With few exceptions, previous research on so-called personal religion has focused on hymns preserved on stelae from Deir el-Medina. Whereas their significance as testimony of personal choice and religious belief should not be excluded, the stelae must be understood in their communal cultic context. In order to grasp individual religious practices this book seeks to broaden the scope of analysis and include the archaeological remains from the houses at Deir el-Medina. Instead of establishing individual relationships between the human and divine, it appeared that 'personal' religion sought to preserve and maintain family continuity. The ancient Egyptian concept of the continuous cycle of creation was thus appropriated at home. Whereas the king guaranteed the order of the cosmos by giving offerings to the gods in the temples, corresponding activities were performed for the well-being of the family at home.

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J.F. BORGHOUTS, R.J. DEMARÉE, O.E. KAPER,
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XXIX

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Traditionally studies of so-called personal piety ("*Persönliche Frömmigkeit*") in ancient Egypt have availed themselves of a primarily phenomenological approach and thus endeavored to explore how individuals gradually discovered (religious) consciousness. In other words personal religion and piety have been understood in terms of an inner relationship between the human and divine. Egyptologists sought such expression of inwardness in (hymnal) texts since the beginning of the 20th century.[1] In view of Michela Luiselli's recent work detailed inquiry into the history of scholarship would seem rather redundant.[2] Accordingly, only a brief overview will be presented in order to illuminate the limitations of both a methodological focus on textual sources and a conceptual apparatus that understands devotion as a central component of Egyptian religion and piety, which are, in fact, notions heavily influenced by the Protestant tradition.[3]

In the 1960s, Siegfried Morenz drew on James Henry Breasted's ideas when developing his model on the so-called "*Heraufkunft des transzendenten Gottes*" (i.e., the advent of the transcendental god).[4] Morenz described a historical development in which the Egyptian king gradually loses power simultaneously gained by the god.[5] This idea was further developed by Jan Assmann who also outlined this development but, contrary to Morenz, emphasized that one should imagine an intellectual achievement rather than a pure historical development.[6] Despite such criticism, however, Assmann has presented a fairly similar model aimed at understanding processes of religious change—or as he would probably say "theological discourse"—in ancient Egypt, whereby individuals ceased to trust the royal-regulated order and began to trust a single god instead.[7] This

[1] James Henry Breasted formulated the idea of a dawn of conscience leading to "*inner aspiration*" to god (cf. J.H. Breasted, *Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt*, London 1912, quoted after paperback Pennsylvania 1972, 349) and J.H. Breasted, *The Dawn of Conscience* (1st edition 1933), New York 1934.
[2] M.M. Luiselli, *Die Suche nach Gottesnähe. Untersuchungen zur Persönlichen Frömmigkeit in Ägypten von der ersten Zwischenzeit bis zum Ende des neuen Reichs*, *ÄAT* 73, Wiesbaden 2011. A brief summary of different approaches towards "personal piety" is also found in C.L. Ausec, *Gods Who Hear Prayers: Popular Piety or Kingship in Three Theban Monuments of New Kingdom Egypt*, PhD thesis Berkeley 2010, 13–27; including a brief summary on some votive stelae from Deir el-Medina; cf. Ausec 2010, 62–4.
[3] See also S.K. Stowers, 'Theorizing Ancient Household Religion', in: J. Bodel and S.M. Olyan (eds), *Household and Family Religion in Antiquity*, Oxford 2008, 8, who emphasizes the influence of Christianity and Romanticism. An interesting, though tangential, aspect is that the biased interpretation for ancient Egyptian religion through the Protestant lens finds parallels in critics the early Copts' monastic life. Contrary to the present example, where ancient Egyptian texts are screened for evidence of early conceptions of inwardness and piety, the absence of such concepts receives disapproval in these examples. A common Protestant criticism of the monastic life is, for example, the notion that "mechanical memorization [of texts and rules that] did not penetrate the heart," cf. D. Burton-Christie, *The World in the desert. Scripture and the quest for holiness in Early Christian Monasticism*, New York 1993, 14, quoting H. Lietzmann, *Geschichte der alten Kirche*, vol. 4: *Die Zeit der Kirchenväter*, Berlin 1944, 140–51.
[4] S. Morenz, 'Die Heraufkunft des Transzendenten Gottes in Ägypten', Reprint in E. Blumenthal und S. Herrmann (eds), *Religion und Geschichte des alten Ägypten*, Köln 1975, 77–119.
[5] Summarized at the end of his study: S. Morenz 1975, 116–17.
[6] J. Assmann, *Theologie und Weisheit im alten Ägypten*, München 2005, 45 und J. Assmann, *Ägypten. Theologie und Frömmigkeit einer frühen Hochkultur* (1st ed.), Stuttgart 1984, 225.
[7] J. Assmann, *Ägypten. Theologie und Frömmigkeit einer frühen Hochkultur*, Stuttgart 1984.

conception stems from the observation that the individual's heart seems to gain prominence as the moral authority in texts from the 11th dynasty, as opposed to earlier texts from the Old Kingdom, where the king holds pride of price. In Miriam Lichtheim's words, "the Egyptian discovered his inner-directedness."[8] Apparently inspired by Morenz,[9] Assmann has argued that this self-awareness was symbolized by the leading heart in the Middle Kingdom texts and later developed into the concept of the heart of the individual being led by the gods in the New Kingdom.[10] The crucial theory, then, is that changes in the development of the individual's self-conception (in ancient Egyptian terms, "his heart") paralleled the development of "theological discourse." This process has been described in terms of so-called implicit and explicit theology by Assmann, i.e., the development from an inherent towards a transcendental religion.[11] Besides "implicit" and "explicit" theology Assmann has also introduced the terms "primary" and "secondary religion."[12] On analogy to "implicit theology," "primary religion" is the self-evident existence of the divine as part of the cosmos and the concomitant religious action.[13] "Explicit theology" or "secondary religion," by contrast, is a founded religion that emphasizes the communication between the human and divine "beyond the barriers of cult."[14] Put differently, the development of secondary religion in ancient Egypt implies that contact between god(s) and humans gradually became a personal one and, to some extent, offered a liberation from cult and royal intermediation alike. As for chronology, Assmann argues that this theology of the "divine will" developed from the Middle Kingdom onwards, continuing into the early New Kingdom, but subsequently suppressed in the Amarna Period and reinforced thereafter in the Later New Kingdom, i.e., in the "Age of Personal Piety."[15] In terms of theology, Assmann views a major shift during the reign of Amenhotep III when a so-called "new solar theology" developed the world becoming object of divine action and control.[16] Assmann thus presents a bipolar model that describes historical as well as theological transformation: the concept of Maat

[8] M. Lichtheim, *Maat in Egyptian Autobiographies and Related Studies*, *OBO* 120, Freiburg 1992, 23.
[9] Compare S. Morenz 1975, 117, note 177, in which he suggests looking into the role of the heart of the individual. See also J. Assmann, 'Ägyptische Religion: Probleme ihrer Beschreibung und Deutung. Ein Erfahrungsbericht', in: A. Verbovsek, B. Backes and C. Jones (eds), *Methodik und Didaktik. Herausforderungen eines kulturwissenschaftlichen Paradigmenwechsels in den Altertumswissenschaften*, München 2011, 674.
[10] J. Assmann, 'Zur Geschichte des Herzens im Alten Ägypten', in: J. Assmann (ed.), *Die Erfindung des inneren Menschen*, Gütersloh 1993, 95.
[11] See also the discussion by L. Weiss, 'Individuum und Gemeinschaft: methodologische Überlegungen zur *Persönlichen Frömmigkeit*', in: G. Neunert, K. Gabler and A. Verbovsek (eds), *Sozialisationen: Individuum – Gruppe – Gesellschaft. Beiträge des ersten Münchner Arbeitskreises Junge Ägyptologie*, *GOF* IV/51, Wiesbaden 2012, 189.
[12] J. Assmann, *Ma'at. Gerechtigkeit und Unsterblichkeit im Alten Ägypten*, München 1990, 19 and 279–88; J. Assmann, 'Kulte und Religionen. Merkmale primärer und sekundärer Religion(serfahrung) im Alten Ägypten', in: A. Wagner (ed.), *Primäre und sekundäre Religion als Kategorie der Religionsgeschichte des Alten Testaments*, Berlin 2006, 269–80; and also J. Assmann, *Religion und kulturelles Gedächtnis*, München 2000, 50–1.
[13] J. Assmann 2006, 272.
[14] J. Assmann 2006, 275.
[15] J. Assmann 2005a, 52.
[16] J. Assmann 1984, 235–41.

regulating the cosmic order is gradually replaced by the divine will.[17] Personal religion is therefore viewed as a theological invention whose prime period is the Ramesside Period.[18]

Assmann's model has proven somewhat unsatisfactory for a number of reasons:[19] firstly, the Amarna religion can no longer be interpreted as either a "*Religionsstiftung*"[20] or, consequently, a turning point as traditionally proposed.[21] Recent research has shown that the Bes-image and gods like Thoeris and Ptah were worshipped in the Amarna Period, thereby undermining claims of a "*Negation, Abschaffung und radikale Entwirklichung [...] der polytheistischen Religion.*"[22] Assmann has, in fact, modified his interpretation of the Amarna Period, which he now views as a continuity and not a break,[23] but he has done so without changing his idea that the Amarna Period should be conceived as the fulcrum of a religious development that began at the end of the Old

[17] J. Assmann, 'Gottesbeherzigung. "Persönliche Frömmigkeit" als religiöse Strömung der Ramessidenzeit', in: I. Brancoli, E. Ciampini, A. Roccati and L. Sist (eds), *L'Impero Ramesside. Convegno Internazionale in onore di Sergio Donadoni*, Rom 1997, 18.
[18] E.g. Luiselli 2011a, 1. For a recent study heavily drawing on Assmann's approach, cf. D. Liesegang, 'The Phenomenon of "personal religion" in the Ramesside Period, from the "Poem" of Ramses II through to the Prayers of Ramses III', in: H. Abd El Gawad *et al.* (eds), *Current Research in Egyptology 2011. Proceedings of the Twelfth Annual Symposium Durham University 2011*, Oxford 2012, 127–32.
[19] Compare Weiss 2012, 187–205.
[20] Term e.g. J. Assmann 1984a, 233 criticised by e.g. D. Kessler, 'Dissidentenliteratur oder kultischer Hintergrund? Teil 1: Überlegungen zum Tura–Hymnus und zum Hymnus in TT 139', *SAK* 25 (1998), 161–188; D. Kessler, 'Dissidentenliteratur oder kultischer Hintergrund? (Teil 2)', *SAK* 27 (1999), 173–221; D. Kessler, 'Die kultische Bindung der Ba–Konzeption. 1. Teil: Die Tempelbindung der Ba–Formen', *SAK* 28 (2000), 161–206 und D. Kessler, 'Die kultische Bindung der Ba-Konzeption. 2. Teil: Die Ba–Zitate auf den Kultstelen und Ostraka des Neuen Reichs', *SAK* 29 (2001), 139–186.
[21] E.g. J. Assmann 2005a, 80, who does not yet refrain from terms such as "heretical heresy" ("*häretischer Ketzerei*"). On the historical embeddedness of the Amarna Period cf. e.g. z.B. J. Baines, 'The Dawn of the Amarna Age', in: D. O'Connor and E.H. Cline (eds), Amenhotep III. Perspectives on his Reign, Ann Arbor 1998, 271–312, especially 274–275.
[22] J. Assmann 1991a, 233. It should be emphasized, however, that Assmann quotes early sources (such as P. Boulaq 17 = CG 58038) and interprets them as the earliest evidence of the "theology of the will": e.g. J. Assmann 1984a, 229. Parts of the text are first attested on a Ramesside papyrus, but already occur on statue BM 40959 from the 17th dynasty, cf. M.M. Luiselli, *Der Amun–Re Hymnus des P. Bulaq 17 (P. Kairo CG 58038). KÄT* 14, Wiesbaden 2004, XX–I. All arguments against a radical monotheism at Amarna have recently been discussed in detail by J. Baines, 'Presenting and Discussing Deities in New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period Egypt', in: B. Pongratz-Leisten (ed.), *Reconsidering the Concept of Revolutionary Monotheism*, Princeton 2011, 62–5.
[23] J. Assmann 1991a, 234: "*Ich vertrete also die These, daß es sich bei der Amarna-Religion nicht um einen Einbruch von außen handelt, auch wenn sie sich wie alle gestifteten Religionen als einen solchen, als Offenbarung, legitimiert. Es handelt sich vielmehr um eine radikalisierte Position im Prozeß des theologischen Diskurses.*" In earlier works Assmann had viewed "*die nachfolgende theologische Spekulation* [i.e. of the later New Kingdom as] *eine Anti-These zu Amarna*"; cf. J. Assmann, 'Primat und Transzendenz. Struktur und Genese der ägyptischen Vorstellung eines "Höchsten Wesens"', in: W. Westendorf (ed.), *Aspekte der Spätägyptischen Religion, GOF* 9, Göttingen 1979, 26. It is here exactly in this opposition and hence not continuity that the Amarna Period became the breeding ground for the later developments (cf. Assmann 1979, 32). Another example for Assmann's dialectic is the claim that "*sich das Neue* [i.e. "*die Thebanische Amun-Theologie der Ramessidenzeit*"] *gegenüber dem Alten* [i.e. "*die Amarna-Religion [die] mit Gewalt, in Form einer "Revolution von oben," und unter militanter Ausschließung anderer religiöser Formen eingeführt wurde*"] *scharf absetzt*"; cf. J. Assmann, *Re und Amun. Die Krise des polytheistischen Weltbilds im Ägypten der 18.-20. Dynastie*, Göttingen 1983, 189.

Kingdom.[24] Why Assmann cannot abandon the crisis element in his model becomes clear within his earlier work: indeed, his main premise is that the concept of the inner individual which founded the Christian-Occidental perspective can only evolve through the experience of such a crisis or "cognitive dissonance."[25] Amarna's alleged crisis initiated by the persecution of traditional gods during the Amarna Period, usually receives support from the text of king Tutankhamun's so-called restoration stela (CG 34183).[26] The stela was found at Karnak temple and illustrates its disastrous condition in the Amarna Period subsequently restored by Tutankhamun.[27] According to this decree, the "shrines [of the traditional gods] were fallen into ruin, having become more mounds overgrown with grass (...) [and when t]he gods were ignoring this land."[28] As demonstrated above, not all gods were terrorized at this time, but Amarna actually hosted a variety of religious practices.[29] The text of the stela should thus not be interpreted as an objective report of previous events. For example, John Baines has noted that "it would be unwise simply to take this [text] at face value."[30] Rather, the texts presents a topos in which king Tutankhamun could present himself as the restorer of Maat (i.e., cosmic order and justice) a practice that is attested for other kings as well.[31] What is particularly important for the present study, however, is a different sequence of the text whose significance has previously been overlooked:

jr snmḥ.tw n nṯr r nḏ ḥ.t m-ᶜ=f nn jj.n=f
jr sšȝj.tw n nṯr.t nb[.t] [m] mjt.t n[n] jj.n=s

[24] J. Assmann 1984a, 193.
[25] J. Assmann (ed.), *Die Erfindung des Inneren Menschen*, Gütersloh 1993, 10; J. Assmann 1984, 239; J. Assmann, 1990, 256. This idea apparently stems from the hypothesis that archaic cultures do not distinguish between inner and outer perspectives, cf. e.g. S. Shaked, '"Innen" und "Außen" in der Religionsgeschichte', in: J. Assmann (ed.), *Die Erfindung des Inneren Menschen*, Gütersloh 1993, 16. The categories "inside" and "outside" imply a range of associations (cf. A. Assmann, 'Zeichen – Allegorie – Symbol', in: J. Assmann (ed.), *Die Erfindung des Inneren Menschen*, Gütersloh 1993, 29) including the distinction of implicit/explicit theology used by Assmann. Using the example of Jewish magic texts from Late Antiquity, however, Shaul Shaked invalidates his earlier hypothesis by demonstrating the risks involved in attempts to explication the underlying the ancient thought and practice (Shaked 1993, 22); he demonstrates the complexity of the issue depending on the point of view of any given agent. A problem of the associations previously mentioned their implication of certain appraisal (cf. A. Assmann 1993, 29).
[26] P. Lacau, *Stèles du Nouvel Empire. Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire; nos. 34001–34064, 34065–34189*, Cairo 1909–16, 227 and pl. 70.
[27] E.g. H.A. Schlögl, *Echnaton – Tutanchamun. Daten – Fakten – Literatur* (4th revised edition), Wiesbaden 1993, 77; B.G. Davies, *Egyptian Historical Records of the Later Eighteenth Dynasty* VI, Warminster 1995, 31; and J. van Dijk, 'De restauratiestèle van Toetanchamon', in: R.J. Demarée and K.R. Veenhof (eds), *Zij schreven geschiedenis. Historische documenten uit het Nabije Oosten (2500–100 v. Chr.)*, Leiden 2003, 233.
[28] Translation by W.J. Murnane, *Texts from the Amarna Period in Egypt*, Atlanta 1995, 213.
[29] Most recently cf. B. Kemp and A. Stevens, *Busy Lifes at Amarna: Excavations in the Main City (Grid 12 and the House of Ranefer, N.49.18), I: The Excavation, Architecture and Environmental Remains. EES Excavation Memoir* 90, London 2010, 504 and studied in detail by A. Stevens, *Private Religion at Amarna: The material evidence*, Oxford 2006. On earlier evidence for divine intervention see also, for example, B.S. Lesko, 'Divine Interest in Humans in Ancient Egypt', in: Z. Hawass and J. Houser Wegner (eds), *Millions of Jubilees. Studies in Honour of David P. Silverman* I, Cairo 2011, 305–13.
[30] J. Baines and E. Frood, 'Piety, Change and Display in the New Kingdom', in: M. Collier and S. Snape (eds), *Ramesside Studies in Honour of K.A. Kitchen*, Bolton 2011, 2.
[31] See also Baines 2011, 46–55.

If one prayed to any god, to ask something from him, he did not come at all.
If one prayed to any goddess in the same way, she did not come at all.

Malte Römer listed the passage as evidence of oracular ineffectiveness after the Amarna Period, but offered no further comment.[32] Yet the meaning of the words *snmḥ* and *sšȝj* extends beyond "petitioning" and embodies the act of supplication and prayer alike.[33] Given the somewhat standard topos, the text cannot serve as evidence for a people "deprived of the access to divine succour"[34] in the Amarna Period. What is more important within the topos of restoring the status quo, however, is that the statement only makes sense if the gods did come when addressed also preceding the Amarna Period. In other words, the text proves that personal religion was not invented after the Amarna Period.

Apart from historical misconception, yet another problem underlies many previous approaches, namely the conception of personal piety in terms of inwardness/introspection or personal devotion to a god.[35] This notion of piety stems from and implies evolutionist and sometimes orientalist notions.[36] In fact, such a picture of piety often leads to the idea that religious development peaks when it is closest to modern Christian conceptions of the divine and personal devotion.[37] This assumption manifests itself when the aforementioned authors portray the "piety" of the New Kingdom as the crowning glory of Egyptian religion. While Morenz states "*eine höchste Höhe kann man nicht steigern*",[38] Assmann's term "*Durchbruch einer neuen, vierten Dimension*"[39] ("breakthrough of the fourth dimension," i.e., the dimension of personal piety) is not exactly value-free. That original theory of primary and secondary religion—formulated by Theo Sundermeier—and advanced by Assmann has been dismissed as overly simplistic and rather unhelpful primarily because of its missionary concern to present Christianity as a better alternative.[40] The same presupposition underlies notions of cult as barrier to religion and

[32] M. Römer, *Gottes- und Priesterherrschaft in Ägypten am Ende des Neuen Reichs*, *ÄAT* 21, Wiesbaden 1994, 509.
[33] Compare *Wb* IV, 165, 16 and *Wb* IV, 281, 23 and their *Belegstellen*.
[34] Baines and Frood 2011, 2.
[35] E.g. Bickel's suggestion of a '*religiosité individuelle*' in the sense of '*toutes les aspirations pour lesquelles un individu pouvait éprouver le besoin d'adresser une force supérieure*', cf. S. Bickel, 'Aspects et fonctions de la déification d'Amenhotep III', *BIFAO* 102 (2002), 63–90, especially 66. For a criticism of Bickel's perspective compare also Luiselli 2011a, 7.
[36] On "patronizing views" in Egyptology, see also J. Baines, 'Restricted Knowledge, Hierarchy, and Decorum: Modern Perceptions and Ancient Institutions', *JARCE* 27 (1990), 2. Related to this issue is the matter of the Bible as the measure of Egyptological descriptions of the ancient Egyptian religion see, for example, M. Fitzenreiter, 'Bemerkungen zur Beschreibung altägyptischer Religion. Mit einer Definition und dem Versuch ihrer Anwendung', *GM* 201 (2004), 20.
[37] Compare a similar criticism on Adolf Erman's approach by K. Koch, *Das Wesen altägyptischer Religion im Spiegel ägyptologischer Forschung*, Hamburg 1989, 49.
[38] S. Morenz, 1975, 109.
[39] J. Assmann 1984a, 198.
[40] E.g. A. Grünschloss, 'Jenseits von 'primärer' und 'sekundärer' Religion', in: A. Wagner (ed.), *Primäre und sekundäre Religion als Kategorie der Religionsgeschichte des Alten Testaments*, Berlin 2006, 251–8 and especially 254–55.

piety.[41] This conceptual system follows Protestant tradition, where piety and (divine) word are considered more valuable than religious acts or offerings.[42] The authors mentioned above thus remain within a Christian Eurocentric framework.[43] Therefore, the nature of previous undertakings has all too often projected authorial standards of religion based on piety back onto a bygone culture.[44] In support of such method, theory borrowed from missionary, biblical, and Protestant sources undergo application to religion in general.[45] These approaches have considerable limitations in their resonance with ancient Egyptian reality.

Ironically, the traditional evaluation of personal piety's development has sparked recent opposition, which contends religious texts (primarily on stelae) provide *no* evidence of personal piety.[46] Presented by Dieter Kessler and his disciples, this counter argument understands religious texts on stelae as part of an institutionalized cultic context inexpressive of personal piety. Kessler argues only priests could communicate with the god(s)[47] and understands iconographic representations of individuals presenting offerings before the gods as mere imitation of the religious action performed by priests.[48]

[41] J. Assmann 2006, 275. In his conclusion, Assmann states that ancient Egypt always remained "cult" and never accomplished (!) the transition to "religion" (cf. J. Assmann 2006, 280). Elsewhere, Assmann laments the absence of canonical Holy Scripture for the extant texts: cf. J. Assmann, 'Unio Liturgia. Die kultische Einstimmung in götterweltlichen Lobpreis als Grundmotiv "esoterischer" Überlieferung im Alten Ägypten', in: H.G. Kippenberg and G.G. Stroumsa (eds), *Secrecy and Concealment. Studies in the History of Mediterranean and Near Eastern Religions*, Leiden 1995, 41. How Christian conceptions and missiology have influenced Assmann's model has also been demonstrated by J. Mohn, 'Theologieaffine Religionstypen oder Religion im Medium von Mythos und Ritual im Alten Ägypten? Anmerkungen zur Adaption religionstheoretischer Begriffe anhand von Jan Assmanns Unterscheidung zwischen primärer und sekundärer Religion', in: A. Verbovsek, B. Backes and C. Jones (eds), *Methodik und Didaktik. Herausforderungen eines kulturwissenschaftlichen Paradigmenwechsels in den Altertumswissenschaften*, München 2011, 728.

[42] On this tradition compare, for example, R. Flasche, 'Opfer und Gebet in der Religionswissenschaft. Eine Einführung', in: U. Berner, Ch. Bochinger and R. Flasche (eds), *Opfer und Gebet in den Religionen, Veröffentlichungen der Wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaft für Theologie* 26, Gütersloh 2005, 12. A similar criticism has been proposed by F. Junge, 'Rezension zu J. Assmann, Maat', *Göttingische Gelehrte Anzeigen* 245 no. 3–4 (1993), 154.

[43] See also the criticisms by Mohn 2011, 728 and B.U. Schipper, 'Ma'at und die "gespaltene Welt." Zur Anwendung der Unterscheidung von primärer und sekundärer Religion auf die Religion Ägyptens', in: A. Wagner (ed.), *Primäre und sekundäre Religion als Kategorie der Religionsgeschichte des Alten Testaments*, Berlin 2006, 193–6. Contrary to Mohn, Schipper criticizes the exclusion of magic from Egyptian religion by early Egyptologists but not the model by Jan Assmann, which Schipper views as a descriptive tool for religion and magic as two equipollent forms of ancient Egyptian religion (Schipper 2006, 198). An recent overview on eurocentrism in the study of religion and magic in general has been presented by B.C. Otto, *Magie: Rezeptions- und diskursgeschichtliche Analysen von der Antike bis zur Neuzeit*, Berlin 2011, 98–132.

[44] See also Mohn 2011, 728.

[45] Mohn 2011, 730–5.

[46] Such as e.g. F. Adrom, ''Der Gipfel der Frömmigkeit' (Soziale und funktionale Überlegungen zu Kultstelen am Beispiel der Stele Turin CG 50058 des Nfr-abw', *SAK* 33 (2005), 1–28), vgl. M.M. Luiselli, Rezension von E.E. Morgan, Untersuchungen zu den Ohrenstelen, *OLZ* 102/1 (2007), 13–4.

[47] For example, Kessler 2001, 148 divides between "*nichteintrittsberechtigten Menschen*" and the "*Pastophorengruppe einer sakralen Institution*" who initialized the cults. Kessler means that only designated people could perform cultic action at Deir el-Medina. The term "*Pastophoren*" should not, however, be used in the present context since the "*Pastophoren*" were not priests but rather a kind of "*Ordnungsdienst*" (security service) in charge of carrying objects during processions etc. in the Graeco-Roman period; cf. H.B. Schönborn, *Die Pastophoren im Kult der ägyptischen Götter. Beiträge zur klassischen Philologie* 80, Meisenheim am Glan 1976, 4–5 and 23–24.

[48] E.g. D. Kessler, 'Tierische Misverständnisse: Grundsätzliches zu Fragen des Tierkults', in M. Fitzenreiter (ed.), *Tierkulte im pharaonischen Ägypten und im Kulturvergleich. Internetbeiträge zur Ägyptologie und Sudanarchäologie* IV, Berlin 2003, 40.

For his part, Faried Adrom draws on ritual theory to place stelae within a highly institutionalized cultic context, whereby the individuals could not act "*jenseits von Gruppenzwängen als freies Individuum*" or follow their own private beliefs.[49] A methodological problem here, however, arises from Adrom's generalization, since he deploys his conclusions from a single stela in order to make a normative statement on the interpretation of stelae from Deir el-Medina in general (on the site, see chapter 1.5 below).[50] Contrary to Kessler,[51] however, Adrom acknowledges the general possibility that a form of piety might have existed:[52] these stelae might indeed have had multi-layered functions and embodied both self-representation and, at least potentially, personal piety.

Perhaps the New Kingdom should be interpreted as a period that saw the development of new religious forms,[53] or at least new means and forms of representation.[54] Notably, Baines has criticized Assmann's interpretation of the increase of religious texts and representations in the New Kingdom as a change of the so-called *decorum*, i.e., the rules of what may or may not be represented in which context.[55] According to Baines "personal piety" existed at all times but was "downplayed in public contexts during earlier periods."[56] The weakening of *decorum* in the New Kingdom thus increased access to formerly restricted knowledge.[57] Put differently, for Baines "personal piety" is no invention of the New Kingdom but a decline in the status quo that is tangible in representational change. Friedrich Junge maintains that the Egyptian cosmos was always ruled by the will of the god(s) and this will was increasingly emphasized.[58] While these approaches are undoubtedly convincing, the question of cause for such change remains rather difficult to answer.[59] Nevertheless, the anchoring of representational modality in standardized tradition does not exclude some extends of personal choice.

[49] Adrom 2005, 14.

[50] As has been shown by Luiselli 2011a, 33.

[51] E.g. Kessler 1999, 189.

[52] Adrom 2005, 26.

[53] J. Assmann 1997, 29.

[54] Luiselli 2011a, 4.

[55] J. Baines, 'Practical Religion and Piety', *JEA* 73 (1987), 82.

[56] J. Baines, 'Society, Morality, and Religious Practice', in: B.E. Shafer (ed.), *Religion in Ancient Egypt. Gods, Myths, and Personal Practice*, Ithaca 1991, 146.

[57] Baines 1990, 1–23.

[58] Junge 1993, 157. See also P. Vernus, 'La grande mutation idéologique du Nouvel Empire: Une Nouvelle théorie du pouvoir politique. Du démiurge face à sa creation, *BSÉG* 19 (1995), 69–95.

[59] Compare also the discussions by Baines and Frood 2011, 7–16 and C. Keller, 'Some Thoughts on Religious Change at Deir el-Medina, in: S.H. D'Auria (ed.), *Servant of Mut. Studies in Honor of Richard A. Fazzini, Probleme der Ägyptologie* 28, Leiden 2008, 151–54 on the "religious development at Deir el-Medina" (p. 151).

In sum, though, the study of "personal piety" has polarized[60] Egyptology, none of these studies has presented a model that fully explains the role of personal religion in the daily life of ancient Egyptians. Assmann's understanding of personal piety as confined to elite intellectual discourse and their "religious orientation" excludes a variety of other possible forms of piety,[61] whereas for Kessler no piety existed at all,[62] which seems a rather extreme position given those aforementioned studies on Egyptian conceptions of the heart (p. 1–2). Certain elements of all positions above are justified, but the options set forth are not, in fact, either/or. Luiselli, for instance, has shown that wishes expressed in the stelae texts demonstrate a personal component beyond the general cultic setting in which the stelae were embedded.[63] A hymn inscribed on a stela could express personal religion *and* reflect the prestige[64] of possessing access to a certain deity even when cultic actions were performed by priests. Its shape and representation might have been chosen more or less freely within established *decorum*,[65] yet the choice of motif should be understood as an expression of personal piety by means of using a *„von der offiziellen Tempelinstitution (...) zur Verfügung gestellten Motiv, so dass ein Ausdruck Persönlicher Frömmigkeit ermöglicht und gleichzeitig gesteuert wurde."*[66] In her recent study, Luiselli could thus contend that the votive stelae of Deir el-Medina prove an important source for understanding personal religion. She stresses, however, that this aspect is but one side of the coin.[67] Indeed, analysis of both aspects extend beyond the scope of a doctoral dissertation. Accordingly, Luiselli's argument supports further study of another aspect, namely, the *„Vollzug von rituellen Handlungen im privaten Bereich."*[68] Such inquiry requires the broadening of scope beyond the traditional Egyptological focus on text[69] (e.g. letters, prayers and hymns) to include other forms of personal religious practice in ancient Egypt. Klaus Koch cut to the heart of the issue already in 1989:

> *"Die ägyptischen Texte beharren darauf, von den Göttern zu wissen und nicht etwa an sie zu glauben. Die beliebte Weise, altägyptische Religion als einen Glauben analog zu dem modern-christlichen Verständnis von Religion darzustellen, wie sie für Erman und Kees selbstverständlich war und bei Morenz eine ausschlaggebende Rolle einnimmt, arbeitet mit einem anachronistischen Begriff. Denn Glaube betrifft eine Sache der Entscheidung und des Vertrauens für etwas, was von den einen als unverbrüchlich wahr hingestellt wird, von den anderen aber als unzuverlässig oder gar falsch betrachtet wird. Ein solches Entweder-oder kennt das alte Ägypten nicht. Indem die Mythologie als Produkt „rationaler" Erkenntnis, wenngleich u.U. als esoterisches Wissen, aufgefaßt wird, zwingt das den modernen Religionshistoriker zu Überlegungen über den vorausgesetzten Charakter solcher Vernunft. Der Schluß läßt sich kaum umgehen, daß hier eine andere Art des Denkens vorherrscht als die uns geläufige."*[70]

"Different thought" does not mean "primitive" or "mythical thought."[71] Clearly, ancient Egyptians were fully capable of thinking logically in their own way, and their particular logic does not differ fundamentally from ours today.[72] Rather, Koch refers to a methodology that allows for religious conceptions divergent from a Christian perspective. Though perhaps impossible to detach fully from our own perceptions, an objective

[60] See for example, the two different representations of Neferabu (i) discussed by Luiselli 2011a, 28 and also 33.
[61] Baines 1987, 96.
[62] Compare also Van der Plas who states that "there is no religion without a personal and popular one," cf. D. van der Plas, 'Tempel in Ägypten', in: R. Gundlach and M. Rochholz (eds), *Ägyptische Tempel – Struktur, Funktion und Programm (Akten der Ägyptoplogischen Tempeltagungen in Gosen 1990 und in Mainz 1992)*, *HÄB* 37, Hildesheim 1994, 251.
[63] Luiselli 2011a, 34.
[64] The undisciplined use of the term prestige in *Altertumswissenschaften* has recently been challenged by G. Neunert, *Mein Grab, mein Esel, mein Platz in der Gesellschaft. Prestige im alten Ägypten am Beispiel Deir el-Medine*, Berlin 2010. His criticism is, however, problematic. That a hierarchy existed at Deir el-Medina seems clear from the differences in income (e.g. Neunert 2010, 68–70). The village of Deir el-Medina was rebuilt and overhauled on a regular basis, and no evidence suggests that income differences within a certain group would not have had an impact on the standard of living as indicated inter alia by the size of one's house. The spacious home of the "simple workman" Sennedjem (i) (i.e. house S.O. VI) could be explained by the generally higher standard of living in the villages's earlier habitation. The decline in the later phase can, for example, be illustrated by the missing salaries that caused the strikes in the later 20th dynasty, (e.g. Frandsen 1990, 166–99). Another explanation for the large house could be that Sennedjem earned money and prestige through other activities, such as making use of his craftsmanship in informal workshops—a topic that I cannot explore here in detail. In support of Neunert's criticism, his study did aim to detect the social mechanics of the entitlement to prestige ("*Prestigeanspruch*"), i.e., prestige as an ideational good that was negotiated and re-negotiated by the parties involved (Neunert 2010, 127). Though these negotiation processes are difficult to explore in a past culture, I would still argue that wealth would tend to create prestige in any society and that both mobile and immobile property would raise the prestige of agents in almost any society. I fully agree with Neunert that the terms used in *Altertumswissenschaften* need to be questioned and reviewed, drawing on literature from sociology in particular, though not at all odds. Not all contemporary explanation models can be applied to ancient culture since we lack the source materials. The attempt should thus focus on case studies and not necessarily dismissal of the whole concept (but see Neunert 2010, 215). Compare also the discussion by M. Fitzenreiter, 'Einleitung: Das Heilige und die Ware. Überlegungen zum Nexus von Religion und Ökonomie', in: M. Fitzenreiter (ed.), *Das Heilige und die Ware. Zum Spannungsfeld von Religion und Ökonomie*, *IBAES* VII, London 2007, 5–6. In spite of these objections I do appreciate Gregor Neunert's work and am obliged to him for many fruitful elucidating conversations.
[65] Compare, for example, the three main types of representation proposed by K. Exell, *Soldiers, Sailors and Sandalmakers – A Social Reading of Ramesside Votive Stelae*, *Golden House Publications Egyptology* 10, London 2009, 20. The worshipping person could either be depicted directly in front of the deity (type A) or in the lower register (type C), or he or she might "use a higher-ranking intermediate" (type B).
[66] Luiselli 2011a, 41.
[67] Luiselli 2011a, 36.
[68] Luiselli 2011a, 36.
[69] E.g. A. Erman, *Die ägyptische Religion*, *Handbücher der ägyptischen Museen*, Berlin 1905; A. Erman, *Denksteine aus der thebanischen Gräberstadt, Sitzungsberichte der königlich preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, Berlin 1911, 1086–1110; A. Erman, *Die Religion der Ägypter*, Berlin 1934, 139–56; B. Gunn, 'The Religion of the Poor in Ancient Egypt', *JEA* 3 (1916), 81–94; S. Morenz, *Ägyptische Religion*, Stuttgart 1960, 85–116; E.E. Morgan, 'Einige Bemerkungen zur Thematik der persönlichen Frömmigkeit', *SAK* 34 (2006), 333–52.
[70] Koch 1989, 104.
[71] Elaborated criticism on this perspective has already been proposed by H. Sternberg, *Mythische Motive und Mythenbildung in den Ägyptischen Tempeln und Papyri der Griechisch Römischen Zeit*, *GOF* IV/14, Göttingen 1985, 1–9.
[72] E.g. J. Baines, 'Interpretations of Religion: Logic, Discourse, Rationality', *GM* 76 (1984), 25–54 and R. van Walsem, 'The struggle against chaos as a "strange attractor" in Ancient Egyptian culture: a descriptive model for the "chaotic" development of cultural systems' in: J. van Dijk (ed.), *Essays on ancient Egypt in Honour of Herman Te Velde*, *Egyptological Memoirs* 1, Groningen 1997, 322–4.

analysis must pursue an openness for other frameworks and approaches.[73] The methodological challenge is therefore to transform the somewhat Eurocentric perspective into more refined questions that allow for an analysis of difference and avoid implicit assessments of value.[74] Thus, the present study will widen the scope to encompass the religious practice of ancient Egyptians rather than study "personal piety" in terms of belief and inwardness alone.[75] Interestingly, Assmann himself included such an perspective in his own work: the cultic, cosmic, and mythic dimensions of Assmann's "*Gottesnähe*" are "*weniger eine Sache expliziter theologischer Metatexte als vielmehr* praktizierter [emphasis mine] *und als solche impliziter Theologie.*"[76] Put differently, Assmann's distinction between implicit and explicit theology is mainly a distinction between the practical and the spiritual aspects of religion (or, in his words, theology). Luiselli has undertaken a similar approach in distinguishing between "intellektuell *und* praktisch *gesuchter Gottesnähe.*"[77] In Luiselli's model, gods were (sought to be) approached intellectually in autobiographical and literary texts and practically by means of cultic action.[78] The main difference between these two media center on whether divine proximity is described or by shown by certain deeds.[79] The crucial improvement of Luiselli's model as opposed to the one by Assmann stems from her contextualization of texts within daily life. This move proves crucial for theological content then remains inextricable from personal religion.[80] Considering performative acts involved in the votive stelae cult,[81] Luiselli categorizes these documents among the practically sought nearness to the gods, which makes good sense.[82] These stelae, however, had a multi-layered function and were only one way of religious expression.[83] The notion of performance implies a certain degree of audience,[84] that may not have existed in the domestic context of the home. Full understanding of daily religious practice demands inclusion of the archaeological source materials[85]—a crucial approach for a proper analysis of personal

[73] Compare, for example, G. Ahn, 'Eurozentrismen als Erkenntnisbarrieren in der Religionswissenschaft', *ZfR* 5 (1997), 41–58.
[74] Ahn 1997, 57–5.
[75] Similarly Fitzenreiter 2004, 22–3. Albeit without excluding "sacred texts, (...) visions, nor ecstatic or mystical experiences" as suggested by L. Meskell, *Object Worlds in Ancient Egypt.Material Biographies Past and Present*, Oxford 2004, 69–70.
[76] J. Assmann 1991a, 17.
[77] Luiselli 2011a, 228.
[78] Luiselli 2011a, 228.
[79] Luiselli 2011a, 229–36. It remains, however, somewhat unclear why the intellectually sought nearness to god is considered as less "functional" cf. Luiselli 2011a, 235 versus Luiselli 2011a, 236.
[80] Baines discusses a similar issue in the framework of the monotheism/polytheism debate. In line with the problem described above, the argument that hymns would offer a monotheistic concept "in contradiction with the multiple deities" should be abandoned, cf. Baines 2011, 44.
[81] Luiselli 2011a, 32–4.
[82] Luiselli 2011a, 228–9.
[83] This aspect has also been emphasized by Luiselli 2011a, 35.
[84] Compare, for example, the criteria of a perfomative action as described by S.J. Tambiah, 'A perfomative approach to ritual', *Proceedings of the British Academy* 65 (1979), 113–69, cf. C. Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, New York 1992, 42.
[85] The study on Deir el-Medina usually focuses on texts. A notable exception is the study by A.H. Bomann, *The Private Chapel in Ancient Egypt*, London 1991. How fruitful the analysis of the archaeological materials from the domestic context can be has recently been demonstrated for Amarna by A. Stevens, The Amarna Royal Women as Images of Fertility, *JANER* 4 (2004), 107–27; and Stevens 2006.

religion in ancient Egypt. Nevertheless, focus on practice should not exclude any individual agency altogether for every meaningful religious action is embedded in a broader social framework.[86] According to Egyptian wisdom texts, the heart (i.e., some kind of inner reflection) should ideally play a role in the practice of daily life.[87] Such experiences, however, remain difficult to grasp in ancient culture.[88] We cannot know whether an individual performed an offering out of personal piety or social obligation. Even in modern society the individuals sitting in the first church pew may not be the most religious. Since ancient Egyptians cannot be studied ethnographically, scholarly inquiry must focus on evidence of religious actions performed irrespective of questions as to whether these actions were driven by piety, routine or,—most probably—by both. By no means was the individual entirely constrained.

1.1. Defining Terms and Concepts

The present thesis aims to analyse individual religious practice of ancient Egyptians in the domestic space.[89] Clear investigation requires clear definition of the object of inquiry. Therefore, central concepts of the current study will undergo definition.

1.1.1. "Individual"

Within the Western intellectual tradition, the term "individual" evokes a wealth of semantic connotations.[90] Needless to say, that even a brief summary of the *Begriffsgeschichte* lies far beyond the scope of this study.[91] It is paramount to note, however, that the ancient Egyptian individual was never fully "detached from the community relations."[92] On the contrary, individuality in ancient Egypt never meant

[86] In fact generally belief should not be causally separated from action, though religious action should be understood as expression of religious tenets, cf. H.G. Kippenberg, 'Einleitung: Lokale Religionsgeschichte von Schriftreligionen. Beispiele für ein nützliches Konzept', in: H.G. Kippenberg and B. Luchesi (eds), *Lokale Religionsgeschichte*, Marburg 1995, 14–5. In Egyptology this idea has recently been stressed by H.H. Roeder, 'Zwischen den Stühlen. Zugangsbeschreibungen zur altägyptischen Religion zwischen Transdisziplinarität und Eigenbegrifflichkeit', in: A. Verbovsek, B. Backes and C. Jones (eds), *Methodik und Didaktik. Herausforderungen eines kulturwissenschaftlichen Paradigmenwechsels in den Altertumswissenschaften*, München 2011, 744–45, note 20.
[87] J. Assmann 1993b, 92.
[88] See also Luiselli 2011a, 8.
[89] Individual religious practices were also performed in non-domestic spaces, for example, in the various chapels at Deir el-Medina; cf. e.g. A.H. Bomann, *The Private Chapel in Ancient Egypt*, London 1991, but these activities are largely excluded here.
[90] E.g. W. Janke, 'Individuum/Individualismus I: Philosophisch', in: G. Müller, H. Balz and G. Krause (eds) *Theologische Realenzyklopädie* 16, Berlin 1987, 117–24 and H. Luther, 'Individuum/Individualismus II: Praktisch–Theologisch', G. Müller, H. Balz and G. Krause (eds) *Theologische Realenzyklopädie* 16, Berlin 1987, 124–7.
[91] A comprehensive summary has been presented by L. Meskell, *Archaeologies of Social Life. Age, Sex, Class* et cetera *in Ancient Egypt*, Oxford 1999, 8–52.
[92] Definition of the modern individual by H. Abels, *Identität*, Wiesbaden 2006, 18. The question of freedom of the individual in the modern world is a question beyond the scope of an Egyptologist.

"egomanic individuality, but social and moral responsibility."[93] The term "individual" will thus define a single person acting within that social group in which it is integrated.[94] Indeed, an individuality as equivalent to uniqueness[95] seems difficult to maintain even in modern society, since such a strong definition would demand that every individual differ from every other in every aspect imaginable.[96] Accordingly, the present thesis will adopt a middle-ground definition with "individual" describing the smallest human entity embedded within a social group. This context proves essential since the Egyptian ideal embedded the self in the group.[97] As demonstrated below, the archaeological record can hardly trace the individual, but it can illuminate which practices were carried out and how these practices varied among different houses.

1.1.2. "Family" and Household

The categories of family and household can, but must not overlap.[98] While the definition of a household is relatively easy—namely the group of people living under one roof[99]—a

[93] J. Assmann 1993b, 99.

[94] E.g. J. Weiß, 'Individuum', in: G. Endruweit and G. Trommsdorff (eds), *Wörterbuch der Soziologie*, Stuttgart 2002², 230. Compare the definition by Meskell who uses "the term 'individual' (...) to refer to a single person as the fount of agency, consciousness, interpretation and creativity in cultural and social life" and stresses the fact that the archaeologist should study both "the *multiplicity* of social identities as well as the *singularity* of individual experience," cf. Meskell 1999, 10 and 50. For a similar definition in the context of the ancient Near East; cf. K. van der Toorn, *Family Religion in Babylonia, Syria and Israel. Continuity and Change in the Forms of Religious Life*, Leiden 1996, 3.

[95] E.g. Luiselli 2011a, 8.

[96] R. Harré, *The Singular Self: An Introduction to the Psychology of Personhood*, London 1998, 6–8.

[97] J. Assmann 1996, 94. An interesting side note is the fact that the often quoted Egyptian "proverb" (J. Assmann 1996, 94) "the one lives, when the other leads him" (i.e. "*ʿnḫ wʿ sšm ky*") is not, in fact, a sequence from a New Kingdom wisdom text, but written on the base of the statue Leiden F 1950/8.2 dating to the early Ptolemaic Period, published by A. Klasens, *A Magical Statue Base (Socle Behague) in the Museum of Antiquities at Leiden*, Leiden 1952, 10 and 66, cf. J. Assmann, 1990, 90. For the dating of the statue base drawing on the related statue now in the *Kunsthistorisches Museum* Vienna, inv. no. 40; cf. H. Altenmüller, 'Der "Socle" Béhague" und ein Statuentorso in Wien', *OMRO* 46 (1965), 10–33. The "moralizing tendency" (cf. Klasens 1952, 66) of the text should be understood within the context of the medical spells that equate the patients to Horus-the-Child in need of protection (for the latter interpretation of the spells cf. H. Altenmüller 1965, 32). The only other attestation of the present sequence known to me is the so-called Metternich Stela MMA accession no. 50.85 dating to the 30th dynasty; translated by C.E. Sander-Hansen, *Die Texte der Metternichstele, Analecta ægyptiaca* 7, Copenhagen 1956, 34–5; cf. J. Assmann, *Tod und Jenseits im Alten Ägypten*, Munich 2001, 75. The text sequence is thus taken from a specific context (i.e. healing statues) and from a period dating several centuries after the New Kingdom. Although Assmann's interpretation of the individual as embedded in a network of social relations is probably correct, it seems somewhat misleading to use the latter quote as motto for his interpretation; e.g. J. Assmann 2001a, 73–8.

[98] Compare R. McC Netting, R.R. Wilk, and E.J. Arnould, *Households: Comparative and Historical Studies of the Domestic Group*, Berkeley 1984, xx and see H. Moxnes, 'What is Family? Problems in Constructing Early Christian Families', in: H. Moxnes (ed.), *Constructing Early Christian Families. Family as Reality and Metaphor*, New York 1997, 16–18.

[99] E.g. R.E. Blanton, *Houses and Households, A Comparative Study*, New York 1994, 4 who defined the household as "a group of people co-residing in a dwelling or residential compound (...), who, to some degree, share house-holding activities and decision-making."

definition of family is more difficult to ascertain.[100] Beside representations of more or less consanguineous family members, representations of colleagues and friends are also attested in monuments and on stelae, thereby indicating that these people could be included in specific religious activities. However, Fitzenreiter's conclusion that the family we "read into the sources" never really existed,[101] is somewhat misleading since it requires an implicit definition of family with reference to a nuclear family.[102] For Deir el-Medina, "family" in terms of "nuclear family" is too narrow. The emphasis on the latter is mainly caused by an over-interpretation of a collection of papyri from Deir el-Medina which are known as *stato civile* in Egyptology.[103] These texts list the names of houses and—at least some—of their inhabitants. For example, in one of the text the house of the famous scribe Thutmose (ii) is mentioned with his parents, but neither his brother nor his sister, nor his son Butehamun (i)[104] appear in the text, perhaps because he had just moved to the village? Butehamun (i) had at least eight children.[105] Unfortunately, no *stato civile* record of his household has been preserved, so we do not know whether these children would have been mentioned, but it is clear that larger families were still common. It would also seems rather unlikely that the numbers of Egyptian households, which had traditionally included other members beyond the nuclear family such as "unmarried siblings, brothers and sisters, uncles and aunts, as well as the parents or even grandparents of both spouses, plus other elementary units of the second generation and eventually servants"[106] would have suddenly have decreased during the late 20th dynasty. In fact, the implications of the Egyptological term *stato civile* as a local residence registration may be rather misleading. We do not know the purpose of these lists, i.e. whether naming all inhabitants of a house was their aim or; for example, only the adults?[107] Instead of accepting the *stato civile* as reference to small families at the end of the 20th dynasty at Deir el-Medina, we should acknowledge the fact that the picture is incomplete. We simply lack the extensive records such as stelae and tombs that provided this information in the earlier periods of the New Kingdom (and beyond). The discussion of the household assemblages below will show the difficulty in establishing a hard and fast definition especially valid in a close-knit community like Deir el-Medina. Most known family trees were known over several generations[108] and these descendants may well have lived in a house traditionally inhabited by the same family. No evidence suggests that servants were involved in religious activities performed within the house,

[100] Compare also M. Lehner, 'Fractal House of Pharaoh: Ancient Egypt as a Complex Adaptive System. A Trial Formulation', in: T.A. Kohler and G.J. Gumerman (eds), *Dynamics in Human and Primate Societies. Agent-based Modelling of Social and Spatial Processes*, New York 2000, 278–80; with references.

[101] Cf. Fitzenreiter 2005, 84.

[102] Cf. M. Fitzenreiter, '*ꜣḫ n jtn* als *ꜣḫ jḳr n rʿ*. Die königlichen Familienstelen und die religiöse Praxis in Amarna', *SAK* 37 (2008), 103 and see M. Fitzenreiter, 'Zum Ahnenkult in Ägypten', *GM* 143 (1994), 69–70; referring to both types of relationships.

[103] Cf. R.J. Demarée and D. Valbelle, *Les Registres de Recensement du Village de Deir el-Médineh (Le "Stato Civile")*, Leuven 2011.

[104] Demarée and Valbelle 2011, 6 and see B.G. Davies, *Who is Who at Deir el-Medina: A Prosopographic Study of the Royal Workmen's Community, EU* 13, Leiden 1999, chart 9.

[105] J. Černý, *A Community of Workmen at Thebes in the Ramesside Period, BdE* 50, Cairo 1973, 362.

[106] Cf. R.M. Janssen and J.J. Janssen, *Getting Old in Ancient Egypt*, London 1996, 37.

[107] But see also the discussion by Demarée and Valbelle 2011, 71–4.

[108] B.G. Davies, *Who is Who at Deir el-Medina: A Prosopographic Study of the Royal Workmen's Community, EU* 13, Leiden 1999.

however. Excluding non-consanguineous members of the household, a broad understanding of the term "family" seems appropriate to describe the groups occupying the houses at Deir el-Medina. In the following, the term "family" will thus refer to family members usually[109] living under one roof, including rather distant relatives as well as deceased[110] and yet unborn, future family members.[111]

1.1.3. Religious Practice

Although divine supersession of Maat was first proposed by Hellmut Brunner,[112] Miriam Lichtheim has demonstrated the complementary nature of both Maat and the divine will.[113] The latter was not something "arbitrary; (...) quite the contrary (...) man *knew* (...) that right-doing was what the gods desired."[114] Therefore, religion will be defined as a system of everyday practices aimed toward the "realization [of the conception] of Maat" (i.e., on a larger scale the order of the world, on a smaller scale the correct way to behave responsibly).[115] This definition acknowledges that any interaction between human and sacred (in whatever form) should be understood as a dynamic interplay consisting of "personal experience, the belief, the ritual and the religious symbols of any given culture."[116] As mentioned above (chapter 1.1), the focus on religious practice does not intend to exclude any forms of spirituality, rather, it tries to overcome the common division of spiritual and practical into two separate perspectives. Admittedly, the term ritual as applied in the preceding definition proves somewhat problematic, for implies a

[109] Although also here we know exceptions for some families occupied more than one house.

[110] A similar argument has been put forward by Moreno Garcia in his discussion of Egyptian letters to the dead; cf. J.C. Moreno Garcia, 'Oracles, Ancestor Cults, and Letters to the Dead: The Involvement of the Dead in the Public and Private Family Affairs in Pharaonic Egypt', in: A. Storch (ed.), *Perception of the Invisible. Religion, Historical Semantics and the Role of Perceptive Verbs*, *Sprache und Geschichte in Afrika (SUGIA)* 21, Cologne 2010, 139.

[111] Compare also L.M. Meskell and R.A. Joyce, *Embodied Lives. Figuring Ancient Maya and Egyptian Experience*, London 2003, 136–7. Note that Catherine Keller has also demonstrated a continuation of preferences for certain deities within families drawing on the prosopographical evidence known from monuments and stelae; cf. Keller 2008, 149–54.

[112] H. Brunner, 'Der freie Wille Gottes', *Les Sagesses du Proche Orient Ancient*, Strasbourg 1963, 103–17 followed by J. Assmann 1990, 252.

[113] Lichtheim 1992, 98–101 and F. Junge, *Die Lehren des Ptahhotep und die Tugenden der ägyptischen Welt*, *OBO* 193, Freiburg 2003, 93–7. For a critical perspective compare J.F. Quack, *Die Lehren des Ani. Ein neuägyptischer Weisheitstext in seinem kulturellen Umfeld*, *OBO* 141, Freiburg 1994, 71–2; following Assmann's understanding of Maat as a part of culture and not of religion (cf. J. Assmann 1990, 18). It shall, however, be emphasized in the following that no sharp distinction can be drawn between culture and religion in ancient Egypt, because this "*wäre eben schon deshalb denkunmöglich, weil jede Form von Welt die sich selbst bekundende Realität eines Gottes ist, und so auch die sich bekundende Realität der Maat*" (cf. Junge 2003, 94).

[114] Lichtheim 1992, 100 and M. Lichtheim, *Moral Values in Ancient Egypt*, *OBO* 155, Freiburg 1997, 97–8 For a critical discussion of Assman's view and the emphasis of the ongoing importance of the concept of Maat until the Graeco-Roman Period; cf. S. Lippert, *Einführung in die Altägyptische Rechtsgeschichte*, *Einführungen und Quellentexte zur Ägyptologie* 5, Berlin 2008, 3–4; with references.

[115] J. Assmann, *The Search of God in Ancient Egypt* (translation by D. Lorton), Ithaca and London 2001, 4–5. The concept of Maat has been studied by J. Assmann 1990. The idea of religion as everyday practice is borrowed from J. Baines 1987, 79. See also Lehner 2000, 320–1; with references.

[116] Definition by Luiselli 2011a, 14, based on F. Stolz, *Grundzüge der Religionswissenschaft* (3rd rev. ed.), Göttingen 2001, 14-19.

range of presuppositions which include the assumption that actions must conform to a certain fixed sequence or that such actions might even be meaningless. The term religious practice seems a more neutral description. The emphasis on the religious practice in the present thesis does thus not, therefore, exclude religious experience.

1.1.4. Agency[117]

The concept of agency is too complex to receive only a brief definition. For adequate explanation of individual religious agency a survey of earlier approaches' failure to grasp the full significance of the individual is necessary. The conceptual background for this important category as well as the contributions such a model can offer will then follow.

As mentioned above, piety in Assmann's analysis results from religious discourse that leads to a change in the Egyptian world view.[118] Earlier evidence of individual religious practice, however, has challenged this thesis.[119] While the models of Assmann and Baines aim at a macro-explanation for increased evidence of individual religious materials in the New Kingdom,[120] they cannot explain what religion—or, in their terms, personal religion and/or piety–actually meant for the individual in everyday life. Though not their particular inquiry, this question motivates the present study, which needs to develop a new methodology, that can encompass agency. Seeking to incorporate individual agency in the study of ancient Egyptian religion this study will thus avoid methodologies that obscure analysis of individual agency. Although Foucault's "discourse" model may be appropriate for Assmann's macro-level analysis of possible textual developments,[121] its usefulness for analysis of individual agency remains limited.[122] Discourse is "not the majestically unfolding manifestation of a thinking, knowing, speaking subject",[123] but leads to "*death of man*" who would soon "be erased like a face drawn in the sand at the edge of the sea."[124] Similar problems apply to Baines' idea of a changing *decorum*. His model may describe shifts in display and question of who might have had access to specific knowledge, but it does not explain these changes themselves. Nevertheless, the present thesis does not pursue these areas of inquiry; rather, it focuses on religious practice at Deir el-Medina of the Ramesside Period. In spite of the explanatory limitations, the term *decorum* thus remains a useful heuristic term to describe patterns of both content and decoration for the media in question.

[117] The following paragraph is based on earlier considerations in Weiss 2012.

[118] J. Assmann 1984a, 239.

[119] Notably Baines 1987, esp. 84–5 and 94–8 and Baines 1991, 172–8. On some Middle Kingdom texts: P. Vernus, 'Etudes de philologie et de linguistique (II)', *RdE* 34 (1983), 115–17. On pre-Amarna hymns on ostraca: G. Posener, 'La piété personelle avant l'âge Amarnien', *RdE* 27 (1975), 195–210.

[120] Compare also the slightly different approach by Stowers 2008, 9–10 who "reject[s] totalizing abstractions like society and social structure," while at the same time stating that "religion was not a matter of meaning for the individual."

