

F7 – Week 2, Thursday

Funerary Beliefs and Material Culture: Equipping the Dead

HPAH5076/6076

Funerary Beliefs in Ancient Egypt

Dr Katharina Zinn

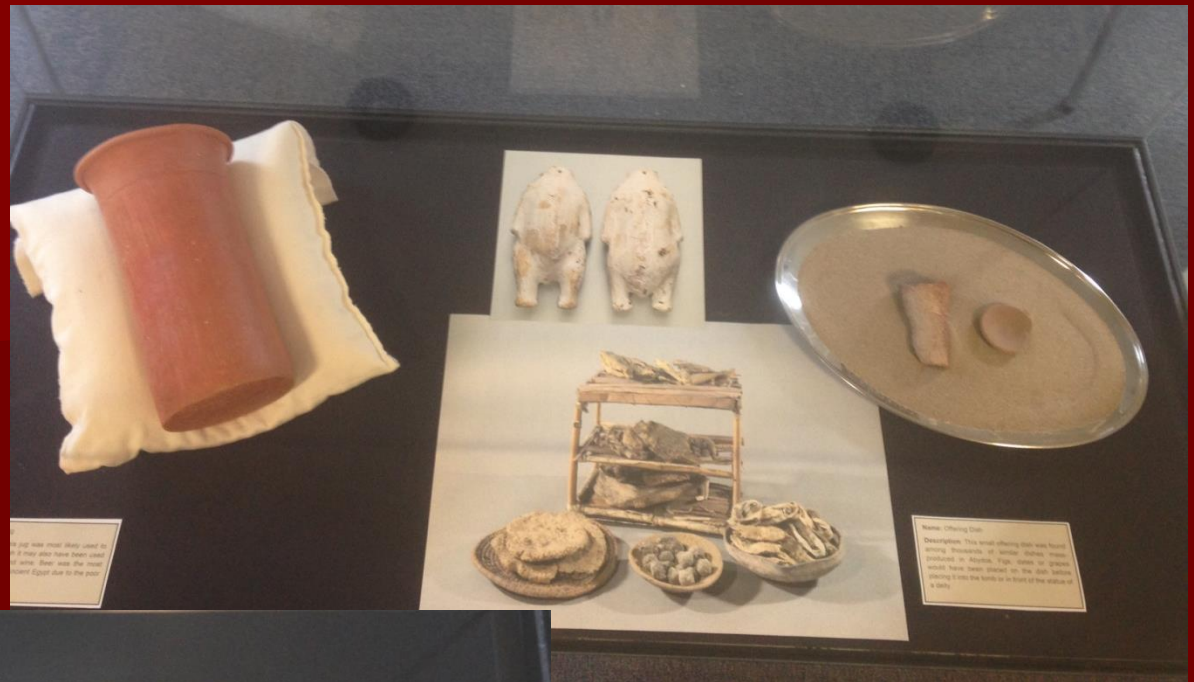
Case study (to illustrate what might be able to do with your object)

A lacklustre offering plate for a dead body OR Too many problems?

A case study for the interpretation and importance of material culture in ancient Egyptian funerary culture

Offering Plate CC 308.004





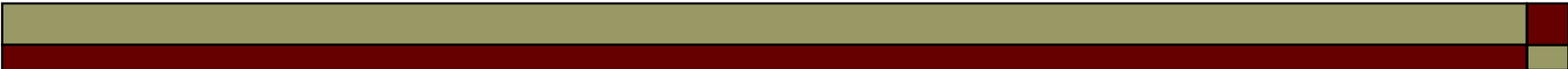
Name: Jar
Description: This jar was used to hold water or other liquids. It was found in the tomb of a high official of the pharaoh Amenhotep III.

Name: Offering Dish
Description: This small offering dish was found among thousands of similar dishes mass-produced in Abydos. Figs, dates or grapes would have been placed on the dish before placing it into the tomb or in front of the statue of a deity.



