction with the unguent cone, sometimes piercing it; B. In the Ramesside period the unguent cone is often replaced by a large lotus flower seemingly miraculously balancing on the head; C. In the Late Period, a bunch of plant material is often seen depicted between the head of a person and the unguent cone, the plant surely alluding to Osiris and the idea of rebirth, reinforcing the idea of a happy future existence in the afterlife conveyed by the unguent cone; D. Sometimes *ba*-birds are depicted with unguent cones on their heads, surely to convey the idea of survival; and E. Hall E of a palace at Tell el-Amarna has a painted floor, the lowest register of which has a row of cones of the same form as those worn on the heads of deities/people/birds/objects in Egyptian art. These cones are decorated with flowers and placed on a base or stand, adorned with lotus flowers. The cones are coloured at the top, with a row of dots at the base and garlands of lotus flowers at half height. Interspersed among the cones are bouquets of lotus flowers or papyrus stalks, flanked by two poppy flowers, whose perfume suggested rebirth to the Egyptians. Halls F and G of this temple contain similar fragments. The plants, birds and fish that appear on these floors represent the daily renewal of fauna and flora. Grape vines, a symbol of Osirian renewal, also appear on them. It would seem that the 'unguent cones' appearing on them have the same sort of symbolic role.

An example of A can be seen in the Theban tomb of Sennedjem (TT 1), where Sennedjem and his wife are kneeling before the tree goddess, who is offering them food and water. The author is of the opinion that the lotus flower on the head of Sennedjem's wife, while it could be piercing the unguent cone, as Cherpion argues, could also be the artist's way of trying to convey the fact that the flower is lying behind the cone (Figure 14.10).



Figure 14.10: Scene in the Theban tomb of Sennedjem (TT 1)

An example of B can be seen on a Nineteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, reign of Ramesses II, faience tile originating from a finely decorated building in Quantir (Pi Ramses), the new capital city of this dynasty, at the king's residence, now in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo (JE 89483) (James 2002:169). A lady is depicted pricking the stem of a plant, seemingly to extract its juice, identified by scholars as a hollyhock, with no known medicinal value. Hovering above her head is the open lotus flower (Manniche 2006:44) (Figure 14.11).

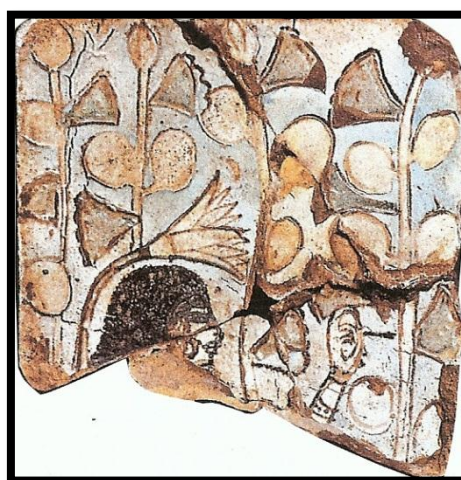


Figure 14.11: A lady pricking the stem of a plant

One example of C is found in a scene depicted on the stela of Djedamuniuniankh, now housed in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo (TR 25.12.24.29), Twenty-second Dynasty, Third Intermediate Period. Another example can be found in part of a scene in the Late Period stela of Tentperet, now housed in the Musée du Louvre(E 52). The author points out that this indicates that this phenomenon did not only occur in the Late Period, as implied by Cherpion, but also in other periods (Figure 14.12) and (Figure 14.13).

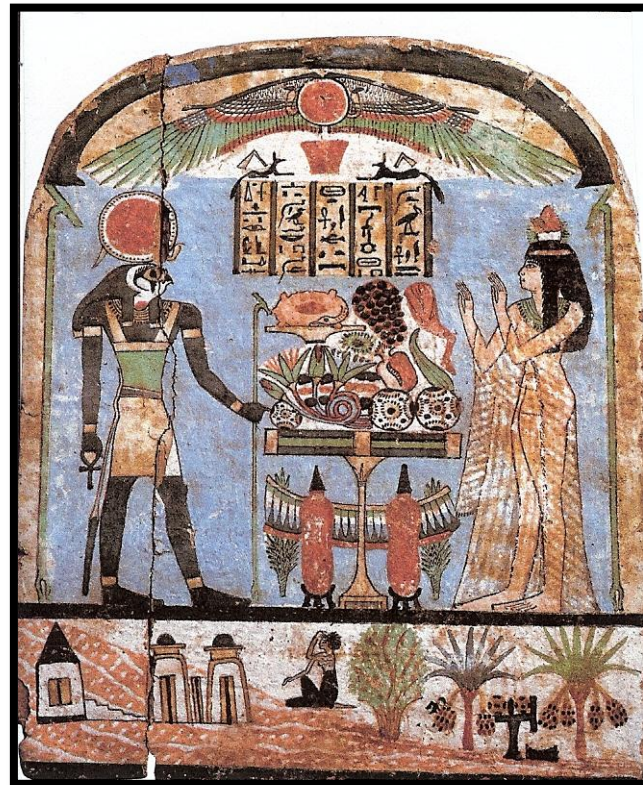


Figure 14.12: Stela of Djedamuniuniankh



Figure 14.13: Stela of Tentperet (detail)

An example of D can be seen depicted on the side of the coffin of Nespaweshefti, Twenty-first Dynasty, Third Intermediate Period. Nespaweshefti, with a perfumed unguent cone on his head, is offering a burning bowl of incense in his right hand to Nut, the sycamore tree goddess. His *ba*, in the form of human-headed bird, is wearing a perfumed unguent cone on its head and drinking the liquid poured by Nut. Gahlin (2001:82) translates his title as ‘Chief of all the scribes at Karnak temple’ (Figure 14.14).

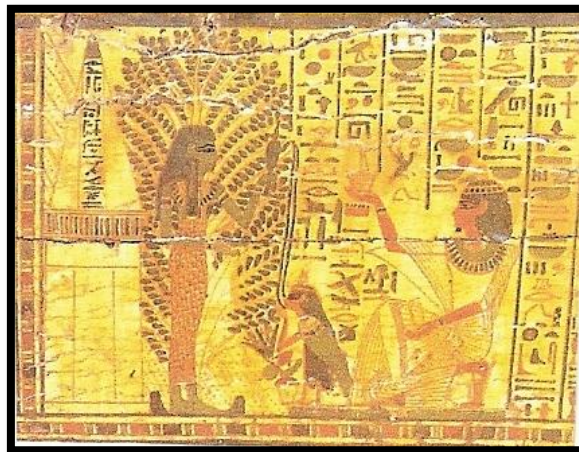


Figure 14.14: Scene on the coffin of Nespaweshefti

Examples of E form part of the floor from Hall E of a palace at Tell el-Amarna and part of the pavement of the grand palace at Tell el-Amarna (Figure 14.15).

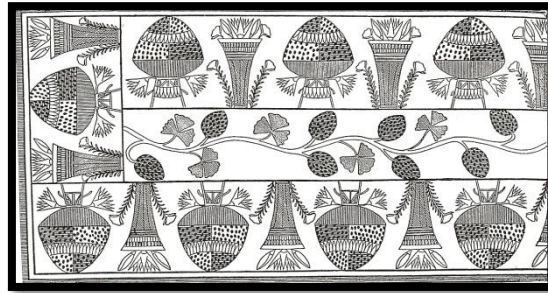
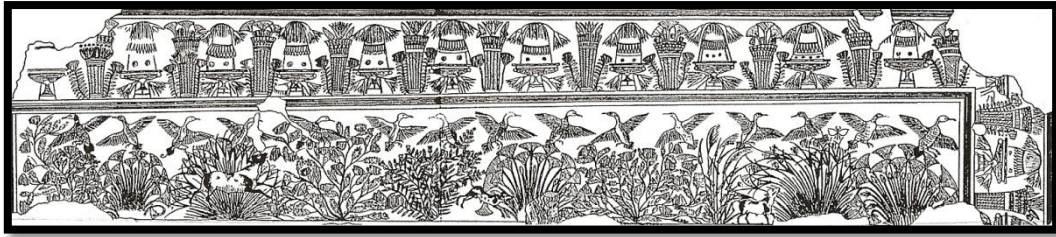


Figure 14.15: Parts of a floor and pavement at Tell el-Amarna

The author agrees with Cherpion's thesis that the cones depicted on the heads of deities/people/birds/objects in ancient Egyptian art were rooted both in reality and in symbolism but interprets this dichotomy differently from the way she does. The author argues that fragrant unguent cones were placed on the heads/wigs of guests at banquets such as those held during the 'Beautiful Festival of the Valley' and that they melted during the course of this banquet, enveloping these guests with grease and perfume. This is evidenced by depictions of female guests at these banquets with orange stains on their white garments, especially on the shoulders, an indication that the unguent cones, impregnated with myrrh, had melted, releasing this myrrh with its perfume. These orange stains are clearly visible in the banquet scene of the Theban tomb of Nebamun. The author points out that the guests depicted at banquets in Egyptian art with cones on their heads/wigs, either on the occasion of the 'Beautiful Festival of the Valley' or other occasions, are alive in the case of the former scenario, visiting the tombs of their ancestors and enjoying a banquet in the tomb chapel. The author argues that it is in the realm of the dead that unguent cones depicted in Egyptian art on the heads of deities/people/objects/birds are purely symbolic in nature and would not have involved actual perfumed unguent cones. Here they are symbols of rebirth, the perfumed unguent cones ensuring a successful afterlife for the deceased. This would apply to

depictions in tomb scenes of *ba*-birds, deities with a funerary connection, mummies, coffins and the tomb owner and his wife, if she was also deceased, wearing these cones.

In the tomb of Zed-Amun-efankh, a rock-cut chamber at the bottom of a shaft on the eastern ridge of El Bawiti in the Bahariya Oasis in the Libyan desert, the falcon-headed funerary deity Qebhsenuef, one of the ‘four sons of Horus’, who protects the intestines of the deceased, and is in turn protected by the goddess Selkis and is associated with the west, is depicted on a wall holding a knife in his left hand to protect the deceased in the underworld. He is wearing a perfumed unguent cone on his head, a symbol of rebirth. Hawass (2000:183 and 187) states that El Bawiti is the name of the modern town, ancient El Qasr, capital of the Bahariya Oasis in the Twenty-Sixth Dynasty, the Late Period, the period to which this tomb belongs (Figure 14.16).

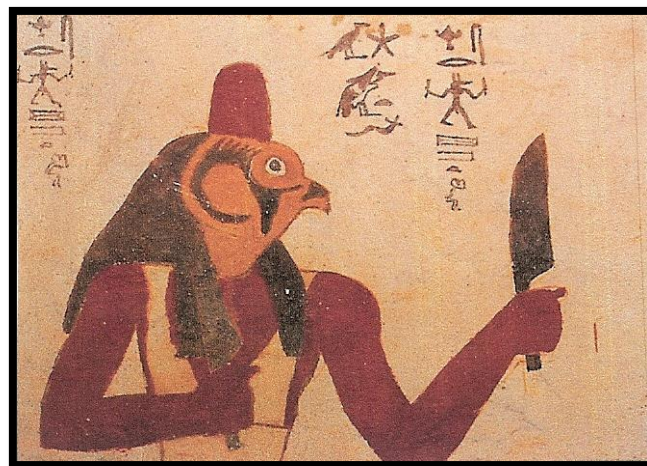


Figure 14.16: The funerary deity Qebesenuef

There are anomalies, however, one of which occurs in the fowling scene depicted in a painted fragment from the tomb chapel of the Theban tomb of Nebamun, now housed in the British Museum (EA 37977). Originally, there was also a fishing scene, not shown in this fragment (Figure 14.17).



Figure 14.17: A fowling scene in the Theban tomb of Nebamun

The scene portrays Nebamun, the tomb owner, on a boat, hunting fowl with his throw stick, accompanied by his wife Hatshepsut and his daughter. Spencer (2007:196) points out that every detail appearing in tomb scenes symbolically relates to the purpose of tomb chapels, namely, places where the deceased receive food and drink and, crucially, the guarantee of rebirth and a successful afterlife. The hunting scene, he argues, symbolises the hunting of the god of disorder, Seth, by the god of order, Horus. Furthermore, he avers that the mass of birds provide the same counterfoil to Nebamun as the throng of state enemies provide to the victorious king in royal scenes. However, Desroches-Noblecourt (1954:32-42) argues that fishing and fowling scenes appearing on tomb walls symbolise one of the stages of transformation of the deceased, immediately before rebirth occurs.

Nebamun has fragrant blue lotus flowers, a symbol of rebirth, hanging over his right arm while his daughter is holding a few of these flowers. Hatshepsut is more suitably dressed for a banquet held during the 'Beautiful Festival of the Valley' than she is for a fishing and fowling trip. She is holding a sheath/vessel filled with fragrant blue lotus flowers with a few placed on her head. While the whole scene revolves around the rebirth of the deceased, Nebamun, Hatshepsut is presumably still alive, yet she is wearing a perfumed unguent cone on her head.

14.3.2 The shape and colour of the perfumed unguent cones

The shape of unguent cones in representations in tomb banqueting scenes changed over time. At the beginning of the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, when they first appear in these scenes, they are hemispherical, gradually growing taller thereafter, with some being very tall and elegant. Sometimes their outlines are uneven while others are decorated with an unusual floral design. The unguent cones have white as their basic colour and are yellow at the summit, the yellow colour spilling down the cone as it melts. Occasionally, the summits are red instead of yellow, perhaps indicating the presence of *'ntyw* (Manniche 1999:96). In the tomb of Zed-Amun-efankh, Twenty-sixth Dynasty, the Late Period, the fragrant unguent cone depicted as being worn on the head of the funerary deity Qebesenuef is a reddish/brown colour throughout.

Part of a scene in the Theban tomb of Userhat (TT 51) depicts a celebratory group of his wife and female relatives playing drums or tamborines. They are greeting Userhat as he returns from the palace, having received rewards of jewellery, some of which he is wearing, while more is set out on a table (not shown here) (Pinch-Brock 2001:414). His wife is wearing an elaborate perfumed unguent cone on her head. The summit is red; the middle section is white, with vertical lines running through it, underlined with blue and red horizontal stripes; and the bottom is white with two red dots on it. His two female relatives are also wearing perfumed unguent cones on their heads, the summits being red and the lower sections being white (Figure 14.18).

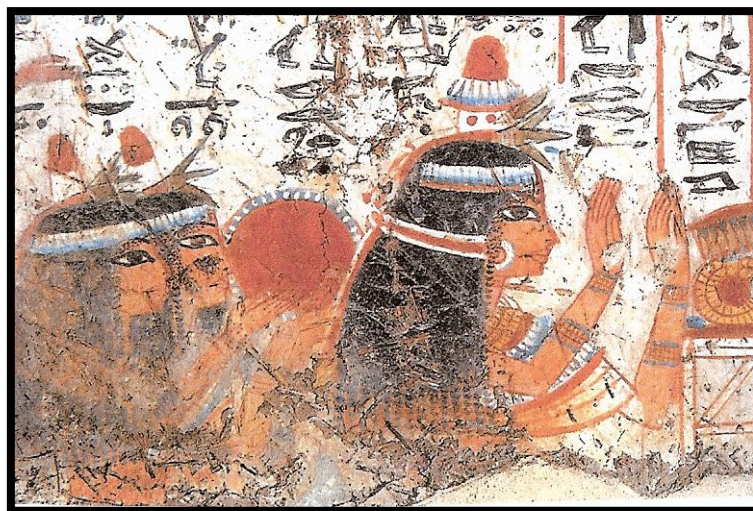
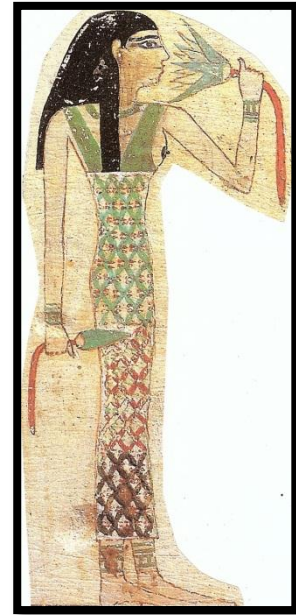


Figure 14.18: A celebratory group, in the Theban tomb of Userhat (TT 51)

14.4 THE FRAGRANT BLUE LOTUS FLOWER

The fragrant blue lotus flower was considered sacred to the ancient Egyptians because of its association with the Hermopolis creation myth, wherein it was a giant lotus which first rose from the primeval waters (*nun*) and from which the sun god Ra arose (Wilkinson, R H 1994:121). The lotus was considered the daily bearer of the sun god Ra, who rose each morning, having spent the night in the underworld, because during the night, when its petals closed, the flower dipped beneath the water before emerging the following morning and once more opening its petals (Tiradritti 2000:230). Its heady perfume suggested to the Egyptians the perfume of the sweat of the god Ra (Watterson 1999:40).



The lotus was closely associated with the imagery of the funerary cult as a symbol of rebirth, as were the flowers of the sacred *isd*-tree. It was for this reason that the lotus and the ‘four sons of Horus’ are sometimes depicted on the lotus which rises from a pool before the throne of Osiris in the underworld (Wilkinson, R H 1994:121). This is illustrated in one of the vignettes accompanying spell 125 (the judgement scene) of the ‘Book of the Dead’ of Hunefer (Faulkner 1985:34-35). It is also for this reason that the lotus features in banquet scenes, associated with festivals of the dead such as the ‘Beautiful Festival of the Valley’, where revellers can be seen sniffing open blue lotus flowers and have lotus flowers hanging over their arms.

In the Theban tomb of Sennefer (TT 96), Sennefer is handed an open fragrant blue lotus flower by his wife, Meryt, the fragrance of which he is inhaling, on the occasion of the ‘Beautiful Festival of the Valley’, during which a family banquet was held in the tomb chapel (Figure 14.19).

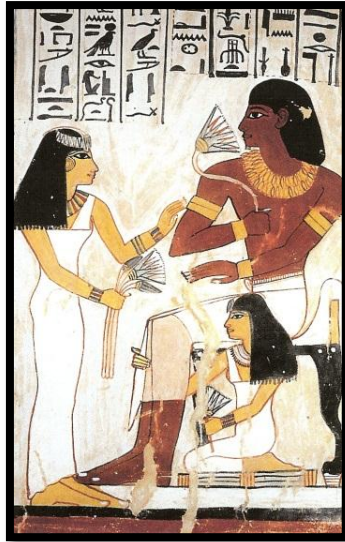


Figure 14.19: Sennefer sniffing a fragrant blue lotus flower

Women holding fragrant blue lotus flowers to their noses and sniffing them are depicted on funerary *stelae* from three different periods of the history of ancient Egypt. The first emanates from the Fifth Dynasty, Old Kingdom, which depicts a naturalistic bending stem. The second emanates from the Twelfth Dynasty, Middle Kingdom, and depicts a geometrically stylised stem. The third emanates from the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, and portrays a flamboyantly curved stem (Spencer 2007:196) (Figure 14.20).

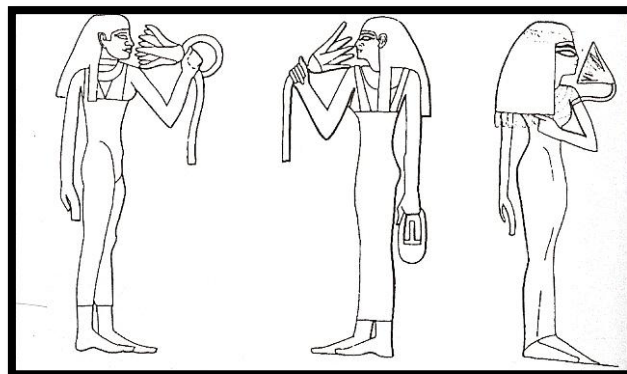


Figure 14.20: Women sniffing fragrant blue lotus flowers

In the Theban tomb of Rekhmire (TT 100), Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, part of a banquet scene depicts a female guest, with a perfumed unguent cone on her head, kneeling on a mat. A stooping female servant is adjusting a floral garland around her neck, consisting of

the fragrant blue lotus flower. Another female servant is standing behind this servant, proffering another one (Figure 14.21).

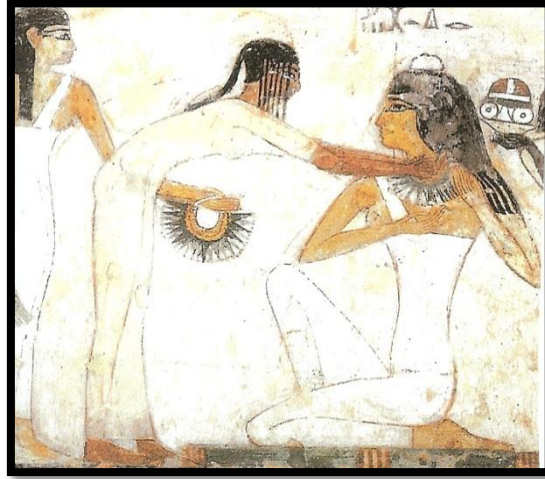


Figure 14.21: Guest at a banquet receiving a floral garland

14.4.1 Was the lotus used as a mind-altering drug?

Tyldesley (2000:171) poses the question:

... was the lotus appreciated simply because of its beauty, its scent and its association with creation, or did it have a more direct role to play in ancient rituals, perhaps being consumed or sniffed as a mind-altering drug?

Manniche (1999:99) cautions that the effect of the scent of the lotus flower as perceived by the Egyptians themselves, can only be gauged through the role the flower played in offering rituals, which postdate the banquet scenes in tombs by a thousand years or more, more or less contemporaneous with the perfume/incense ‘laboratories’ in temples such as those at Edfu, Dendera and Philae in the Ptolemaic Period, although these rituals themselves probably had more ancient roots. She points to the fact that the inner walls or columns of temples often depict the king offering lotus flowers to deities. Inscriptions accompanying these depictions indicate the following:

The deity is said to be ‘satisfied’ by the lotus flower and his/her heart ‘appeased’ by its scent. The god ‘enjoys the divinity’ of its scent. When the god sees the brilliance of the flower, his ‘eyes marvel’, and when he sniffs

its scent, his 'nostrils dilate'. The god in turn will acknowledge the offering by saying, 'I receive your offering and sniff its scent. I cause you [the king] to be praised and loved by means of its scent.'

Manniche (1999:99) opines that this effect of the lotus flower on deities, which causes the nostrils to be dilated, could be interpreted as being almost sedative or hypnotic. Furthermore, if this psychic effect, which includes excitement, and often goes hand in hand with narcotic plants, was intentional in this late stage in Egyptian history, it goes without saying that this same effect had been experienced by ordinary mortals for some considerable time previously. She is of the opinion that as people are depicted sniffing lotus flowers in Egyptian art as early as the Old Kingdom, this practice could well date back to the dawn of Egyptian civilisation. Furthermore, the effect of the scent resulting from Egyptians burying their noses in lotus flowers and perhaps keeping them there for a while, may have been sufficient to result in an alteration of consciousness, a concept that would not have been foreign to them, as they were used to the various transformations which the deceased person would be able to achieve with the aid of magical spells, one of them in fact being in the form of a lotus flower. Manniche (1999:100) points out that buds and closed flowers of the lotus, with their scent restrained or much reduced, meaning that their effect would only be visual or psychological, are depicted as frequently as open lotus flowers. She is of the opinion that the bud/closed flower represented a stage in the transformation process, without which the cycle of events symbolising eternity would be incomplete.

Nunn (1996:157), on the other hand, states that the two *Nymphaea* species (blue and white lotus) contain four narcotic alkaloids, which are soluble in alcohol but not in water, concentrated in the flower and the rhizome but not found in the seeds, stem and leaf, meaning that the effect of these narcotic alkaloids would only be experienced by either ingesting the roots or flowers or by drinking wine in which these two elements of the lotus have been steeped. He is of the opinion that it would not be possible to obtain any effect of the narcotic alkaloids by merely sniffing the lotus blossom, as is shown in many tomb scenes (Nunn 1996:158). Harer (1985:54) argues that the New Kingdom banquet scenes showing female servants pouring a liquid from very tiny vessels into much bigger drinking bowls, could possibly be a lotus concentrate to enhance the wine. Furthermore, banqueting scenes showing wine vessels with lotus flowers hanging over, in, and around them, suggest that the lotus is in the wine.

Emboden (1978:401) states:

The proof must be found somewhere between legend and a convincing chemical profile that suggests the power of *Nymphaea caerulea* to alter states of consciousness.

Emboden (1978:407) argues that the blue lotus was exploited in ancient Egypt for its narcotic content in order to provoke the shamanic state of ecstasy among a priestly caste. According to Emboden (1989:66), there were two principal castes in ancient Egypt, one headed by the shaman-priest and the other by cult leaders involved in ritual magic, for example, the cult of the goddess Selket. This shamanic state of ecstasy involved shamanic ritual. One of the examples Emboden (1978:404) uses to place the blue lotus in a shamanic context is a scene depicted on a limestone slab featuring, he believes, king Smenkare and his wife Meriaten (Figure 14.22).

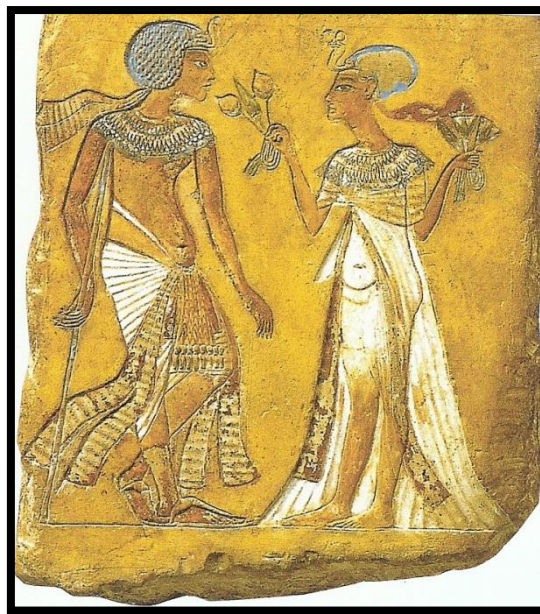
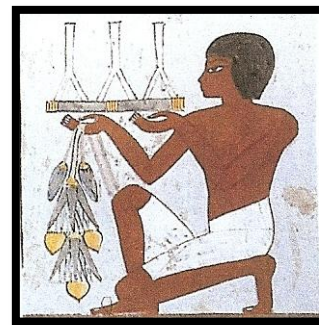


Figure 14.22: Akhenaten/Smenkare/Tutankhamun and his wife Nefertiti/Meriaten/Ankhesenamun

Reeves (2001:148), however, is of the opinion that this scene portrays Amenhotep IV (Akhenaten) and his wife Nefertiti, while the author opines that the scene portrays Tutankhamun and his wife Ankhesenamun. The king is leaning on what appears to be a staff or a crutch, while Nefertiti/Meriaten/Ankhesenamun offers him with her right hand two mandrake fruits and a bud of the blue lotus. In her left hand, she is holding a bud and two and two open flowers of the blue lotus. Emboden (1978:404) argues that this scene depicts ritual healing involving sacred narcotic plants, the lotus and the mandrake.