[121] Cf. Assmann 1983, 182, note 126.

[122] Compare Weiss 2012.

[123] M. Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse of Language*, New York 1970, 55.

[124] M. Foucault, *The Order of Things*, New York 1970, 386–7.

Analysis of individual religious action therefore requires a new model to understand individual agency. In the following I will discuss the foundations for such a model. Anthony Giddens' *structuration theory* provides one important aspect,[125] for it acknowledges the agent's capacity to understand his/her own actions (called "knowledgeability" by Giddens),[126] without exaggerating this dimension. Giddens stops short of declaring all social life consciously controlled by individual agents.[127] Traditional models can be divided into two poles: action vs. structure, individual vs. society and determinism vs. voluntarism. Attempting to avoid such extremes, Giddens instead interprets the pairs as two sides of the same coin.[128] In this way, Giddens does not ignore the existence of a structure beyond direct individual human control. Structure in Giddens' model, however, "only exists in so far as people do things knowledgeably and do them in certain contexts that have particular consequences (...) their reproduction (...) makes them structural and allows us of talk to structural effects."[129] In other words, structure exists as a dual structure of social consensus and common acceptance of conventions constantly reaffirmed in the process of structuration. Giddens thus acknowledges individual agency without reducing it to a macro-level effect.[130] *Structuration theory*, as I understand it, does not imply a notion of "society as an ontology which is somehow independent from its members",[131] rather, the theory serves as conceptional framework for locating the acting individual in different positions all within the broader social structure.[132]

These various positions and related individual activities are best described in terms of *role identity theory*,[133] which will provide the second conceptual source of inspiration for the model advanced in the study at hand. In *role identity theory*, roles are conceptualized as "positions within the social structure" and identity as "internalized meanings and expectations associated with a role."[134] Each individual role is embedded into one or more groups that provide the meanings and expectations associated with any given role. Moreover, identities evolve from group participation (*social identity*), social

[125] A. Giddens, *The Constitution of Society. Outline of the Theory of Structuration*, Oxford 1984, cf. Exell 2009, 3.
[126] Giddens 1984, XXII–III.
[127] A. Giddens and Ch. Pierson, *Conversations with Antony Giddens. Making Sense of Modernity*, Cambridge 1998, 85.
[128] Giddens 1984, XX–I.
[129] Giddens and Pierson 1998, 81.
[130] H. Joas, 'Giddens' Theorie der Strukturbildung. Einführende Bemerkungen zu einer soziologischen Transformation der Praxisphilosophie', *Theorie. Zeitschrift für Soziologie* 15/4 (1986), 239.
[131] Compare, for example, the criticism by Meskell 1999, 25.
[132] Meskell's main criticism points against "Giddens' temporal chauvinism" and his "desire to separate past and present"; cf. Meskell 1999, 26 and 108–9. It shall be shown in the following; however, that there is no reason to agree that the conceptional framework as outlined above would not apply to pre-modern societies.
[133] Compare, for example, S. Stryker, *Symbolic Interactionism: A Social Structural Version*, Menlo Park 1980; S. Stryker and P.J. Burke, 'The Past, Present and Future of Identity Theory', *Social Psychology Quarterly* 63 (2000), 284–97 und P.J. Burke and J.E. Stets, *Identity Theory*, Oxford 2009. I have greatly benefitted from the ideas Professor Eric Rebillard presented on 1 December 2010 at the Max-Weber-Kolleg at Erfurt University and who drew my attention to the role identity theory; see now E. Rebillard, *Christians and Their Many Identities in Late Antiquity, North Africa, 200-450 CE*, Ithaca/London 2012, 3-5.
[134] Stryker and Burke 2000, 289.

roles (*role identity*) or biological components (*personal identity*),[135] which can be activated in accordance to different situations (*salience of an identity*). In summary, *role identity theory* illuminates how an individual accumulates multiple roles whose elements fluctuate in dominance based on specific situations.[136] Which identity is activated depends on the *opportunity structure*, i.e., an abstract concept of both limitations and opportunities that may differ in context and situation. In some ways *role identity theory* displays similarities with Pierre Bourdieu's field theory,[137] which served as an initial inspiration for the model set forth here, though it eventually proved too restrictive to fully grasp the individual opportunities in time and space. The nature of and problems with Bourdieu's field theory for the present approach have been presented elsewhere,[138] so only the most important aspects will undergo explication here. Bourdieu's theory also aims at description of various perspectives within social space, and his notion of *habitus* connects these perspectives.[139] For the present study, the premise that "the habituated nature of much of human action is necessarily performed *without* conscious reflection and therefore beyond the purview of individual motivation" is rather limiting.[140] *Role identity theory*, in contrast, provides an alternative fair middle ground—a theory in which the "positions within the social structure" can be analyzed, without ignoring possible "internalized meanings and expectations associated with a role",[141] while discarding the idea individual action is fully determined by the unconscious.[142]

Against the background of these premises, I would like to propose a model that combines the insights of both *role identity theory* and *structuration theory* and that provides a conceptual framework for the rest of the current inquiry. Agency in the present thesis is understood as the perpetual movement between different roles and the appropriation of practices according to specific needs, while the term appropriation comes from Michel de Certeau, who was among the first to acknowledge, that the manner in which people engage in certain activities is not just *given* in terms of a fixed structure, but that a range of possibilities is in place as to how an individual can operate according to specific situation and space.[143] The concept of appropriation allows, then, for

[135] E.g. P. Bourdieu, 'On the Family as a Realized Category', *Theory, Culture & Society* 13/3 (1996), 19. The remaining question is thus whether ostensibly biological characteristics are not culturally constructed, too.
[136] Stryker and Burke 2000, 286.
[137] P. Bourdieu, *Sozialer Raum und "Klassen." Leçon sur la leçon. Zwei Vorlesungen*, Frankfurt 1985, 9–15.
[138] Weiss 2012.
[139] On the *habitus* als connective element between Bourdieu's fields; cf. E. Barlösius, *Kämpfe um soziale Ungleichheit. Machtheoretische Perspektiven*, Wiesbaden 2004, 164.
[140] J.F. Dornan, 'Agency and Archaeology: Past, Present and Future Directions', in: *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* 9/4 (2002), 306. For a different argument see Fitzenreiter 2004, 25, who defines the form of religion as the use of "*habituell gebildet und weitergegebenen Systems religiöser Zeichen, Normen und Praktiken*," which distinguishes religious practice from other "*Segmenten gesellschaftlicher Praxis*." This definition is questionable not least in view of Fitzenreiter's own statement that the boundaries between religious practice and social practice often overlap (cf. Fitzenreiter 2004, 26).
[141] Stryker and Burke 2000, 289.
[142] Compare Dornan 2002, 305–6.
[143] In Certeau's terms the so-called "'ways of operating' constitute the innumerable practices by means of which users *reappropriate* (emphasis mine) the space organized by techniques of sociocultural production"; cf. M. de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life (transl. by Steven F. Rendall)*, Berkeley 1984, xiv and see

conceiving this opportunity structure for individual religious practice—a structure that can be mapped onto different social layers:

1. Appropriation of individual practices

2. Appropriation of family practices

3. Appropriation of local practices

4. Appropriation of trans-local practices

Put differently, individual agency and related religious roles are performed within four levels of varying degrees of group involvement.[144] In the following it will be demonstrated that both the forms of religious action as well as the *decorum* differed according to the respective spheres.

A similar approach to the varying degrees of group participation has been taken by Pinch, who distinguishes between "personal piety," "folk religion" and "popular religion"[145] Apart from several terminological issues involved in the application of qualifiers like "folk," "state" and "piety" to the ancient Egyptian context, a major problem of Pinch's model stems from the overlap of categories themselves. Pinch's term "popular religion" encompasses all "religious beliefs and practices, whether corporate or individual",[146] though analysis can surely separate these spheres. At the same time, it is unclear why "personal piety" would only address so-called "state gods"[147] and why "folk religion"—i.e., the "[r]eligious or magical beliefs and practices of the populace (...) centered on home and family"[148]—must exclude "state cults."[149] The same problems apply to Nicola Harrington's model in which "personal religion" is restricted to houses and tombs, whereas "state gods" appear to be available only "via intermediaries or priests."[150] Little evidence would in fact suggest that ancestor cults excluded elements of piety or that state gods, such as Amun, were not worshipped for the well-being of a

also the discussion of Certeau's approach by M.E. Gardiner, *Critiques of Everyday Life*, London 2000, 167–8 and 177.

[144] Compare also the notion of "*Zugehörigkeitshorizont*" by J. Assmann, 'Zum Konzept der Fremdheit im Alten Ägypten', in: M. Schuster (ed.), *Die Begegnung mit dem Fremden: Wertungen und Wirkungen in Hochkulturen vom Altertum bis zur Gegenwart, Colloquium Rauricum* 4, Stuttgart 1996, 80–1. This terms describes the individual as being embedded into the social fabric. Assmann discusses this conception within the context of personal identity and xenology. He did not, however, realize its importance for a better understanding of Egyptian religion which in Assmann's view does not constitute a "*starken Brennpunkt interlokaler Zusammengehörigkeit*" (cf. J. Assmann 1996, 84).

[145] Cf. G. Pinch, *Votive Offerings to Hathor*, Oxford 1993, 325.

[146] Cf. Pinch 1993, 325.

[147] Cf. Pinch 1993, 325.

[148] Cf. Pinch 1993, 325.

[149] Cf. Pinch 1993, 325.

[150] N. Harrington, *Living With the Dead. Ancestor Worship and Mortuary Ritual in Ancient Egypt*, Oxford 2013, 102.

family.[151] Nevertheless, Pinch's model distinguishes degree of personal involvement and the aim of the concomitant action. For example, a childless person could perform an offering to request enhanced fertility from the gods and, in a different role, and address the gods as a professional in the state temple.[152] These are crucial elements indeed, but there were certainly more options than those detectable in Pinch's model. The present model will therefore employ the term appropriation to emphasize the multiplicity of potentialities for executing a role.[153] As one possible instance, an individual might have addressed his/her ancestors with a special request for which another individual would address a particular god. Within the framework of the opportunity structure, the individual could perform a variety of different actions or address different gods across various spheres. Roles, then, were not fixed and may influence religious traditions themselves. The model above thus aims at describing different appropriations within the social layers, viewing the individual within his/her environment and hereby overcoming the problems involved in focusing on individual or "structuring structures."[154]

1.2. Case Study

This book investigates the domestic religious practice at the village Deir el-Medina as a case study. Well-known in Egyptology and already the focus of numerous studies, this village requires only a brief summary:[155] Deir el-Medina is the modern name of a village situated in Upper Egypt on the west bank of the city of Thebes (Luxor) and inhabited by the workmen in charge of decorating the royal tombs in the Valley of the Kings during the New Kingdom (roughly 1500–1100 BC) along with their families. The village is one of the few excavated settlements from ancient Egypt that has yielded a large amount of both archaeological and textual remains.

Personal religious practice in the New Kingdom village proves particularly interesting, since it allegedly witnessed Assmann's proposed change of worldview for the ancient Egyptians[156] and Baines' proposed weakening of the *decorum*.[157] Even more, it is the place of provenance of many stelae previously been analysed within the context of the "*Persönliche Frömmigkeit*." The evidence of personal religious practice from the houses at Deir el-Medina has previously been overlooked.[158]

The reason for the Egyptology's traditional focus on the philological sources is twofold. First of all, the field—especially that in Germany—was influenced by the

[151] For example, Dorn has shown that Amun-Re is the most frequently attested god on stelae and ostraca from the Valley of the Kings, cf. A. Dorn, *Arbeiterhütten im Tal der Könige. Ein Beitrag zur altägyptischen Sozialgeschichte aufgrund von neuem Quellenmaterial aus der Mitte der 20. Dynastie (ca. 1150 v. Chr.), Text und Katalogband, Aegyptiaca Helvetica* 23, Basel 2011, 92.

[152] As is for example attested for the scribe Ramose (i) (p. 22).

[153] On appropriation: M. Füssel, 'Die Kunst der Schwachen. Zum Begriff der "Aneignung" in der Geschichtswissenschaft', *Sozial.Geschichte* 21/3 (2006), 7–28.

[154] For a comprehensive elaboration on the problems of a single-sided approach see Dornan 2002, 315.

[155] For a more detailed summary see chapter 1.6 below.

[156] J. Assmann 1990, 256.

[157] Baines 1990, 1–23.

[158] A notable exception combining different source material is F.D. Friedman, 'Aspects of Domestic Life and Religion', in: H.L. Lesko (ed.), *Pharaoh's Workers, The Villagers of Deir el-Medina*, London 1994, 95–117, who provided a first brief summary of the religious life at Deir el-Medina.

research tradition of the great scholars of the so-called "Berlin School," particularly their contributions to Egyptian lexicon, grammar, and text editions.[159] Second, little evidence of rural settlement structures has been preserved and excavated. The earliest archaeologists had focused on excavating burial sites, for extension of both private and museum collections stood as the main motivation of the Western financiers.[160] Though archaeological focus has shifted towards settlement archaeology in recent decades,[161] few comparable materials have been uncovered. The reason for such an imbalance of evidence as compared to that of temples and tombs is again twofold. Most importantly, the modern Egyptian population often dwells more or less on the same settlement areas as in pharaonic times, given the scarce fertile space of the Nile Valley. As a result of this settlement pattern the ancient settlement sites are often inaccessible if not destroyed.[162] Furthermore, the evidence from settlement areas was usually not intended to be preserved,[163] which makes a snapshot of inhabitants' daily life exceedingly difficult. Indeed, only certain objects were left behind when a site was abandoned (see also below chapter 1.3.). A great challenge of the study of Egyptian religion is thus the contextualization of evidence from both fields of Egyptological expertise: archaeology and philology.[164] However, the village of Deir el-Medina proves itself an excellent starting point for full analysis of both archaeological and written sources. Located at the desert's edge it is one of the few settlements undisturbed by modern building or agricultural activities.

Yet the question remains as to whether this particular settlement is comparable to an average settlement of the time since the craftsmen who built and decorated the royal tombs inhabited Deir el-Medina.[165] Because of their professions, the inhabitants of the Deir el-Medina thus represented a certain social stratum with customs that may have diverged from general practice. The inhabitants of Deir el-Medina were most likely wealthier and better educated than the majority of the Egyptian population with literacy rates estimated as up to 40%.[166] In this sense they were part of the *high(er) culture*.[167] At

[159] Cf. J. Assmann 2011, 670. A brief history of the dictionary project is found on http://aaew.bbaw.de/dateien/informationen/einfuehrung.html (accessed on 21st November 2011).

[160] Compare, for example, W. Grajetzki, 'Class and Society: Position and Possessions', in: W. Wendrich (ed.) *Egyptian Archaeology*, Chichester 2010, 185. In settlement sites, being abandoned places it is less probable to find valuable materials.

[161] Compare the discussion of the problem already in the 1970s; cf. M. Bietak, 'Urban Archaeology and the "Town Problem" in Ancient Egypt', in: K. Weeks (ed.), *Egyptology and Social Sciences*, Cairo 1979, 97–144.

[162] E.g. J. Richards, *Society and Death in Ancient Egypt, Mortuary Landscapes of the Middle Kingdom*, Cambridge 2005, 32–8.

[163] See also M. Fitzenreiter, 'Eine archäologische Perspektive auf die Beschreibung der altägyptischen Religion', in: A. Verbovsek, B. Backes, C. Jones (eds), *Methodik und Didaktik. Herausforderungen eines kulturwissenschaftlichen Paradigmenwechsels in den Altertumswissenschaften*, München 2011, 708.

[164] See also Fitzenreiter 2011, 703–23.

[165] Such as R. Ventura, *Living in a City of the Dead: A Selection of Topographical and Administrative Terms in the Documents of Deir el Medina, OBO* 69, Freiburg 1986, XIII. This problem was also already addressed by the excavator Bruyère: B. Bruyère, *Rapport sur les fouilles de Deir el Médineh (1931–32), La nécropole de l'ouest, FIFAO* 10, Cairo 1934, 79.

[166] Cf. B.J.J. Haring, 'From Oral Practice to Written Record in Ramesside Deir el-Medina', *JESHO* 46/3 (2003), 250.

[167] On the theoretical foundations of high culture and low culture cf. e.g. M.M. Luiselli, 'Themen der Kulturwissenschaft innerhalb der Untersuchung der altägyptischen Religion', in: A. Verbovsek, B. Backes, C. Jones (eds), *Methodik und Didaktik. Herausforderungen eines kulturwissenschaftlichen Paradigmenwechsels in den Altertumswissenschaften*, München 2011, 83–5.

the same time, administrative texts found in the village primarily reflect an oral tradition.[168] Whereas the degree of the literacy at Deir el-Medina was thus beyond average, most inhabitants could probably not have composed complex religious tracts or add substantially to the theological discourse. Nevertheless, their study can contribute to the understanding of religious practice more broadly. Contrary to assertions of this village's somewhat exceptional nature, several reasons suggest everyday life in the houses of Deir el-Medina did not differ fundamentally from other settlements irrespective of who lived there. Clearly, the inhabitants of Deir el-Medina formed part of the lower-class elite, however, no evidence indicates that members of different social layers held fundamentally different beliefs or performed completely different practices.[169] Instead, the difference most probably lay only in access to certain resources (such as a limestone rather than clay image[170]) and means restricted to certain groups.[171] Whereas the religious practices of commoners elsewhere and the elite may have slightly differed with respect to their means, the assumption of a coherent religious system requires that both groups shared the common beliefs and performed the same or at least similar daily life practices.[172] At Deir el-Medina *low culture* is represented by the assistance personnel (the *smd.t*) who provided the villagers with necessities such as food and water.[173] As for their income and standard of living one would not expect the members of the *smd.t* had consistent access to (even small scale) divine images made of valuable materials such as lapis lazuli (e.g. **Cat. 10.61**). Attested only in transactions, these people lived elsewhere—certainly in the Ramesside period—and did not perform religious activities in the village, which explains the absence of their religious activities in homes. As a result, if common names appear on certain objects, these people may be excluded as possible owners (e.g. **Cat. 4.9**). Differences in means and access to certain knowledge or materials

[168] Haring 2003, 249–72.

[169] Cf. M. Riesebrodt, *Cultus und Heilsversprechen, Eine Theorie der Religionen*, München 2007, 30. For the same idea in Egyptological literature compare, for example, J. Baines and N. Yoffee, 'Order, Legitimacy, and Wealth in ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia', in: G.M. Feinman and J. Marcus (eds), *Archaic States*, Santa Fee 1998, 240. On the validity of conclusions drawn from Deir el-Medina for the understanding of Ancient Egypt generally: M. Lehner, 'Villages and the Old Kingdom', in: W. Wendrich (ed.), *Egyptian Archaeology*, Chichester 2010, 95.

[170] Clay was not generally a material whose use was confined to "the lower strata of society." Even some royal rituals required the use of a clay images; cf. E.A. Waraksa, *Female Figurines from the Mut Precinct, Context and Ritual Function. OBO* 240, Göttingen 2009, 93 with references. Nevertheless, the present argument obtains since Nile alluvium was theoretically available to everyone. Even if special craftsmanship or related religious actions were required–to revive a figurine or statuette, for instance–the accessibility of the material suggests that clay objects were cheaper than large, elaborate stone statues. For a more elaborated discussion of this aspect see chapter 3.2.1.2 below.

[171] E.g. E. DeMarrais, L.J. Castillo and T. Earle, 'Ideology, Materialization, and Power Strategies', *Current Anthropology* 37/1 (Feb., 1996), 31.

[172] R.K. Ritner, 'Household Religion in Ancient Egypt', in: J. Bodel and S.M. Olyan (eds), *Household and Family Religion in Antiquity*, Oxford 2008, 173. The appearance of similar types of house altars in the houses at Malkata, Amarna, Deir el-Medina, and Medinet Habu supports this assumption.

[173] Cf. J.J. Janssen, E. Frood, and M. Goecke-Bauer, *Woodcutters, Potters and Doorkeepers. Service Personnel of the Deir el-Medina Workmen, EU* 17, Leiden 2003. A full analysis of this group is in preparation: cf. K. Gabler, *Prosopographische Untersuchungen zu den smd.t n bnr*, ongoing PhD thesis, Maximilian University Munich.

may, in fact, as well apply to the inhabitants of the village, nonetheless, the argument in favor of a general comparability of religious practices between Deir el-Medina and other settlements receives further support from the settlement's proximity to the outside world, in contrast to previous theories, which located the village in relative isolation.[174] If the inhabitants left the village on certain occasions, an exchange of ideas and perhaps practices may be assumed. Moreover, not every inhabitant of Deir el-Medina was raised there. The scribe Ramose (i),[175] for example, was promoted to Deir el-Medina from the temple of Thutmosis IV[176] and hence might have brought certain practices with him. The same applies to the workmen sent northwards to assist with the work at Saqqara.[177] Even further, not all inhabitants remained members of the workforce until retirement or death. For example, the *smd.t*-scribe Anupemheb (i) is known to have built his tomb (TT 206) outside of Deir el-Medina and may also have lived elsewhere (possibly near Khokha).[178] A categorical difference between the inhabitants of Deir el-Medina and those of other settlements in terms of daily religious practice is therefore unwarranted. Analysis of the religious life based on the archaeological remains of the village of Deir el-Medina, then, provides a unique opportunity to study the personal religious practice of a known social stratum within a known time period. Broader conclusions from these finds can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of religious practices in the New Kingdom and who performed which religious action, in which location and in which context, and how the individual religious practice was appropriated within the community. Within the framework of the present book, the main focus is how religion was practiced in the household. Some readers may view this focus as a shortcoming and argue that religion was practiced also in other spaces such as, for example, in (tomb) chapels, at festivals and by some in temples. After many in-depth studies of more or less public religious

[174] E.g. David had claimed that Upper Egypt in general was "more isolated from new ideas and influences," and argued that the workmen in Ancient Egypt were isolated and guarded because of their knowledge of the exact location of the kings' tombs; cf. A.R. David, *The Pyramid Builders of Ancient Egypt, A Modern Investigation of Pharaoh's Workforce*, London 1986, 16 and 59 and compare Ventura 1986, 170. This opinion is partly shared by Christopher Eyre who notes that "the village was in an isolated part of the necropolis, unlikely to be visited by people who had no specific business with the crew," but emphasised the fact that the "wall surrounding the village (...) was not strong enough to serve as a defensive feature," cf. C.J. Eyre, 'Work and the Organisation of Work in the New Kingdom', in: M.A. Powell, *Labor in the Ancient Near East, American Oriental Series* 68, New Haven 1987, 170. Recently K. and A. Schlüter have again argued that although contact with the outside world was possible, certain controls restricted the freedom of movement, cf. K. and A. Schlüter, 'Anmerkungen zur Interpretation von Festdarstellungen aus Deir el-Medineh', in: D. Kessler, R. Schulz, M. Ullmann, A. Verbovsek and S. Wimmer (eds), *Texte – Theben – Tonfragmente. Festschrift für Günter Burkard, ÄAT* 76, Wiesbaden 2009, 369.

[175] In order to facilitate the identification of individuals mentioned in the present thesis Benedict G. Davies' numbering system will be followed where possible: Davies 1999.

[176] B.S. Lesko, 'Rankes, Roles and Rights', in: L.H. Lesko (ed.), *Pharaoh's Workers, The Villagers of Deir el Medina*, Ithaca 1994, 24.

[177] Cf. A. Zivie, 'Un détour par Saqqara: Deir el-Médineh et la nécropole memphite', in G. Andreu (ed.) *Deir el-Médineh et la Vallée des Rois. La vie en Égypte au temps des pharaons du Nouvel Empire: Actes du colloque organisé par le Musée du Louvre*, Paris 2003, 67–82.

[178] Cf. Davies 1999, 90, for a different interpretation cf. A.G. McDowell, *Jurisdiction in the Workmen's Community of Deir el-Medina, EU* 5, Leiden 1990, 78. McDowell assumed that he was the scribe of the vizier. For the present argument the exact job description of the scribe Anupemheb (i) is less important, because anyhow, it is clear that an outsider could participate in village activities such as the local court where he was engaged in the daily life practices.

testimonies, the question after individual religious practices will now start where the individual was most intimate, namely in the domestic sphere.

1.3. The Limitations of an Archaeology of Religion

Archaeology offers information often missing in textual accounts,[179] some information either too sacred or too marginal to be written down. The study of religion in a (semi-) oral culture[180] thus requires analysis of texts,[181] in conjunction with the archaeological remains. Only the combination of both archaeological and textual evidence fosters a comprehensive understanding of a bygone culture.[182] Archaeological remains do not, however, reflect a static view of a site abandoned at once, with everything precisely in place.[183] Accordingly, the present analysis needs to take the following caveats into account:[184]

When only a minority of rooms contain certain artifacts such items can only indicate the use of a space or structure preliminary.

1. *In situ* artifacts relate primarily to abandonment practices, rather than original usage in any given space.
2. Publications of the settlements under consideration are not, for the most part, sufficiently detailed to determine the location and context of many finds.

Therefore, the present study will start from the fixed features and artifacts in the houses at Deir el-Medina, like niches,[185] and other cult emplacements (chapter 2), that shall indicate which activities occurred in the home.[186] In the third chapter, practices will be described that cannot—or at least not immediately—be related to fixed structures namely those reconstructed based on the finds of artifacts. Such reconstruction requires a brief excurse on how artifacts arise during excavation, namely because former inhabitants have left or deposited them at the site.[187] Deir el-Medina was probably abandoned in a slow, unorganized process when the royal burial practice changed by the end of the New Kingdom.[188] Since the inhabitants' ultimate destination and departure remain unknown, factors such as distance to the next site, season of abandonment, size of emigrating

[179] Meskell 1999, 5.

[180] Haring 2003, 249–72.

[181] Compare, for example, A.I. Sadek, *Popular Religion during the New Kingdom. HÄB* 27, Hildesheim 1988. A notable exception is Stevens 2006.

[182] M.V. Angrosino, *The Culture of the Sacred. Exploring the Anthropology of Religion*, Prospect Heights 2004, 10. Similarly recently Fitzenreiter 2011, 703–23.

[183] This wrong assumption has been called 'Pompeii Premise' by Schiffer: M.B. Schiffer, 'Is there a "Pompeii Premise" in Archaeology?, *Journal of Anthropological Research* 41/1 (1985), 18–41.

[184] B.S. Düring, *Constructing Communities: Clustered Neighbourhood Settlements on the Central Anatolian Neolithic ca. 8500–5500 CAL. BC.*, Leiden 2006, 34.

[185] Düring 2006. 34.

[186] Düring 2006, 35.

[187] M.B. Schiffer, 'Archaeological Context and Systemic Context', *American Antiquity* 37/2 (Apr. 1972), 160.

[188] L. Weiss, 'Personal religious practice: House altars at Deir el-Medina', *JEA* 95 (2009), 193–5.

population, means of transportation,[189] and consideration of an eventual return[190] do not arise from the extant evidence. Most probably, the inhabitants expected no return, and the workmen and their families were leaving in search of work elsewhere and hence seeking to remove all their movable valuables[191] and leaving only larger and less valuable objects behind.[192] Arguments against Medinet Habu as a subsequent site[193] may require reconsideration. Indeed, a significant problem in artifactual interpretation comes from material finds belonging to the 19th dynasty, but textual sources mainly to the 20th dynasty. This gap between textual and architectural evidence has recently been noted by Andreu-Lanoë.[194] Such material absence from the later inhabitants is, however, not entirely surprising given two important aspects. First, the famous Turin strike papyrus indicates that at the end of the reign of Ramesses III the government had difficulty paying the workmen's wages.[195] Economic problems in the middle of the 20th dynasty must have influenced and moreover, lowered the standard of living. If the financial means were restricted and there was already a large elaborate cult emplacement already stood in the house, change may not have been a priority. Secondly, family tradition held substantial sway as illustrated by the reuse of objects by later generations.[196] Items from the 19th dynasty, for instance, continued in 20th dynasty household assemblages by so-called vertical cycling,[197] i.e., the move of objects within a household from one owner to the other by means of inheritance or reuse. Such circulation proves important since the objects had been left by the last inhabitants of the houses who had used and then discarded them.

Another limitation of the present study is caused by the fact that the archaeological methodology and the recording techniques applied during the first excavations[198] were less refined. The artifacts found within the houses were often only grouped together and listed, while fixed features were usually indicated on his maps. Bruyère generally listed the artifacts according to particular houses or areas, but the exact find spot often remains unclear. In some cases, the information in his notebooks[199] and the final publication contradict one another which makes reconstruction of find contexts exceedingly difficult (see also "*Introduction to the catalogue*"). Yet even later campaigns

[189] On the theoretical basis for the present argument here and in the following cf. Schiffer 1972, 160.
[190] On general approach cf., e.g. M.G. Stevenson, 'Toward an Understanding of Site Abandonment Behavior: Evidence from Historic Mining Camps in the Southwest Yukon', *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 1 (1982), 259.
[191] Stevenson 1982, 259.
[192] Stevenson 1982, 244.
[193] A.J. Peden, 'The Workmen of Deir el Medina and the Decline of Textual Graffiti', in: R.J. Demarée and A. Egberts (eds), *Deir el Medina in the Third Millennium AD*, *EU* 14, Leiden 2000, 288.
[194] G. Andreu-Lanoë, 'Les Mystères de Deir el-Medina', *Memnonia Cahier Supplémentaire* 2 (2010), 174–5.
[195] E.g. P.J. Frandsen, 'Editing reality: the Turin Strike Papyrus', in: S. Israelit-Groll (ed.), *Studies in Egyptology Presented to Miriam Lichtheim* I, Jerusalem 1990, 166–99.
[196] Although this practice may as well be caused by economical considerations.
[197] Schiffer 1985, 27.
[198] B. Bruyère, *Rapport sur les Fouilles de Deir el Médineh (1934–1935), Troisième Partie: Le village, les décharges publiques, la station de repos du col de la vallée des rois*, *FIFAO* 15, Cairo 1939.
[199] Bruyère's notebooks can be accessed through the website of the IFAO in Cairo: http://www.ifao.egnet.net/bases/archives/bruyere/; Version 1, *données du 3 mai 2010*. In the following references will quote the numbers of the .pdf-files.

failed to indicate exact find spots for many objects,[200] though, a slightly more specific find spot such as "in the west corner" or "on top of the *lit clos*" (i.e., large house altar) is occasionally indicated. In sum, "while it is relatively easy to accept that objects examined within a household context are likely to have both functional and symbolic qualities, one must be absolutely sure of how these functional qualities operate in the domestic unit in order to be able to distinguish the symbolic/ritual ones."[201] The function of the cultic emplacements' (generally) undecorated remains can only be understood based on relatable artifacts. Accordingly, the present study must hence assume that most artifacts were found at least in the vicinity of their actual areas of use. Such an assumption is plausible since the village was probably not densely inhabited after the last workmen had left; furthermore, no evidence suggest any large scale environmental disturbances other than the rain that came down the *wadi*. Though often difficult to relate certain artifacts to particular cult emplacements or individuals, the archaeological record reveals patterns of individual action, including noteworthy differences. Where possible the finds will be compared with the information available from texts[202] and other sites, such as Amarna, which proves especially illuminating since Deir el-Medina was inhabited already before the city of Amarna was built; some scholars even argued that certain members of the Deir el-Medina workmen moved to the workmen's village of Amarna to construct and/or decorate buildings and tombs in the newly founded city.[203] When Amarna was abandoned, Deir el-Medina again functioned as a workmen's village housing the crew that built the tombs in the Valley of the Kings. Despite their many differences, a comparison between Deir el-Medina and Amarna is thus quite fruitful—all the more since Amarna is the only site for which the personal religion has been explored based on the archaeological finds.[204]

1.4. Research Questions

The primary aim of the present thesis is to analyze the domestic religious practice at Deir el-Medina insofar as it relates to that appropriations model described above. For this reason, the study will consider religious actions the smallest entity of religious activities[205] wherever possible, the relation between actor, benefactor and beneficiary will

[200] Ch. Bonnet and D. Valbelle, 'Le village de Deir el-Médineh reprise de l'étude archéologique', *BIFAO* 75 (1975), 429–46 and pls LXII–LXXII and Ch. Bonnet and D. Valbelle, 'Le village de Deir el-Médineh étude archéologique (suite)', *BIFAO* 76 (1976), 317–42 and pl. LVII. Since Bonnet and Valbelle were most interested in the beginnings of the village in the early 18th dynasty the enclosure wall of Thutmosis I was studied in detail. The find spots of the artefacts were only mentioned in very general terms (such as "*dans la maison NO X (cuisine)*" or "*contre le mur de la salle I*": cf. Bonnet and Valbelle 1975, 445) No find spots are indicated on the maps (Bonnet and Valbelle 1975, pl. LXIII and LXIV and Bonnet and Valbelle 1976, 342, fig. 11).
[201] A. Christophilopoulou, 'Domestic Space and Community Identity in the Aegean Islands and Crete 1200–600 BC', *MOSAIKjournal 1* (2010), 70, Allison 1999, 2–3.
[202] Studied in detail recently by Luiselli 2011a.
[203] Černý 1973, 51–2; Bonnet and Valbelle 1975, 432–3 and Eyre 1987, 171.
[204] Stevens 2006.
[205] J. Rüpke, *Historische Religionswissenschaft. Eine Einführung*, Stuttgart 2007, 82–7.

undergo analysis.[206] Such relational consideration is important since the actor in any given religious activity may not have been to the primary benefactor. As demonstrated below, cultic equipment was often reused within the family. In addition, some rituals demanded help from a religious specialist may be needed.[207] The difference between addressor and addressee is also relevant for objects moved between generations through vertical cycling, where the person mentioned in the offering formula may no longer be directly addressed. The same applies to the questions of offering equipment's (such as offering tables) multifunctionality, i.e., whether the use of such items was restricted only to those gods mentioned in their respective texts (cf., e.g., the discussion of **Cat. 8.2** in chapter 3, p. 129–30). Additional questions include the media (e.g., spells, offerings etc.) employed, the correlation of users and means of communication, and the confinement of modes to particular places or periods (seasons, feasts or time of the day).[208] Finally, the social role of the religious activity is only relevant in terms of family matters, since in the domestic context it seems less likely that a given activity requires an audience beyond the household community, for instance, to serve as a witness as one may expect for oaths or confessions.[209] Apart from religious actions and appropriation of the single individuals, it is crucial to understand the options available to the individuals and how that system was regulated.[210]

1.5. Deir el-Medina and its Excavations

Though some aspects have already been addressed (chapter 1.2) and the scholarly literature is quite extensive,[211] the village of Deir el-Medina requires a brief introduction, particularly its excavation that related to houses.

Deir el-Medina was probably planned at the beginning of the 18th dynasty during the reign of Amenhotep I who is attested as an important tutelary deity for the village. However, the first archaeological evidence of the village comes from the reign of his successor, Thutmosis I.[212] The village included about 40 to 60 houses[213] inhabited by workmen, scribes, foremen, and their families.[214] All tomb workmen living in the village were directly selected by the vizier and responsible to him.[215] Since the village was relatively isolated, next to the Valley of the Kings, a small crew of assisting personnel

[206] Rüpke 2007, 83 offers a slightly different model in order to analyze the communication between addressor and receiver. For present topic the terms addressor, benefactor and beneficiary have been chosen, because as shall be shown in the following an additional distinction between addressor and benefactor will prove necessary below.
[207] Rüpke 2007, 84.
[208] Rüpke 2007, 85.
[209] Rüpke 2007, 86–7.
[210] Compare B. Gladigow, *Religionswissenschaft als Kulturwissenschaft*, ed. by Ch. Auffarth and J. Rüpke, Stuttgart 2005, esp. 138 and 141.
[211] For a full and regularly updated bibliography see http://www.leidenuniv.nl/nino/dmd/dmd.html.
[212] In form of stamped bricks of the enclosure wall of the village: Bruyère 1939, 4.
[213] Only during a brief period in the reigns of Ramesses IV to Ramesses VI. Their number has been raised to about 120 households, also including workmen living outside, i.e. not at Deir el-Medina.
[214] Unfortunately only a few people can be related to specific houses (cf. table 1).
[215] McDowell 1990, 1.

(the *smd.t*) provided the workmen with not only with the necessities like water and food, but also with materials as wood etc. In the Ramesside period this assisting personnel did not live among the village community, but somewhere outside—their houses probably built of mud brick and lying at the edge, where inundation has prevented their localization. The workmen were organized into two groups, one on each side of the village. Each group was headed by a foreman,[216] who—together with the senior scribe—served as the administrative and social head of the community who were together called *ḫwtj.w*, captains.[217] The standard of living in the community of workmen was quite high. At least in the 19th and early 20th dynasties the payment was good, the workmen able to earn additional income by making funerary equipment and furniture for other villagers.[218] Studying the community life in this small village is particularly interesting, since the inhabitants left a wealth of textual and archaeological records that provide a portrait into the general living conditions in the New Kingdom.[219] Deir el-Medina may have been abandoned at the end of the 20th dynasty, then falling into decay (see also above chapter 1.3).[220]

After several treasure hunts the history of the scientific research at Deir el-Medina began in the early 20th century,[221] the first scientific survey of the village Deir el-Medina was carried out by Ernesto Schiaparelli in 1909.[222] In 1911 and 1913, a German team under the supervision of Georg Möller excavated another part of the village.[223] The most important excavator of the village was, however, Bernard Bruyère of the French Institute in Cairo (IFAO), who investigated the village area and the cemetery between 1922 and 1951.[224] The present analysis focuses on his excavations in the village in 1930 and 1934–5,[225] since it is confined to the activities of the village itself. Bruyère introduced a system of house numbers based on quarters in different compass directions, and this study will adopt the same method: N.E. for the North-East (for French "*nord-est*") quarter of

[216] During the reign of Ramesses III the scribe was assisted by a junior or deputy scribe responsible for managing affairs concerning the assistant personnel.
[217] A profound summary of the different professions at Deir el-Medina has been offered recently by Neunert 2010, 70–112.
[218] A comprehensive summary of the wages has been provided by Eyre 1987, 178–9. The workmen of Deir el-Medina earned about 5 ½ sacks of grain per month from their work in 'the Tomb' (i.e. the institution of the royal tombs) and produced crafts in their spare time in order to raise their income. This extra work should not be called "moonlighting" (as suggested by L.H. Lesko (ed.), *Pharaoh's Workers: The villagers of Deir el-Medina*, Ithaca 1994, 12); on the contrary, these activities were of enormous economic importance for craftsmen (K.M. Cooney, *The Cost of the Death, The Social and Economic value of Ancient Egyptian Funerary Art in the Ramesside Period, EU* 22, Leiden 2007, 144).
[219] E.g. Černý 1973; D. Valbelle, "*Les ouvriers de la tombe.*" *Deir el-Médineh à l'Époque Ramesside, BdE* 96, Cairo 1985 and Lesko (ed.) 1994.
[220] Černý 1973, 189–90 and Valbelle 1985, 123–5 and 370–1.
[221] In the following just a brief summary is provided. A more extensive elaboration on the subject will be found in the introduction to the catalogue (p. 227–32 below).
[222] Bonnet and Valbelle 1975, 429.
[223] Houses N.E. VIII–XVII/XIX, cf. R. Anthes, 'Die Deutschen Grabungen auf der Westseite von Theben in den Jahren 1911 und 1913', *MDAIK* 12/1 (1943), 55–62. For Bruyère's numbering system see below. Möller's team also excavated parts of the cemetery as did Gauthier and Leconte-Dunouÿ in1917–1918 followed by Kuentz in 1921. In 1912 Baraize had been investigating the temple area. The present analysis, however, focuses on the village area. For the history of the excavations see Tosi and Roccati 1972, 24.
[224] Published by B. Bruyère, *Rapports sur les fouilles de Deir el-Médineh*, Cairo 1924–1953.
[225] Cf. Bruyère 1939.

the village, N.O. for the North-West quarter ("*nord-ouest*"), C. for the central ("*central*") quarter, S.E. for the South-East quarter ("*sud-est*"), and S.O. for the South-West ("*sud-ouest*") quarter (see also fig. 1, p. 29). The last excavation of the village took place in 1974 and 1975, when Bonnet and Valbelle carried out a rescue campaign concentrating on the "enclosure wall" of Thutmosis I.[226]

Since this doctoral thesis focuses primarily on the houses of Deir el-Medina the structure of a typical house at Deir el-Medina requires a few introductory remarks: The main building material was collected from the surrounding area: mud brick (i.e., mud and straw, often plastered with chalk) with some elements made of limestone and wood.[227] The floor consisted of the leveled soil which was hardened by stamping and watering it.[228] Straw and tethering stones prove that, at least in some cases, people lived side by side with their small animals (such as geese, ducks, and goats, etc.).[229] A standard house consisted of four to six rooms (figs 1 and 2),[230] perhaps sparely furnished.[231] As for the layout, the first room (8–24m^2) was situated in front of the second one (14–26 m^2), while a number of smaller rooms (3–6 m^2) were situated at the rear adding up to an average living area of about 72 square meters.[232] Behind these main rooms, a number of smaller rooms followed, which Bruyère termed *débarras*,[233] because their general lack of decoration. The rear room often housed the kitchen identified as such by the existence of ovens,[234] mortars,[235] and grain emplacements. In general, the construction of the rear rooms is coarser, the walls never whitewashed. The irregular stones used to construct them came from the *wadi*, with brick rarely used for building. Connected by stairs, the rooms lay on different levels and stairs also provided entry to roofs, cellars, and silos in different locations. The houses have flat wooden roofs that permitted access across the village precinct,[236] perhaps serving as additional floor space for the home as well.[237] The only clear difference between the houses in the north and those in the south is the

[226] Bonnet and Valbelle 1975, 429–446 and pls LXII–LXXII and Bonnet and Valbelle 1976, 317–342 and pl. LVII.
[227] Bruyère 1939, 19.
[228] Bruyère 1939, 28.
[229] L. Meskell, *Private Life in New Kingdom Egypt*, Princeton 2002, 44.
[230] It seems worth mentioning that an Egyptian schematic drawing of a house of Deir el-Medina has been found in house N.E. X: Anthes 1943, pl. 17a.
[231] Neunert (2010, 37) mentions that the "*Inneneinrichtung ist kaum erhalten*," but information on the interior design can be derived from tombs–a correct move since the inhabitants of Deir el-Medina possessed chairs, tables, end chests, etc. In line with modern parallels of village life in Egypt, it should, however, be noted that probably not all houses were fully furnished, many activities taking place on the floor at that time (and today).
[232] Valbelle 1985, 117.
[233] Bruyère 1939, 71.
[234] Bruyère 1939, 74.
[235] According to Bruyère, the oven painted in the 18th dynasty tomb of Ptahmose was a construction like those of Deir el-Medina, comp. W. Wreszinski, *Atlas zur Altaegyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, Leipzig 1914–42, 87, 7. H. Ricke has collected the Amarna material about ovens in H. Ricke, *Der Grundriss des Amarna–Wohnhauses*, Leipzig 1967 *(reprint of the first edition from 1932)*, 45–6.
[236] Bonnet and Valbelle 1975, 444.
[237] L. Meskell, 'Spatial Analyses of the Deir el Medina Settlement and Necropoleis', in: R.J. Demarée and A. Egberts (ed.), *Deir el Medina in the Third Millennium AD* (*EU* 14), Leiden 2000, 264.

following: the northern ones have cellars rooms, whereas the southern ones have plastered store pits.[238]

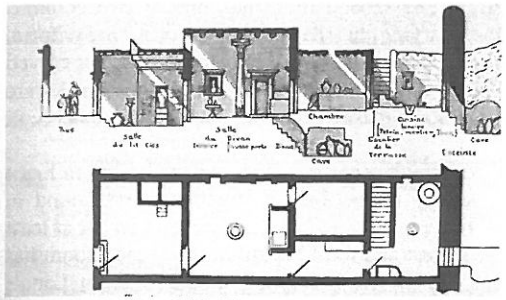


fig. 1, after Bruyère 1939, 50.

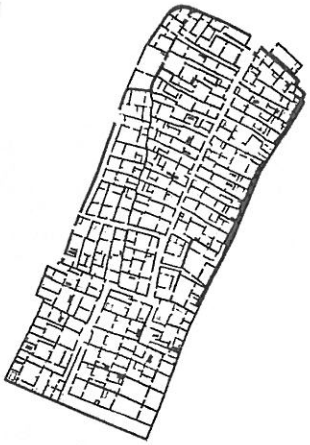


fig. 2, after Bruyère 1939, pl. VII.

No Egyptian terminology describes the purposes of the various rooms,[239] though no Egyptian terminology exists for any of the rooms of the Deir el-Medina houses, as far as I know. A multifunctional use for most rooms may be assumed.[240] In fact, some authors have sought to analyze the "symbolic" function of the houses' first and second rooms: the first was reached by moving steps which led Bruyère to suggest such lowering of the floor level was meant to make the room appear more spacious without having to build higher walls.[241] Even more, that room contained large house altars, and its walls housed niches (see below chapter 2). Discussed in detail within my master's thesis, the former will not undergo further inquiry here; when necessary, reference will be made to the publication.[242] Proposals for the first room as a court yard[243] are not convincing since

[238] Cf. Neunert 2010, 35 quoting Valbelle 1985, 116–7 and Bruyère 1939, 65.
[239] Bruyère suggested *ʿry.t* as name of the first room since the term refers to a holy place (cf. *Wb* I, 209), thereby assuming the first room was used as an altar room. Bruyère may have had O. UC 39656 in mind, which is about a father-in-law called Horemwia, who let his daughter-in-law stay at his *ʿry.t* in case of divorce. In the Deir el-Medina database, *ʿry.t* has been translated "storehouse." In the majority of cases, *ʿry.t* means vestibule, lintel, or simply hall (*Wb* I, 209–10). While *ʿry.t* may refer to the first room of the house, this interpretation cannot be proven. To base the designation of the first room on a single occurrence where the word *ʿry.t may* indicate the designation of a certain room remains highly speculative.
[240] As is well-known from other sites: e.g. Gibbon 1984, 142.
[241] Bruyère 1939, 54.
[242] Weiss 2009a.
[243] A. Koltsida, 'Birth-bed, sitting place, erotic corner or domestic altar? A study of the so-called "elevated bed" in Deir el-Medina houses', *SAK* 35 (2006), 170. A similar idea has been proposed by E. Roik, *Das altägyptische Wohnhaus und seine Darstellung im Flachbild*, Frankfurt 1988, 130. Recently, Brooker suggested that the first rooms of the houses at Deir el-Medina should be interpreted as gardens with garden altars—smaller parallels of the ones known from Amarna, cf. M.L. Brooker, *A new approach of identifing the function of the elevated beds at Deir el-Medina*, Birmingham 2009, 112.

several houses contain columns in the first room clearly built to support the roof.[244] As for the second room, it was situated on street-level, so again one had to use stairs to reach it, though this time to ascend. The ceiling was about 25 cm higher than that of the first room.[245] Lynn Meskell explains the relative height in terms of males passing through space filled with female imagery (assumed in the first room by Meskell) and stepping up to a higher level to reach their own socio-ritual space.[246] Nira Kleinke, however, has recently demonstrated that Meskell's spacial separation of the house's interior into male and female space makes little sense. According to Meskell's theory, the kitchen would be the most important room of the house.[247] The second room had one or two columns supporting the ceiling[248]—the columns (varying in shape, cylindriform, papyriform, etc.)[249] particularly interesting when found *in situ* since they were often painted or carved with the name of the house's owner.[250] Like the first room, the walls of the second were whitewashed but usually not painted, in some cases featuring niches and other cult emplacements (see chapter 2).

Bruyère's term "*salle du divan*" derives from a structure (generally 20 cm high) frequently built against a wall in the second room. Similar structures were found in houses elsewhere in Egypt, so Bruyère's interpretation of the structure as "bed" or at least sitting area seems convincing. The most largest and most beautiful, the second room has been interpreted as the most important one.[251] According to Edward William Lane's description of the 19th century Egypt, "having such a divan was a mark of status and civility."[252] Such portrayal falls in line with Bruyère's earlier argument that hidden small subterranean *cachettes*—often found close to the *divan*—could be watched by the landlord at night,[253] though who slept and/or sat on the *divan* is difficult to determine.[254] Apart from the family's belongings, the *cachette* could have stored food or conveyed some religious connotation (see below; pp. 46–9). Fireplaces close to the *divan* suggest someone sitting on the *divan* during craftwork (such as metalworking or faience production[255]). Regarding the column, it may have had a practical function for elevating the roof of this room, which may have had a *Mulqaf* [256] as is known from modern

[244] Roik argues that a court would improve air and light conditionings in the second room. To be fair one should note that Roik suggests the 'court yard' may have been partly covered: Roik 1988, 130.
[245] Bruyère 1939, 65.
[246] L. Meskell, 'An Archaeology of Social Relations in an Egyptian Village', *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* 5/3 (1998), 229.
[247] N. Kleinke, *Female Spaces: Untersuchungen zu Gender und Archäologie im pharaonischen Ägypten, Göttinger Miszellen Beihefte* 1, Göttingen 2007, 73.
[248] Bruyère 1939, 69.
[249] Bruyère 1939, 69.
[250] Compare, for example, Demarée and Valbelle 2011, 70.
[251] Bruyère 1939, 70 and Meskell 1998, 229.
[252] E.W. Lane, *An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians: Written in Egypt During the Years 1833–34 and –35*, London 1871, 23–8.
[253] Bruyère 1939, 66.
[254] As has also been admitted by Meskell arguing that her idea "is obviously coloured by modern Egyptian practices": Meskell 1998, 231.
[255] Meskell 1998, 65.
[256] D. Soulié, *Villes et citadins au temps des pharaons*, Perrin 2002, 189. This particular type of "domed window on the ceiling (Arabic: *mulqaf*) is a ventilation feature that allowed rising hot air to escape, and prevailing cool north wind to be drawn in." It is, for example, also known from the village of Kahun:

Egyptian houses.[257] In conclusion, the average mud brick house at Deir el-Medina consisted of two bigger rooms behind each other in the front, followed by two or more smaller rooms and a corridor along with the kitchen to the rear of the house. So far, no specific meaning could be attached to certain areas, which have probably all been used more or less multi-functionally. The variety of the cultic emplacements among the different houses is remarkable. What, if any, activities took place on the roofs themselves cannot be established, since the roofs had collapsed by the time Bruyère arrived at the site and he did not make reference to any objects situated top of them.[258]

http://www.museum.manchester.ac.uk/collection/ancientegypt/virtualkahun/thetown/mansions/, accessed on 30 July 2013.
[257] Bruyère mentions the find of an intact wooden barred window (Bruyère 1939, 70, 50 x 37 cm), perhaps identical with the one he found the second room of house C. VI. Windows were probably no exception, but have been stolen since they could have served as firewood for other people in later times when the village had been abandoned or had fallen into decay.
[258] Compare also V. Müller, *Tell el-Dabʿa XVII. Opferdeponierungen in der Hyksoshauptstadt Auaris (Tell el-Dabʿa) vom späten Mittleren Reich bis zum frühen Neuen Reich. Teil 1: Auswertung und Deutung der Befunde und Funde*, Wien 2008, 372, note 1129.

Chapter 2: Fixed Cultic Emplacements

In the houses at Deir el-Medina various types of architecturally fixed structures have emerged that most probably served as cultic emplacements. Though perhaps somewhat imprecise, the term "cultic emplacement" is deployed here to avoid any conceptual importation that might occur through the application of terminology otherwise specific to other contexts or even other cultures. Such analytical slippage has proven quite pervasive. A good example of this problem within the Deir el-Medina context itself comes from the discussion of the so-called false doors that appear in houses.[259] While Egyptological usage often employs the term a "false door" related to the mortuary context,[260] the main purpose of a false door came from its function as the central cultic locations in the tombs,[261] where the Ka (i.e., one particular dimension of the person according to Egyptian conceptualization)[262] of the deceased received offerings. From this perspective, false doors—a general classification including those found in houses—received interpretation as imaginative "point[s] of transition"[263] between this world and the next.[264] Whereas some of these so-called false doors at Deir el-Medina might appertained to ancestral worship within the house,[265] a broader interpretation remains not only possible but also probable. The function of false doors as primary cultic location in tombs may have found parallel in the houses.[266] As a working hypothesis, false doors were no longer

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[259] Bruyère 1939, 67.

[260] Studied in detail by S. Wiebach, *Die ägyptische Scheintür. Morphologische Studien zur Entwicklung und Bedeutung der Hauptkultstelle in den Privatgräbern des Alten Reichs*, *HÄS* 1, Hamburg 1981. See also recently A. Kahlbacher and L. Zelenková Hudáková, 'Kultstelle in Bewegung. Position und Konzeption von Scheintür, Statue und zugehöriger Dekoration in den Felsgräbern von Mier und Beni Hassan im Mittleren Reich', in: G. Neunert, K. Gabler and A. Verbovsek (eds), *Nekropolen: Grab – Bild – Ritual. Beiträge des zweiten Münchner Arbeitskreises Junge Aegyptologie (MAJA 2)*, *GOF* 54, Wiesbaden 2013, 90–2.

[261] E.g. recently H.M. Hays, 'Funerary Rituals (Pharaonic Period)', in: J. Dieleman and W. Wendrich (eds), *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, Los Angeles, 2; cf. *www.escholarship.org/uc/item/1r32g9zn*, accessed on 24 June 2013.

[262] It is beyond the scope of the present study to discuss the ancient Egyptian conception of a person in detail. Compare, for example, G.C. Borioni, *Der Ka aus religionswissenschaftlicher Sicht. Veröffentlichungen der Institute für Afrikanistik und Ägyptologie der Universität Wien* 101. Wien 2005, 17–28.

[263] Meskell 1998, 231 following Bruyère 1939, 67 who had defined them as "*portes fictives qui s'ouvrent imaginairement sur un monde irréel.*"

[264] Similarly, the ones found in the royal mortuary temples have been interpreted as passages to the netherworld, a palace/residence, or other rooms etc. cf. Weiss 2011, 201–2.

[265] E.g. recently N. Harrington, 'Funerary furniture made to order? Stela UC 14228', in: D. Magee, J. Bourriau and S. Quirke (eds), *Sitting beside Lepsius. Studies in Honour of Jaromir Malek at the Griffith Institute*. *OLA* 185, Leuven 2009, 229 and L. Gahlin, 'Private Religion', in: T. Wilkinson (ed.), *The Egyptian World*, New York 2010, 334. See also Fitzenreiter 1994, 57–9.

[266] In fact, the function of false doors in New Kingdom tombs also shifted: false doors were degraded from main cult place to *Nebenkultstellen*, cf. J. Spiegel, 'Die Entwicklung der Opferszenen in den Thebanischen Gräbern', *MDAIK* 14 (1956), 190. This development has been interpreted as evidence for the idea that the world of the living gradually became more distant from the world of the deceased in the New Kingdom, cf. Spiegel 1956, 206. This is interesting because others have argued that the borders between the two worlds became blurred, cf. J. Assmann, 'Geheimnis, Gedächtnis und Gottesnähe: Zum Strukturwandel der Grabsemantik und der Diesseits-Jenseitsbeziehungen im Neuen Reich', in: J. Assmann, E. Dziobek, H. Guksch and F. Kampp (eds) *Thebanische Beamtennekropolen, Neue Perspektiven archäologischer Forschung. Internationales Symposium Heidelberg 9.–13.6.1993*. *SAGA* 12, Heidelberg 1995, 281–93.

confined to serve as cultic emplacements for the deceased alone, but operated as more generic cultic emplacements.[267] To avoid analytical risk involved in employing the architectural category "false door"—a term frequently conceptualized as cultic locality strictly within tombs—the more neutral locution "cultic emplacement" will replace it (cf. table 2).

Yet another group of cultic emplacements—namely the so-called *laraires*—have witnessed similar terminological problems. The French lexeme "*laraire*" derives from Latin "*lararium*" which denotes a "part of the interior of a Roman house, in which the tutelary deities (the so-called *lares*) were placed."[268] In this case, the terminology proceeds from not only a different context, but also a much different culture, both chronologically and geographically. Application of this specifically Roman architectural conception to Deir el-Medina proves problematic, insofar as it raises specific expectations. For example, Roman "*lares*" typically received veneration in the less representative quarters of Roman domiciles,[269] which was certainly not the case at Deir el-Medina, as demonstrated below. However, both the Roman "*laraire*" and the Egyptian structures in question do designate domestic cult places. The inquiry must therefore turn to which specific cultic localities the standard terminology seeks to classify, for Bruyère deployed "*laraire*," "*autel*,"[270] "*naos*"[271] and "niche;" all with reference to certain architectural features (cf. table 3). While the difficulties of reconstructing find contexts have hampered proper distinction among categories,[272] Bruyère exacerbated analytical problems by using the four terms more or less interchangeably. As one example, a naos for Bruyère could consist of (fragments of) "*encadrements de portes de laraires*."[273] The same applies to *autels*: he explained numerous fragments of *laraires* in house S.O. I as a feature typical of houses yielding "*autels aux Pénates*."[274] This blurred terminology actually fits the find situation of the Roman eponym—the *lararium*—which could appear both as altar, niche,

[267] Cf. L. Weiss, 'Some thoughts on the false doors at Deir el-Medina', in: M. Horn, J. Kramer, D. Soliman, N.T.B. Staring, C. van den Hoven and L. Weiss (eds), *Current Research in Egyptology 2010: Proceedings of the Eleventh Annual Symposium Which Took Place at Leiden University, The Netherlands, 5–8 January 2010*, Oxford 2011, 197–205.

[268] C.T. Lewis, *A Latin Dictionary*, Oxford 1980, 1036 and e.g. Ritner 2008, 185.