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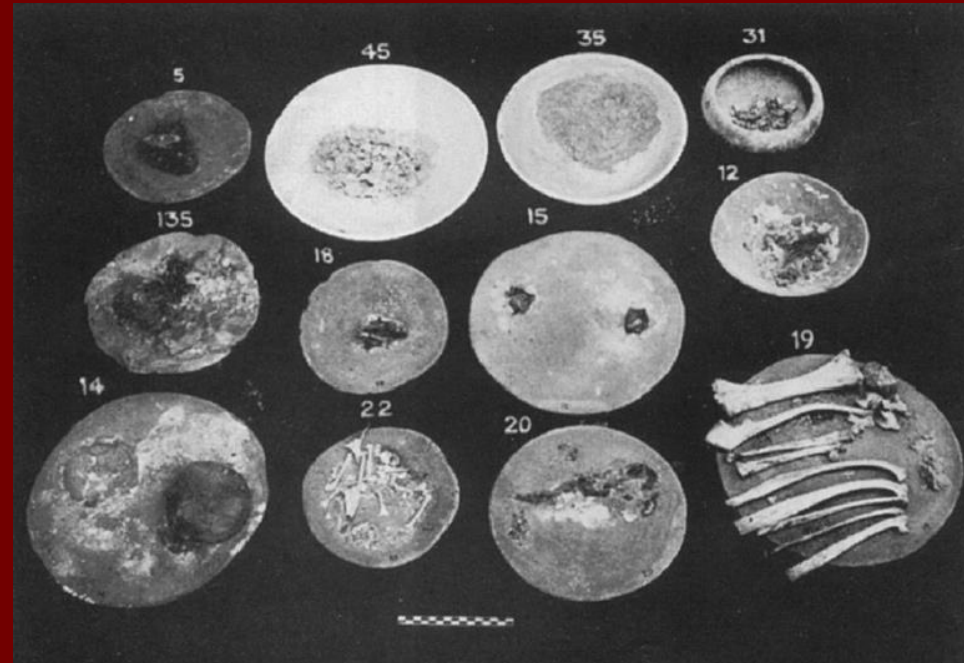




In this case:

- ❑ funerary customs called for ample provisions for the after-life (sustaining the spirit aspects of the person)
 - Nourishing with real food offerings (during burial)
 - Magical role of images and models
 - Offering cult
- ❑ = envisaged as continuation of existence before death → crossing boundaries
- ❑ provision for the life in the Next World: according the best as economic abilities would allow

A Funerary Meal (festival meal) in an Egyptian Tomb → served on pottery



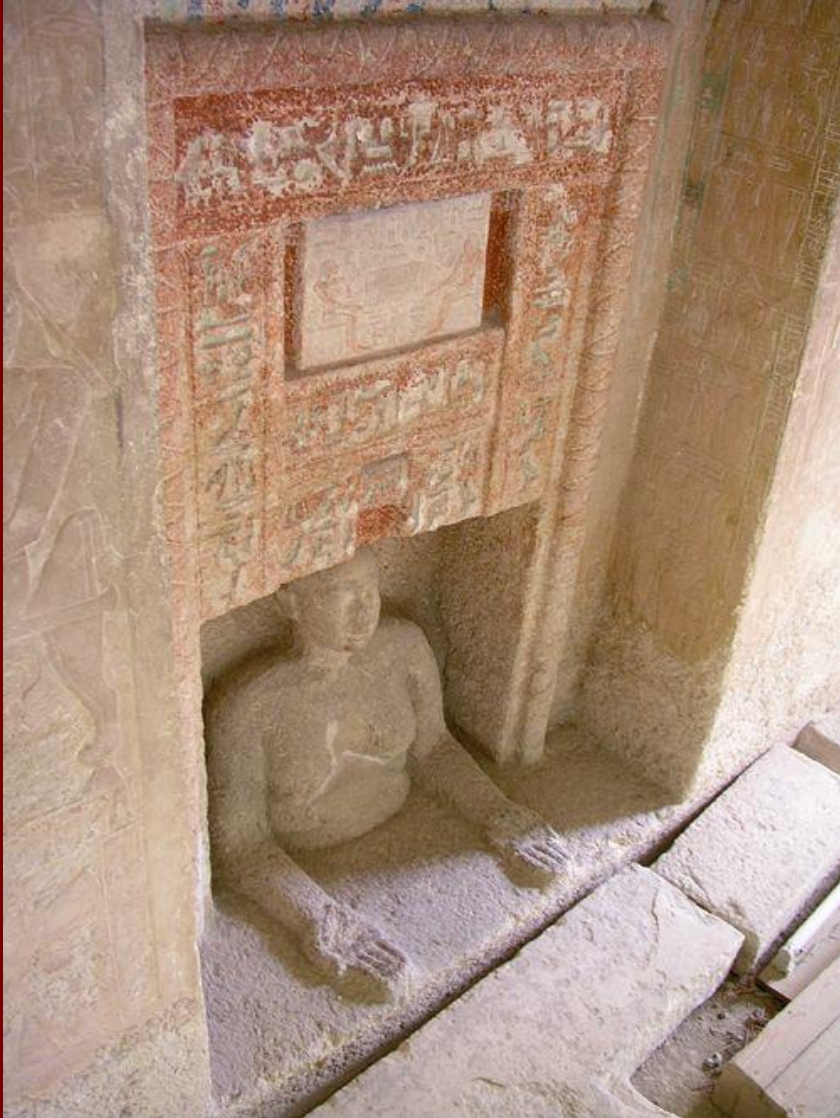
A Funerary Meal (festival meal) in an Egyptian Tomb → served on pottery