14.5 MANDRAKE FRUITS

In the banquet scenes, sometimes the lotus flower is replaced by depictions of guests either, sniffing, passing to one another, or playfully hiding behind their backs, a yellow pointed fruit. This could be one of two fruits, which are not easily distinguishable from one another in decorative motifs, wall paintings and reliefs, as they are very similar. It could either be the perseia fruit (*Mimusops laurifolia* L.), *Sapotaceae* family, or the mandrake fruit (*Mandragora*¹⁹⁸ *officinarum* L.), *Solanaceae* family (Manniche 1999:100). Both have yellow pear-shaped fruits, however, whereas the perseia has smaller reflexed sepals, the mandrake has a distinct calyx covering the lower part of the fruit, not always discernible in Egyptian art (Hepper 1990:15).



The mandrake originated in the north-eastern Mediterranean region, so was not indigenous to Egypt and arrived there in the New Kingdom (Manniche 1999:101). It is an herbaceous, perennial plant with heavily wrinkled lance-shaped leaves and poisonous yellow berries/fruits (Lord 2003b:873). Manniche (1999:102) argues that, in the New Kingdom, the Egyptians probably knew the mandrake as *rrmt*.

Manniche (1999: 100-101) argues that the mandrake is far more likely to be the fruit depicted in banquet scenes than the perseia, despite the fact that the perseia, with its sweet pulp, is the more appropriate of the two to appear in the banquet scenes. To support her argument, Mannich (1989:42) refers to the affinity of the mandrake with the lotus flower, both being symbols of rebirth.

In the Theban tomb of Nakht (TT 52), a scene portrays guests at a banquet with fragrant unguent cones on their heads playfully passing mandrake fruits (Figure 14.23).

¹⁹⁸ The name *mandragora* is an adulterated version of the Assyrians' name for the plant, namely *nam ta ira*, 'the strong drug of the plague god Namtar'. This plant was a vital ancient source of anaesthetics and analgesics (Pavord 2005:45).

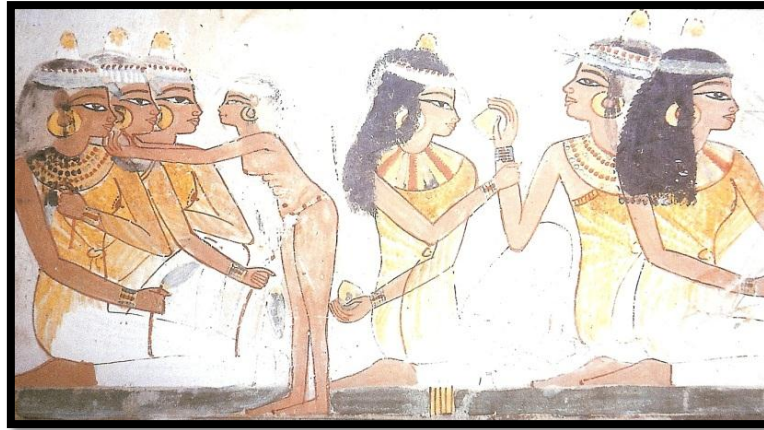


Figure 14.23: Guests at a banquet passing mandrake fruits to one another, tomb of Nakht (TT 52)

14.6 ENTERTAINMENT

14.6.1 Entertainment/harpers'/orchestra songs, a genre in ancient Egyptian literature

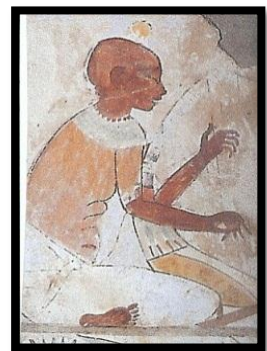
Many of the banquet scenes are accompanied by texts, which form a specific genre of ancient Egyptian literature. Fox (1982:268) views a genre as a system of expectations. Within this system the speaker shapes what he/she intends to say, while the interpreter comprehends these utterances. He cautions however that the application of modern genre notions to ancient literature can lead to warped interpretations, as the modern reader does not have as a point of departure the same assumptions and expectations that the ancient author expected of his audience. Fox (1977:395) argues that a genre, the tradition of literary conventions, is always in a state of flux, as each author reshapes these conventions into a new work.

Scholars have assigned various names to these texts and therefore to the genre itself. Fox (1982:289) calls them 'entertainment songs' when they are part of what he calls the 'entertainment scene', a scene which defines the genre of these songs and determines their purpose. The name 'entertainment scene' he derives from the Egyptian term *shmh-ib* (literally 'diverting the heart'), which accompanies many of the banquet scenes, one of the various activities in which the participants are enjoined to engage. However, Fox (1982:306) maintains that this term is in itself not sufficient to identify 'entertainment scenes', as it could also appear in other types of scenes, for example, hunting and fowling scenes and as a label for types of songs that do not appear in 'entertainment scenes', such as love songs. Fox (1982:269) argues that a banquet scene becomes an 'entertainment scene' when there is a

musician seated before the ‘master’ of the banquet (the deceased) entertaining him with songs. At the very least, the festivities must be directed towards human beings, because worship scenes where deities are being entertained, for instance, are not ‘entertainment scenes’, in his opinion (Fox 1982:307).

According to Fox (1982:281), the ‘entertainment scenes’ had a dual purpose. Firstly, they were creative in the manner in which they affected the dead, supplying them with food, drink, companionship, merriment, music and entertainment, through the Egyptians’ belief in the independent life and power of images. Secondly, they had a didactic purpose for the living ancient Egyptians who viewed these scenes. Fox (1982:289) argues that they constituted an interpretation of the mortuary offering rituals, teaching the public their true inner significance, that is, that the daily offering is really a banquet of the sort enjoyed by the living (Fox 1982:288). The rationale behind this was to encourage them to make offerings of food and drink to the *ka*-statues of the dead (Fox 1982:289). Here the sphere of education is embedded in the sphere of religion. Besides *shmh-ib*, participants in the banquet are enjoined to ‘make holiday!’ (*irt hrw-nfr*), said to be carried out by ‘tying on a filet’ (*ts w3h*), anointing (*wrh or gs*), observing beauty, praising, dancing and singing (*m33 bw nfr hst hbt sm yt*) (Thompson 1991:162).

Thompson (1991:161) states that much longer versions of these ‘entertainment songs’, often represented as being sung by a harper in attendance at the banquet, have received the designation harpers’ songs. These Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, songs were also sung to the accompaniment of other instruments (Fox 1982:307). They are often also called ‘make merry songs’, or *carpe diem* (seize the day) songs. During the Old Kingdom, although harpers were depicted, their songs were never recorded, except in one Sixth Dynasty tomb at Meir (Lichtheim 1945:187). In the Middle Kingdom, when it is fairly common for harpers to be depicted as being blind, harpers’ songs stem from private tombs and funerary stelae. In the New Kingdom, the depiction of harpers as being blind was very common (Lichtheim 1945:188), with harpers’ songs being written in tombs from the end of the Eighteenth Dynasty, although one is recorded on a papyrus roll (Manniche 1991:97). Lichtheim (1945:181 and 209) states that these songs have been divided into two classes: one sceptic, pessimistic and primarily



secular, and the other pious, optimistic and primarily funerary. Pictorially, their context is usually either the ritual offering table or the funerary banquet. Wente (1962:121) argues that the post-Amarna 'make merry songs' possibly performed the same function as the orchestral songs of the Eighteenth Dynasty.

Lichtheim (1945:181) argues that the term harpers' song for a song accompanied by a harp is ambiguous, in that it neither includes, nor out-rightly bars, the many little songs recorded mainly in private tombs of the Eighteenth Dynasty, which are either sung in unison by several musicians playing various instruments (of which the harp is one), or divided among the different musicians, each singing his part. She calls these little songs orchestra songs as distinct from harpers' songs. Lichtheim (1945:186) argues that the background for these orchestra songs is the funerary banquet. She therefore is of the opinion that they are funerary in character, without being strictly ritual, and although they make use of secular phraseology, they are neither secular nor biographical. They have a 'make-holiday' or 'make-merry' motif, whereby the holiday is invoked to be enjoyed in the afterlife, while extolling the lasting and vigorous life the deceased, and, will live there (Lichtheim 1945:187). Lichtheim (1945:208) states that it is the 'make-holiday' motif that links the orchestra songs with the harpers' songs. The difference, however, is that in the Antef song, and in those harpers' songs' following the same pattern, the 'make holiday!' advice is addressed to the living as a result of a melancholy contemplation of death, based on the fear thereof, whereas in the orchestra songs the 'holiday' has been transposed to the afterlife, since it is in the beyond that the feast takes place. Fox (1982:307) states, that what he calls 'entertainment songs', includes the orchestra songs and the harpers' songs.

Wente (1962:120), in critiquing Lichtheim, is of the opinion that her conclusion that the orchestra songs are funerary in character is clouded by her failure to arrive at a clear definition of what the funerary banquet is, which for her provides the background for the orchestra songs. He argues that her notion that it takes place 'in the beyond', the afterlife, seemingly points to the fact that she does not believe that actual banquets were held by the living in the tomb chapel during festivals such the 'Beautiful Festival of the Valley', whereas Schott in his 1952 essay *Das schone Fest vom Wustentale*, produces considerable evidence to support the view that actual festivities took place in the tomb chapels in the Theban necropolis in which the living took part, particularly during the 'Beautiful Festival of the

Valley'. Fox (1982:271) argues that most of the 'make merry' songs are set in definitely mortuary scenes and are explicitly mortuary in nature, thereby echoing Lichtheim's stance.

14.6.2 Musicians and dancers

The revellers were entertained by musicians playing various instruments. The core of the ensemble generally consisted of the harp, lute and double oboe. Sometimes there were additional instruments such as the lyre, tambourine and different kinds of harps, an instrument that underwent changes in the course of the Middle Kingdom. By the time of the New Kingdom, specific forms of harp were in use and the harp found in virtually all ensembles is the so-called 'boat-shaped'¹⁹⁹ one, its U-shaped hollow sound-box (which tapered gradually toward the neck) being covered in a membrane painted with spots to mimic the skin of an animal, the decoration of a lotus flower concealing the joint between the neck and the body of the instrument. It usually had nine to twelve strings. The instrumentalists could be joined by dancers²⁰⁰ and people singing and clapping their hands (Manniche 1991:40). Here the sphere of recreation (including sport, games, music, singing and dance) is embedded in the sphere of religion.

¹⁹⁹ Not one example, or even part of one, of these U-shaped harps is extant (Manniche 1991:40).

²⁰⁰ There is no generic Egyptian word for dance, the closest being *ib3*, which can perhaps be translated as 'caper'. Another word is *hbi*, usually considered to be an acrobatic dance (Meeks 2001:356). The oldest ancient Egyptian dances pertain to the various phases of the funeral. Amongst these are the following: dances performed by a specialised group, the ladies of 'the acacia house', who performed dances in some Old Kingdom tombs immediately after mummification had been completed to appease the goddess Sekhmet and to rejuvenate the dead; the 'offering table' dance, which invited the dead to enjoy their first meal; dances characterised by leaping and skipping, known from Middle and New Kingdom tombs, were performed to greet Hathor, who met the dead at the entrance of the underworld and helped them enter it; the *mww*-dancers, known from the Old Kingdom to the end of the New Kingdom, wearing special headdresses consisting of woven papyrus stalks, performed when the funeral procession reached the tomb. Their role was to serve as ferrymen, ferrying the dead across the water leading to the underworld, echoing a fictitious journey through the Nile Delta, from Memphis to Sais, then to Buto and back; and dwarfs performing a farewell dance to the dead at the entrance of the tomb as they departed for the underworld, mentioned only in texts from the Middle Kingdom onward. A Middle Kingdom *stela* (Louvre C 17) depicts a scene halfway between the 'offering table' dance and the dances depicted in banquet scenes (Meeks 2001:357-358). Dancers even played a major role in the funerary rituals of the Apis and Mnevis bulls (Spencer 2003:116). Dancing scenes generally disappeared from tomb scenes after the end of the New Kingdom, there being a few remarkable exceptions, probably because of changes in tomb decoration and not because dances ceased to be practised during funerals (Meeks 2001:358-359).

In the Theban tomb of Nakht (TT 52), Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, three female musicians, playing the harp, the lute and a wind instrument, have fragrant blue lotus flowers in their hair and perfumed unguent cones on their heads, two of them with orange stains on their white garments (Figure 14.24).

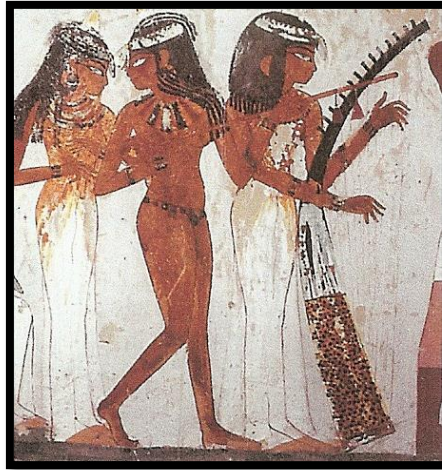


Figure 14.24: Musicians at a banquet, tomb of Nakht (TT 52)

14.7 THE REBIRTH OF THE DECEASED

Manniche (1989:42) is of the opinion that the symbolism of the banquet deals with the preliminaries of creating a new life, with the deceased being reborn. Sometimes the tomb had an additional vignette, besides that of the banquet, on another wall, showing the preparation of a bed and a chair, with supplies of perfumed oil/ unguent and eye paint brought in for the union of the couple, with a mirror close at hand. This vignette can be seen in a painting in the tomb of User²⁰¹ (TT 260).

In the Theban tomb of Nakhtamun (TT 335) there is a painting portraying a mummy lying on a couch undergoing the ritual of ‘the opening of the mouth’, performed by Anubis, or a priest wearing a jackal’s mask. Beneath the couch are a mirror and a perfume jar with two perfumed unguent cones placed on top of them. Isis is standing at the end of the couch holding a jar with a lid in the form of a perfumed unguent cone, while Nephthys is standing at

²⁰¹ Manniche (1989:140) translates User’s titles as the ‘Weigher of Amun’ and ‘Overseer of the ploughed lands of Amun’, possibly during the reign of Tuthmosis III.

the top of the couch holding an 'nkh-sign as a jar. At the top of the scene there are two huge bouquets in which fragrant blue lotus flowers are prominent. Cherpion (1994:88) argues that the perfumed unguent cones for the mummy, like those depicted in scenes on the heads/wigs of people (such as banquet scenes), are symbols of rebirth, both being paralleled by the depiction of the mirror, which has a clear erotic and therefore life-enhancing role, also a symbol of rebirth. Other symbols of renewal and rebirth in the scene are the 'nkh-sign and the fragrant blue lotus flowers, all of them ensuring rebirth for the deceased in the afterlife (Figure 14.25).

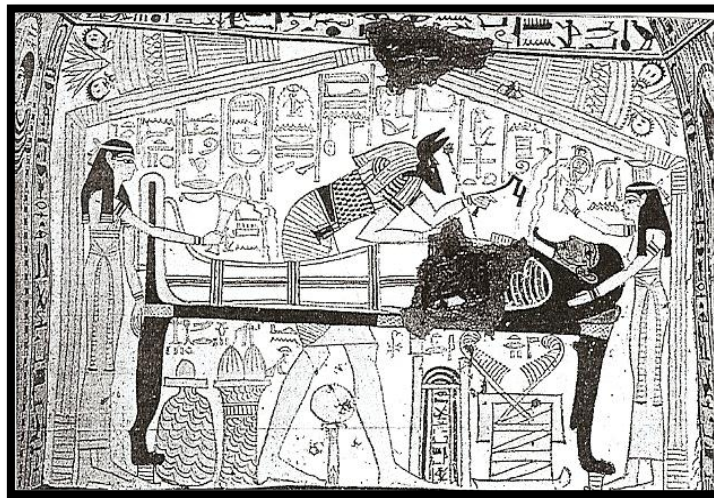


Figure 14.25: Scene in the Theban tomb of Nakhtamun (TT 335)

14.8 CONCLUSION

Banquets were held in ancient Egypt for a variety of reasons but depictions of them in Egyptian art indicate that they were mainly held in a funerary context or during festivals of the dead, particularly during the annual Theban 'Beautiful Festival of the Valley'. These depictions reveal that whilst both males and females attended these banquets, initially there was strict gender segregation, with male guests (attended by male servants) and female guests (attended by female servants) sitting apart from one another. Gradually this gender segregation fell away and both males and females are depicted in tomb scenes featuring banquets mingling with each other and being served by servants of both genders.

These depictions also reveal that both males and females enjoyed the various forms of perfume that were offered to guests during these banquets. For instance, both sexes are depicted wearing perfumed unguent cones on their heads, wearing floral garlands featuring

the fragrant blue lotus flower around their necks, wearing lotus filets on their heads, sniffing open fragrant blue lotus flowers, and being anointed with perfumed oil/unguent. Whilst the author has only come across depictions of female guests at banquets in tomb scenes in ancient Egyptian art being offered liquid perfume by servants, either being poured into their hands, poured into a bowl, and even in one case poured over the guest's head, the male guests were almost certainly also offered this perfume by servants.

The purpose of the use of perfume, in all the various forms, at banquets in a funerary context, such as those taking place during a funeral or during festivals of the dead, such as the 'Beautiful Festival of the Valley', was to ensure rebirth of the deceased and a successful afterlife for him/her, evidenced by a part of the banquet scene in the Theban tomb of Rekhmire (TT 100), where a female servant is pouring perfume into a bowl for a kneeling female guest and says 'for your *ka!*'. In addition, the fragrant blue lotus flower and the mandrake, are symbols of rebirth.



CHAPTER 15

CONCLUSION

The ancient Egyptian's production of perfume in various forms and subsequent use of it, formed a very important part of their *Weltanschauung* or world view, entwined as it was with so many aspects of their culture. The two most important social spheres where this entwinement took place, were in the spheres of religion and the 'ideology of the king'. In the former sphere, the deities took centre stage, all of them connected to perfume, 'the fragrance of the gods', as they were scented beings, infused with the divine scent. This connection was stronger however in certain ones, who played leading roles, the principal one being Nefertem, god and lord of perfume, and god of the primordial fragrant blue lotus flower. Other deities had special connections to perfume in that they were associated with certain aromatic plants. In the latter sphere the king took centre stage, either being involved in festivals concerning himself where perfume was used, such as the *sed* festival, or by being involved for example in the handing out of rewards, which included perfume, to officials at a reward ceremony. In theory the king was also involved in the sphere of religion in this respect, making offerings of incense, liquid perfume, and fragrant flowers, such as the blue lotus and the lily to the deities, as is depicted in ancient Egyptian art. In practice however it was the priests who made these offerings, in addition anointing the cult statues of deities and other cult objects with perfumed oil.

The classical authors, the most important of which are Theophrastus, Dioscorides, Pliny the Elder and Galen, play a vital role in informing us about the ingredients, types of perfume and production methods used in the ancient world and mentioning by name some of the exotic and luxury perfumes that were produced by the ancient Egyptians. There is little other evidence in Egypt itself to supplement this information, especially textual evidence, three of the sources being the Pyramid Texts, texts accompanying ancient Egyptian art, and the perfume recipes inscribed in hieroglyphs on the walls of perfume/incense 'laboratories' in certain temples in the Ptolemaic Period. It is for this reason that reliefs and paintings on temple and tomb walls have been used extensively in this dissertation to illustrate many aspects of the essence and use of perfume in ancient Egypt.

Embarking on trading expeditions was essential for the ancient Egyptians to obtain all the necessary aromatic and non-aromatic plant material that they needed to produce the various kinds of perfume, either because the required plants, shrubs and trees could not produce this material in sufficient quantities, or Egypt's climate was not suitable for their cultivation at all. It was the trading expeditions to the fabled 'land of Punt', involving both land and sea travel, that were especially essential to obtain the vast quantities of fragrant gum-resins that the Egyptians required to be used as incense, the eye of Horus, in their temples, rituals, ceremonies and festivals, as Egypt itself produced very little of this material. A major resin industry existed in the Levant in the Late Bronze Age, with distribution occurring via a network of trade in the Mediterranean, which involved ancient Egypt, but this trade, together with the exportation of luxury and exotic perfumes all around the Mediterranean in the Ptolemaic Period by the Egyptians, needs more research work done on it.

It is not possible to provide an exact list of the ingredients that the ancient Egyptians used in the production of perfume, instead a selection of the major aromatic and non-aromatic plant material used in the ancient world for perfume production has been discussed in this dissertation. Some of this material is definitely known to have been used by the ancient Egyptians in their production of perfume, while with others there is a possibility, sometimes a strong one, that they did so, either cultivating the appropriate plants, shrubs and trees in Egypt (both indigenous and non-indigenous) or acquiring this material through trade. Most of the names that the Egyptians gave to plants, shrubs and trees are unknown.

As far as the exotic and luxury perfumes are concerned, it is not possible to provide an exact list of them that the ancient Egyptians produced, instead a selection of them that the classical authors inform us were popular in the ancient world has been discussed in this dissertation. With some of them it is definitely known that the Egyptians produced them, while with others there is a possibility, sometimes a strong one, that they did so. Predominately women wore these perfumes but the men wore the lighter ones. Only the wealthy Egyptians, emanating from the elite, upper classes of society, namely royalty and the nobility, could afford these precious perfumes, many being produced from expensive, imported ingredients. All classes of Egyptian society could afford the less expensive, non-luxury, perfumed oils, which they applied to their bodies, in order to counteract the effects of the dry Egyptian climate.

Egyptian texts mention two fragrant gum-resins that were used in large quantities by the Egyptians for incense, namely, *'ntyw* and *sntr*. No positive botanical identification has been made of *'ntyw*, which traditionally has more often been translated as myrrh (*Commiphora* spp.) by scholars. The same was true of *sntr*, which traditionally more often has been translated as frankincense (*Boswellia* spp.) by scholars, until the discovery of pottery sherds with resin attached to them at the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, site of Tell el-Amarna in Middle Egypt, obtained during archaeological excavation there by Barry Kemp from 1984 to 1995. This discovery paved the way for a multidisciplinary approach to the problem, involving botanical data, archaeological research, and chemical analysis. These three elements together revealed that the resin attached to these pottery sherds was pistacia resin. The scholars Serpico and White (2000a:804) argue that this discovery undoubtedly means that the botanical identification of *sntr* is pistacia (*Pistacia* spp). This ties up with the analysis done in 1989 by Mills and White of samples of resin from seventeen of the one hundred and twenty Canaanite amphorae found on the wreck of a late Bronze-Age ship near Ulu Buran, off the coast of Turkey, which revealed that it was pistacia resin. The fabric that these amphorae were made from is Amarna clay fabric III.10, one of the same fabrics that the pottery sherds containing residue of pistacia resin that were excavated at Tell el-Amarna were made from, the other one being Amarna clay fabric IV.6, with the former being more prevalent. This means that whatever the source of the pistacia resin on board the Ulu Buran ship was, the same source was supplying Tell el-Amarna with this resin in the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom.

The multidisciplinary approach to the finds at Tell el-Amarna also revealed that fragrant resin, an expensive commodity that had to be imported, was not restricted to use as incense in state temples or by royalty, instead its use was extended to areas of domestic occupation, such as the workmen's village at Tell el-Amarna, and small chapels that were family-centred.

The 'seven sacred oils', whose names remained the same over millennia, were each placed in a jar of a different shape from the Old Kingdom onwards, which can be seen depicted in reliefs/paintings on temple and tomb walls. In the late Twenty-fifth and Twenty-sixth Dynasties, the Kushite and Saite periods of the Late Period respectively, these jars are depicted in tomb scenes underneath the chair of the tomb-owner. This practice, which also had variations, appears to indicate that the symbolism of the 'seven sacred oils' is involved here. The Pyramid Texts indicate that sacred oils are the emblem of the 'eye of Horus', itself

considered to be incense by the ancient Egyptians, and that the deceased was united with Ra and Osiris after smelling them. They also indicate that the deceased was given the physical and the spiritual power of resurrection after being anointed with these sacred oils. The 'seven sacred oils', which were in time expanded to ten sacred oils/unguents, were thus essential for the rebirth of the deceased in the afterlife, available to all levels of ancient Egyptian society.

The production of oil, needed for the base material, and the production of perfume itself, took place both indoors and outdoors. The Egyptians used three basic methods in perfume production, namely pressing, enfleurage (cold steeping) and maceration (hot steeping). Reliefs/paintings on temple and tomb walls reveal that both men and women were involved in activities such as the gathering of flowers and the pressing of seeds and flowers. They also reveal that the bag press, used for the latter process, could easily be handled by two women, whereas a development of this, also a bag press but involving an upright frame, required at least four men to operate it.

Archaeological excavation has revealed rooms in large temples dating to the Middle Kingdom, the New Kingdom, and the Ptolemaic Period, what Egyptologists have dubbed perfume/incense 'laboratories', used to store aromatic plant material, both locally grown or received as imports from various locations, leading to the conclusion that the smaller temples probably did not have them. The subject matter of the reliefs/paintings on the walls/door jambs/lintels of these rooms, and even on pillars in front of them, which helped identify their purpose in the first place, evolved over time, so that by the Ptolemaic Period, when luxury, exotic perfumes were produced on a large scale, they were very much more elaborate and accompanied in certain instances by perfume recipes inscribed in hieroglyphs.

No perfumers' workshops have been found by means of archaeological excavation, apart from the perfume/incense 'laboratories' which have been found in large temples, where some scholars believe that perfume production took place, while others do not. A single scene in a Theban tomb dating to the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, name of owner unknown, believed by scholars to depict a perfumer's workshop, affords us a glimpse of what took place in these workshops. There have however been perfumers' workshops belonging to other ancient civilisations uncovered through archaeological excavation at places such as Mari, Syria; Palestine; the Minoan palace of Zakros, Crete; Delos; Paestum; and possibly Pompeii.

Our knowledge of perfume production in the ancient world was increased with the discovery in 2003 of a large perfumers' workshop, called in fact a perfume 'factory' by the team of archaeologists from the National Council for Researches of Rome (Institute for Technologies Applied to Cultural Heritage) led by Dr. Maria Belgiorno, that found it, at Pyrgos-Mavroraki in Cyprus. This is part of what they call a large 'industrial complex' dating to the second millennium BC, which was destroyed in c 1850 BC by an earthquake. Besides the perfume 'factory', there was an oil production workshop, two workshops for copper production, a textile workshop, and a wine production workshop. This 'industrial complex' was unique in the ancient world and the individual elements were linked, in that the oil produced in the oil production workshop was used for perfume production, textile production, and as fuel for copper production. They were also linked through a common purpose as far as trade is concerned.