[269] T. Fröhlich, *Lararien- und Fassadenbilder in den Vesuvstädten, Untersuchungen zur "volkstümlichen" pompejanischen Malerei, Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archaeologischen Instituts. Römische Abteilung, Ergänzungsheft* 32, Mainz 1991, 22 and 29. Interestingly, Fröhlich notes that the absence of offering places in front of paintings does not automatically indicate the paintings were no "*Kultstellen*" (Fröhlich 1991, 21) Girlanden etc. He also assumes that paintings served as a cheaper alternative to the more expensive shrines of richer households (Fröhlich 1991, 29). Note that the idea that the *lararia* were situated in less representative areas of the house has recently been challenged by Günther Schörner in his paper 'Domestic cults in the Roman Empire: Archaeological Methods for Detecting Individuality in the Roman Household' held on 16 July 2013 at the conference "Forms of Religious Individualisation: Concepts and Processes", Max Weber Center/Erfurt University.

[270] "*Autel*" is the French word for "altar" or "offering table," cf. http://www.cnrtl.fr/definition/autel; accessed on 30 July 2013.

[271] "Naos" is a Greek loanword used to describe a (portable) shrine containing the image of a god: cf. H.S. Jones and R. McKenzie (eds), *A Greek–English Lexicon*, Oxford 1940, 1160.

[272] Bruyère 1939, 46. Similarly Bruyère seems to propose a typology for the so-called "*lits clos*," but does not apply it to his archaeological finds: cf. Weiss 2009a, 196.

[273] In the houses N.E. IX (Bruyère 1939, 254), N.O. XXIV (Bruyère 1939, 298), C. VI (Bruyère 1939, 309), S.E. IX (Bruyère 1939, 277), and S.O. V (Bruyère 1939, 327).

[274] Bruyère 1939, 315.

or even as wall painting.[275] The use of the Roman terminology may thus explain why Bruyère deployed the terms interchangeably. In only a few cases do terminological distinctions seem to correspond to categorical distinctions. Within a single house (S.O. VI), for instance, he referred to an *autel* and a *laraire*, apparently indicating two different categories. Moreover, his use of the term *autel-laraire*[276] suggests a differentiation that might indicate either categorical indecision or a *laraire* in the form of an altar (*autel*), i.e., a built structure and not a niche. Unfortunately, little information has been preserved on the only two so-called *autels* (S.E. VI[277] and S.O. VI[278]) mentioned by Bruyère. The same is true for the *autel-laraire* in house C. II.[279] Regarding terminological ambiguity, only two distinctions remain clear: *autel* never describes a niche, while *niche* and *naos* never refer to built structures.[280] In short, larger and smaller cultic emplacements appear throughout the houses of Deir el-Medina, the larger being those previously called "false doors," the smaller further categorized into niches and altars (cf. tables 2 and 3).[281] Bruyère's somewhat confusing terminology will therefore be discarded and only complement descriptions where necessary. The large house altars (formerly called "*lits clos*") discussed by the author in her MPhil thesis and will not be studied again in detail.[282]

2.1. Analysis of the Larger Cultic Emplacements

Bruyère found about 19 larger cultic emplacements at Deir el-Medina whose average size was 170 x 115 cm and which varied in number and orientation per house (see table 2).[283] Varying orientation, however, does not necessarily support arguments against their religious significance since similar diversity occurs among the house altars of both Amarna and Deir el-Medina.[284] While some scholars still consider orientation a crucial element of Egyptian religion,[285] most sources indicate that the Egyptians handled

[275] W. Martini, *Sachwörterbuch der klassischen Archäologie*, Stuttgart 2003, 191. Cf. also the finds in the houses of the Vesuvian area: A. Kaufmann–Heinimann, *Götter und Lararien aus Augusta Raurica, Herstellung, Fundzusammenhänge und sakrale Funktion figürlicher Bronzen in einer Römischen Stadt Forschungen in Augst* 26, Augst 1998, 184.

[276] In house C. II: cf. Bruyère 1939, 302.

[277] Bruyère 1939, 271.

[278] Bruyère 1939, 331.

[279] Bruyère 1939, 302.

[280] Toye seems to share this idea, but adds to the confusion by neglecting fixed altars and only distinguishing simple niches and more elaborated ones with decorated frames referred to as 'naoi': N. Toye, 'Amon-de-la-bonne-rencontre', *GM* 211 (2006), 101, note 60. Sadek refers to "laraires or household shrines" as "niches in the house-walls," i.e. excluding built structures like altars; cf. Sadek 1988, 77.

[281] Anna Stevens' term "vertical niches" (cf. Stevens 2006, table II.13.2, 235–46) will not be applied to the present study, because I understand the term niche as a deeper cavity in the wall in which objects can be placed. See also Bruyère's summary: Bruyère 1939, 46.

[282] The results of the analysis of the house altars have been published in Weiss 2009a, 193–208. See also more recently N. Cherpion, 'La danseuse de Deir el Médîna et les prétendus "lits clos" du village', *Égypte Afrique & Orient* 63 (2011), 55–72.

[283] Bruyère 1939, 68.

[284] Stevens 2006, 226–8, and 231, and Weiss 2009a, 204–5.

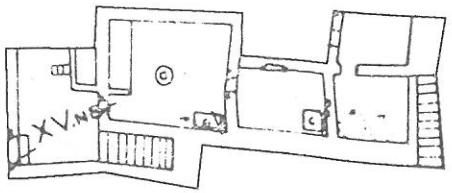
[285] E.g. M.J. Raven, 'Egyptian Concepts of the Orientation of the Human Body', *JEA* 91 (2005), 38 with references.

symbolic orientation pragmatically.[286] Accordingly, the importance of orientation existed only in theory,[287] with the actual location of domestic cult places depending on space and other practical considerations (such as the location of exits).

Nevertheless, a pattern does emerge for the location of the large cultic emplacements insofar as almost all rest within the houses' second rooms.[288] The rather poor state of wall preservation, however, does allow for the possibility of other large cultic emplacements having since fallen into decay;[289] in addition, others may have been painted onto mud brick walls[290] and hence had disappeared from visibility by the time Bruyère arrived at the site. Numbers, therefore, do not necessarily yield representative results.

Investigation will now turn to the large cultic emplacements themselves following Bruyère's numbering system, their meaning[291] discussed further below (chapter 2.2).

House N.E. XV



(fig. 3)[292]

Painted yellow with red bands, the large cultic emplacement (155 x 90 cm) of house N.E. XV rests in the north wall of the third room.[293] Though somewhat vague, this description converges with recent analysis of another large cultic emplacement at Amarna. Such coloring may refer the emplacement's red decoration along with a "yellow ground colour of for the hieroglyphic column:"[294] according to the report, the side posts

[286] Cf. H. Kees, 'Ägypten', in: A. Alt *et al.* (eds), *Kulturgeschichte des Alten Orients, Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft 3. Abt., Tl. 1, Bd. 3, Abschnitt 1, Kulturgeschichte des Alten Orients* 1, München 1933, 295 and see Raven 2005, 39 stating that "pragmatic" orientations could also be "symbolic" ones.

[287] Compare for example the text–based considerations by G. Posener, *Sur l'orientation et l'ordre des points cardinaux chez les Égyptiens, Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen I. Philologisch–Historische Klasse*, Göttingen 1965[2].

[288] Bruyère had stated that—with one exception—*all* large cult emplacements were located in the second room of the houses which is thus not entirely correct, cf. Bruyère 1939, 67.

[289] For a similar argument concerning the examples from Amarna cf. B. Kemp, 'Wall Paintings from the Workmen's Village at El-ʿAmarna', *JEA* 65 (1979), 51 and A. Stevens, 'The Material Evidence for Domestic Religion at Amarna and Preliminary Remarks on its Interpretation', *JEA* 89 (2003), 151.

[290] This idea has been suggested for the houses at Amarna by Ricke 1967, 27.

[291] Or "*Sinnhorizont*;" cf. H.H. Roeder, '"Mit dem Auge sehen." Ägyptisches und Ägyptologisches zum "Auge des Horus"', *GM* 138 (1994), 50.

[292] Figs cf. http://www.ifao.egnet.net/uploads/images/sites/deir-el-medina/1_Plan_topo_gen_DeM.jpg

[293] Bruyère 1939, 261.

[294] Kemp and Stevens 2010a, 132.

of house N.E. XV's emplacement show red painting.[295] Since this red and yellow painting remains the most common decoration of large cultic emplacements at Deir el-Medina, it must have had some significance. The question, however, is whether or not such significance bore any religious symbolism. Egyptologists have frequently emphasized that "the Egyptian painter was not free to choose his colors as these always had symbolic connotations."[296] In line with such arguments, the symbolism of various colors could be discussed for the cult emplacements at Deir el-Medina, but lacking further evidence, none of these argument seems very convincing. For example, the color red receives interpretation as symbolic of the sun's ambiguous powers both dangerous and protective,[297] of which only the protective force would make sense in the domestic space. Yellow could also have borne a solar connotation,[298] though it may also have functioned as the mere symbolic counterpart of the color red.[299] In conjunction with Bruyère's term "false door," solar motifs regularly appear on false doors of tombs from the New Kingdom period,[300] but the color yellow without additional motifs seems rather weak an argument for a solar symbolism. A different interpretation suggests that yellow imitates gold.[301] Though perhaps relevant for temple decoration, this hypothesis seems rather inappropriate for the houses at Deir el-Medina. Yet another interpretation associates red and yellow with gendered representations, namely, male (red) and female (yellow), as is typical for the color of the skin of men and women in wall-paintings and reliefs.[302] While such symbolism could emphasize the family as the houses' religious core, as demonstrated below, such symbolism is not plausible because yellow also served as background color of the hieroglyphic columns, where the may have been employed simply to enhance hieroglyphic visibility. In summary, traces of red and yellow cannot alone serve as

[295] Bruyère 1939, 261.

[296] Compare, e.g., the discussion by M.J. Raven, 'Papyrus-sheats and Ptah-Sokar-Osiris Statues', *OMRO* 59–60 (1978–9), 281 with references.

[297] E.g., H. Kees, *Farbensymbolik in ägyptischen religiösen Texten. Nachrichten von der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen* 11, Göttingen 1943, 446–9; J.G. Griffiths, 'The Symbolism of Red in Egyptian Religion', in: J. Bergman (ed.), *Ex orbe religionum. Studia Geo Widengren XXIV mense apr. MCMLXXII quo die lustra tredecim feliciter explevit oblata ab collegis, discipulis, amicis, collegae magistro amico congratulantibus* I, Leiden 1972, 89–90; R.H. Wilkinson, *Symbol & Magic in Egyptian Art.* London 1994, 106–7 and G. Robins, 'Color Symbolism', in: D.B. Redford (ed.) *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt* I, Oxford 2001, 292.

[298] G. Pinch, 'Red Things: The Symbolism of Colour in Magic', in: W.V. Davies (ed.), *Colour and Painting in Ancient Egypt*, London 2001, 184 and see also N. Harrington, *Living With the Dead. Ancestor Worship and Mortuary Ritual in Ancient Egypt*, Oxford 2013, 67.

[299] Wilkinson 1994, 111.

[300] As indicated by solar motifs and hymns appearing on false doors in tombs such as TT 32, cf. L. Kákosy, B. Tamá, B. Zoltán, I.F. Zoltàn and G. Ernő (eds), *The Mortuary Monument of Djehutymes (TT 32), Studia Aegyptiaca Maior* I, Budapest 2004, pl. VI.

[301] As has been suggested for the use of yellow as background color on the doorways in the temple of Medinet Habu by U. Hölscher, *The Excavation of Medinet Habu IV. The Mortuary Temple of Ramses III, part II, The University of Chicago Oriental Institute Publications* 55, Chicago 1951, 39.

[302] On the color symbolism of red and yellow for men and women, cf., e.g., W.A. Ward, *The Egyptian Economy and Non-royal Women: Their Status in Public Life, (NEH Lecture, Brown University, 21 June, 1995)*, cf. http://www.stoa.org/diotima/essays/wardlect.shtml; accessed on 30 July 2013. The latter explained this painting tradition by arguing contrary to women, men worked outside and became tanned. Ward's interpretation is highly questionable though; for instance, the tomb owners are usually shown sitting under a baldachin when examining the work of their subordinates outside and should have thus been as "yellow" as their wives.

indication of potential symbolism of the large cultic emplacements, let alone justify connection to false doors and mortuary practices. Given limited support from other iconographic details, conclusions regarding color symbolism ultimately remain dubious.

The upper lintel part of house N.E. XV's large cultic emplacement was plastered[303] and inscribed with on a red background, as indicated by a fragment Bruyère found underneath. The remains of the inscription read "[...] *n Imn sš* [...] meaning [a title*] of Amun, scribe [...]."[304] Unfortunately, no name survives. Based on decorations from smaller cultic emplacements, an original offering formula seems likely (see below, p. 40).[305] Egyptian titulaturies usually begin with the most important title, so the subsequent designation "scribe" suggests a higher ranking title at the beginning, i.e., and not simply "servant" or "follower." The abundant administrative and priestly designations related to the various domains of Amun prevent reconstruction of the title, let alone the bearer's personal name.

A doorpost the house N.E. XV found *in situ* associates the house with Khawy (ii),[306] though little information about this guardian survives.[307] The names of his parents no longer remain on the poorly-preserved inscriptions of his tomb (TT 214).[308] He may have had a father whose title related to the god Amun and who served as a scribe; conversely, the inscription might indicate another occupant of the house. A workman Pashedu also finds attestation in the house (**Cat. 6.2**). Since Khawy (ii) has no extant genealogical chart, his connection to one of the twelve known men called Pashedu at Deir el-Medina lies outside the realm of possibility.[309] The inscription on the larger cultic emplacement, therefore, does not necessarily relate to the family of Khawy (ii). However, the title does suggest that someone professionally affiliated with the god Amun did use

[303] Bruyère's term *limon moulé* literally means "molded mud brick," but he seems to refers to a thick layer of mud brick plaster, common as prime grounding for paintings elsewhere in Ancient Egypt.

[304] The transcription was published by Bruyère 1939, 261, but unfortunately no picture of the inscription is available for a check.

[305] J. Budka, *Der König an der Haustür, Die Rolle des ägyptischen Herrschers an dekorierten Türgewänden von Beamten im Neuen Reich, Veröffentlichungen der Institute für Afrikanistik und Ägyptologie an der Universität Wien* 94, *Beiträge zur Ägyptologie* 19, Wien 2001, 14.

[306] Bruyère 1939, 261 and Davies 1999, 193. The striking arm (Gardiner D 40) is the determinative of the title *sšw.t.y*, i.e. "guardian" a title borne by Khawy (ii). Khawy (i) was a workman and is thus not attested on the large cult emplacement. Contrary to Davies' minor slip (1999, 193 and note 41 versus 1999, 77, note 16), it is the workman Khawy (i) and not the guardian Khawy (ii) who is attested on the rock cut stela MMA 14.6.183. This is unfortunate, for the rock cult stela shows the adoration of the god Amun. On the stela Khawy (i) is accompanied by Amenemope, the "draftsman of Amun" Prehotep (i) and a man called Amenemwia. There is, however, no reason to argue that Khawy (i) and Khawy (ii) might have been related and the appearance of yet another Khawy related to the god Amun does not contribute to analysis of this large cult emplacement.

[307] Davies 1999, 192–3.

[308] Cf. Davies 1999, 193. The tomb and its inscriptions are unfortunately unpublished and cannot be checked: cf. F. Kampp, *Die Thebanische Nekropole. Zum Wandel des Grabgedankens von der XVIII. bis zur XX. Dynastie* II, Mainz 1996, 494.

[309] From the 19 men called Pashedu listed by Davies, four are known as workmen Pashedu (i), (ii), (xiv), and (xv). Eight others were called Pashedu, but no titles are known as of yet: Pashedu (iv), (v), (xi), (xii), (xiii), (xvi), (xvii), and (xix), cf. Davies 1999, 301. These eight might have been workmen, so they cannot be excluded here. In fact, the men bearing other titles may also have been workmen earlier in their career as well.

the emplacement from house N.E. XV in some phase.[310] Indeed, Möller found a fragment from a religious text in the house (**Cat. 12.1**), perhaps part of an archive comparable to the so-called Chester Beatty library and thus potentially bequeathed over several generations.[311] Möller was a specialist in hieratic paleography,[312] so his assessment of the text's genre deserves serious consideration. Since the present location of the fragment—Berlin or Cairo—as well as its current museum number remain unknown, the text cannot provide insight into possible religious practices performed in the house, nor can it illuminate activities related to the cultic emplacement. As the Chester Beatty library indicates, not all owners were literate, so declarations that "ordinary necropolis workmen (...) were literate and possessed medical texts"[313] are somewhat exaggerated. While most workmen may have had some degree of literacy, competency in complex texts is another matter. Therefore, the text found in N.E. XV does not elucidate religious activities of that house perforce.[314] An ostracon with a representation apparently copied from a tomb (TT 359, **Cat. 11.17**; see also below p. 76 and p. 158) does suggest, nonetheless, that someone interested in religious practice did occupy the house at some point. Living under the reign of Ramesses II, Khawy (ii) would probably not have seen the decoration of TT 359, which dates to the reign of Ramesses III.[315] It is therefore more plausible that one of the later inhabitants of the house, perhaps a Pashedu, may have drawn the ostracon, which could have served as cult image deifying Amenhotep-son-of-Hapu, an influential official under king Amenhotep III, who was later worshipped in the Theban area.[316] In fact, this offers an alternative interpretation for the inscription on the emplacement in

[310] For worship of "particular deities as patrons" depending on the profession of the worshippers themselves, cf., e.g., D.P. Silverman, 'Divinity and Deities in Ancient Egypt', in: B.E. Shafer (ed.), *Religion in Ancient Egypt. Gods, Myths and Personal Practice*, Ithaca 1991, 54.

[311] Building on the preliminary work by Georges Posener, Pieter Willem Pestman has studied the so-called Chester Beatty library and the question which documents belonged to the archive and by whom the papyri were owned, cf. J. Černý, *Papyrus Hiératiques de Deir el-Médineh*, Tome I, Cairo 1978, vii–iii and P.W. Pestman, 'Who Were the Owners of The Chester Beatty Papyri', in: R.J. Demarée and J.J. Janssen (eds), *Gleanings from Deir el Medina. EU* 1, Leiden 1981, 155–72. Most probably P. Chester Beatty I–XIX, P. DeM I–XVII, P. Naunakhte I and IV, P. Geneva 15274, and probably P. Naunakhte II and III and perhaps also P. BM 10731 constituted a family archive that had been bequeathed through several generations. Pestman (1981, 155) excluded P. BM 10731 from the archive. P. BM 10731 had been written by Qenhirkhopshef (i) which confirms Deir el-Medina as its provenance (cf. I.E.S. Edwards, 'Kenhikhopshef's *Prophylactic* Charm', *JEA* 54 (1968), 155). Contrary to Pestman, P. BM 10731's find spot apart from the rest of the archive does not necessarily undermine its original connection to the archive, as the papyrus scroll could have been sold illegally, the with other documents (cf. J. Černý, 'The Will of Naunakhte and the Related Documents', *JEA* 31 (1945), 29). A definite relationship cannot be established, but P. BM 10731 would fit perfectly into the context of the Chester Beatty archive.

[312] His hieratic palaeography is still a standard work for modern Egyptology students: G. Möller, *Hieratische Paläographie: die aegyptische Buchschrift in ihrer Entwicklung von der fünften Dynastie bis zur römischen Kaiserzeit* (2 vols) *(2nd corrected edition)*, Leipzig 1936.

[313] R.L. Miller, 'Palaeoepidemiology, literacy, and medical tradition among the necropolis workmen in New Kingdom Egypt', *Medical History* 35 (1991), 23.

[314] The same applies to fragments of papyrus perhaps with religious content found in houses C. II's first room and N.O. XXVII's third room by Bonnet and Valbelle 1975, 445 and pl. LXXII; cf. **Cat. 12.10-1.**

[315] Davies 1999, 78 quotes O. MMA 09.184.183,2 dating to the 21st year of the reign of Ramesses II, ca. 1247 B.C., whereas Ramesses III reigned from 1187–1157 B.C., beginning of his 65 year reign after the attestation of Khawy (ii). For the dates cf. E. Hornung, R. Krauss, and D.A. Warburton, *Ancient Egyptian Chronology, Handbook of Oriental Studies* Sect. 1, *The Near and Middle East* 83, Leiden 2006, 493.

[316] Cf. D. Wildung, *Egyptian Saints. Deification in Pharaonic Egypt*, New York 1977, 89.

house N.E. XV. Several factors intimate that the inscription refers to Amenhotep-son-of-Hapu. First, a higher ranking priestly title followed by the title "scribe" (i.e. "[...] *n Imn sš* [...]") would rarely identify an inhabitant of the village. Although priestly titles do come from Deir el-Medina, they usually consist of designations that rank lower than "village scribe." Second, Amenhotep-son-of-Hapu received veneration as intermediary of Amun in the temple of Amun at Karnak; moreover, this figure served as a royal scribe. A tentative reconstruction of the titulatory on the house's larger cultic emplacement could thus read "{*wḥm.w*} *n Imn, sš* {*nsw Imn-ḥtp-sꜣ-Ḥpj*}" ("{intermediary}[317] of Amun, {royal} scribe {Amenhotep-son-of-Hapu}").

In front of house N.E. XV's cultic emplacement, in Bruyère found a low platform (a so-called *trottoir* or *estrade basse*), visible in the photograph, but not been described in detail,[318] which in his estimation, may have been used for offerings.[319] This platform represents a less elaborate version of the so-called lustration slabs found in front of similar emplacements at Amarna, though the latter are usually larger and have a rim (similar to a basin).[320] According to common interpretation, these "lustration slabs" were used primarily for supporting water jars and washing activities, but cultic activity—such as purification rituals and/or libation offerings—may have also been included.[321] The platform of house N.E. XV may have experienced similar application, thereby implying cultic functionality; however, it remains distinct from an offering table found in the same house (**Cat. 6.2**).[322] While the latter preserves the designation Pashedu, the name's frequency prevents precise identification of the Pashedu in question; moreover, the offering table has retained neither divine name nor epithet.

Consequently, interpretation of those religious activities related to the large cultic emplacement in house N.E. XV persists without firm support. Although a relatively well-educated person interested in religious matters may have venerated Amenhotep-son-of-Hapu in the house at some point in this house, even this conclusion remains hypothetical.

[317] This reconstruction should be treated with caution, for *wḥm.w n Imn* is, in fact, not attested as a title of Amenhotep-son-of-Hapu, who called himself *wḥm.w n pꜣ nṯr Nb-Mꜣᶜ.t-Rᶜ*, "herald of this god Amenhotep III," cf. Wildung 1977a, 87. A phrase, not a title, usually describes his function as intermediary for the people offering his statue. For example on stela CG Cairo 42037 Amenhotep-son-of-Hapu says: "Come to me, and I shall relay your words to Amun-of-Karnak" (cf. *jm n=j smj=j ḏd=tn m Imn-n-Jp.t*). His role as intermediary is granted by the king demonstrated in his self-reference as spokesperson of the king rather than that of the god Amun ("spokesman appointed by the king to hear your words of supplication and to promote the affairs of the two lands;" i.e. *wḥm.w n ḏd nsw r sḏm m(w)d.w.t n(y).t nmḥ r sᶜr.t ḫr(.w).t tꜣ.wy).*; cf. A.P. Kozloff and B.M. Bryan, *Egypt's Dazzling Sun. Amenhotep III and his World*, Cleveland 1992, 251 and W. Helck, *Urkunden der 18. Dynastie, Heft 21. Inschriften von Zeitgenossen Amenophis'III.*, Berlin 1958, 1833, 18–9. If Amenhotep-son-of-Hapu is depicted here, however, a real title of his, like {*sšm.w-ḥb*} *n Imn* (Festival conductor of Amun', cf. A.R. Ayedi, *Index of Egyptian Administrative, Religious and Military Titles of the New Kingdom*, Ismailia 2006, 518, no. 1755) would be more convincing.

[318] Bruyère 1939, 261 and pl. XII.

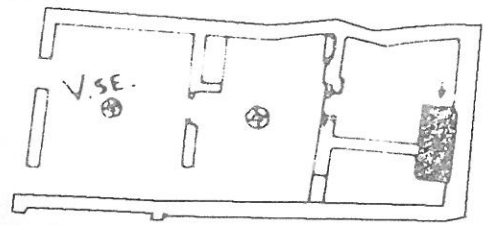
[319] Bruyère 1939, 261 and pl. XII.

[320] Compare, for example, the "lustration slab" in house P.47.19 published by L. Borchardt and H. Ricke, *Die Wohnhäuser in Tell el-Amarna*, Berlin 1980, 124–5 and pls 10 A and B.

[321] Stevens 2006, 235.

[322] Bruyère 1939, 261.

S.E. V



(fig. 4)

Interpretation of the large cultic emplacement situated in the east wall of house S.E. V's second room proves even more difficult, however. Likewise painted in yellow and red, the structure contained no traces of a "tableau painted with persons",[323] as Bruyère explicitly mentioned. Such remark attracts particular attention since Bruyère recorded no other panels with depictions of offering persons for any of the other large cultic emplacements in the village apart from house S.O. V (see table 2 and pp. 50–2 below). The crucial question then arises as to why Bruyère would expect such a *tableau* and whether his statement implies frequent depiction of human offering persons upon the large cultic emplacements. Were such decoration common, one would expect Bruyère to declare as much. Perhaps Bruyère expected to find these *tableaus*, since the shape of the emplacements resembles that of false doors, which frequently feature such panels. Unfortunately, no artifacts elucidate the function of this emplacement. Two other artifacts emerge elsewhere in the house: a round slice of turquoise inscribed with "scribe Pentaweret" and a wooden block inscribed with the name Hay.[324] Yet again, the identities of these individuals as well as their possible relationship to the family of Khawy (ii) remain obscure.[325] These objects had no immediate religious significance, but may have been used to fashion other objects with religious use. In this case, the turquoise may have been used as raw material for crafts like amulet production (see also below; p. 164–9) while the parallelepiped could have served as some kind of tool or work-bench.

A *divan* stood opposite the cultic emplacement, probably as a seat and/or bed (see above chapter 1.6).[326] Once again, Meskell's conception of a strictly functional or symbolic division of various rooms requires substantial correction.[327] Nevertheless, the first and second rooms almost certainly functioned as the houses' primarily living areas.[328] Bruyère recorded no hinge holes for doors, so the large cultic emplacement opposite the

[323] Bruyère 1939, 270.

[324] Bruyère 1939, 270–1.

[325] Davies lists three scribes by the name Pentaweret: Pentaweret (ii), (iii), and (iv) who were in duty between the reigns of Ramesses II and Ramesses IV (for the exact dating and the sequence of *smd.t* scribes at that time cf. Davies 1999, 126–133 and 283). As for Hay, the name was very common at Deir el-Medina and since no charts of either a Pentaweret or Khawy (ii) are yet known, no possible relationship can be drawn between one of the 14 men called Hay and the others attested in house S.E. V.

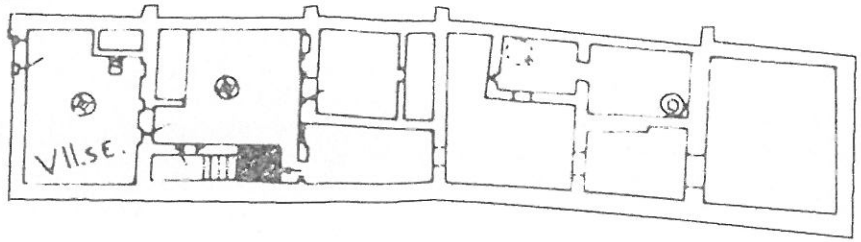
[326] Bruyère 1939, pl. XXIX.

[327] Kleinke 2007.

[328] E.g. J. Toivari-Viitala, 'Deir el-Medina (Development)', in: W. Wendrich (ed.), *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, Los Angeles 2011, 5; cf. http://digital2.library.ucla.edu/viewItem.do?ark=21198/zz002b227q; accessed on 2nd January 2012.

divan would have thus been visible to everyone in the second room. Though the house itself was not a public space, if parts of it were indeed employed for cultic usage, they would not have been hidden from sight, as with the sanctuary in a temple. As for the cultic emplacement in house S.E. V, no evidence supports a cultic function.

S.E. VII



(fig. 5)

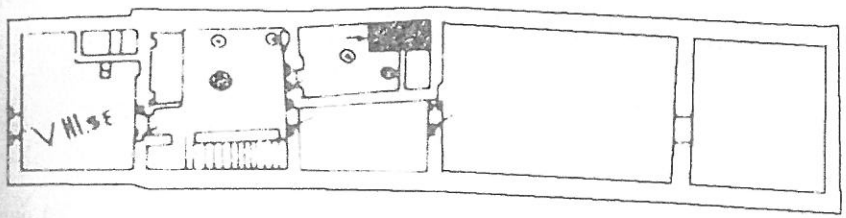
Such conclusions apply to the large cultic emplacement of house S.E VII as well, which bears striking similarity to the previous one. Painted both in red and yellow, it, too, rested in the east wall of the second room opposite the *divan*. The *tableau* was destroyed. The family of Nebamentet (i) probably owned the house (see table 1),[329] but no decoration or inscriptions support an interpretation as a cultic emplacement. In front of the large cultic emplacement, Bruyère found a large ostracon (**Cat. 11.36**). Although Bruyère alludes to the find only vaguely within his published material, his notebook record a "*grand ostracon, compte*" in front of a "*stèle fausse porte.*"[330] In contrast to Möller, Bruyère could probably not read hieratic, which then calls into question his identification of the ostracon as an accounting text. Both find spot and size could suggest religious connotations, though the dearth of further information—particularly its current classification number and location—prohibit any certainty.

House S.E. VII has also yielded a left doorpost portraying three persons walking rightward and carrying offerings (**Cat. 4.17**). Since the fragment lay more or less *in situ*, the four names found on the doorpost—Nebamentet (i), Hathor/Hunero (viii), his wife, as well as Anuy (ii) and Nebsetau (i), his brothers—most likely indicate that the house belonged to them. Given its size (h. 74 cm; w. 22 cm; d. 21 cm), the doorpost could not have constituted the small cultic emplacement located in the east wall of the first room (h. 45 cm; w. 45 cm; d. 18 cm),[331] rather, the doorpost formed part of a functional door, though the decoration remains quite unusual. Doorposts of both small cultic emplacements and generally depict the original owner kneeling or standing at the lower end (e.g. **Cat. 4.22**),[332] not walking in a procession, as in **Cat. 4.17**. This anomaly may hint at the doorpost's connection to the second room's large cultic emplacement, but its original

[329] Bruyère 1939, 273.
[330] Cf. Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0155_014.
[331] Bruyère 1939, 272.
[332] Interestingly, this is only occasionally the case on the doorposts of actual doors. Budka does not mention this decoration scheme: cf. Budka 2001, 6–7, but see her figs 5, 16, and 27).

context remains unclear, the find spot being the cave of the house. As for the two stelae found in the house S.E. VII (**Cat. 11.34** and **Cat. 11.35**), few specifics have emerged, though one (**Cat. 11.34**) portrays a standing couple and the other is an *ꜣḫ-jḳr*-stela (**Cat. 11.35**). Either may have stood in the small niche or upon the large house altar in the first room (see also p. 79). No names indicate a relation with Nebamentet (i)'s family, nor has any clarity arisen regarding the large cultic emplacement's function.

S.E. VIII



(fig. 6)

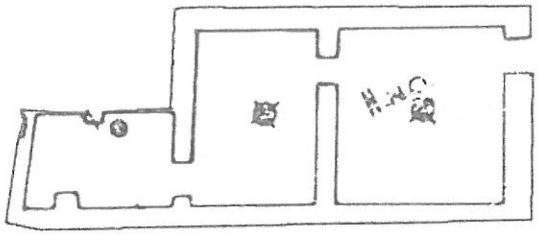
House S.E. VIII exhibits a floor plan almost identical to that of house S.E. VII,[333] and both displayed a *divan* and large cultic emplacement in the same relative location. Apparently houses in similar areas of the village were not only built at the same time but also along the same layout.[334] The large cultic emplacement of house S.E. VIII was painted red with a yellow band in the middle.[335]

Drilled into the soil, an amphora stood before this placement.[336] The amphora's fixed nature suggests a storage function. Indeed, donkeys carried water to Deir el-Medina[337] for a variety of purposes from drinking to cooking to (libation) offerings,[338] and such water requires storage. Textual sources confirm the performance of water libations, as when, for instance Thutmose (ii) writes a letter to his son Butehamun (i) and requests, in his own absence, that he not neglect the water libation to the god Amun, the desired effect being a safe return from a place called Yar.[339] The venue for this offering may go unspecified, but no evidence supports a locality outside the house. In the cave of house S.E. VIII, large amphorae decorated with ornamental Hathor heads have been found,[340] perhaps used for religious activities conducted within the house. Practical considerations might intimate that smaller vessels ushered water out of the larger fixed amphorae. Water or some other substance was probably drawn from such amphora and offered before the emplacement, but the amphora need not have had a purely cultic use, if

[333] Bruyère 1939, pl. XXIX.
[334] Compare, for example, the ground plans of the houses C. I–C. III, cf. Bruyère 1939, pl. XXIX.
[335] Bruyère 1939, 275.
[336] According to Bruyère, between the large cultic emplacement and the *divan* two amphorae were enforced into the soil. When checking the map, only one seems close enough to be possibly related: Bruyère 1939, pl. XXIX.
[337] Cf. J.J. Janssen, *Donkeys at Deir el-Medina*, *EU* 19, Leiden 2005, 73.
[338] Compare Luiselli 2011a, 90 and Stevens 2009, 9–10.
[339] Cf. P. Turin 1973, cf. Luiselli 2011a, 293–4.
[340] Bruyère 1939, 275.

any. Once more, this emplacement does not demand a cultic interpretation. The artifacts found in the house will undergo fuller discussion below, in relation to that niche found in the first room of the house (pp. 80–2).[341]

N.O. II



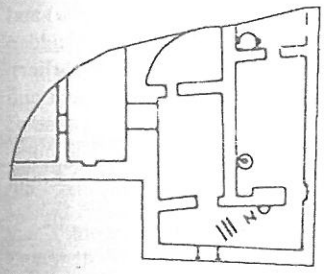
(fig. 7)

The west wall of house N.O. II's first room originally contained two doors, the left one blocked at some point and later rebuilt as a large cultic emplacement.[342] Interestingly, this emplacement also underwent several phases of construction. First, it was painted in red and yellow, repainted in the same colors, and then in a third, much later stage, painted in white.[343] The walls of the room were white-washed,[344] most probably in all three phases. Questions remain as to whether the emplacement's white color was decoration or means of concealing it against the white background of the white-washed wall. Bruyère having initially interpreted the cultic emplacements as false doors,[345] such white painting finds noteworthy parallels in tombs, for during the Old Kingdom, false doors in tombs were painted with thick layers of white paint *after* completion of their decoration.[346] Likewise, the white coating of the cultic emplacement in house N.O. II was subsequently added onto the original red and yellow decoration. For the Old Kingdom context, this white paint likely served as a means of purifying the false doors,[347] and indeed, cultic pottery underwent the same process with the same color during the same period,[348] the latter practice common even into the New Kingdom.[349] White-coated pottery, for example,

[341] Bruyère 1939, 275.
[342] Bruyère 1939, 280.
[343] Bruyère 1939, 280.
[344] Bruyère 1939, 280.
[345] Bruyère 1939, 67.
[346] Compare, for example, K.O. Kuraszkiewicz, 'Inscribed Objects from the Old Kingdom Necropolis West of the Step Pyramid (With Remarks on Their White Coating)', in: F. Coppens (ed.), *Abusir and Saqqara in the Year 2001 Proceedings of the Symposium (Prague, September 25th–27th, 2001)*, *Archiv orientální* 70/3, Prague 2002, 351–76 esp. nos 3 and 4.
[347] Kuraszkiewicz 2002, 367–8 and T.I. Rzeuska, 'Some Remarks on the Old Kingdom White Painted Funerary Cult Pottery From West Saqqara', in: J. Popielska-Grzybowska (ed.), *Proceedings of the Second Central European Conference of Young Egyptologists. Egypt 2001: Perspectives of research. Warsaw 5–7 March 2001*, *Warsaw Egyptological Studies* IV, Warsaw 2003, 128.
[348] Rzeuska 2003 128–34.
[349] Rzeuska 2003, 128–34. A comprehensive study of the cult pottery from Deir el-Medina is beyond the scope of this study. For some preliminary considerations see chapter 3.1.3.

appears in not only the tombs of Deir el-Medina, but also its chapels.[350] This white coating may have thus operated as a means of purification, in which case this coloration would not indicate removal of that cultic emplacement itself. Within the general context of purification, then, similarity between false doors of the Old Kingdom and the large cultic emplacement at hand would not necessarily support Bruyère's original interpretation of large cultic emplacements as "false doors,"[351] although this white coating might identify the emplacement as a true cultic locality, whereby someone would have purified and hence restored it on some occasion. Unfortunately, neither find nor inscription further illuminates religious activities that might have been performed in house N.O. II.[352]

N.O. III



(fig. 8)

Bruyère's description being even more concise than usual, the find situation of house N.O. III is rather difficult.[353] Three niches clearly visible on his map go unmentioned: i.e., two situated in the southern wall of the second and sixth rooms, and a third in the east wall between the first and second rooms.[354] Apparently, these niches remained undecorated, and since Bruyère did not identify them as cultic emplacements, they might have been blocked doors as well.[355]

The layout of the houses N.O. III and N.O. IV suggests modification; a single house may have been divided into two through closure of a former door as the workforce of Deir el-Medina continued to grow. A dearth of details precludes any determination as to whether the niches visible on Bruyère's map were large cultic emplacements (see above; p. 43 for a similar situation in house S.E. VIII), an amphora stood embedded into the

[350] Rzeuska 2003, 131 and note 19; quoting some examples from G. Nagel, *La céramique du Nouvel Empire à Deir el-Médineh*, Cairo 1938.
[351] Bruyère 1939, 67.
[352] This absence of finds may stem from Schiaparelli's excavation, since he made no specific notation of small finds. Most architectural fragments found by Schiaparelli probably come from tombs rather than the village, and have therefore been omitted in the present study.
[353] Bruyère 1939, 280–1.
[354] Bruyère 1939, pl. VII.
[355] Compare note by Bruyère 1939, 281 in his description of house N.O. IV. Another blocked door was found in the north wall of house N.O. V (Bruyère 1939, 281). Since no cavity in the wall is visible on Bruyère's map (1939, pl. VII) there is no reason to question Bruyère's interpretation. Therefore the latter door has not been added to table 2.

ground close to the large cultic emplacement of house N.O. II's second room,[356] but the report records no additional finds,[357] and interpretation only on the map's details proves quite dubious.[358] Debate still surrounds the nature of the three wall cavities in house N.O. III.

Another large white-painted cultic emplacement lay in the western wall of house N.O. VI's third room.[359] Elaborately shaped and located approximately opposite the entrance door, the structure would have stood in clear sight of anyone entering the room. Even clearer than in house N.O. II, the white painting was decorative, or symbolic, or both, but certainly not intended to camouflage the emplacement against the walls, which were perhaps white-washed.

Painted red and yellow,[360] two additional large cultic emplacements are situated against the south wall of the same third room. Before the eastern (i.e. left) one, Bruyère indicated a small *cachette* containing a small mat made of alfalfa grass (French: *alfa*) and several fragments of pottery.[361] The term *cachette* suggests that something was hidden and perhaps covered.[362] In houses at Tell el-Dab'a (inhabited several centuries earlier), the excavator Manfred Bietak found offering deposits filled and covered with sand and occasionally with mud,[363] while two allotment stones in the foundation of the house of Ranefer at Amarna may suggest a "foundation ritual to protect the house."[364] The question therefore arises as to whether the *cachette* of house N.O. VI may have had a similar function.[365]

The offering deposits at Tell el-Dab'a usually lay in the center of the room,[366] but one was situated in an emplacement created by two *Zungenmauern* (i.e. small ledges extending into the room) in the south wall.[367] Since the deceased at Tell el-Dab'a were at times buried in their houses, the offering deposits might have been related to a cult of the dead.[368] With only two exceptions, home burials was not practiced at Deir el-Medina.[369] Nevertheless, the potential offering deposits of Deir el-Medina may have also concerned

[356] Also visible on the map; cf. Bruyère 1939, pl. VII.
[357] Bruyère 1939, 281.
[358] Unfortunately, it was not possible to travel to Deir el-Medina to analyze the situation on site, since the village could not be entered, closed to individual research.
[359] Bruyère 1939, 282.
[360] Bruyère 1939, 282.
[361] Bruyère 1939, 282.
[362] Compare, for example, the lexicography as described in http://www.cnrtl.fr/definition/cachette, accessed on 30 July 2013.
[363] V. Müller, 'Bestand und Deutung der Opferdepots bei Tempeln, in Wohnhausbereichen und Gräbern der Zweiten Zwischenzeit in Tell el-Dabᶜa', in: H. Willems (ed.), *Social Aspects of Funerary Culture in the Egyptian Old and Middle Kingdoms. Proceedings of the International Symposium Held at Leiden University 6–7 June, 1996*, *OLA* 103, Leuven 2001, 176.
[364] Cf. Kemp and Stevens 2010a, 507 and Kemp and Stevens 2010b, 51–52, inv. nos. 33328 and 33362.
[365] Contra Müller 2008, 375.
[366] Cf. Müller 2008, 320.
[367] M. Bietak, *Tell el-Dab'a V. Ein Friedhofsbezirk der Mittleren Bronzezeitkultur mit Totentempel und Siedlungsschichten Teil 1*, Wien 1991, 137–8, fig. 94–5 and plan 5, cf. Müller 2008, 318–9.
[368] Müller 2008, 320–1.
[369] Bruyère mentioned child burials in two houses (Bruyère 1939, 65), but only one had been mentioned in his *nomenclature* of the village's finds namely, the one found in house S.E. VI, fifth room, north; cf. Bruyère 1939, 271.

ancestral cults, for the contents of the *cachette* found in house N.O. VI parallel those of Tell el-Dab'a. Apart from artifacts, pottery, and pottery models,[370] some offering deposits contain pottery fragments "destroyed intentionally."[371] The symbolic destruction of the pots may correspond to the well-known ritual of breaking the red pots for protection against evil forces,[372] at practice that continued into the New Kingdom.[373] Excepting two occasions, this ritual has found attestation only within mortuary contexts (but see below; pp. 53–5).[374] In Coffin Text [926] the deceased is asked to wash his/her hands and then sits for the offering meal, the pots are broken whereupon libation and incense offering ensue.[375] The inhabitants of the village Deir el-Medina may have performed similar activities in their houses. As indicated by *Letters to the Dead* (i.e. letters written to mollify or propitiate angry ancestors), the deceased could intervene in daily life.[376] Given the resemblance between execration rituals (such as the breaking of the pots) and the *Letters to the Dead*,[377] offering deposits might have served a similar function. Ancestral cults sought, then, not only veneration and amelioration of the dead, but protection for the

[370] Müller 2008, 323.
[371] V. Müller, 'Offering deposits at Tell el Daba', in: C.J. Eyre (ed.), *7th International Congress of Egyptologists*, Leuven 1998, 799–800.
[372] Müller 1998, 800. On the ritual see also J. Assmann, *Altägyptische Totenliturgien* II: *Totenliturgien und Totensprüche in den Grabinschriften des Neuen Reichs*, Heidelberg 2005, 116–7 with references and J. van Dijk, 'Zerbrechen der roten Töpfe', *LÄ* VI, 1389–96 and R.K. Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*. *SAOC* 54, Chicago 1993, 144–7. On the breaking of offerings in general see also T. Kertez, 'The Breaking of Offerings in the Cult of Hathor', *Tel Aviv* 3 (1976), 134–6; J. van Dijk, *The New Kingdom Necropolis of Memphis. Historical and Iconographical Studies*, Groningen 1993, 185–6; S. Cauville, *Offerings to the Gods in Egyptian Temples* [first published as *L'offrande aux dieux dans le temple égyptien*, Leuven 2011], Leuven 2012, 31 and Harrington 2013, 37–9.
[373] Ritner 1993, 146 (with references). That the practice might have been known at Deir el-Medina is perhaps suggested by a possible allusion in the dream book, where "breaking the vessel (...) means fighting" (P. Chester Beatty III, 10.5), cf. B. van Rinsveld, 'Deux allusions littéraires au rituel de la destruction des pots', in: A. Théodoridès, P. Naster and J. Ries (eds), *Archéologie et Philologie dans l'Étude des Civilisations Orientales*, Leuven 1986, 207–12.
[374] E.g. CT [926], cf. J. Assmann 2005b, 114. The exceptions being an offering deposit with broken pots found in the fort of Mirgissa dating to the 12th dynasty and a depiction of the breaking the pots in the Luxor temple from the time of Amenhotep III. In both cases the ritual aims at protection against evil forces either personified as the foreign countries (Mirgissa) or as the enemies of the god (Luxor temple), cf. Müller 2008, 341–3, with references.
[375] E.g. CT [926], cf. J. Assmann 2005b, 114.
[376] E.g. R.J. Demarée, *The 3h iḳr n Rc-stelae. On Ancestor Worship in Ancient Egypt*, *EU* 3, Leiden 1983, 268–75. Compare, for example, O. Louvre 698 from Deir el-Medina, discussed by P.J. Frandsen, 'The letter to Ikhtay's Coffin: O. Louvre inv. no. 698', in: R.J. Demarée and A. Egberts (eds), *Village Voices. Proceedings of the symposium 'Texts from Deir el-Medîna and their interpretation', Leiden, May 31–June 1, 1991*, Leiden 1992, 31–49. On the general issue cf. A.H. Gardiner and K. Sethe, *Egyptian Letters to the Dead Mainly From The Old and Middle Kingdoms*, London 1928; F.D. Friedman, 'On the meaning of some anthropoid busts from Deir el-Medina', *JEA* 71 (1985), 94–6; and Baines 1987, 86–8. For a recent discussion of the letters to the dead compare, for example, S. Donnat, 'Written Pleas to the Invisible World: Texts as Media between Living and Dead in Pharaonic Egypt, in: A. Storch (ed.), *Perception of the Invisible. Religion, Historical Semantics and the Role of Perceptive Verbs*, *Sprache und Geschichte in Afrika (SUGIA)* 21, Cologne 2010, 51–80. For a general overview of the sources cf. U. Verhoeven, 'Post ins Jenseits – Formular und Funktion altägyptischer Briefe an Tote', in A. Wagner (ed.) *Bote und Brief. Sprachliche Systeme der Informationsübermittlung im Spannungsfeld von Mündlichekiet und Schriftlichkeit*, *Nordafrikanisch/Westafrikanische Studien* 4, Frankfurt 2003, 31–51 and Harrington 2013, 34–7.
[377] Ritner 1993, 180–3.

household against the netherworldly forces.[378] Accordingly, household offering deposits of broken pots might evince inhabitant's attempts warding off the malevolent dead.[379] Interpretation of the *cachette* as offering deposit requires further explanation, however. The question centers on why no similar cult installation has emerged in front of other emplacements in house N.O. VI or elsewhere at Deir el-Medina[380]—a situation also paralleled at Tell el-Daba.[381] Perhaps not every household was haunted, and hence not every household would have needed protection against evil spirits. Alternatively, a single deposit in one house may have sufficed for the whole village, which might then intimate a religious specialist bore responsibility for this religious activity. Indeed, a parallel Coffin Text portrays a *wtj*-priest breaking the pots.[382] The *wtj*-priest usually acted as "embalmer,"[383] which seems to place the entire undertaking in the context embalmment. Whether or not the house's inhabitants could break the pots themselves is difficult to determine. If the *cachette* did in fact serve as an offering deposit, a specialist would have most likely been instrumental in its creation.

The preceding considerations are, or course, hypothetical.[384] It is, for example, impossible to tell whether the potsherds found in the *cachette* of house N.O. VI were destroyed deliberately.[385] Moreover, this find remains the only deposit of its kind at Deir el-Medina. Should these propositions be correct, however, they would indicate the performance of cultic activities (perhaps cultic meals *inter alia*[386]) in the vicinity of a large cultic emplacement. Regardless, the present findings do support interpretation of the

[378] Compare Müller 2001, 204.

[379] Execration rituals performed in the domestic context has also been suggested by P.A. Bochi, 'Death by Drama: The Ritual of Damnation Memoriae in Ancient Egypt', *GM* 171 (1999), 78. It is not fully clear what Bochi means with her statement that the execration formulae were also "used in [the] private sphere" (Bochi 1999, 78). For support of her conclusions, she draws on Robert K. Ritner (1993, 136–42 with references), which suggests that she applies his definition. Independent of Bochi's assessment, Ritner would not agree that non-specialists could perform execration rituals in the house. In Ritner's terms ""private" magician" always refers to a "cultic priest" (1993, 2). In view of the representation of Amenhotep III breaking pots in front of the god Amun-Re (cf. A. Moret, 'Le rite de briser les vases rouges au temple de Louxour', *RdE* 3 (1938), 167), the offering could have been directed toward a god. Harrington 2013, 39 also considers the broken pots as offering for the deceased.

[380] The only other *cachette* mentioned by Bruyère was found empty. Located in the first room of house N.E. XV next to the house altar and measuring 30 x 19 cm, the only other cachette was found mentioned by Bruyère was found empty, cf.; Bruyère 1939, 261. Perhaps this *cachette* was no cultic deposit, but a place to hide precious items taken away when the village was abandoned.

[381] Müller 2001, 196, who seeks to explain the issue as expression of personal preferences.

[382] J. Assmann 2005b, 112 and 115.

[383] *Wb* I, 379.9–12.

[384] For example, Müller discusses the present *cachette* together with the two child burials and concludes that "*die kursorischen Angaben zu den Gruben bieten leider keine Anhaltspunkte für ihre Deutung*," cf. Müller, 2008, 375.

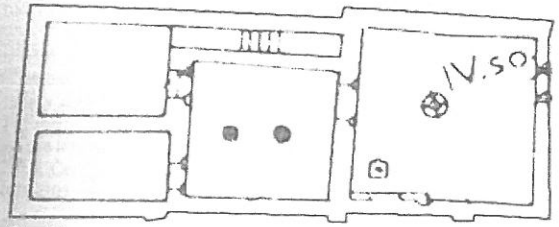
[385] Compare also the criteria listed by A. Seiler, 'Archäologisch faßbare Kultpraktiken in Grabkontexten der frühen 18. Dynastie in Dra'Abu el Naga/Theben', in: J. Assmann *et al.* (eds) *Thebanische Beamtennekropolen, Neue Perspektiven archäologischer Forschung. Internationales Symposium Heidelberg 9.–13.6.1993, SAGA* 12, Heidelberg 1995, 193. For example, it should be possible to reconstruct at least pottery profiles and to show that the pottery was laid down deliberately none of which can be assured for the contents of the *cachette* in house N.O. VI.

[386] Compare Müller's interpretation of the finds from Tell el-Dab'a, cf. Müller 1998, 803 and Müller 2001, 178. For ideas on ritual meals in the New Kingdom: Stevens 2006, 283 and Weiss 2009a, 200.

large cultic emplacements in house N.O. VI as cult localities.[387] Another problem centers on the difference in both orientation and decoration among the three large cultic emplacements in house N.O. VI (red and yellow versus white; cf. table 2), i.e., whether this variation implies different functions for the emplacements. No finds or inscriptions provide further insight into the religious activities potentially performed at the emplacements, and no evidence hints at the inhabitant's identities.[388]

The ambiguity of color symbolism proves quite unfortunate in this instance (pp. 37–8), since such indexing often remains the only indication of a cultic placement's original function. The red and yellow painting also appears, for example, on a large cultic emplacement in the second room of house N.O. XII,[389] though the owner of that house has not been identified and no finds pertain to the emplacement.[390] As for the two emplacements in the second room of house N.O. XX, the same situation manifests itself.[391] The function of the three emplacements is therefore far from clear.

S.O. IV



(fig. 9)

More difficulty comes from house S.O. IV. While Prehotep (i) occupied it during the 19th dynasty, indicated by a doorpost bearing his name, its inhabitant during the 20th dynasty eludes certain identification (see also below; pp. 84–7).[392] A base found in the house (**Cat. 4.51**) attests the names Khabekhnet (i) and Sati (i), his wife, but the family seems to have inhabited the area around the houses S.O. IV–S.O.VI. Moreover, although the doorpost of a small cultic emplacement (**Cat. 4.50**) bears the name Qenja,

[387] Compare the discussion by Müller 2001, 186. Note that in her later study Müller has remarked that offering deposits were often related to outdoor altars on which burnt-offerings have been performed. This finding may suggest that the offering deposits might have something to do with the cult of the sun, cf. Müller 2008, 343.

[388] Again, it was Schiaparelli who possibly uncovered the small finds and did not record them; cf. *Introduction to the catalogue*.

[389] Bruyère 1939, 286.

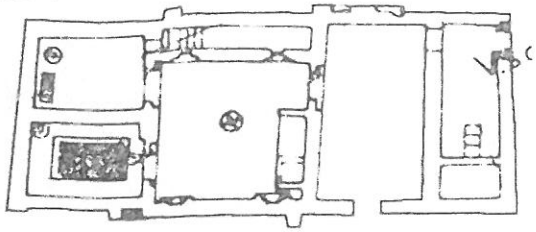
[390] The only interesting find in the second room—the remains of a polychrome painting located underneath the plinth—received no description by Bruyère. He only drew the decoration preserved on the altar in the first room, cf. Bruyère 1939, 286.

[391] Bruyère 1939, 297. The only find being the fragment of the bed of a female figurine in the fifth room; cf. Bonnet and Valbelle 1975, 445.

[392] Davies 1999, 150 and recently L. Weiss, 'Markings on Oracle Ostraca of Deir el-Medina', in: B.J.J. Haring and O.E. Kaper (eds), with the assistance of C.H. van Zoest, *Pictograms or Pseudo Script? Non-Textual Identity Marks in Practical Use in Ancient Egypt and Elsewhere. Proceedings of a Conference in Leiden, 19–20 December 2006, EU 25*, Leiden 2009, 230.

no additional information about this figure has survived. He may have been a later descendant of the family, but this interpretation is mere speculation. The house's inhabitants in the late 20th dynasty thus persist obscurity. Nevertheless, two doors of house S.O. IV may have been transformed into large cultic emplacements. They lay in the first room of the house, where Bruyère also found traces of a large house altar (formerly called "*lit clos*"),[393] though traces of this altar do not appear on his map.[394] The chronology and relationship of the house altar and large cultic emplacement could provide stimulating points of inquiry. Had the latter replaced the former as the house's cultic center, then Bruyère's exclusive discovery of altar remnants would occasion no surprise. Given its relatively large space requirements,[395] the house altar may have been destroyed when no longer in use. Filled with religious materials,[396] house S.O. IV might have hosted a number of religious activities (see below, pp. 107–8). None of these finds clearly relates to the large cultic emplacement, however—save an amphora placed in front of the right emplacement,[397] which may reflect libation rituals (p. 40 and see also a parallel in house S.E. VIII; p. 43).