- ❑ triangular loaf of bread - made from emmer wheat, small circular cakes
- ❑ form of porridge - made from ground barley
- ❑ cooked fish - cleaned and dressed with the head removed
- ❑ pigeon stew, a cooked quail (cleaned and dressed with the head tucked under one wing)
- ❑ two cooked kidneys, ribs and legs of beef , stew? (containing ribs of beef)
- ❑ stewed fruit probably fig
- ❑ fresh nabk berries
- ❑ small jars containing some form of cheese
- ❑ grape wine in a large jar

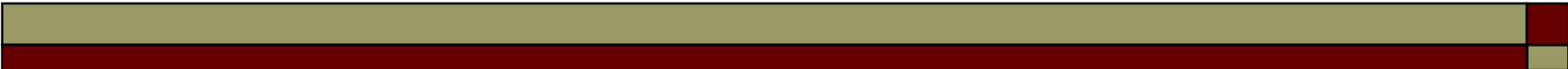
Offering Table (MMA 86.1.89)



G7102: Idu



- Consumption
- AND
- Symbolic consumption as embodied magical consumption



Supplies

- Food provided
 - Real food (offerings)
 - depicted on the walls (magically transformed to supply if expected regular offerings would cease): items which the tomb owner would have eaten in his lifetime and hoped to eat in the after-life
- representations of food, along with the accompanying prayers were thought to supply the tomb owner once the actual food offerings stopped

Magical role of images and models – Symbolic consumption



Models of offerings (from a 6th dyn. mastaba in Giza)