Most importantly, the discovery of the perfume 'factory' at Pyrgos-Mavroraki, revealed that the process of distillation with water was being used in perfume production by the Cypriots there in the second millennium BC, primary evidence for which are the distillation apparatuses, including clay alembic heads, found at the site, the oldest stills found to date. Dr. Belgiorno is of the opinion that the Cypriots at Pyrgos-Mavroraki could not have discovered the methods of perfume production by themselves and that these must have been passed on to them by the Egyptians, it being a known fact that the two peoples had contact with one another. The author argues that in the absence of the discovery of perfumers' workshops through archaeological excavation in Egypt, it is impossible to know whether the Egyptians also used the process of distillation in perfume production, as in the only tomb scene thought by scholars to depict such a workshop, the process of distillation is not portrayed, only simple boiling. If the ancient Egyptians did pass on perfume production methods to the Cypriots but not the process of distillation, it must have been a second millennium BC Cypriot innovation.

The use of perfume in the context of temples to honour the deities, required vast amounts of incense in particular, used as offerings to them, involving a variety of censers and vessels, most of them being depicted in ancient Egyptian art. The precious 'seven sacred oils' were used to anoint the limbs of cult statues in the daily ritual of the cult statues, indicating the importance that the Egyptians attached to this ritual. Cloth, considered by the Egyptians to have been issued from the sweat of Ra and part of the divine essence, was offered to the

deities along with perfume in the Ptolemaic Period. These two elements were uniquely entwined in a scene in the *per nu* in the Ptolemaic temple of Hathor at Dendera, which depicts the king offering the 'horizon of lotus' cloth, thought to be steeped in lotus perfume, to the goddess Isis. This in fact brings in a third element, the fragrant blue lotus flower, considered by the Egyptians to be sweat of the god Ra, echoed in the ritual of the offering of the fragrant blue primordial lotus to deities by the king, also in the Ptolemaic Period. A unique feature of this ritual, is that a fresh blue lotus flower was not offered, instead it was symbolically represented by one made of gold and lapis lazuli.

The use of perfume in the funerary context ensured the rebirth of the deceased and a successful afterlife. Taking many forms, this usage was rooted in the mummification process and connected rituals, such as the ritual of the 'opening of the mouth', involving the precious 'seven sacred oils'; connected items, such as funerary equipment; and connected occasions, such as the funerary banquet and the daily mortuary meal.

The 'seven sacred oils', besides the important role they played in the mummification process and the ritual of the 'opening of the mouth' in the funerary context, were depicted on tomb walls in two scenarios on the walls of *mastaba* tombs belonging to the Old Kingdom. In both scenarios they were depicted in their distinctive jars, a different shaped one for each of the seven oils, in the first on offering lists and in the second on either side of the false door. In both scenarios the contents of the jars, the sacred oils, magically came alive for the deceased to enjoy in the afterlife. Both these scenarios only appeared in scenes on the walls of *mastaba* tombs of this period.

The use of perfume in rituals, in both the spheres of religion and the ideology of the king, was rooted mainly in the form of censuring (the offering of incense) and anointing with the 'seven sacred oils' and other perfumed oil. Reward ceremonies involving the king are featured prominently in scenes in the private rock-cut tombs at Tell el-Amarna, Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom. Amenhotep IV (Akhenaten) appears to have been very keen to reward his officials with luxury gifts, including perfume in the form of perfumed unguent cones, perhaps in a bid to draw their attention away from the fact that he had banned the worship of all deities at Tell el-Amarna, except that of the Aten. Scenes involving reward ceremonies are not featured on tomb walls prior to the middle of the Eighteenth Dynasty, if they had been, they would have contributed to our knowledge of whether perfumed unguent cones formed

part of the luxury gifts bestowed on honourees at these ceremonies in earlier periods of the history of ancient Egypt. The same applies to the anointing of honourees with perfumed oil.

Festivals in ancient Egypt, both in the sphere of religion and in the sphere of the ideology of the king, played a crucial role in the *Weltanschauung* or world view of the Egyptians, their main aims being rooted in the themes of fertility and birth, as well as rebirth of the deceased in the afterlife. The use of perfume featured in all of them, some usages being more suited to 'travelling festivals' and others to festivals that took place in temples. The 'Beautiful Festival of the Valley', an annual 'travelling festival' of the dead in the sphere of religion, involved some forms of perfume usage that were unique to that festival. These included the priests in the procession of the Theban triad offering the holocaust, a burnt sacrifice consumed with flames, over which a heavy-scented oil was poured, releasing sweet-smelling smoke; the tomb-owner is depicted in tomb scenes pouring fragrant myrrh on the path as the procession of the Theban triad passed his tomb and holding up braziers, with amongst other things, incense, all offerings to the triad; large *ankh*-bouquets full of Amun-Ra's regenerative perfume being placed in tomb chapels for the deceased to enjoy; and guests enjoying a variety of perfume at banquets held in honour of the deceased in the tomb chapel. The use of perfume in the 'Festival of the coronation of the Sacred Falcon,' in the sphere of the ideology of the king, was unusual in that fragrant myrrh symbolically represented a meat meal.

Banquets in tomb scenes mainly depict those taking place in a funerary context, such as the funerary meal, and festivals of the dead, such as the annual Theban 'Beautiful Festival of the Valley', with most of the scenes dating to the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom. These scenes reveal that both men and women attended these banquets, with the sexes at first being segregated and the women being served by female servants and the men by male servants. This strict gender segregation gradually fell away, and female and male guests are then depicted mingling with each other in the same register, being served by servants of both gender. These scenes also reveal that both genders enjoyed the perfume that was served to them at banquets, which includes perfumed unguent cones worn on their hair/wigs, floral garlands tied around their necks featuring the fragrant blue lotus, liquid perfume, and fragrant blue lotus flowers to sniff.

The ancient Egyptians made the most of the fragrant material obtained from plants, shrubs and trees that was either part of their botanical treasure, or obtained by them through trade,

principally using the various types of perfume that they produced from it, to honour the deities and to ensure the rebirth and successful afterlife of the deceased. The wealthy elite, upper classes of Egyptian society, namely royalty and the nobility, enjoyed using the luxury, exotic perfumes which Egypt produced, with names such as ‘The Egyptian’, ‘The Mendesian’ and *susnon*, the fame of which spread throughout the ancient world. The lower classes of Egyptian society did not miss out altogether however, as both women and men were pampered with various types of perfume at banquets.

The ancient Egyptians, besides the utilitarian ones, produced a variety of magnificent vessels to hold the various perfumes and perfumed oils/unguents in that they produced, made out of a variety of materials. The women from the middle and upper classes of Egyptian society possessed beautiful boxes to store their perfume bottles and cosmetics in. Elaborate unguent/cosmetic spoons were produced by the Egyptians in various shapes and made out of a variety of materials. These are generally thought by scholars to have been used to pour perfumed oils over the body or to scoop perfumed unguents from jars.

The word ‘essence’ in the title of this dissertation is a play on words, a pun, meaning the core or fabric of the perfume produced and used by the ancient Egyptians, as well as the plant essences that they extracted to make their precious perfumes. This echoes the use of play on words by the Egyptians in their hieroglyphic writing that they so enjoyed using.

ANNEXURE A



PERFUMERS' WORKSHOPS AND PERFUME SHOPS IN THE ANCIENT WORLD

Archaeologically, no perfumers' workshops have been identified for ancient Egypt, although some scholars believe that perfumes were prepared in the Ptolemaic Period perfume/incense 'laboratories'. Fortunately, one tomb scene from the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, tomb-owner unknown, appears to depict such a workshop. Perfume production also took place in other parts of the ancient world¹ and perfumers' workshops, often with perfume shops attached to them, have been identified through archaeological excavation.

Brun (2000:277-278) states that the fact that perfumers' workshops/perfume shops were situated in the centre of cities such as Delos, Paestum, Pozzuoli, Capua and Rome during the Hellenistic and Roman periods, indicates their importance in society. On the other hand, perfume making was considered a *sordida ars* and perfumers were held in low public esteem. Despite this, the perfumers were constantly in contact with the upper classes, as although perfume production was a very lucrative occupation, it required large sums of money to buy the expensive exotic aromatics. He argues, therefore, that both perfume production and trade was possibly financed by leading citizens, who through their freedmen, would have collected most of the profits. Towards the end of the fifth century BC, both men and women in ancient Greece wore perfume to banquets during the Adonia, honouring the deities Adonis and Aphrodite and perfume shops became quite common in Athens and other Greek towns, which often were social meeting places (Brun 2000:281).

¹ In Mesopotamia perfumes were produced in the palaces under state control (Brun 2000:278). The most ancient perfume recipes that are known come from the Sumerians, inscribed on hundreds of cuneiform clay tablets dating to the fourth millennium BC (http://www.erimiwine.net/erimiwine_g000002.pdf). In mainland Greece the town of Corinth specialised in the production and exportation of perfumed oils, with Corinthian perfume bottles and flasks, decorated with flowers and animals, being found through archaeological excavation in settlements and cemeteries, particularly in the western Mediterranean, dating from the seventh to the sixth centuries BC (Brun 2000:278)

SYRIA – MARI

Brun (2000:278) states that the Syrian city of Mari had a flourishing perfume industry in the eighteenth century BC and that when the palace was excavated, rooms in which scented oils (as well as unscented oils) and an administrative archive, in the form of clay tablets, detailing accounting records of scented oils were found. These tablets indicate that myrtle, cypress, opanax, odorous reed, galbanum, storax, and labdanum were amongst the ingredients used to produce these scented oils, however it is not known what ingredients were specifically used to produce *supalum* and *tamrirum* oils, and oil of Mari. The texts also indicate that some of the scented oils required maceration (not involving heating), while some of them required heating in their production. The author is of the opinion that the perfumers' workshop was probably situated in the grounds of the palace, although this has not been archaeologically identified. The excavated rooms in the palace where scented oil was stored, were possibly also used to prepare those that did not require heating.

PALESTINE

Perfume production in Palestine was an activity that continued throughout its history, with the Hebrews being great producers and users of olive oil-based perfumes, as early as the fourteenth century BC (Brun 2000: 279). The village of Ein Gedi at the Ein Gedi (Kid spring) oasis in the Judean desert, on the western shore of the Dead Sea, was established at Tell Goren in the seventh century BC, during the Judean kingdom (<http://www.biblewalks.com/Sites/EinGedi.html>). Archaeological excavation at Tell Goren has yielded furnaces, jars, and various metal and bone objects that have been linked to the perfume industry, coming from a level dated between 630 and 582 BC. Seals found at the site indicate that perfume production could have been under state control (Brun 2000: 279).

This village was then deserted in the fourth century BC. During the Hasmonean period, the Hasmonean kings, starting from Hyrcanus I (134-104 BC) and especially Alexander Jannaeus (103-76 B C), rebuilt the oasis, which led to the establishment of a new enlarged village of Ein Gedi, to the north-east of Tell Goren, on a ridge between Arugot and David streams. These kings initiated a perfume industry there, involving the rare persimmon perfume, the village reaching its zenith in the Roman/Byzantine period, by which time it had become a wealthy town, famous for its dates and the persimmon perfume

<http://www.biblewalks.com/Sites/EinGedi.html>). The perfume is derived from the resin of the persimmon bush, *Commiphora opabalsamum*, which grew in thick groves, at only certain places on the shores of the Dead Sea, such as at Ein Gedi and Jericho. The method of production of this perfume was a carefully guarded secret, which was lost after the Byzantine period (<http://www.biblewalks.com/Sites/EinGedi.html>). The persimmon perfume was considered three times more valuable than gold (http://www.erimiwine.net/erimiwine_g000002.pdf). In 1988 a jar of the fragrant persimmon oil was discovered in the Qumran caves beside the Dead Sea in Israel (http://www.wysinfo.com/Perfume/Perfume_route.htm). In the time of the first village at Ein Gedi, the Judean kings also extracted resins from this shrub and king Josiah introduced the practice of anointing new kings with persimmon oil (<http://www.jewishmag.com/54mag/ein-gedi/ein-gedi.htm>). The *Commiphora opabalsamum* groves have long since disappeared from Ein Gedi but the botanical garden at Kibbutz Ein Gedi, is hoping to reintroduce this shrub there (<http://www.travelwiththegardener.com/Ein-gedi.htm>).

The best evidence of perfume production in Palestine, however, comes from the Roman period. Excavations at Jerusalem have uncovered a house belonging to an aristocratic family of priests named Qatros, which was burnt in AD 70, when the city was captured by Titus. Furnaces, stone mortars, scale weights, measures, ingredients and glass and terra-cotta *unguentaria* were found inside this house. This indicates that perfumes were being made here, to fulfil temple requirements. In the En Bocq oasis, south of Masada on the Red Sea, excavations in 1980 revealed a perfumers' workshop, in use for less than a century. This is a rectangular construction, built in the time of Herod, on the remnants of an older tower. Room 5 contains equipment, amongst which, is possibly a press bed, containing resin and aromatic plant residue. It is here that the excavators believe perfumes were produced, using the methods of grinding, pressing and heating. A courtyard in the middle of the construction contains a hearth, mortars and three circular based furnaces. These furnaces were designed in such a way that they allowed double-boiler heating of vessels used in the perfume production process. At the north end of room 4, an area 3.5 m long and 3.8 m wide, the ground covered with a layer of mortar, is bounded to the south by a low wall. This wall channelled liquids towards a small tank (0.50 x 0.35 x 0.55 m). A press possibly stood in this area, used to express oils or essences. In room 6 there is a circular pavement, at the centre of which is the base of a millstone, which was possibly used to grind aromatic ingredients used in perfume

production (Brun 2000:279-282). After the discovery of this perfumers' workshop, it was dubbed 'Cleopatra's perfume factory' (http://www.erimiwine.net/erimiwine_g000002.pdf).

MINOAN CRETE – ZAKROS

A perfumers' workshop has plausibly been identified at the Minoan palace at Zakros in eastern Crete, destroyed during the middle-late fifteenth century BC in LM IB, in a large room, XLVII, part of a complex of eight workrooms and storage areas in an 'industrial quarter', south of the Central Court at Zakros. In the western half of room XLVII, a large quantity of pottery was found, a number of the shapes being suitable for perfume production. Also in this western half are braziers on perforated stands, wide-mouthed jars, possibly used for steeping, incense burners and saucers (known from various sites in Crete and from Minoan colonial sites but not in Mycenaean contexts) with hollow enclosures below them, the tops of which are convex. The bottom of these enclosures are also convex and are perforated with many small holes around a larger central opening, identified by Platon, the excavator at Zakros, as being specialized equipment for perfumery, which would have been used to prepare aromatic material in before being added to oil, either by dry distillation, or by volatising aromatic essences over water. In fact Platon used these saucers as principal evidence that Room XLVII at Zakros was a perfumers' workshop. In the eastern half of Room XLVII other items, amongst which are large three-legged kettles, a large shallow basin and a terra-cotta grill are also consistent with perfume production (Shelmerdine 1985:57-58).

Clay tablets from Knossos and Hagia Triada in Crete (as well as Mycenae on the Greek mainland), indicate that sesame, safflower and olive oil were used in perfume production, the oils being made astringent by coriander, sedge or juniper being added, the mixture then being heated with flower petals, usually roses, or rhizomes, such as those from irises (Brun 2000:281).

GREEK MAINLAND - MYCENAEAN PYLOS

At Pylos, one of a number of autonomous kingdoms which rose and flourished in Greece during the Late Bronze Age, c 1550-1200 BC in the Late Helladic III (LH III) Period (Shelmerdine 1985:1), where excavated clay tablets written in the Linear B script reveal that the Mycenaeans had developed a highly sophisticated and organised industry in perfumed oil

by the late thirteenth century BC, which was controlled by the palace (Shelmerdine 1985:123). However, no excavated rooms of the palace contain finds suggesting that perfume was manufactured in them (Shelmerdine 1985:58). Brun (2000:281) argues that the perfumers' workshop could have been situated in front of the eastern entrance of this palace, which was destroyed by fire towards the end of the thirteenth century BC, as cauldrons, basins and vases have been found there through excavation.

THE GREEK ISLAND OF DELOS

Pliny (NH 13.4) states that in 'the old days', perfume from Delos was the most desired. This confirms that perfumers were active in Delos during the Hellenistic period. Perfume was constantly in demand for religious purposes, by women, athletes, as well as by those people that frequented the palaestrae, gymnasia and public baths (Brun 2000:286). Pliny (NH 15.29) states that the oil used in gymnasia was scented with marjoram.

Brun (2000:285- 288) reports that archaeological excavations were carried out by himself and Brunet in April and May of 1997, on a press installation in Delos situated in house I,B in the stadium district. It was built around the first century BC on the levelled remnants of a house. It comprised two vertical presses, with two finely-worked marble press beds embedded between the posts. Four furnaces were built against a wall at right angles to the presses. He points out that this plan implies presses with uprights and that as direct screw presses were not employed throughout the Roman Empire until the first century AD, he argues that the presses were wedge presses, used mainly for extracting oils for perfumes in the eastern Mediterranean in antiquity. He argues, further, that a large perfumers' workshop was situated here, given the combination of two oil presses and the presence of four furnaces, which could have been used for the hot enfleurage of fragrant oils. Flowers and aromatics were imported by oriental merchants, who acted as middlemen, taking full advantage of their knowledge of the Semitic countries and their languages, from whence these commodities came.

Brun (2000:282-283 and 287) states that a great number of press beds, quadrangular blocks with a carved circular channel and an outlet groove, one of two types of stone blocks that were used in presses, the other being counterweight blocks, have been excavated in Delos (besides numerous wine and oil presses), with most of them being carefully carved in marble,

unlike the usual rough way for such an object. These press beds were found throughout the site, with six of them coming from the theatre district shops, where the streets were so narrow that only vertical wedge presses could have been installed in them, indicating that they were used for small-scale perfume production. Six of these marble press beds have a heart in low relief near the spout, seemingly all carved by the same craftsman, two of them coming from house I, B in the stadium district, which he argues was a large perfumers' workshop. He argues further that these press beds, besides extracting olive oil and plant essences to produce perfumes, possibly represented a 'brand' image, acting as an identifying symbol for perfumers, similar to the apothecary's mortar. Nowhere else, except at Paestum in Italy, where perfumes were also produced, are press beds so meticulously cut and decorated.

THE ISLAND OF CYPRUS: PYRGOS-MAVRORAKI

In 1998, after three years of surveying having been conducted, regular excavations began on an early-middle Bronze Age site at the village of Pyrgos-Mavroraki in Cyprus by a team of archaeologists from the National Council for Researches of Rome (Institute for Technologies Applied to Cultural Heritage), led by Dr. Maria Rosaria Belgiorno. A very unusual large 'industrial complex' was discovered here, dating from 2000 BC.



It was abandoned in c 1850 BC, when it was destroyed by an earthquake. Geophysical prospecting has revealed that the entire building comprising the 'industrial complex' covered an estimated area of 4000 sq. m. It is called an 'industrial complex', as there are not enough elements for the archaeologists to argue that it was a small 'palace', similar to the famous



Minoan palaces on Crete, such as those of Knossos and Phaistos (http://www.pyrgos-mavroraki.net/pyrgos-mavroraki_000007.htm).

In 2008 a unique triangular building was excavated south of the 'industrial complex', consisting of two rooms and a small triangular area with a ring of stones inside it. This is thought by the archaeologists to have been a temple, due to the presence in one room of an altar, with a channel made of heavy basalt pebbles on either side of it, for the collection and

disposal of sacrificial liquids. Goat and cattle bones were discovered in the second room (http://pyrgos-mavroraki.net/pyrgos-mavroraki_000006.htm).

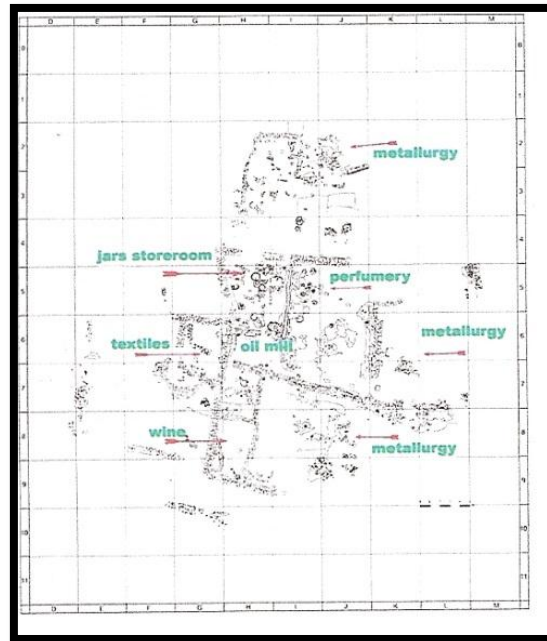


Figure A.1: Plan of the 'industrial complex' at Pyrgos-Mavroraki



Figure A.2: General view of the 'industrial complex' at Pyrgos-Mavroraki

A coppersmith workshop was found on the east side of the building, where primary processing of raw copper occurred. This workshop was provided with a mud oven/forge, supported by large slabs of calcarenite. Two anvils made of andesite were found at the site, the one having a cutting on its 'table' to shape blades. During the 2004 and 2005 excavation seasons a second coppersmith workshop was uncovered, which had two interleading doors to

the olive press room. Stone implements, anvils, hammers and clay moulds (still in the furnaces) found in this workshop, indicate that secondary copper processing, casting and refining of metals took place there (http://www.pyrgos-mavroraki.net/pyrgos-mavroraki_000007.htm) (Figure A.3).



Figure A.3: The two coppersmith workshops at Pyrgos-Mavroraki

Next to the coppersmith workshop is a large room (15m x 18m) for the production of olive oil, the west wing of which was used for the storage of the olive oil in large pottery jars, six of which were found, capable of containing 500 to 300 litres of oil. A second storeroom for oil was uncovered in 2003, increasing the estimation of the olive oil produced at the site, believed to exceed domestic requirements, with the balance being exported. The olive press system consisted of a beam hung from a wall. This was balanced on a stone base press, which was positioned on a central bench. Heavy weights made with calcarenite with a hole in each one for attachment were found at the end of the beam, attached to it, probably hung there to assist the pressing process. Before the pressing process began, the olives were worked in basalt mills. Large mortars with calcarenite around them were found with their pestles (http://www.pyrgos-mavroraki.net/pyrgos-mavroraki_000007.htm) (Figure A.4).



Figure A.4: The olive press room and the storeroom for oil at Pyrgos-Mavroraki

In 2003, in the eastern side of the olive press room, a large perfumers' workshop was found. The archaeologists believe that perfumes were produced here on an industrial scale and they call it a perfume 'factory'. Fourteen pits, plastered with calcarenite and talc are carved into the floor, each holding a large jug used for the process of maceration. Surrounding the pits, hundreds of flint blades of various shapes and sizes were found, mixed with more than seventy clay vases (http://www.pyrgos-mavroraki.net/pyrgos-mavroraki_000017.htm). The apparatus for making the perfumes was found under collapsed walls, reduced to a heap of rubble, partially burnt by the massive fire which followed the earthquake, fuelled by the olive oil produced by the olive press room (http://www.erimiwine.net/erimiwine_g000002.pdf) (Figure A.5).



Figure A.5: General view of the perfume 'factory' at Pyrgos-Mavroraki, with reconstructed vessels

An unusual workshop for textile production was uncovered in a room west of the olive press room. Two large basins used for dyeing were found there and the workshop possessed a complete apparatus for the spinning of fibres and weaving of objects. A long line of thirty-five mud loom weights flanked by heavy stone weights lying in the centre indicate where a vertical loom once stood. Lumps of coloured substances were found all over the workshop. One of the two most important and famous is the purple of Tyre, being extracted from a marine gastropod mollusc of the family *Muricidae*, genus *Murex*, the species *Murex trunculus* and *Murex brandaris* being widespread in the Mediterranean area. The second is the dark blue indigo, obtained from the leaves of *Indigofera argentea*. The Cypriots at

Pyrgos had discovered a unique way of fixing the colour indigo on textiles. This was found in one spindle whorl, where spores of a brown algae of the *focus* family (still full of colour) had the function of making the colour of indigo indelible on fibres. This is the only evidence of the use of this system in the Bronze Age (http://www.pyrgos-mavroraki.net/pyrgos-mavroraki_000007.htm).

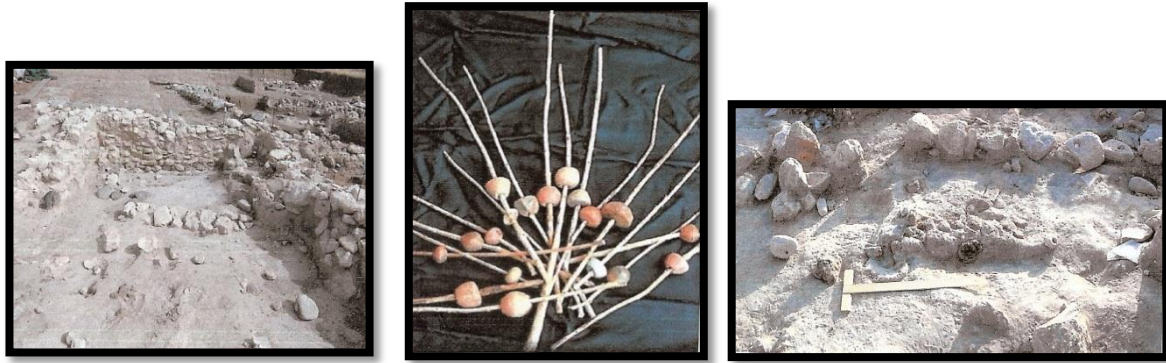


Figure A.6: The textile workshop, spindle whorls and stone and clay weights found *in situ*

In the excavation season of 2005 a secondary room for the organised production of wine was uncovered. Its presence had previously been suspected by the discovery of grape seeds and special jugs with a pointed base, which contained remains of tartaric acid (http://www.pyrgos-mavroraki.net/pyrgos-mavroraki_000007.htm) (Figure A.7).

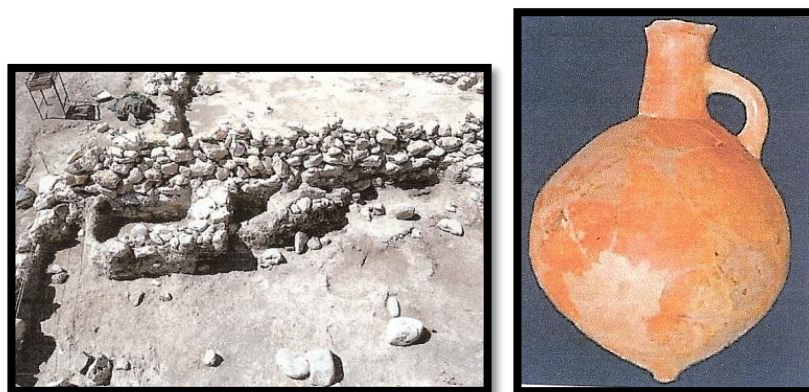


Figure A.7: The wine workshop and a jug with a pointed base

Importance of the discovery of the ‘industrial complex’ at Pyrgos-Mavroraki and in particular the perfume ‘factory’

The discovery of the ‘industrial complex’ at Pyrgos-Mavroraki in Cyprus is very important, as to date no similar site from the ancient world has been uncovered through archaeological

excavation. The author has discussed all the elements of the ‘industrial complex’ and not just the perfume ‘factory’ and the oil press room, because of the importance of viewing all of them as a whole for the true significance of this unique complex to be appreciated. The workshop for the production of olive oil played a vital role in the success of this site. It provided olive oil for the perfume ‘factory’, used as a base for the perfumes it produced; the coppersmith workshop, used as fuel to smelt the copper instead of charcoal, a much more cost effective method; and the textile workshop. Remains of perfumes were found in the spindle wool. Perfumed oil was used by the Cypriots for the spinning of wool, masking the smell of goats and sheep. All the elements of this industrial Bronze Age complex worked together to produce products for export, trading in a group as a co-operative. Cosmetics and medicine were also produced at this site, besides luxury goods such as perfumes and textiles, for which Cyprus was famous for (<http://mydnafragrance.com/perfume/the-scent-of-aphrodite.html>).