S.O. V



(fig. 10)

The clearest evidence for interpretation of the large cultic emplacement's function derives from house S.O. V. Here Bruyère found four large cultic emplacements located in the house's third room,[398] two opposite of each other in both the south and north walls. Painted in red with central yellow bands and polychrome paintings, only one has been preserved, but similar decoration patterns can almost certainly be assumed for the other three.[399]

Khabekhnet (i) inhabited the house,[400] and the right emplacement of the northern wall depicts him adoring the cartouche of the deified queen Ahmes-Nefertari.[401] From another figure adoring the cartouche from its left side, only a part of the right foot

[393] Bruyère 1939, 321.
[394] Bruyère 1939, pl. XXIX.
[395] Friedman has estimated that the house altars would have occupied about 10% of the room, cf. Friedman 1994, 95.
[396] **Cat. 5.19**, an anthropoid bust (DM 4009), **Cat. 10.62**, **Cat. 11.50**, **Cat. 12.15** and **Cat. 12.16**.
[397] It is visible on his map, but was not mentioned by Bruyère 1939, pl. XXIX.
[398] Bruyère 1939, 67 and 325.
[399] The *tableau* of the south-western large cult emplacement is specified as damaged but might have been decorated in a similar manner, cf., Bruyère 1939, 325.
[400] Bruyère 1939, 325.
[401] Bruyère 1939, 325 and figs 196–7.

remains, but the posture identifies the figure as a man, since a woman would have been represented with her feet next to each other. The right side considered more important by ancient Egyptians, a younger member of Khabekhnet (i)'s household presumably occupied the leftward position, perhaps one of his sons.[402]

Posthumously deified, king Amenhotep I and his mother, Ahmes-Nefertari, were worshipped in the village.[403] Since Amenhotep I putatively founded the village, his place in the cult raises fewer questions than that of his mother.[404] Alexandra von Lieven has recently emphasized that the cult of Amenhotep I extended far beyond Deir el-Medina during the New Kingdom, thus "a phenomenon in society as a whole."[405] Extending the argument further, Daniel Polz interpreted the prominence of Amenhotep I and his mother Ahmes-Nefertari as "adoption of a common motif."[406] This interpretation might then bear on the scene depicted in house S.O. VI, i.e. whether it portrays veneration of divine ancestors[407] or of patron deities more generally—if such a systematic distinction of the pantheon even existed for the ancient Egyptians. In any case, the emplacement had a clear cultic significance. This conclusion receives additional support from an offering support found in front of the emplacement (**Cat. 8.2**), which bears an offering formula dedicated to the god Thoth,[408] and might therefore imply cultic equipment could serve different

[402] A base of Khabekhnet (i) and his wife Sati (i) in the neighboring house S.O. IV (**Cat. 4.51**), suggests the family may have inhabited the area.The family of Khabekhnet (i) has been listed by Davies 1999, chart 7. For the right side as the one where the older person is depicted see also **Cat. 4.59**, which shows Khonsu (ii) on the left and most probably his father Sennedjem (i) on the right side of a lintel.
[403] J. Černý, 'Le culte d'Amenophis Ier chez les ouvriers de la nécropole thébaine', *BIFAO* 27 (1927), 159–203; M. Gitton, *L'épouse du dieu, Ahmes Néfertary: documents sur sa vie et son culte posthume. Centre de Recherches d'Histoire Ancienne* 15. *Annales littéraires de l'Université de Besançon* 172, Paris 1981; G. Hollender, *Amenophis I und Ahmes Nefertari, Untersuchungen zur Entwicklung ihres posthumen Kultes anhand der Privatgräber der thebanischen Nekropole, Sonderschrift Deutsches Archäologisches Instituts Abteilung Kairo* 23, Berlin 2009.
[404] E.g. D. Polz, *Der Beginn des Neuen Reichs. Zur Vorgeschichte einer Zeitenwende, Sonderschriften des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Abteilung Kairo* 31, New York 2007, 191.
[405] A. van Lieven, 'Kleine Beiträge zur Vergöttlichung Amenophis I., II. Der Amenophis-Kult nach dem Ende des Neuen Reiches', *ZÄS* 128 (2001), 41 with references. See also M. Betrò, 'Il culto di Amenofi I a Dra Abu el-Naga: considerazioni preliminari', in: S. Pernigotti and M. Zecchi (eds), *Il sacerdozio e la società civile nell'Egitto Antico, Atti del terzo Colloquio (Bologna – 30/31 maggio 2007), Archeologia e Storia della Civiltà Egiziana e del Vicino Oriente Antico, Materiali e studi* 14, Bologna 2008, 85–104. A crucial translation in this respect is, unfortunately heavily disputed. O. Cairo CG 25234 attests a festival of Amenhotep I in which 60 people participated al well as 60 people from elsewhere. Controversy surrounds the meaning of *myt* or *dmjt*, assuming the 60 people were villagers or guests from outside. The latter interpretation would intimate the significance of the cult of Amenhotep I for the Theban area as a whole. Compare Jauhiainen's discussion of the different textual interpretations, advocates for outsiders, cf. H. Jauhiainen, *"Do not celebrate your feast without your neighbours." A Study of References to Feasts and Festivals in Non-Literary Documents from Ramesside Period Deir el-Medina, Publications of the Institute for Asian and African Studies* 10, Helsinki 2009, 291.
[406] Polz 2007, 190 and recently Neunert 2010, 50. Both authors do not exclude the possibility that Amenhotep I was the founder of the village, but acknowledge that the earliest evidence from the village dates to his successor, Thutmosis I. The most convincing middle ground has already been proposed by Bruyère (1939, 3), who suggested Amenhotep I started the workshop, and Thutmosis I improved the logistics by founding the village. For a profound discussion of early history of the village cf. Neunert 2010, 49–53. The evidence analyzed in the present study dates to the later phase of inhabitation of the village: its early history is therefore an incidental aspect.
[407] Bruyère 1939, 68.
[408] Bruyère 1939, 329 and fig. 200.

gods independent of the inscription (for the details see chapter 3, pp. 129–30).[409] The other three large cultic emplacements of house S.O. V may permit the same interpretation: cultic localities with offerings placed before them.

2.2. The Interpretation of the Larger Cultic Emplacements

Hubert Roeder introduced the term *Sinnhorizont* to Egyptology as a dynamic concept that comprises not only meaning but also agency (i.e. the relationship between agents and object along with concomitant action). It is difficult to translate the term into English, which is why it will not be applied to the present study. Nevertheless, analyzing a multi-layered constellation of aspects that constitutes meaning—thereby encompassing both structures and objects related to the agency involved—is vital.[410] While the precise agency implied in those cultic activities related to the village's 20 or so large emplacements (cf. table 2) proves rather difficult to establish, these emplacements were not purely decorative. Indeed, only a few mirror other emplacements or doors—an argument advanced for a strictly decorative function at Amarna. Since a number of them were painted in red and yellow, the question of color symbolism arises yet again. Egyptian religious texts indicate that colors could carry a religious symbolism (see also pp. 37–8), but the scarcity of extant data precludes any definite conclusions for the cultic emplacements, a limitation that also applies to the white coloration, which might suggest some kind of purification (see above; pp. 44–5).

Only a few artifacts could potentially appertain to the large cultic emplacements. In most cases these artifacts were amphorae were placed before the large emplacements, which might suggest religious activities (e.g., libation offerings). The argument demonstrates a certain circularity, however: if the emplacements are cultic emplacements the placement of offerings in front of them makes good sense; conversely, if the amphorae evidence cultic activity interpretation of the emplacements as cult places would be more convincing. The function of the large emplacements probably did differ in terms of religious activities, as clearly indicated by the houses S.O. V and N.E. XV. While the evidence does not permit absolute determination of the intermediary Amenhotep-son-of-Hapu as an object of worship at house N.E. XV's large emplacement, the data does confirm that not all cultic emplacements were decorated with the "*Kartuschen der Dorfheiligen Amenophis I. und Ahmes-Nefertari*,"[411] in short, only the emplacement in house S.O. V displays this decorative scheme, which makes the iconography unstandard and hence of limited value to serve as basis for the interpretation of the other large emplacements.

[409] Compare earlier considerations in Weiss 2011, 200.
[410] Cf. H.H. Roeder, '"Mit dem Auge sehen." Ägyptisches und Ägyptologisches zum "Auge des Horus"', *GM* 138 (1994), 50. Note that Roeder focused on the ancient Egyptian vocabulary; cf. H.H. Roeder, *Mit dem Auge sehen. Studien zur Semantik der Herrschaft in den Toten- und Kulttexten. SAGA* 16, Heidelberg 1996 and recently H.H. Roeder, 'Mundöffnung und rituelle Feindtötung. Die soziomorphe Definition eines altägyptischen Vernichtungsopfers', in: E. Stavianopoulou *et al.* (eds), *Transformations in Sacrificial Practices from Antiquity to Modern Times*, Berlin 2008, 19–64. The approach is, however, equally valuable for the analysis of potential cultic emplacements.
[411] Cf. Neunert 2010, 36.

Whereas the other large emplacements thus might have had different meanings, the only known figurative decoration shows royal ancestors. This advocates an interpretation of at least this cultic emplacement within the sphere of the ancestor cults. Accordingly, Bruyère's interpretation of the cultic emplacements as "false doors" was not entirely amiss, the form of the former evoking that of the latter in tombs. A strict association of the large cultic emplacements with the "mortuary sphere" would, however, limit full comprehension of their meaning. To situate the large cultic niches within this broader conceptual field, however, the conclusions of chapter three will have to be somewhat anticipated: research in the following chapter will demonstrate that ancestral cults played an important role at Deir el-Medina and that domestic cults usually integrates deities with mortuary associations (pp. 119–26). These two phenomena resulted from a blurred, permeable boundary between the spheres of the living and that of the dead.[412] However, analysis must turn once again to questions of chronology—that is, whether the phenomena occurred only after the Amarna Period.[413] Few rituals were reserved strictly for mortuary or funerary traditions: even rituals traditionally understood as part of the embalming procedure—such as the opening of the mouth ceremony—were not limited to the deceased, but extended to cult statues in temples.[414] While some scholars account for similarities between the cult of the dead and the cult of the gods by maintaining that said gods were not always present in their statues,[415] such similarity ultimately argues against a rigid dichotomy within Egyptian religion. On the contrary, these general conceptions applied to all putative "spheres." [416] No "concrete, bi-partite distinction" existed between "daily life" and "mortuary tradition" at Deir el-Medina, but that these sphere's were viewed as a "continuum."[417] or in the words of Hubert Roeder in as two worlds in co-existence.[418] In a world where the deceased were omnipresent and entered the world of the living, a firm division between "mortuary" and "non-mortuary" wields little analytical

[412] J. Assmann 2005b, 29.
[413] Compare the recent interpretation of the Amarna tombs as an attempt to resume the interrupted communication caused by a change of mode of existence ("*Wechsel der Daseinsform*"). In this new form the deceased thus remained part of the "sphere" of the living, cf. J. Arp, *Die Nekropole als Figuration. Zur Methodik der sozialen Interpretation der Felsfassadengräber von Amarna*, *GOF* 50, Wiesbaden 2012, 150–5 (quote cf. Arp 2012, 154).
[414] References have been listed by A.R. Schulman, 'The Iconographic Theme: "Opening of the Mouth" on stelae', *JARCE* 21 (1984), 171, note 19. See also R.B. Finnestad, 'The meaning and purpose of *Opening the Mouth* in Mortuary Contexts', *Numen* 25 (1978), 118–34.
[415] E.g. E. Hermsen, 'Opfer und Gebet in der altägyptischen Religion', in: U. Berner, Ch. Bochinger and R. Flasche (eds), *Opfer und Gebet in den Religionen*, *Veröffentlichungen der Wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaft für Theologie* 26, Gütersloh 2005, 161–3.
[416] Similarly, Ritner (2008, 184) states "conncetions between the domestic and funerary [or better mortuary, addition by the present author] spheres were not minimal, but common and multifaceted."
[417] J. Wegner, 'Tradition and Innovation: The Middle Kingdom', in: W. Wendrich (ed.), *Egyptian Archaeology*, Chichester 2010, 124; Finnestad (1978, 121–2 and 134). and see also J. Arp 'Raumkonzeptionen im altägyptischen Totenglauben', in: K. Rezania (ed.) *Raumkonzeptionen in antiken Religionen. Beiträge des internationalen Symposiums in Göttingen, 28. und 29. Juni 2012. Philippika. Marburger altertumskundliche Abhandlungen*, Wiesbaden, 2013, 41–61.
[418] H. Roeder, 'Einleitung. Die altägyptische Nekropole als sakraler Raum. Zur kulturwissenschaftlichen Erschließung einer Funerärkultur', in: G. Neunert, K. Gabler and A. Verbovsek (eds), *Nekropolen: Grab – Bild – Ritual. Beiträge des zweiten Münchner Arbeitskreises Junge Aegyptologie (MAJA 2)*, *GOF* 54, Wiesbaden 2013, 12.

power.[419] Indeed, the ancient Egyptians knew and emphasized differences between the two worlds, but these worlds were integrated in the religious practice where people communicated and interacted with gods and ancestors.[420] Recent findings from Amarna betray a rather fluid transition between the venerated living and the venerated dead.[421] Strict division between categorically separate and separable domains thus seems to be a concept from Egyptologists, not ancient Egyptians.[422]

From this perspective, it is interesting to return to the interpretations of the false doors in tombs: Schulman and others have argued that in the Old Kingdom the "stelae took the shape and schematic composition of the tombs' false door" and could hence be interpreted as "free standing false-doors."[423] During the Old Kingdom period, false doors stood as the central cultic place of tombs, and even if false doors and stelae became less important within New Kingdom tombs,[424] they maintained their locative cultic function nonetheless.[425] "[F]ollowing the principle of *parce pro toto*, the significance of false doors (alongside stelae) was not confined a kind of "surrogate" for tombs;[426] rather, their shape indicates the essence of an ancient Egyptian cultic location.[427] The similarity in shape between the large cultic emplacements and the false doors hence may suggest a similar meaning after all. Elsewhere I already argued that the cultic emplacements (formerly called "false doors") may, in fact, be "two-dimensional depictions of shrines."[428] I would like to reinforce this idea and contend that large cultic emplacements served as focal points of religious activity within the house. These activities are aptly described with Karel van der Toorn's notion of "family religion"[429] as shall become clear in the following chapter. At Deir el-Medina the unborn, ancestors, and all living family

[419] Compare also Hermsen, who states that "*Diesseits und Jenseits (...) sind (...) vollständig voneinander getrennt nicht denkbar*," cf. E. Hermsen, 'Perspektiven zum Verstehen der altägyptischen Religion', *DE* 34 (1996), 6.

[420] After Roeder 2013, 12, who views the point of interaction mainly in temples.

[421] Kemp and Stevens 2010a, 507.

[422] The fluidity of different "spheres" appears in the importance of "entering" and of "going out" as central concepts to Egyptian religion as the whole. This movement is, for example, illustrated by numerous spells in the *Book of the Dead* that speak of going forth by day. Likewise, the gods moved between their shrines and the sanctuary whose doors were opened and closed during the daily rituals. Compare, for example, the text traditionally called "Ritual of Amenhotep I", which has also been preserved at Deir el-Medina, cf. H.H. Nelson, 'Certain Reliefs at Karnak and Medinet Habu and the Ritual of Amenophis I', *JNES* 8 (1949), 206 and see now for a broader interpretation N. Tacke, *Das Opferritual des ägyptischen Neuen Reiches* (2 vols), *OLA* 222, Leuven, 2013.

[423] Schulman 1984, 170 with references.

[424] A. Hermann, *Die Stelen der thebanischen Felsgräber der 18. Dynastie*, *ÄF* 4, Glückstadt 1940, 22.

[425] Related to the shared symbolism of false doors and stelae, a letter (O. DeM 129) refers to a wooden door re-functioned into a stela, cf. Cooney 2007, 37. Translation by E.F. Wente, *Letters from Ancient Egypt*, Atlanta 1990, 141. Unfortunately the letter does not provide a clue where the stela was meant to be installed.

[426] Schulman 1984, 170 with references.

[427] Cf. Hermann 1940, 19.

[428] Cf. Weiss 2011, 210. Compare also the interpretation as a "compressed shrine" by H. and N. Strudwick, 'The House of Amenmose in Theban Tomb 254', in: R. Tefnin, *La Peinture Égyptienne Ancienne. Un Monde de Signes à Préserver. Actes du Colloque International de Bruxelles, Avril 1994*, *Monumenta Aegyptiaca* VII, Bruxelles 1997, 45, cf. Harrington 2013, 68.

[429] Van der Toorn 1996, 3–4, who also noted the combined veneration of gods and ancestors at home in his study on family religion in Babylonia, Israel, and Syria. The common cult for gods and ancestors in houses as part of a family cult was also briefly noted by Fitzenreiter 1994, 63 and 69 and Fitzenreiter 2008, 105.

members betwixt and between were part of the religious activities performed in the houses. Within this understanding also the undecorated niches served as focal points for family cults. Apparently, a structural feature originally part of mortuary architecture came into usage within the domestic space, creating a generic cultic platform for any religious activities the respective inhabitants performed in the house.

2.3. Analysis of the Smaller Cultic Emplacements

Beyond the large cultic emplacements, two other types of smaller cultic emplacements have appeared in the houses of Deir el-Medina: small altars (chapters 2.3.1) and niches (chapters 2.3.2–3) Blurred terminology and vague descriptions often inhibit a clear distinction between the two (see also table 3). The finds in house N.O. XVI,[430] for instance, may support both identifications (see below, p. 101). Although the record places the cultic emplacement in the second room between the two doors, the record does not explicitly state whether the emplacement was located *in* the wall itself or before it; the location, then, could apply to both structural categories (i.e., altar or niche). Neither niche nor altar is visible on the maps,[431] and no further information aids arbitration either: both options are therefore equally possible.

In other cases, Bruyère seems to have changed his mind. His notebook, for example, clearly classifies a structure in house N.E. V as for the "*lares*;"[432] the publication, however, ostensibly refers to the structure as "traces of a *lit*-mastaba or of a *dressoir*"[433] (i.e., a bed-like structure or a dresser). Although Bruyère's notebook was never meant to be published and the reinterpretation of structures over the course of analysis is perfectly acceptable, a detailed discussion of the reasoning for specific (re)interpretations would have been tremendously helpful for the present analysis. The house was almost empty when Bruyère excavated it, and its owner remains unknown. The objects preciously unearthed by Schiaparelli—who did not make exact reference of the find spots— do not correspond to the house under investigation, let alone ambiguous structures, with any certainty at all.

House N.E. III provides yet another example. Here, Bruyère found traces of a small cultic emplacement and a so-called *pétrin* ("dough trough") beside the entrance to *cuisine I*. Recently, *pétrins* have been identified as quern emplacements used primarily for dehusking emmer and milling.[434] He used "*vestiges*" to describe the traces of both emplacements (i.e., the cultic and the quern), a term usually reserved for ruins of buildings.[435] Such usage thus supports interpretation of the cultic emplacement as a built structure, i.e., an altar; however, a lintel (**Cat. 4.1**) found in the same room was most

[430] Bruyère 1939, 293.

[431] Bruyère 1939, pl. XXVI and Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0156_007.

[432] In the south-east corner of the kitchen cf. Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0155_013.

[433] Bruyère 1939, 250.

[434] In line with Bruyère, the usage for kneading flour and water into a dough may have also been included: D. Samuel, 'Bread Making and Social Interactions at the Amarna Workmen's Village, Egypt', *World Archaeology* 31/1, *Food Technology in Its Social Context: Production, Processing and Storage* (Jun., 1999), 131.

[435] Bruyère 1939, 293. For the meaning of the word cf. http://www.cnrtl.fr/definition/academie8/vestige, accessed on 30 July 2013.

probably built into a niche, which might support the interpretation of said traces as a niche. Ambiguous, then, is where exactly the remains of the small cultic emplacement were situated and whether or not it was an altar or a niche. The relationship between cultic emplacement and *pétrin* remains likewise uncertain. Bread made from emmer was staple in ancient Egypt, and food offerings performed in the domestic context might have paralleled those from Egypt's state temples.[436] Although "baking for the gods is not attested" in the official religious texts,[437] some religious practices might have incurporated such elements.[438] A Middle Kingdom text, for instance, states that every man offered his first harvest to the temple.[439] While the text explicitly mentions the temple of Wepwawet, it does not suggest any restriction of this particular offering to this particular god. Certain religious activities executed within certain houses on certain occasions could have paralleled those described in this text. From offering receptacles in the village of Kahun, Rosalie David has concluded that "dough or bread may have been made, as part of a regular domestic ritual."[440] Such practice could also have been common in the New Kingdom. A cultic emplacement dedicated to the goddesses Meretseger and Renenutet (**Cat. 4.1**) likely supports this conclusion. Since most small architectural fragments probably came from niches rather than altars, they will undergo analysis below (2.3.3.). A few roof fragments (**Cat. 4.21**)[441] as well as a base (**Cat. 4.61**); however, may suggest stone elements in some free-standing altars.

2.3.1. Small House Altars

While some cultic emplacements have been clearly designated as altars, they remain difficult to interpret nonetheless. For instance, little information has come forth for the altars of houses S.E. VI[442] and C. II[443]—their description absent and location only vaguely specified as within the second room and the kitchen, respectively. As demonstrated above (chapter 1.5.), attempts to determine any particular representative and/or symbolic function to the second room have proven unsatisfactory. More or less prestigious areas may indeed have existed in the Deir el-Medina houses. The rougher construction of the rear rooms may indicate a less representative area of the house, for example; however, the second room may have been just as stately as the first.

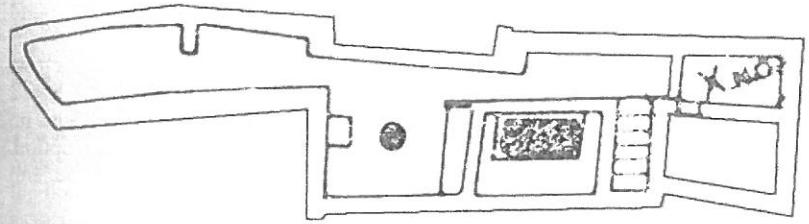
[436] E.g. U. Verhoeven, *Grillen, Kochen, Backen im Alltag und im Ritual Altägyptens – Ein lexikographischer Beitrag*, *Rites Égyptiens* IV, Bruxelles 1984, 1. The idea that the religious practice paralleled official cults has also been noted by H. Sternberg-El-Hotabi, *Untersuchungen zur Überlieferungsgeschichte der Horusstelen, Ein Beitrag zur Religionsgeschichte Ägyptens im 1. Jahrtausend v. Chr., Vol.* I, *ÄgAh* 62, Wiesbaden 1999, 26–7.
[437] E.g. Verhoeven 1984, 210.
[438] E.g. B.S. Lesko, 'Household and Domestic Religion in Egypt', in: J. Bodel and S.M. Olyan (eds), *Household and Family Religion in Antiquity*, Oxford 2008, 202. On shared religious conceptions see also, for example, F. Dunand and C. Zivie Coche, *Hommes et Dieux en Égypte 3000 a.C.–395 a.C*, *Anthropologie Religieuse*, Paris 2006, 152–3.
[439] G.A. Reisner, 'The Tomb of Hepzefa, Nomarch of Siût', *JEA* 5 (1918), 83, cf. Lesko 2008, 200.
[440] R. David, 'Religious Practices in a Pyramid Workmen's Town of the Twelfth Dynasty', *BACE* 2 (1990), 37.
[441] See also Bruyère 1939, pl. XVI, 5, with unclear find spot.
[442] Bruyère 1939, 271.
[443] Bruyère 1939, 302.

Interpretations of altars in kitchen areas does permit some speculation, but the location of altars in other rooms cannot explain their function in the least.

This caveat applies especially to those cases in which Bruyère himself seemed to doubt whether or not a given *construction* was, in fact, an altar (e.g., N.O. XV).[444] In other cases, his somewhat blurred language conceals the facts. His description of house N.O. X, for instance, does not establish with any certainty whether the structure was an altar or merely looked like an altar:

> "*Entre elles* [i.e. the doors], *le mur porte les arrachements d'une construction adventive semblable pour la forme à un laraire assez élevé, h. 1 m. 25, l. 0 m. 80, qui s'avançait vers le milieu de la salle où se trouvait la colonne* [i.e. the second room]."[445]

N.O. X

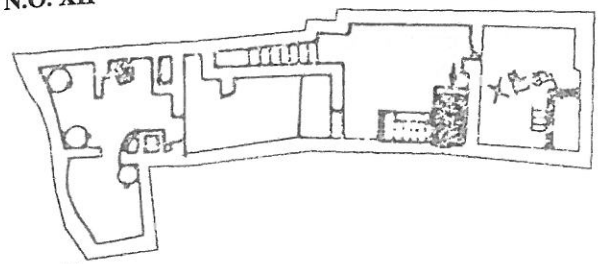


(fig. 11)

The problem centers on the ambiguity of the term "*arrachement*," which could refer to either the ruins of an old construction or the stones used to indent the voids of a new construction's building material.[446] On Bruyère's map, a square structure does appear on the wall opposite a *divan*,[447] but no further information is available.[448] The nature of this structure thus persists in dubiety.

[444] Referring to a structure attached to the west wall of the second room that "*devait être un laraire:*" Bruyère 1939, 291.
[445] Bruyère 1939, 285.
[446] Compare http://www.cnrtl.fr/definition/arrachement; accessed on 30 July, 2013.
[447] Bruyère 1939, pl. VII.
[448] In his notebook Bruyère briefly describes the house in question which was excavated between 23-24 January 1935.

N.O. XII



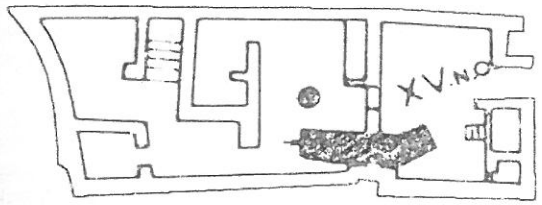
(fig. 12)

In house N.O. XII, the record proves similarly vague: in the northern corner of the kitchen (identified as such by an oven as well as a quern emplacement), an amphora was embedded into the soil close to a mud brick structure that might have been an altar base.[449] If so, a small cultic emplacement would have served as an altar within an area devoted to food production (e.g. in house N.E. III; pp. 55–6). Furthermore, Bruyère found a fragment belonging to a cultic emplacement dedicated to the goddess Meretseger (**Cat. 4.28**), a deity usually associated with fertility. The fragment joins another one found in the neighboring house N.O. XI (**Cat. 4.5**). Establishing which house accommodated the cultic emplacement remains difficult, but since Bruyère indicated no traces of a cultic emplacement in house N.O. XI,[450] N.O. XII may be a likelier option. However, the fragment's rough sides indicate the frame had been built into a niche, and neither house has yielded such a niche.

In house N.O. XII, Bruyère also found the limestone lintel and two uninscribed doorposts of a second small cultic emplacement (**Cat. 4.27**).[451] Relatively small (25 x 11 cm), it possessed several pivot holes indicating the original existence of wooden door wings like those of **Cat. 4.54** (22 x 14 cm). However, it did not only lay too far away for a possible match (in the second room of house S.O. VI), but also lacked the proper dimensions to fit into the space between the two doorposts of the present frame (**Cat. 4.27**). Though uninscribed, the frame functioned as a small shrine, as suggested by its shape and cavetto corniche. The sides of the cultic emplacement were worked smooth, which implies a free-standing altar similar to the one Bruyère mentioned for the kitchen.[452]

[449] Bruyère 1939, 287.
[450] Bruyère did not comment on the state of preservation of house N.O. XI's walls. The absence of traces of a cult emplacement in house N.O. XI cannot, therefore, be explained by a poorer state of preservation of house N.O. XI, cf. f. Bruyère 1939, 285–6.
[451] Bruyère 1939, 287 and pl. XV, 4.
[452] Bruyère 1939, 287.

N.O. XV



(fig. 13)

Through not *in situ*, a doorpost found in house N.O. XV (**Cat. 4.31** and see also **Cat. 11.6**) marks Pashedu (vii) and Nefertari (v) as inhabitants at some point in the domicile's history. In the second room, Bruyère recorded a structure that might have been an altar,[453] which leads to inquiries into the altar's function and functionaries. As for relevant finds, only an offering table dedicated to a certain *ỉḫ-jḳr-n-Rᶜ* Ahmose (**Cat. 5.10**) could bear on reconstruction of religious activities in this case. His identity elusive, this ancestor was either an early inhabitant of the village or a family member of Amenhotep I's deified family (see also remarks **Cat. 5.10**). Whether this cult employed the cultic emplacement in the second room or possibly to the large altar in the first[454] remains unclear.

The best evidence for a small altar comes from house S.O. VI (fig. 22). Here, two altars materialized, one in the second room the other one in the fourth (i.e. southern) room of the house. The latter altar situated close to a silo,[455] might have provided a venue for cults associated with food production and/or storage. While the size of the altar "*peut-être*" located against the west wall of the second room[456] is unclear, the report describes its material as mud brick. The existence of an altar—if found *in situ*—might receive support from the find of a roof (**Cat. 4.60**). Since the workman Sennedjem (i) owned the house,[457] the fragments fragments bearing his name may well have been found more or less *in situ*. However, Sennedjem (i) lived at the beginning of the 19th dynasty, and question surround whether his descendants continued to occupy the house into the 20th dynasty. Reconstruction of fragments **Cat. 4.57-59** depict the frame of a cultic emplacement showing Sennedjem (i) and his son Khonsu (ii)[458] kneeling before the god Sobek, the goddess Meretseger possibly portrayed as a snake on the second fragment.[459] Moreover, a limestone base found in the second room of house S.O. VI bears an inscription dedicated to the god Sobek (**Cat. 10.59**). Despite Bruyère's plausible reconstruction of this base

[453] Bruyère 1939, 291.
[454] Bruyère 1939, 291.
[455] Bruyère 1939, 331.
[456] Bruyère 1939, 331.
[457] Bruyère 1939, 330. That his family later inhabited the house is clear from a doorpost attesting his son Ramose (iv), cf. Bruyère 1939, 44 and Davies 1999, 180, note 50 and chart 7.
[458] Davies 1999, chart 7.
[459] That this is not a rule can be seen on the naos of Anhurkhawy (i) (BM 597) where the goddess Renenutet appears as a snake sitting on an altar while the parallel scene shows Ptah and Sobek with human bodies sitting on thrones, cf. M.L. Bierbrier, *Hieroglyphic Texts from Egyptian Stelae* 10, London 1982, 28 and pls 66–7.

supporting a wooden statue,[460] no evidence can prove the original association of these two objects.[461] House C. VII—where a crocodile statuette has materialized—seems rather distant. The statuette could have shifted from its initial context, but this proposal is pure speculation.[462] Nevertheless, the base (**Cat. 10.59**) suggests the presence of similar image in the house.

Interestingly, extant evidence does not portray the god Sobek as frequently addressed by individuals.[463] The few references from non-public contexts in which the god does appear consists of two introductory formulae of letters from Kahun dating to the Middle Kingdom and a fictive letter from a tomb in Saqqara.[464] Since the god Sobek found his primary cultic place in the Fayoum area,[465] the concentration of references in this region does not occasion any real surprise. The inhabitants of Deir el-Medina likely had little contact with the Fayoum, but some indications do support the presence of Sobek in the Theban area, though solid evidence for an official cultic institution of Sobek at Thebes comes only "from the 26th dynasty onwards."[466] First attested in a dedicatory hymn dating to the Middle Kingdom, the epithet "Sobek, Lord of Thebes" evinces his veneration at Thebes.[467] New Kingdom attestations further verify the god Sobek "firmly established in the pantheon of Thebes, though not as a main divinity."[468] Evidence for a Sobek cult at Thebes and the surrounding area may be scarce,[469] but a temple to Sobek stood at er-Rizaqat, north of Gebelein and about 30 km south of Thebes.[470] Here Sobek received veneration in a triad with Anubis and Hathor.[471] This site may be the same temple of Sobek described as a grain delivering institution by a late Ramesside text dating

[460] Showing the base found in house S.O. VI and a wooden statue of Sobek found in house C. VII: Bruyère 1939, 197, fig. 88.
[461] As Bruyère (1939, 332) indicates, "*Cette statuette de Sobek proviendrait d'un de laraires de la maison.*"
[462] When both objects entered the Louvre Museum, they acquired related inventory numbers: E. 16335a and 16335b, cf. G. Andreu (ed.), *De kunstenaars van de Farao's, Deir el-Medina en de Vallei der Koningen*, Bruxelles 2002, 270–1, no. 217. The same number does not indicate that two did, in fact, belonged together. In the past often large numbers of objects were registered with the same number. Museologists realized only during the last decades that every object should receive a unique number.
[463] Stela Moscow 5627; S. Hodjash and O. Berlev, *The Egyptian Reliefs and Stelae in the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts*, Moscow 1982, 135–36 attesting a workman, but no name and stela JdE 43569 showing Paheripedjet (i) (?) adoring Ptah, Sobek, Isis, Meretseger and Shed, cf. Exell 2009, 145. Paheripedjet (i) was a son of Qaha (i) (Davies 1999, chart 1).
[464] Cf. Luiselli 2011a, 270–2 and 281–2.
[465] Compare, for example, R. David 1990, 37.
[466] H. Kockelmann, '*Sebek Neb Waset*. On the Crocodile Cults of Thebes and its Neighbourhood', in: Z. Hawass, T.A. Bács and G. Schreiber (eds), *Proceedings of the Colloquium on Theban Archaeology at the Supreme Council of Antiquities November 5, 2009*, Cairo 2011, 88.
[467] P. Ramesseum IV, Col. VI, 23 published by A.H. Gardiner, 'Hymns to Sobk in a Ramesseum Papyrus', *RdE* 11 (1957), 47 and pl. II; cf. Kockelmann 2011, 86.
[468] Cf. Kockelmann 2011, 86.
[469] Cf. Kockelmann 2011, 87.
[470] Cf. Kockelmann 2011, 84 with references to earlier research and the discussion of yet another Sobek temple in the Gebellein area. Yet another Sobek temple was situated about 14,5 km south of Armant; cf. H.S.K. Bakry, 'The Discovery of a Temple of Sobk in Upper Egypt', *MDAIK* (27/2) 1971, 131–46.
[471] E.g. Valbelle 1985, 151 and L. Morenz, *Die Zeit der Regionen im Spiegel der Gebelein-Region: kulturgeschichtliche Re-Konstruktionen, Probleme der Ägyptologie* 27, Leiden 2010, 125 and 131–9. Sobek Lord of Sumenu is also known from the story of Sinuhe e.g. attested on an ostracon from Deir el-Medina O. Ashmolean Museum HO 1945.40, line 23; cf. *TLA*, lemma no. 401043.

to years 12 and 14 of Ramesses XI.[472] A letter (P. DeM III, rt. 7–9) refers to a festival hosted and offering performed at the village for the god Sobek in the middle of the 20th dynasty (see also below; p. 99),[473] but does not specify whether the author (a certain Hay) or the community more broadly performed this festival.[474] No evidence thus far confirms any affinity of any of house S.O VI's possible inhabitants with the god Sobek. Although Robert K. Ritner has suggested the appearance of Sobek in the house "could be linked to the god's association with male potency,"[475] the family's propensity to the god seems more plausible.[476]

The cultic emplacement consisting of these fragments (**Cat. 4.57–9**) did not, however, belong to any free-standing altar in house S.O. VI, nor did the roof (**Cat. 4.60**) belong to the structure. Instead, the lintel with two doorposts suggests the entire construction framed the niche of the second room.[477] The gods Sobek and Meretseger would likely have found themselves in a context of food offerings, so the unknown size of the two altars is quite unfortunate.

In summary, five structures may be identified as altars (cf. table 3),[478] but little information provides further illumination. With no clear pattern of space allocation, their interpretation remains uncertain. Although Bruyère imagined a specialized small altar used in religious activities accompanying food preparation,[479] such an interpretation relies primarily on inscriptions from architectural fragments related to niches rather than altars. In fact, none of these fragments can be clearly related to any altar. Without any clear description, hypotheses concerning the use of such altars remain speculative. Perhaps constructed of wood,[480] few altars have survived. Small, portable, and most probably valuable, they probably accompanied the inhabitants of Deir el-Medina when they abandoned the village. Stone elements may have supported (and decorated) the preserved mud brick bases, but given the survival of only three stone roofs, such elements likely characterized niches more than altars (see also below chapter 2.3.3). Monolithic stone naoi like those known from the official temple contexts have not emerged found at Deir el-Medina, perhaps expensive and dedicated by high temple personnel primarily from the Late Period.[481]

[472] P. Turin Cat. 1895 + P. Turin Cat. 2006, rt. II, 2 and rt. V, 8 and 9.
[473] Cf. Jauhiainen 2009, 228, 244 and 246.
[474] Cf. Jauhiainen 2009, 272.
[475] Ritner 2008, 185.
[476] See also Kockelmann 2011, 87 and especially note 57. In his discussion of the evidence from Deir el-Medina, Holger Kockelmann contends that the finds suggest "a certain affiliation between certain individuals and the crocodile cult" rather than proving the official cult of the god Sobek.
[477] Bruyère 1939, 331.
[478] One altar each in the houses S.E. VI, N.O. XII, N.O. XV, C. II and two altars in house S.O. VI.
[479] However, these altars did not hang above the fire but were situated on the floor different from where Bruyère (1939, 77).
[480] E.g. D. Valbelle, 'Le naos de Kasa au Musée de Turin', *BIFAO* 72 (1972), 179–80 also mentioned by Bruyère 1939, 195.
[481] E.g. CG 70025 and CG 70039, cf. G. Roeder, *Naos, Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire 70001–70050*, Leipzig 1914 104–5, pl. 35b and 129–33, pls 42b–43. See also N. Spencer, 'Shrine', in: W. Wendrich (ed.), *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, Los Angeles 2010, 3, cf. http://www.escholarship.org/uc/item/5t48n007; accessed on 29 July 2013.

2.3.2. Niches

Bruyère mentions about 21 niches (table 3b) and two so-called *laraires* should supplement this number based on their description. These niches appeared behind the quern emplacements of houses N.E. XIV[482] and perhaps N.E. III, and between the doors of N.O. XIV. Though totaling 24 niches, this number may not represent historical reality. Every house may have contained one or two niches, generally located in the same room.[483] The niches vary greatly in size, but Bruyère did not record the measurements of each individual niche, instead summarizing the width between 25 to 65 cm and height as 25 to 80 cm.[484] The smallest niche 10 x 10 cm (house C. VI) and, the largest 48 x 75 cm (S.O. VI), the average size would be 33.4 x 37.3 cm. Given such significant variation, however, averages create a rather misleading impression.[485] Since many had religious functions, niches undergo analysis in this chapter, but not *all* niches necessarily functioned religiously.[486] Some—like that situated in the cave—may have stored lamps,[487] while others might have served as cupboards.

Two so-called "cultic cupboards" came from houses N.O. XV and S.O. VI,[488] for instance. Bruyère considered them cupboards used to store cult objects employed in family cults. Situated in the first room in house N.O. XV and close to the large house altar (formerly called "*lit clos*"), one received identification as a "cultic cupboard" on account of its size[489] and white internal color.[490] Most of the smaller rectangular or round topped niches have a depth of 10 to 20 cm, i.e. ways too shallow to serve as a cupboard. However, the absence of other finds within the house N.O. XV's large niche[491] does not argue against Bruyère's hypothesis, since the leaving workforce would have presumably removed all valuable possessions. Possible if ultimately unprovable is Alexander Peden's theory that former crew members may have occasionally visited the village at a later

[482] Bruyère 1939, 261.
[483] The only exception being house S.O. VI which contained two niches: one in the first room and the other one in the second: Bruyère 1939, 330–1.
[484] Bruyère 1939, 195.
[485] The varying size of the niches has also been noted by Bruyère 1939, 195.
[486] Compare also Bietak 1991, 137 who mentions niches in houses and doubts whether he deals with "*praktische oder kultische Installationen*." Although this example comes from the Middle Kingdom, i.e., much earlier, it is interesting because one of the niches seems to be related to an offering deposit. No such deposit is known from the excavated New Kingdom houses and, even at Tell el-Dab'a, such deposits are quite exceptional (cf. Müller 1998, 799).
[487] Bruyère 1939, 66. For example, the niche in house N.O. XIV (Bruyère 1939, 290). For those niches used to store lamps, one would expect to find traces of smoke in them. Smoke might, however, also indicate that incense was burnt inside the niche. Unfortunately, Bruyère did not indicate eventual traces of smoke in the niches, and it is therefore difficult to establish whether such traces of smoke may have existed and, if so, whether they were not mentioned by Bruyère or had already vanished by the time he arrived.
[488] Bruyère 1939, 291. Another niche has been indicated in "house 1312;" cf. B. Bruyère, *Rapport sur les Fouilles de Deir el Médineh (1934–1935), Première Partie: La nécropole de l'ouest, FIFAO 14*, Cairo 1937, 25 fig. 12 and pls I and XIV. It will be excluded from this analysis since its location in the western cemetary may disqualify it as a "house."
[489] Unfortunately, the actual size is not indicated.
[490] Bruyère 1939, 291.
[491] The only artifact that has been found in the house's first room—a coffin fragment—comes from non-systemic disturbances like tomb robberies, treasure hunts, and clandestine excavations; compare Bruyère 1939, 292.

stage, the houses then serving as "storerooms for various goods and materials."[492] A letter states that some documents from a house were (to be) deposited in a tomb,[493] but connection of house N.O. XV's niche to the house altar strictly through proximity alone thus proves quite speculative, an exclusive cultic function therefore remaining unconfirmed.[494]

The other large niche (48 x 75 cm) or so-called "cultic cupboard" lay beneath the stairs in the western wall, next to the house altar of house S.O. VI.[495] Inside, Bruyère found several objects: an oracle ostracon (not further specified), a lamp shaped as a duck,[496] and a large stela of the guardian Penbuy (i)[497] dedicated to the goddesses Hathor and Thoeris.[498]

The diversity of those objects found in the niche in house S.O. VI, however, seems to betray the niche's use as a cupboard. Questions as to why the objects remained come to the fore. Naturally, they may have been left behind when the village was abandoned. While some of the objects had a clear religious function, not all served strictly cultic functions. The oracle ostracon might have been used for future reference of the outcome of an oracle decision, but the lamp may simply have had a profane purpose.

Since the structure in house S.O. VI was almost certainly a cupboard, and shape of house N.O. XV's large niche bears a striking resemblance to it, both niches may have served as cupboards, in which case they would have stored various kinds of objects, both cultic and profane.[499] The specification "cultic" cupboard should therefore be abandoned.

With the subtraction of cave N.O. XIV's two cupboards and the niche in the cave, a total of 21 niches remains. The orientation of the preserved niches is surprisingly uniform: 11 niches were located in the east wall of the houses (table 3b). It should be noted, however, that the village was not arranged along the cardinal points but shifted about 45 degrees with the shape of the *wadi* (cf. fig. 2). Moreover, the space allocation of the preserved niches may not represent ancient reality. The eastern walls might be better preserved, which would explain why the niches have been found there; or, the inhabitants of a house could have focused on symbolic, not literal, orientations.[500] Nevertheless, when comparing this find with the random orientation of the larger cultic emplacements (table 2), tracing a pattern in the record of Deir el-Medina is remarkable. Whereas larger cultic emplacements consume a significant amount of space, a small niche could have been placed almost everywhere, thereby crating few space limitations. From this perspective, a relative uniform niche orientation might have been a deliberate choice on

[492] Peden 2000, 288, note 12.
[493] Papyrus BM 10326, J. Černý, *Late Ramesside Letters*, Bruxelles 1939, 18–9, cf. Peden 2000, 288, note 12.
[494] In case of house S.E. VIII's smaller niche, for example, Bruyère did not relate it to the large house altar; cf. Bruyère 1939, 275.
[495] Bruyère 1939, 330 (fig. 210).
[496] Bruyère 1939, 331 (fig. 203).
[497] Louvre E 16374; cf. Bruyère 1939, 334 and 335 (fig. 206); Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0156_009; Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0156_010. For the geneology cf. Davies 1999, 194–5.
[498] Bruyère 1939, 334 and 335 (fig. 206).
[499] Similarly Stevens 2006, 248.
[500] For similar observations concerning burials and the orientation of bodies: B. Kemp, 'The Orientation of Burials at Tell el-Amarna', in: Z.A. Hawass and J. Richards (eds), *The Archaeology and Art of Ancient Egypt. Essays in Honour of David B. O'Connor* II, Cairo 2007, II, 24–5.

part of the ancient Egyptians. In other words, the record's uniformity does not necessarily a coincidence in state of preservation. It is interesting that Peter Pamminger locates the appearance of the gods in tombs on the eastern walls.[501] This would make sense since the east is also the compass direction of the sunrise, i.e., the god Re and related constellations, who played an important role in the Ramesside Period. For example, spell BD 131 greets the god Re as "*nṯr ʿɜ m jɜb.t p.t*" ("great god of the eastern sky"). At the same time, however, the east is an ambivalent compass direction also considered as bad and evil.[502] Funerary literature illustrates such ambiguity, where the deceased calls himself "habitant of the eastern sky"[503] (spell BD 25), but fears being "ferried to the east in the gods' domain"[504] (spell BD 93), "where the gods behead those who answer them there."[505] It is beyond the scope of the present study to analyze this ambiguity in detail. For the purpose of the present analysis, we can only remark the lack of any extensive study of both the textual evidence and the archaeological evidence from ancient Egypt, which could further illuminate the underlying symbolic meaning of cardinal points. At present, we are left in uncertainty and hence exposed to the risk of overreaching interpretations.

As already mentioned the niches in the mud brick walls were often supported by stone elements (table 4). The fact that the small limestone lintels and doorposts Bruyère found in the village[506] were built-in elements is clear from their rather crude edges.[507] Properly worked edges were not necessary since they would no longer be visible built into the mud brick walls. The framing of mud brick walls with stone elements is well-known from New Kingdom doors.[508] Koenigsberger has shown that the construction of a passage in a mud brick wall requires an additional reinforcement of the brick work by means of (wooden or stone) frames.[509] Especially a lintel in the upper side is an important element that supports the weight on top. Over time, a mud brick wall would not endure if it bore the entire weight load with a void underneath, i.e., without the additional support

[501] P. Pamminger, 'Magistrale Intervention: Der Beamte als Mittler', *SAK* 23 (1996), 283, cf. Luiselli 2011a, 36.
[502] Following D. Kessler, 'Himmelsrichtungen', *LÄ* II (1977), 1213.
[503] Translation by T.G. Allen, *The Book of the Dead or going forth by day. Ideas of the Ancient Egyptians concerning the hereafter as expressed in their own terms. SAOC* 37, Chicago 1974, 37.
[504] Translation by Allen 1974, 76–7.
[505] E. Hornung, 'Schwarze Löcher von innen betrachtet: Die altägyptische Hölle', in: T. Schabert and E. Hornung (eds), *Strukturen des Chaos, Eranos Neue Folge Bd.* 2, München 1994, 247.
[506] Compare Bruyère 1939, pls XV–XX.
[507] This is especially clear when viewing lintel fragments such as **Cat. 4.1**, **Cat. 4.2**, **Cat. 4.10**, **Cat. 4.23**, **Cat. 4. 28**, **Cat. 4. 35**, **Cat. 4. 40**, **Cat. 4. 44**, and **Cat. 4. 46**. I would like to thank Monika Dolinska, who kindly provided me with her article on the fragments now in the Warsaw Museum and graciously translated her main arguments for me: M. Dolinska, 'Fragmenty kapliczek z Deir el-Medina w zbiorach Muzeum Narodowego w Warszawie', *RMNW* 33–34, 1989–90, 45–57.
[508] S. Seidlmayer, 'Zu einigen Architekturinschriften aus Tell el-Amarna', *MDAIK* 39 (1983), 183–4 and Budka 2001, 14, both with references.
[509] O. Koenigsberger, *Die Konstruktion der ägyptischen Tür*, Glückstadt 1936, 4. See also more recently G.W. and O. van Beek, *'Glorious Mud!'Ancient and Contemporary Earthen Design and Construction in North Africa, Western Europe, the Near East, and Southwest Asia*, Washington 2007, 435 and V.L. Emery, 'Mud brick Architecture', in: W. Wendrich (ed.), *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, Los Angeles 2011, cf. www.escholarship.org/uc/item/ 4983w678; accessed on 26 June 2013.

from a lintel.[510] It seems difficult, however, to apply this argument to the small niches, which would probably require no additional backing, but there is of course no reason to reject the idea that stone elements generally might as well have had decorational purposes. The proposal that doorframes served as shrines elements receives support from a text that mentions doorposts for a female statue probably intended for a cultic emplacement.[511] Here, the frames were apparently decorative rather structurally supportive. Niches, then, did not demand such frames. Although no frame or lintel has been found *in situ*, limestone frames may have constituted niches generally and altars only occasionally. The following section seeks to match niches with their possible frames, an is important undertaking since many frames bear offering formulae that will provide insights concerning those subjects involved in the cult. Before going into further detail, we shall formulate some theoretical considerations on the nature of such offering formulae. Primarily set in the context or mortuary religion, these offering formulae have thus far undergone investigation mainly through philological analysis.[512] Though discovered in a domestic context, many of the texts from Deir el-Medina bear striking similarity to the formulae known from mortuary contexts. Explanation of such overlap requires discussion regarding the nature and meaning of the formulae, undertaken in the following excursus.

Excursus: Some Remarks on Egyptian Mortuary Literature

In his monumental study of ancient Egyptian tomb texts, Assmann distinguishes between two categories of mortuary texts: "liturgical" texts ("*Totenliturgien*") and "literary" texts ("*Totenliteratur*"), like the Book of the Dead.[513] For him, liturgical texts belong to the sphere of cultic recitation and thus the world of the living (i.e. to the outside sphere). Literary texts consist of those texts *in* the tomb, which sought to equip the deceased in their tombs through magic. According to this categorization liturgical texts present in the tombs stand as "literature" rather than "liturgy" since they were no longer accessible to the living and hence not part of their cultic activities. Assmann stresses that these liturgical texts were therefore refunctioned ("*umfunktioniert*").[514] This statement is

[510] I would like to thank Maria Correas-Amador, at the time doctoral student at Durham University and specialist in ethno-archaeological approaches to mud brick architecture (title of thesis "Ethnoarchaeology of Egyptian Mud brick Houses: Towards a Holistic Understanding of Ancient Egyptian Domestic Architecture") for kindly sharing information and photographs with me. The following considerations on the need of frames in mud brick architecture result from personal communication with her. See also M. Correas-Amador, ''Living in a Material world': understanding and interpreting life in an Egyptian mud house', in: H. Abd El Gawad *et al.* (eds), *Current Research in Egyptology 2011. Proceedings of the Twelfth Annual Symposium Durham University 2011*, Oxford 2012, 75–84.
[511] O. IFAO 764, line 4: *pɜ ḥtrj tɜ rpy.t*, unpublished; cf. Cooney 2007, 39 note 130 and 335.
[512] Cf. e.g., Luiselli's argument on the interpretation of stela Louvre AF 6949, which maintains the figure depicted is also mourning, probably a correct analysis. The interpretation of the stela within the funeral context is thus not solely based on the appearance of the *ḥtp dj nsw* formula: cf. Luiselli 2011a, 37 and 399, quoting N. Durisch Gauthier, 'Cultes canidés à Assiout: trois nouvelles stèles dédiés à Oupouaout', *BIFAO* 93 (1993), 207.
[513] J. Assmann, *Altägyptische Totenliturgien* I: *Totenliturgien in den Sargtexten des Mittleren Reichs*, Heidelberg 2002, 13.
[514] J. Assmann 2002a, 13.

somewhat odd, for these texts were taken into the tombs primarily to serve a "liturgical" function for the deceased,[515] magically activating the rituals with accompanying instructions and depictions of those people involved in them. Assmann, however, is well-aware of this fact; indeed, he coined the term "*Schreibakte*" ("written act," on analogy to "speech act" indicating an action initiated by written text).[516] My analysis has slightly modified his term to highlight the written word as completed action. This move is crucial: whereas the German "*Schreibakt*" stresses the action of writing ("*schreiben*"), I emphasize the written act as functional not only during, but also, and primarily after the process of writing, i.e., an action performed through the appearance of the written word. Consequently, the term written speech act matches the conceptualization more accurately.[517] Assmann's main criterion for distinguishing between liturgical and literary texts is the place of ritual performance that is, whether the texts were inside the tomb or outside and hence inaccessible to the living.[518] Though a crucial distinction, as demonstrated below, arguments for textual "refunctioning" ultimately mislead analysis, since the inscriptions were not less liturgical. In fact, the texts preserved in tombs usually begin with ritual instructions such as elaborating by whom the following words should be *spoken* (e.g. the common Egyptian formula *ḏd md.w jn*, "words to be spoken by"[519]). Written speech acts and their associated depictions were thus only necessary in places inaccessible to the living, where the activities could not be initiated on a regular basis. Put differently, the ritual instruction further explains which people and which objects are involved by means of a written speech act.[520] Therefore, the presence or absence of written speech acts can provide insights into the performance of religious activities.

This conclusion bears directly on Deir el-Medina since written speech acts are virtually absent from the houses (see also chapter 3.2.2.1). Instead, architectural fragments from the houses show simple offering formulae ("*ḥtp dj nsw*")[521] or name the

[515] Assmann confines his term "*Totenliteratur*" to the following definition: "*als einen Wissensvorrat (...), der den Verstorbenen ins Grab mitgegeben wurde, um ihnen im Jenseits zur Verfügung zu stehen*" (J. Assmann 2001a, 504). The use of certain spells to accomplish certain challenges in the netherworld was certainly one function of the texts in the tombs, though clearly not the only one.

[516] J. Assmann, *Stein und Zeit, Mensch und Gesellschaft im alten Ägypten*, München 1991, 26 and see J. Assmann 2001a, 322. On the speech act as "giv[ing] rise to the actual existence" of situation described by the spoken word, cf. e.g., E. Meyer-Dietrich, 'Recitation, Speech Acts, and Declamation', in: W. Wendrich (ed.), *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, Los Angeles 2010, cf. http://www.escholarship.org/uc/item/1gh1q0md; accessed on 29 July 2013. And see also, for example, J. Baines, *Visual and Written Culture in Ancient Egypt*, Oxford 2007, 151 and Ch. Eyre, *The Cannibal Hymn. A Cultural and Literary Study*, Liverpool 2002, 26–9.The speech act will be discussed below in chapter 3.2.2.1.

[517] Cf. L. Weiss, 'Perpetuated Action', in: J. Rüpke (ed.), *A Companion to the Archaeology of Religion in the Ancient World*, *Blackwell-Wiley* forthcoming.

[518] J. Assmann 2001a, 322.

[519] On this formula see, for example, K. Jansen-Winkeln, 'Vermerke zum Verständnis kurzer und formelhafter Inschriften auf ägyptischen Denkmälern', *MDAIK* 46 (1990), 141.

[520] See also Assmann 2001a, 335, who explains that "the script as artificial voice is meant to extend the cultic recitation beyond the actual ritual performance and to keep the deceased within reach of the priestly voice."

[521] The *ḥtp dj nsw* formula was thus not a "funerary-type prayer{s} for their [i.e. the deceased relatives] nourishment in the Beyond," as assumed by Sadek (1988, 78), but more broadly functional as "any cult act" of a person to a god with the king as intermediary; cf. J.F. Borghouts, *Egyptian. An Introduction to the Writing and Language of the Middle Kingdom I: Grammar, Syntax and Indexes*, *EU* 24.1, Leiden 2010, 285, §79.f.

benefactor ("*jr n* NN," i.e. "which NN has made"[522]). The texts on the cultic equipment from the houses thus never illuminate what the individuals were actually doing.[523] Accordingly, an elaborate written speech act was not deemed necessary given the usage of artifacts within the houses and thus their accessibility for religious activities.[524] No written speech acts were needed to perform cultic acts, which individuals could perform in the houses.

This conclusion finds parallel in the absence of the *rdj.t-jꜣw-n*-formula (i.e. "praise to")[525] at the beginning of hymns and prayers preserved on ostraca.[526] Rather these texts often begin with *mj n=j* (i.e. the imperative form: "come to me!") followed by the name of a god.[527] Contrary to similar texts on stelae, moreover, these texts provide no indication of time or space.[528] Finally, an absence of stereotypical wishes for a beautiful funeral, old age, or good health further characterize the texts preserved on stelae.[529] Based on these observations, Luiselli considers the ostraca texts as school texts and thus outside any cultic context.[530] Surely, religious texts played a role in the scribal education, which suggests the texts were part of the every day life and thus indirectly reflective of religious practice.[531] Egyptological consensus holds that those texts classified under the genre of "school texts" tend to demonstrate a greater freedom of literary expression.[532] Literary freedom in ancient Egypt cannot, however, be expected to verbalize the unthinkable in the sense of science fiction; in other words, texts come from somewhere: if they are not copied, they might betray an oral tradition allowing for a greater degree of variation. Assmann has shown that shared phrases and vocabulary suggest an oral transmission of hymnal texts from the New Kingdom.[533] Given the nature of introductory formulae for primarily written speech acts, such formal invocation was apparently superfluous in every day practice. Consequently, a deity might have been approached in a less formalized

[522] For the perfect relative form; cf. Borghouts 2010, §79.c. The object referred to by the fomulae is the object itself, e.g. the offering table.

[523] The only exceptions include the king acting in the offering formula and the statement "which NN has made."

[524] Note, however, that the *ḥtp dj nsw*-formulae were not written speech acts, but performative texts (cf. Weiss, forthcoming), appearing on temple statues in all periods where they enabled the benefactor of the statue to participate in the temple cult, e.g. A. Verbovsek, *"Als Gunsterweis des Königs in den Tempel gegeben..."Private Tempelstatuen des Alten und Mittleren Reichs*, *ÄAT* 63, München 2004, 25 and see Baines 2007, 152 and below chapter 3.2.2.1.

[525] Cf. *TLA*, lemma no. 851491. The formula is the typical introduction of the stelae usually discussed within the context of *Persönliche Frömmigkeit*.

[526] Studied by Luiselli 2011a, 193–218.

[527] Luiselli 2011a, 199.

[528] Luiselli 2011a, 215–17.

[529] Luiselli 2011a, 217.

[530] Luiselli 2011a, 215.

[531] Compare also Baines and Frood's argument that "these texts should be understood as relating indirectly to existing forms of religiosity rather than providing direct evidence for a new development in it" (Baines and Frood 2008, 6).

[532] Luiselli 2011a, 217.

[533] J. Assmann, 'Die Entdeckung der Vergangenheit. Innovation und Restauration in der ägyptischen Literaturgeschichte', in: H.-U. Gumbrecht and U. Link-Heer, *Epochenschwellen und Epochenstrukturen im Diskurs der Literatur- und Sprachhistorie*, Frankfurt 1984, 492.

manner, that is, in a privately spoken prayer[534] rather than a written text fixed for eternity on a limestone stela (i.e. a written speech act). In fact, similar finds have come from the Valley of the Kings.[535] Classification of those texts mentioned above remains a subordinate issue. They provide an insight into daily life that might be closer to Egyptian realities than that depicted in public representations.