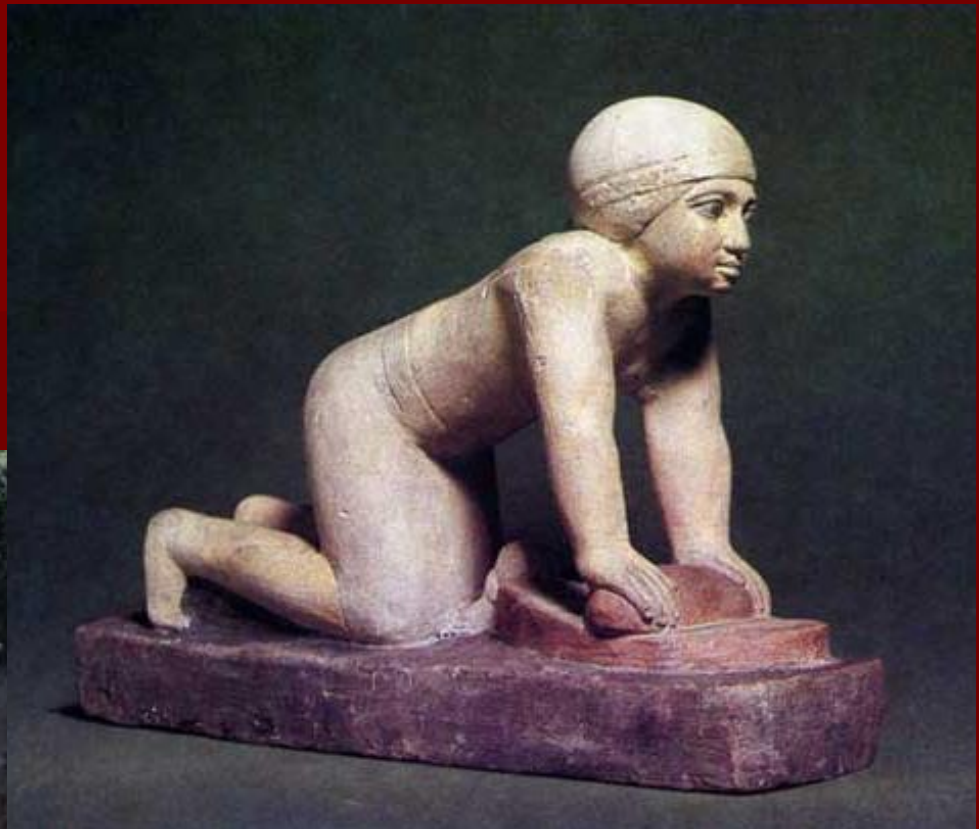
Meat (MMA 64.66.6)



Beer (MMA 64.66.4b)



A woman grinding grain –
reconstruction of the
ancient method, seen at Dr.
Ragab's Pharaonic Village in
Cairo



Process of
food
production:
Model bread
moulds heaped on
fire
(MMA 64.66.10)



Model of Brewers, Bakers, and Butchers (MK, MMA 11.150.12)