The discovery of the perfume ‘factory’ at Pyrgos is also very important. This ‘factory’, being four thousand years old, is without a doubt the oldest site for the production of blended perfumes found to date. Traces of fifteen perfumes found there in jars that were being produced when the earthquake struck the site in c 1850 BC are the oldest blended perfumes found to date. The still apparatuses, including the clay alembic heads, found at the ‘factory’ are the oldest ones used for the process of distillation found to date (http://www.erimiwine.net/erimiwine_g000002.pdf).

Dr. Belgiorno the head archaeologist that worked at the site, believes that it is just not possible that a small island like Cyprus could have developed the technology for making scented oils and perfumes in isolation, which probably came from the ancient Egyptians, as there were strong links between the two civilisations (http://www.erimiwine.net/erimiwine_g000002.pdf). The author is of the opinion that if this hypothesis is true, this poses the very important question of whether or not the ancient Egyptians used the process of distillation, instead of plain boiling, as one of the processes to

produce their perfumes, as is believed the perfumers at Pyrgos-Mavroraki did, following the discovery of clay alembic heads in the perfume ‘factory’ there. In the absence of the discovery of an ancient Egyptian perfumers’ workshop through archaeological excavation, this question cannot be answered at this point in time. The one tomb scene, dating to the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, thought to depict such a workshop, does not show the process of distillation, only plain boiling (see Section 9.2.1). The author argues that if the ancient Egyptians did pass on the knowledge of perfume production to the perfumers at Pyrgos-Mavroraki, but not the process of distillation, it must have been an early-Middle Bronze Age Cypriot innovation.

CAMPANIA IN ITALY, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO PAESTUM, POMPEII AND HERCULANEUM

Perfume production was common in Rome and indeed throughout Italy. Pliny (NH 13.5, 21.16, 20-27) states that Palestrina and Tusculum were famous for their roses and violets; nardum was produced in Liguria and Istria (NH 13.18, 21, 135); and salunca was cultivated in Ivrea (NH 21.43). It is Campania² however that was famous for its perfume industry in antiquity, where perfume production reached near-industrial levels, with oil production being prolific there and it had an abundance of flowers, especially roses (Brun 2000:290). Literary and epigraphic evidence indicates that it was concentrated in Capua, which was well-placed to serve the markets of Rome. The Seplasia was the district of the town dedicated to this industry, with trade being funnelled through the port of Puteoli (Mattingly 1990:81). The fame of rose perfume in particular was widespread in Campania (Jashemski 1963:120). In Pozzuoli perfume merchants shared a district with glass-makers who produced *unguentaria*, where they set up shop (Brun 2000:299).

Paestum

Paestum is a town in Campania, Italy, which was originally Poseidonia, founded by Greeks from Sybaris in c 600 BC. Towards the end of the fifth century BC the Poseidonians were conquered by the Lucanians, who took the town, giving rise to a mixed culture (Greek and

² Campania is still famous today for a perfume that is distilled from a wild carnation, which only grows on the isle of Capri. The perfume is made at the monastery there. The Saturday Star, Travel Section (2008:14).

Lucan). At the start of the third century BC, after a war between Pyrrhus and Rome, Poseidonia became the Roman colony of Paestum in 273 BC (Brun 2000:291).

Brun (2000:292 and 294) states that in October 1995 he directed an archaeological investigation of a marble press bed in a shop measuring 4.3 x 3.5 m in the northeast corner of the forum, the walls of which still stand, which had been uncovered through archaeological excavation in the 1920s. The shop dates from the second quarter of the first century AD and the press was assembled no earlier than the second half of the century, both seemingly in use at least until the third century AD. During the late Roman Empire the floor was raised, the press destroyed, and the press bed buried. A front wall consisting of large stone blocks was erected, after which the shop appears to have been used for another purpose. He argues that a late first century or second century AD date for the press seemingly excludes an agricultural use for it, as the forum was at that time used as a public place and market. Furthermore, the marble press bed was very carefully sculpted, like the one found in house I, B in the stadium district of Delos, which he has identified as a large perfumers' workshop. He thus argues further that this was a perfume shop and that the press was an olive press, used to make oil for the bases of perfumes. Clues on the site have led him to believe that it is likely to have been a direct-screw press, sometimes made entirely of wood, although perfumers in the Roman era most often used the wedge press.

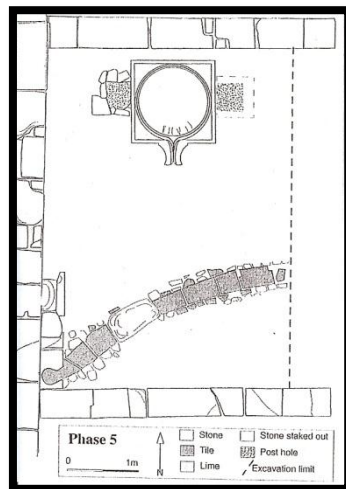
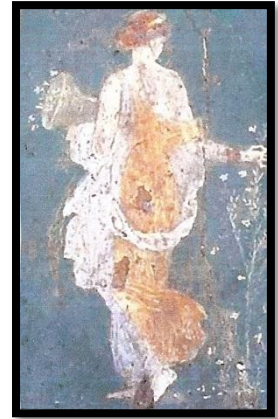


Figure A.8: Drawing of a plan by J-P Brun of the perfume shop at Paestum, showing the marble press bed

Pompeii

There are several forms of evidence that perfume manufacture took place at the Roman town of Pompeii, Campania, Italy, which was destroyed by an eruption of Mt. Vesuvius in AD 79. Pompeian lilies were used to produce *susinum*, jasmine blossoms to make *iasminum*, and a base of saffron oil to make the more highly prized royal ointment or *rhodium* (Panetta 2004a:193). Four inscriptions at Pompeii indicate that a guild of *unguentarii* (perfumers) were present there (Jashemski 1979:409). Excavations carried out by the University of Maryland from 1972-1974 at Pompeii, uncovered what is believed to be a commercial flower garden in the 'Garden of Hercules', attached to a humble house (Jashemski 1979:403 and 408). Besides the flowers believed to have been grown there on a large scale, the presence of olive pollen indicates that olive trees were also grown there. Many perfume bottles made of blown glass were found in the garden, a rare occurrence, and in the house (Jashemski 1979:411). The author argues that all these factors indicate that a fully-fledged perfumers' workshop existed on these premises, where flowers were grown and pressed, olives were pressed for olive oil, perfumes were produced and perfumes were put into bottles made of blown glass.



Pompeian art (fourth style) provides us with a delightful fresco on a black background in an *oecus* (receiving area) at the north end of the peristyle leading out to the garden of the House of the Vettii, showing the production and selling of perfumes in a perfume workshop, with *unguentarii* (perfumers) at work. This fresco is part of a genre of art which was common at both Pompeii and Herculaneum, featuring scenes of *amorini* (cupids) and *psyches* at work and at play, not simplistic artistic fantasies, but detailed episodes drawn from everyday life (Mattingly 1990:73-74 and 79). The fresco consists of one continuous scene, which can be divided into three separate tableaux for convenience sake.

Starting from the right of the scene, the first tableau depicts two cupids, *unguentarii*, hammering wedges with large mallets between the beams of a wedge press, crushing olives, the oil of which will be used as a base for the perfumes. When the beams move apart, they press baskets which are filled with olive paste that has been placed on a quadrangular stone

which has a spout. The olive oil pours from the spout into a metal basin (Brun 2000:297) (Figure A.9).



Figure A.9: Cupids pressing oil with a wedge press, House of the Vetii, Pompeii

The second tableau, to the left of this press, depicts a *psyche* sitting on a low stool while stirring a liquid that is being heated in a cauldron which rests on a tripod. To her left two cupids are standing on a low plinth on either side of a deep mortar, stirring or mixing something with long-handled implements. These two parts of the tableau represent the processes of petals, herbs and other aromatic plant material such as resins being added to the essential oil, being boiled up and left to steep before the mixture is filtered and put into bottles (Panetta 2004a:193). Next to these two cupids another one is standing or is seated at the shop counter, holding a spatula and a perfume bottle. In front of him on the counter are a *volumen*, on which is written the recipe for the perfume which is being prepared, and a set of scales used to weigh the necessary ingredients. Behind this cupid stands an open cupboard, with a statuette, flasks and bottles standing on its shelves. Next to this cupboard stands a basin on a tripod (Brun 2000:297) (Figure A.10).

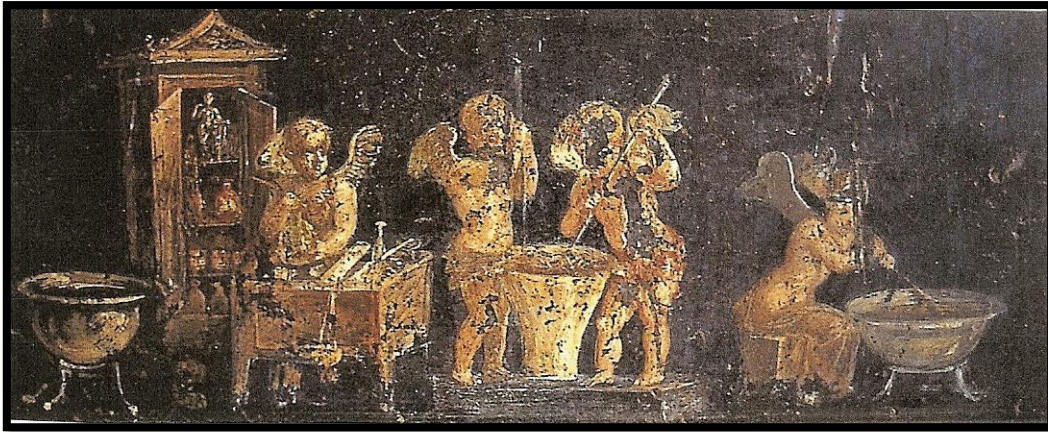


Figure A.10: Cupids making perfume, House of the Vetii, Pompeii

The final tableau shows a *psyche* sitting on a stool, her feet resting on a footstool and a cushion, holding the back of her left wrist close to her nose. In front of her stands a cupid, clutching a flask under his left arm and a spatula in his right hand. Behind her stands another *psyche*, her slave, carrying a fan. This tableau represents the perfume shop part of a Pompeian perfume workshop. Elegant wealthy ladies would arrive with their slaves and stand before an open cabinet containing bottles of perfume to make their selection, trying out the perfume on the back of their wrists (Panetta 2004a :193) (Figure A.11).



Figure A.11: Psyche trying out perfume in the perfume shop, House of the Vetii, Pompeii

Another fresco from the pictorial frieze in the main hall of the House of the Vettii at Pompeii, depicts cupids with a goat, both of them carrying baskets of flowers, with the goat also carrying a load of flowers. Varone (2004:148) states that the cupids and the goat are carrying flowers which will be used in the production of perfumes. On the other hand, Jashemski

(1979:409) points out that this tableau is part of a scene where cupids are making garlands of flowers, displayed for sale on a wooden rack, and argues that it portrays a gardener bringing his flowers for this purpose. In antiquity flowers were grown at Pompeii with two purposes in mind. The first was to make perfume and perfumed oil and the second was to make garlands. Garlands were considered to be the appropriate gifts to honour the deities, the living and the dead (Jashemski 1963:112) (Figure A.12).



Figure A.12: Cupids and goat carrying flowers, House of the Vetii, Pompeii

A fresco depicting a Pompeian perfumers' workshop, now lost or destroyed but fortunately a drawing of it exists, found at House VII.7.5 at Pompeii, the house of the Calpurnii, shows on the left of the scene, in the shop part cupids making perfume in various stages, a wedge press also being involved. In the shop part of the workshop an attendant (a male figure, which could be a cupid but is wingless in the drawing) is actually applying the perfume with a spatula on the back of the wrist of a seated *psyche* customer (Mattingly 1990:75). A *psyche* servant is standing behind the customer holding a money bag, waiting for her to make her purchase (Jashemski 1963:119). To the right of the scene cupids are making perfume in various stages, a wedge press also being involved (Figure A.13).

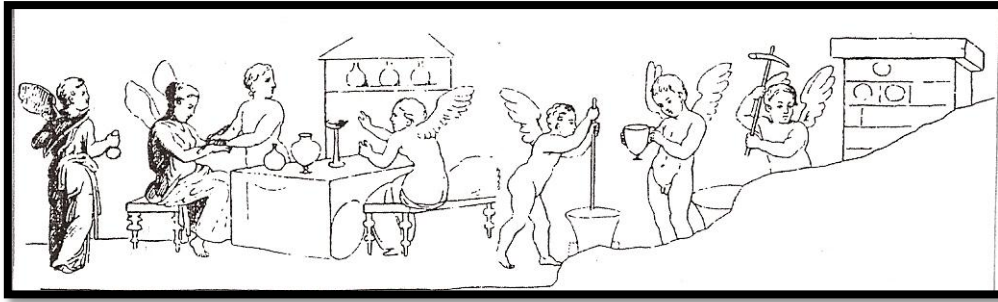


Figure A.13: A perfumers' workshop and perfume shop, House of the Calpurnii, Pompeii

Both the house of the Calpurnii and the house of the Vettii, private houses, were not themselves perfume workshops but those portrayed in the paintings on their walls suggest that the owners had financial interests in manufacturing, most probably in perfume production. Evidence, albeit very little of it, points to the area for organised flower selling and perfume trade at Pompeii being very close to the *forum*. Election graffiti mentioning *unguentarii* (perfumers) appear on either side of a flight of steps leading to the first floor of shops on the front of the market building which overlooked the *forum*, leading to suggestions by scholars that the headquarters of the perfumers' guild was situated there (Mattingly 1990:82).

Through archaeological excavation, a shop with an oil press has been found in the *Via degli Augustali* in Pompeii (Brun 2000:291). Mattingly (1990:86-87) argues that this is a wedge press. Brun (2000:291) points out that this is the only type of press used to press olives by the cupid *unguentarii* in the frescoes in Pompeii and Herculaneum depicting perfumers' workshops. The author argues that this was a perfumers' workshop with possibly a perfume shop attached to it.

Herculaneum

Herculaneum is another Roman town in Campania, Italy, that was destroyed by an eruption of Mt. Vesuvius in AD 79. Archaeological excavations at the *Casa dei Cervi* (House of the Deer) (ins. IV,21) revealed a fresco, now housed in the Museum of Naples, depicting a perfumers' workshop, in the same style as the one from the House of the Vettii in Pompeii, although it is not as well preserved. The fresco depicts cupids (*unguentarii*) making perfumes. One cupid is hammering wedges in the beams of a wedge press with a large

hammer. Olives are being pressed, the resulting oil being used for the base of the perfumes that are being made is running into a metal basin. The other cupid is stirring a liquid which is being heated in a cauldron on a furnace (Figure A: 14).

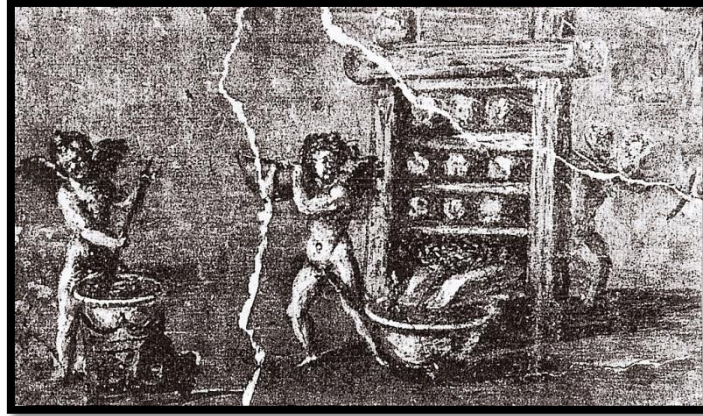


Figure A.14: Cupids pressing olives and making perfumes, *Casa dei Cervi*, Herculaneum

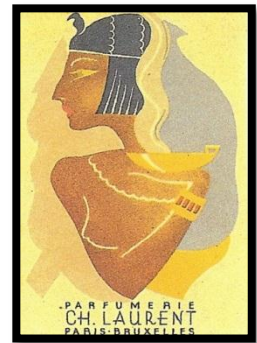
ANNEXURE B



MODERN PERFUMES INSPIRED BY ANCIENT EGYPT AND APHRODITE'S FABLED ISLAND OF CYPRUS

ANCIENT EGYPT

Many modern perfumes have been inspired by ancient Egypt, a few of which will be discussed by the author. This inspiration started even before a wave of Egyptomania swept through the perfume industry in Europe in the early 1920's following the discovery in 1922 by Howard Carter (financially backed by George Herbert, the fifth Earl of Carnarvon) of the almost intact tomb of the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, king Tutankhamun in the Valley of the Kings, KV 62.



PERFUMES BY MONNE/ RAMSES

A Greek called Louis de Bertalot emigrated from Egypt and settled in Paris, France, at the end of World War I. He founded Monne perfumes but soon changed the name to Ramses, a label which existed for three or four years. In 1917 he launched a perfume called 'Le Secret du Sphinx' (The Secret of the Sphinx) under the Ramses label, which was put into a bottle shaped like a canopic jar, with hieroglyphs featuring on the front of it. The stopper is in the form of a pharaoh's head. Perfume bottles in the Egyptian style were popular between 1913 and 1937 (Humbert, Pantazzi & Ziegler 1994: 548) (Figure B.1).



Figure B.1: A bottle of 'Le Secret de Sphinx'

In 1919 the company launched 'Un Reve sur le Nil', sold under the Monne label. The body of the bottle is the shape of a pharaoh's head, with the stopper being in the shape of two Ma'at ostrich feathers. This same bottle was used in 1920 and 1921 to hold the perfume 'Ramses IV', sold under the Ramses label (Humbert *et al.* 1994: 549) (Figure B.2).

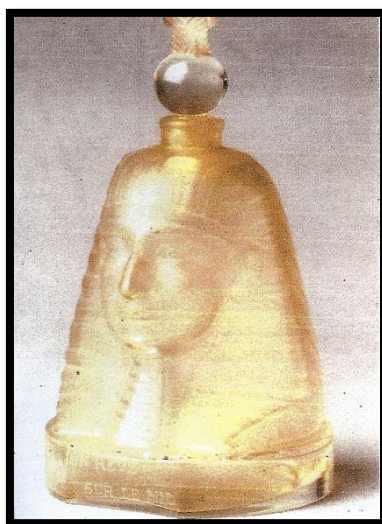


Figure B.2: A bottle of 'Un Reve sur le Nil'

PERFUMES BY BICHARA

The Bichara perfume company was established in 1896 by Bichara Malhame from Beirut, who referred to himself as ‘The Syrian perfumer’ and his perfumes as ‘*parfums enivrants*’, ‘intoxicating perfumes’

(<http://www.cleopatrasboudoir.com/apps/blog/categories/show/61387-french-perfume-houses.htm>).

In 1928 Bichara launched the ‘Ramses II’ perfume. Both the bottle, with hieroglyphs on it, and box are in a shape reminiscent of this king’s obelisk at Luxor (Humbert *et al.* 1994). The perfume came in two sizes (Newman, C 1998:117) (Figure B.3).

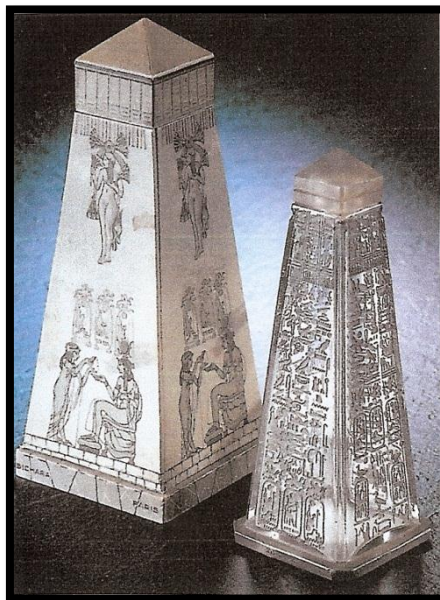


Figure B.3: The bottle and the box designed to hold Bichara’s ‘Ramses II’ perfume

‘VALLEE DES ROIS’ BY MIRA TAKLA

Mira Takla, from the United Kingdom, in association with the department store Harrods in London, launched a perfume in 1988 called ‘*Vallee des Rois*’ (Valley of the Kings). The exact list of ingredients featured in this perfume is a carefully guarded secret, the Danish Egyptologist Lise Manniche being among the privileged few to know it, having been approached by Mira Takla to help her in her research of ancient Egyptian perfumes by deciphering hieroglyphic texts (<http://www.kvinfo.dk/side/674/article/39/>). This perfume is now discontinued, is very rare, is highly sought after, and sells for large sums of money on internet sites such as eBay.

The author, who is privileged to have smelled this divine perfume, is aware of four different beautiful bottles that were designed to hold it, but there could be more. This perfume was produced in different forms, such as pure *parfum*, pure *parfum splash*, *eau de parfum*, *eau de parfum spray*, *eau de parfum vaporisateur* and *eau de toilette vaporisateur*. The bottles, all made of blue glass, are packaged in a blue box featuring the whole or part of a design of different stylized flowers/plants. It is difficult to determine exactly which flowers/plants are portrayed in this design, which surely all feature amongst the ingredients of the perfume.

The first bottle has a rough texture to it, featuring what the author believes is the design of a lily, echoing one of the stylized flowers that are found on the box. The stopper is made of metal, featuring a blue lotus flower on it. This is probably also one of the stylized flowers/plants found in the design on the box. On top of the stopper there is a small sphere made of blue glass, attached to it by a short metal rod (Figure B.4).



Figure B.4: A bottle of ‘Vallee des Rois’ perfume and its box

The second bottle is in the shape of a bust of a woman wearing an Egyptian style necklace around her neck.

The third bottle is in the shape of a bust of a woman wearing a gold chain around her neck (Figure B.5).

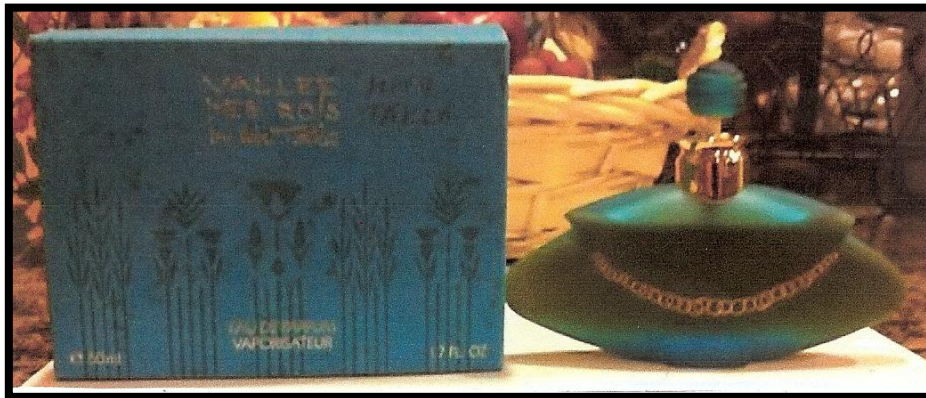


Figure B.5: A bottle of 'Vallee des Rois' perfume and its box

The fourth bottle, made of fluted blue glass, is in the shape of an elegant perfume flacon, with a golden stopper (Figure B 6).



Figure B 6: A bottle of 'Vallee des Rois' perfume and its box

RECREATIONS OF ANCIENT EGYPTIAN PERFUMES BY C2RMF, THE CENTRE FOR RESEARCH AND RESTORATION OF FRENCH MUSEUMS

Sandrine Videault is a French researcher who is a historical reconstruction expert, creating perfumes involving olfactory reconstructions from ancient civilisations. Besides recreations of ancient Egyptian perfumes, a perfume called ‘Song of Senses’, involving olfactory interpretations (not reconstruction in this instance) of Solomon’s text ‘Song of Songs’ has been created (<http://www.perfumeshrine.blogspot.com/2009/02/interview-with-perfumer-Sandrine.html>).



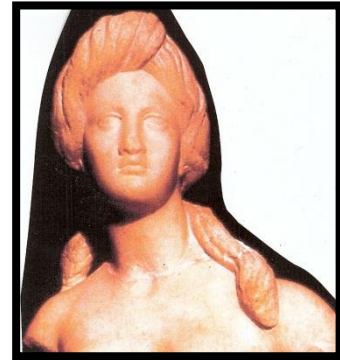
Figure B.7: Sandrine Videault pictured in a laboratory

Kyphi and metopion

A historical reconstruction of ancient Egyptian *kyphi* was produced in 2002 through collaboration between C2RMF, the Centre for Research and Restoration of French Museums and the beauty house L’Oreal of Paris. Sandrine Videault from C2RMF says that all previous attempts to recreate *kyphi* had failed, because traces of it found in Egyptian museums that were provided, proved to be too small for analysis. Success was finally achieved when the ancient Greek author Plutarch’s recipe for *kyphi* was consulted. This reconstruction of *kyphi* was exhibited at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo at an exhibition entitled ‘Perfumes and cosmetics of ancient Egypt’ and contains ‘hesperidic head notes’ of mint and lemon grass, a ‘spicy centre-note’ of juniper berries and cinnamon, and a ‘balsamic base note’ of incense and myrrh. The metopion is a historical unguent reconstruction carried out by C2RMF of the unguent cones worn by the Egyptians on occasions such as banquets, which was exhibited at Sephora-Champs-Elysees (<http://www.perfumeshrine.blogspot.com/2009/02/interview-with-perfumer-Sandrine.html>).

CYPRUS

According to Greek mythology, Cyprus was the birthplace of the beautiful Greek goddess of love and beauty, Aphrodite, with the large rock ‘Petra Tou Romiou’ on the coast of Cyprus marking the actual spot where she rose from the foaming sea. Aphrodite’s cult is thought by scholars to have arrived in Greece from Cyprus (Barnett 1999:35). The patron-goddess of Cyprus, Aphrodite was the most fragrant of all the deities in the ancient world (http://www.pyrgos-mavroraki.net/pyrgos-mavroraki_g00000.0.pdf).



The large amount of pottery and stone tools found *in situ* in the large perfume ‘factory’ through archaeological excavations at Pyrgos-Mavroraki, Cyprus (Limmissol district) in 2003 were displayed in a series of exhibitions (http://www.erimiwine.net/erimiwine_g000002.pdf) (see Annexure A, the Island of Cyprus: Pyrgos-Mavroraki) (http://www.pyrgos-mavroraki.net/pyrgos-mavroraki_g00000a.pdf).