The dynamics between textual structure and public accessibility hence indicate that no formalized written formulae were necessary if religious activities could be performed on a regular basis. Although, precise definition of "regular basis" must be postponed, this consideration already counters Kessler's contention that religious specialists alone performed religious activities.[536] Aside from priests, "the wise woman"[537] and the "scorpion charmer"[538] may be well-known from textual sources at Deir el-Medina, but these specialists alone could not possibly have performed all religious practices in all houses at all times. Kessler's scenario would demand the presence of written speech acts guaranteeing the performance of religious actions whenever the specialists were absent. The absence of written speech acts within the houses therefore supports the hypothesis of speech acts as the primary venue for approaching gods and ancestors.[539]

2.3.3. The Context of the Niches

As demonstrated above, not all small cultic emplacements can clearly be identified as altars or niches (chapter 2.3). The emplacement found in house N.E. III's kitchen serves as but one example. We shall now consider its potential identification as a niche and those frame fragments possibly related to it. In fact, a lintel fragment of a corniche from a small cultic emplacement dedicated to Renenutet and Meretseger has emerged in *cuisine I* of house N.E. III (**Cat. 4.1**).[540] The lintel shows black traces of smoke, which Bruyère seems to interpret as remains of a fire-producing installation in the kitchen (i.e. a hearth

[534] See also Harrington 2013, 148; noting that "[l]iteracy would not have been a barrier, because requests could have been made orally; as with laments, rituals may have been passed from one generation to another."
[535] Dorn 2011, 98–9.
[536] As suggsted by Kessler 2001, 139–42.
[537] J.F. Borghouts, 'Divine Intervention in Ancient Egypt', in: R.J. Demarée and J.J. Janssen (eds), *Gleanings From Deir el Medina*, *EU* 1, Leiden 1982, 24–7.
[538] F. van Känel, *Les Prêtres-Ouâb de Sekhmet et les Conjurateurs de Serket*, Paris 1984, 179–84.
[539] Another means of contact between man and gods as well as ancestors is the dream, cf. E. Teeter, *Religion and Ritual in Ancient Egypt*, Cambridge 2011, 101. Apart from the well-known textual evidence from Deir el-Medina discussed by K. Szpakowska, *Behind Closed Eyes. Dreams & Nightmares in Ancient Egypt*, Swansea 2003, 123–57; it seems hard to trace dreams in the archaeological record of the household assemblages. Therefore, this category was excluded from the present study. As an aside, it shall be noted that the so-called *Ramesside Dream Book* (P. Chester Beatty III, rt. 5,2; cf. Szpakowska 2003a, 90) explains a situation viewed in a dream as signifier of a situation in which "his call will be heard by his god." This passage once again stresses the oral form of the call, which can be heared by gods (and ancestors). Also interesting is the removal of the enemy's speech as a punishment by "taking away (...) [a person's] ability (...) [to] speak the necessary words to safely get through the farworld" (in rt. 4,5; interpretation by Szpakowska 2003a, 87).
[540] Bruyère 1939, 245.

or fireplace).[541] If this implication were, in fact, his intention, these smoke traces would contradict the claim for a relationship between the cultic and quern emplacements. Used for milling activities the quern emplacement does not involve fire or smoke. A fire installation was attached to the eastern wall, opposite to the remains of the cultic emplacement,[542] but no evidence for a second cultic emplacement close to the oven has arisen. Nevertheless, traces of smoke do not necessarily prove an association of the emplacement with a fire installation. Incense offerings probably played an important part of religious activities, as is clear from stelae representations. An incense holder of Mehy (i) found in the *décombres* behind the houses of the S.E. area[543] confirms such a practice at Deir el-Medina, but unfortunately no such find was made in the village itself. The fact that only one example has been found is possibly due to the fact that such objects were easily portable and therefore taken away in the abandonment processes. As for the meaning, these offerings most likely not only purified but also exhilarated benefactor and beneficiary alike.[544]

Rather than indicate the niche's location above a fire place, the traces of smoke most likely reveal these kinds of offerings. Indeed, the occurrence of a cultic emplacement dedicated to two fertility goddesses near a quern emplacement makes good sense. Hard evidence for this situation in house N.E. III proves more difficult, however. The lintel could have shifted from its original context by "processes of discard and abandonment."[545] For the present lintel, and another lintel appeared elsewhere in 1920 and joins it (cf. **Cat. 4.1**),[546] thereby permitting one to have remained in its original context and the other relocated. Therefore we cannot be sure of the small cultic emplacement's original position in the village.

A number of artifacts related to household religious activities allows for reconstruction the house N.E. III's inhabitants at some point in its history. While an offering table found in the house (**Cat. 5.1**) attests a sculptor Piay (ii), his grandson

[541] This impression comes from Bruyère's wording: "*noirci par fumée (cuisine I)*," i.e. the word "smoke" is immediately followed by the findspot, that is the kitchen. This wording thus seems to imply that the smoke was produced in the kitchen; cf. Bruyère 1939, 245.
[542] Bruyère 1939, 245.
[543] Only one man called Mehy has been listed by Davies (cf. Davies 1999, 67). Lacking a filiation we can, however, not be sure. Transcription: [...] *y jr n bȝk n Imn Mḥ.y mȝʿ ḫrw* [...];[...] *y* (?); "Which the servant of Amun Mehy, justified has made [...];" cf. Bruyère 1933, 8 and Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0151_007.
[544] Cf. H. Bonnet, 'Die Bedeutung der Räucherungen im ägyptischen Kult', *ZÄS* 67 (1967), 20–8. See also D. Martinetz, K. Lohs and J. Janzen, *Weihrauch und Myrrhe: Kulturgeschichte und wirtschaftliche Bedeutung. Botanik, Chemie, Medizin*, Berlin 1989, 106.
[545] Compare the terminology by Stevenson 1982, 261.
[546] Bruyère 1939, 245 and pl. XVI, 3. The reconstructed lintel bears an offering formula dedicated to Meretseger and Renenutet—both well-known for their tutelary and fertility aspects. Although Bruyère and others (e.g. Sadek 1988, 118–21) have listed numerous sources very little is known about the goddess Meretseger. Her sanctuary in the mountains close to Deir el-Medina remains yet to be published, cf. B. Bruyère, *Mert Seger à Deir el Médineh*, *MIFAO* 58, Cairo 1930, 5–6 and R.C. Lepsius, *Denkmäler aus Aegypten und Aethiopien nach den Zeichnungen der von Seiner Majestät dem Könige von Preussen Friedrich Wilhelm IV nach diesen Laendern gesendeten und in den Jahren 1842–1845 ausgeführten wissenschaftlichen Expedition* III: Theben, Leipzig 1900, 204d, 206d and 218. So far Egyptologists seem to agree that Meretseger (translated as "the one who loves the silence") is to be interpreted as the personification of the necropolis, e.g. Bruyère 1930, 123. Renenutet not only appears in the domestic context, but also protects institutions such as granaries, temples, and even the king; cf. J. Broekhuis, *De godin Renenwetet*, Assen 1971, 67–87.

Penkhnum (i) occurs on a stela (**Cat. 11.3**) also found in the house. Apart from Penkhnum (i), Amenemope (i) and his wife Hunero (iv) might also find attestation there, but the reconstruction is tentative. If confirmed, even distant relatives would have then shared in certain cults. Penkhnum (i) was, in fact, a distant grandson-in-law of Amenemope (i),[547] namely the son of Nakhtamun (ii) who was married to Nubemshaes (i). Nubemshaes (i) was the sister of Isis (iv/v) who was married to Amenemope (i)'s son Minmose (i). Though this relationship may seem far-fetched, another stela found in the house refers to Amenemope (i) or (ii) (**Cat. 11.2**). This find may settle the matter. Given the house's family continuity, the stela (**Cat. 11.2**) might have stood as an ancestral stela, a conclusion supported by the iconography of the chair with lion's feet.[548] The odd title *mškb* precludes Amenemope (i)/(ii) as a candidate for the ancestor whose name is unfortunately lost. The phrase "his [son]" (i.e., the son of the stela's beneficiary) probably refers to Amenemope and thus indirectly attests Amenemope (ii)'s father Minmose (i), Penkhnum (i)'s uncle.[549] Admittedly, relatives rarely receive mention on ancestor stelae from Deir el-Medina.[550] In addition, the word "son" ("*s3*") appears only rarely written with a sitting man determinative (Gardiner A1[551]), and the determinative may instead resemble the sign Gardiner A2, which would therefore suggest a verbal form in the 3rd person (masculine) and not a noun followed by the possessive pronoun. The existence of an ancestral cult in the house can remains unproven. Nonetheless, the accumulation of objects related to a single family, evinces that the family of Penkhnum (i) inhabited house N.E. III. One wonders whether the text might read "Piay" instead of a "Pay" (**Cat. 11.5**), but no other stela has materialized. The stela that has appeared shows a kneeling man adoring the morning sun.[552] An offering basin found in the house (**Cat. 6.1**) further suggests the significance of solar cults in the house, for the has an inscription that contains the phrase "bark of millions," which refers to the bark of the god Re. Unfortunately, the object preserves no personal name. Whether the family of Penkhnum (i) performed these activities is difficult to determine. One of the stelae might have stood in a niche.

A find in house N.E. XIV supports a possible connection of quern emplacements to the niches.[553] Situated "behind" the quern emplacement in house N.E. XIV, the small cultic emplacement was likely attached to the south-eastern wall. A promising candidate to have stood in the niche in house N.E. XIV is a wooden snake (**Cat. 10.6**) found by Möller, which could have been worshipped in the niche. Unfortunately, Möller did not provide the exact location of his find, so this idea remains tentative.

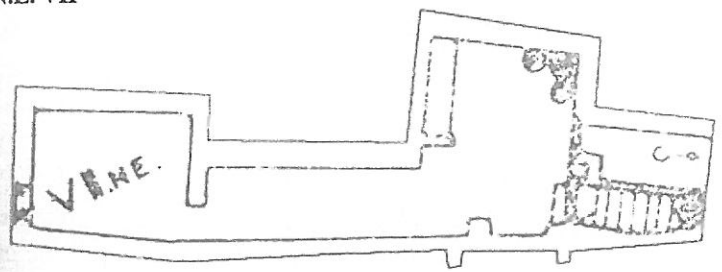
Rectangular in shape (25 cm x 30 cm and 22 cm x 30 cm) and situated in the west wall of house N.E. V, two other niches have come from a kitchen area (see also above; p. 55). The only frame fragment ostensibly related to one of these niches is **Cat. 4.1**,

[547] Davies 1999, chart 24.
[548] Compare the stelae listed by Demarée 1983.
[549] Davies 1999, chart 24.
[550] Demarée 1983, 174.
[551] Cf. Gardiner's sign list; published by A.H. Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar. Being an Introduction to the Study of Hieroglyphs* (3rd revised edition) London 1973, 442–543.
[552] Bruyère 1939, 246.
[553] Bruyère 1939, 260.

associated by a slip rather than archaeological context (see remarks **Cat. 4.1**). Such slip impacts interpretation since N.E. III and N.E. V constitute the only evidence for niches in kitchen areas. In addition, Bruyère posited a relationship between the two goddesses and kitchen based on numerous lintel fragments with offering formulae related to Renenutet and Meretseger.[554] Epithets related to "provisions" ("*k3.t/k3.w*" etc.) clearly connect them to aspects of food-bringing.[555] However, if the two goddesses were worshipped within a broader scope of food production and fertility, their worship must not necessarily have been restricted to the kitchen area.

The niches of the house N.E. V were located at 1.10 m above floor level.[556] While Bruyère assumed the niches had contained unpreserved stelae,[557] no other finds in the house illuminate the niche's function.

N.E. VII



(fig. 14)

The second room of the house also had niches. In house N.E. VII, for instance, Bruyère records a niche (34 x 48 x 45 cm) in the eastern wall between the two doors.[558] According to Bruyère its base bore an inscription,[559] but no such base appears among house N.E. VII's find list, nor does any picture or drawing of the niche appear. The only architectural fragment found in the house is a right doorpost (30 x 8 cm; **Cat. 4.2**), but a frame would usually consist of two doorposts and a lintel. Although, the doorpost would fit into the niche, it would leave little space for a lintel afterwards, especially considering the doorpost was incomplete. Only the beginning of the offering formula to Amun-Re-[...] remains, the beneficiary named below. Reconstruction whole give the entire frame a height of at least 1 m a measure not high enough for a door with a lintel in place.[560] It is tempting to reconstruct Amun-Re-of-the-good-encounter, who was a local deity of

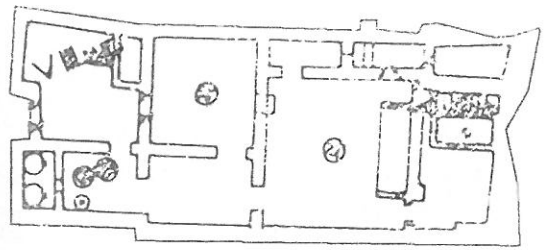
[554] Meretseger and Renenutet do not appear together frequently (e.g. **Cat. 4.1** and Bruyère 1939, pl. XVI, 22; Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0155_019), although, admittedly the fragments showing only one of the the two goddeses may just have lost their counterparts.
[555] E.g., **Cat. 4.14** and **Cat. 4.46**.
[556] Bruyère 1939, 250.
[557] Bruyère 1939, 250.
[558] Bruyère 1939, 251.
[559] Bruyère 1939, 251.
[560] The doorpost has not been mentioned by Budka 2011, 163–7, which—if the object was not simply overlooked—might suggest that she did not consider the present doorpost as a part of a door.

Western Thebes.[561] His appearance on a doorpost at Deir el-Medina would certainly make sense, for a left post dedicated to the same manifestation of Amun was found in house S.E. III (**Cat. 4.15**) and names its owner as Neferhotep (i) or (ii). However, this doorpost is not related to the former. Much smaller and almost complete, it probably constituted a niche, though the report records no niche in house S.E. III. Given the scarcity of Amun-Re-of-the-good-encounter's attestations,[562] a relationship between these two fragments is still quite appealing. As far as I am aware, these two fragments comprise the only frame fragments dedicated to Amun-Re-of-the-good-encounter. Coincidence may not account for a stela fragment (Turin N. 50155) bearing a similar inscription,[563] also owned by Neferhotep (i) or (ii).[564] Similar inscriptions of the Turin fragment N. 50155 and that found in house S.E. III could indicate a stela located in a niche with a decorated limestone frame, like the one found in the houses S.E. III. Based on Bruyère's drawing of the hieroglyphs, a reconstruction Amun-Re-*of-the-good-encounter* remains difficult, but the only convincing epitheton nonetheless. Whereas **Cat. 4.2** would theoretically fit into the niche of house N.E. VII, too many uncertainties argue against a possible match. First of all, no evidence hints at a discovery of the doorpost (**Cat. 4.2**) *in situ* or a cultic emplacement of Amun-Re-of-the-good-encounter in house N.E. VII. Second, the two houses S.E. III and N.E. VII lie too far from each other for the object to have easily moved easily from one to the other. Third, the Turin fragment N. 50155 came from the Meretseger sanctuary area, that is outside of the domestic religious sphere.[565] Fourth, the door fragment from house N.E. VII (**Cat. 4.2**) bears no name and might also have been owned by someone else.[566] Fifth, no known house belonged to those families known to have worshipped the god Amun-Re-of-the-good-encounter. The door post of house N.E. VII (**Cat. 4.2**) lay in the house's cave together with a coffin fragment that may or may not have been moved from the neighboring house.[567] No other finds offer

[561] On the deity; cf. for example, Toye 2006, 89–110. The present fragment is not included in her study.
[562] Toye lists 21 references: Toye 2006, 95–101. Recently two more attestations were found on P. BM 75020; cf., R.J. Demarée, *The Bankes Late Ramesside Papyri*, London 2006, 19–21 and pls 17–20.
[563] *rd.t jꜣw* [*n Imn*] *n ṯḥn nfr n ḥry n js(.w).t m S.t-Mꜣ<.t Nfr*[*-ḥtp*]: cf. Tosi and Roccati 1972, 153–4 and 323, cf. Toye 2006, 98.
[564] Although only the beginning of the name (*Nfr-*) has been preserved the titulatory "foreman" indicates the could be reconstructed Neferhotep (i) or (ii), as no other foreman was called *Nfr*–something. The other known men named *Nfr*[…] had other titles, cf. Davies 1999, 279 and 298–9.
[565] Tosi and Roccati 1972, 153.
[566] Four people are attested as worshipping Amun-Ra-of-the-good-encounter: Paneb (i) (Offering standard published by G. Lucas, 'Four Egyptian Pieces in the Wellcome Collection at Swansea, I', *GM* 167 (1998), 83–5), the scribe Qenhirkhopshef (i) (Stela BM 278, published by Bierbrier 1982a, 37–8 and pl. 86.), Pameduneternakht (i) son of Hay (viii) (Stela Bankes 11 published by J. Černý, *Egyptian Stelae in the Bankes Collection*, Oxford 1958, no. 11), and a chantress mentioned in the tomb of the foreman Inherkhau (ii) perhaps his wife as suggested by Toye 2006, 103 (in TT 359, cf. B. Bruyère, *Rapport sur les fouilles de Deir el Médineh (1930)*, *FIFAO* 8, Cairo 1933, 42). Toye's conclusion that only two servants of Amun-Re-of-the-good-encounter were attested (cf. Toye 2006, 105) is too narrow for analysis of personal religion in general. It is true that only two titles related to Amun-Re-of-the-good-encounter have been preserved (Qenhirkhopshef (i) in his function as *wʿb*-priest and the chantress). For the reconstruction of personal religion in general, however, it is not important whether somebody bore an official title or simply worshipped a god in other contexts, e.g., at home or in a chapel.
[567] House N.E. VIII was at some point inhabited by the foreman Qaha (i), who is attested on a coffin fragment found in the cave of house N.E. VII, cf. Bruyère 1939, 251. The find of a coffin fragment is difficult to explain. Qaha (i) lived under the reign of Ramesses II (Davies 1999, 12). Was somebody living in house N.E. VII in charge of producing a coffin for Qaha (i)? This is not a plausible explanation of the find of the fragment. If the coffin had for whatever reason not yet been delivered why would it still be kept in the house several generations later? But why would it be found in the village anyway? Qaha (i)'s tomb has been published by B. Bruyère, *Rapport sur les fouilles de Deir el Médineh (1929)*, *FIFAO* 7, Cairo 1930, 71–82, 84–90.
[568] Davies 1999, 12–3 and Bruyère 1939, 252.
[569] Bruyère 1939, 252.
[570] Bruyère 1939, 253 and pl. XVIII, 4.
[571] Davies 1999, charts 3 and 22.
[572] Bruyère 1939, 307 and see Bruyère 1939, 89 (fig. 28) and Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0156_015.

data for possible religious activities performed in the two houses. Unknown is who might have lived there. The evidence is thus too vague to reveal the function of house N.E. VII's niche.

N.E. VIII

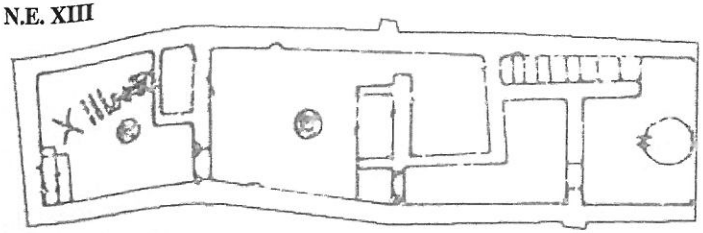


(fig. 15)

Foreman of the left side of Deir el-Medina during the reign of Ramesses II, Qaha (i) son of Huy (ii), inhabited the neighboring house N.E. VIII.[568] In the north wall of the house's third room, Bruyère records traces of two niches.[569] A cultic emplacement found in the house consisted of the fragment of the right doorpost of Qaha (i)'s contemporary, the scribe Ramose (i) (**Cat. 4.4**).[570] The two families were not related,[571] so Qaha (i) would presumably not have had a cult place supplied by Ramose (i). The doorpost was probably not found in its context of use. We do not yet know where Ramose lived, so the find of this fragment cannot illuminate the function of the niche in the house N.E. VIII. Though Bruyère did not publish it, he drew another limestone fragment found in house N.E. VIII (**Cat. 4.3**) next to **Cat. 4.4** in his notebook. The text columns of both fragments are of the same size. The appearance of Amun's spouse Mut on the left side of a complete frame would be appropriate, but yet again, no personal names have been preserved, and the present location of both fragments is unknown to me. Therefore, their relationship cannot receive any external support. Far from house N.E. VIII in house C. V, Bruyère found Qaha (i)'s limestone base of a Hathor statue.[572] How it arrived and where it came from is difficult to explain (see also below; p. 86). Had the fragment been found in Qaha (i)'s house, the image of the goddess Hathor might have been worshipped in the niche or on the house altar in house N.E. VIII's first room. The niche's size not in the record, such a hypothesis cannot be tested. Another proposal might interpret the statue as originally a

votive gift to the community shrine for the goddess Hathor,[573] relocated and reused several generations later.

N.E. XIII



(fig. 16)

Another niche (25 x 35 x 28 cm) rested in the north wall of house N.E. XIII's second room, about 1 m above floor level.[574] Perhaps supported with a frame, the fragments recorded by Bruyère receive no further specification (**Cat. 4.6** and **Cat. 4.7**). The left doorpost (**Cat. 4.6**) painted in red shows a standing female facing right. She is called Ipy or Ipuy, as the drawing in the notebook makes clear. The other fragments (grouped among **Cat. 4.7**) were apparently painted in red as well but further left undecorated.[575]

In the same house, Möller found an anthropoid bust of Khandjer, the lady of the house.[576] These busts have been traditionally called ancestor busts, but following Jean Lewis Keith, who recently suggested a broader use as generic cult image not confined to ancestral cults.[577] As shall be shown in the following her argument is not fully convincing (pp. 111–14), but for the moment we shall apply her more neutral terminology[578] and discuss the function of the busts below. Unfortunately, the standard sources of references[579] provide no information for the name Khandjer, thereby making the identity and family relations impossible to determine. In fact, other anthropoid busts were usually not inscribed,[580] which might suggest the name as a later addition.[581] Nevertheless, it is

[573] A New Kingdom community shrine was situated underneath the Ptolemaic temple to Hathor. Although almost nothing remains from the shrine, parallels from Deir el-Bahari suggest cow figures were a common votive gift to Hathor: cf. Pinch 1993, 160–3.
[574] Bruyère 1939, 259.
[575] Bruyère 1939, 260.
[576] Cairo JE 43980; cf. Anthes 1943, 59 und Tf. 16d; Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0156_037 and Keith 2011, 70–1 and 204–6.
[577] J.L. Keith, *Anthropoid Busts of Deir el Medineh and Other Sites and Collections*, *FIFAO* 49, Cairo 2011, 15 and on the previous terminology cf. Keith 2011, 1–3. The interpretation as ancestors is based on the find context of house C. VI only, see below; pp. 87–9; cf. Keith 2011, 5 and note 22.
[578] See also Demarée 1983, 289.
[579] I.e. the Deir el-Medina database and the studies by J. Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el Medina. A Study of the Status and Roles of the Female Inhabitants in the Workmen's Community During the Ramesside Period*, *EU* 15, Leiden 2001 and Davies 1999.
[580] Keith 2011, 71–3 refers to only four inscribed examples of a total 91 busts from Deir el-Medina (two of which were certainly found in houses namely Berlin ÄMP 20994; cf. Keith 2011, 71–2 and 199–201 and Cairo JE 43980; cf. Keith 2011, 70–1 and 204–6) and a fifth one possibly incised with a workman's marking. See also Keith 2011, 85 and Janssen and Janssen 1996, 53.

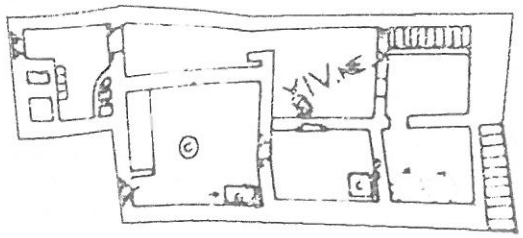
difficult to establish whether or not the bust bore some connection to the lady Ipy/Ipuy attested on the doorpost (**Cat. 4.6**) or Osiris Penpairu attested on an offering table fragment (**Cat. 5.3**). The owners of house N.E. XIII cannot be identified. The fragment of a lintel of Mose (vii) and Ipy (i) that was found reused as doorpost was probably taken from the neighboring house N.E. XII. However, reuse in house N.E. XIII does *not* suggest reuse for the remaining part in house N.E. XII. The lintel in house N.E. XII was found *in situ* and identifies the owners of house N.E. XII as Mose (vii) and Ipy (i), both men ostensibly related in some manner and perhaps occupants of the same house (i.e. N.E. XII).[582] Who lived in house N.E. XIII and who reused part of their lintel as a doorpost remains unclear. Incidentally, the *in situ* find from house N.E. XII serves as yet another indication that some doors had decorated limestone lintels.[583]

Alternatively, the doorjamb of Ipy/Ipuy (**Cat. 4.6**) could have been part of house N.E. XII's household assemblage.[584] The doorpost may depict Jpy (i)'s wife, Baket (i),[585] for many examples doorposts depicting ladies of houses.[586] Were she the one depicted in this instance, however, one would expect to read her name and titulatory, not her husband's. Nonetheless, the doorpost suggests we are dealing with a woman called Ipy.[587] Another problem stems from the unknown size of the doorjamb in its original form, but even more or less complete and containing no text, the doorjamb would not have left enough space for a lintel and hence not have fitted the present niche (h. 20 vs. 24 cm). Yet the fragment could have constituted another niche or stood as a doorpost. The same options pertain to the fragments of lintels' red-painted corniches.[588] Bruyère provided no detailed description, so they apparently bore no elaborate decoration. Based on its size (h. 21 cm) the anthropoid bust[589] would have fit well into the niche. It is highly unfortunate that the lady Khandjer cannot be related to the other people attested in the house, for both name and titulary seem to identify the bust as a person, which means that it was most probably worshipped as an ancestor and not a generic cult image.[590] Against this view, one could argue that the connection between bust and name should have been placed prominently on her chest and not on the bottom side of the object. Keith does not mention the bust in her discussion of the *ȝḫ-jḳr-n-Rˁ*[591], and hence does not seem to share the identification of Khandjer as an ancestor. Even though, the absence of other objects

[581] Keith 2011, 73 discusses whether the face of the bust might have been intentionally destroyed, which indeed is "the more dramatic" option, for the name identifies the bust as a subject. This idea cannot, however, be proven.
[582] On the close relationship of the two men: Davies 1999, 209–10.
[583] Bruyère 1939, 257.
[584] Bruyère 1939, 260.
[585] Davies 1999, chart 31.
[586] Budka 2001, 38 quoting the post (of a naos?) depicting Nofret, cf. Bruyère 1939, pl. XVIII, 22.
[587] The women at Deir el-Medina are not well-studied, so there may be more options in the future. At this point the only name close to Bruyère's transcription is the one of the lady Ipu (i) sister of Bukhanef-Ptah (i) of the Kasa (i) family, cf. Davies 1999, 269 and chart 28. Toivari-Viitala does not list a female name starting with *Ip*-[…]: Toivari-Viitala 2001, 280.
[588] Bruyère 1939, 260.
[589] Cairo JE 43980; cf. Anthes 1943, 59 und Tf. 16d; Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0156_037 and Keith 2011, 70–1 and 204–6.
[590] This interpretation has also been proposed again by P.A. Bochi, 'Figuring the Dead: the Ancestor Busts and the Embodied Transition', in: Z. Hawass and J. Houser Wegner (eds), *Millions of Jubilees. Studies in Honor of David P. Silverman* I, Cairo 2011, 69–79.
[591] Keith 2011, 89–90. and see also Keith 2011, 12.

related to ancestor cults in the house does not contradict interpretation of the bust as representative of an ancestor. Given the reality of busts as cult images and not merely "portraits,"[592] Keith argues that the anthropoid cult image must have been deified in some manner.[593] On the bottom side of the bust, space presents reconstruction of an *jr-n-*formula (i.e. "which Khandjer has made"), which implies the name identifies the creator of the object and not necessarily the depicted person. Both the title "mistress of the house" as well as the lack of Khandjer's attestation elsewhere in the village, contradict proposals that she might have been a god or an important intermediary like Amenhotep-son-of-Hapu (**Cat. 11.17**; see p. 39 and 158), for instance. The only conclusive interpretation, therefore, is that the bust made by Khandjer,[594] and perhaps also depicting her, was worshipped as an ancestor in house N.E. XIII. Moreover, the bust could have stood in the niche.

N.E. XIV



(fig. 17)

The cultic emplacement house N.E. XIV's kitchen has already undergone brief analysis (p. 70). The two small niches (15 x 19 x 12 cm) from the house N.E. XIV's second room cause more difficulty for interpretation, however. For his part, Bruyère described their location as "*creusées dans le chambranle du porte du couloir.*"[595] While the irregular shape of the door is visible on the map,[596] the somewhat odd location of the niches permits their interpretation as remains of constructional elements rather than structures with religious function. Another more practical explanation might account for the two niches. Religious motifs decorate some door openings. For example, the wall separating the entrance from the stairs in house S.O. IV is decorated with a black drawing of the deified king Amenhotep I.[597] The location of the niches in the door opening to the second room of house N.E. XIV does not, therefore, automatically exclude a possible religious function. Meskell has interpreted doors and thresholds as liminal zones,[598] where

[592] Compare the discussion by Keith 2011, 103–4.
[593] Compare also Keith's ideas of the busts as "divinity or divinized person[s]," cf. Keith 2011, 86.
[594] Cairo JE 43980; cf. Anthes 1943, 59 and pl. 16d; Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0156_037 and Keith 2011, 70–1 and 204–6.
[595] Bruyère 1939, 260.
[596] Bruyère 1939, pl. VII.
[597] Bruyère 1939, 321.
[598] Meskell 1998, 229 on the matter see also J.Z. Smith, *Relating Religion. Essays in the Study of Religion*, Chicago 2004, 327 with reference to A. van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, London 1960, 41–165.

thresholds "symbolize dangerous zones, because transition is indefinable" and the "danger" caused by the transition "is controlled by ritual."[599] As previously mentioned, Meskell's proposition of female and male spheres corresponding to the first and second rooms of a house respectively, proves highly problematic (see above; p. 30). Although the location of this particular niche would admittedly fall in line with her interpretation, namely, in the "liminal zone" at the end of the corridor leading from the first to the second room,[600] her conclusions about specifically male and female imagery restricted to certain rooms cannot be upheld.[601] Despite implications of male and female spaces, the notion of doors as points of transition is highly promising. The image of a snake found in the house (**Cat. 10.6**) is one possible candidate to have guarded the threshold, for clay cobras from Amarna might have served as apotropaic images.[602] Different material does not necessarily imply a different meaning. The latter cobras have been found in the city of Amarna, but their context of use remains unclear.[603] Accordingly, the image found in house N.E. XIV (**Cat. 10.6**) could support Meskell's interpretation of the threshold as liminal zone. Meskell's statement that the passing of the liminal zone is best understood as a "nondiscursive" move[604] requires some elaboration. "Discursive events are particular utterances, such as statements made or questions asked, (...) inscriptions (...) and (...) the recorded versions of such events, so often the printed word."[605] In reverse, non-discursive events lie the unwritten rules as well as intuitive and non-propositional actions.[606] What Meskell means is thus that passing through a threshold was not a ritualized, intentional act in everyday practice. In other words, inhabitants were not always aware of the move's potential implications. The presence of the cobra in a niche could thus be understood as an apotropaic element that might have required no further religious action.

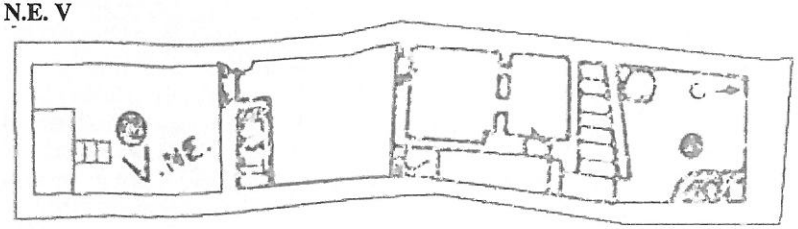
If the niches had a cultic function, the second one might have been occupied by a stela or relief study (**Cat. 11.16**) also found in the house. Classification is difficult without the opportunity to analyze the actual object. It shows the king in front of the falcon-headed sun god and may or may not be interpreted as a cult image. An ostracon demonstrates the same possibility showing the scene of a birth.[607] Oddly, instead of a

[599] Meskell 1998, 228, referring to the relevant sociological literature such as P. Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge 1977, 130 and M. Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*, London 1966, 97.
[600] Bruyère 1939, 260.
[601] Compare the comprehensive discussion by Kleinke 2007, 73–6.
[602] K. Szpakowska, 'Religious Uses of Clay Cobras from Amarna', *JARCE* 40 (2003), 119–22. Szpakowska mainly discusses their possible use in spells and medical prescriptions. On the cobras as apotropaic images in the four corners of the bedroom, cf. Ritner 2008, 186.
[603] Szpakowska 2003a, 115–6.
[604] Meskell 1998, 229.
[605] Definition by I. Hacking, 'Between Michel Foucault and Erving Goffman: between discourse in the abstract and face-to-face interaction', *Economy and Society* 33/3 (2004), 278.
[606] Definition by A.C. Lloyd, 'Non-Discursive Thought: An Enigma of Greek Philosophy', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, New Series* 70 (1969–1970), 261.
[607] O. Berlin ÄMP 21451, cf. Brunner-Traut 1956, 69, no. 65 and pl. XXV. Sketch of an elaborated birth-bed decorated with Bes-pillars. The left Bes-image is playing the lute. On top of the bed a woman sits with her baby in her arms, while another woman, probably her handmaid, presents a mirror to her. The drawing is unfinished and broken. The second person seems to wear a white crown, which would identify the person as a king, and not as a midwife. This would be a highly unusual depiction that could indicate that the birth of a king was meant here (compare similar idea in the Berlin inventory). For a general discussion of the possibility that some pictorial ostraca were cult images, cf. chapter 3.2.2.2 below.

midwife, the king wearing the white crown apparently presents offerings to the woman carrying the baby, perhaps portraying the birth of a king. Since the head of the mother is broken it remains unknown whether she wore a crown.

The latter two possible cult images thus do not fit interpretation of the niches as markers of liminal zones containing apotropaic images, but no rule requires the same function for both niches.

N.E. V



(fig. 18)

As for the two niches situated in the east wall of house N.E. XV's third room, Bruyère believed they once contained busts or statuettes.[608] While Möller's earlier find of a king's head (**Cat. 10.7**) might support Bruyère's interpretation, the object seems complete, which suggests it is an artist's study rather than a statuette fragment. Perhaps the niches' great size (25 x 23 x 15 cm and 38 x 40 x 18 cm) and position 160 cm above the floor level were the decisive factors for Bruyère's interpretation of their function as holding religious images. In the north wall of the same room, a large cultic emplacement is situated (see above; pp. 36–40), and questions surround its relationship to the two niches. The exact find spot of the round limestone libation basin of the workman Pashed (**Cat. 6.2**) has not been specified, unfortunately, and it is also unclear to which Pashed it might have belonged. As shown above (p. 38), Khawy (ii) was the owner of house N.E. XV at some point, but no other finds within the house can be related to him or his family.

S.E. VII

Another niche (45 x 46 x 18 cm) lay in the eastern wall of house S.E. VII's first room, beside the large house altar (see fig. 5).[609] Again, its relationship to the two niches comes into question. In the cave of the house, Bruyère found a doorpost *in situ*,[610] which may reveal the names of the house's owners as the family of Nebamentet (i) son of Kasa (i). In addition to Nebamentet (i), his wife, Hunero/Hathor (viii),[611] and perhaps his brothers

[608] Bruyère 1939, 261.
[609] Bruyère 1939, 272.
[610] Bruyère 1939, 273.
[611] See also Davies 1999, 268.

Nebsetau (i) and Anuy (ii) as well are depicted on the doorpost.[612] The base of a cultic emplacement belonging to Nebamentet (i) son of Kasa (i) in house C. VI (**Cat. 4.45**)[613] alone cannot counter identification of the owners of house S.E. VII. Davies' idea that the find of an offering table of a Nebamun in house S.E. VIII (**Cat. 5.5**) supports the identification of the owners of house S.E. VII[614] is, however, equally problematic. Davies showed that Nebamentet (i) had a son called Nebamun (iii), and while possible, but one has to bear in mind that the latter name is too common for Nebamun (iii)'s clear attestation on the offering table. Both the offering table and the base of a cultic emplacement could have shifted from their original context. By contrast, an offering table of a lady Juy (**Cat. 5.9**), who might be identical with the wife of Nebamentet (i)'s brother Nefer(em)senut (i), (i.e., Juy (v)[615]) found near house S.E. IX, might confirm the family of Nebamentet (i) as inhabiting the houses in the lower south-eastern quarter of the village.[616] If so, one wonders whether the base fragment found in house C. VI (**Cat. 4.45**) might have originally framed one of the niches in house S.E. VII or S.E. VIII. According to its size, the base of the cultic emplacement (39 x 6.5 cm) would have fit into the niche leaving, about 3.5 cm space to both sides.

Unfortunately, this possible inhabitant identification does not aid reconstruction of the niche's contents in house S.E. VII, even if the base had, in fact, been part of the niche. The base only reveals the name Nebamentet (i) son of Kasa (i), attesting no divine name.

In fact, the stelae fragments from house S.E. VII provide little information. On one of these fragments, only the feet of a standing couple have been preserved[617] (**Cat. 11.34**). Another shows a male *ꜣḫ-jḳr-n-Rᶜ* (**Cat. 11.35**) but no text.[618] Both stelae might have been situated in the niche or on the house altar, the former more likely given the shape of the niche in house S.E. VII. According to Bruyère, the shape suggests that the niche had been used to store a stela with a rounded top.[619] The *ꜣḫ-jḳr-n-Rᶜ*-stela (**Cat. 11.35**; size: 11.5 cm x 12 cm x 1.5 cm) would fit in the niche,[620] but whether it shifted from the niche of the first room to the cave under the fourth remains unknown. In any case, it is plausible that the niche in house S.E. VII was a cultic emplacement that contained some kind of a cult image.

[612] The numbering is taken from Davies 1999, 271 and chart 28. Davies did not further specify which Anuy is meant, but since Anuy (ii) was the brother of Nebamentet (i) it would make sense for him to be depicted here.
[613] Bruyère 1939, 309 and Davies 1999, 271.
[614] Davies 1999, 271.
[615] Davies 1999, chart 28.
[616] Moving forward in the generations, Nebamentet (i)'s possible granddaughter-in-law Iuy (iii) would be another possibility. Compare also Demarée's document B 3 who lists also other options and comes to the same conclusion: Demarée 1983, 147–8.
[617] Bruyère 1939, 273.
[618] The fragment of a headrest is not considered an artifact used in a religious context. Its inscription reads: *sꜣ=f Sn-rn=f*. This name is not listed by Davies 1999; cf. Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0155.
[619] Bruyère 1939, 272.
[620] Cf. R.J. Demarée, 'More *ꜣḫ ikr n Rᶜ*-stelae', *BiOr* 43 (1986), 350 and Bruyère 1939, 273. This stela is most probably identical with Demarée's document A66, cf. Demarée 1986, 350.

S.E. VIII

Another stela niche was situated in the east wall of house S.E. VIII's first room (see fig. 6).[621] Interestingly, Bruyère mentioned a cavity in front of it that held an offering table.[622] Assuming the south-eastern part of the village had been inhabited by the extended family of Nebamentet (i), one could posit that the offering table (**Cat. 5.5**)[623] was discovered close to its original context of use. The offering table is dedicated to the *ꜣḫ-jḳr-n-Rᶜ* Nebamun,[624] perhaps Nebamun (iii) (see above; p. 79). According to the family tree, Nebamun (i) son of Amenemone (ii)/(iii) might emerge as another possibility,[625] perhaps supported by a headrest of the workman Amenemone in house S.E. VIII. Both identifications are tentative: the offering table could refer to any Nebamun.[626] It is unfortunate that the family relations of this Nebamun remain unclear, because an *ꜣḫ-jḳr* was a venerated ancestor who had gained "privileged position which enables him [to] act with godlike powers."[627] The offering table could thus set the niche into the context of ancestor cults. Such a hypothesis gains plausibility from Bruyère's observation of a small hole in front of house S.E. VIII's niche and close to the house altar, which contained an offering table.[628] It would be tempting to assume Nebamun used this very offering table (**Cat. 5.5**). Though not found *in situ*, it might have shifted from the hole to a different place in the first room. Lacking exact measurements of the "*cavité d'encastrement pour une table d'offrandes*" as described by Bruyère, this proposition remains speculative.[629]

Were the offering table part of house S.E. VIII's cultic emplacement, the niche (40 x 20 x 20 cm) may have contained a stela or statue also related to an *ꜣḫ-jḳr-n-Rᶜ*. Unfortunately, the house has yielded no such cult object. In fact, no stela related to the extended families of Nebamentet (i) or even Amenemone (ii)/(iii) has come from the village.[630] Again, the only clue is Bruyère's argument that the niche's rounded top indicates a stela once in place.[631] Two other candidates have emerged in the house: namely, two small stelae dedicated to Ptah (**Cat. 11.37** and **Cat. 11.38**). The evidence is, however, ambiguous. In his 1939 publication of the village, Bruyère notes the find when referring to his excavation of house S.E. VIII in 1928.[632] The earlier reference records only a single fragment of a stela decorated on two sides, showing the god Ptah on one

[621] Bruyère 1939, 275.
[622] Bruyère 1939, 275.
[623] Bruyère 1939, 275 (fig. 147) and 276.
[624] Bruyère 1939, 275, fig. 147 and 276. The offering table (l. 16 cm, w. 13 cm and h. 8 cm) is now kept in the Louvre E 16287: cf. Demarée 1983, B 9, 153 and note 1.
[625] Davies 1999, chart 4.
[626] For the discussion of the various men called Nebamun see Davies 1999, 258–60.
[627] Studied in detail by Demarée 1983. For the quote see Demarée 1983, 253.
[628] Bruyère 1939, 275.
[629] Bruyère 1939, 275.
[630] The following publications have been scrutinized: Demarée 1983; Demarée 1986, 348–50; and A.R. Schulman, 'Some Remarks on *ꜣḫ-jḳr-n-Rᶜ*–Stelae', *BiOr* 43 (1986), 302–47.
[631] Bruyère 1939, 275. Stelae have indeed often rounded tops, but different shapes also occur, e.g. Demarée 1983, 8–9. It is clear, however, that the shape of the niche is not necessarily equated by its content.
[632] Bruyère 1939, 276.

side and a standing king on the other.[633] The king is not mentioned in the later publication.[634] Even more, the description of a two-faced stela showing the god Ptah would also match another stela.[635] Accordingly, Bruyère either found three stelae dedicated to Ptah, one of which was decorated on both sides, made a slip when copying his older notes, or only later found a fragment of a second stela. Unfortunately, the small stelae (**Cat. 11.37** and **Cat. 11.38**) receive no fuller description in either the publications or the notebooks, and their present location is unknown to me. While one of them might have been situated in the niche, this solution remains speculative lacking any description or size. The same situation applies to a limestone statuette showing the remains of a kneeling man (**Cat. 10.50**): the statuette has no fuller discussion. It has been found in the cave and may or may not have been placed in the niche.

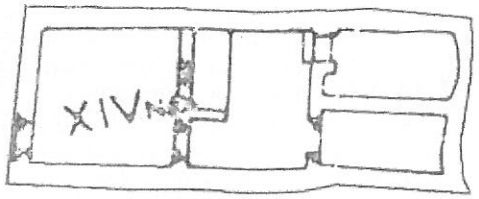
Other objects found in the house can be excluded because of their size. For example a possible statuette of the Bes-image (h. 55 cm) that Bruyère found in the cellar[636] would not have fit in the niche (h. 40 cm). Poorly preserved, debate centers on whether Bruyère's identification of the object as statuette is even correct. In view of parallels, it is perhaps more plausible that the object was the leg of a wooden bed.[637]

Like its neighboring house, S.E. VII, S.E. VIII contained a niche situated next to the large house altar.[638] Unfortunately no known architectural fragments indicate the niche's possible use.[639] This house altar is decorated with a polychrome drawing of a dancing female on its eastern wall,[640] thereby portraying a festival motif with dance and music that resembles other altars with a dancing Bes-image.[641] Side by side with the Bes-image, the goddess Hathor might have some connection to the depicted festival motif.[642] The pottery decorated with clay ornaments of Hathor's head, which Bruyère found in the

[633] B. Bruyère, *Rapport sur les Fouilles de Deir el Médineh (1928), FIFAO 6,2*, Cairo 1929, 136. and see also Bruyère 1939, 308 (fig. 178). This finding may or may not indicate that there was a link between the houses S.E. VIII and C. VI.
[634] Bruyère 1939, 276.
[635] Cf. Bruyère 1934, 86. Bruyère's in indcation "*épaisseur 0 m 308*" is possibly a slip and should be read as 3,8 cm, rather than 38 cm. If the depth indicated by Bruyère is correct the object should be interpreted as the block of a temple, rather than as a stela. The fact that this is the only other stela decorated on both sides and also dedicated to Ptah is perhaps be no coincidence. No further information is available in Bruyère's publication or notebooks.
[636] Bruyère 1939, 101 (fig. 34) and 276.
[637] Bruyère 1939, 98, fig. 98. The decoration of beds and headrests is well-known in ancient Egypt. For example, Fischer states, that at Deir el-Medina "headrests bear apotropaic figures such as Bes and Toueris, as do the beds on which they were placed," cf. H.G. Fischer, 'Kopfstütze', *LÄ* III (1980), 688. In order to decide whether or not this the present object is a statuette the original object should be consulted. It is probable that the image shows traces of a pin on top in which case the image would be a furniture fragment (e.g. the leg of a bed) rather than a statuette. For possible parallels cf. Pelizaeus-Museum L/Sch 5–6 (a–b), published in M. von Falk, K. Lembke and B. Rabe (eds), *Das Leben am Nil und der Alltag im alten Ägypten*, Darmstadt 2011, 28 A–B, 106–7. For another parallel cf. Hölscher 1954, 58, 1 and pl. 34A.
[638] For a description of the find situation, cf. Bruyère 1939, 275 and recently N. Cherpion, 'La danseuse de Deir el-Médîna et les prétendus "lits clos" du village', *Égypte, Afrique & Orient* 63 (2011), 55–72.
[639] Whether or not **Cat. 4.18** was found in house S.E. VIII is subject to debate, but even acceptance of this interpretation would not add to our understanding of the niche since the inscription is highly fragmentary.
[640] Bruyère 1939, 273 (fig. 145), 274 and pl. X.
[641] Kleinke's interpretation is fully conclusive. For her ideas and the discussion of earlier interpretations: Kleinke 2007, 52–3.
[642] Kleinke 2007, 53.

cave,[643] might have been used for libation rituals on the altar. Dated by Bruyère to the 18th dynasty, the vessels could theoretically have shifted to the cave when the house was still inhabited, but neither house S.E. VIII nor the whole south-eastern part of the village was built in the 18th dynasty. The question is thus whether Bruyère's dating is correct and, if so, whether the vessels were still in use when the village was abandoned. If precious cultic objects, they might have been passed through the generations by vertical cycling. How far the niche might have been part of this hypothetical scenario is difficult to tell. Bruyère's interpretation of the Bes-image as statuette is, however, not fully convincing, since the object could be the fragment of a bed. The question whether the niche in house S.E. VIII was related to the large house altar remains unclear. In sum, although house S.E. VIII has yielded several religious objects, it is difficult to reconstruct the religious activities possibly related to the niche. The variety of religious materials found in the one house is remarkable, nonetheless. It seems to indicate that a variety of religious activities were performed in the house.

N.O. XXIV

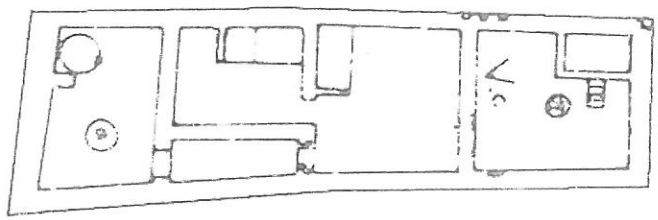


(fig. 19)

The function of two niches located next to each other in the west wall above the *divan* of house N.O. XXIV remains unclear.[644] Although no size has been recorded, their location suggests that they might have kept objects at hand, as a bed-side table would. The only find potentially related is of an uninscribed base (**Cat. 4.39**) found in the house.[645] Therefore, it is thus difficult to tell whether or not the niches had a religious function. Theoretically, one could think of niches containing cult images that protected the sleeper at night similar to the imagery of wooden beds, but such a proposition is merely guesswork. If the niche had a religious function, it would be one of the few niches located in a west wall. Unfortunately, the record is too scarce to illuminate the niches's function.

[643] Bruyère 1939, 275.
[644] Bruyère 1939, 298, note the wrong number on the map.
[645] Bruyère 1939, 298.

C. V



(fig. 20)

Situated in the eastern wall of house C. V's first room,[646] another niche was situated diagonally opposite a large house altar. A cultic relation between the two architectural features seems therefore less plausible than in the case of house S.E. VII (pp. 78–9). Nevertheless, the niche of house C. V was certainly a focal point, much larger (60 x 45 x 16 cm) than the other niches in the village and framed with a large painted white panel and black borders.[647] The size of the niche is thus much bigger than the lintel (l. 30 cm) dedicated to Renenutet and Sobek, which was found in the cave of house C. V (**Cat. 4.44**). Lintels framing the niches were usually about the same size as the niches plus a few centimeters where they were built into the mud brick walls (although the walls might have been broken where the lintel used to be inserted). The question is thus whether another niche—since fallen into decay—was located in the house.

In the niche, Bruyère found traces of a thick (5 cm) tile, which might have supported a stela placed in it. This tile or base is most probably identical with the limestone base Bruyère found in "*une cavité de la mureille*" in the first room (**Cat. 4.43**),[648] for the slight difference in size (4 versus 5 cm) does not necessarily contradict a match. Apparently, Bruyère's team took measurements quite hastily at times.[649] The match between the object listed in the first room's finds and the one mentioned in the description of the room is plausible since the niche is the only "*cavité de la mureille*" Bruyère recorded in that room. Probably near-complete given its size (4 x 29 x 11 cm), the base (**Cat. 4.43**) would have fit well into the niche. The space of about 16 cm not taken by the base could have been filled up by doorposts of about 7,5 cm width, which is more or less the average size of these doorposts (see table 4). The base might thus reveal the niche's function and owner alike. The inscription reads [...] *wꜣḏ.t nfr(.t) n Imn-Rᶜ n jp.t jr.n sḏm ᶜš m S.t-Mꜣᶜ.t Pꜣ-rꜣ-ḥtp mꜣᶜ ḫrw* [...], i.e. "beautiful stela of Amun-

[646] Bruyère 1939, 305.
[647] Bruyère 1939, 305.
[648] Bruyère 1939, 306 and pl. XIX, 2.
[649] Compare Bruyère 1939, pl. XVII, 10 with the drawings of the same fragment in Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0151_027; Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0155_019; and Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0164_024. This fragment is thus a good example to illustrate the fact that Bruyère's recording techniques were not always accurate. Not only is the fragment drawn three times in the notebooks, but also size slightly differs. Whereas the space to the right of the text column is indicated as 1 cm in two of the drawings the third indicates it as 1,5 cm. Bruyère's reading *mr* should most probably be corrected into *mrḥ.t*, i.e. unguent (cf. *Wb* 2, 111.1–10), which usually follows after "incense" in offering formulea (e.g. BD 72, cf. G. Lapp, *The Papyrus of Nu (BM EA 10477)*, *Catalogue of Books of the Dead in the British Museum* I, London 1997, pl. 20).

Re of Luxor, which the workman Prehotep has made." The name Prehotep not very common,[650] it is possible to reconstruct relationships between some of the people attested in the house C. V, at least hypothetically: the grandfather of Prehotep (i) was called Ipu(y) (v) and bore the title *sš-ḳd n Imn m njw.t rsy.t* (i.e., draftsman of Amun in the Southern City/Thebes).[651] A shorter version of this title is *sš ḳd n Imn*, frequently attested in the 18th dynasty.[652] The title suggests Ipu(y) was a draftsman in the temple of Amun at Thebes before he came to Deir el-Medina,[653] which may then indicate the family of Prehotep (i) was traditionally related to the temple of Amun. Support for this proposition also comes from the title of his father, Pay (i), who was *sš-ḳd n Imn m S.t-Mꜣᶜ.t* ("draftsman of Amun at the Place of the Truth").[654] Known from various ancient Egyptian sources referring not only to Thebes, but also to other sites, such as Memphis and Amarna,[655] "place of the truth" means "tomb," "necropolis" or "hereafter." In the Deir el-Medina context, *S.t-Mꜣᶜ.t* ("place of the truth") referred to the same institution as *pꜣ ḫr*, the institution administering everything concerning the (royal) tomb.[656] The choice for the one or the other depended on context. With one exception, the phrase *m S.t-Mꜣᶜ.t* occurs only in the official documents, whereas *m pꜣ ḫr* appears in all kinds of non-official everyday documents.[657] As for the family of Prehotep (i), the title *sš-ḳd n Imn m S.t-Mꜣᶜ.t* hence indicates that his father, Pay (i), was professionally related to Amun at Deir el-Medina. Pay (i) is apparently not the same person as a man called Pay who appears as *bꜣk n Imn* ("servant of Amun") in TT 219 of Nebenmaat (ii), the son of Amennakht (xxi).[658] The latter is most probably Prehotep (i)'s son Pay (ii).

These titles therefore show a familial continuity of professions related to the god Amun, although it is not fully clear which institution or temple is meant in the references above. In this context, a niche dedicated to Amun by Prehotep (i) makes good sense. Prehotep (i) has, however, been identified as the owner of house S.O. IV (table 1), so the question is whether his later descendants might have moved to house C. V. In view of the family tradition, it would be plausible to think of a continuation of the religious tradition by later descendants living in another house.

When considering the depiction of Pay (i or ii) in TT 219, it is striking that another find in house C. V is a small polychrome stela dedicated to Ptah and Harsiese for the Ka of Nebmaat (**Cat. 11.46**).[659] This Nebmaat may have been identical with Nebenmaat (ii)

[650] Davies 1999, 303 lists only three men called Prehotep.
[651] Tosi and Roccati 1972, 83 and 281, cf. Davies 1999, 149.
[652] Cf. S.S. Eichler, *Die Verwaltung des "Hauses des Amun" in der 18. Dynastie*. *SAK Beihefte* 7, Hamburg 2000, 158–9. Whereas Eichler lists 13 title bearers from the 18th dynasty, Al-Ayedi knows only a total of eight references for the whole New Kingdom: Eichler 2000, 158 vs. Al-Ayedi 2006, 580, no. 1943. Hence, the information that the reference of the title *sš-ḳd n Imn m njw.t rsy.t* mentioned above is the only one (cf. Al-Ayedi 2006, 581, no. 1945) is probably not reliable.
[653] Similar: Davies 1999, 149.
[654] Tosi and Roccati 1972, 83 and 281.
[655] Černý 1973, 35–7.
[656] Jaroslav Černý was the first to realize that both titles referred to the same institution: Černý 1973, 34.
[657] Of all documents in the Deir el-Medina database, the title *sḏm ᶜš m S.t-Mꜣᶜ.t* appears only twice: once on a document that was probably the draft of a votive inscription (O. Cairo CG 25764) and once in a list of workmen and some of their wives (O. Varille 12).
[658] Davies 1999, 150.
[659] Bruyère 1939, 306 and 307 fig. 178.

above.[660] With the identification of Nebenmaat (ii) on the stela, yet another—admittedly rather distant—family tie may be worth mentioning. Prehotep (i) was the brother of Nebre (i), who was married to Pashedet (i), a sister of Meretseger (v) who was the wife of Nebenmaat (ii).[661] In addition, Khaemtir (i) the brother of Nebenmaat (ii) appears on an offering table found in the kitchen of house C. V (**Cat. 5.12**).[662] It could be more than a coincidence that a certain *sḏm ᶜš* Huy appears on a column, perhaps implying he was an occupants of the house. Huy was a common name at Deir el-Medina. Considering the other names attested in the house, it seems at least worth mentioning that Meretseger (v)'s father, Kel (i), had a brother called Huy (xx) and that the father of his wife, Takhat (ii), was also called Huy (ii).[663] Finally, the brother of Taysennofret (ii), wife of Prehotep (i), was called Huy (xii).[664] While these considerations may appear somewhat far-fetched for the name Huy, the occurrence of these names in the same house is striking and might therefore indicate that some members of Prehotep (i)'s extended family inhabited house C. V at some point after his death.

For interpretation of the niche's function, the stela of Neb(en)maat (i/ii) (**Cat. 11.46**) holds particular interest. The find spot of the stela is highly ambiguous (see remarks **Cat. 11.46**), and the remarks in Bruyère's notebooks suggest he added the stelae to the finds of house C. V, based on his assumption that the family of Neb(en)maat (i/ii) had inhabited the house at some point—a hypothesis this study has also advanced. Regarding the stela's original placement in the niche, the stela bears both inscriptions and decorations on both sides, so in a niche, only one side would have been visible at a time, the other side facing the niche's rear wall. According to introductory formulae in tombs and textual functionality in inaccessible spaces, a written offering formula may have operated irrespective of its visibility from the perspective of the offering person. The text preserved on this stela's sides, is not, however, an offering formula. Each side shows Neb(en)maat (ii) or his great-great-grandfather Nebenmaat (i)[665] standing before a god (Ptah and Harsiese, respectively). Raised hands, with palms facing deity, establishes the figures as offering persons in this case. As for the text itself, it identifies Neb(en)-maat (i/ii) and the gods through a brief titulatory, though no offering formula occurs. Once again, the absence of any written offering formula suggests the stela was accessible and the words speakable by Neb(en)maat (i/ii) or his descendants. The brief text rather untypical for a stela in the public context,[666] the stela was likely used in a domestic context. Perhaps the two gods were addressed at different occasions, or the loyalties of Neb(en)maat shifted from one god to the other during his lifetime. Another interpretation might argue that the stela was displayed somewhere else, with both sides visible, for example, on the altar in the house's first room. This altar is decorated with an odd motive showing a priest with his right hand raised above his head, holding a long object,[667] but

[660] Davies records two men called Nebenmaat, but no Nebmaat, so one wonders whether the latter name was either a shortened version or whether Bruyère made a slip. Cf. Davies 1999, 297.
[661] Davies 1999, charts 10 and 27.
[662] Bruyère 1939, 305–6.
[663] Davies 1999, chart 27.
[664] Davies 1999, chart 11.
[665] For the genealogy compare Davies 1999, chart 21.
[666] Compare, for example, the stelae discussed by Luiselli 2011a, which were all inscribed with hymnal texts.
[667] Bruyère 1939, 305 and fig. 172.

the decoration cannot illuminate possible religious activities on the altar, hence unable to determine whether the stela stood upon the altar.