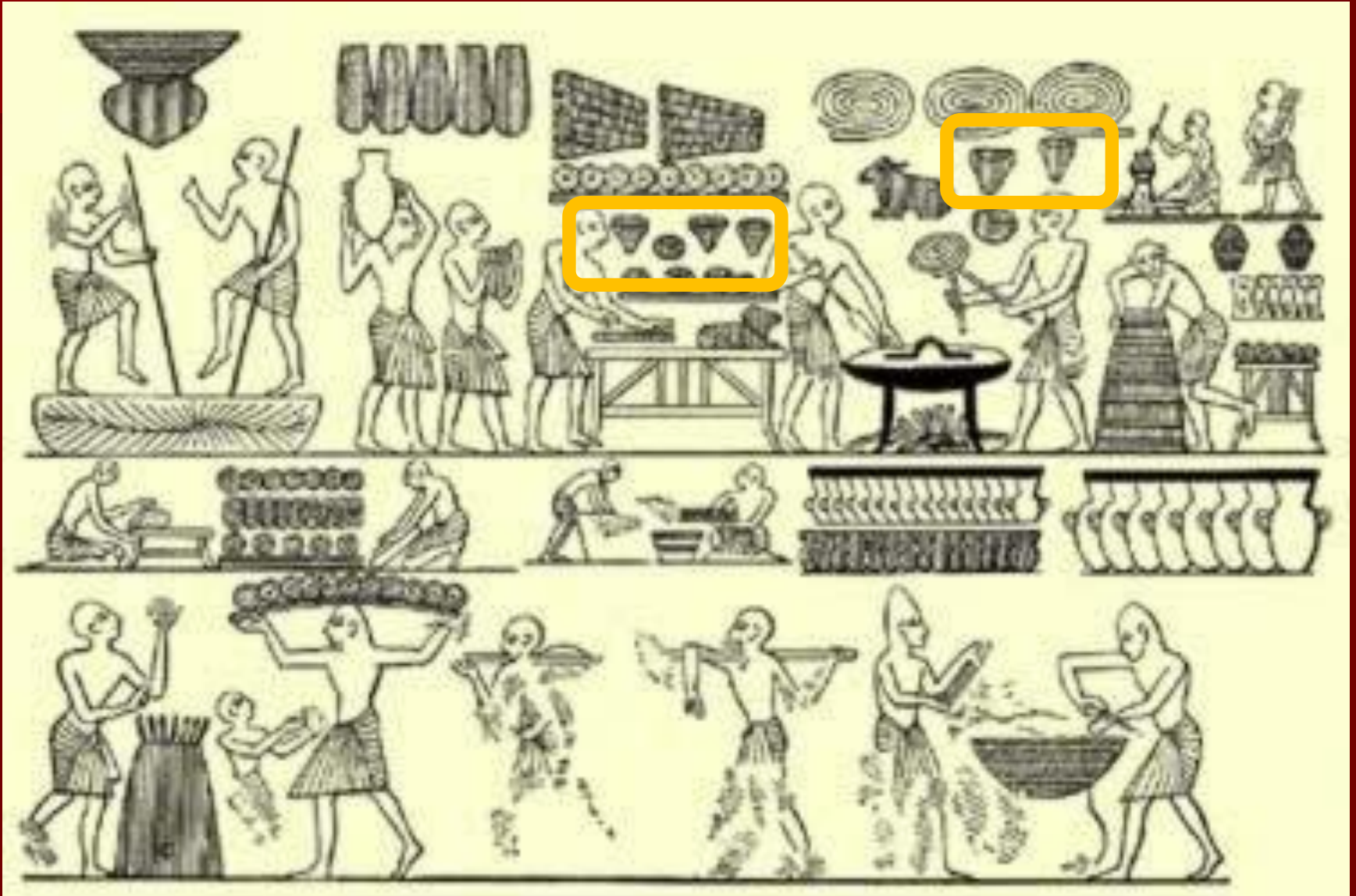


- Right: butchers preparing meat
- Left: making bread and beer

- composite model symbolically provides everything a tomb owner needed to eat and drink



Bakery (Ramses III, KV 11)



Book of the Dead of Ankh-Hapi, son of Pa-Khered-en-Min and Ta-di-Aset (Egypt Centre Swansea W867)