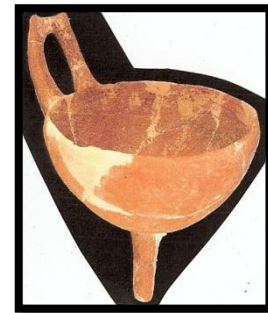
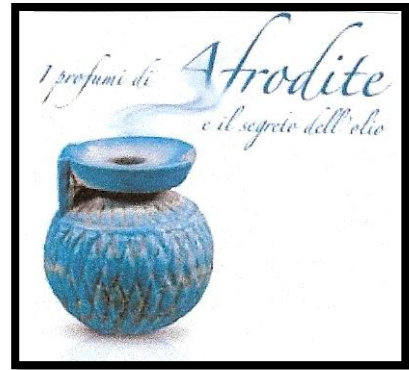


Figure B.8: Dr. Belgiorno with one of the large oil vessels found at the site

At the exhibition held in Rome from 14th March to 2nd September 2007 at the ‘Musei Capitoloni’ entitled ‘*I profumi di Afrodite e il segreto dell’ olio – scoperte archeologiche a Cipro*’, ‘The perfumes of Aphrodite and the secret of oil – uncovered archaeologically at Cyprus’, besides one hundred artefacts from the perfume ‘factory’ on Cyprus, four perfumes were on display behind glass.



People visiting the exhibition could lift up flaps to smell the perfumes. These are four perfumes recreated by Dr. Belgiorno and her team from the remains of fourteen perfumes found in pottery jars in pits at the perfume ‘factory’ (see Annexure A, the Island of Cyprus: Pyrgos-Mavroraki), which were in the process of being produced when an earthquake struck the site in c 1850 BC (http://www.pyrgos-mavroraki.net/pyrgos-mavroraki_g00000a.pdf).

The four perfumes are named after four ancient Greek goddesses. ‘Afrodite’ (Aphrodite), containing olive oil, pine, turpentine and bergamot; ‘Elena’ (Athena) containing olive oil, laurel, coriander and turpentine; ‘Artimides’ (Artemis) containing olive oil, almonds, myrtle, parsley and turpentine; and ‘Era’ (Hera) containing olive oil, rosemary, green anise and lavender (www.carmelperfume.blogspot.com/2010_6_09_archive.html). The author is of the opinion that it is disappointing that myrtle is not one of the ingredients in the perfume named ‘Afrodite’, as myrtle, called myrtos or myrrine by the Greeks, was sacred to Aphrodite, a fact acknowledged by Dr. Belgiorno herself (<http://www.pyrgos-mavroraki.net/pyrgos-mavroraki000017.htm>).

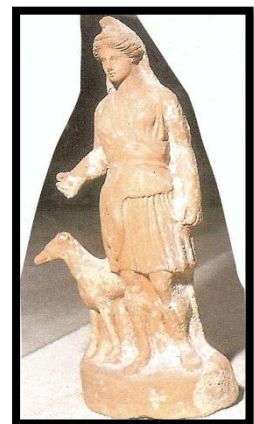


Figure B.9: The four perfumes (‘Afrodite’, ‘Elena’, ‘Artimides’ and ‘Era’)

To make the essences for the four olive oil based perfumes, scientists at an experimental archaeology centre in Blera, Italy, in conjunction with Dr. Belgiorno and her team of archaeologists, copied the entire process, step by step, that the people of Cyprus used four thousand years ago to make their perfumes, which took about six months, as all the plant material used was locally sourced on Cyprus and they had to wait for the seasonal material to become available (http://www.carmelperfume.blogspot.com/2012_06_09_archive.html).

From the typology of vessels found at the perfume ‘factory’, three methods used to produce the perfumes were identified. The first is the boiling of barks to extract resin and oil content from it, which were then squeezed in a cloth between two sticks. The second is distillation, the third is maceration in warm water and olive or almond oil, to extract aroma from roots, leaves and other parts of plants. Very important is the discovery of the use of distillation in the perfume production process at Pyrgos. This is an advanced system of boiling, whereby steam full of particles of fragrant plants (terpenes) pass the alembic head into a collecting jar, after which the essential oils are separated from the water (http://www.pyrgos-mavroraki.net/Pyrgos-mavroraki_000017.htm). Evidence of the use of distillation at Pyrgos is based primarily on the presence of clay alembic heads, shaped like an amphora, with a rounded conical base and a long straight neck. The two apparatuses for distillation found at the site are the most ancient stills ever found, composed of four pieces: an alembic head with spout, two jugs, and a basin, all the pottery made of metallic ware (red polished IV to withstand high temperatures). The vase used at Pyrgos as a condenser, was most probably one of the large metallic ware jugs, six of which of this type and dimension, all crushed, were found in the perfume ‘factory’, and experiments to reconstruct the apparatus confirmed that the shape and dimensions were correct for this purpose. The stills at Pyrgos were capable of producing both essential oils and scented water (http://www.erimiwine.net/erimiwine_g000002.pdf).

One of the distillation apparatuses, including the clay alembic head and spout, found at the perfume ‘factory’ at Pyrgos, on display at an exhibition held in Florence in 2008 (Figure B.10).

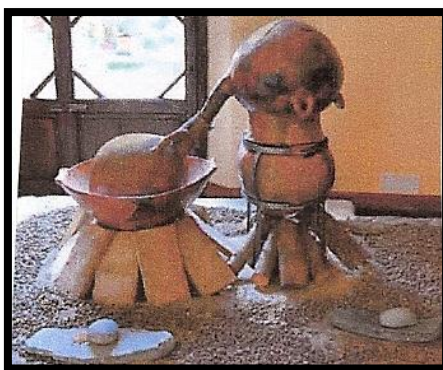


Figure B.10: A distillation apparatus

Of the many perfumes mentioned in the Mycenaean Linear B tablets of the second half of the second millennium BC, only three of these are found at Pyrgos, namely coriander, therebindus (terebinth resin - turpentine) and conifer resin (pine). Two of the most famous flower essences in antiquity are not amongst those made at Pyrgos, namely Aphrodite rose, which the author believes would have been most appropriate, and majorana (majoram). In fact, flowers do not feature at all in the ingredients of the traces of the fourteen perfumes found at Pyrgos. Today in Cyprus the distillation of rose petals is the principal perfume industry (http://www.carmelperfume.blogspot.com/2012_06_09_archive.html).

Dr. Maria Rosaria Belgiorno and Yiannoulla Lazarou, a Cypriot herbalist, have created two oil-based perfumes in honour of the remnants of perfumes found at the perfume ‘factory’ at Pyrgos. The one is called ‘Mistikò’. Amongst the ingredients are the five basic ingredients of the famous Kypros/Chypre. These are olive oil (used as the base), bergamot, majoram, ayioklima and laudanum, the aromatic plant material growing wild on the Troodos mountain in Cyprus and their essential oils being extracted in Lazarou’s laboratory (http://www.pyrgos-mavroraki.net/pyrgos-mavroraki_g00000.9pdf). The bottle that has been designed to hold the perfume ‘Mistikò’ is inspired by a jar that was unearthed through archaeological excavation dating to c 600 BC (<http://www.cyprusperfume.com/>). The other perfume is called ‘Mavrorachi’, dedicated to the goddess Aphrodite. The ingredients are: olive oil, used as the base; bergamot and pine, the first notes; rosemary, lavender and sweet wormwood, the second notes; and cedar wood, oak musk, galbanum and thuja, the third notes. ‘Mavrorachi’ was launched in a limited edition of four thousand bottles (http://www.pyrgos-mavroraki.net/pyrgos-mavroraki_g00000.2.pdf).

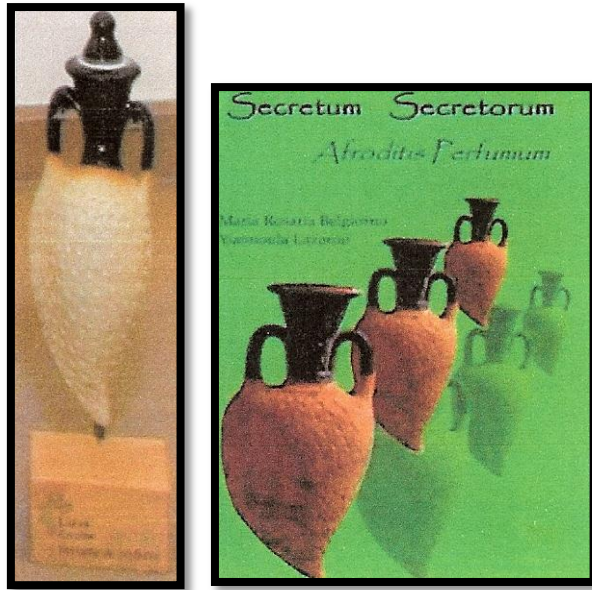


Figure B.11: Bottle for the 'Mistikò' perfume and the ancient jar that inspired its creation



Figure B.12: A bottle of 'Mavrorachi' perfume



ANNEXURE C

PERFUME VESSELS

Perfumes in ancient Egypt were luxury items, as they are today. The costlier the perfumes, made from expensive imported ingredients, the more exquisite were the vessels to keep them in. The ancient Egyptians made some exquisite vessels to hold perfumes and perfumed unguents/oils, works of art in their own right, many now housed in museums throughout the world.



Many of these exquisite vessels are extant, often excavated from tombs, as perfumes were essential for the afterlife (Hawass 2006b:153). There were of course also utilitarian vessels produced for this purpose. The author will highlight some examples of perfume vessels, made from a selection of various materials that would have been used for that purpose.

GLASS

Both glass¹ and faience in ancient Egypt were considered to be artificial precious stones and the glass that was produced there is amongst the finest in the ancient world. Since the earliest ancient Egyptian glass shows signs of remarkable technical competence, seemingly the product of a fully-fledged industry, it is now thought that this early glass was imported, or at least craftsmen from outside Egypt came there to establish the industry. This view is backed up by the fact that the words *ehlipakku* and *mekku*, which the Egyptians apparently used to refer to raw glass, were words of foreign origin (Nicholson & Henderson 2000:195).

Oppenheim (1973:263) states that the word *ehlipakku*² is evidently Hurrian and the word *mekku*³ is probably West Semitic and that the use of these two words for raw glass points either to the region of its origin or to the region from which the craftsmen came from. He

¹ One of the hieroglyphic terms for glass reads 'melted stone' (Lilyquist *et al.* 2001:11).

² This word is attested in the Hurrian capital (Hatushas), Alalakh, Ugarit, Qatna, Jursa, Ascalon and Nuzi and is mentioned in an Amarna letter (EA 148), part of a group of ten letters written to king Akhenaten by Abimilki, the king of Tyre and refers to the same material as the word *mekku* (Oppenheim 1973:260-261).

³ This word is attested in Assyria, Tyre and Ugarit and is also mentioned in an Amarna letter (EA 148). This word is also found in only one of the Assyrian prescriptions for making coloured glass (atypical of these prescriptions in respect of terminology and technology) in a context that unmistakably establishes it as a word for raw glass used by craftsmen to fashion, among other things, glass containers and beads (Oppenheim 1973:260-261).

argues that Upper Syria is the most likely candidate for that region and that Mitanni glassmakers possibly went to Egypt as prisoners of war after that country had been conquered by Thutmosis III, where they started to produce glass objects in Egyptian style. There is evidence he says that raw glass was imported into Egypt from Syria. Oppenheim (1973:259) argues that glass was ‘invented’ in upper Syria, from whence it spread into Egypt⁴ as well as Mesopotamia.

Lilyquist *et al.* (2001:11) are of the opinion that intentional glassmaking, the manufacture of objects from raw glass, originally began in the geographical area now comprising northern Iraq (ancient Mesopotamia) and eastern Syria and that glassmaking in ancient Egypt was perhaps initially a royal monopoly, possibly using imported raw glass, however, the real *floruit* of Egyptian glass production was from 1500 BC onward in the early New Kingdom (Keller 1983:19), when glass was a regular, albeit high-status, product, seemingly allied with faience production (Nicholson & Henderson 2000:195), both forming part of a ‘vitreous materials industry’ (Nicholson 1998:60). Spencer (2007:235) states that glass production seemingly disappeared in Egypt between the end of the New Kingdom and the Saite Period (Twenty-fourth Dynasty), in other words during the Third Intermediate Period. Nicholson &

⁴ There were several glass manufacturing sites in ancient Egypt, the best known being at Malkata, a palace complex on the west bank at Thebes, founded by Amenhotep III, Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, situated in the South Village, a couple of kilometres to the south of the main palace complex, and in a small area in the middle of the main palace complex; Tell el-Amarna, founded by Amenhotep IV/Akhenaten, a site where evidence of Egyptian glass-making first made its appearance (Keller 1983:19-20). Workshops found there, which can be precisely dated to the middle of the fourteenth century BC, were excavated by William Flinders Petrie in 1894, one of the few glass-making workshops excavated in the Ancient Near East. They were located east and south of the great temple to Aten (Mc Govern, Fleming & Swann 1993:11). Strong evidence is found at these workshops that glass was made in the full range of colours there and that luxury glass goods were made there for direct use in the royal palace (Rehren & Pusch 1997:140); and Lischt, a site south of Dashur in the Memphis necropolis, generally understood to have been later in date (Keller 1983:19-20). Keller (1983:20) states that although material from a site in Upper Egypt called Menshiveh is similar to that from Lischt, she doubts that this was actually a glass manufacturing site. Rehren & Pusch (1997: 129, 132-133 and 135) state that forty fragments of almost cylindrical glass-smelting crucibles, made of a local Nile clay (fabric I E.01 in the Quantir-Tell el Dab’a system), large enough to attribute to individual vessels (together with several hundred smaller fragments), were excavated at the Delta QI site of Quantir, during the seasons 1980 to 1995, dating to the Nineteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, reign of Ramesses II, or even perhaps slightly earlier. It appears that the workshops here served as a central production site for red glass, although most of the glass fragments found at the site are green. Microscopic analysis of the fragments revealed that this glass was originally red, coloured by cuprite, transformed to green corrosion products by the wet conditions of the Nile Delta. Red glass is actually preserved in the core of some larger fragments. James (2002:166) states that the region that is now accepted as the site of ancient Piramesse, the great imperial city Piramesse-great-of-victories of Ramesses II, covers two places. The first is Tell El-Da’ba (the ancient Hyksos capital of Avaris), the second is nearby Quantir.

For a discussion of glass manufacture in ancient Egypt, see Russmann (2001:164), Nicholson & Henderson (2000:199-205), and Spencer (2007: 233-234).

Peltenburg (2000:184) however argue that during the Third Intermediate Period glass production did not die out, as was once thought, although they admit that there is little evidence of it and that most of the products were of lower quality. In addition, it was carried out on a much reduced scale. Lilyquist *et al.* (2001:11) agree with Nicholson & Peltenburg that glass production was diminished in the Third Intermediate Period, adding that while some vessels were produced, items such as eye inlays and decorative inlays for statues, coffins and jewellery were more frequently produced.

Nicholson & Peltenburg (2000:184) point out that a general revival of arts occurred in Egypt during the Twenty-fifth and Twenty-sixth Dynasties, at the start of the Late Period, which would have included glass and faience production. Egypt, and especially Alexandria, was famous for its glass production during the Ptolemaic and Roman periods, but this industry is not well understood. During this period glass inlays are considered to have been an Egyptian speciality in the Mediterranean world (Lilyquist *et al.* 2001:11). Polychrome glass vessels, found in excavations all over the Mediterranean and probably the most widely distributed vessels used to hold perfumes in (Manniche 1999:9), were needed to be produced in large quantities in Alexandria during this period, with luxury perfumes manufactured there being exported in them to this region. Stern (1999:443-444) states that Alexandria's flourishing glass industry seemingly suffered a marked decline in the first century AD, a period when Thebes appears to have been the main exporting Egyptian glass centre.

In ancient Egypt glass objects, as well as faience, at least as far as vessels are concerned, copied forms that were originally made in stone or pottery. Vessels in painted wood in turn imitated these glass vessels. These glass vessels served the same function as their stone and pottery counterparts, serving as containers for perfumes, ointments and cosmetics (Nicholson & Henderson 2000:195-196).

An exquisite vessel for scented oil in polychrome glass from Tell el-Amarna, Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, now in the British Museum (EA 55193), is in the form of a *bulti*-fish⁵, the tail and fins being added separately. The core would be scraped out afterwards to form the cavity. This vessel was found through excavations buried, together with several

⁵ This bottle is the most spectacular, complete and most fish-like of all the extant fish-shaped glass vessels made in or around the Amarna Period, Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom (Russmann 2001:164).

other small luxury ones, beneath the plaster floor in a room east of house N 49.20 at Tell el-Amarna. The colours used in this bottle resemble lapis lazuli, turquoise and yellow jasper. These symbolic glass colours were favoured by the ancient Egyptians, as glass was cheaper and more versatile than semi-precious stones (Russmann 2001:164) (Figure C.1).

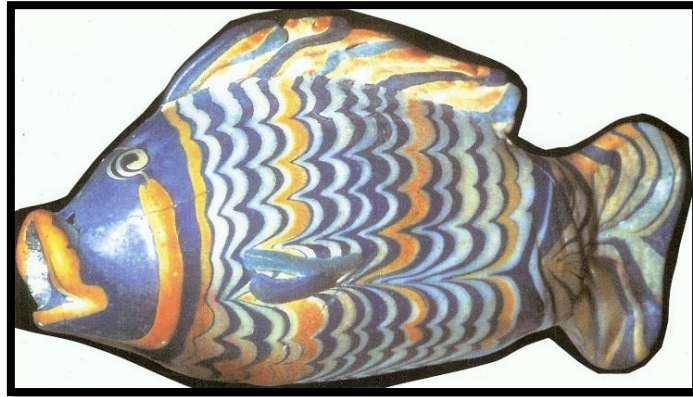


Figure C.1: A polychrome glass perfume vessel in the shape of a *bulti*-fish

Two core-formed polychrome perfume flasks from the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, now housed in the British Museum, London, have colourful threads as decoration (Figure C.2).

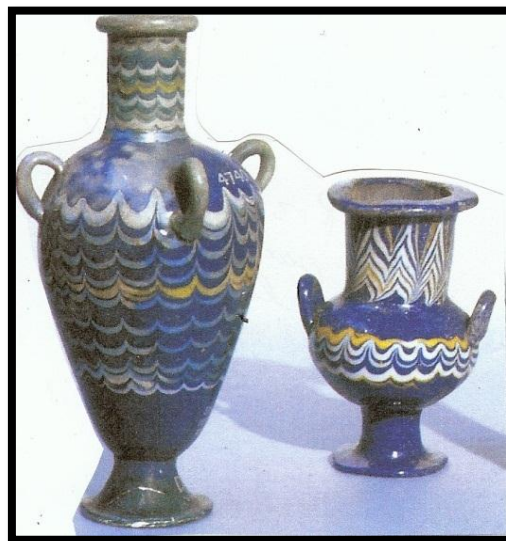


Figure C2: Polychrome glass perfume vases

A yellow glass vase in the shape of a pomegranate, now housed in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (26.7.1180), when purchased in Cairo, was said to have originated from a glass workshop discovered near Akhmin in Middle Egypt in 1912. Although the Egyptians

imitated organic forms in vessels since prehistoric times, the pomegranate only arrived in Egypt at the beginning of the New Kingdom, probably brought back from military campaigns in western Asia. This vase with a core-formed body and the nine calyx tips being formed when the glass was still soft, is thought to date either to the Nineteenth or Twentieth Dynasty, New Kingdom, and may have contained a precious scented oil or perfume. It is also possible however that it contained pomegranate juice, added to wine at banquets (Lilyquist *et al.* 2001:14) (Figure C.3).

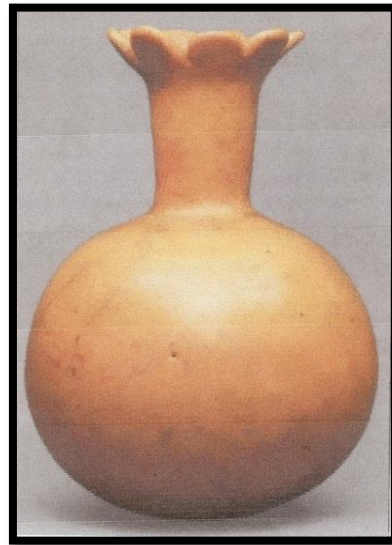


Figure C.3: A yellow glass vase in the shape of a pomegranate

A turquoise glass footed cup, copied from a stone prototype of the same period, is now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (26.7.1178). Travertine three-ribbed cups are not known before the reign of Amenhotep III in the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, so this glass three-ribbed cup is thought to date to that period or perhaps slightly later. Tomb scenes reveal that these vessels were used by servants to dispense perfumed unguents to guests at banquets (Lilyquist *et al.* 2001:13). Perfumed unguent cones were also carried in these dishes at banquets (Friedman 1998b:228) (Figure C.4).



Figure C4: A glass footed cup

FAIENCE

Faience⁶ is a non-clay ceramic material comprising crushed quartz or sand together with small amounts of lime and either natron or plant ash, coated with a soda-lime-silica glaze. It is more correctly called ‘Egyptian faience’, to avoid confusion with a tin-glazed earthenware, also called faience, made in Faenza in northern Italy (and elsewhere) from late medieval times onward. Since the Italian pottery has now been renamed majolica, it is usual to drop the ‘Egyptian’ part of the name and to just call it faience (Nicholson & Peltenburg 2000:177).

⁶ Friedman (1998a:16-17) states that it appears to be certain that faience workshops existed by the First Dynasty, as in that and the second dynasty (together also known as the Archaic Period), faience objects in the form of small votive temple offerings, decorative temple wall tiles and royal tomb objects were used extensively. Nicholson & Peltenburg (2000:189) state that there is evidence that faience was produced at Abydos at least as early as the middle of the Old Kingdom to the early Middle Kingdom. Several bowl-shaped pits, some lined with broken bricks, and all fire-reddened, thought to be the remains of kilns (although not associated with a superstructure such as a house or workshop) were unearthed during an excavation by the joint University of Pennsylvania Museum/Yale University/Institute of Fine Arts, New York University expedition, directed by Dr. Mathew Adams, revealed what appears to be a faience factory site, with several bowl-shaped pits. Some of the pits were lined with broken bricks, all fire-reddened, thought to be the remains of kilns. They are of the opinion that if there was indeed no superstructure, then these kilns can perhaps be regarded as the shallow pits, beneath bonfires, meaning that the open fire technique was employed here for faience making. During the Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period there is evidence that faience was produced at Lisht. A so-called ‘glaze factory’ was unearthed in buildings AI.2 and AI.3 in the 1920-21 season of excavations by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, situated immediately south of the probable line of the south wall of the pyramid enclosure, where numerous pieces of faience (mostly beads) were found. The most convincing evidence however was the discovery of what possibly is a kiln, a semi-circular structure built into the corner of a room, apparently filled with an ashy deposit, having an external diameter of about 1.5 metres (Nicholson & Peltenburg 2000:181-182).

Nicholson & Peltenburg (2000:182-183) state that the New Kingdom was the zenith of Egyptian faience-working, when faience was exported around the Mediterranean, being well-known from Cyprus and Crete and even parts of the Greek mainland.

When faience first appeared in ancient Egypt in the late Predynastic Period it was blue-green, the colouring agent for this glaze⁷ being crushed copper. The palette eventually expanded to many other colours, including, amongst others, a broad range of blues, greens, white, yellows, marbled browns and blacks (Friedman 1998a:15). In Predynastic burials the earliest faience objects found adorning the dead are beads and amulets used as jewellery. In the Early Dynastic Period, while beads and amulets continued to appear in burials, even royal ones, new types of faience objects appeared in temple and shrine contexts, such as figurines, votive objects, tiles and vessels. In the Old Kingdom, while beads were rare, faience was employed for the same type of objects as before. During the First Intermediate Period beads and amulets continued to be made in faience. By the Twelfth Dynasty in the Middle Kingdom the variety of faience objects increased to include figurines in all sizes and shapes. These mostly depicted animals, found in private tombs in cemeteries throughout Egypt, such as in Heliopolis, Lischt, Beni Hasan, Abydos, and the west bank at Thebes, whereas earlier human and animal figurines are found in public shrines and cult temples. During this period faience was particularly important for the production of funerary jewellery, such as broad collars. In the New Kingdom the repertoire of faience objects was expanded to include statues, *shabtis*, game boards, *sistra*, headrests, model furniture and large containers such as canopic jars, in usually funerary Eighteenth Dynasty contexts. It was during this dynasty that faience became popular for small pieces such as containers, game pieces and inlay, made in moulds by the middle of the dynasty. In the second half of the New Kingdom, there was another expansion in the types of faience objects that were produced, such as model equipment for burials and foundation deposits and grand objects such as the lion-shaped newel posts from the throne dias of Ramesses II's palace at Quantir. From the Third Intermediate Period on the most common objects made of faience were beads, inlays and *shabtis* (Patch 1998:32-33). Stylistic changes occurred during the Ptolemaic Period. Egyptian surface decoration was combined with decorative motifs inspired by Greek and Near Eastern tradition, such as rosettes, palmettes, griffins, garland-and-bow designs and dancing figures, arranged in a series of friezes. Vessel types used in this period, such as the

⁷ Faience objects were glazed employing three different methods: direct application, efflorescence and cementation (Maravelia 2002:82-83). With the efflorescence process, soluble alkali salts are mixed with the faience body prior to the construction of the object, which on drying causes the salts to effloresce or deposit on the surface, which become the glaze during firing. During the cementation process a faience object is placed in a glazing powder, which during firing becomes glazed. Faience from the Ptolemaic Period has a characteristic light green overall glaze, with subtle surface decorations enhanced by two-tone glazes in contrasting colours, both types of glazes containing lead-alkali-silica. The earlier pharaonic faience has an alkali-silica glaze (Mao 2001:17 and 21-22). Efflorescence is the most common glazing technique for faience (Friedman 1998:266).

rhyton, originated in the Near East (Mao 2001:17). It was during this period that a distinctive apple-green colour was introduced and a preference for high-quality matte faience became evident, instead of the shiny glazes of earlier periods (Nicholson 1998:62).

Bianchi (1998:24) argues that faience, generally translated as such from the Egyptian word *tjehnet* (etymologically relating to words connoting luminosity and scintillation) was not an inexpensive material used as a substitute for the costlier lapis lazuli or other semi-precious stones because it could be mass-produced, as is commonly believed. Rather objects made from it had an intrinsic symbolic value and they were not crafted primarily as utilitarian items. Foremost of the symbolic associations in connection with faience is solar imagery, complemented by its predominantly blue-green colour with connotations of rebirth and regeneration (Bianchi 1998:28).