One stela fragment found in house C. V "his beloved brother, Piay" has made (**Cat. 11.45**).[668] The *ṯzy-mḏ3.t n Imn* Piay (ii) appears in a graffito together with Pay (i).[669] Concerning Piay (ii)'s title, it is related to the god Amun, and his outsider status might further indicate he was recruited together with Ipu(y) (i). If Piay (i) and Ipu(y) (i) were working together for an extended period of time, Piay (ii) might have been a close friend of the family. His beloved brother Piay could thus be the same Piay (ii) honored as close friend of the person whose name is lost. In this scenario, the small stela might have been placed in the niche.

More difficult is explanation of the statuette base of Hathor, also found in the house.[670] Dedicated to the goddess by Qaha (i), who lived in house N.E. VIII (see above; p. 73), the find might have been used in different houses and by different people within the process of vertical cycling. This proposal does not invalidate the argument that Qaha (i) himself originally used the object. Given his status as a foreman, the object may have maintained value and use among his descendants. Incidentally, Nebenmaat (ii) was married to Qaha (i)'s niece Henutdjuu (i),[671] Qaha (i)'s father was the workman Huy (ii)'[672] and the name Huy appears on limestone column base fragment found in the first room, which usually indicates the owner of the house.[673] Since the name Huy occurs quite frequent,[674] no meaningful connection can be ᵉstablished While one of Prehotep (i)'s brothers was called Huy (xii),[675] a man named Huy (x) was the son-in-law of Piay (ii).[676] Huy (x)—like Pay (ii)—ostensibly attended the funeral procession depicted in the tomb of Nebenmaat (ii),[677] which suggests he was probably a close friend of the family. His status as a scribe might account for his absent attestation on the present column. Whereas titles and careers could change within a lifetime, a scribe would probably not have replaced the objects that still referred to himself as a workman in his house.[678]

[668] Bruyère 1939, 307 and fig. 177.

[669] W. Spiegelberg, *Ägyptische und andere Graffiti (Inschriften und Zeichnungen) aus der Thebanischen Nekropolis*, Heidelberg 1921, 66 no. 817, line b.2, cf. Davies 1999, 149.

[670] Cf. Bruyère 1939, 89 (fig. 28) and 307 and Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0156_015.

[671] Davies 1999, chart 27.

[672] Davies 1999, 12–3.

[673] Bruyère 1939, 306.

[674] Davies identifies at least 24 men called Huy: cf. Davies 1999, 291. What adds to the confusion is the fact that the name Huy was also used as a diminutive of the name Amenhotep, for which Davies lists eleven different people, cf. Davies 1999, 88 and 286.

[675] Davies 1999, chart 11.

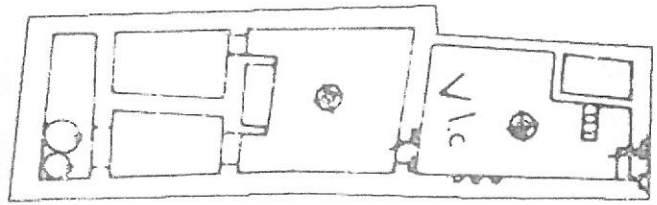
[676] Davies 1999, charts 14 and 22.

[677] For the reference cf. Davies 1999, 89–90.

[678] In the context of a tomb it seems we can interpret the title "scribe" as an official one. In other contexts people called themselves "scribe" in order to emphasize their own literacy. This is, for example, known from the colophon of P. BM 10683 (= P. Chester Beatty III), which points out that the "scribe" Amennakht (xxvi), son of Kha'emnun (i) and brother of the craftsman Qenhirkhopshef (vi) and of the scribe Pama (not attested in Davies'chart 25), has done these writings, but we know he was only a simple workman, cf. A.H. Gardiner, *The Library of A. Chester Beatty, Description of a Hieratic Papyrus with a Mythological Story, Love-Songs, and Other Miscellaneous Texts*, Oxford 1931, 26. For another example, cf. Davies 1999, 100. To argue scribe was not used as official title here, one could maintain that Huy (ii) was depicted

The family of Prehotep (i), who worshipped the god Amun in a large elaborated niche, certainly used the niche in house C. V, but since there is no clear family relationship between Prehotep (i) and Nebenmaat (i/ii), questions remain as to whether these objects were also used in the house and, if so, by whom. In fact, two other fragments found in the household assemblage might have found use in the house (**Cat. 12.12** and **Cat. 12.13**). These fragments, however, may not have stood in the niche, perhaps being the remains funerary equipment produced in the house instead.

C. VI



(fig. 21)

Clearer evidence of shrines housing anthropoid busts comes from house C. VI—the only house where three niches have been preserved in the first room. All three niches lay in the eastern wall between 120 and 160 cm above floor level next to the entrance to the second room.[679] Beneath the niches Bruyère found two anthropoid busts,[680] which implies the busts fell out of the niches.[681] The importance of ancestral worship finds support from the fragment of an *3ḫ-jḳr*-stela of Mose (i) son of Baki (i) found in the house's first room.[682] The fragments of a stela of Baki (i) were in fact not found in the corridor of the house as recorded by Bruyère, but bought in the antique market.[683] Both names of and the family

in TT 219. Following chart 27, however, Huy (ii) would be Nebenmaat (ii)'s grandfather and would probably not have appeared on his grandson's funeral: cf. Davies 1999, chart 27.

[679] Sizes: (A) 20 x 18 x 20 cm; B) 60 x 28 x 30 cm; and C) 10 x 20 x 20 cm), cf. Bruyère 1939, 308.

[680] Louvre E. 16348; cf. Andreu 2002, 142, no. 86; Bruyère 1939, 171 (fig. 66) and 309; and Keith 2011, 210–11 and DM 4020; cf. Bruyère 1939, 309; Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0156_016; and Keith 2011, 152–3.

[681] Compare Bruyère 1939, 308 and Demarée 1983, 30.

[682] Bruyère 1939, 309; for the stela see also Demarée 1983, A 23, 67–8.

[683] In the publication Bruyère indicates that the stela was found in the corridor of house C. VI (1939, 310). This relatively specific indication of the find spot is somewhat odd, because the notebook seems to provide different information. The record for 3 and 4 March 1935 says: "Ranke bought a stela of the *3ḫ-jḳr* Baki for us" (cf. Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0156_ 020). On the next page the present stela is drawn (cf. Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0156_021). Since no find of a similar stela is recorded in the notebooks it is plausible that both stelae were identical. This means that the stela of Baki was *not* found in the house. The indication of the find spot in Bruyère's publication is thus most probably an interpretation based on the finds of objects possibly related to other members of this family (see also **Cat. 5.5**). This is important because the present stela is an important element of the hypothesis that the ancestor cults were related to the niches (Demarée 1983, 30). To be fair it should be noted that Bruyère's notebooks were not yet easily accessible in the 1980s and that there was no reason to doubt Bruyère's indication of the find spot. In view of the family relations between the respective ancestors the idea that ancestor cults were performed for these people in house C. VI is still plausible. Nevertheless, it is crucial to emphasize the fact that the

relations between the men indicate, however, that the two stelae—and most probably also the busts—belonged together and were used in the same religious context.[684]

Bruyère suggested the bust[685] might have been located in the largest niche (B),[686] a convincing hypothesis since only niche B (60 x 28 x 30 cm) could have housed the bust which has an height of 23 cm. A limestone frame would then have filled the remaining about 35 cm. However, no frame dedicated to ancestor cults has emerged from Deir el-Medina or any other location for that matter. These frames seem to have borne inscriptions with formulae of specific gods only. It has been shown above that these frames were not mandatory building elements but decorative additions. The bust might have looked somewhat lost in empty space, so a base might have lain beneath the base, thereby compensating for the void. Again, no base related to the ancestor cults is known from Deir el-Medina, but the base and object placed on it may not have been dedicated to the same beneficiary.

The second bust (h. 18 cm)[687] would have fit next to the first bust in niche B. Conversely, if the bust did not stand on a base, niche A (20 x 18 x 20 cm) could have housed it. As yet another alternative, the stela of Baki (i) (19 x 15 x 3 cm) might have stood in niche A. The tiny fragment of the stela of Mose (i) (7 x 9 x 2.5 cm) suggests that the complete stela's dimensions would have been much larger than 10 cm in height, thereby forbidding a potential location in niche C (10 x 20 x 20 cm). Put differently, although the dimensions of those objects related to the ancestral cults might have permitted their placement in the niches A and B, no find would have fit into niche C (h. 10 cm).

Another object possibly connected to the cult of the *ꜣḫ-jḳr* performed in house C. VI come from the second room: an *ꜣḫ-jḳr*-offering table of a lady Irtynefer (**Cat. 5.13**).[688] Based on the family coherence outlined above, the Baki (i) stood as a distant family member. Baki (i) was the father of Qaha (i),[689] whose brother, Hay (ii), was married to Tamehyt (ii).[690] Their daughter (i.e. the granddaughter of Baki (i)) Hathor/Hunero (viii) was married to Nebamentet (i), son of Kasa (i),[691] and Nebamentet (i)'s sister Amentetwosret (i) was married to Penbuy (i),[692] who was also married

present find spot is again an interpretation rather than the record of the actual excavation of the present object. Publication of Louvre E. 16369; cf. Demarée 1983, 29–30.

[684] Compare also Demarée 1983, 29–30, 67–8 and 286–7.

[685] Louvre E. 16348; cf. Andreu 2002, 142, no. 86; Bruyère 1939, 171 (fig. 66) and 309; and Keith 2011, 210–11.

[686] Bruyère 1939, 171 (fig. 66) and 308. For the identification of Baki (i) the son of Wennefer (i): Demarée 1983, A 7, 29–30.

[687] DM 4020; cf. Bruyère 1939, 309; Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0156_016; and Keith 2011, 152–3.

[688] Bruyère 1939, 310 (fig. 181). Demarée 1983, B 4, 148–9.

[689] Davies 1999, chart 3.

[690] Davies 1999, chart 5.

[691] Davies 1999, chart 5.

[692] Davies 1999, chart 28. Davies is in doubt whether Amentetwosret (i) was Kasa (i)'s daughter or sister, cf. Davies 1999, 195. Another problem is the question whether Penbuy (i) was married to the two women at once or not: Davies 1999, 194. For the reconstruction of a possible family relation between Irtynefer (i) with Baki (i), however, these minor details are irrelevant.

to Irtynefer (i) the daughter of Sennedjem (i).[693] In an extended family clan, Irtynefer (i) would thus be a distant granddaughter-in-law of Baki (i).

The family of Irtynefer (i) may have worshipped her memory together with these rather distant relatives. The crucial question here is to what extent actual family relations of different people were still known after several generations. In modern Egypt, people would generally know their place in a particular family and can name their great ancestors.[694] Exact family ties of the different generations could, however, become somewhat blurred in the tradition. The family of the foreman Baki (i) lived in the 19th dynasty,[695] which indicates the objects were still in use in the 20th dynasty and must have arrived in the household assemblage of house C. VI by means of vertical cycling. The family of Baki (i) was apparently still known as great ancestors of the village, but the people worshipping him as their ancestor might not have been able to draw the precise family tree. Assuming that the offering table of the lady Irtynefer (i) (**Cat. 5.13**) was found in its context of use, two possible scenarios come to the fore: either the ancestor cults in the 20th dynasty included distant family members as part of the great tradition or any ancient offering table related to the ancestor cult was good enough for reuse. That an ancestor cult for the family of Baki (i) was still ongoing in the 20th dynasty should occasion no surprise given his family's status in the village. It belonged to the most important clans in Deir el-Medina.[696] His offspring lived until the middle of the 20th dynasty,[697] perhaps even longer, and might have performed his cult until the end of the 20th dynasty.[698] Significantly, the objects were not moved when the house was abandoned, an unexpected situation considering their small size and portability. The finds discussed above can thus be interpreted as *de facto refuse*[699] and therefore prove the function of niches A and B as related to the ancestor cult. By the end of the 20th dynasty, the ancestor tradition had apparently become but an empty shell, the objects no longer deemed important enough to be kept.[700]

As previously mentioned, no finds bear any clear connection to the third niche. Within the setting of ancestor cults, a more important ancestor may have received veneration here, one taken away when house C. VI was left behind. Alternatively, the object could have disappeared from the assemblage through theft, early and/or illegal excavation, or simply decay. Other objects found in the house might have been situated in the niche, however, (the fragment of) a statuette of a lion (**Cat. 10.57**) serving as one

[693] Davies 1999, chart 29. For references on a few cases of polygamy in Ancient Egypt focussing on the 18th dynasty sources: S. Whale, *The Family in the Eighteenth Dynasty of Egypt. A Study of the Representation of the Family in Private Tombs*, *The Australian Centre for Egyptology: Studies* 1, Sydney 1989, 247–50; for the cases from Deir el-Medina cf. Toivari-Viitala 2001, 87–8.

[694] Research in oral cultures has shown that people usually remember a time span of about 80 to 100 years in which the so-called we-identity ("*Wir-Identität*") is located, cf. J. Assmann 2000, 38.

[695] Demarée 1983, A 7, 29–30.

[696] Davies 1999, 2.

[697] Davies 1999, 12.

[698] Davies 1999, 3.

[699] Meaning the object was still usable and refused when the inhabitants left the house: Schiffer 1985, 26.

[700] I would rather exclude the possibility that the object has been lost. It seems unreasonable that someone would lose the bust of a deified ancestor.

example. In view of the parallels from Deir el-Medina (e.g. **Cat. 10.5**),[701] the fragment was probably part of a sphinx representing a deified king. No name has been preserved or recorded, so the king's identity remains uncertain. Perhaps we can exclude Amenhotep I, who was not—as far as I know—worshipped in the shape of a sphinx at Deir el-Medina. Although the goddess Meretseger also appeared in form of a sphinx,[702] this manifestation has only been documented in graffiti and on stelae,[703] which would make this object the first known cult image. Bruyère did not record the statuette's size, but he did indicate a certain smallness, so it could potentially have stood in the niche. Nevertheless, no evidence hints at the object's involvement in the cult.

Yet another object possibly placed in a niche is the stela by Penmennefer (i) (**Cat. 11.47**). Though too high (16 cm) for niche C (10 cm x 20 cm x 20 cm), it could have fit into both A (20 cm x 18 cm x 20 cm) and B (60 cm x 28 cm x 30 cm), thereby challenging the preceding argument. Containing prayer to Re and Amun, the stela is one of few comparable stelae found in the domestic context. Little is known about the guardian Penmennefer (i),[704] so his relationship to the family traced above is difficult to establish. While the name's latest attestation is the first year of Ramesses IV, this figure may not be the same workman Penmennefer alive during the reign of Ramesses V.[705] Regardless, the guardian Penmennefer (i) could have been one of the house's later inhabitants.[706]

[701] Another one is mentioned in Bruyère 1939, 311 without further information. A third one, found somewhere between P. 1404 and the village is mentioned in the notebook only: Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0156_010: "[...] (pharaoh?) son of Re Amenmesses, beloved of Amun, Amun-Re [...] lord [...] beloved [...] ([...] (*pr ʿ3?*) *s3 Rᶜ Imn-mss mry Imn Imn-Rᶜ* [...] *nb* [...] *mr* [...])" Amenmesses was a king in the 19th dynasty, who reigned for two years only from 1202–1200 BCE (cf. Hornung, Krauss and Warburton 2006, 493). The fragment is thus correctly termed sphinx by Bruyère. The question is, whether the "Amun-Re" following the cartouche should not preferably be read as *Mn-mj-Rᶜ*, which was Amenmesses' throne name (cf. Beckerath 1995, 158–9). The reading "*pr ʿ3*" would require reading two houses (Gardiner O1) underneath Gardiner O29 instead of the odd sign and two "*t*-signs" (Gardiner X1). The former spelling of "pharaoh" is typical of the 18th to 20th dynasty; see for example, *TLA*, *DZA* 23.309.010. As to the find spot it is unclear whether or not the statuette was village material. For Amenmesses is considered the rival king of Seti II (cf. Hornung, Krauss and Warburton 2006, 213) it would be plausible that his statue was thrown away when he resigned. The present fragment has not been published by Bruyère. No further information is available in the notebooks.

[702] Compare Exell 2009, 40–1.

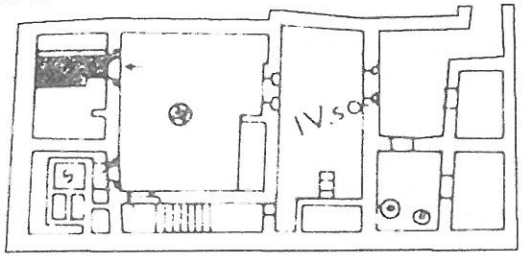
[703] Compare Exell 2009, 40–1, quoting Brunner-Traut 1956, 90–1, pl. 33 and Cabrol 2001, 378–9, note 628.

[704] Davies 1999, 197–9.

[705] Davies 1999, 197.

[706] As has been suggested by Davies 1999, 198.

S.O. VI



(fig. 22)

Another interesting case is the niche in house S.O. VI.[707] In addition to the cupboard of the first room (already discussed above, pp. 62–3), Bruyère found a niche or more ("*ou plusieurs*") in the west wall between the doors in the house's second room,[708] possibly in the wall behind a small altar (see above).[709] Apart from the possible door frame and the roof of a cultic emplacement, many of the fragments could have been related to the niche.

Other finds from house S.O. VI consist of the fragments belonging to a painted wooden door wing of a small cultic emplacement, which depicts the goddess Mut (**Cat. 4.52**).[710] Bruyère having reconstructed the door wing's original size as measuring 24 cm x 18 cm, calculation of additional space for pivot holes etc. would give the original width of the whole cultic emplacement a measure of at least 40 cm (if it had had a double door wing).[711] Unfortunately, Bruyère did not record the niche's size, which makes it particularly difficult to argue for or against specific fragments even in a theoretical manner.

Typically Mut wears a vulture cap or the double crown, revealing her main aspects as mother goddess and the manifestation of kingship.[712] Amun's spouse and mother of Khonsu, Mut was worshipped as part of a divine triad at Karnak temple. One might therefore expect the goddess Mut to appear in the official realm rather than in this domestic context. Unfortunately, the text on the door wing does not reveal its owner's name.[713] It would have been interesting to know whether, for example, the person or his family was professionally related to the temple of Amun in Karnak, argued for the family of Prehotep (i) above (p. 84). Remembering Baines' ideas concerning *decorum* one could imagine a restricted system in which only a family tradition entitled people to worship

[707] Note the wrong number on the map.

[708] Bruyère 1939, 331.

[709] Bruyère 1939, 331.

[710] Bruyère 1939, 332 and fig. 204.

[711] Mendéz has recently shown that wooden doors could also be attached to stelae; cf. G. Menédez, 'Deir el-Medina Inscriptions in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo: A Preliminary Report', *Bulletin of the Egyptian Museum* 6 (2009), 29 and pl. VI. Aside from a niche or altar, a use of the doorwing to cover a stela would be yet another possibility. I would like to thank Konstantin Lakomy for kindly drawing my attention to the present article.

[712] H. te Velde, 'Mut and Other Egyptian Goddesses', in: J. Phillips (ed.), *Ancient Egypt, The Aegean, and the Near* East II, San Antonio 1997, 459–60.

[713] The text says: *Mw.t wr.t nb.t pt ḥnw.t nṯr.w (...) jr.n sḏm ʿš (...)*. The text reveals the title "Servant in the Place of the Truth" (*sḏm ʿš*), but not the name.

certain state gods at home. In fact, little archaeological evidence witnesses to the goddess Mut at the village, and of those few objects, most have turned out to be tomb rather than village material.[714] Others come from the "*station du repos*" (i.e. the area of the huts between the Valley of the Kings and the village)[715]—, the only exception being **Cat. 4.3** (see below p. 73).

Textual evidence support a professional relationship of Sennedjem (i)'s sons with the goddess Mut. A far as I am aware, the only reference depicting a workman with the title "servant of Mut" is stela Turin 50135.[716] The other two known sources of titles related to the goddess Mut refer to women.[717] As for Turin 50135, Kitchen has reconstructed the name Bennakht as Bennakht[ef],[718] a convincing since proposal, since—as far as I know—no Bennakht is attested at Deir el-Medina,[719] whereas a deputy Bennakhtef (or Bennakhtuf (i) as Davies calls him) is known as the son of Sennedjem (i).[720] Bennakhtuf (ii) almost certainly does not appear on stela Turin 50134 since he was a wood-cutter[721] and could probably not have afforded an expensive limestone votive stela. To sum up, we are dealing with a door wing of a cultic emplacement (**Cat. 4.54**) dedicated to the goddess Mut in house S.O. VI, which has been identified as the house of Sennedjem (i) whose son Bennakhtuf (i), at least one source identifies as a follower of Mut. It is tempting to assume this is no coincidence. In fact, another son of Sennedjem (i), Khabekhnet (i), was also related to the goddess Mut in some manner, as the elaborated depiction of her temple area in his tomb (TT 2) implies.[722] From this depiction, some scholars have assumed Khabekhnet (i) and his family might have had temple access during festivals,[723] but regardless the depiction in Khabekhnet (i)'s tomb is yet another piece of evidence that relates the Sennedjem (i) family to the goddess Mut. Finding (fragments of) a wooden shrine door dedicated to the goddess Mut in his house would thus lie well within the realm of possibility. Khabekhnet (i) did not live in house S.O. VI

[714] E.g. Turin Cat. N. 50201; cf. Tosi and Roccati 1972, 175 and 336 and Turin Cat. N. 50207 (lintel) and Turin Cat. N. 50211 (doorposts); cf. Tosi and Roccati 1972, 182–3 and 339.

[715] E.g. Louvre E. 32819; cf. Bruyère 1939, pl. XVI, 1.

[716] Tosi and Roccati 1972, 144–5 and 316 and *KRI* III, 701:15, cf. Davies 1999, 44.

[717] E.g. Turin Cat. N. 50219; cf. Tosi and Roccati 1972, 187–8 and 344. The same title may also be attested on stela Turin 50219, which shows a "chantress of Mut" (*šm^cy.t*), cf. Valbelle 1985, 329 and on stela Turin 50066 (formerly numbered cat. 1601 and as such quoted by Černý) the wife of Ramose bears the title *ḥsy n Mw.t* ("praised one of Mut"), cf. Černý 1973, 327. The stelae have been published by Tosi and Roccati 1972, 102–3 and 187–8.

[718] *KRI* III, 701, 15.

[719] The Bennakhtuf on ostracon Turin 57005 (not recognized by Lopez, but see the Deir el-Medina database) can be excluded, since the ostracon is most probably not from Deir el-Medina. This is clear from the fact that it was acquired by Drovetti and also because *Pn-jnw-ḫr* (line 5) is not known from the village, cf. J. López, *Ostraca Ieratici III–I, N. 57001–92*, Milano 1978, 18 and pl. 9a. Demarée has kindly mentioned to me that a man called Bennakht is attested on a fragment known from the 20th dynasty. On P. Turin 2098+2100, rt. 4 a *P3-k3mn s3 Bn-nḫt=f* appears. Nothing further is yet known about this man, so at this stage of research this find does not invalidate Kitchen's reconstruction.

[720] Davies 1999, 44 and chart 7. Davies also suggests that Bennakhtuf (i) is identical with Bunakhtef (i).

[721] Davies 1999, 44.

[722] Recently, A. Schlüter, *Sakrale Architektur im Flachbild. Zum Realitätsbezug von Tempeldarstellungen*, *ÄAT* 78, Wiesbaden 2009, 46–7, with figures and references.

[723] Exell 2009, 22 and A. Cabrol, 'Une représentation de la tombe de Khâbekhnet et les dromos de Karnak-Sud: Nouvelles hypothèses. Les béliers du dromos du temple Khonsu et l'intérieurs de l'enceinte du temple de Mout', *Cahiers Karnak X*, Cairo 1995, 32–64 and A Cabrol, *Les voies processionnelles de Thèbes*, *OLA* 97, Leuven 2001, 262–66 and see recently K. and A. Schlüter 2009, 361–9, esp. 362–4.

but next door, in house S.O. V.[724] The later descendant of this family might still have inhabited this part of the village and reused the religious material. Moreover, though only speculation, the fragment of a stela dedicated to the "cat of Mut"[725] might have been worshipped by the same family, the object found in *Kom Sud*, which is considered as dumping ground for village material and lies not far away from the house.

Another fragment of a cultic emplacement's base also arouse in the second room of house S.O. VI and reveals the name of somebody (N.N.) whose daughter is called Tatenet (**Cat. 4.55**).[726] Davies' prosopography does not account for the name, listing only those people from Deir el-Medina about whom more information is known. At this point, then, reconstructing the name of the father who probably owned the limestone base remains an impossible task. Also unclear is whether this fragment came from its more or less original context. Another stela Bruyère that neither described nor published in any detail suffers from the same ambiguity (**Cat. 11.51**).

In conclusion, one of the niches in house S.O. VI may have been dedicated to the goddess Mut. Whereas the niche dedicated to Amun was exceptionally large and framed in black, no evidence has been recorded for this niche's enhanced decoration or size. The location of the (two) niches of the second room—possibly in the wall behind an altar and opposite the *divan*—might, however, stress the importance of the goddess. The number and variety of religious finds within house S.O. VI is also remarkable. Apparently, the descendants of Sennedjem (i)'s clan were highly engaged in religious activities at home.

2.3.4. Frames of Niches

Because of the difficulties inherently involved in interpretations based on artifacts, the following proposals will remain tentative. The find spot of most frames may, in fact, have lain close to their cultic emplacements. At the same time, relating frames to altars and niches does not always prove possible on account of former recording techniques (see chapter 1.4.1) and the village's state of preservation at Bruyère's arrival. As it happens,

[724] Bruyère 1939, 325.

[725] Unpublished small "*ex-voto*" of the cat of Mut, the text is written in black ink: Transcription: "[...] *mjw(.t) nfr.t n Mw.t* [...] *mjw(.t)* [...];" translation: "[...] beautiful cat of Mut [...] cat [...];" cf. Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0151_008. This fragment was apparently part of a parallel inscription running to both sides from the middle. The epithet is a variant or combination of typical epitets known from the New Kingdom (cf. *LGG* III, 242 with references) not listed in the *LGG*. The latter knows "the beautiful cat of Re" and "the large cat of Mut" (*LGG* III, 242). The cat of Mut was possibly related to the goddess Mut by a pun of *my.t* ("cat," cf. *Wb* II, 42.4-7) and *Mw.t* (the name of the goddess; cf. *Wb* II, 53.11); cf. H. Te Velde, 'The Cat as Sacred Animal of the Goddess Mut', in: M. Heerma van Voss, D.J. Hoens, G. Mussies, D. van der Plas and H. Te Velde (eds), *Studies in Egyptian Religion dedicated to Professor Zandee*, *Studies in the History of Religions (Supplements to Numen)* 43, Leiden 1982, 132–3. By a similar word play *my.t* can be related to the god Re, who is sometimes called a tom-cat (*mjw*, cf. *Wb* II, 42.1-3) (cf. e.g. E. Otto, 'Die Ätiologie des "großen Katers" in Heliopolis', *ZÄS* 81 (1956), 65–6). The cat of Mut thus symbolizes the role of the goddess Mut as daughter or eye of the god Re (cf. Te Velde 1982, 132). Its typical iconography is a sitting cat with its head facing to the front, cf. A. Gasse, *Catalogue des ostraca figurés de Deir el-Médineh. Nos. 3100–3372*, Cairo 1986, 7 and pl. VIII. No further information is available in Bruyère's notebooks.

[726] Bruyère renders the name as *T3-rnp.t*: Bruyère 1939, 332 and pl. XIX, 9. The phonetic complement *n* for *rnp.t* would be rather odd. It seems Bruyère misinterpreted the *tj*-sign (Gardiner U43) as *rnp*-sign (Gardiner M4).

the majority of frames have come from houses without any cultic emplacements. Accounting for this dearth, most frames were probably parts of niches. Niches were often situated at a considerable height above floor level, about 1–1,60 m (see table 3), which made them susceptible to quick destruction when the walls collapsed. Consequently, "invisible niches" may be related to artifacts discovered in the context of their respective houses.

N.E. VIII

Schiaparelli and Möller excavated house N.E. VIII before Bruyère arrived at the site, the house also situated in an area of the village poorly preserved. Nevertheless, it was one of the village's larger houses (see fig. 15), inhabited by the foreman Qaha (i) and possibly his descendants at some point (see above; p. 73).[727] The doorpost (**Cat. 4.4**) of a cultic emplacement of Ramose (i) is thus difficult to explain. Both the foreman Qaha (i) and senior scribe Ramose (i) are attested from the early years Ramesses II's reign until his 38th year,[728] which makes it rather unlikely they inhabited the house at the same time despite their distant familial relationship.[729] Rather wealthy, Ramose (i) had served in a state temple before he came to Deir el-Medina (see also above; p. 22).[730] He and Mutemwia (i) were apparently childless,[731] but they did adopt Qenhirkhopshef (i) who later became senior scribe.[732] Qenhirkhopshef (i)'s work hut stood as "the most spacious and luxurious"[733] and his profession might have allowed him to move into the biggest house of the village.[734] As a result of this position—and since Ramose (i)'s wife Mutemwia (i), was considerably younger than her husband[735]— Ramose (i) and Qenhirkhopshef (i) might have inhabited the house N.E. VIII subsequently. His close

[727] Bruyère 1939, 251–2.

[728] Davies 1999, 279 and 283.

[729] Qaha (i)'s sister Webkhet (i)/(iv) was married to Harnefer (i), who was the brother of the great-great-grandfather of Ramose (i)'s wife Mutemwia (i), cf. Davies 1999, charts 1 and 22.

[730] Davies 1999, 79.

[731] This is suggested by two observations: first, the couple remained childless and second, Ramose (i) is known to have offered a phallus to Hathor in the community chapel that is inscribed with a text. Because of the shape of the votiv object, the text is usually interpreted as the wish to conceive a child; cf. Bruyère 1952, 15–6. The relevant text passage has been reproduced by Pinch (see also her discussion 1993, 241–3): "*jm ssp=j bȝk.w n pr=t kwj* (sic!)" ("Cause that I receive the revenues of your temple!") and "*jm mn m pr=t m-dj=k*" ("Cause to be established in your temple to be in your hand"). The grammatical problems may be caused by an inaccurate transcription of the text.

[732] Davies 1999, 84. This conclusion needs to be checked with the results of the mapping of the area by Finnish mission, yet unpublished; cf. J. Toivari-Viitala, T. Alsheimer, A. Eklund and Virpi Perunka, *Workmen's huts in the Theban Mountains Project. Preliminary Report of the Work Performed during the Season 2010*, Helsinki 2010; cf. http://www.egyptologinenseura.fi/fieldwork/Preliminary% 20Report_ Toivari-VIitala_Academy%20of%20 Finland_Season2010_for%20ASAE.pdf; accessed on 29 July 2013.

[733] Davies 1999, 85 referring to Bruyère 1939, 349.

[734] The idea that the size of a house reflects the owner's status is in line with Ricke 1967, 13–68 and Roik 1988, 31. By contrast, Neunert states that their conclusions cannot be applied to the living conditions at Deir el-Medina, since the inhabitants of the village were an "*an sich eigene Gruppe der Gesellschaft*," cf. Neunert 2010, 39–40. That Neunert's criticism of the term prestige is somewhat problematic has been argued above (see note 64)

[735] Compare the family tree as shown in Davies 1999, 89. Davies even suggests a "political maneuvering," which does not necessarily involve differences in age.

relationship with Qaha (i) could allow for a friendly takeover.[736] In this scenario, the family of Qenhirkhopshef (i) inhabited house N.E. VIII after Qaha (i)'s retirement or death.[737] Although this hypothesis cannot, of course, be proven, it remains a plausible reconstruction nonetheless. The close relationship between Qaha (i) and Qenhirkhopshef (i) could explain why Qaha (i)'s doorpost remained *in situ*, but his cult ostensibly continued elsewhere (see above; p. 86).

Unfortunately, the doorpost fragment dedicated by Ramose (i) (**Cat. 4.4**) has preserved no divine name. As is clear from its size, it did not belong to another right doorpost (**Cat. 4.3**) found in the same house, N.E. VIII. Almost twice the width, **Cat. 4.3** is much bigger, and inscribed with a partially preserved offering formula dedicated to the goddess Mut. Here, too, no name remains, but Möller did find a scarab dedicated to the goddess Mut in the same house (**Cat. 9.1**). These finds thus suggest the goddess Mut was worshipped in the house. Stela BM 278[738] shows Qenhirkhopshef (i)'s grandchildren-in-law—namely Qenhirkhopshef (iv) (the son of Qenhirkhopshef (i)'s wife, Naunakhte (i), and her second husband, Khaemnun (i), and his mother, Naunakhte (i), along with Qenhirkhopshef (iv)'s sons, Nebsetau (ii) and Amenemheb (ix)—worshipping the gods Hathor, Amun, Re, and Mut. Though not found in the village context, the stela does demonstrate relationship with the goddess Mut, among other divinities. Still, this find cannot prove that the family occupied house N.E. VIII.

Möller also uncovered a pictorial ostracon showing a man with a fattened bull on a leash.[739] Above the drawing, the name Hay appears. Contrary to the hypothesis elaborated above, this ostracon could also indicate the descendants of Qaha (i) lived in house N.E. VIII. In fact, a man called Hay (iv) was the grandson of Qaha (i),[740] and this Hay (iv)'s son was called Hay (vii) as well.[741] No known source describes Hay as a member of the extended clan of Qenhirkhopshef (i), his wife, Naunakhte (i) and her second husband, Khaemnun (i).[742] Hay was, however, a fairly common name in Deir el-Medina,[743] and it is unclear which Hay is attested here. Furthermore, the lower side of the ostracon seems blackened by smoke or fire. As with the frames, such traces might indicate religious burnings (see below; chapter 3.2.2.2). If so, the ostracon with the fattened bull,[744] found in house N.E. VIII, might have been used as a model meat offering burned on an altar or in a niche, perhaps one dedicated to the goddess Mut. Uncertain is whether the Egyptians would have attributed any significance to ostracon also portraying a man, perhaps Hay, in possession of the ox.[745]

[736] Davies 1999, 85.

[737] Eyre has suggested that the houses remained property of the tomb's administration, cf. Eyre 1987, 170. This would facilitate the moving of families to different houses, but there is no conclusive argument to prove his idea.

[738] Bierbrier 1982a, 37–8 and pl. 86.

[739] O. Berlin ÄMP 21439; found in *Grabungsstelle* D1 = N.E. VIII; cf. Möller, *Fundjournal*, 128 and Brunner-Traut 1956, 106, no. 110, pl. XXXV.

[740] Davies 1999, chart 7.

[741] Davies 1999, chart 8.

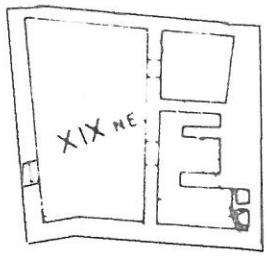
[742] Davies 1999, charts 22 and 25.

[743] Davies lists 14 men with that name: 1999, 289–90.

[744] O. Berlin ÄMP 21439; cf. Brunner-Traut 1956, 106, no. 110, pl. XXXV.

[745] See chapter 3.2.2.2 below for a detailed analysis of this aspect.

N.E. XIX



(fig. 23)

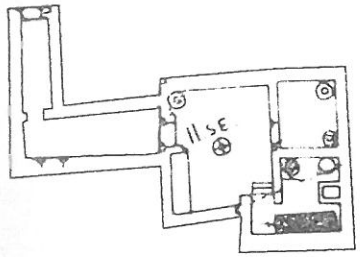
In house N.E. XIX, a cultic emplacement might have played a role in the ancestor cult. The record is particularly unclear, though. While the frame fragment (**Cat. 4.10**) found in the house was left undecorated, the only find in the same house is an offering table dedicated to the *ɜḫ-jḳr-n-Rᶜ* of Paheripedjet (**Cat. 5.4**). It is unclear which of the three known men called Paheripedjet is attested here (see also below; p. 124),[746] but all three were distantly related. Both Qaha (i) and his wife, Tuy (i), had a brother named Paheripedjet, (i) and (ii) respectively.[747] This family tradition might explain why the daughter of Qaha (i)'s wife, Takhat (ii), whom she had with her new husband, Kel (i), namely the lady Pashedet (i), called her son Paheripedjet (iii). Although all three men could have had their own ancestor cults, little evidence sheds light on any of these figures, nor did they or their descendants definitely live in house N.E. XIX. In the house's vicinity, Möller found other objects potentially related to religious activities, however, since Möller's excavation zone did not fully correspond to Bruyère's house numbers, these finds are difficult to correlate to the cultic emplacement under discussion.[748] Möller's system offers three find places that could potentially correspond with house N.E. XIX or the neighboring houses.[749] For proper interpretation, such artifactual discovery locations would be essential. The finds in (the area of) house N.E. XIX[750] could thus support a variety of cults. Regardless, a bust[751] further supports family ancestor cults in the house. Fertility cults also find attestation in the house, as indicated by a female figurine (**Cat. 10.14**), the head of a Bes-image (**Cat. 10.15**), and the upper part of another

[746] Davies 1999, 9, note 97 argues that it showed Paheripedjet (i), but the evidence for this identification remain unclear.
[747] Davies 1999, 1 and 3.
[748] See also the *Introduction to the Catalogue*.
[749] Möller's *Grabungsstelle* D10 refers to the houses N.E. XVI and N.E. XIX. Möller's *Grabungsstelle* D11 refers to house N.E. XVII and N.E. XIX and Möller's *Grabungsstelle* D probably describes the area of the surface finds around the houses N.E. VIII–XIX; cf. Anthes 1943, 55.
[750] The finds from the *Grabungsstelle* D have been excluded from the following summary. This find indication is certainly too vague to provide insight into the religious activities possibly performed in house N.E. XIX.
[751] Möller, *Fundjournal*, 412; cf. Anthes 1943, 59 and Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0156_037.

Bes-image playing a flute made of green faience (**Cat. 10.17**).[752] Religious activities involving Bes-images and female figurines may have had some connection.[753]

Besides cults directly related to the family, royal ancestors may also have been worshipped in the house. A relief fragment showing the body of a king (**Cat. 11.22**) and a cult image of what seems to be a king (**Cat. 10.13**) both suggest such activity. The figure drawn on a pictorial ostracon might also be identified as a royal representation (**Cat. 11.23**). Finally, inscribed on a statuette is a hymn related to the sun cult (**Cat. 10.16**). In sum, Möller's finds incorporate a variety of religious objects indicating religious activities, some likely performed in relation to house N.E. XIX's cultic emplacement.

S.E. II



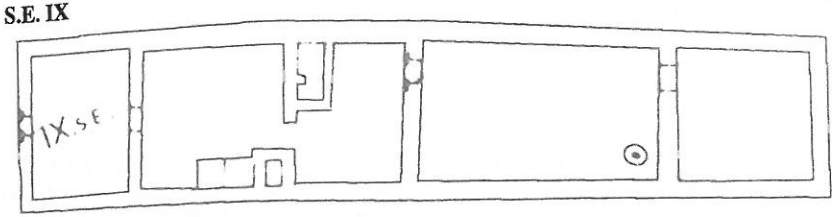
(fig. 24)

House S.E. II has yielded the fragment of another cultic emplacement. In the corridor behind the large house altar situated in the neighboring house S.E. I[754] Bruyère supposedly found a large lintel dedicated to the goddess Renenutet adored by Nebdjefa (i) and his son Harnefer (i) (**Cat. 4.14**). Since Bruyère did not provide the size,[755] original location of the structure is difficult to prove. Furthermore, little evidence supports the hypothesis that these altars were closed constructions rather than open platforms like found elsewhere in the village.[756] In the context of house S.E. I, the north wall (i.e. opposite of the large house altar) preserves the remains of a polychrome wall painting that portrays the feet of four females (h. 28 cm; w. 122 cm).[757] Bruyère's reconstruction is highly tentative.[758] The positioning of the indicates three standing women facing a sitting one. Rather than representing the population living in the Nile valley[759] in front of the

[752] Note that **Cat. 10.17** was found in *Grabungsstelle* D11, i.e. N.E. XVII/N.E. XIX.
[753] This idea is supported by the fact that both types of figurines could be painted in red (e.g. **Cat. 10.11**).
[754] Bruyère 1939, 267.
[755] Bruyère 1939, 264.
[756] For example, Bruyère developed a model of three types of these altars, that has never been applied to his records. Apparently, Bruyère presented a hypothesis of how these altars might have looked like and never meant to present a typology; cf. Weiss, 2010a, 196.
[757] B. Bruyère, 'Un fragment de fresque de Deir el Médineh', *BIFAO* 22 (1923), 122.
[758] Bruyère 1923, 132.
[759] Bruyère 1923, 123.

goddess Hathor,[760] the arrangement of figures evokes childbirth or toilet scenes resembling those on pictorial ostraca.[761] The relationship of this wall painting to the house altar also persists in dubiety. No other finds illuminate possible religious activities performed in the house. Similarly, the lintel fragment not necessarily identifies Harnefer (i) and Nebdjefa (i) as inhabitants of the house,[762] since the two men found widespread attestation. For example, an ostracon with Harnefer came from house N.E. XII (**Cat. 11.11**), while Nebdjefa (i)'s offering grill emerged from house S.O. III (**Cat. 7.2**), neither in the vicinity of house S.E. I nor S.E. II. Nebdjefa (i) and his son Harnefer (i) both lived in the first half of the reign of Ramesses II,[763] their ancestor cult perhaps overruled by the powerful cult of their own ancestor, Baki (i),[764] and their possessions used by different families.

S.E. IX



(fig. 25)

In house S.E. IX, Bruyère found the fragment of a lintel dedicated to the god Sobek-Re (**Cat. 4.20**), and the same house has also yielded a so-called *jeu de la nature* in the shape of a crocodile.[765] A small stone object whose natural shape was enhanced by pen strokes, thereby forming the object into a particular image,[766] this *jeu de la nature* shows a crocodile in front of a lotus plant or perhaps an offering table. The offering table clearly identifies the object as a cult image, not a toy, which thus substantiates interpretation of the stone image as religiously significant. In this case, the crocodile image and the lintel (**Cat. 4.20**) may bear some connection. The crocodile image could have served as a cult image situated in a small cultic emplacement somewhere in house S.E. IX. A right doorpost (**Cat. 4.22**) found in the same house might constitute another fragment of this cultic emplacement. This doorpost reveals no divine name, but shows a woman in

[760] Bruyère 1923, 133.
[761] G. Pinch, 'Childbirth and Female Figurines at Deir el-Medina and Amarna', *Orientalia* 52 (1983), 407.
[762] Cf. Neunert 2010, 38.
[763] Davies 1999, 88.
[764] Harnefer (i) was married to Webkhet (i)/(iv), the daughter of Baki (i), who might still have been worshipped at the end of the 20th dynasty, while little is known about the children and grandchildren of Harnefer (i) and Webkhet (i)/(iv), cf. Davies 1999, chart 22. The question is thus whether everybody could become a worshipped ancestor or whether only distinguished members of certain families had their own cults.
[765] Bruyère 1939, 276 (fig. 149), and 277; Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0155_010 and Keimer 1940, 12–15 and fig. 11.
[766] Studied in detail by L. Keimer, 'Jeux de la nature retouchés par la main de l'homme, provenant de Deir el-Médineh (Thèbes) et remontant au Nouvel-Empire', *Études d'Égyptologie* II, Cairo 1940.

prayerful disposition. Based on its size, the doorpost probably did not belong to any functional door. Its smoothly-finished sides, moreover, might indicate that the frame was not an element built-in. It could have been part of a free-standing cultic emplacement with a roof (**Cat. 4.21**), i.e., a naos. Hence, at least two cultic emplacements may have stood in the house.

The large number of finds relatable to religions practices suggests such activities did take place in the house (see also below p. 174). Although Bruyère published only a portion of his finds, the notebook implies all objects were found together on a single day in house S.E. IX or at least in its vicinity.[767] The base of a statue attesting the names Amennakht and Huy provides one clue in this regard.[768] Though both names appear frequently at Deir el-Medina,[769] the combination of the two occurs on one object and may hence suggest a close family relation. Amennakht (ii) and his father, Huy (iii)/(vi)/(vii)/(ix), may be attested here.[770] Unfortunately, they have no connection to the other names attested in the house. While Hay of the letter (P. DeM III, rt. 7–9, see above; p. 61) referring to a festival for the god Sobek[771] could potentially be Hay (iii)//v) son of Huy (iii)/(vi)/(vii)/(ix),[772] such association is pure speculation. The identity of this Hay thus remains unclear. No evidence hints at affinity of any potential inhabitants to the god Sobek, who was worshipped in house S.E. IX. Perhaps another family inhabited the house later and reused their possessions.

According to the names attested on other artifacts found in the house, the family of Maaninakhtuf (i/ii) might have lived in house S.E. IX. Based on that doorpost fragment identifying the parents of Maaninakhtuf (i)—namely, Nefertari (v) and Pashedu (vii)[773]—which was found in house N.O. XV (see also above p. 59), the family of Maaninakhtuf (i) generally occupied this location.[774] Though fathers tended to bequeath their homes to sons, such an arrangement was by now means law (cf., e.g., the argument on the family of Qenhirkhopshef (i) above, p. 95). Remarkably, house S.E. IX may witness not only the name Maaninakhtuf,[775] but also a Juy (**Cat. 5.9**). Maaninakhtuf (i) had a son called

[767] In his notebooks Bruyère mentions that he was excavating the area "*jusqu'au thalweg les dernières maisons du sud*" from east to west on 21 December 1934 (cf. Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0155_010). The finds of that day were divided into the ones found in the north (N) and the ones in the south (S) side. What is highly unclear is the fact that some of the objects from this list have been published as having been found in house S.E. IX, whereas others remained unpublished. It seems plausible that all objects listed by Bruyère were found in the house S.E. IX. At the time when Bruyère wrote the present notebook entry he could not have known the village layout or his later numbering. The exact find spots remain unclear and the objects have hence not been included in the catalogue of this study.
[768] Unpublished: Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0155_010. Fragment of a statuette decorated with text. Transcription: on top: [...] *[sꜣ]=f Imn-nḫ.t* [...] and in front: [...] *Ḥwy mꜣʿ ḫrw sꜣ=f* [...]; Translation: on top: his [son] Amennakht and in front: [...] Huy, justified his son [...] Found on 27 to 28 December 1933, when Bruyère was perhaps still excavating the area around house S.E. IX.
[769] Davies 1999, 286–7 and 291.
[770] Compare Davies 1999, chart 4.
[771] Cf. Jauhiainen 2009, 228, 244 and 246.
[772] P. Boulaq 10, vs. 1, cf. Davies 1999, 19. Hay (iii)/(iv) is the one who is attested in year 8 of Ramesses III, but the letter dates to the middle of the 20th dynasty, cf. Jauhiainen 2009, 228, 244 and 246.
[773] Bruyère 1939, 43 and for the family relations cf. Davies 1999, chart 11.
[774] Davies 1999, 157 and Demarée 1983, 145–6.
[775] A fragment of an offering table attests [...] *n kꜣ n Wsjr sš-ḳd Mꜣꜣ-nḫt=f* [...]; cf. Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0155_010. Most of the other objects found in that area have been published as found in house S.E. IX. In his notebooks Bruyère mentions that he was excavating the area "*jusqu'au thalweg les dernières*

Juy (ii), the uncle of Maaninakhtuf (ii).[776] In addition, Maaninakhtuf (i)'s brother was called Juy (i).[777] The title *ȝḫ-jḳr-n-Rᶜ* attested on the offering table (**Cat. 5.9**), however, has a female ending,[778] though such an indicator may have been a scribal error. Another brother of Maaninakhtuf (ii) was called Pashedu (ix),[779] and while little is known about him, he may have been married to a lady Wadjet (**Cat. 5.8.**), though Davies does not list this couple. This relationship may account for the mother of Maaninakhtuf (ii) having the moniker Noferu (i),[780] perhaps abbreviated Nofret (as attested on the doorpost mentioned earlier **Cat. 4.22**). The question is whether the doorpost of a Pashedu found in the vicinity of the house (**Cat. 4.23**) might have been the one of Pashedu (ix) or possibly Pashedu (vii). Both options seem possible.

The family of Maaninakhtuf (i) is well-known as draftsmen.[781] If indeed the family occupied house S.E. IX, this could be supported by another offering table found in the house (**Cat. 5.20**). Since no filiations have received attestation and the entire reconstruction stems from artifacts, these considerations remain far from certain; nevertheless, the possibility of relating these figures proves quire intriguing.

Not all names attested in the house fit into this web of relations, however. Some find no link to any of those families detailed above. Such is the case with the workman Meria (**Cat. 5.7**), and the workman Nebmehyt (i/ii/iii) (**Cat. 5.22**). Attestation of the latter supports Rob Demarée's alternative interpretation of a female Juy (v) attested on the offering table (**Cat. 5.9**) mentioned above.[782] The lady Juy (v) was the wife of Nefer(em)senut (i) and mother of Paneb (i), hence the grandmother of Nebmehyt (i).[783] If Nebmehyt (i) lived in house S.E. IX at some point, the worship of Juy (v) as an ancestor would make good sense. In this scenario, two names can be linked within the household assemblage of house S.E. IX. Even more, the cluster of houses in the S.E. area would have belonged to the extended family of Nebamentet (i) (see above; p. 79).

In conclusion, it is difficult to identify who lived in house S.E. IX and, even further, who might have served as a religious agent. As with house S.O. VI, the evidence suggests Sobek was worshipped in the house. Apparently, different families inhabited the house at different times and reused the objects from earlier dwellers. Perhaps we do not yet know existing relations or affinities within certain groups or families. The absence of clear evidence for the last inhabitants of the house is quite unfortunate, for the archaeological record reveals a variety of cults performed in the house.

maisons du sud" from east to west on 21 December 1934 (cf. Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0155_010). See also note 767 above. Maaniakhtuf was not a common name at Deir el-Medina, but two of the three men with that name were draftsmen. It could be either Maaniakhtuf (i) son of Pashedu (viii) or Maaniakhtuf (ii) who is attested here (on the family relations cf. Davies 1999, 155–62 and chart 11).

[776] Davies 1999, chart 11.

[777] Davies 1999, chart 11.

[778] Compare the discussion of the identity of a female Juy discussed in **Cat. 5.9**.

[779] Davies 1999, chart 11.

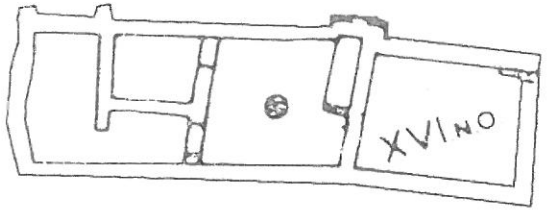
[780] Davies 1999, 162 and chart 11.

[781] Davies 1999, 155–166.

[782] Demarée 1983, 148.

[783] Davies 1999, chart 28.

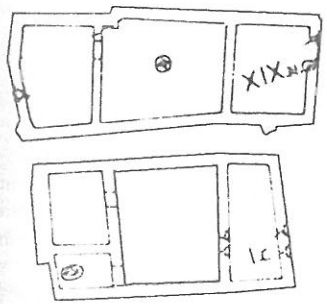
N.O. XVI



(fig. 26)

Bruyère's description of the cultic emplacement in the west wall of house N.O. XVI's second room—with traces of a "*laraire*" between two doors[784]—could refer to either an altar or a niche (see above; p. 55). In view of the rough outer face of relatable frame fragments (**Cat. 4.32** and **Cat. 4.65**, that joins **Cat. 4.32**, but has been found elsewhere), a niche might be more likely. The right doorpost of the frame shows an offering formula dedicated to the goddess Meretseger (**Cat. 4.32**). If this frame decorated a niche in house N.O. XVI's second room, the cult of the goddess Meretseger would therefore have extended beyond the kitchen area. The cult of the goddess Renenutet, attested on another frame fragment (**Cat. 4.33**), would demonstrate a similar extension. Unfortunately, since the exact find locations of these two artifacts in house N.O. XVI (i.e. **Cat. 4.32** and **Cat. 4.33**) have not been recorded, it is difficult to deduce whether one of the two decorated a niche in the house's second room. No other cultic emplacement has been recorded in the house, and it is unclear who inhabited the house.[785]

N.O. XIX-C.I



(fig. 27)

[784] Bruyère 1939, 293.

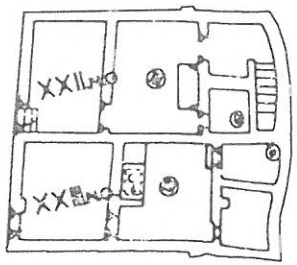
[785] Based on a large doorpost in the house (cf. Bruyère 1939, 293), Neunert (2010, 38) assumes the owner of the house was at some point Amenemheb (ix) son of Qenhirkhopshef (iv) (cf. Davies 1999, 254 and chart 25). The latter doorpost was, however, probably reused material from their tomb (cf. Bruyère 1939, 44–5).

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Also unclear is the uninscribed red-painted frame found in the street south of house N.O. XIX (**Cat. 4.35**). Why Bruyère added the fragment to the find list from house N.O. XIX is further unknown.[786] A fragment of a cultic emplacement's right doorpost (**Cat. 4.36**), a limestone stela dedicated to the goddess Hathor,[787] a further unspecified group statue (**Cat. 10.55**), and an offering grill (**Cat. 7.1**) all may come from more or less the same location in the street. Unfortunately, the objects preserve no names that could relate to one another or even a specific house. The only clue comes from a stela fragment that might attest the name Ta-Bastet (?) (**Cat. 11.43**). If the fragmentary text is, in fact, a personal name, it is the only attestation of an otherwise unknown name at Deir el-Medina. In house N.O. XIX's second room, Bruyère found the fragment of a large black granite statue (**Cat. 10.54**), but he provided no further description—an unfortunate decision, as a granite statue in a domestic context seems highly unusual, expected rather in a temple context. Perhaps the fragmentary statue was unfinished, destined for donation to a temple or placement in a tomb chapel.

The location of artifacts in the street rather than in the house suggests they were discarded. Thus, they could easily have come from house C. I—located opposite house N.O. XIX—instead. However, no artifacts or cultic emplacements support or weaken their connection to house N.O. XIX, which thus prevents secure interpretation of a possible cultic emplacement in either house.

N.O. XXIII and N.O. XXIV



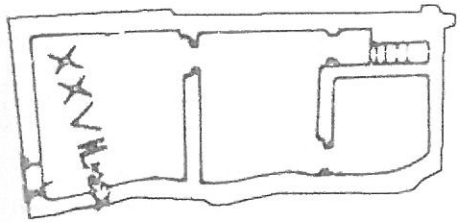
(fig. 28)

In house N.O. XXIII, Bruyère found the lintel of a cultic emplacement made of white limestone (**Cat. 4.37**) along with a stela (**Cat. 11.44**) depicting a standing man. Yet again, he neither described nor published either object, all the more unfortunate since the inscriptions might have provided a clue to the objects' function.[788] The same absence of information pertains a doorpost (**Cat. 4.38**) painted red, inscribed, and bearing a representation, the remains of which depict the feet of several persons. Perhaps the object looks similar to **Cat. 4.17**.

[786] Bruyère 1939, 295.
[787] Bruyère 1934, 86; Bruyère 1937, 17, no. 7 and fig. 6; Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0155_009 and Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0155_010.
[788] Bruyère 1939, 298.

This ambiguous find situation finds parallel in house N.O. XXIV, where Bruyère discovered another inscribed doorpost of a cultic emplacement (**Cat. 4.39**). Unfortunately, no other finds illuminate the niche's possible function. These objects are probably identical to one of the unprovenanced objects, though it is impossible to say which one. No cultic emplacement has been recorded in either house, and the potential religious activities performed there remain uncertain.

N.O. XXVII



(fig. 29)

Other fragments of cultic emplacements came from house N.O. XXVII. Here, Bruyère recorded two fragments of a cultic emplacement's right doorpost (**Cat. 4.40** and **Cat. 4.41**). Although the break line between the two does not join, a match seems possible. An offering formula following the name of the beneficiary is reasonable, and both the layout and size of the fragments seems to match.[789] Unfortunate that the present location of the theoretical upper part (**Cat. 4.41**) is unknown, which makes further inquiry impossible. Both fragments were built into a mud brick wall, but no niche has been recorded in the house.[790] On the fragment of the lower end of a doorpost (**Cat. 4.40**), a man called Paser is depicted in a kneeling and adoring position. The title "servant in the place of the truth" identifies him as Paser (i) or (ii), for Paser (iii) and Paser (iv) were both scribes.[791]

In the vicinity of the house, on the street close to the entrance, Bruyère uncovered an offering table dedicated to the deified king Ramesses II (**Cat. 5.11**). The beneficiaries of the offering table are Nekhemmut (vi) and his sons, Khonsu (vi) and Ramesses-Userkhopesh (i). So if a papyrus fragment found in the third room attests a man called Khonsu (**Cat. 12.10**), it may be Khonsu (vi), but this is uncertain. Given the distant relationship between Nekhemmut (vi) and Paser (ii),[792] a long family tradition—as in the case of Baki (i) (see above; pp. 87–90)—would seem rather far-fetched in the present case. To link these objects through family tradition, one might identify that Amennakht attested on another fragment found in house N.O. XXVII (**Cat. 4.42**) as either Amennakht (vi)/(xii)/(xxii)[793] or Amennakht (x),[794] but the name Amennakht was

[789] For the difference in size as a criterion of a possible match, see also the remarks in **Cat. 4.40**.
[790] Bruyère 1939, 299.
[791] Davies 1999, 102–3.
[792] Nekhemmut (iv)'s father, Amenwa (i), was the brother of Amennakht (vi)/(xii), the great-grandson of Paser (ii)'s brother Buqnetuf (i), cf. Davies 1999, chart 8.
[793] Davies 1999, charts 8 and 12.
[794] Davies 1999, chart 8.