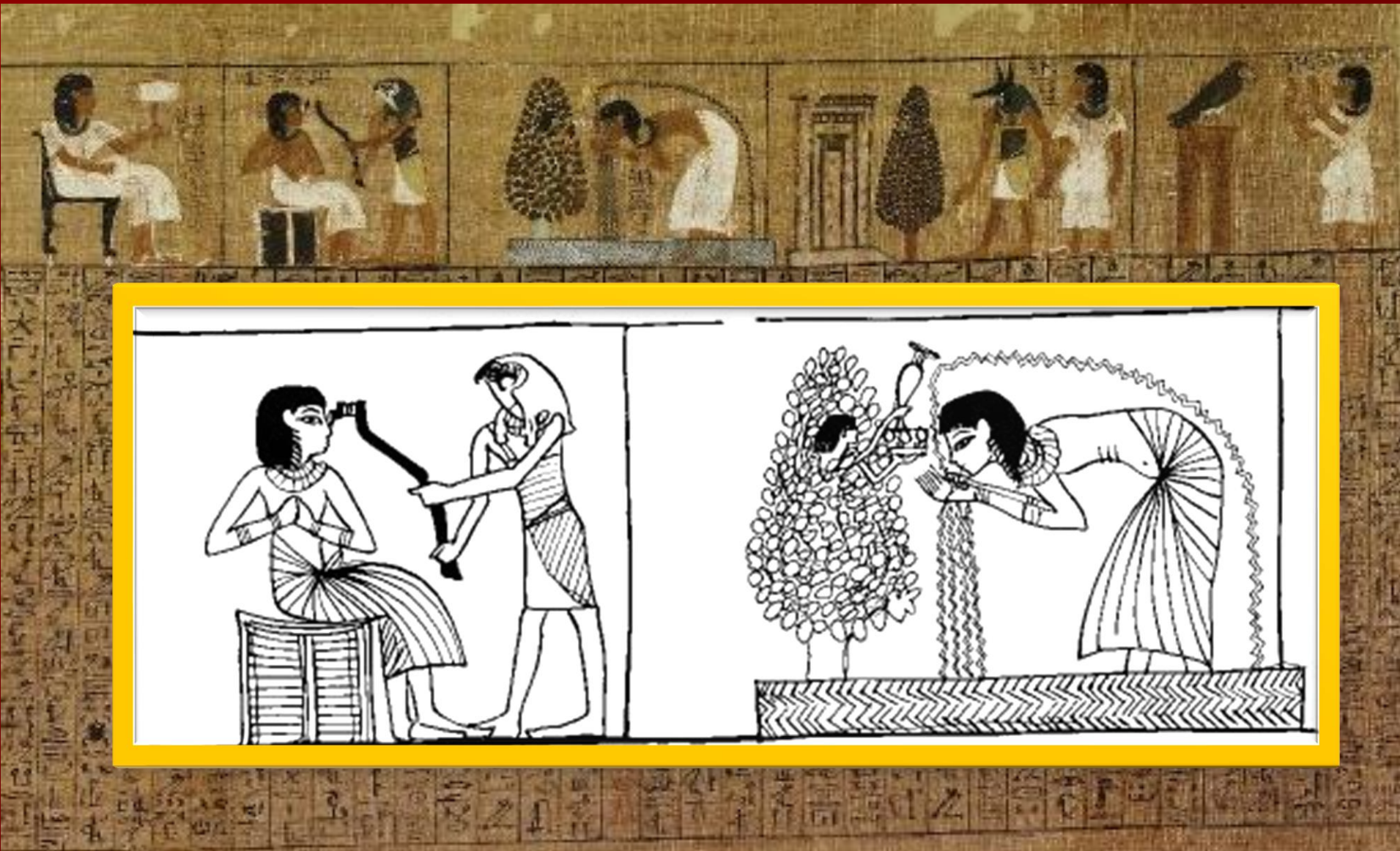


Funerary texts as description of embodiments

□ *BoD, chapter 1, 7:*

- *You tested me by many mouths. (My) soul has been confronted by (my) heart, which has been found that my speech on earth was sound. Behold, I am in the presence, lord [= god Osiris]. I smell the food of the Ennead; I sit with them. The ritual priest invokes for me the coffin; I hear the offering list.*

BM EA10471,8 (BoD, Nakht)



Funerary texts as description of embodiments

□ BoD, chapter 59:

- *Formula for breathing air and obtaining water in the necropolis for the Osiris [name]:*
- *O you Sycamore of Nut,*
- *Give me the water and the air in you! [...]*
- *As it is sound, I am sound,*
- *As it lives, I live,*
- *As it breathes air, I breath air!*

Offering Procession



False Door

- ❑ common element within tombs and temples (NK onwards)
- ❑ dedicated to deceased
- ❑ represented thresholds that allowed gods or the deceased to interact and link with the living world, and are most commonly associated with offering rituals
- ❑ Link deceased to living → deceased could receive sustenance from the land of the living



**False Door of Mehu at
Saqqara, 6th Dynasty**



**Rare Wooden False Door
of Ika, 5th Dynasty**





Ancient Egyptian offering formulae

- ❑ referred to as the **ḥtp-dỉ-nsw formula** by Egyptologists, was written in ancient Egypt as an offering for the deceased
- ❑ Allowed deceased to partake in offerings presented to the major deities in the name of the king, or in offerings presented directly to the deceased by family members
- ❑ same basic structure, but with great deal of variety (deities, offerings are mentioned, epithets, titles)

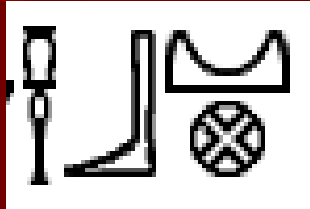
Offering Formula



An offering given by the king (to) Osiris, the lord of Busiris, the great god, the lord of Abydos." "That he may give a voice-offering of bread, beer, oxen, birds, alabaster, clothing, and every good and pure thing upon which a god lives." "For the ka of the revered Senwosret, True of Voice."