In a similar vein, Friedman (1998a:15) points out that although faience may originally have been developed as an inexpensive substitute for the violet-blue rock lapis lazuli (*hsbd*) (obtained by the ancient Egyptians and other civilizations of the Ancient Near East from Badakshan in Afghanistan from at least the fourth millennium BC) or for the blue-green mineral turquoise (*mfk3t*), it was not merely a cheap substitute for these materials, or any other ones, but had a meaning far transcending its mundane composition, being made of common materials, not valuable in themselves. Through the goddess Hathor, sacred to the Sinai where the Egyptians obtained turquoise, who had the epithets 'Mistress of Turquoise' and 'Mistress of Faience', faience had inherent associations with light, rebirth, and fertility. Friedman states further that although faience was used in many strata of Egyptian society⁸, it was essentially a luxury item, although Maravelia (2002:82) on the other hand states that because faience looked like both lapis lazuli and turquoise (the original blue-green colour), it could be used by the Egyptians as a perfect substitute for these more expensive materials.

One of the most common forms of everyday vessels in ancient Egypt was the cylindrical jar, with flaring rim and foot, and a typical function of it was to hold unguents/perfumed oils, which would have included scented unguents/perfumed oils. These jars first started in pottery forms in the late Predynastic Period and First Dynasty and then stone forms appeared,

⁸ In the late Middle Kingdom faience animals were popular items of funerary equipment in non-elite tombs, such as the jerboa mice in the collection of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, although mice are rare (Friedman 1998b:239).

which remained frequent through at least the Eighteenth Dynasty. From the Sixth Dynasty, Old Kingdom, onwards these jars sometimes had lids. Faience cylindrical jars to store unguents in appeared at least from the Twelfth Dynasty, Middle Kingdom, as a blue faience vase belonging to this period from Kahun which contains resin provides evidence that faience began to be used for these unguent vessels at the same time that blue anhydrite became a popular material for unguent vessels (Friedman 1998b:227).

A faience example of a cylindrical jar, with traces of blue on it, which means that this was probably the original colour, now faded, from the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, is now in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge (E.274.1939). The lid is internally rimmed, allowing it to fit snugly into the mouth of the jar (Friedman 1998b:227) (Figure C.5).

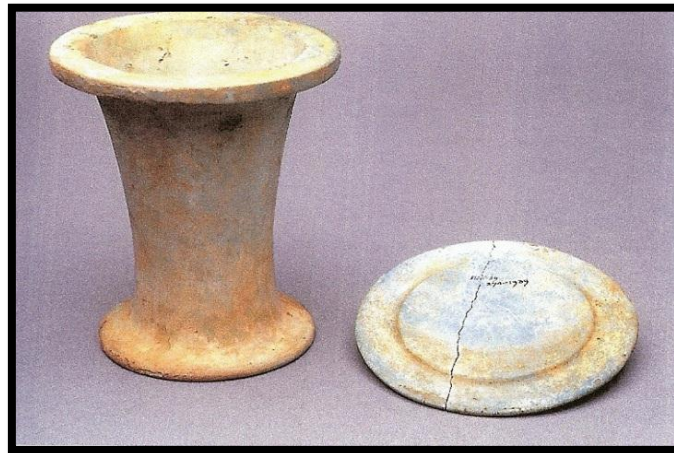


Figure C.5: A faience cylindrical jar with lid

A faience vase in the shape of trussed duck or goose⁹, dating to the Late Third Intermediate Period to Late Period, now in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (Marilyn M Simpson Fund 1996.108), has a spotted decoration in dark blue to indicate the plucked feathers. This exquisite vessel may have been used to store precious perfumed oil in, or perhaps it served as a funerary offering (Friedman 1998b:215) (Figure C.6).

⁹ This is a motif found throughout the Dynastic Period (Lacovar 1998:215). See ‘anhydrite’ under Annexure C for further discussion of this motif.



Figure C.6: A faience vase in the shape of a trussed duck or goose

A faience perfume vase from the late Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, found in the Sesebi necropolis, Nubia¹⁰, now in the British Museum, London (EA 64041), in the form of a small amphora, a shape also used for clay vessels and travertine stoneware, has swags of lotus buds and leaves as a motif for its decoration (Friedman 1998b:213) (Figure C.7).

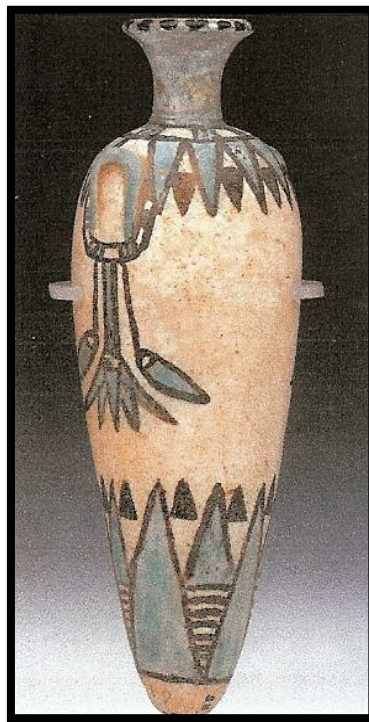


Figure C.7: A faience perfume vase lotus motif decoration on it

¹⁰ The Egyptians colonised this area in southern Nubia in the New Kingdom, where they established a walled settlement (Friedman 1998:213).

An unusual five-tone faience jar masterpiece (the only extant faience vessel to be five-tone), Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, now in the Musée du Louvre, Paris (E4877), is inscribed for king Amenhotep III and Queen Tiye. The predominant colour of this jar is a rich yellow. On the front of the jar blue hieroglyphs are inlaid within a trapezoidal-shaped panel outlined in blue inlay. The left hand column reads 'Son of Ra, Amenhotep, ruler of Thebes.' The central column reads 'The good god Neb-Maat-Ra'. The words 'may he live forever' extend beneath both these columns. The right hand column reads 'the king's wife, Tiye'. The words beneath this column read 'may she be healthy'. The lid has open and closed lotus flowers in blue inlay on it, with four apple green inlaid dots at the interior tips of the former and twelve red inlaid dots at the outer tips of the latter. The stopper has a daisy design on it in inlaid white. No residue was found in this jar, so it might never have been used in everyday life but for ceremonial purposes (Friedman 1998b:183). This could have been a container for scented oil or for eye-paint (Figure C.8).

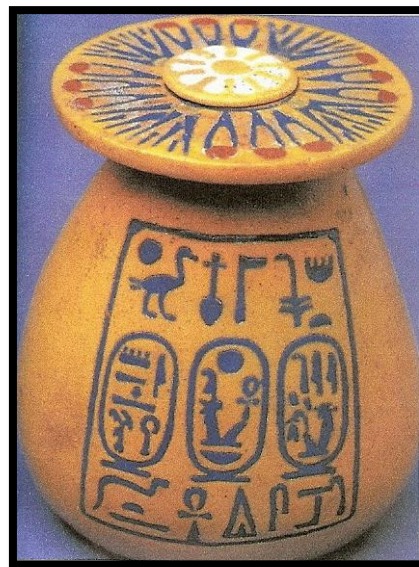


Figure C.8: A five-tone faience jar

A deep-blue faience footed dish from the Eighteenth Dynasty, New kingdom, thought to be from the reign of Amenhotep III because of the daisy motif on it, which this king frequently employed in decorative art and sculpture, as well as the placement of dots at the end of the daisy petals (only intermittently here), typical of work in his reign, is now in The Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, Maryland (48.1608a,b). This example could have been a perfume holder for the living, or a tomb gift for the deceased for banquets in the afterlife (Friedman 1998b:228) (Figure C.9).

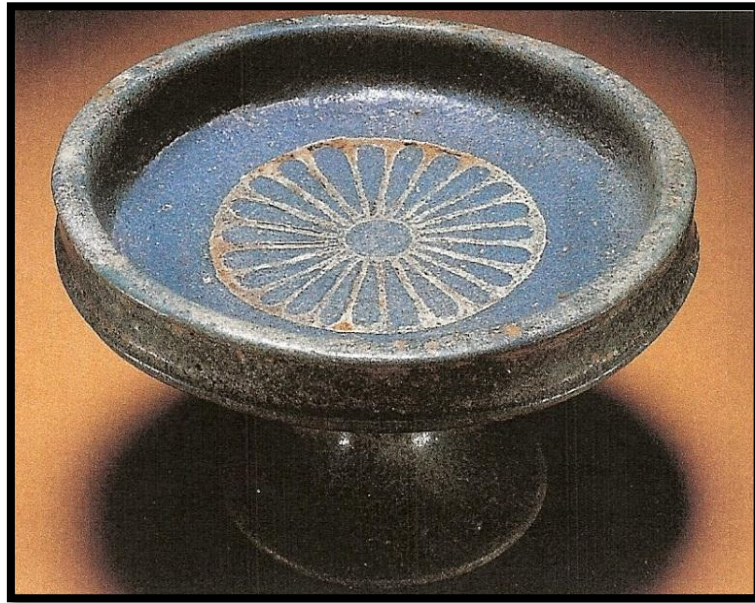


Figure C.9: A faience footed jar

A blue faience stirrup jar with black glaze details from the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, now in a private collection, demonstrates how Egyptian craftsmen borrowed forms and motifs from neighbouring civilisations but at the same time adapting them to conform with strict Egyptian design tenets. This vessel corresponds approximately to the classic form of a Late Helladic IIIB stirrup jar typically produced in the Mycenaean world in the thirteenth century BC. Although the larger Mycenaean stirrup jars were seemingly intended to contain olive oil, the smaller ones and this Egyptian faience imitation, only 6.5 cm in height, appear to be for perfumed oils or other precious liquids (Friedman 1998b:228). A typical Egyptian lotus decoration can be seen on the top half of the stirrup jar (Figure C.10).

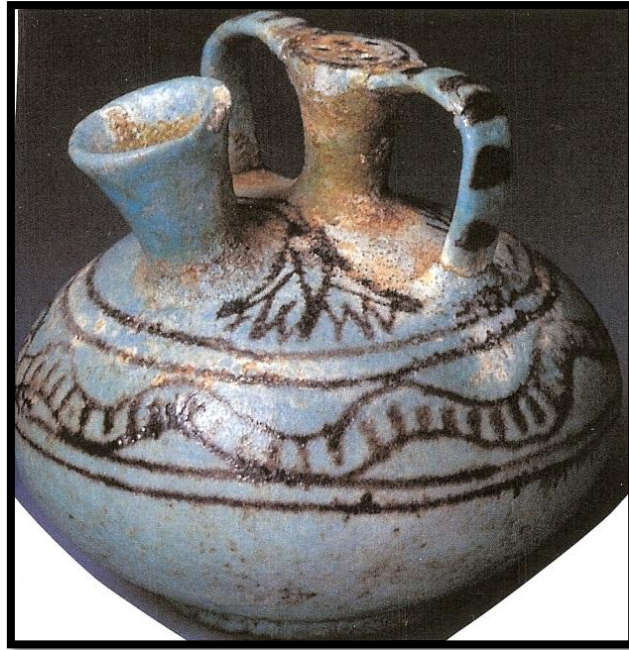


Figure C.10: A faience stirrup jar with lotus motif

This neck from a faience *aryballos* (perfume vase) from Abydos, Twenty sixth Dynasty, Late Period, now in the Musee du Louvre, Paris (E 11261), has two heads, the better preserved one a male with a cropped beard, and the other one tentatively identified as a female. The beard indicates that the male figure is probably intended to be a foreigner, perhaps a Persian, based on Egyptian descriptions of the Achaemenids. This is not surprising, as Achaemenid fashions were being depicted in Egypt, and presumably also worn, before the Persian occupation in 525 BC. The colour of the fabric appears to have been originally apple-green (now faded), a colour traditionally employed by the Egyptians for the production of *shabtis* from the Twenty-Sixth to the Thirtieth Dynasties, Late Period. There was a flourishing faience industry in Egypt during the Third Intermediate Period, when amongst other things, *aryballoi* and zoomorphic vessels were produced (Friedman 1998:229) (Figure C.11).

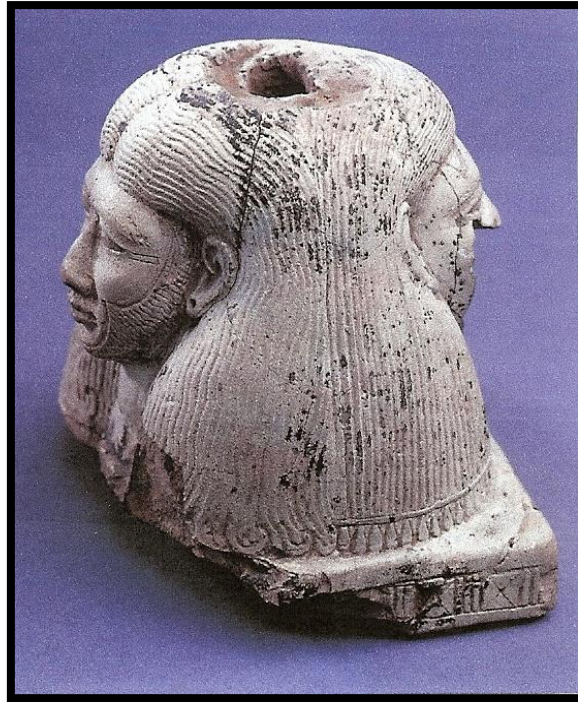


Figure C.11: A neck from a faience *aryballos*

A blue (with purple-black dots) faience *aryballos* (vase for perfume or scented oil), in the shape of a hedgehog¹¹, East Greek,¹² Archaic period, second half of the sixth century BC, is now in The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (1999.254). For approximately one hundred years production of small faience *aryballoi*, such as this East Greek one, flourished at Naukratis (Arnold *et al.* 2000:12). From the reign of Ahmose II, in the Twenty-sixth Dynasty, the Greeks established a colony, a trading emporium¹³, at this city in the western Delta of Egypt, which flourished into the Roman Period, serving Pharaonic interest by attracting trade into Egypt (Spencer 2007:253). Many of the vessels were in the form of an animal, such as fish, goats, rabbits and monkeys but the hedgehog was the most common form. This *aryballos* has an Egyptian sphinx-like head on top of the hedgehog's back, directly in front of the vessel's mouth and handle (Arnold *et al.* 2000:12) (Figure C.12).

¹¹ The hedgehog was the emblem of the goddess Abast, who had a cult centre in the Late Period at the Bahariya Oasis. This animal seemingly served some magical function, as many amulets were made in the form of it, although ancient Egyptian texts do not mention its symbolic significance. The Egyptians possibly saw the animal's behaviour of curling itself into a ball when threatened as an apotropaic or protective symbol. On the other hand, they might have viewed the hedgehog as a symbol of rebirth after death (Friedman 1998:220).

¹² Faience had become a popular material in East Greece, especially in Rhodes, by the sixth century BC (Friedman 1998:214).

¹³ The Greeks founded other trading emporiums at other eastern Mediterranean sites, including Rhodes (Arnold *et al.* 2000:12).



Figure C.12: A faience *aryballos* in the shape of a hedgehog

EGYPTIAN BLUE

Egyptian blue¹⁴, a frit, known as early as the Fourth Dynasty, Old Kingdom, is a material that is related to faience and is sometimes confused with it. Frits¹⁵ can be divided into ‘blue frits’, known as ‘Egyptian blue’ in which the main crystalline phase is a calcium-copper tetrakisilicate in a very limited matrix of glass. The other type is ‘turquoise blue frits’, where the dominant phase, other than quartz, is a calcium silicate known as wollastonite. Both these types are products of a solid-state reaction similar to that used in Egyptian glass making (Nicholson 1998:55). Egyptian blue frits underwent gradual refinement, becoming increasingly glass-like going into the early Roman period but are easily distinguished from faience in a broken section as they do not have a core and do not have a separate glaze layer, being homogenous throughout (Nicholson & Peltenburg 2000:178). Egyptian blue, of much greater antiquity than glass, is closely allied to it and appears to be an ancient Egyptian invention (Nicholson & Henderson 2000:205).

¹⁴ There is evidence at site QI at Quantir, that Egyptian blue was manufactured there (Rehren & Pusch 1997:140).

¹⁵ A frit is the product of a solid state reaction. A similar solid state reaction was used in the first stages of manufacture of Egyptian glass (Nicholson & Henderson 2000:205). Besides faience and frits such as Egyptian blue, the Egyptians produced other vitreous materials, such as glazed steatite, although other types of stones were glazed as well. As with faience, the glazing methods of direct application and cementation were used for steatite. The third glazing method used for faience, efflorescence, was not used for steatite however, as it is a stone and is not prepared in particulate form like faience is. The inception of glazed steatite in ancient Egypt, like that of the other vitreous materials, pre-dates that of glass, all beginning in the fourth millennium BC (Tite & Bimson 1989:87).

A grayish periwinkle-blue, with bright yellow and red details, perfume jar¹⁶ in the image of the god Bes dating to the early to mid-Twenty-sixth Dynasty, Late Period, made of Egyptian blue is now housed in the Cleveland Museum of Art (1955.13), Ohio. Bes's crown plumes, which would have acted as the vessel's stopper, are missing, the jar's mouth acting as the *modius* on which these plumes would have stood. The holes in his fists would have held applicator sticks, probably made out of ivory or wood (Friedman 1998:209) (Figure C.13).

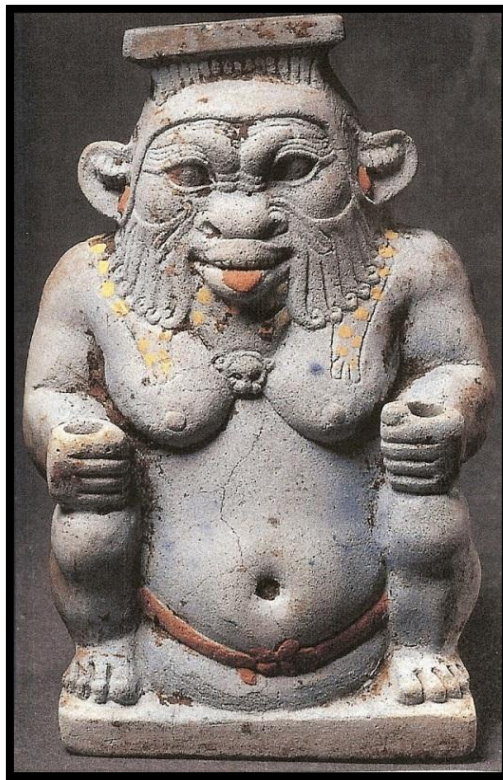


Figure C.13: An Egyptian blue perfume jar in the shape of the god Bes

STONE

Anhydrite

Anhydrite, sometimes called by the misnomer of 'blue marble', is thought to have been quarried by the ancient Egyptians somewhere in the Eastern Desert, the exact site being

¹⁶ Cylindrical jars were also made of Egyptian blue.

unknown. Harder than travertine, it often has a lustrous sheen, its colour varying from white, to rose, to blue. The Egyptians preferred the blue variety, using it in two special ways. First it was used in the Middle Kingdom to carve flasks for liquids such as oils and perfumes, as well as ointment jars and eye-paint pots, mostly in simple undecorated shapes. These containers were with very few exceptions always carved from stone¹⁷, although other varieties besides anhydrite were also used. Elaborate forms of these containers however were almost exclusively carved from blue anhydrite, the second special way in which the Egyptians used this stone, although stones such as calcite were also used. These forms included monkeys, tilapia fish and ducks. Carved blue anhydrite objects are very rare and the period of their production is confined, with two exceptions¹⁸, to a very limited period of just over four hundred years, extending from the early Middle Kingdom, Eleventh Dynasty, to the Seventeenth Dynasty, end of the Second Intermediate Period, indicating that the Egyptians' source of this stone was small, and seemingly virtually exhausted by the start of the New Kingdom, Eighteenth Dynasty (Fay 1998:23-27).

Duck flasks are either carved in the form of a plucked duckling, a plucked duck, or a pair of plucked ducklings or ducks arranged back-to-back. Except for rare examples, stylistically dateable to the early Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, carved from travertine, presumably after the Egyptians' source of anhydrite was exhausted, these duck flasks were always carved from blue anhydrite, thirteen complete ones and two fragments of which are extant. Where the provenances of these flasks are known, they were found in burials most often in Northern Upper Egypt, in particular the area encompassing Girgeh, Abydos and Thebes. It is difficult to date these flasks, as none of them have inscriptions on them. It is only through analysis of indirect evidence and inference that this can be achieved, such as considering other blue anhydrite vessels. Dates that have variously been assigned to them range from the middle of the Twelfth Dynasty, Middle Kingdom, to the Seventeenth Dynasty, Second Intermediate Period. If this is correct, it means that the Egyptians produced these flasks for well over three hundred years (Fay 1998: 27-29).

¹⁷See Figure C.5, Annexure C, for an exquisite faience example.

¹⁸ The exceptions are a vessel trimmed with gold belonging to a minor wife of Tuthmosis III, Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (26.8.35a.b) and the head and feet of a *shabti* from the tomb of Ramesses II, Nineteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom (Fay 1998:46).

Stylistically, the blue anhydrite duck flasks can be organised into four types (A, B, C and D), with ducks from types A, C, and D being so homogenous, that all extant examples within each type can be attributed to a single workshop, and probably to one artisan. All the extant type D examples are presumably the work of a single craftsman, who appears to be not as talented as the artisans who carved the ducks on the A, B and C type flasks (Fay 1998:33 and 36).

According to Fay (1998:34-35) the four different types can be described, as shown in Table C.1.

Table C.1: The types of anhydrite blue duck flasks

Type A	‘The head is sharply undercut to the base of the beak, the eye is rimmed in copper, and the eye socket is shown as a depression’
Type B	‘The eye socket may be shown as a groove, the hind toe and the vent may be indicated’
Type C	‘The head is small in proportion to the body. The eyes are small, the eye sockets are not indicated. The beak is long and narrow, and its surface may be recessed at the side of the head. The neck is narrow. The neck may be turned to one side and/or worked only in bold relief on the vessel wall, not free from the body’
Type D	‘These are the largest ducks, and have elliptical bodies. The head is large, with only the beak tip pressed against the breast. The mouth of the vessel is surrounded by a sharp rim’

Fay (1998:27-29) states that with two exceptions, all the extant blue anhydrite duck flasks have spouts which are narrow and have rounded rims, which suggests that these vessels were not meant to contain a solid but a liquid, like a perfume or scented body oil. She states further that an anomaly exists in that these flasks are the only stone flasks to depict prepared food and it would be reasonable to expect that they contained something edible or drinkable, yet anhydrite containers are only associated with perfumes, scented oils and cosmetics. She is of the opinion that the symbolic meaning of the blue anhydrite ducks perhaps partly explains this anomaly. Abrasions are often visible on at least one surface of the flasks,

usually on the duck's back, indicating that they were used during the course of daily life, while those with known find-spots were amongst burial goods. Symbolically, the role of the blue anhydrite duck flasks in the funerary context would have been to provide food for the inner body and perfume or scented oil for the outer body of the deceased in the afterlife.

Newman¹⁹, R (1998:49-52), from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, carried out a gas chromatography/mass spectrometry (GC/MS) analysis of solvent-extracted organic residues²⁰ found in three of the blue anhydrite duck flasks (plus fourteen other blue anhydrite vessels in a variety of shapes, including monkeys and fish) in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York and one blue anhydrite duck flask in the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. If the vessels originally contained perfume, then base oils, animal fats and some compounds from the fragrant materials used in making the perfume could still be present in the organic residues. His analysis revealed that with two exceptions, a pair of monkey-shaped jars, all the vessels in question appear to have contained an oil or fat. The specific types of oils could not be identified but some almost certainly contained a drying oil, such as linseed oil, having high levels of azelaic acid, a dibasic acid. Most however contained non-drying vegetable oils, such as olive oil, and animal fats, used in the production of perfumes. Almost half of the objects containing oil or fat also contained a conifer resin of some type (most probably pine, larch or fir), with three objects containing beeswax (Newman, R 1998:49-51).

A blue anhydrite duck flask for unguent from the Thirteenth Dynasty, Second Intermediate Period, now housed in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (1927.27.9.1), is in the form of a pair of ducks trussed for sacrifice. The jar has copper inlays in it. Fay (1998:25) identifies this flask as Type A, according to her classification of these duck flasks (see Table C.1) (Figure C.14).

¹⁹ Fay (1998:46), from the Museum of Art, New York, states that Newman carried out these tests in his capacity of Research Scientist, Department of Objects Conservation and Scientific Research, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, at her request.

²⁰ Newman, R (1998:49) states that these organic residues have penetrated the walls of many stone (and ceramic) vessels which once held organic materials, such as perfumes, cosmetics and foodstuffs. Strong organic solvents can extract these residues, at least partially. These are then available for analysis, especially useful in cases where no traces of them can visibly be seen. He cautions however that analysis can only afford us a glimpse of the original contents of the vessels and not an accurate view of them, due to factors such as the solvent not necessarily extracting all types of organic materials; the analytical technique chosen not necessarily analysing all the compounds found in the extracted material; and most importantly, the effects of aging, which destroys many organic materials and changes the composition of others.

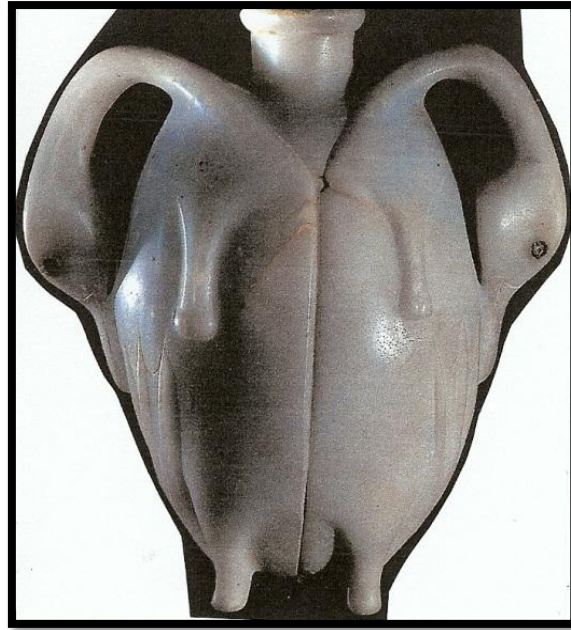


Figure C.14: A blue anhydrite duck flask for unguent

A blue anhydrite unguent jar from the Twelfth Dynasty, Middle Kingdom, or Thirteenth Dynasty, Second Intermediate Period, now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (10.176.54), is in the form of a baboon holding a jar, which may once have contained an applicator stick. The baboon is wearing a shell pendant around his neck, a badge of office (Manniche 1999:70) (Figure C.15).



Figure C.15: A blue anhydrite jar in the form of a baboon

Breccia

Breccia is a composite stone with fragments of one type of stone embedded in a matrix of another. The Egyptians obtained a green variety from the Wadi Hammamat in the eastern desert and a red and white variety in the western desert and at various sites along the Nile (Wilkinson 1999:86).

An unguent vessel for offerings (13 cm in height), from the Predynastic Period, now housed in the Agyptisches Museum, Berlin, made out of marble breccia, is in the form of an ibis (Figure C.16).