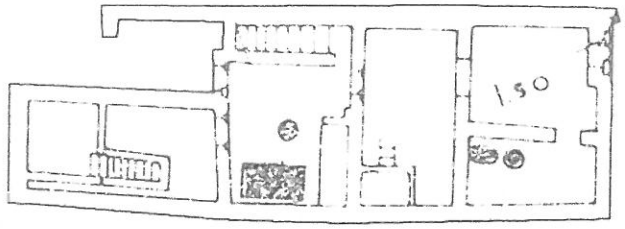
extremely common at Deir el-Medina.[795] Lacking any further information the present hypothesis must remain highly tentative.

The offering formula attested on **Cat. 4.41**, which expresses the wish for the name of someone to endure, further supports the hypothesized domestic ancestral cult. As this formula illustrates, the name was one of the essential parts of the ancient Egyptian conception of a person.[796] Usually found in mortuary contexts, the formula does not constitute the *ꜣḫ-jḳr-n-Rʿ* cults. Nevertheless, an anthropoid bust from the house[797] seems to suggest an ancestor cult was performed in the house. Theoretically, the wish could have been pronounced in everyday as well, but it would not have been common practice.

The offering table (**Cat. 5.11**) indicates the deified king Ramesses II was worshipped in the house at some point as well. A somewhat ironic detail in this respect, perhaps Nekhemmut (iv), but certainly his brother, Paisen (ii), were reputed tomb robbers.[798] Found near the entrance of house N.O. XXVII, the offering table might have been discarded. Bruyère apparently believed the object came from house N.O. XXVII. As for niches, he recorded none for the house, which makes interpretation of the finds as well as their connection to a decayed cultic emplacement quite difficult. "*Ruelle, près de la porte*[799] of house N.O. XXVII" might also refer to a find spot in the vicinity of house C. V's entrance, located on the other side of the street.[800] The objects found in house C. V have already been discussed above (pp. 83–7), and no relation between the people attested in the present house could be detected.

[795] Davies 1999, 286–7 lists more than 30 known men called Amennakht. No title has been preserved on the fragment (**Cat. 4.42**), so none of these men can be excluded.
[796] Cf. e.g. Borioni 2005, 27–8.
[797] Unidentified; cf. Bruyère 1939, 300 and Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0156_014.
[798] The question is whether Nekhemmut was "synonymous with Paisen" or whether Paisen was his brother, cf. Davies 1999, 172 and M.L. Bierbrier, *The Late New Kingdom in Egypt. A Genealogical and Chronological Investigation (c. 1300–664 B.C.)*, Warminster 1975, 34 and 126 note 126; referring to G. Botti and T.E. Peet, *Giornale della necropoli di Tebe*, pl. 12, lines 8–11: the Tomb Robberies (P. BM 10053) lists the eight thieves from two families: Amenwa (i) son of Hay (vii) with his three sons, Pa(an)-qen (i), Paisen (ii), and Hori (xii) (cf. Davies 1999, chart 8; note however, that Davies 1999, chart 12 lists Pa'anemesetmaat (i), Ptahkhau (i), Paisekheru (i) and Hori (xi) as their children instead), and Pentaweret (iv) son of Amennakht (v) with his three sons Nakhtmin, Amenhotep (vii) and Mose (vi) (cf. Davies 1999, chart 9; Nakhtmin is not listed in this chart but appears as Nakhtmin (vii) son of Pentaweret (viii) in chart 34) (papyrus published by T.E. Peet, *The Great Tomb-Robberies of the Twentieth Egyptian Dynasty*, Oxford 1930, 104–8 and pls XVII–XIX). The Necropolis journal of the same year 17 (cf. G. Botti and T.E. Peet, *Giornale della necropoli di Tebe*, Turin 1928, pl. 12, lines 8–11) lists eight workmen removed from the crew of workmen: Amenwa with his sons Paanqen, Hori, and Nekhemmut, and Pentawere with his sons Nakhtmin, Amenhotep, and Mose. Instead of Paisen, it is a Nekhemmut who is removed. Either Paisen (ii) is identical with Nekhemmut (iv), or Nekhmemut (iv) is a brother of Paisen, who was "sentenced" (for his brother?). The situation is highly unclear since also another brother of theirs (Seramun) is also apparently removed from the crew, though he is not mentioned in P. BM 10053.
[799] Bruyère 1939, 300.
[800] Bruyère 1939, pl. XXVI.

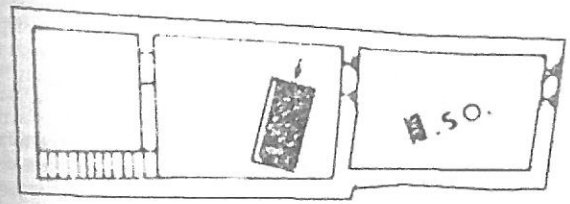
S.O. I



(fig. 30

House S.O. I has produced the elaborate frame of a cultic emplacement dedicated to the goddess Renenutet, which depicts the goddess on both doorposts and a brief titulatory on the lintel (**Cat. 4.46**). No niche was recorded in the house, but it might have fallen into decay. Alternatively, the fragments may have belonged to a large house altar present in the house. What is particularly striking in the house is that Bruyère also mentioned numerous other frame fragments (**Cat. 4.47**). Although houses could have had more than one cultic emplacement, at least theoretically, few houses actually housed more than one. A great number of similar fragments might suggest a workshop rather than the remains of actual cultic activities, yet several arguments contradict house S.O. I as a professional workshop. First, though possibly mere coincidence, no transactions of such objects have arisen thus far. Second, the buyer usually provided the necessary raw materials,[801] thereby intimating incidental earnings. Third, three fragments of offering tables found in house S.O. I's second room betray misspelled names (**Cat. 5.15–7**), somewhat odd for a professional workshop. The quality of the text on these objects sharply contrasts the elaborate frame fragment (**Cat. 4.46**), though the producer of the latter could have differed from that of the offering tables and perhaps the other frame fragments. Further, Bruyère's decision not to describe or draw the frame fragments (**Cat. 4.47**) found in the house betray a lower quality. While one could hypothesize the house as a training facility, no evidence can verify thus postulation, nor the performance of religious activities there.

S.O. III



(fig. 31)

[801] Cf. A.G. McDowell, *Village Life in Ancient Egypt. Laundry lists and Love Songs*, Oxford 1999, 83.

The second room of house S.O. III (**Cat. 4.48**) has also produced another unspecified frame, but lack of details hinders its connection to a base by Harnefer (ii) and his daughter, Hemtmeter (ii) (**Cat. 4.49**). Harnefer (ii)'s father was called Harnefer (i), the latter's father Nebdjefa (i).[802] As already demonstrated, discovery of artifacts related to this family were found relatively widespread among the houses, which may indicate their cult was no longer practiced by the late 20th dynasty. As for house S.O. III, Nebdjefa (i)'s (i.e. Harnefer (ii)'s grandfather's) offering grill (**Cat. 7.2**) was found in house S.O. III. This grill was dedicated to the goddess Thoeris. Despite frequent emphasis of this goddess's importance within the domestic context,[803] the archaeological record from Deir el-Medina does not support such explanation. Compared to other deities, Thoeris receives limited mention in stone inscriptions. No cultic emplacement has been recorded in house S.O. III.[804] In view of two other cult objects from the same rather small family in the house, they may have been used together. Additionally, the house has provided an anthropoid bust[805] that was possibly venerated within the ancestor cult. In the house's first room another fragment of an offering table (**Cat. 5.18**) arouse that attests the rather common name Amenmose, but the figure does not converge with the family of Nebdjefa (i). Unclear, then, is who occupied the house.

Two other objects that might illuminate the niche's function include an offering support (**Cat. 8.1**), with an offering formula dedicated to Osiris-Khontamenti, and a stela dedicated by an Osiris *jmɜḫy* ("revered one") (**Cat. 11.49**). The god Osiris-Khontamenti is usually considered as a mortuary god, and similar offering supports have emerged from tombs (but see **Cat. 8.2**). As an alternative, a stela dedicated to the goddess Renenutet (**Cat. 11.48**) might have been situated in a cultic emplacement. None of these objects bears inscriptions that attest personal names, so they offer no link to those objects already discussed.

[802] Davies 1999, chart 22.

[803] E.g. Sadek 1988, 125–6 and Keith 2011, 100.

[804] The only evidence for a cult emplacement dedicated to the goddess Thoeris consists of two wooden door wings from the workmen Nebmehyt and Mose, now in the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts in Moscow (no. 4867 a–b) and published by E.S. Bogoslovsky, 'Monuments and Documents from Dêr el-Medîna in the Museums of the USSR IV', *Vestnik Drevneij Istorii* 4/122 (1972), 75–89 and pls 6–9. I would like to thank Ildar Karigov for helping me with the translation of this Russian article. The two door wings (total size: h. 34,4 cm; w. ca. 18 cm; d. 0,9 cm) are inscribed with four columns of text and show the two men standing in adoration. In the upper part, the goddess Thoeris with a winged sun-disk between Hathor horns is seated on a throne in front of two offering tables. No filiation is mentioned in the text. Perhaps the name Mose is an abbreviation of the name Amenmose, in which case perhaps Nebmehyt (iii) and his father Amenmose (vii) would be depicted here (cf. Davies 1999, chart 21). The door wings are inscribed with four columns of a hymnal text starting with *rdj.t-jɜ.w*. This formula is not expected in the context of a house, where offerings could have been performed on a regular basis (see above; p. 56). No find spot has been recorded for the two door wings sold on the antique market in Luxor at some point before 1911, when the object entered the museum collection. In line with the argument above, it would be plausible that its original context of use was a chapel. That Thoeris was venerated in chapels is, for example, clear from a find recorded by B. Bruyère, *Rapport sur les Fouilles de Deir el Médineh (1922-1933)*, *FIFAO* I,1, Cairo 1924, 60 and fig. 15 and see B. Bruyère, *Rapport sur les fouilles de Deir el Médineh (1935-40)* III, *FIFAO* 20, Cairo 1952, 72–82.

[805] Unidentified; cf. Bruyère 1939, 309 and Keith 2011, 11.

The find situation in house S.O. IV proves similarly diverse. As already mentioned (p. 49 and fig. 9), Prehotep (i) probably inhabited the house.[806] Although the base of Khabekhnet (i) and Sati (i) (**Cat. 4.51**) could have shifted from its original context into the neighboring houses S.O. IV-S.O. VI, it might have undergone reuse in the house, for example, by Qenja (**Cat. 4.50**) or someone else. Their find context may therefore suggest that a small cultic emplacement lay in the house, a proposition that receives additional support from several objects related to religious activities, which may themselves be connected to a cultic emplacement. In the second room, Bruyère found an offering table dedicated to the god Osiris-Wennefer (**Cat. 5.19**). Like Osiris-Khontamenti (**Cat. 8.1**), Osiris-Wennefer normally appears in the mortuary sphere. As previously argued, these "spheres" likely overlapped to a large extent, the clearest example being the ancestor cults. The text on the offering table found in house S.O. IV (**Cat. 5.19**) contains the wish that the god Osiris-Wennefer may cause *ɜḫ*. The meaning of *ɜḫ* is complex and can refer to a variety of things, usually understood in the context of transfiguration of the deceased.[807] Whether the state of *ɜḫ* was qualitatively distinctive from the justified dead is subject to debate.[808] Some authors assume a proper embalming ritual guaranteed transformation into a glorified one,[809] which would apply to every adequately buried person, while others hold that "becoming an *ɜḫ* was (...) dependent on moral conditions."[810] Little textual evidence confirms the latter theory,[811] and a status higher than "justified" apparently came through the addition of the attribute *jḳr* (i.e. "excellent" or "able"[812]). The exact meaning of the present phrase remains somewhat unclear and raises the question as to whether the offering table pertained to the ancestor cult. If so—, it might be no coincidence that an anthropoid bust was found in the house,[813] which should then be interpreted as an ancestor bust. A stela dedicated to Osiris and what may be the deified king Thutmosis I (**Cat. 11.50**) also evinces the presence of so-called mortuary aspects within the home. Such a cult might have involved flower offerings (**Cat. 12.15**). Yet another piece of evidence suggests a hippopotamus statuette of Thoeris might have been worshipped in the house (**Cat. 10.62**). Although Keith sought to link this find to four oracle ostraca found in the house in order to substantiate her interpretation of the bust as an oracular bust,[814] her conclusion seems rather far-fetched since the oracle ostraca constituted part of an archive and do not neccesarily attest oracular practices performed in the house.[815] A certain affinity of the house's owner to Amenhotep I, who did act as an

[806] Davies 1999, 150 and recently Weiss 2009b, 230.

[807] However, the verb can as well be translated as "to be useful," cf. *Wb* I, 13.7–14.25.

[808] Cf. Demarée 1983, 193–4. A recent discussion of the *ɜḫ* has been provided by Harrington 2013, 7–10; with references.

[809] E.g. H. Kees, *Totenglauben und Jenseitsvorstellungen der alten Ägypter: Grundlagen und Entwicklung bis zum Ende des Mittleren Reiches*, Berlin 1956, 37; cf. Demarée 1983, 193 and see recently M. Smith, *Traversing Eternity. Texts for the Afterlife from Ptolemaic and Roman Egypt*, Oxford 2009, 4.

[810] Demarée 1983, 194 quoting E. Otto, 'Akh', *LÄ* I (1975), 51.

[811] Demarée 1983, 194 quoting G. Englund, *Akh - Une notion religieuse dans l'Égypte pharaonique*, Boreas. *Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis: Uppsala Studies in Ancient Mediterranean and Near Eastern Civilizations* 11, Uppsala 1978, 204.

[812] Cf. *Wb* I, 137.16.

[813] DM 4009; cf. Bruyère 1939, 323; Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0156_016 and Keith 2011, 142–3.

[814] DM 4009; cf. Bruyère 1939, 323; Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0156_016 and Keith 2011, 142–3. For the interpretation see Keith 2011, 93; following ideas by Petrie 1914, 86 and Lepsius 1900, 224i.

[815] Weiss 2009b, 221–30.

oracular god, arises from a depiction of the deified king in the door between the third and the fourth rooms of house S.O. IV.[816]

The large cultic emplacements in house S.O. V have already undergone analysis (pp. 50–2 and fig. 10). The base of Khabekhnet (i) (**Cat. 4.51**) may suggest that in addition to these large cultic emplacements, a smaller one might have also stood in the house. The only find potentially situated in a niche is an ancestor stela of two men called Pennub and Khamy[817]. Their family trees as well as the relation between the two men is, however, most unclear.[818] Any relation between the objects and their possible cult within the house remains hypothetical.

2.4. The Interpretation of the Smaller Cultic Emplacements

It has become clear that interpreting the frames of cultic emplacements is highly difficult if no cultic emplacements have been preserved whose size or location can be matched with the relevant objects. This difficulty increases since Bruyère did not record exact find spot for the majority of his finds. Moreover, he drew many objects in his notebooks together with others that did not necessarily come from the village itself. The same situation applies to objects published in his village volumes that were found elsewhere. In Bruyère's times it was common practice to publish similar artifactual groups together irrespective of their find context (see also "*Introduction to the Catalogue*"). As a result, we cannot be sure that all fragments were actually found in the houses of the village without explicit mention of find spots. Some frames might have been part of chapels. Nevertheless, examples found in the village offer much material for discussion of the variety of forms, texts, and actors related to the remaining frame fragments.

One of the main results of the present analysis is the observation that some families had affinities to certain gods and that these family traditions were maintained for several generations.[819] This means on the one hand that group participation within the (even

[816] Bruyère 1939, 321 and Weiss 2009b, 1.

[817] Louvre E. 16362; cf. Bruyère 1939, 153 (fig. 62); 327 and 328 (fig. 198); Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0156_015 and Demarée 1983, 102–3 and pl. X. Two similar stelae showing the same men as *3kh-jḳr* are BM 359 and BM 372 (published by James 1970, 50–1 and pl. XLI, cf. Davies 1999, 227, note 314). The identity especially of Khamy is subject to debate (cf. Davies 1999, 256–7). Depending on the dating of O. Turin N. 57082 ("Dyn. 19, reign of Ramesses II year 26; year 36 or year 6", cf. Deir el-Medina database) one or two men with that name lived at Deir el-Medina. The same applies to Pennub. Arguing for an early date would support the idea that Pennub (i) and Khamy (ii) are shown here. Arguing for a later date would be in favor of Khamy (i) and Pennub (i)'s grandson Pennub (ii) (cf. Davies 1999, 257; see also the discussion by Demarée 1983, 90–1). The relationship between the two is also unclear. Several combinations have yet been proposed (cf. Davies 1999, 256 with references). Surprisingly nobody has yet offered the idea that the two men might have been close friends. The problem cannot be settled.

[818] Davies 1999, 256–7.

[819] A similar result has been put forward by Sweeney in her study on the not strictly religious "cat-under-chair motif;" cf. D. Sweeney, 'Cats and their people at Deir el-Medina, in: D. Magee, J. Bourriau and S. Quirke (eds), *Sitting beside Lepsius. Studies in Honour of Jaromir Malek at the Griffith Institute*. *OLA* 185, Leuven 2009, 543 and 560, fig. 17.

extended or distant) family played an important role in religious life. The fact that the profession of family members influenced the religious activities at home suggests a large degree of overlap between different appropriations as proposed above (p. 18). That this overlap was not necessarily a rule can be illustrated by the base of a stela from a man called Bakenmut (i) or (ii) (**Cat. 4.9**) and a cultic emplacement by Anhurkhawy (i) and Henutdjuu (i).[820] Both objects were dedicated to the god Ptah, but their families are thus far not known to have been particularly involved with the official cult of this god.

The god Ptah was mainly worshipped in public contexts on stelae and/or in a public community shrine.[821] The number of finds from the village,[822] however, suggests that Ptah was worshipped in the domestic context. It is unfortunate that apart from the two artifacts already mentioned above, no other artifact can be related to individuals. The two exceptions indicate nonetheless that, firstly, for the god Ptah no general spacial restriction existed and secondly, the cult of a certain god was not strictly bound to family tradition.

In other cases, however, and in line with Baines' work, clear differences between the *decorum* of personal and public space did exist. In fact, differences emerge from the decoration scheme of the cultic emplacements' frames.

It is, for example, remarkable that only two of the small lintels from the village (**Cat. 4.5** and **Cat. 4.8**) were decorated with a winged sun disk, as opposed to nine from unspecified areas.[823] It is unclear whether these proportions are representative especially in view of the pre-assumption that also the latter objects were originally used in the village. It is also clear that altogether fewer lintels were decorated with the winged sun disk as compared to the majority of lintels that were either painted in red or show brief offering formulae. Although the winged sun disk was a motif that usually decorated the lintels of temple doors and stelae, the limited amount of research done on the motif is confined to the Graeco-Roman Period, due in large part to the text on the walls of the temple of Edfu that explains the winged sun disk as the shape in which the god Horus Behedeti "terrif[ied] the enemies" of the god Re.[824] As such, the sun disk served as an appropriate protective element for the temple, but the question naturally arises as to whether such an interpretation equally applies to the New Kingdom period.[825] In line with

[820] Turin Cat. N. 50220 and BM 597; cf. Bruyère 1930b, 165, fig. 89; Tosi and Roccati 1972, 188–9 and 344 and H.R. Hall, *Hieroglyphic Texts from Egyptian Stelae, etc., in the British Museum* 7, London, 1925, pl. 28

[821] cf. Bruyère 1930, pl. 2 and Luiselli 2011a, 78 and 86, note 265 and see also remarks **Cat. 4.9**.

[822] The god Ptah is attested on **Cat. 4.9**, **Cat. 10.26**, **Cat. 11.13**, **Cat. 11.37**, **Cat. 11.38**, and **Cat. 11.46**.

[823] Cf. Bruyère 1939, pl. XVI, 5-7 (the latter identified as A 1584, IFAO nu 2002 1309 in the IFAO database); Bruyère 1939, pl. XVI, 10; 17; 23 and 24 and Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0155_020.

[824] E.g. H.W. Fairman, 'The Myth of Horus at Edfu I', *JEA* 21 (1935), 29 and H.W. Fairman, 'Worship and Festivals in an Egyptian Temple', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 37.1 (1954), 193–203.

[825] A different explanation has been offered by Wolfhardt Westendorf, who interprets the cavetto corniche as "cubic representation of the palm column" ("*in Würfelform übertragene Palmsäule*") and follows that the representation of the winged sun disk on top of a cavetto corniche should be interpreted as an imitation of the cosmos ("*nachgeahmten Weltgebäudes*"); cf. W. Westendorf, *Altägyptische Darstellungen des Sonnenlaufs auf der abschüssigen Himmelsbahn*, *MÄS* 10, Berlin 1966, 74–5. This interpretation must be read against the hypothesis that the Egyptian temple imitates the cosmos, a topic also studied primarily within the context of the Edfu temple; e.g. R.B. Finnestad, *Image of the World and Symbol of the Creator. On the Cosmological and Iconological Values of the Temple of Edfu*, *Studies in Oriental Religions* 10, Wiesbaden 1985, 8–16.

Baines' notion of *decorum*, the winged sun disk might have been less common in the domestic context.

As for the distribution of Meretseger's and Renenutet's attestations, Egyptology have long known that many cultic emplacements in kitchens were dedicated to these goddesses; a distribution generally explained by the great importance of fertility within the domestic context.[826] It shall be shown in the following that fertility cults did indeed play an important role in houses, but that they were only one aspect among others.[827] As for a different *decorum* in different contexts, it is interesting that both number and form of the attestations of the two goddesses seems to have differed considerably. The goddess Meretseger is attested in her popular manifestation as a snake on several stelae (e.g. **Cat. 11.10**),[828] whereas the goddess Renenutet appears hitherto only twice on a stela. The one reference shows the goddess together with Meretseger,[829] the other attesting Renenutet alone was found in house S.O. III (**Cat. 11.48**). The shape and decoration scheme of the latter is unfortunately unclear. This find situation is reversed in the houses, however, where the majority of frames were dedicated to Renenutet.[830] Provided that the finds of both stelae and fragments present a more or less representative view, the goddess Renenutet seems to have been more popular in houses than on stelae displayed in more public contexts. Remarkably, the situation is reversed in the workmen's huts found in the Valley of the Kings, where the goddess Meretseger is more popular than all other goddesses combined, not only Renenutet but also Thoeris and Hathor.[831] This data confirms Andreas Dorn's hypothesis that Meretseger was primarily associated with work and the workmen.[832] As caveat to this hypothesis, many of the two- and three-dimensional representations of snake goddesses from the domestic context at Deir el-Medina were uninscribed and could hence represent both Meretseger and Renenutet. The differences mentioned above should hence not be exaggerated. As an aside, stelae depict Meretseger's worship by men from the 19th dynasty onwards, whereas women appear only from the 20th dynasty on.[833] Unfortunately, the frame fragments cannot be dated; otherwise, a shift in Meretseger's worship might be discernible. If this were the case, the find situation above may be explained as a parallel development showing the goddesses' increasing accessibility.

[826] E.g., Sadek 1988, 77 and Ritner 2008, 181 discusses the large house altars and their decoration with paintings of the god Bes, which led him to propose a "prominence of fertility gods in home shrines."
[827] Luiselli 2011a, 138 and note 138. And see Stevens 2009, 18.
[828] Cf. Exell 2009, 41 with references and see also Sadek 1988, 85.
[829] Stela Bordeaux 8635, cf. Luiselli 2011a, 377–8. The cult of the goddess Renenutet has not been discussed in detail by Exell 2009.
[830] For parallels of Meretseger see **Cat. 4.1** and **Cat. 4.67** and Bruyère 1939, pl. XVI, 22 for the two goddesses Meretseger and Renenutet appearing together. Meretseger without Renenutet is attested in **Cat. 4.28**, **Cat. 4.32**, and **Cat. 4.57-9** and see also Turin Cat. N. 50183M cf. Tosi and Roccati 1972, 166–7 and 332; Turin Cat. N. 50237; cf. Tosi and Roccati 1972, 198–9 and 350; Bruyère 1933, 7 (perhaps = **Cat. 4.1**). Attestations of Renenutet without Meretseger are **Cat. 4.14**, **Cat. 4.33**, **Cat. 4.44**, and **Cat. 4.46** and see also Bruyère 1939, pl. XV, 8; Bruyère 1939, pl. XVI, 8; Turin Cat. N. 50219; cf. Tosi and Roccati 1972, 187–8 and 344 and Turin Cat. N. 50220 and BM 597; cf. Bruyère 1930b, 165, fig. 89/Tosi and Roccati 1972, 188–9 and 344; Bruyère 1939, pl. XVI, 17 and Bruyère 1939, 194, fig. 86. **Cat 4.25**; Bruyère 1939, pl. XVIII, 7 and Bruyère 1939, pl. XVI, 16. could refer to either of the two godesses.
[831] Dorn 2011, 105.
[832] Dorn 2011, 105.
[833] Cf. Exell 2009, 41 and Luiselli 2011a, 37, note 89.

The idea of a specific *decorum* can, however, not be generalized for gods only rarely attested on stelae from Deir el-Medina. The god Sobek is, for example, only attested on two stelae excavated by Bruyère,[834] whereas more evidence for his cult comes from houses, namely, houses S.O. VI and S.E. IX.[835] Such distribution likely stems less from *decorum* than geography. Most Egyptians adored local deities,[836] and the closest cult place of the crocodile god was Thebes.

The same argument explains the distinguished position of Amun-Re. The god was the most important state god in the New Kingdom[837] and resided in the Theban area, i.e. in the Karnak temple on the east bank. At the same time, he receives the most frequently attestation of any god on stelae from Deir el-Medina.[838] The god Amun-Re could appear in different forms, as ram, goose, bark, or human. However, only non-anthropomorphic representation has come from the 20th dynasty versus the nine attestations of the 19th.[839] The development of Amun-Re's representations on stelae may thus differ from that of Meretseger as a snake. For the stelae, Exell has shown that the ram and Amun-of-the-good-encounter are the most frequently attested.[840] Given the broken nature of many frame fragments, it is difficult to attempt a similar calculation.[841]

As another important conclusion of this chapter, anthropoid busts were ancestor busts and should receive due analysis as such.[842] All busts discussed above can be linked to other artifacts related to the ancestor cults, and their shape confirms this interpretation. Keith herself has noted the similarity of the wigged busts with "anthropoid coffins, mummy masks" and shabtis placing the busts within the imagery of "funerary equipment."[843] Based on analysis of the few ancestor busts bearing inscriptions,[844] Keith tried to challenge the standard interpretation of busts as ancestors by arguing that some might, in fact, have been deities. This conclusion proves untenable considering that from

[834] Stela Moscow 5627; cf. Hodjash and Berlev 1982, 135–36 attesting a workman, but no name and stela JE 43569 showing Paheripedjet (i) (?) adoring Ptah, Sobek, Isis, Meretseger and Shed, cf. Exell 2009, 145. Paheripedjet (i) was a son of Qaha (i).
[835] And see **Cat. 4.20**, **Cat. 4.26**, **Cat. 4.44**, **Cat. 4.57–9** and see also Turin Cat. N. 50220 and BM 597; cf. Tosi and Roccati 1972, 188–9 and 344; and **Cat. 10.59**.
[836] Cf. e.g. Luiselli 2011a, 46.
[837] E.g. I. Guermeur, *Les cultes d'Amon hors de Thèbes: recherches de géographie religieuse*, *Bibliothèque de l'École des Hautes Études, Sciences Religieuses* 123, Turnhout 2005, 550–1.
[838] Exell 2009, 29.
[839] Exell 2009, 32 and fig. 3.8.
[840] Exell 2011, 35.
[841] Amun-Re-of-the-good-encounter is attested twice in the houses: on **Cat. 4.2** and on **Cat. 4.15**.
[842] See also Bochi 2011, 69–79. I do not agree that the shape of the busts demonstrate "truncated" bodies (Bochi 2011, 73). It is correct that ancestors could also be "potentially harmful" (Bochi 2011, 73), but the information gained from letters to the dead suggests that ancestors were calmed by means of prayers and offerings. Rendering them innocuous would have affected their afterlife, in which they hoped to be physically complete and not "truncated," compare, for example, H.D. Schneider, *Een brief voor Anchiry. Scenes uit een Egyptisch huwelijk of persoonlijk getuigenis over leven en dood in Oud-Egypte*, Zutphen 1981. On anthropoid busts as ancestral figurines see also Harrington 2013, 58.
[843] Keith 2011, 44 and her discussion of the relevant literature; cf. Keith 2011, 43–4.
[844] Keith 2011, 70–2.

the houses of Deir el-Medina, three inscribed busts are known, two referring to women,[845] and a third identified as the goddess Hathor.[846] Sylvie Donnat has advanced a different argument: drawing on Bruyère, she sought to relate the busts to the cult of the goddess Thoeris.[847] However, her alleged parallel—the head of a limestone statuette of the goddess Thoeris[848]—"*est toutefois fort différent des bustes anthropoïdes.*"[849] The bust betrays traces of arms and the head of a hippopotamus.[850] The different head seems to be the decisive iconographical element indicating the function of the statuette as a cult image of the goddess Thoeris. Although the two-dimensional parallels[851] presented by Donnat are interesting indeed, the applicability of their interpretation as cult images of Thoeris to the anthropoid busts from the houses at Deir el-Medina remains quite questionable. As far as I know, no evidence of a representation of the goddess Thoeris depicts her with a human head. The object Bruyère found was, in fact, a bust without a head, which he simply considered as goddess Thoeris.[852] It is difficult to understand how a wedge-shaped or round bust without a head and without any inscriptions could be recognizable as the goddess Thoeris. More convincing, then, is suggestion that Bruyère found the body of a limestone hippopotamus statuette. Instead, the bulgy shape of the bust may have reminded Bruyère of a hippopotamus body. The bust cannot, therefore, be identified, and the reasons for Bruyère's interpretation remain unclear. For Keith, Bruyère used the term *bustes de laraire* in a broader sense,[853] which converges with his interpretation of the "*laraires*" as a domestic cult places (see above; pp. 34–5). Accepting this hypothesis, Donnat contended the human head of the anthropoid busts related to the goddess Opet.[854] As in the case of Thoeris, though, the iconography of Opet would not be complete without the body of a hippopotamus (e.g., **Cat. 10.20**). Similar circumstances pertain to the goddess Meretseger, who is represented with the face of a human and the body of a cobra.[855] With human heads, without animal bodies, and without inscriptions, these goddesses would thus be deprived of their whole iconography, thereby leaving them unrecognizable. In fact, Keith has considered the argument that "the identification of wigged anthropoid busts as female ancestors refers to the much lower literacy among women (...) implying that inscriptions were neither necessary nor useful" as "unsatisfactory."[856] Similarly unsatisfactory is an iconographically dismantled female goddess, since this situation would mark her iconography an unnecessary ballast any

[845] Cf. Cairo JE 43980 and another one with unknown provenance: CG 1172; cf. Keith 2011, 316. A description of the object, but unfortunately no photograph, is available in L. Borchardt, *Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire vol. 94, Statuen und Statuetten von Königen und Privatleuten* 4, Berlin 1934, 89.

[846] Berlin ÄMP 20994; cf. Anthes 1943, 58 and pl. 16c; Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0156_037 and Keith 2011, 71–2 and 199–201.This argument is somewhat peculiar since Keith has criticized other scholars for drawing on the evidence from one house (C. VI; see also p. 70–2) only, e.g. Keith 2011, 5–6, 15 and 89.

[847] Keith 2011, 95 and 97–8. Compare also Harrington 2013, 52 who considers both options possible.

[848] Keith 2011, 97–8 and fig 11.

[849] Keith 2011, 97.

[850] Keith 2011, 97.

[851] Keith 2011, 98 figs 12 and 13.

[852] Unidentified; cf. Bruyère 1934, 88.

[853] Keith 2011, 15.

[854] Keith 2011, 97.

[855] Keith 2011, 100 and note 83.

[856] Keith 2011, 89.

religious person could imagine during his/her vow. Although many anthropoid busts were indeed found without their heads, as long as no bust with a hippopotamus or a snake head appears, attempt to interpret the busts as cult images of the female goddesses is inconclusive. The single example[857] of a bust gaining a Hathoric aspect seems to be exceptional, interpretation of the busts as ancestors is far more convincing. Keith herself offers such an interpretation,[858] yet her distinction between *ꜣḫ-jḳr-n-Rʿ* and the "dead in a less formal sense"[859] is in total contradiction to Egyptian concepts. Moreover, the state of *ꜣḫ* was probably not qualitatively distinctive from the state of being "justified" (*mꜣʿ ḫrw*),[860] though the *ꜣḫ-jḳr-n-Rʿ* were clearly venerated ancestors.[861] The relative scarcity of attestations from Deir el-Medina suggests that not everyone automatically became an *ꜣḫ-jḳr-n-Rʿ*.[862] The crucial aspect here, however, is that the deceased who failed the weighing of the heart procedure headed by the god Osiris would have proceeded to the so-called Devourer-of-the-dead.[863] The deceased who did not accomplish the state of either justification and/or glorification were thus disqualified from the afterlife, which makes categorization of the "not necessarily "justified" dead"[864] unconvincing. To sum up, interpretation of the busts as ancestors is plausible for those found in the houses.

[857] Berlin ÄMP 20994; cf. Anthes 1943, 58 and pl. 16c; Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0156_037 and Keith 2011, 71–2 and 199–201.

[858] Keith 2011, 89–90.

[859] Keith 2011, 90.

[860] Cf. Demarée 1983, 193–4 with references. For a different interpretation cf., Fitzenreiter 1994, 61–2, who states that the *ꜣḫ-jḳr-n-Rʿ* was not necessarily a family member venerated of the "'normal'ancestor cult," but one who had "made the first move towards a possible deification."

[861] For a different view, see Bochi 2011, 77, who believes the ancestors were only temporarily worshipped in their embodiment as bust and, as such, in a "state of transition (....) distinct from the blessed dead." The general importance of family continuity—as shown in the present study—challenges this idea, however. In his discussion of the letters to the dead, Moreno Garcia has noted the importance of ancestors as "part of the extended family" whose "intervention was called in in order to safeguard the harmony of the living and the continuity of the kin group," cf. Moreno Garcia 2010, 139 and see also 153. Nevertheless, it is essential to note that this interpretation also applies to the New Kingdom and that letter writing was not the only means of contacting gods and ancestors. Therefore, his finding that the number of letters to the dead declined in the New Kingdom in favor of letters to gods (cf. Moreno Garcia 2010, 148) does not prove a concurrent increasing importance of the worship of gods versus ancestors. Rather than "replacing dead ancestors in the traditional domestic sphere" (cf. Moreno Garcia 2010, 148), gods were worshipped side-by-side with ancestors in the houses at Deir el-Medina. To be fair, it should be noted that Moreno Garcia (2010, 150) discusses Deir el-Medina as an exception. For the arguments against this view, see above, p. 21. In his conclusion, Moreno Garcia seems to withdraw from his own argument by referring to the ancestor stelae from Deir el-Medina as evidence for the "continued (...) fundamental component" of family (cults) in ancient Egypt in general (Moreno Garcia 2010, 153). On the idea of "[t]he contingency of human existence (...) [as] a major theme in Egyptian thought" and its practical implications; see also M. Lichtheim, *Late Egyptian Wisdom Literature in the International Context. A Study of Demotic Instructions*, Göttingen 1983, 8-9 and see also J.Z. Smith 2004, 326.

[862] See also A. von Lieven, who lists the *ꜣḫ.w-jḳr.w-n-Rʿ* among the deified humans, cf. A. von Lieven, 'Deified Humans', in: J. Dieleman and W. Wendrich (eds), *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, Los Angeles 2010, 1; cf. http://digital2.library.ucla.edu/viewItem.do?ark=21198/ zz0025k5hz; accessed on 2 January 2012.

[863] *ʿm-mw.t*, cf. *Wb* I, 184.9 and 186.17; and e.g. M. Smith 2009, 2.

[864] Keith 2011, 90.

None has been found *in situ* in a niche, but were likely placed wither on an altar or in a niche, as recent finds elsewhere demonstrate.[865]

Finally, for niches (and larger cultic emplacements), no evidence suggests that worship of the king took precedence over the worship of the gods at the village,[866] a hypothesis based on analysis of New Kingdom doorposts from mostly high-ranking officials.[867] Apparently, doorpost decoration signaled their loyalty rather than their religion.[868] At Deir el-Medina, both living and ancestral kings were worshipped (e.g., Amenhotep I or Ramesses VI[869]). In comparison to other deities or human ancestors, these royal cults find less frequent attestation in the houses.

2.5. The Interpretation of Fixed Cultic Emplacements

In conclusion, although a religious function cannot be reconstructed for all cultic emplacements, the emplacements can be designated as cultic based on their shape since the architecture of both larger and smaller cultic emplacements is quite similar. The relative uniformity of frame conditions—such as altars, niches or large cultic emplacements—suggests they were defined by *decorum*. Within this *decorum*, however, individual appropriations of practice differed. Cult installations were thus "perhaps temporary but periodic."[870] The descendants of a family inhabiting the house could therefore reuse existing structures or vary their religious activities according to their own needs and ideas. Some households, for instance, seem to have worshipped mainly their ancestors, whereas others appear to have relied on specific deities or intermediaries.

[865] Cf. a similar bust found in the rear of a house at Amara West, which was also apparently placed in a niche with a limestone frame, cf. http://blog.britishmuseum.org/2011/02/, accessed on 7 February 2011. I would like to thank Neal Spencer for kindly sharing his unpublished information with me. An interesting side note is that ancestors could ostensibly be worn as amulets, as seen in Amarna: Kemp and Stevens 2010b, 76, fig. 10.2 A1. At Deir el-Medina no such amulet has been found, but this may be a coincident.

[866] As had been claimed by Budka 2001, 60, who views a "*Vorrangstellung des Königs gegenüber Göttern im Siedlungsbereich*," followed by Luiselli 2011a, 185.

[867] Budka 2011, 7.

[868] Another interpretation is offered by Ockinga, who suggests that in the Ramesside period loyalty towards the king in the Ramesside period lost the exclusive character it had had in the Amarna Period and becoming "clouded" by the "Gott-Mensch-Beziehung der persönlichen Frömmigkeit," cf. B.G. Ockinga, 'Zum Fortleben des "Amarna-Loyalismus," *Die Welt des Orients* 14 (1983), 214–5. In view of the somewhat arbitrary allegiance towards a number of gods (as shown by Luiselli 2011a, 233) it is, however, questionable whether this decline of public testimony concerning loyalty to the king should per se be equated with a loss of power.

[869] From the latter we know a statue at Deir el-Medina received offerings: cf. P. Turin 1879 vs. I. 1,13–4; *jw pзy=f twt ḥr šsp snṯr* [*ḳbḥ.w*] [*r*] [*pз*]*y =f ḥtp-nṯr.w m-bзḥ=f mj-ḳd nз nb.w n tзy s.t ᶜз.t ḏsr.t ᶜḳз sp-2*, "his statue receiving incense and [libations] for its divine offerings in front of it {= statue} in precisely the same manner as the lords of this great and holy place," cf. W. Hovestreydt, 'A Letter to the King related to the Foundation of a Statue (P. Turin 1879 vso.)', *LingAeg* 5 (1997), 107–21. In addition, there might have been a cult statue of king Merenptah at Deir el-Medina (a *twtw*-statue is attested on P. Berlin P. 23301 vs. although it is not clear whether the king was the "owner or recipient"), cf. H. Fischer-Elfert, 'A strike in the reign of Merenptah? plus The endowment of three cult statu(ett)es on behalf of the same king at Deir el-Medina (Pap. Berlin P. 23300 and P. 23301)', in: V. Lepper (ed.), *Forschung in der Papyrussammlung - Festschrift für das Neue Museum*, Berlin 2012, 57.

[870] A finding paralleled at Amarna, cf. Kemp and Stevens 2010a, 507.

Appropriations within different households should not be confused with a highly individualized religion in the sense of personally chosen patron deities, however. The conceptualization of individual patron deities comes from analysis of hymnal texts on stelae where an individual emphasizes his or her loyalty to a particular god.[871] These texts refer to personal gods (*nṯr=ḳf*, "his/her god") to whom the benefactor of a stela gives his/her heart, the formulae associated with Assmann's "*Gottesbeherzigung*."[872] As Luiselli has shown, such vows were not as exclusive as previously thought, having little actual impact on religious practice.[873] She demonstrated that the choice of a personal god did not mean general exclusion of others; instead, a local god or a god to whom the benefactor was professionally related was simply granted privileged status.[874] The archaeological record from Deir el-Medina confirms these conclusions: such formulae never appear. Introductory formulae replaced individual action and appear only on fixed features and artifacts inaccessible to the daily cults,[875] which explains the difference in *decorum*. Similarly, individual patrons do not arise from the archaeological record of the domestic context. Rather, religious appropriations varied greatly according to family tradition, profession, and kin. It is thus clear that the social group played an important role in religious life, which at the same time makes it difficult to grasp individual action. In many cases, the latest performers of the offerings were not those mentioned on the offering equipment itself. This pattern suggests the reuse of the objects. The crucial question in this respect is whether such reuse was restricted by certain rules, either within a family or by the benefactor or beneficiary.

[871] E.g. Luiselli 2011a, 232–3.

[872] Cf. Luiselli 2011a, 231–3.

[873] Luiselli 2011a, 233. She illustrates this practical approach by the stela BM 589, where Neferabu places the god Amun in his heart on one hand side and addresses the god Ptah on the other. Interestingly, similar ideas can be found in Max Weber's monumental work "*Die Kompetenzabgrenzung wird gekreuzt durch die Gepflogenheiten des religiösen Attachements an einen speziellen, jeweils besonders bewährten Gott (...) an den man sich gerade wendet, diesen als funktionell universell zu behandeln*;" cf. M. Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft, Grundriss der verstehenden Soziologie* (5th ed. provided by J. Winckelmann), Tübingen 1972, 249.

[874] Luiselli 2011a, 235–6.

[875] See also below chapter 3.2.2.1.

Chapter 3: Artifacts Used in Religious Practice

Following previous chapter's analysis of fixed features and artifacts, the remaining categories are those artifacts that cannot be related to any fixed structure. As stated since the beginning (p. 23), although conclusions based on artifacts must be treated with caution, thesis presupposes that artifactural patterns can illuminate the religious activities that took place in the houses. One means overcoming these obstacles, at least partly, involves discussion of artifacts at large on the one hand and the general patterns of performed religious actions on the other.

3.1. Offering Equipment

Offering stood as the fundamental religious activity in ancient Egypt. Considering the sustaining significance Egyptian religion attributed to offerings, it is all the more striking that Egyptology has tended to neglect the topic considering the term "offering" self-evident and engaging in no broader theoretical approach.[876] The category "offering table" has received limited investigation as well.[877] Since "offerings" as an subject of inquiry is entirely too expansive in both time and space for any single study, the present foray into offering theory has the humble objective of an initiating further discussion.

As already indicated in chapter 2 (p. 56) ancient Egyptians conceived of no fundamental distinction or dual offerings system that bifurcated temple offerings from others, as Burkhard Gladigow has suggested for other contexts.[878] Although divine images in temples were concealed and access to them limited apart from festivals and processions,[879] the evidence from Deir el-Medina demonstrates the similarity between the offerings or religious activities performed. Offering in ancient Egypt generally meant an exchange of goods, i.e., giving something to the gods in order to satisfy them and receive

[876] Nicolaus Tacke has recently presented a complete edition of the text formerly known as "Ritual of Amenhotep I" or "Ritual of the Royal Ancestors," which he now views as "the standard ritual for the daily offerings of food in the divine temples of the New Kingdom," cf. Tacke 2013 (quote: vol. I, 1). While Tacke's study certainly provides easy access to a vital source, the lack of putting the material in a broader theoretical perspective appears to be a missed opportunity. Thanks to the synthetic priorities of the time, the most detailed study on offerings still remains: A. Moret, 'Du sacrifice en Égypte', *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions* 57 (1908), 81–101. Apart from this study, the topic has received attention in lexica articles, but no comprehensive study of offerings in general has been published as of yet. Silvie Cauville's recent study (Cauville 2012), for instance, takes an encyclopedic rather than an analytic approach. For other general descriptions, cf., e.g. A. Erman, *Die Religion der Ägypter. Ihr Werden und Vergehen in vier Jahrtausenden*, Berlin 2001[2], 10–1; H. Bonnet, *Reallexikon der ägyptischen Religionsgeschichte*, Berlin 1952, 547–50; H. Altenmüller, 'Opfer', *LÄ* IV (1982), 579–84; G. Englund, 'Offerings', in: D.B. Redford, *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt* II, Oxford 2001, 564–9.

[877] A.O. Bolshakov, 'Offering tables', in: D.B. Redford, *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt* II, Oxford 2001, 572–3.

[878] B. Gladigow, 'Opfer und Komplexe Kulturen' in: B. Janowski and M. Welker (eds), *Opfer. Theologische und kulturelle Kontexte*, Frankfurt 2000, 95–8.

[879] Gladigow 2000, 97; for the types of images carried in processions, cf., e.g., K. Eaton, 'Types of Images Carried in Divine Barks and the Logistics of Performing Temple Ritual in the New Kingdom', *ZÄS* 134 (2007), 15–26.

certain rewards in return.[880] The effects of this exchange are thus reciprocal.[881] For ancient Egypt this reciprocity can be illustrated by a quote from the *Teaching of Merikare*: *jr n nṯr jr=f n=k mjt.t* (" (something) which is done for the god, so that he does the same for you").[882] The text prescribes offerings and votive inscriptions to mention the name of the worshipper so the god will know from whom he receives the offerings. These offerings usually consisted solids and liquids,[883] i.e., the staple foods. Accordingly, food offerings operate as that symbolic currency typical for societies in which both acquisition and allocation of food resources pose basic problems.[884] This ritualized transfer of food is a characteristic of kin-based societies[885] with a barter economy.[886] At Deir el-Medina, the importance of food transfer and reciprocity is underlined by the numerous lists that served as a memory aid for one of the parties involved.[887] Offerings to the gods apparently mirror a common economic concept, with staple foods functioning as both offering and gift.[888] The significance of offering staple foods is reflected in the way the word for "offering" ("*ḥtp*"[889]) is written in the ancient Egyptian script. The hieroglyph

[880] E.g. Sadek 1988, 231–5; Altenmüller 1982, 581; R. Hölzl, *Ägyptische Opfertafeln und Kultbecken. Eine Form– und Funktionsanalyse für das Alte, Mittlere und Neue Reich*, *HÄB* 45, Hildesheim 2002, 3–4. It is thus no coincidence that the ancient Egyptian language uses the same word for "offering" and "to satisfy/to be satisfied," cf. J. Assmann 1991a, 60.

[881] As already argued by H. Hubert and M. Mauss, *Sacrifice: Its Nature and Function* (translated by W.D. Halls) [first published in 1898: Essai sur la nature et la fonction du sacrifice in *L'Année sociologique*], London 1964, 100 and cf., P.J. Frandsen, 'Trade and Cult', in: G. Englund (ed.), *The Religion of the Ancient Egyptians. Cognitive Structures and Popular Expressions. Proceedings of Symposia in Uppsala and Bergen 1987 and 1988*, *Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis. Boreas* 20, Uppsala 1989, 100. Lichtheim observes, that "the connection between the deed and its effects on the doer was viewed as fixed and certain, since it derived directly from the order of the world, an order which was one and the same in the cosmic and the human sphere"; cf. M. Lichtheim, *Late Egyptian Wisdom Literature in the International Context. A Study of Demotic Instructions*, Göttingen 1983, 37.

[882] *jr n nṯr jr=f n=k mjt.t m ꜥ3b.t [n.t] [sw3d] ꜥb3.w m ḫtj.t*, cf. P. Moskow 4658, VIII, 8–9, cf. *TLA*, lemma no. 35330; J.F. Quack, *Studien zur Lehre für Merikare*, *GOF* IV/23, Wiesbaden 1992, 7 and 195. Compare also Gladigow 2000, 88–99 for the pragmatic aspects of offering. For a nice example of the Egyptian deities' relative dependency, see e.g., P. Geneva MAH 15274, III, 6. In this spell against scorpion bites, the conjurer threatens to prevent that one does rituals in their temples (i.e. of the gods): *nn dj=j jr=tw ḥnw.w m nȝy=w r3.w-pr*; "I will prevent that offerings will be placed in their temples"; cf. A. Massart, 'The Egyptian Geneva Papyrus MAH 15274', *MDAIK* 15 (1957), 184. Apparently, this threat is directed at the gods responsible for removing the poison from the sick's body.

[883] Beyond solids and liquids, incense, myrrh, flowers, ointment, cloths, make-up, textiles, crowns, cult equipment, and any nuber of other objects could be offered, cf. Altenmüller 1982, 581. In her analysis of the offerings depicted on the so-called ear stelae, Morgan arrives at a similar result: E.E. Morgan, *Untersuchungen zu den Ohrenstelen aus Deir el Medine*, *ÄAT* 61, Wiesbaden 2004, 38.

[884] U. Dahm, *Opfer und Ritus. Kommunikationstheoretische Untersuchungen*, Marburg 2003, 91.

[885] Dahm 2003, 86–7.

[886] Dahm 2003, 167.

[887] Studied in detail by J.J. Janssen, 'Gift-Giving in Ancient Egypt', *JEA* 68 (1982), 253–8. For the interpretation of the texts as *aide-mémoire*, cf. Janssen 2003, 256.

[888] On the economic importance as gift, cf. Janssen 2003, 254.

[889] Many words can be translated as offerings, depending on their contextual use, e.g., *jḫ(.w).t* as "things" or "offerings" (cf. *Wb* I, 124.2–125.7) and *wꜥb* as "meat" or "meat as offering" (cf. *Wb* I, 284.13). Compare the references for "offering" listed by the *TLA*. *Ḥtp*, however, seems least ambiguous, though *ḥtp* can also mean "to be satisfied" (cf. *Wb* III, 188), "to rest" (cf. *Wb* III, 190),[889] "peace" and many derivatives of these words (cf. *Wb* III, 192). It is far beyond the scope of this thesis to discuss the etymology or meaning of *ḥtp* in detail, the general connotation of the word should be clear.

"*ḥtp*" (Gardiner R4) represents a reed mat with a loaf of bread on top of it,[890] the hieroglyph also symbolized by the shape of many offering plates or tables.[891] According to these representations, an "offering table" is a portable base (as distinguished from an altar, which is fixed) used to hold offerings in the sense defined above.[892] Therefore, offerings took place on offering tables. Apart from this rather obvious classification, Egyptologists have proposed no proper definition that could delimit the subject.[893] Hölzl has presented a twofold typology that first denotes the main characteristics of the offering table's shape (i.e., "basin," "drain," etc.),[894] then divides the decorative elements into *real-functional* and *magical-functional* elements.[895] This distinction acknowledges that ancient Egyptians themselves considered the decoration on the offering tables as "functional". While Hölzl's study presents the variety of shapes,[896] her typology has not addressed potential differences in use; the focus of the present study. In addition to from the common flat limestone offering tables (table 5), Bruyère found offering basins (table 6), so-called *grilles d'offrandes* (table 7), and offering supports (table 8). The flat and basin-shaped offering tables can be combined into a single category. The offering supports are not strictly offering tables since they probably supported offerings indirectly (i.e., their supports might have carried offerings on additional offering tables).[897]

3.1.1. Offering Tables

The preceding analysis of larger cultic emplacements has demonstrated that conceptualization of a transition between the mortuary sphere and the sphere of the living is an Egyptological construct. Rather than distinct spheres, the Egyptian lived in a continuum between the living and the dead,[898] a conclusion reached through investigation into the offerings performed in the houses.

[890] *Wb* III, 183.

[891] *Wb* III, 183.

[892] Contra Bolshakov, who confines the term "offering table" to funerary cults and suggests "altar" for temple cults without considering size and mobility: Bolshakov 2001, 572–6. Similarly, Kuentz and Hölzl focus on the funerary context: Ch. Kuentz, 'Bassins et tables d'offrandes', *Bulletin du Centenaire. BIFAO suppl.* 81 (1981), 243–82; R. Hölzl, 'Zur Typologie der Opfertafeln und Kultbecken', *GM* 183 (2001), 53–69 and Hölzl 2002, 1. Hölzl includes temples and considers both altars and offering tables functionally identical (2001, 1–3). On offering tables as "common feature of New Kingdom artisans' houses," see also Harrington 2003, 79.

[893] Bolshakov 2001, 572.

[894] Hölzl 2002, 9–10.

[895] Hölzl 2002, 65–6.

[896] Hölzl 2002, 9–11.

[897] Similarly argued by Hölzl 2002, 64.

[898] Notably, Sadek lists a few stelae attesting praise to the god Osiris "outside of any direct funerary context" (cf. Sadek 1988, 108 with reference to i.a. stela BM 547, showing Thuthir[makte]f (i), with his wife Wenuro (i) and their daughters Nofretiyti (iv) and Nehihai (i). Their son Huy (x) is not depicted, cf. Davies 1999, chart 22 and see H.R. Hall, *Hieroglyphic Texts from Egyptian Stelae, etc., in: the British Museum* 7, London 1925, 9 and pl. 22).

With few exceptions (e.g., **Cat. 5.11**), the gods traditionally associated with the afterlife like the Osiris-Wennefer,[899] Anubis,[900] and a combination of them[901] are attested in the houses at Deir el-Medina. Beyond such beneficiaries, offering tables mention the invocation offering (*pr.t-ḫrw*). *Pr.t-ḫrw* literally means the "appearing of the voice," which refers to the "*Totenopfer (bei dem der Tote auf den Ruf aus dem Grabe zu den Speisen hervorkommt).*"[902] The term "invocation offering" (*pr.t-ḫrw*) thus emphasizes the "oral nature" of the formula as a written (speech) act.[903] Moreover, both texts and iconography attested on the offering tables from Deir el-Medina characterize those generally found in the mortuary contexts. Crucially, while some authors contend that the term "offering table" should only refer to objects found in a mortuary context,[904] the ones discussed here came not from tombs but houses. Even discounting those without certain provenances,[905] still many examples remain whose find spots lay in the houses. Arguments for all offering tables having shifted from the necropolis or having undergone reuse and hence refunctioning in a domestic context prove quite far-fetched.

More plausibly, invocation offerings were performed in the house. Such a conclusion receives support from a wisdom text that says the ancestors should receive an invocation offering (*pr.t-ḫrw*) in the house.[906] Another religious instruction suggests the performance of a *pr.t-ḫrw* for the *ȝḫ.w* in the house on the seventh day of the second month of the *pr.t*-season.[907] It is not fully clear who had access to this instruction and whether it provided suggestions or requirements; nevertheless, the passage shows that the *pr.t-ḫrw* took place in (at least some) houses.

Very few artifacts would support a cult of "mortuary gods" within the household. Only three objects could potentially evince such cults: the fragment of an Osiris figurine (**Cat. 10.1**) in house N.E. IV (?), a statuette with an offering formula dedicated to the god Osiris (**Cat. 10.52**), a stela dedicated to Osiris by Paneferemdjed (i) and his brother, To (i), (**Cat. 11.8**) in house N.E. IX, and the fragment of an Atef-crown (**Cat. 10.4**) in house N.E. XI.[908] Though the latter often receives interpretation as a fragment of an Amenhotep I statuette, the iconography could apply to Osiris as well. Either these objects may have been produced in the village and used elsewhere, or, few people may have given

[899] Cf. **Cat. 5.11** and **Cat. 5.19**.

[900] Cf. **Cat. 5.10** and **Cat. 5.23**.

[901] Cf. **Cat. 5.2** (Anubis, Osiris-Wennefer and Hathor), **Cat. 5.4** ([Anubis (?)] and Osiris-Wennefer) and **Cat. 5.12** (Anubis Imiut; Osiris) and **Cat. 5.13** (Anubis with Re-Horakhty).

[902] *Wb* I, 529.7–530.5. In German the meaning of the term *pr.t-ḫrw* can neatly be rendered more or less literally as "*Herausrufen*" of the deceased, cf. M. Fitzenreiter, 'Überlegungen zum Kontext der "Familienstelen" und ähnlicher Objekte', in: M. Fitzenreiter (ed.), *Genealogie – Realität und Fiktion von Identität. Internet-Beiträge zur Ägyptologie und Sudanarchäologie* V, London 2005, 71. In the following the Standard English translation 'invocation offering' shall be followed. On the formula see also J.J. Clère, 'Nouvelles observations sur l'expressions *prl ḫrw*', *RdE* 11 (1957), 158–9.

[903] Cf. also the discussion of this terms and others attested in the letters to the dead by Donnat 2010, 64–7.

[904] E.g. Bolshakov 2001, 572–6.

[905] Admittedly, domestic provenance is plausible but not provable for those found in the *décombres* and the *Kom Sud* (see also *Introduction to the catalogue*).

[906] P. Sallier IV, 6–7, cf. Friedman 1985, 96. For a comprehensive discussion of the evidence see also Janssen and Janssen, 1996, 50–2 and Demarée 1983, 272–3.

[907] Cf. P. Sallier IV, rt. 16, 4–5; Chr. Leitz, *Tagewählerei: das Buch ḥ3t nḥḥ ph.wy ḏt und verwandte Texte*, *ÄA* 55, Wiesbaden 1994, 233 and pl. 70.