Abydos

(3500 BC – 500AD) –

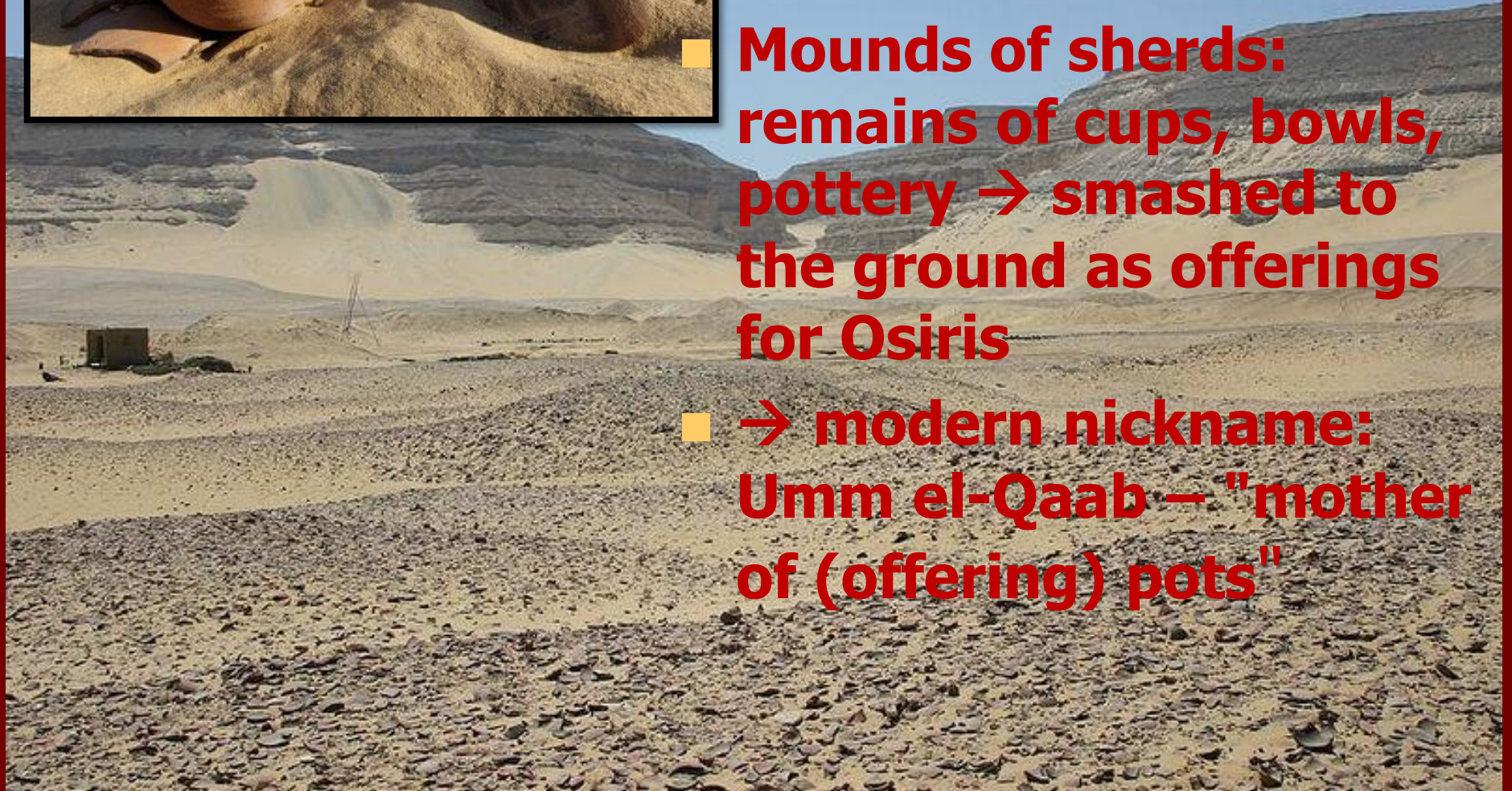


Terrace of the Great God in Abydos – processional route





- **Abydos = important pilgrimage center**
- **Mounds of sherds: remains of cups, bowls, pottery → smashed to the ground as offerings for Osiris**
- **→ modern nickname: Umm el-Qaab – "mother of (offering) pots"**





***I smell the
food of the
Ennead; I sit
with them.***