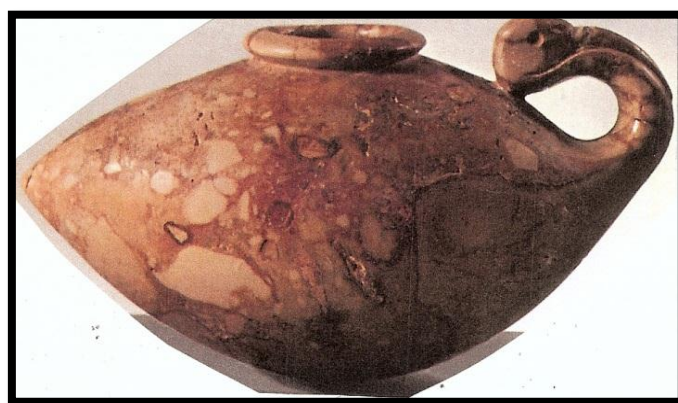


Figure C.16: An unguent jar made out of marble breccia

Obsidian

Obsidian is a volcanic glass, usually black in colour, but may also be red, brown or colour-banded, formed from magma that did not allow minerals to crystallise, as it cooled too rapidly for this to happen. Obsidian had to be imported into Egypt, a process that began in the Naqada I period, nearly all of it found in Egypt being of a pure jet-black variety. The source of the obsidian obtained by the ancient Egyptians is not known for certain but an Upper Egyptian site such as Abydos is more likely to have obtained its obsidian from an African source, such as Ethiopia, whereas a site in the Delta might well have found Asiatic sources to be more accessible. Further investigation needs to be made of obsidian sources throughout the Red Sea region. During the Late Period the Egyptians could well have obtained obsidian from Aegean sources. Obsidian was used by the Egyptians to make a variety of objects, including dishes, the pupils of inlaid eyes in copper statues, mirror handles,

model vessels in 'opening of the mouth' sets and cylindrical unguent/perfume jars (Aston, Harrell & Shaw 2000:46-47).

An obsidian cylindrical unguent jar, trimmed with gold, from the Twelfth Dynasty, Middle Kingdom, is now housed in the Cleveland Museum of Art, Ohio (CMA 85.107). This exquisite cylindrical jar is not the only extant one made out of these particular materials, there being other known counterparts from excavations in both Egypt and Syria (Kozloff 1986:331) (Figure C.17).



Figure C.17: An obsidian cylindrical jar trimmed with gold

Terracotta

The ancient Egyptians used Nile silt clay (terracotta) for the production of human and animal figures, the earliest extant ones dating from the Predynastic Period. During the Middle Kingdom most elaborate figurines were made out of terracotta, such as female fertility figurines and bound captives, both having magical significance. Terracotta was used more extensively in the Late Period and its use was widespread in the Roman and Ptolemaic Periods due to the increasing Greek and later Hellenistic influence exerted on Egypt. Late settlements at Memphis have yielded large numbers of terracotta heads through excavation, whilst clay lamps of various types were very common in the Roman Period and figures of deities and animals have been found at sites dating to this period (Spencer 2007:229-230).

A vase, twenty-three cm in height, originally from Thebes, for perfumed oil made from painted terracotta in the form of a woman playing a lute dates to the Eighteenth Dynasty,

New Kingdom (Spencer 2007:228). This is an example of the fine red-ware figure vessels that were produced in the middle of the Eighteenth Dynasty (Russmann 2001:170) (Figure C.18).

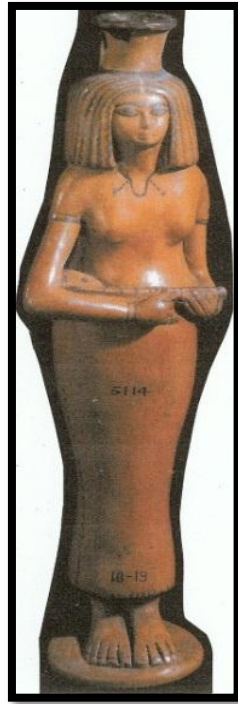


Figure C18: A terracotta vase in the shape of a woman playing a lute

Travertine

Small deposits of travertine²¹ occur sporadically in Egypt in the Eocene limestones of the Nile valley, as well as the adjacent desert plateaux (mainly in the eastern), between Esna and Cairo. Nine ancient Egyptian travertine quarries are known, the most famous being situated eighteen kilometres from Tell el-Amarna in Middle Egypt. From the Old Kingdom onward, texts refer to this site as Hatnub ('mansion of gold'), where inscriptions, graffiti and

²¹ Aston *et al.* (2000 :59) state that travertine, a sedimentary rock (a variety of limestone) and consisting largely of the mineral calcite (in the form of calcium carbonate and aragonite), used by the ancient Egyptians from Predynastic times to produce the majority of their stone vessels, has frequently been called 'Egyptian alabaster' or simply 'alabaster' by scholars. This terminology, according to them, is incorrect, as true alabaster, as recognised by geologists, is composed of the mineral gypsum. They point out that some scholars refer to travertine as 'calcite' or even 'calcite-alabaster'. They are not in favour of either of these two terms, as the former is the name of a mineral and therefore not suitable for a rock, and the latter is a hybrid name, not recognised at all by geologists. James (2000 :305), whilst pointing out that the term 'alabaster' for this stone is incorrect, is one such scholar that advocates the name 'calcite' for it. Manniche (1999:9) is another scholar that refers to this stone as 'calcite', whilst Wilkinson (1999 :86) refers to it as 'alabaster'. The author will use the term 'travertine' for this stone in this dissertation.

archaeological remains indicate that the Egyptians intermittently exploited it for about three thousand years, from at least as early as the reign of king Khufu in the Fourth Dynasty, Old Kingdom, to the Roman period (Aston *et al.* 2000:59). This stone is white to yellow in colour, is translucent, and frequently is attractively banded or zoned (James 2000:305). According to Pliny (NH XIII, 19) travertine vessels are the best to store perfumes in.

A travertine unguent jar, Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, (provenance unknown but probably found at Tell el-Amarna), now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (17.190.1963), is in the form of a dwarf carrying a jar on which lotus leaves are engraved. (Figure C.19).

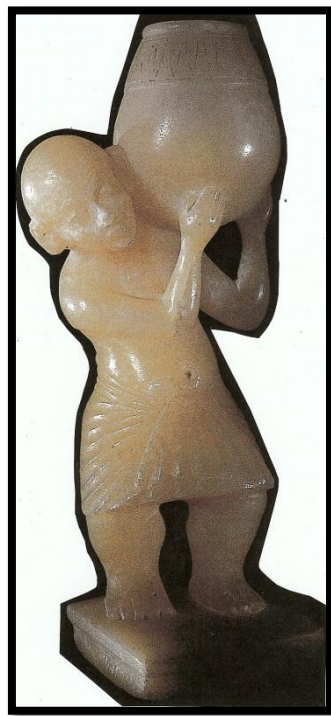


Figure C.19: A travertine unguent jar in the form of a dwarf carrying a jar

A travertine vessel for perfumed oil, early Twelfth Dynasty, Middle Kingdom, now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (1990.59.1), is in the form of a wildcat. The stopper is now lost. The eyes, one now lost, are made of rock crystal and set in bronze sockets (Fay 1998:25) (Figure C.20).



Figure C.20: A travertine vessel for perfumed oil in the form of a wildcat

A travertine jar for perfumed unguent/oil from the Sixth Dynasty, Old Kingdom, now housed in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (1992.338), is in the form of a mother monkey holding her young. The stopper is now lost. The jar is inscribed with the name of king Merenre. Jars such as this one and another similar one, but smaller, also housed in this museum, inscribed with the name of king Pepi I, were gifts from the king to favourites on the occasion of his *heb-sed* (Arnold 1999 :130) (Figure C.21).

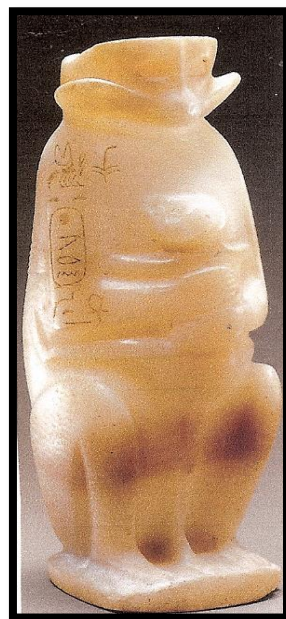


Figure C.21: A travertine jar to hold perfumed unguent/oil in the form of a mother monkey

travertine perfume jar, from the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, reign of Amenhotep IV/Akhenaten,²² now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (40.2.4), is in the slender form of the ancient *hs t* vase, its conical stopper being carved in one piece with the jar itself. On the side of the jar is a polychrome appliqué, applied to the jar with a thin layer of orange glue, depicting a naked girl, carved from a thin flake of carnelian. Her hair, featuring the side-lock of youth, is made from polished obsidian or black glass. She is standing on a lotus flower, made from minute spears and triangles of purple glass (imitating lapis lazuli), light blue glass (imitating turquoise), and polished carnelian. At the base of the lotus is a piece of thin gold plate (Hayes 1940:81-82) (Figure C.22).



Figure C.22: A travertine perfume jar in the form of a *hs t* vase

WOOD

Indigenous Egyptian trees produced a fairly poor quality of wood, so from early dynastic times on the Egyptians imported wood and lumbar on a large scale for various purposes, including carpentry for making furniture, shipbuilding, construction, and coffin making (Germer 2001b:540), although wood from indigenous species was used, but mainly for less important work (Wilkinson 1999:89). Wood was imported, amongst other places, from Lebanon and Nubia.

²² The Amarna period, Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, was the zenith of the manufacture of the minor decorative arts in ancient Egypt (Hayes 1940:81).

An unguent container of painted wood, with ivory inlay, from the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, early in the reign of Akhenaten, from the tomb of Hatiay, in the necropolis of Sheikh abd el-Qurna, now in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo (JE 31382), is in the form of a male servant supporting the actual vessel (with lid) which contains the unguent, a minuturised replica of the Syrian amphorae that were imported into Egypt during that period. The servant (standing on a base) is bent under the weight of this container, the exterior of which is richly decorated in black on a red background. The neck of the container has a continuous band of geometric and stylised flower motifs, whilst a broad frieze on the body of the vessel is dominated by the images of three calves, which contain ivory inlays. The unguent container comes from the tomb of Hatiay and his family in the Skeikh abd el-Qurna necropolis and was found in the coffin of the mistress of the house, Siamun (Tiradritti 2000:185) (Figure C.23).

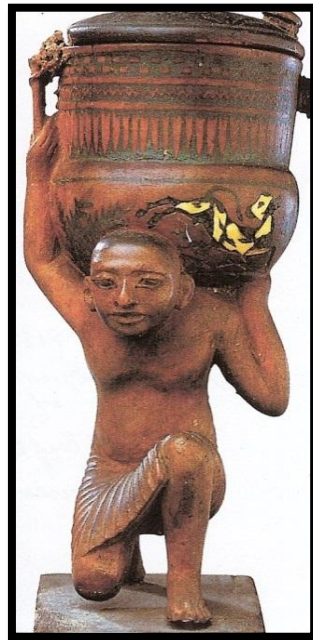


Figure C.23: A wooden unguent container in the shape of a male servant holding a vessel

GOLD

Gold appears in use in ancient Egypt at least as early as the Predynastic Period and continued to be used throughout its history for the manufacture of ritual and funerary objects, as well as personal possessions, obtained by the Egyptians from alluvial deposits in *wadis* in the (eastern) desert, or else mined from veins occurring in quartz formations (and obtained from places such as Nubia in vast quantities) (Schorsch 2001:55). In early Egyptian texts, the

word *nbw* was used to refer to gold, silver and electrum (a naturally occurring alloy of them both) until the early Fourth Dynasty, Old Kingdom, when *nbw* was reserved exclusively for gold and the term *nbw hd* ('white gold' or 'white precious metal') was brought into use for silver. The term *nbw* was used for gold until the New Kingdom, when several terms appear in texts to denote such things as origin, for example 'gold of the desert' (*nbwn h3st*); colour, for example 'green gold' (*nbw w3d*); or form, for example 'gold in lumps or nuggets' (*nbw m gngn*). The term *nbw hd* for silver however was quickly replaced by *hd*, with a gold determinative (*hd nbw*), used until the Ptolemaic Period. Another term found in Old Kingdom texts, *d' m*, is thought to mean electrum, which lost its meaning in the New Kingdom, when many new words, such as 'fine gold' (*nbw nfr*) dealt with the quality or purity of gold (Schorsch 2001:56).

Gold, regarded to be a divine and imperishable substance, was both economically and symbolically very important to the Egyptians, the untarnishing nature of gold symbolising eternal life. Gold's brightness echoed the brilliance of the sun, with the sun god Ra sometimes having the epithet 'the mountain of gold', with the flesh of all the deities descended from Ra thought by the Egyptians to be made from gold. Ra's daughter, the goddess Hathor was believed to be the personification of gold, often having the epithet 'The Golden One'. The goddess Isis was also associated with gold, her image and that of her sister Nephthys sometimes being placed on the hieroglyph for gold at the head and foot of sarcophagi in the New Kingdom. An amuletic 'vulture of gold' was also associated with Isis. This was placed around the necks of mummies in the new Kingdom and the Late Period to impart protection to the deceased (Wilkinson 1999:83).

A receptacle with gold leaf applied to it, either for eye-paint or scented unguent, in the form of a shell, originally from the funerary complex of king Sekhemhet, Third Dynasty, Old Kingdom, now in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo (JE 92656), has a loop at the top of it, allowing it to be worn as a pendant (Ziegler 2000:32) (Figure C.24).



Figure C.24: A receptacle with gold leaf applied to it

PERFUME VESSELS FOUND IN THE TOMB OF TUTANKHAMUN (KV 62) IN THE VALLEY OF THE KINGS

There were several remarkable travertine vessels found in Tutankhamun's tomb, Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, to hold scented oils/unguents, some of them very elaborate, all now housed in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo.

One vessel features a design representing the union of the two Lands of Upper (the lily on the left) and Lower Egypt (the papyrus on the right), featuring the two cartouches of Tutankhamun (JE 62116). Another vessel features a lion standing upright and features Tutankhamun's two cartouches and that of Ankhesenamun (JE 62114) (James 2000: 308 and 314).

One particularly extravagant vessel is made of four pieces of travertine cemented together featuring, amongst other things, two Nile gods (JE 62114). The main features of the vessel are embellished with gilding and inlays of coloured paste or faience. Symbolism overrides functionalism in this case. The body of the perfume vessel is in the shape of the *sma*-sign of unity. One Nile god has a papyrus clump on his head and is holding on to frets of papyrus plants tied onto the *sma*-sign, whilst the other Nile god has a clump of lily plants on his head and is holding on to frets of lily plants tied on to it (James 2000:307) (Figure C.25).



Figure C.25: A travertine perfume vessel featuring two Nile gods

Another such perfume vessel, made of two kinds of travertine, is an unguent jar with lion lid (JE 62119), which had not been opened by the robbers of the tomb in antiquity and still contained a fatty mass weighing about 450 g. A chemical analysis done at the time of the discovery of the tomb (1922) revealed that it contained 90% neutral animal fat and about 10% of some resin or balsam. The jar, with scenes of the desert hunt on the sides, is supported on travertine cross bars featuring heads of Nubians and Asiatics carved in red and black stones. The lid, with a recumbent lion on top of it (featuring Tutankhamun's two cartouches) with a pink ivory tongue and gold eyes, is pivoted on a pink ivory knob (James 2000:314) (Figure C.26).

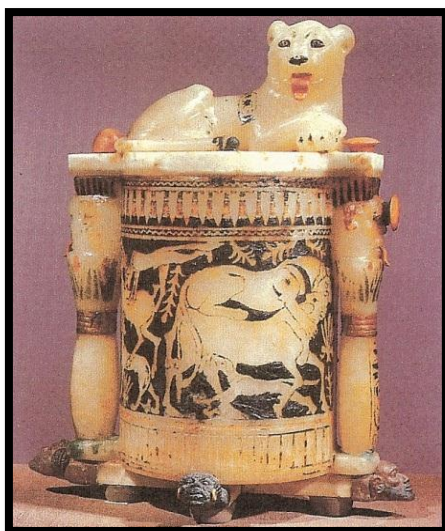


Figure C.26: Travertine unguent jar with a lion on the lid

A spectacular gold box to hold scented unguent (traces of which were still inside it), bristling with symbolism, is in the form of a double two-sided cartouche, its lid having double plumes and sun-discs. The two cartouches on the front of the box show the king as a child (with a sidelock indicating this) and a *uraeus* on his forehead, the pharaonic symbol of power. The cartouches on the other side of the box show the king wearing the blue crown. In one of them his face is blackened, possibly a reference to regeneration. Chased designs on the side walls of the box show Heh, god of eternity, kneeling on the *heb* hieroglyph for 'festival' and holding palm-tree branches in each hand, symbolizing millions of years. An *ankh* hieroglyph hangs from one of his elbows. The box is mounted on a silver base, decorated with *ankh*-signs and *was*-sceptres. The underlying symbolism of this box is the wishing of the king a long life and eternal rule. It is now housed in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo (JE 61496) (James 2000:198) (Figure C.27).



Figure C.27: A gold box to hold scented unguent

THE INHERENT SYMBOLISM FOUND IN SOME OF THE MATERIALS USED BY THE ANCIENT EGYPTIANS TO PRODUCE VESSELS TO STORE THEIR PERFUMES IN

Some of the materials used by the ancient Egyptians to produce vessels to store their perfumes, scented oils and scented unguent cones in had intrinsic symbolic meaning, such as faience, gold and silver, the last two, as well as electrum, sometimes being juxtaposed in some of these vessels to further enhance their symbolic meaning. In addition, a symbolic thread can be detected, namely that of rebirth, woven in the choice of fabrics used by the Egyptians.

Wilkinson (1999:107) states that one of the symbolic connotations of the colour blue in ancient Egypt is that of life and rebirth, represented by the sky and the primeval flood. Although faience objects later appeared in many colours, the original colour was a scintillating blue/green. Green also had a potent symbolic meaning of resurrection and rebirth, with early texts referring to the afterlife itself as the ‘field of malachite’, a vivid green mineral used by the Egyptians for the production of one type of eye paint. Egyptian blue was another blue material favoured by the Egyptians. Although anhydrite appeared in other colours in Egypt, the Egyptians preferred the blue variety. Glass appeared in many colours

but a vivid blue and turquoise were favourites of the Egyptians, echoing the more expensive semi-precious lapis lazuli and turquoise stones, which had to be imported. Many of the perfume vessels made of these materials were used in a funerary context, placed in tombs, symbolically assuring rebirth, the contents to be enjoyed by the deceased in the afterlife.

During the Old Kingdom the Egyptians made the first objects that used precious metals systematically for their contrasting colours, a practice which expanded in the Middle Kingdom. During the second half of the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, and particularly during the reign of Tutankhamun, the greatest sophistication in the use of precious metals occurred, when gold (including reddish alloys or those intentionally coloured red), silver²³ and electrum (a naturally occurring alloy of the two) were juxtaposed to exploit their inherent colours and to evoke symbolic meaning (Schorsch 2001:55).

THE AVAILABILITY OF THE VARIOUS MATERIALS USED FOR THE PRODUCTION OF PERFUME VESSELS TO THE VARIOUS SOCIAL CLASSES OF ANCIENT EGYPT

Not all the materials used by the ancient Egyptians for the making of perfume vessels, a selection of which were discussed in this annex, would have been available to all levels of Egyptian society, and sometimes only certain types of a particular material would have been available to certain social classes. The elite class comprised the upper classes, namely royalty and the nobility, for example high placed officials such as the vizier.

²³ The Egyptians believed that the bones of the deities were made of silver, which did not occur naturally in Egypt and had to be imported (Wilkinson 1999:84).

Table C.2: An analysis of the availability of the various materials to various Egyptian social classes

Material	Elite/non-elite	Comment
Glass	Elite/non-elite	Regular glass production in ancient Egypt only began at the beginning of the New Kingdom, when it was a high-status product, only afforded by the elite. During the Third Intermediate Period there was very little glass production in ancient Egypt and what was produced would have been reserved for the elite. At the start of the Late Period there was a revival of glass production, especially at Alexandria for the exportation of luxury perfumes. The non-elite would have been able to afford non-elaborate glass vessels for scented oils and unguents.
Faience	Elite/non-elite	Although faience was essentially a luxury item, it was used in many strata of society. Vessels such as cylinder jars would have been available to the non-elite. The more elaborate vessels however, would only have been available to the elite.
Egyptian blue	Elite/non-elite	Like faience, Egyptian blue would have been available to the elite and non-elite alike.
Stone	Elite/non-elite	Simple travertine vessels would have been available to the non-elite, however elaborate travertine vessels like those found in the tomb of Tutankhamun, Eighteenth dynasty, would only have been afforded by royalty. Stone vessels such as the elaborate blue

		anhydrite duck flasks, would only have been available to the elite.
Terracotta	Elite/non-elite	Terracotta was not a luxury material, afforded by both elite and non-elite.
Wood	Elite/non-elite	Imported wood was only afforded by the elite. Wooden vessels with ivory inlays would have belonged to the elite. Local Egyptian wood (of poor quality) would have been available to the non-elite.
Gold	Elite	Gold was a luxury material that only the elite could afford. The more elaborate gold vessels would only have been afforded by royalty.



ANNEXURE D

UNGUENT/PERFUME CHESTS AND BOXES

The middle and upper classes of ancient Egypt possessed chests and boxes¹ of various shapes and sizes, which they used for storage, many of which were used to store precious perfumes and cosmetics in and were put in the tomb for use in the afterlife (Hawass 2006b:111). Unguent/perfume chests and boxes were often depicted in tomb scenes beneath the tomb-owner's chair, ensuring that the contents were always close at hand for use in the afterlife (Fletcher 2000:85).

During the Middle Kingdom boxes were made to be used for specific purposes. One particular type contained eight small travertine vases to hold perfumes and oils, placed in eight holes in a tray inserted inside a simple rectangular box, often fitting tightly and requiring finger holes or a slot to be cut through the centre of the tray, to aid with its removal (Killen 1994: 41).

UNGUENT CHEST OF KEMUNY

An exquisite cedar-wood chest for keeping jars of perfumed unguent/oil in, now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (26.7.1438), from the Twelfth Dynasty, Middle Kingdom, reign of Amenemhat IV, has inlays of ivory and ebony on the two sides, on the lid and on the front, part of a drawer which opens out to reveal its contents. The ivory front panel has a picture showing the owner of the unguent chest, whose duty it was to make the king's breakfast, offering two unguent jars to the statue of the deified king. There is a mirror inside the lid (Manniche 1999:121). The chest, which belonged to the butler Kemuny, has its lid and drawer secured with a silver bolt and staples and they have silver knobs on them (Scott 1973:155) (Figure D.1).

¹ A frieze from the Theban tomb of Menna (TT 69) shows a procession of offering-bearers all carrying chests, their contents displayed on top of the chests. Perfume vessels are included amongst the contents.



Figure D.1: The unguent chest of Kemuny

COSMETIC CHEST OF SITHATHORIUNET

Princess Sithathoriunet was the daughter of Senwosret II and in all probability was the wife of Senwosret III, Twelfth Dynasty, Middle Kingdom. She was buried in tomb no. 8 at Lahun, a town in the Faiyum (Dodson & Hilton 2004:99).

Amongst the treasures found in her tomb in 1914 through excavation by W M F Petrie, was a magnificent cosmetic chest made of ebony, with inlays of ivory and gold. When excavated it was found in mud in pieces. It has now been fully restored by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, where it is housed. Amongst the ruins of this cosmetic chest were cylinder jars made of travertine and obsidian mounted with gold. These would have been housed in the cosmetic chest and filled with perfumed oils for Sithathoriunet to enjoy in the afterlife (Dodson 2000:44-45). Also found in the ruins was an exquisite mirror, which would have also been placed in the chest. The reflecting surface is a silver disc. The handle is in the form of an open papyrus flower made out of electrum-covered obsidian, with edges in gold, the curving lines of which narrow to form the face of Hathor in cow form. Faience and semi-precious stones also feature on the handle. This mirror is now housed in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo (JE 44920) (Oppenheim 2000:153) (Figure D.2).



Figure D.2: Sithathoriunet's cosmetic chest and the mirror with a handle featuring the face of Hathor

COSMETIC CASE OF QUEEN MENTUHOTEP

This cosmetic case, made of palm fibre, reed and papyrus, belonged to Queen Mentuhotep of the Second Intermediate Period, Seventeenth Dynasty. It is now housed in the Ägyptisches Museum, Berlin (1176-77). The interior is divided into six compartments, which held fragile cosmetic utensils and containers for eye paint and perfumed unguents and oils (Wenzel 1998: 406) (Figure D.3).

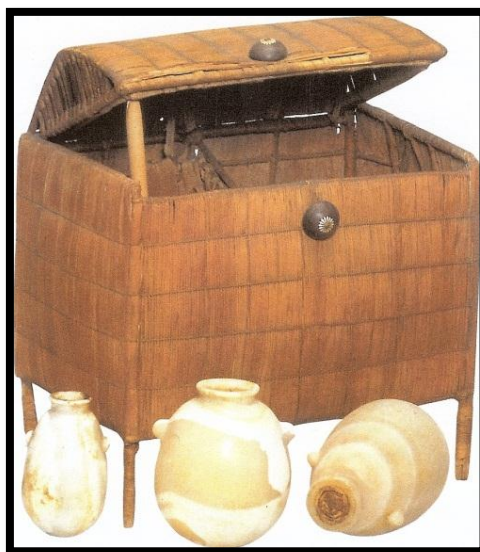


Figure D.3: Cosmetic case of Queen Mentuhotep

PERFUME AND COSMETIC CHEST OF MERIT

A richly decorated wooden box from the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, reign of Amenhotep III, now in the Museo Egizio, Turin, comes from the tomb of Merit, wife of royal architect Ka. It contains flasks and jars of perfumes and cosmetics for her to use in the afterlife (Figure D.4).

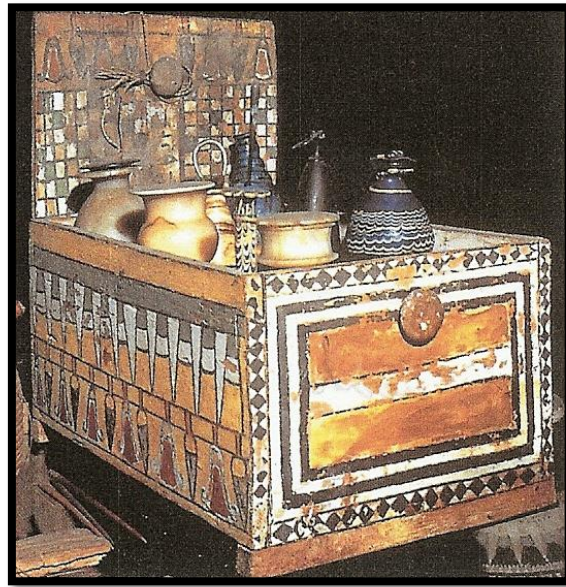


Figure D.4: Perfume and cosmetic case of Merit

TUTU'S TOILET BOX

A toilet box was found in the Theban tomb of Any (TT 168), whose titles (Manniche (1989 :137) translates as 'divine father clean of hands' and 'Chosen lector of the lord of the gods', during the Nineteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom. This fine wooden box belonged to his wife Tutu and is now housed in the British Museum, London (BM 24708). The interior is divided into four compartments. Vases containing perfumed oil were placed in each of the three small compartments at the rear of the box, the long front compartment holding a bronze cosmetic-mixing dish and gazelle-skin slippers. This box consists of a frame in which panels are placed, the joints being glued together. A decorative lattice consisting of round dowels is situated below the base of the box. The rounded feet of the legs of the box were probably originally encased in bronze protective shoes (Killen 1994:53). The lid, which was held in

position by a pair of tongues which projected from under the back of the lid, was held down by tying papyrus strands around a pair of mushroom-shaped handles (one on the top of the lid and the other on the front of the box), which were then sealed together with clay. Wall paintings in Theban tombs show small boxes such as Tutu's being carried by porters on their shoulders under a pole, two porters being able to carry three such suspended boxes (Killen 1994:52-54) (Figure D.5).

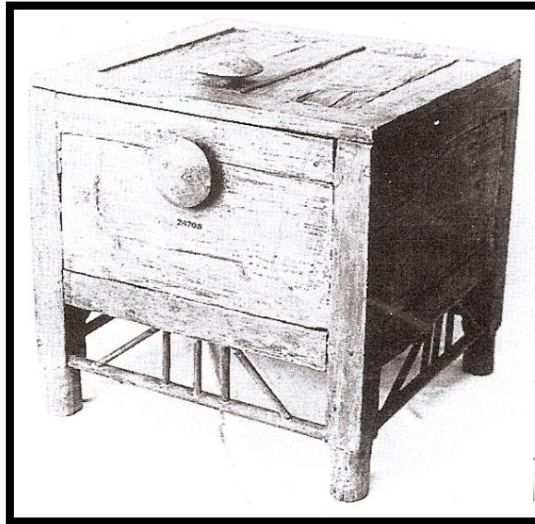


Figure D.5: Tutu's toilet box



ANNEXURE E

UNGUENT/COSMETIC SPOONS

THE PURPOSE OF UNGUENT/COSMETIC SPOONS

Scholars are not in agreement about the purpose of what Egyptologists term ‘cosmetic spoons’, flat receptacles for wax or ointment/unguent (the exact nature of which has not yet been ascertained) found in Egypt in a vast variety of shapes, sizes and materials. Green (2001:416) is of the opinion that the term ‘cosmetic spoon’ may be a misnomer, as they are found in tombs and temples and are not found in conjunction with other items of obvious cosmetic use. Watterson (1997:118) opines that they were toilet spoons, used to pour perfumed oils over the head and body, or to scoop the unguent from its jar. Decker (1992:91) argues that they were used to dispense unguents. These spoons, luxury items, are attested from as early as the Predynastic Period. These Egyptian spoons also reached Palestine and many beautiful specimens have been excavated from the treasury of the Late Canaanite palace at Megiddo, stratum VIII (Dayagi-Mendels 1989:46).

THE SYMBOLISM OF UNGUENT/COSMETIC SPOONS

Wilkinson (1999:33) argues that these spoons represent a class of small objects, which includes mirrors, decorated with numerous representational motifs with symbolic intent, seemingly used in certain ritual contexts. Some of these decorated forms were often Hathoric symbols, for instance the papyrus and the cow (similar to those found on mirrors), while another group of quite diverse forms appear to relate to a very different symbolic form. The handsome ‘swimming girl’ type of spoons, especially popular in the New Kingdom, is included in this group. Manniche (1999:76) is of the opinion that these ‘swimming girls’ probably symbolize the goddess Nut. Wilkinson (1999:33) concurs with this opinion, adding in addition the sun which she bore (or her husband or son depending on the symbol used), according to Egyptian mythology. Green (2001b:416) states that when the animal the ‘swimming girl’ propels is a goose, Geb the earth god and husband of Nut, has been suggested by scholars as the deity involved.

Wilkinson (1999:33) argues that unguent/cosmetic spoons with decorative motifs other than ‘swimming girls’, such as those having handles in the form of a running or swimming dog with a clamshell or bulti fish in its mouth, also relate to the same underlying theme. In this case the dog symbolically represents the fingers of Nut holding the sun (Wilkinson 1999:111).

TYPES OF UNGUENT/COSMETIC SPOONS

‘Swimming girl’ unguent/cosmetic spoons

Made from materials such as ivory, wood or travertine, the handles of these unguent/cosmetic spoons take the shape of a young girl with an elaborate Egyptian hairstyle, nude but for a collar and a girdle. Her legs extend backwards and her arms stretch forward, clasping a container, which may be round or rectangular, sometimes decorated with fish, in the form of a flower or several creatures e.g. a kitten (Hawass 2006b:153), duck, goose or gazelle (Dayagi-Mendels 1986:46). Decker (1992:92) is of the opinion that although it cannot be proved that the girl featured on these spoons is actually swimming (she appears as if she is in the gliding phase of the breast stroke and occasionally looks as though she is doing the kick part of the crawl) and a degree of scepticism about it seems to be in order, there is no need to reject out of hand the characterization of these spoons, which has a long history in Egyptology. He opines further that in favour of the traditional interpretation is the fact that the motif of the ‘swimming girl’ is found elsewhere in Egyptian art, for instance as decoration on a silver bowl found in the tomb of Psusennes I, Twenty-second Dynasty, Third Intermediate Period (Tanis no. 775, Egyptian Museum, Cairo JE 87 742); along with fish and waterfowl; on a Twentieth Dynasty, New Kingdom, *ostrakon*, now in Turin; and on the handle of an Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, unguent bowl (Berlin 14 076). Sometimes the container has a lid attached by a hinge, consisting of just the upper part of the creature’s body or including the head as well. Examples of these cosmetic/unguent spoons have been found in Egypt, Palestine, Syria and Cyprus (Dayagi-Mendels 1986:46).

An example from the Fayum, Eighteenth/Nineteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, now in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, made of wood, has the ‘swimming girl’ propelling a container in

the form of a duck. It does not have a hinged lid. It is partly painted and has inlay work on it (Figure E.1).

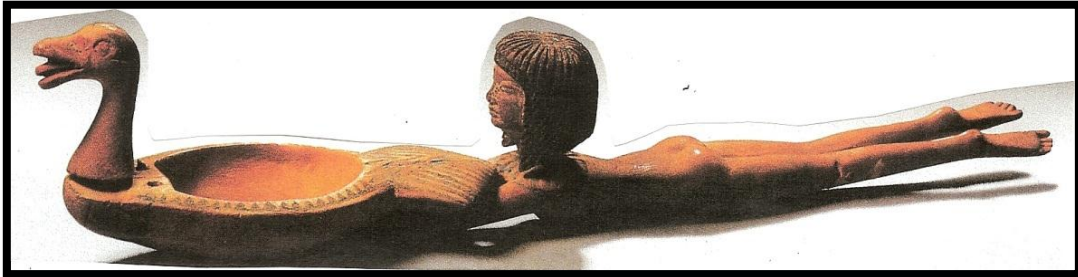


Figure E.1: 'Swimming girl' unguent/cosmetic spoon with duck-shaped container

An example from the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, reign of Amenhotep III, now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (26.2.47), made from travertine, has the 'swimming girl' propelling a container in the form of a Dorcas gazelle or a similar animal. It has a hinged lid forming the upper part of the animal and its head (Figure E.2).

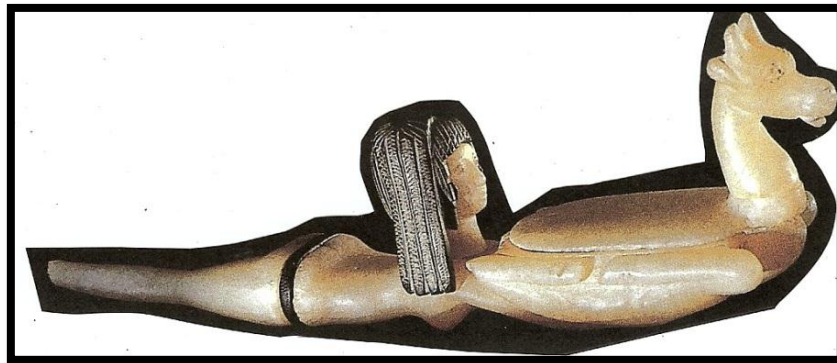


Figure E.2: 'Swimming girl' unguent/cosmetic spoon with Dorcas gazelle-shaped container

Another example from the Eighteenth Dynasty, Old Kingdom, reign of Amenhotep III, now in the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow, made from ivory and ebony, has the 'swimming girl' propelling a container in the form of a red lotus flower (with a hinged lid) instead of an animal (Figure E.3).

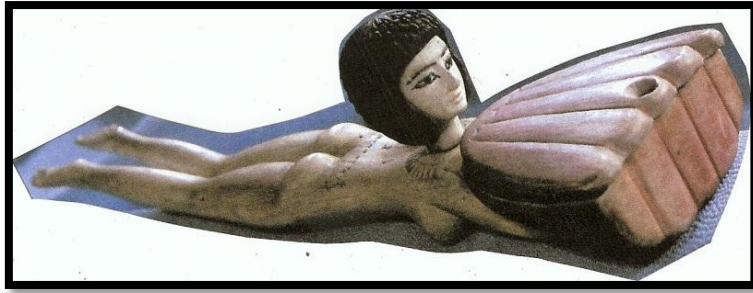


Figure E.3: 'Swimming girl' unguent/cosmetic spoon, with red lotus-shaped container

Unguent/cosmetic spoons with animals/birds as handles

An example, made of wood with blue paint on it, from the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, was found at Memphis. The handle of the spoon is in the form of a leaping jackal, which has a fish in his jaws, the top of which forms a moving lid (Figure E.4).



Figure E.4: Unguent/cosmetic spoon with a handle in the form of a jackal and a fish-shaped container

An unguent/ cosmetic spoon, made of wood, 16cm in length, has the cartouche of queen Mutemwiya, wife of king Thuthmosis IV, Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, inscribed on its handle, which ends with the head of a duck. It is now housed in the Musée du Louvre, Paris (Figure E.5).



Figure E.5: Unguent/cosmetic spoon, with a handle which ends in a duck-head

Unguent/cosmetic spoons with handles in the shape of humans (other than ‘swimming girls’), decorated with plant material, or with the entire spoon in the shape of animals such as ibexes or oryxes with their feet bound

Another kind of spoon, common in the New Kingdom, made of materials such as travertine, bone or wood have elegant and delicate designs with handles in the shape of a human figure or decorated with plant motifs. Sometimes the entire spoon is shaped like animals such as ibexes or oryxes with their feet bound. The exact purpose of these spoons is uncertain and there is hardly a trace of material on them that can be analysed. At the beginning of the twentieth century one spoon in the British Museum was examined and found to have an oily substance on it. Generally they are thought to be perfume/unguent spoons or cosmetic spoons (Dayagi-Mendels 1986:46). These would have contained a spoonful of solid material for the immediate use of the owner, presumably scooped from a larger container and perhaps stored in a room other than the one in which the scented material is being applied (Manniche 1999:89).

An unguent/cosmetic spoon, made from wood, from the late Eighteenth or Nineteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, now in the Musée du Louvre, Paris, is in the form of a young woman carrying an amphora and a bag of wood (Figure E.6).

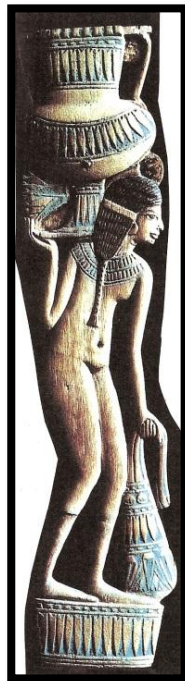


Figure E.6: An unguent/cosmetic spoon in the form of a girl carrying an amphora and a bag of wood

An unguent/cosmetic spoon, made of wood, from the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, now in the Ägyptisches Museum, Berlin, Germany, is in the form of a female dancer playing the tambourine among lotus flowers (Figure E.7).

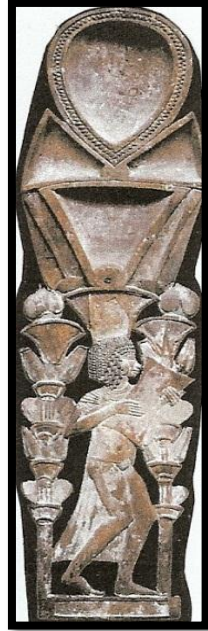


Figure E.7: An unguent/cosmetic spoon in the form of a female dancer playing the tambourine

A comical ivory example from the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, is in the form of a palm tree with two monkeys sitting on branches laden with dates. A youngster plans to climb up the tree to steal some dates behind the back of a guard carrying a stick, who appears to be unaware of his exploits. This unguent/cosmetic spoon was originally found at Tuna el Gebel in Middle Egypt. It is now housed in the Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, Lisbon, Portugal (Figure E.8).



Figure E.8: An unguent/cosmetic spoon in the form of a palm tree

An ivory unguent/cosmetic spoon from the Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom, is in the shape of an oryx with its feet bound (Figure E.9).



Figure E.9: An unguent/cosmetic spoon, in the form of an oryx with its feet bound

Other examples of unguent/cosmetic spoons

An ivory unguent/cosmetic spoon from the Predynastic Period, found at Ezbet el-Walda (Helwan), now in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo (JE 87485), has a handle in the form of a girdle tie or knot of the goddess Isis (*tit*) (Figure E.10).



Figure E.10: An unguent/cosmetic spoon with a handle in the form of a knot of the goddess Isis

An unguent/cosmetic spoon made of red ivory in the form of a bulti fish (*Tilapia nilotica*), found in the tomb of Aperel at Saqqara in an area called 'Doors of the Cats', vizier under Amenhotep III and Amenhotep IV (Akhenaten), Eighteenth Dynasty, New Kingdom at Saqqara (Hawass 2004:142) (Figure E.11).

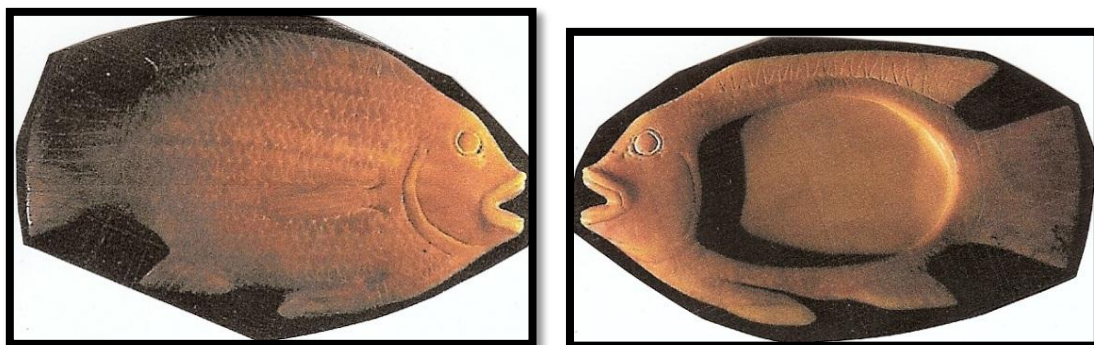
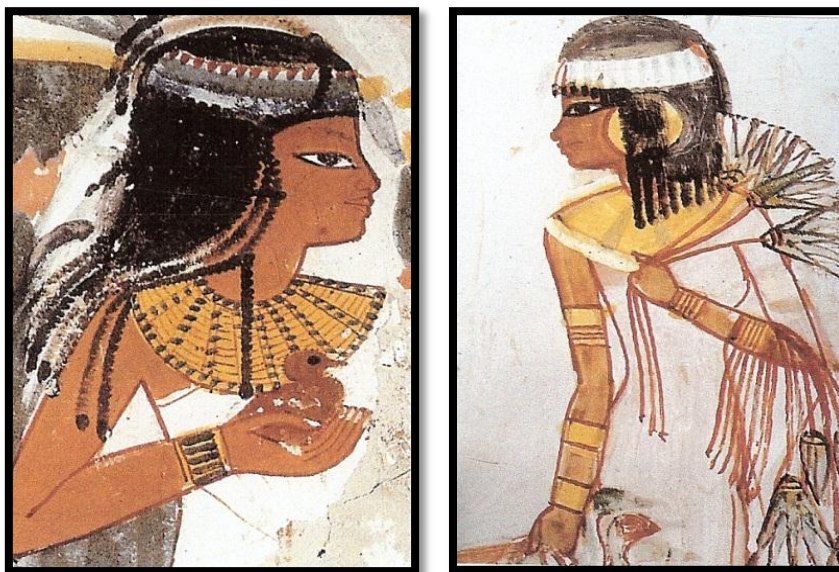


Figure E.11: An unguent/cosmetic spoon, in the shape of a bulti fish

JOURNAL ABBREVIATIONS



AJA	American Journal of Archaeology
ASAE	Annales du Service des Antiquités de l' Egypte
AW	Antike Welt
BACE	The Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology
BASOR	Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research
BIFAO	Bulletin de l'Institut francais d'archeologie orientale
BJRL	Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester
BSA	Bulletin on Sumerian Agriculture
EB	Economic Botany
GM	Göttinger Miszellen
JAH	The Journal of African History
JAOS	Journal of the American Oriental Society
JARCE	Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt
JEA	Journal of Egyptian Archaeology
JGS	Journal of Glass Studies

JNES	Journal of Near Eastern Studies
JS	Journal of Semitics
KB	Kew Bulletin
KMT	KMT: A Modern Journal of Ancient Egypt
MMAB	The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin
MMAB (NS)	The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin (New Series)
MMJ	Metropolitan Museum Journal
NARCE	Newsletter of the American Research Center in Egypt
NEA	Near Eastern Archaeology
OJA	Oxford Journal of Archaeology
OMRO	Oudheidkundige mededelingen uit het Rijksmuseum van Oudheden
SA	Studia Aegyptiaca
SAK	Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur
SH	Scripta Hierosolymitana
WA	World Archaeology
ZÄS	Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde

PICTURE CREDITS



Figure 2.1: <http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theophrastus>

Figure 2.2: Pavord 2005: Plate 17

Figure 2.3: Pavord 2005: Plate 4

Figure 2.4: <http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Galen>

Figure 3.1: Hagen & Hagen 1999: 131

Figure 3.2: Hawass 2006b: 188

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Figure 7.1: Manniche 2006: 21

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Figure 7.7: <http://www.en.wikipedia.org/Santorini>

Figure 7.8: El-Shimy 2003: 37

Figure 7.9: [http://www.reshafim.org.il/ad/egypt/trades/perfumemakers .htm](http://www.reshafim.org.il/ad/egypt/trades/perfumemakers.htm)

Figure 7.10: Serpico & White 2000c: 462

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Figure 14.1: Schulz & Seidel 1998: Figure 55

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Figure 14.3: Fletcher 1999b: 35

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Figure A.1: http://www.pyrgos-mavroraki.net/pyrgos-mavroraki_000007.htm

Figure A.2: http://www.pyrgos-mavroraki.net/pyrgos-mavroraki_000007.htm

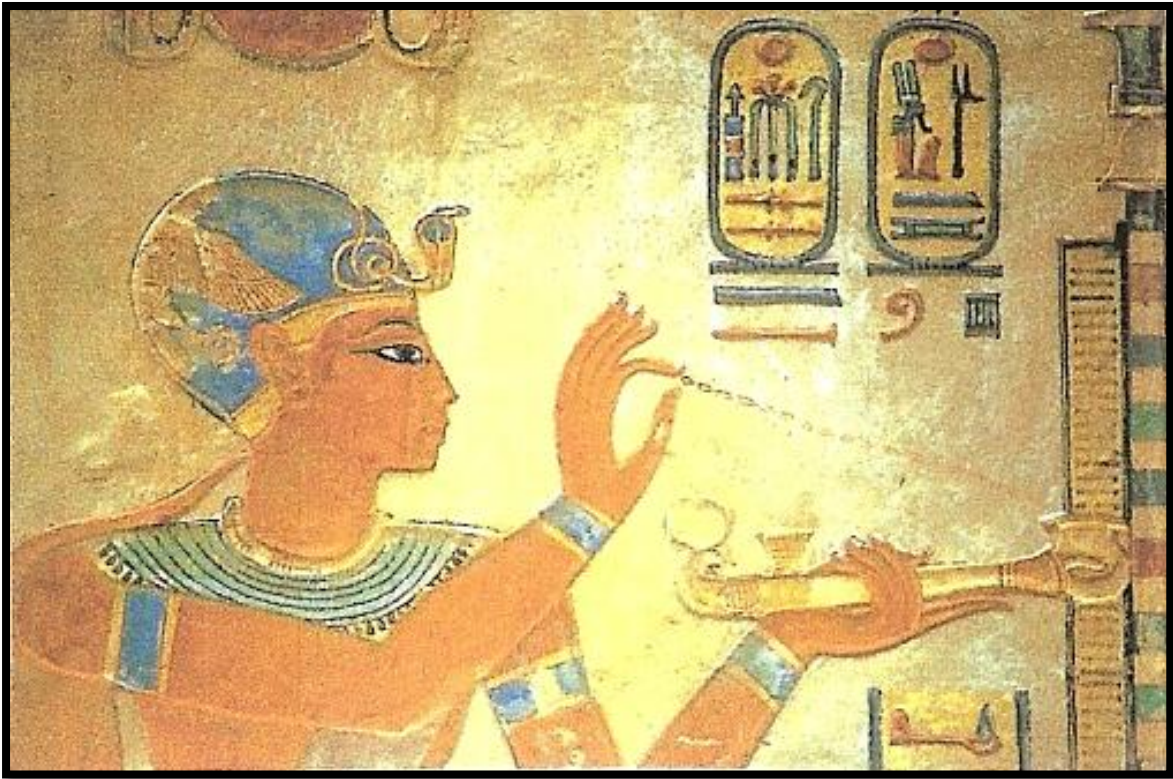
Figure A.3: http://www.pyrgos-mavroraki.net/pyrgos-mavroraki_000007.htm

- Figure A.4: http://www.pyrgos-mavroraki.net/pyrgos-mavroraki_000007.htm
- Figure A.5: http://www.pyrgos-mavroraki.net/pyrgos-mavroraki_000007.htm
- Figure A.6: http://www.pyrgos-mavroraki.net/pyrgos-mavroraki_00001a.htm
- Figure A.7: http://www.pyrgos/mavroraki.net/pyrgos-mavroraki_000007.htm
- Figure A.8: Brun 2000: Figure 12
- Figure A.9: Nappo 2000: 135
- Figure A.10: Nappo 2000: 134-135
- Figure A.11: Panetto 2004: 186
- Figure A.12: Panetto 2004: 368-369
- Figure A.13: Mattingly 1990: Figure 3
- Figure A.14: Brun 2000: Figure 19
- Figure B.1: Humbert *et al.* 1994: 548
- Figure B.2: Humbert *et al.* 1994: 550
- Figure B.3: Humbert *et al.* 1994: 551
- Figure B.4: Photographs taken by M. McRae
- Figure B.5: <http://www.ebay.com/itm/Vallee-des-Rois-Mira-Takla-EDP-1-7-oz-BNIB-rare-/1806>
- Figure B.6: <http://www.ebay.com/itm/Vallee-des-Rois-Mira-Takla-EDP-Spray-0-25-oz-NIB-/230>
- Figure B.7: <http://www.perfumeshrine.blogspot.com/2009/02/interview-with-perfumer-sandrine.html>
- Figure B.8: <http://www.immersionmedia.biz/arts-culture/113-the-ancient-essence-of-cyprus>
- Figure B.9: <http://www.immersionmedia.biz/arts-culture/113-the-ancient-essence-of-cyprus>
- Figure B.10: http://www.pyrgos-mavroraki.net/pyrgos-mavrorki_g00000.a.pdf
- Figure B.11: <http://www.cyprusperfume.com/>
- Figure B.12: http://www.pyrgos-mavroraki.net/pyrgos-mavroraki_g000002.pdf
- Figure C.1: Houlihan 1996: 150

Figure C.2:	Manniche 1999: 132
Figure C.3:	Lilyquist <i>et al.</i> 2001: 14
Figure C.4:	Lilyquist <i>et al.</i> 2001: 13
Figure C.5:	Friedman 1998b: 139
Figure C.6:	Friedman 1998b: 116
Figure C.7:	Friedman 1998b: 119
Figure C.8:	Friedman 1998b: 88
Figure C.9:	Friedman 1998b: 139
Figure C.10:	Friedman 1998b: 137
Figure C.11:	Friedman 1998b: 141
Figure C.12:	Arnold <i>et al.</i> 2000: 12
Figure C.13:	Friedman 1998b: 13
Figure C.14:	Manniche 1999: 32
Figure C.15:	Manniche 1999: 70
Figure C.16:	Manniche 1999: 42
Figure C.17:	Manniche 1999: 109
Figure C.18:	Spencer 2007: 229
Figure C.19:	Manniche 1999: 62
Figure C.20:	Manniche 1999: 82
Figure C.21:	Arnold 2000: 131
Figure C.22:	Manniche 1999: 65
Figure C.23:	Tiradritti 2000: 185
Figure C.24:	Manniche 1999: 63
Figure C.25:	http://www.kv64.info/2009/04/perfume-of-egyptians.html
Figure C.26:	Hepper 1990: Plate 12
Figure C.27:	Tiridritti 2000: 21
Figure D.1:	Hamilton 2005: 74

- Figure D.2: KMT 11(1) 2000: 44
- Figure D.3: Schulz & Seidel 1998: 406
- Figure D.4: Fletcher 2000: 91
- Figure D.5: Killen 1994: 52
- Figure E.1: Hagen and Hagen 1999: 130
- Figure E.2: Manniche 1999: 64
- Figure E.3: Manniche 1999: 76
- Figure E.4: Spencer 2007: 240
- Figure E.5: Manniche 1999: 43
- Figure E.6: Manniche 1999: 48
- Figure E.7: Manniche 1999: 49
- Figure E.8: Manniche 1999: 88
- Figure E.9: Dayagi-Mendels 1989: 53
- Figure E.10: Tiridritti 2000: 28
- Figure E.11: Hawass 2003b: 79
- Frontispiece: Ptahhotep sitting before an offering table and sniffing a jar of perfume, Fifth Dynasty *mastaba* tomb of Pthotep and Akhehotep, western sector, Saqqara (De Fabianis & Bourbon 2005:134).
- Journal
- Abbreviations: Nakht's wife holding a small bird, Theban tomb of Nakht (TT 52) (Siliotti 2000:153).
- A daughter of Menna holding lotus flowers and birds that have been caught, Theban tomb of Menna (TT 69) (Siliotti 2000:154).
- Picture Credits: Tall offering stands with cups of burning incense, tomb of Khnumhotep II (BH 3), Beni Hasan, Middle Egypt (Schulz & Seidel 1998:125).
- Bibliography: Ramesses III offering incense, using an arm censer, adding the pellets of incense to the bowl in the presence of the deity Ptah, tomb of Amunherkhepshef, Valley of the Queens (QV 55) (Gahlin 2001:19).

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