[908] Bruyère 1939, pl. XVII, 7 perhaps shows the fragment of a cult emplacement dedicated to the god Osiris, but it has no clearly identified find spot. **Cat. 10.4** may as well be worn by Amenhotep I.

offerings to Osiris in the house.[909] In addition, none of the smaller and larger cultic emplacements discussed in chapter 2 indicates a cult for "mortuary gods." Therefore the main beneficiaries referenced on the offering tables were probably the deceased. Although many offering tables are broken, we find a relatively uniform pattern of (mostly) flat offering tables used for the veneration of the deceased by means of *pr.t-ḫrw*. The offering formulae were dedicated to the gods, who—in return for the offerings—cared for the (Ka of the) deceased in the afterlife.

Those ancestors attested on the offering tables were, in fact, not only the *ȝḫ.w-jḳr-n-Rʿ*[910] but also the many ancestors bearing the title *Wsjr* ("Osiris").[911] The title Osiris raises interest, since both offering tables and Osiris were generally associated with the netherworld.[912] However, the title *Wsjr* not indicate the identity of the god or the deceased.[913] As Mark Smith has shown, the title "Osiris + NN" consist of a direct genitive (i.e., "Osiris of NN")[914] and therefore indicates no temporarily "becoming one" ("*Einwohnung*"[915]) of deceased and divinity. Rather than a part of the god Osiris, the deceased became a follower of the god.[916] To explain this constellation, Smith draws on

[909] Cf. the ostraca venerating the god Osiris or Ptah-Sokar-Osiris in the Valley of the Kings, cf. Dorn 2011, 92.

[910] Cf. **Cat. 5.4**, **Cat. 5.5**, **Cat. 5.10**, **Cat. 5.13**, **Cat. 11.27**, **Cat. 11.35**.

[911] Cf. **Cat. 5.1**, **Cat. 5.2**, **Cat. 5.3**, **Cat. 5.7**, **Cat. 5.12**, and **Cat. 5.20** and **Cat. 11.49** and see also Bruyère 1939, 309 and fig. 179/Demareé 1983, 67–8 and pl. VII (found in C.VI); Louvre E. 16369 (not found in C. VI! see remarks note 863 above); cf. Bruyère 1939, 164, 310 and pl. XXIII/Demarée 1983, 29–30 and pl. III; Louvre E. 16344 (found in S.O. II); cf. Bruyère 1939, 317 (fig. 186) and 318/Demarée 1983, 106–9 and pl. XI; Louvre E 16368 (found in S.O. II); cf. Bruyère 1939, 318 and fig. 187/Demarée 1983, 110–1 and pl. XI and Louvre E. 16362 (found in (S.O. V); cf. Bruyère 1939, 153 (fig. 62); 327 and 328 (fig. 198)/ Demarée 1983, 102–3 and pl. X.

[912] M. Smith, 'Osiris and the Deceased', in: J. Dieleman and W. Wendrich (eds), *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, Los Angeles 2008, 3; cf. http://digital2.library.ucla.edu/viewItem.do?ark=21198/zz001nf6bg; accessed on 3rd January 2012.

[913] That the deceased "took on the identity of the resurrected god Osiris" is stated, for example, by Meskell 1999, 120. DuQuesne even coins the term "incarnation of Osiris," cf. T. DuQuesne, 'Concealing and revealing: the problem of ritual masking in ancient Egypt', *DE* 51 (2001), 5. In English, incarnation can simply mean "the embodiment of a deity or spirit in some earthly form," but given the strong Christian connotation of the term understood as the "the union of divinity with humanity in Jesus Christ" the term is better avoided within the ancient Egyptian context. For both definitions, see Merriam-Webster dictionary, cf. http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/incarnation accessed on 30 July 2013.

[914] Cf. M. Smith, 'Osiris NN or Osiris of NN', in: B. Backes, I. Munro and S. Stöhr (eds), *Totenbuch-Forschungen, Gesammelte Beiträge des 2. Internationalen Totenbuch-Symposiums 2005*, *Studien zum Altägyptischen Totenbuch* 11, Wiesbaden 2006, 331. This translation is indeed common practice for translation of titles elsewhere, cf. K. Jansen-Winkeln, 'Bemerkungen zum "Genetiv" im Ägyptischen', *ZÄS* 127 (2000), 27–37 and H. Spiess, 'Der Direkte Genitiv', *DE* 37 (1997), 65–72.

[915] E.g. J. Assmann, 'Einwohnung', in: T. Hofmann and A. Sturm (eds), *Menschenbilder – Bildermenschen: Kunst und Kultur im alten Ägypten*, Norderstedt 2003, 1.

[916] M. Smith 2006, 355 and M. Smith 2009, 7. Incidentally, this proposal answers why women could also bear the title Osiris. Previously, Egyptologists argued that by becoming an Osiris, women obtained some kind of "gender fluidity"; e.g. H.L. McCarty, 'The Osiris Nefertari: A Case Study of Decorum, Gender and Regeneration', *JARCE* 39 (2002), 176. McCarty uses this postulation to explain the absence of Ramesses II in the tomb of Nefertari, she having an alleged special status. In the tombs of kings, representations of their wives were also not a common element of the decoration. For example, no such depiction is shown in C. Ziegler (ed.), *Queens of Egypt. From Hetepheres to Cleopatra*, Paris 2008. In the present model the construction of "gender fluidity" is unnecessary. The deceased women did not become a part of the male

the conception of a "*unio liturgica*" between the deceased and the god Osiris,[917] the term "*unio liturgica*" borrowed by Assmann from Jewish Studies and describing the act of participation in the "*götterweltliche Handlungsgefüge, das den Kosmos zusammen- und in Gang hält.*"[918] Within the "*unio liturciga*," the deceased was able to "participate in his cult" (i.e., the cult of the god Osiris).[919] Although it seems highly questionable to adopt this terminology to the ancient Egyptian context, Smith's findings are crucial and suggest both the god Osiris and the deceased could benefit from the offerings performed for either of them.

The same concept of cult participation may apply to the title *ꜣḫ-jḳr-n-Rᶜ*, an indirect genitive. These deceased apparently became followers of the god Re.[920] The two titles hence seem to betray a distinction. While *ꜣḫ-jḳr-n-Rᶜ* and *Wsjr* seldom appear together,[921] *ꜣḫ jḳr-n-Rᶜ* is only once attested in a tomb at Deir el-Medina.[922] Another example comes from a stela found in a tomb in Buhen, which depicts the adoration of the god Osiris in the upper register and the adoration of the ancestors underneath it.[923] Not explicitly classified as *ꜣḫ.w-jḳr-n-Rᶜ*, the ancestors are identified by their iconography nonetheless, for their representation as seated and smelling the lotus flower is typical of the *ꜣḫ.w-jḳr-n-Rᶜ*.[924]

The occasional, albeit rare, appearance of both titles together seems to indicate that becoming an *ꜣḫ-jḳr-n-Rᶜ* was no special achievement.[925] Such a ranking would seem rather alien to a polytheistic pantheon. The co-relations of various gods actually reveal different competencies.[926] In other words, devotion to the one god did not weaken an

god Osiris but joined his devotees, an act that enabled them "to experience rebirth and renewal," cf. McCarty 2002, 194. Women could, however, appear as Hathor or Osiris-Hathor in "from sometime between the 7th and the 4th centuries BC" indicating that "women could also acquire the aspect of Hathor"; cf. M. Smith 2009, 7.

[917] M. Smith 2006, 334, quoting J. Assmann 2001a, 511.

[918] J. Assmann 1995a, 46–7 and note 27: in early Judaism this act of joining in the "heavenly liturgy" is not a collective-cultic act, as in the case of Ancient Egypt; rather, it is an an individual-mystic experience. On the Jewish conception; cf. P. Schäfer, *Der verborgene und der offenbare Gott, Hauptthemen der frühen jüdischen Mystik*, Tübingen 1991, 160–2; See also J. Assmann, *Ägyptische Geheimnisse*, München 2004, 157–77.

[919] Compare M. Smith 2006, 334.

[920] It seems remarkable that no reference is made to the *ꜣḫ-jḳr*-cults in the study by S. Quirke, *Cult of Ra*, New York 2001, but see Demarée 1983, 251.

[921] Cf. Louvre E 16368: *Wsjr ꜣḫ.t-jḳr.t-n-Rᶜ* [*S*]*rj(.t)-Rᶜ* [*mꜣᶜ ḫrw*]; cf. Bruyère 1939, 318 and fig. 187/Demarée 1983, 110–1 and pl. XI. Examples for the title *Wsjr ꜣḫ-jḳr-n-Rᶜ* is the stela BM 344 (cf. Demarée 1983, 88-9 and pl. IX) and stela Cannes, *Musée Archéologique* 7 (cf. Demarée 1983, 93-4 and pls IX and XV). Compare also a stela from Abydos (JE 29258), in which Osiris and Horakhty appear together, cf. G. Daressy, 'Notes et remarques', *Recueil de Travaux* 14 (1893), 28.

[922] In TT 335, chamber B, southern wall; cf. Demarée 1983, 155–6 and pl. XVIII.

[923] Found in tomb 473 at Buhen; cf. G. Brunton and R. Engelbach, *Gurob*, London 1927, 15, 19 and pl. L, 11.

[924] Demarée 1982, 174–5; compare, for example, Louvre E. 16362; cf. Bruyère 1939, 153 (fig. 62); 327 and 328 (fig. 198)/ Demarée 1983, 102–3 and pl. X, although most ancestors are seated on chairs. The flower has been interpreted as a symbol of resurrection, cf. Demarée 1986, 318 and see cf. Fitzenreiter 1994, 62.

[925] A different view is taken by Janssen and Janssen, who argue that "particularly (...) [the deceased] that had been a forceful personality (...) [could] exert an influence on the affairs of the living (...) and were distinguished from the ordinary dead," cf. Janssen and Janssen 1996, 50 and see also Fitzenreiter 2008, 101.

[926] B. Gladigow, 'Polytheismus. Akzente, Perspektiven und Optionen der Forschung', *ZfR* 5 (1997), 70–4.

individual's commitments towards another one;[927] on the contrary, different forms or constellations could exist side by side without excluding one another, a phenomenon described as the "multiplicity of approaches"[928] or "complementary thought."[929] The deceased could gain the status of both follower of Re and follower of Osiris without any implying of ranking or absolute nature. The title *ꜣḫ-jḳr-n-Rᶜ* was not significantly more common on offering tables than *Wsjr*, which intimates both forms existed side by side, equally respectable. Archaeological coincidences might account for the same person not being attested as *ꜣḫ-jḳr-n-Rᶜ* on one offering table and *Wsjr* on another.

Professional titles (like "servant in the place of the truth") appear on offering tables most often, but while they could be preceded by *Wsjr*, they never followed *ꜣḫ-jḳr-n-Rᶜ*. *Wsjr* may have thus served as a title for all deceased, who had passed the weighing of the heart procedure, whereas *ꜣḫ.w-jḳr-n-Rᶜ* referred to constellation with the god Re. How much the allegiance of a deceased with Re differed from one with Osiris is difficult to determine, especially since later sources assert that the deceased could not only follow the god Osiris but also "any god of any temple and to worship him according to his wish in the course of every single day."[930] Moreover, the cult of the deceased might have included the cults/allegiance of other gods at some point. The quote from P. Louvre 3452 dates to the Graeco-Roman period and may not pertain to the New Kingdom, but the unity of Re and Osiris in the netherworld is a well-known religious conception during the Ramesside period.[931] The two gods symbolize "a dual eternal existence, one related to Osiris and reflecting his infinite everlasting existence, and one related to Re and reflecting his cyclical rejuvenation."[932] Ostensibly, the possibility to follow both gods—previously studied in connection to the Egyptian kings[933]—finds parallel in the ancestor cult at Deir el-Medina. The workmen at Deir el-Medina were responsible for decoration of the tombs in the Valley of the Kings, which has yielded netherworld books of the kings. As a result, the "imagery both textual and pictorial [was] available"[934] to them. The royal *decorum* could thus explain why ancestors were worshipped as followers of both

[927] Gladigow 1997, 70.

[928] H. Frankfort, *Ancient Egyptian Religion: An Interpretation*, New York 1948, 4.

[929] E. Hornung, *Der Eine und die Vielen, Altägyptische Götterwelt (6th rev. ed.)*, Darmstadt 2005, 257.

[930] M. Smith 2006, 336 with reference to P. Louvre 3452, 1, 2–3 and See M. Smith 2009, 628–9.

[931] E.g. A. Spalinger, 'The Rise of the Solar-Osirian Theology in the Ramesside Age: New points d'appui', in: B. Rothöhler and A. Manisali (eds), *Mythos & Ritual. Festschrift für Jan Assmann zum 70. Geburtstag*, Berlin 2008, 257–75 esp. 273–5; A. Spalinger, *The Great Dedicatory Inscription of Ramesses II at Abydos, A Solar-Osirian Tractate at Abydos*, *CHANE* 33, Leiden 2009, 100–1; T. DuQuesne, 'Osiris with the Solar Disk', *DE* 60 (2004), 21–5 and A. Niwinski, 'The Solar-Osirian Unity as Principle of the Theology of the "State of Amun" in Thebes in the 21st dynasty', *JEOL* 30 (1987-88), 89–106: and see C. Manassa, *The Late Egyptian Underworld: Sarcophagi and Related Texts from the Nectabid Period, ÄAT* 72, Wiesbaden 2007, 430–5.

[932] Cf. Silverman 1991, 46 quoting E.F. Wente, 'Funerary Beliefs of the Ancient Egyptians. An Interpretation of the Burials and the Texts', *Expedition* 24 (1982), 22–4.

[933] E.g. recently J.C. Darnell, *The Enigmatic Netherworld Books of the Solar-Osirian Unity: Cryptographic Compositions in the Tombs of Tutankhamun, Ramesses VI and Ramesses IX*, *OBO* 198, Freiburg 2004 and on the importance of this motif in royal *Jenseitskosmographien* in general; cf. D.A. Werning, *Das Höhlenbuch. Textkritische Edition und Textgrammatik I: Überlieferungsgeschichte und Textgrammatik*, *GOF* 48, Wiesbaden 2011, 3 with references.

[934] Darnell 2004, 450 and see also S. Quirke, *Ancient Egyptian Religion*, London 1992, 165.

Osiris and Re.[935] Interesting in this respect is a text written on a coffin of a man called Paheripedjet saying *ḏd md(w) jn Wsjr sḏm ꜥš m s.t Mɜꜥ.t Pɜ-ḥrj-pḏ.t mɜꜥ ḫrw ḥɜ mw.t Nw.t psš.w ḥr=j dj(=w.t) {m*} jḫm-sk jḫm-wrḏ* (="Words spoken by Osiris, servant of the place of the truth Paheripedjet. Decend mother Nut! Divide yourself on me! May (I) be placed {among} He-who-does-not-set and the Unwearying-one."[936] Given the latter two characters names of stars,[937] it is perhaps a little too far-fetched to argue that deceased "claims to be both Osiris and Re".[938] Most interestingly, however, both stars frequently appear in close connection with the god Re.[939] This standard spell may thus reflect the Solar-Osirian unity in a non-royal context, suggesting that not only kings but also the deceased could enter a divine union with both gods. It is particularly tentative then, to recall the *ɜḫ-jḳr-n-Rꜥ* Paheripedjet, who is attested as the beneficiary of offerings to gods usually contextualized in the mortuary sphere (**Cat. 5.4**). That the Paheripedjet attested on the coffin also came from Deir el-Medina is clear from his titulatury (servant of the place of the truth), but no tomb is known of this person.[940] His coffin was reused for the noble lady Ray and found in a the cachette of TT320.[941] The Paheripedjet attested on the coffin has wife and children,[942] whereas of his three namesakes hitherto known from Deir el-Medina only parents and siblings are known.[943] Considering the dating of the coffin to the 19th dynasty,[944] Paheripedjet (i) is the most plausible option. Apparently, the titles reflect an allegiance with either god, but in the end also the non-royal deceased could enter into a union.

[935] Similarly, Eyre has noted the "overlap in content, function and indeed performance" between royal and non-royal cults; cf. Eyre 2002, 72–3. Contrary to this view, others have maintained that the dominant official religion obstructs analysis of other religious forms, e.g. Fitzenreiter 1994, 53. Note that Fitzenreiter views Deir el-Medina as exception (1994, 57).

[936] CG 61022 (JE 26223); cf. M.G. Daressy, *Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire nos. 610001–61044*, Cairo 1909, 36–7 and see K.M. Cooney, 'The Problem of Female Rebirth in New Kingdom Egypt', in: C. Graves-Brown (ed.), *Sex and Gender in Ancient Egypt. 'Don your wig for a joyful hour'*, Swansea 2008, 4 for a slightly different translation. For a parallel of this standard formula see, for example, the lid of the coffin Turin Sup. 5153, transliterated in *KRI* II, 851, 5–6. The latter is a royal example made for the queen Nefertari.

[937] I.e. two names of circumpolar stars; cf. *Wb* I, 125.14 and *Wb* I, 125.15–16 and see also *LGG* V, 734.

[938] Cooney 2008a, 4.

[939] E.g. "*ḫrp=j n=k sḳd.wt m jr.w=k jpw n(j).t jḫm.w-wrḏ*;" "May I control for you the journey among these Unwearying-ones that belong to you; cf. I. Munro, *Der Totenbuch-Papyrus des Hohenpriesters Panedjem II. (P. London BM 10793-P. Campbell)*, *Handschriften des Altägyptischen Totenbuches* 3, Wiesbaden 1996, pl. 22, 19–20; for the reference see *TLA* lemma no. 500410.

[940] Cf. http://www.tmpbibliography.com/resources/individual_tombs_number.html; accessed on 24 July 2013 and for the dating of the coffin; cf. A. Niwinski, *21st Dynasty Coffins from Thebes, Chronological and Typological Studies*, Mainz 1988, 1176, no. 75

[941] Cf. e.g. http://www.cesras.org/coffins/paheryhedjet.html; accessed on 24 July 2013.

[942] Nubireset (wife), three sons (Amenmose, Merymose and Penamun), and a daughter (Tawosret); cf. Daressy 1909, 38–9.

[943] Cf. Davies 1999, charts 1, 3, and 10.

[944] Contra Daressy 1909, 39 (20th dynasty). See the coffins of Khonsu (ii) for a close parallel (MMA 86.1.2a, b; cf. http://www.metmuseum.org/Collections/search-the-collections/544705; accessed on 26 July 2013) and see also Niwinski 1988, 117 (19th or 20th dynasty). Given the close parallel the coffin of Paheripedjet thus most probable dates to the 19th dynasty, i.e. most probably made for Paheripedjet (i), who lived at the times of Ramesses II (cf. Davies 1999, 9; O. DeM 116 dates to the 19th dynasty).

Ancestor worship occurred primarily in houses, not tombs. Perhaps it is no coincidence that the banquet scenes—the social representation of shared ritual meals for ancestors that were so important in tomb decoration of the 18th dynasty—became less important during the Ramesside period.[945] This iconographic change along with the decline in material tomb offerings have often been interpreted as a devaluation of the sense of community or a tendency of individualization,[946] yet, religious action simply shifted from necropolis to home. Family ties did not loosen; rather, religious activities moved closer to the household. Tombs, obviously important attestations of ancestor cults, may have been visited only on special occasions, such as the Valley-festival.[947] Offerings on a smaller scale were performed more frequently for the (Ka of the) deceased at home. Though questions of timing and frequency for the offerings are difficult to prove, it is clear there was much more everyday overlap between the cults of the living and those of the deceased than previously assumed.[948] As a tentative hypothesis, similar domestic offerings might have been performed in the houses by the poorer population, who could only afford a pit grave without superstructure for their beloved relatives.[949] This situation would further destabilize that all too frequent distinction between social strata's religious conceptualization,[950] instead supporting the argument for a different appropriation of a shared conceptualization. Since ancestor cults were not confined to Deir el-Medina,[951]

[945] M. Fitzenreiter, 'Totenverehrung und soziale Repräsentationim thebanischen Beamtengrab der 18. Dynastie', *SAK* 22 (1995), 129.

[946] A.M. Gnirs, 'Der Tod des Selbst. Die Wandlung der Jenseitsvorstellungen in der Ramessidenzeit', in: H. Guksch *et al.* (eds), *Grab und Totenkult im Alten Ägypten*, München 2003, 193–5.

[947] Compare, for example, B.J. Kemp, *Ancient Egypt. An Anatomy of a Civilization* (2nd edition), New York 2006, 274 and A. Spalinger, 'The limitations of formal ancient Egyptian religion', *JNES* 57/4 (1998), 250–1.

[948] Sadek, for instance, writes, "Conventional funerary religion centered upon burial-customs [and] does not come within the purview of everyday religion in its concern with this life rather than the afterlife," cf. Sadek 1988, 3.

[949] Compare, for example, the findings of S.S. Seidlmayer, 'Vom Sterben der kleinen Leute. Tod und Bestattung in der sozialen Grundschicht am Ende des Alten Reichs', in: H. Guksch, E. Hofmann and M. Bommas (eds), *Grab und Totenkult im alten Ägypten*, Munich 2003, 60–74; especially 69–72. Stephan Seidlmayer describes a much earlier situation in a different place (i.e. Elephantine at the end of the Old Kingdom). Nevertheless, the common ground between elite tombs and poor tombs is striking indeed. Note, however, that Seidlmayer views "*eine tiefgreifende Differenz zwischen Elite- und Grundschichtkultur*" where the presentation tomb owner acts individually, while the deceased serve as objects of the ritual funeral (Seidlmayer 2003, 73). Unfortunately, rather dowdy objects often remain unpublished. An interesting, though much later example is a group of raw sausage-shaped figurines in a wooden box, which served as shabtis; cf. E. Brunner-Traut and H. Brunner, *Die Ägyptische Sammlung der Universität Tübingen*, Mainz 1981, 288, no. 233. I would like to thank Alexandra van Lieven for bringing this group to my attention and Donata Schäfer for kindly providing information and a photograph. See also H. Ranke, *Koptische Friedhöfe bei Karâra und der Amontempel Scheschonks I. bei el Hibe: Bericht über den badischen Grabungen in Ägypten in den Wintern 1913 und 1914*, Berlin 1926, 40.

[950] Compare, for example, also Fitzenreiter's argument of the absence of "theology" ("*primär theologiefreie Bereiche*") in "practical religion" (cf. Fitzenreiter 2004, 32). It should be noted, however, that whereas Fitzenreiter's definition of theology seems at a first glance to follow Assmann's understanding of theology as religious discourse and critical reflection (cf. Assmann 2001b, 9) and not the "system of religious norms and practices," Fitzenreiter does, in fact, acknowledge that temples activated the same "system" of "practical religion" in an enhanced form (Fitzenreiter 2004, 33); he further defines theology as "*interreligiöse Konzeptualisierung*" (Fitzenreiter 2004, 41). Religious practice is thus clearly not free from "theology." Actually, elsewhere Fitzenreiter (2008, 110) defines theology as a form of religious practice.

[951] E.g. Demarée 1983, 184.

"we should not be too reluctant to draw general conclusions from very specific evidence."[952]

3.1.2. Offering Basins, Offering Grills, and Offering Supports

Support for a distinction between different kinds of offering come from a religious instruction for the fourth month of the *pr.t*-season, day 23, which declares an offering ("*ꜥȝb.t*"[953]) should be performed for the gods and an invocation offering ("*pr.t-ḫrw*") for the *ȝḫ.w*.[954] The *ꜥȝb.t* was an offering typically performed for gods.[955] In the *Teaching of Merikare*, for example, the term *ꜥȝb.t* appears in an instruction to "do [something] for the god and he will do the same to you; with offerings in order to make prosper the altars and with inscriptions" (p. 118).[956] The *Teaching of Merikare* thus distinguishes between offerings for the gods and those for the deceased. Such a distinction may have been qualitative. Indeed, another religious instruction specifies the nature of the offerings on the fourth of *pr.t*, day 23: "incense shall be on the fire for the gods and an invocation offering venerated for the *ȝḫ.w*."[957] Incense may have been offered to the gods and "more substantial" food offerings to the deceased, but pictorial evidence showing various offerings for the different recipients does not confirm this differentiation. Gods are often depicted in front of overflowing offering tables, whereas the deceased could also receive incense offerings.[958] Since some offering tables had integrated basins and most had drains,[959] no strict distinction emerges for flat offering tables and offering basins. Additionally, the basins were more fragile, their state of preservation hence much worse. Nevertheless, the evidence suggests the *pr.t-ḫrw* offering was mainly performed on flat offering tables, while the basins were used for a variety of offerings. For the latter a domestic use is possible, but tentative for most basins were found in the *décombres*/*Kom Sud*.[960] The inscriptions are rather ambivalent. For example, a basin contains a formula requesting a "beautiful funeral."[961] The phrase "after the old age" connects the formula to

[952] Demarée 1983, 182 referring to R. Giveon, 'Resheph in Egypt', *JEA* 66 (1980), 144. For the cyclical continuity of the cosmos as a central motif of Egyptian religion in general, see also Sternberg-El-Hotabi 1999, 75 and 187.

[953] *Wb* I, 167.10–12.

[954] Cf. P. Cairo JE 86697, rt. XXIX, lines 9–11; translation by Leitz 1994, 323 and see A. el-Mohsen Bakir, *The Cairo Calendar: no 86637*, Cairo 1966, 39 and pl XXIX.

[955] Cf. references provided by the *TLA*, lemma no. 35330, whether or not it was a burnt offering as assumed by Leitz (1994, 190) remains unclear.

[956] *jr n nṯr jr=f n=k mjt.t m ꜥȝb.t* [*n.t*] [*swȝḏ*] *ꜥbꜣ.w m ḫtj.t*, cf. P. Moskow 4658, VIII, 8–9, cf. *TLA*, lemma no. 35330; cf. Quack 1992, 7 and 195.

[957] *ꜥȝb.t jw snṯr.w ḥr ḫ.t n nṯr.w* [*pr.t*]-*ḫrw n ȝḫ.w ꜥps.w*, cf. P. Sallier IV, rt. 22, 9–10 and Leitz 1994, 322–3 and pl. 76.

[958] E.g., Louvre E. 16344 (cf. Bruyère 1939, 317 (fig. 186) and 318/Demarée 1983, 106–9 and pl. XI) shows an ancestor receiving an incense offering. O. Leipzig 11 seems to be an instruction to calm an angry ancestor with incense, but the text could also refer to a divine manifestation; cf. Borghouts 1982, 20.

[959] **Cat. 5.2**, **Cat. 5.4**, **Cat. 5.5**, **Cat. 5.6** **Cat. 5.8**, **Cat. 5.9**, **Cat. 5.10**, **Cat. 5.11**, **Cat. 5.12**, **Cat. 5.13**.

[960] Cf. Bruyère 1933, 8.

[961] Bruyère 1933, 8: [...] *s.t mr ḳrs.t nfr m-ḫt jȝw* [...]; [...] *s.t mr* a beautiful funeral after the old age [...].The standard desire would be a "beautiful funeral" either "in (his) tomb in the West" or "among the revered ones" (cf. *TLA*, combined search of *ḳrs.t* (*TLA*, lemma, no. 854519) and *nfr* (*TLA*, lemma no. 161960)). A "beautiful funeral after the old age" makes also good sense. The combined search in the *TLA* suggests that this formula is hitherto only attested in the tombs at Amarna (for example, on the right doorpost of the Tomb 3 of Ahmose; cf. N. de G. Davies, *The Rock Tombs of El Amarna* III, *ASE* 15, London 1905, 32 and pl. 27). Clearly the *TLA* is not yet complete, but it is beyond the scope to analyse this aspect in detail. For the present analysis it is sufficient to know that the base was probably used in a solar cult.

the daily life, though as indicated by a hymn praising the god Re-Horakhty and asking him for a reward in the form of a good burial.[962] The offering may have thus stemmed from the cult of Re.[963] Similarly, the formula *sꜥnḫ rn=f* (the revitalization of the name) traditionally pertained to the deceased,[964] but in the New Kingdom, application extended beyond this particular group. None of the inscriptions strictly concern ancestor cults, but—if being preserved—relate them with the cult of the gods. A number of basins suggest they enjoyed a privileged role in religious activities performed for solar cults. The limestone basin found in house N.E. III (**Cat. 6.1**), for instance, bears the remains of an inscription associated with the bark of millions, i.e., the bark of Re.[965] The same bark seems to appear on a parallel basin found in the *Kom Sud*.[966] Less clear is the epithet *nfr-ḥr* ("beautiful of face") found on another one from *décombres* behind the houses of the S.E. area,[967] an epithet mainly attested for the gods Ptah and Hathor but occasionally for Re.[968] These finds converge with the general importance of solar aspects in the Ramesside period. Though unclear which offerings were performed for the god Re, where, and by whom, no solar god receives depiction on the flat offering tables from the village.[969] These cults apparently mainly involved libation offerings primarily but not exclusively.

[962] Preserved in P. Chester Beatty IV, rt. 7, cf. J.N. Oswalt, *The Concept of Amon-Re as Reflected in the Hymns and Prayers of the Ramesside Period*, Ann Arbor 1968, 118.

[963] The formula is, in fact, most probably an invention of the Amarna Period; see also remarks **Cat. 6.11**.

[964] For example, on stela Los Angeles 50.33.31 from the Middle Kingdom, "[t]he dignified sculptor Shensetji, who perpetuates their name" is attested. In the New Kingdom, king Seti I revived the name of his deceased father Ramesses I, on a stela in his million year house at Abydos; cf. *KRI* I, 110–14 and see also S. Schott, *Der Denkstein Sethos' I. für die Kapelle in Abydos*, Göttingen 1964, 32 and 34. Both references were found by a combined search of *rn* (*TLA*, lemma no. 94700) and *sꜥnḫ* (*TLA*, lemma no. 128910) in the *TLA*. On the subject matter, see also H.W. Obbink, *De magische betekenis van den naam inzonderheid in het Oude Egypte*, Amsterdam 1925, 90–1; A. Piankoff, *The Litany of Re*, New York 1964, 3–9 and recently M.G. Nelson-Hurst, '"... who causes his name to live." The vivification formula through the Second Intermediate Period', in: Z. Hawass and J. Houser Wegner (eds), *Millions of Jubilees. Studies in Honour of David P. Silverman* II, Cairo 2010, 13–31.

[965] *Wb* I, 271, 11, for, example, in the Book of the Dead spell 175 (Ani 29, 21) and spell 186 (Ani, 37, 5), cf. *Belegstellen* and the so-called Legend of Isis and Re, P. Turin Cat. 54051, recently republished by A. Roccati, *Magica Taurinensia. Il grande papiro magico di Torino e i suoi duplicati*, Rome 2011, 68–79 and 165–70; or as epithet of Re, (*ḥȝ.t n wjȝ n ḥḥ*), Abydos, temple of Seti I, Portico of the temple, southern part, great dedicatory inscription of Ramesses II, 94; cf. *TLA* and Spalinger 2009, 77 and 135.

[966] Bruyère 1933, 8; cf. Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0151_009 and see A 1892; IFAO database nu 2002 1645.

[967] Bruyère 1933, 8; cf. Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0151_008.

[968] *Wb* II, 255.5–9 and *LGG* IV, 214c–217a, cf. *TLA*, lemma 400940.

[969] The only exceptions are **Cat. 5.9** and **Cat. 5.13**, where the god Re-Horakhty is venerated in favor of an *ȝḫ-jḳr-n-Rꜥ*.

The best-preserved and most beautiful basin comes from house S.O. II (**Cat. 6.4**), inhabited by Harshire (i)[970] (table 1). While the decoration shows the face of Hathor, the text is dedicated to the goddess Thoeris, Bruyère's proposal for a representation of Thoeris broken off on the opposite site makes good sense.[971] The basin was almost certainly used for the cult of both goddesses, Hathor and Thoeris. Likely used in the village a parallel[972]—perhaps only dedicated to Thoeris—confirms the such basins' place in the cult of the goddess. Libation cults were, however, clearly not the only ones performed for Thoeris, as shown by a so-called offering grill in house S.O. III (**Cat. 7.2**). This type of offering table "*sur laquelle s'enlèvent en haut-relief quatre baguettes demi-rondes équidistantes*"[973] reveals traces of burned fat.[974] Perhaps based on the size of the offering grills, Bruyère assumed it was the fat of ducks and pigeons.[975] Nonetheless, these grills demonstrate that offerings could also burned for the goddess Thoeris.

As an artifactual category, offering grills were uncommon at Deir el-Medina. The infrequent deployment of meat for domestic offerings might account for their scarce appearance, meat being an expensive and irregular food at Deir el-Medina.[976] Accordingly, pictorial representations of oxen might have substituted meat as offerings (see also above; p. 95). Deir el-Medina has produced a few attestations of slaughter,[977] so offerings of burned meat (or fat[978]) might have occurred on occasion, albeit exceptionally. Like in state temples, these meat offerings were perhaps eaten after the gods had taken their share.[979]

Other offering grills have emerged from the village, but they were left uninscribed (**Cat. 7.1**)[980], thereby leaving their purpose unrevealed. Unrestricted to specific gods or ancestors, they could have served as bases for a variety of offerings or even cooking.

Offering supports constitute yet another type of offering tables (table 8) typically found in tombs, only three examples of this artifactural category have arisen from the domestic context. The question is therefore whether their find is representative for religious activities in the village in general. Their religious significance is clear from their

[970] Bruyère 1939, 318 and 319 (fig. 189); on the identification of the owner on the house cf. Bruyère 1939, 315 and Neunert 2010, 38–9.
[971] Bruyère 1939, 318.
[972] Bruyère 1939, 198 (fig. 89).
[973] Bruyère 1939, 206.
[974] Bruyère 1939, 206.
[975] Bruyère 1939, 206.
[976] No meat is listed among the regular wages by J.J. Janssen, *Commodity Prices From The Ramessid Period. An Economic Study of the Village of Necropolis Workmen at Thebes*, Leiden 1975, 455–88 and Helck mentions only a few attestations in private documents of meat deliveries for mostly wealthier people: W. Helck, *Materialien zur Wirtschaftsgeschichte des Neuen Reiches V. III. Eigentum und Besitz an verschiedenen Dingen des täglichen Lebens. Kapitel AI–AL*, Wiesbaden 1965, 231(839)–235(843) and see also Ch. Eyre, *The Cannibal Hymn. A Cultural and Literary Study*, Liverpool 2002, 177 and 195-6 and recently Harrington 2013, 33.
[977] E.g. O. Ashmolean Museum 37, cf. Valbelle 1985, 333.
[978] For this practice in temple offerings; cf. Tacke 2013, vol. I., 49 and vol. II, 50–1.
[979] This practice was already common in the Old Kingdom. In the New Kingdom, the shares are clearly designated, cf. W. Helck, *Materialien zur Wirtschaftsgeschichte des Neuen Reiches III. Eigentum und Besitz an verschiedenen Dingen des täglichen Lebens. Kapitel A–O*, Wiesbaden 1963, 268 (464) with references.
[980] Compare the two examples published in Bruyère 1939, 206 (fig. 95) with unspecified find spots.

inscriptions. One is dedicated to Osiris-Khontamenti (**Cat. 8.1**), the other one to the god Thoth (**Cat. 8.2**) and only the third one (**Cat. 8.3**) was apparently left undecorated.

Interestingly, the second room of house S.O. III yielded **Cat. 8.1**. This area also supplied the offering grill dedicated to Thoeris (**Cat. 7.2**), itself rather exception. Such finds might intimate a religious specialist lived in the house at one time (p. 176). Whoever lived in the house s/he also performed quotidian religious activities, such as ancestor cults (cf. an anthropoid bust[981] and perhaps **Cat. 5.18**). In addition to the offering grill (**Cat. 7.2**) and offering support (**Cat. 8.1**), another object from the house might hint at more specialized activities. The same room, i.e. the second room of house S.O. III, has issued a mask of the goddess Hathor (**Cat. 12.14**). Made of wood, the mask has holes in its sides which—along with its size (h. 20 cm; w. about 16 cm)—seems to suggest a human might have worn it (see also 3.3.1 below). Together, these finds provide good evidence for a religious specialist having occupied the house at some point.

The correlation between special equipment and religious specialization may receive support from the offering support found in house S.O. V (**Cat. 7.2**). The remains of the inscription reveal two priestly titles, *wʿb*-priest[982] and lector priest/*ḫr.y-ḥb*[983]. The title *ḫr.y-ḥb* is rather unusual in the administrative documents from Deir el-Medina,[984] the known *ḫr.y.w-ḥb* were clearly *n tȝ ḥw.t*, i.e, associated with Medinet Habu[985] or other larger temples. Perhaps the local temples at Deir el-Medina did not employ *ḫr.y.w-ḥb*, and if they did on occasion, these figures may not have lived at Deir el-Medina. The title *wʿb*, however, was a common title at Deir el-Medina, designating workmen at times which may testify to some kind of rotation system for service responsibilities.[986] While the proposition of a religious specialist having lived in house S.O. V remains ultimately unproveable at this point, the absence of additional artifacts does not discount the hypothesis, as other professional equipment might have been taken away when the house was abandoned.

Even further, the offering support from house S.O. V has its find context in front of a large cultic emplacement. Although this setting would normally suggest a relationship—namely that the offering support (**Cat. 8.2**) was used for some religious activity connected to the large cultic emplacement—the inconsistency between the inscription on the support and the decoration of the emplacement obscures such a clear connection: the support bears a dedication to the god Thoth, the large cultic emplacement to Ahmes-Nefertari (and probably Amenhotep I as well; see also above pp. 50–1). Different beneficiaries raise the question as to "whether cultic equipment could be used for various gods, irrespective of the inscription."[987] The reuse of cultic equipment by later

[981] Unidentified; Bruyère 1939, 309 and Keith 2011, 11. In his publication Bruyère refers to the present bust and to Louvre E. 16348 with the same plate (cf. Bruyère 1939, 171 (fig. 66) and 309). Since the present bust was less representative and missed the head Bruyère apparently referred to the other more beautiful bust in order to indicate the object category rather than his actual find. No further information is available in Bruyère's publication or notebooks.
[982] *Wb* I, 282.13–283.12.
[983] *Wb* III, 395.4–10.
[984] But see Valbelle 1985, 329.
[985] E.g. appearing as witnesses in a court procedure on P. Geneva D 409+P. Turin Cat. 2021, rt. IV, 12, cf. Deir el-Medina database.
[986] Compare, for example, H. Kees, *Das Priestertum im ägyptischen Staat. Vom Neuen Reich bis zur Spätzeit*, Leiden 1953, 301–8.
[987] Weiss 2011, 200.

generations would allow for the beneficiary of texts to differ from that of subsequent cultic activity. Theoretically, multifunctionality would make sense,[988] but the potential loss of original symbolic significance then comes question for subsequent use. Inscriptions carved or painted on artifacts and texts considered meaningful and valuable both witness such symbolic significance.[989] For example, the *Teaching of Amennakht* states, "Do not neglect the words and the speech of ancient times."[990] Found written on an ostracon from the Valley of the Kings this instruction was most probably known at Deir el-Medina.[991] Another wisdom text written on an ostracon from Deir el-Medina emphasizes this teaching was spoken in the manner of writings from more ancient times.[992] Spell BD 64 also evinces the value placed on ancient texts, for it was putatively found beneath the statue of the Old Kingdom king Mykerinos in Hermopolis.[993] These examples suggest that the ancient Egyptians held considerable regard for more ancient texts.[994] Considering artifactual reused within the (extended) families of Deir el-Medina, i.e., within a fairly close past, it seems rather implausible that these artifacts and their inscriptions would have lost their meaning and could have been randomly reused. In summary, although the find context of **Cat. 8.2** reveals the possibility of reuse, this refunctioning was probably not a rule. A religious specialist living in house S.O. V may have addressed different gods both personally and professionally at the large cultic emplacement in his home.

3.1.3. Offering Receptacles

The last category of offering receptacles can undergo only brief analysis. Lacking any detailed descriptions, it is often impossible to tell whether a pottery receptacle was used in a religious context. Bruyère usually listed the pottery finds without further elaboration, the only existing study on pottery of Deir el-Medina limited to the finds in those tombs excavated between 1928 and 1930.[995] Consequently, little information is available, and none of the objects appears in museum collections. For this reason, the catalogue of the present study excludes the category of offering receptacles. Analysis of Deir el-Medina's pottery with respect to its potential religious function would require a full study of the

[988] Weiss 2011, 200.

[989] Compare also the discussion on the Chester Beatty archive, which was also kept as a prestige object by those family members who were less literate (p. 39 and p. 86).

[990] O. KV 18/3.614+627, 5: *m-jr mᶜḫ3 mḏ(.w).t (...) r3.w n js(.w).t*, cf. A. Dorn, 'Die Lehre Amunnachts', *ZÄS* 131 (2004), 40, 43 and 45.

[991] Dorn 2004, 38–55.

[992] O. BM EA 5631: [*ḥ3.t*]-ᶜ *m sb3y.t mtr.t ḏd* [*m-sn.t*] *r sḫ3.w js.w.t*, "[Be]ginning of the educational instruction spoken [according] to the ancient writings"; cf. F. Hagen, 'The prohibitions. A New Kingdom didactic text', *JEA* 91 (2005), 150–2.

[993] *gm.n=tw r3 pn m ḥmn.w ḥr ḏb.t n.t ḥ3 šmᶜ.w ḫtj.w m ḫsbd mᶜ ḥr rd.wj nṯr pn m h3w ḥm n nsw.t-bjt.y Mn-k3.w-Rᶜ mᶜ ḫrw*, i.e. "This spell was found in Hermopolis below the feet of this god of Upper Egypt on a plate of copper, inlayed in genuine lapis lazuli, in the time of His Majesty the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Menkaure/Mykerinos, justified"; cf. G. Lapp, *The Papyrus of Nu (BM EA 10477), Catalogue of Books of the Dead in the British Museum* I, London 1997, pl. 61, 42–3. This and similar phrases are in fact typical elements added to prove the efficiency of the spells in the Book of the Dead.

[994] See also J. Assmann 1984b, 484–99.

[995] Nagel 1938, VI–VII.

artifacts along with their museum contexts, an undertaking far beyond the scope of this analysis. Without consideration of multifunctional use, even a comprehensive study would not preclude determination of specific functions.[996] Pottery items served a "range of utilitarian, secular purposes,"[997] decoration does not always indicate religious use. For example, the handles found in house S.E. VIII probably did not belong to an offering receptacle,[998] and the stamps with the cartouches of Amenhotep I and Horemhab were probably seals,[999] thereby designating the date of the amphorae's original contents and not their function.[1000]

Only in a few cases do decorations clearly relate objects to the cultic sphere. Several large jars decorated with raised reliefs of Hathor heads have been found in the cave of house S.E. VIII, for instance.[1001] A similar object has come from house N.O. XII, namely an amphora neck decorated with a "*tête de gazelle ou de vache*" with a solar disk between the horns,[1002] representing the goddess Hathor. Many other examples have emerged,[1003] but their find spots remain unknown. Receptacles with Hathor motifs are quite common in domestic contexts, discovered at Amarna, Sesebi, and Abydos as well.[1004]

Other receptacles bear representations of the Bes-image.[1005] Common at Deir el-Medina,[1006] these objects unfortunately have neither recorded find spots nor known present locations. Jars decorated with the Bes-image were common in the domestic context, as demonstrated by parallels from Amarna and Kom Rabiᶜa.[1007]

The fragment of a little fayence jar proves particularly significant. Bruyère renders the name on the jar *Jj-j.ḥr-njw.t=f*,[1008] but *Ij-r-njw.t=f* (Iyernutef) has greater plausibility, being a common name at Deir el-Medina.[1009] No familial link can be established between any of the five men named Iyernutef, on the one hand and Paheripedjet (i/ii/iii), who is attested in house N.E. XIX (see above; p. 96), on the other. Any religious significance this jar may have had remains obscure. It could have constituted cosmetic equipment or a drinking vessel. A small and relatively valuable object, it remains an exceptional find, probably broken already when its owner left the village.

[996] Stevens 2006, 167.

[997] Stevens 2006, 195.

[998] Bruyère 1939, 275–6.

[999] Cartouche-stamps are not part of the standard decoration repertoire. For the typical shapes and techniques, cf. D. Arnold and J. Bourriau, *An Introduction to Ancient Egyptian Pottery*, Mainz 1993, 88–102.

[1000] Amenhotep I reined from 1514–1494 and Horemhab between 1319–1292, cf. Hornung, Krauss, and Warburton 2006, 492–3. See also **Cat. 12.2** and **Cat. 12.3**.

[1001] Bruyère 1939, 275.

[1002] Bruyère 1939, 287.

[1003] Cf. Bruyère 1933, 5.

[1004] Stevens 2006, 169–73 with references.

[1005] Bruyère 1939, 102 (fig. 35) and see also, for example, P. Brissaud, 'La céramique égyptienne du règne d'Aménophis II à la fin de l'époque Ramesside', in: J. Vercoutter (ed.), *Hommages à la mémoire de Serge Sauneron 1927-1976*, I. *Égypte Pharaonique*, Cairo 1979, 20 and pl. IV.

[1006] Bruyère 1939, 103.

[1007] Bourriau 1993, 56–7 and Stevens 2006, 168. For parallels from temples and tombs cf. Stevens 2006, 169.

[1008] Bruyère 1939, 263.

[1009] Davies 1999, 292–3.

As yet another significant find, a small vase with four handles contained a highly damaged papyrus scroll.[1010] Unfortunately, Bruyère did not provide a photograph, nor did he mention any details about the scroll, e.g., whether it bore an inscription. The small vase could have served as a container for an amuletic decree. These amuletic decrees are small scrolls of about 6 cm in width, inscribed with magical spells, and usually kept in small containers.[1011] However, a pottery vase as an amuletic container would be rather odd, since such containers were usually comprised lighter materials like leather, wood, or gold and worn around the neck.[1012] While stone and pottery containers do exist, they are usually imitations, that did not contain actual papyri.[1013] Perhaps the vase contained a protective spell buried in the house.[1014]

In summary, some pottery items did function in cultic settings, but the scope of the present analysis prevents their full analysis. Since their decorations often related to the Bes-image and the goddess Hathor, libation offerings might have been performed for these deities.

3.1.4. Summary of the Offerings

While an offering's location can serve as point of orientation,[1015] analysis of the material remains does not establish the offering's location or timing.[1016] The religious instructions mentioned above (p. 120) do attest certain days on which offerings should performed, but exactly who had access to this calendar remains most uncertain. If the instructions were meant as general rules applicable to all, one would expect these offerings to appear in the records of Deir el-Medina. The absence of any explicit reference to religious instructions may be remarkable,[1017] but this does not suggest no offerings were performed in the village on these days. Not all villagers may have had access to such texts, or women could have performed the offerings.[1018] Even official journeys of the king, royal building activities, and the accession to the throne had no strict correspondence to a specific calendar,[1019] which suggests the calendar played no integral part in everyday life.[1020] The difficulty in establishing the timeframe of religious activities in the village stems not only from the state of preservation and recording techniques, but also from their performance on both specific festivals and "on any day" for the benefit of god king, and the private

[1010] Bruyère 1939, 275.
[1011] E.g. I.E.S. Edwards, *Hieratic Papyri in the British Museum* IV. *Oracular Amuletic Decrees of the Late New Kingdom* I, London 1960, xi.
[1012] E.g. Edwards 1960, xviii and B. Bohlecke, 'An Oracular Amuletic Decree of Khonsu in the Cleveland Museum of Art', *JEA* 83 (1997), 156.
[1013] E.g. W.M.F. Petrie, *Amulets*, London 1914, 29 (no. 133a) and pl. XIX.
[1014] Compare the discussion of the *cachette* above; pp. 46–8.
[1015] Dahm 2007, 85.
[1016] Dahm 2007, 85.
[1017] Cf. http://www.leidenuniv.nl/nino/dmd/dmd.html, accessed on 1 January 2012.
[1018] For the idea that women "played a very active role in household religion" at Deir el-Medina; cf. e.g. Lesko 2008, 201.
[1019] Cf. R. Drenkhahn, 'Zur Anwendung der "Tagewählerei"', *MDAIK* 28 (1972), 85–94.
[1020] As Brunner-Traut had assumed, cf. E. Brunner-Traut, 'Mythos im Alltag. Zum Loskalender im Alten Ägypten', *Antaios* 12/4 (1970), 345.

citizen alike."[1021] However, Ritner makes "a sharp distinction (...) between "private practitioner" and "private beneficiary"" and argues that "[t]exts on behalf of the latter do not prove the existence of the former."[1022] This contention concerns so-called magical texts, yet another term that needs some elaboration. Notably, Ritner was among the first to contest the Frazerian distinction between magic, religion, and medicine.[1023] Taking a functional approach, Ritner defines magic "as the technique of religion,"[1024] following the *Webster Dictionary*'s definition of magic as "the use of means (as charms or spells) believed to have supernatural power over natural forces,"[1025] but acknowledging consideration of this technique in Egypt as "*not* supernatural but *quintessentially a part of nature*."[1026] Despite its attempted neutrality, this term betrays modern conceptual imports nonetheless.[1027] I would therefore suggest the term "religious instruction" (or, depending on context: "healing instruction" etc.). This phraseology accepts the technical nature of these texts without imposing modern understandings on the Egyptian material. This revision increases in significance since Ritner defines primarily a literary genre and does not fully accommodate the use of cultic equipment.[1028]

As for religious actors, most instructions do not mention any explicitly, but most scholars assume they were physicians.[1029] For his part, Ritner holds such an assumption deeming complex healing spells inaccessible to some, if not most. He views Deir el-Medina as an exception, perhaps not unexpected since the record from Deir el-Medina contradicts his hypothesis. Indeed, the evidence from Deir el-Medina suggests some non-specialists could possess and share religious instructions.[1030] Religious instructions may thus necessitate contextualization within the everyday use.[1031] In other words, these texts were "read out by people with some experience in ritual and with the ability to read, for the benefit of the illiterate",[1032] not necessarily a professional practitioner. Although some titles such as "scorpion charmer" ("*ḥrp Srḳ.t*") or "wise woman" ("*t3 rḫ.t*") indicate that

[1021] R.K. Ritner, 'A Spell Against Night Terrors', *JARCE* 27 (1990), 40. To support his argument Ritner quotes R.O. Faulkner, *The Papyrus Bremner-Rhind (British Museum No. 10188)*, *BAe* 3, Bruxelles 1933, 46, 51, and 56–7 without elaborating his thoughts. For a recent translation and comments; cf. M. Smith 2009, 120–3.
[1022] Ritner 1990, 40.
[1023] Ritner 1993, 5. A few years earlier Walker had expressed similar ideas: cf. J.H. Walker, 'The place of magic in the practice of medicine in ancient Egypt', *BACE* 1 (1990), 85–95. Compare also the discussion by Waraksa 2009, 125 with more references.
[1024] Ritner 1993, 247.
[1025] Cf. http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/magic; accessed on 26 June 2013, cf. Ritner 1993, 8, note 21.
[1026] Ritner 1993, 8.
[1027] See also Ritner 1993, 28 and recently Otto 2011. Compare also the discussion of Ritner's perspective by B.C. Otto, 'Zauberhaftes Ägypten – Ägyptischer Zauber? Überlegungen zur Verwendung des Magiebegriffs in der Ägyptologie', in: F. Jeserich (ed.), *Ägypten, Kindheit, Tod. Gedenkschrift für Edmund Hermsen*, Wien 2012, 59–61.
[1028] Cf. Ritner 1993, 249.
[1029] E.g. P. Eschweiler, *Bildzauber im Alten Ägypten*, *OBO* 137, Göttingen 1994, 33.
[1030] E.g. P. Geneva MAH 15274, II, 1–6, cf. Massart 1957, 182 and see also the interpretation of O. Gardiner 363 as a "private" spell by Ritner 1990, 40–1.
[1031] Cf. J.F. Borghouts, 'Lexicographical Aspects of Magical Texts', in: S. Grunert and I. Hafemann (eds), *Textcorpus und Wörterbuch. Aspekte zur ägyptischen Lexikographie. Probleme der Ägyptologie* 14, Leiden 1999, 154.
[1032] Borghouts 1999, 154.

certain activities required assistance from a religious specialist (cf., e.g., p. 129 and p. 168), no evidence suggests the performance of said practices was confined to professionals.

Offerings were performed regularly in public during village festivals, and similar offerings may have appeared on a smaller scale at home;[1033] perhaps before or after work, on the weekends, and/or by women. The exact timing of such domestic offerings is quite unclear, although one might expect domestic offerings to have been performed on a regular basis, it is unclear whether a calendar was observed. Given the nature of the Theban area as sacred landscape with several large festivals,[1034] however, it seems plausible that such festivities influenced the daily routines of the villagers at Deir el-Medina. As for benefactors and beneficiaries,[1035] the fragmentary record has preserved them together only on occasion. Different offerings saw the use of different equipment: offering tables seem more popular for the cults of the dead, whereas basins underwent use for a variety of offerings. Regardless, some degree of overlap did exist. Meat offerings on grills were exceptional.

Apart from ancestors, the deceased that had not the status of *ȝḫ-jḳr-n-Rᶜ* were also venerated in the houses. Spell BD 168 (cf. P. BM 10478) seems to mention such veneration, repeatedly referring to a bowl (*jᶜb*) that had been "offered to them by the deceased on earth (*tp tȝ*)."[1036] Even if the precise referent of "them" remains unclear, it is remarkable that the deceased could apparently perform offerings "on earth." Rather than the deceased themselves offering on the earth, their descendants may have performed the offerings on their behalf. The offering tables in the houses would be an appropriate platform for these cults. Whereas perhaps not everybody became an *ȝḫ-jḳr-n-Rᶜ*, the *ȝḫ* was a part of the Egyptian conception of a person.[1037] If "the *ȝḫ* will not die or die again, [and if] he will have full freedom of movement and action,"[1038] the cults for the deceased could have extended the confines of the necropolis. As already mentioned (p. 54), a modern Egyptological construct that has bifurcated so neatly the cults of the living and those the dead.

3.2. Cult Images

Apart from the offering equipment previously discussed, several other kinds of cult images found usage in household religious activities. The term cult image usually applies to divine images, but since this investigation makes no distinction between apoptropaic/amuletic images and those venerated as divine images at home, discussion will divide groups according to shape and function.

[1033] For similar thoughts cf. Ritner 2008, 186.
[1034] For a summary cf., U. Rummel, 'Gräber, Feste, Prozessionen: Der Ritualraum Theben-West in der Ramessidenzeit', in: G. Neunert, K. Gabler and A. Verbovsek (eds), *Nekropolen: Grab – Bild – Ritual. Beiträge des zweiten Münchner Arbeitskreises Junge Aegyptologie (MAJA 2), GOF* 54, Wiesbaden 2013, 207–32 and compare Jauhiainen 2009, 39–40.
[1035] On sender and receiver as actors in the ritual syntax-model, cf. Dahm 2007, 145–8. Similar ideas have been expressed by Rüpke 2007, 83.
[1036] Cf. *TLA*, lemma no. 851550.
[1037] E.g. F.D. Friedman, *On the Meaning of Akh (3H) in Egyptian Mortuary Texts*, Ann Arbor 1981, 28–30.
[1038] Demarée 1983, 241.

3.2.1. Three-dimensional Cult Images

The statue stands as the most familiar type of cult image. A "three-dimensional representation usually of a person, animal, or mythical being that is produced by sculpturing, modeling, or casting"[1039] (table 11), statues come from Deir el-Medina both large and small and made of stone and wood, produced in the village by individual craftsmen. While O. Ashmolean Museum HO 4 records a disagreement over the price of a wooden statuette, a dispute settled by an oracle,[1040] another text (O. Berlin P. 11234) lists the exact measurements of what is almost certainly a stone statue, a list that might have served as a memory aid for either producer or client.[1041] Larger statues were apparently not kept in houses. With one exception (**Cat. 10.54**), the three-dimensional representations found in the houses consisted of small figurines and statuettes, that is, representations smaller than life-size. Though the terms "statuette" and "figurine" often operate as synonyms,[1042] this study will employ "statuette" will for three-dimensional representations made of limestone or wood and "figurine" for three-dimensional representations made of clay and the so-called *jeux de la nature*. The latter term describes natural stones transformed into little figurines through a few brush strokes, which enhance the stone's natural shape. Since differences in material do not necessarily imply any particular qualification, the distinction between statuette and figurine is simply a pragmatic one. A common assumption confines the use of clay to the poorer population,[1043] attributing clay figurines to those people "who could not afford a stone statue."[1044] However, the average monthly income at Deir el-Medina (about 5 ½ khar of emmer and 2 khar of barley) equaled the average value of 11 *deben* of copper,[1045] and the known prices of wooden statuettes varied between about 8 and 12 *deben*,[1046] which means most workmen could saved for and purchased a wooden statuette. An object's material, such as clay, thus betrays a particular choice. Some religious acts actually required clay,[1047] with kings using the material as well.[1048] The Nile's soil probably carried no minor value, according to Egyptian mythology, the god Khnum created humanity from

[1039] Cf. http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/statue, accessed on 30 July 2013.
[1040] Oracles were part of the jurisdiction at Deir el-Medina. The procedure has been studied in detail by McDowell 1990, 107–41.
[1041] Published by http://dem-online.gwi.uni-muenchen.de/; accessed on 30 July 2013. For the expensive nature of the object; cf. Cooney 2007, 81; for the material been "stone or even bronze" and intended for use in the community chapel, cf. Janssen 1975, 248.
[1042] Cf. http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/figurine, accessed on 30 July 2013.
[1043] E.g. Waraksa 2009, 93.
[1044] E. Teeter, *Baked Clay Figurines and Votive Bed from Medinet Habu. Oriental Institute Publications* 133, Chicago 2010, 5.
[1045] Janssen 1975, 534; on the financial situation of the workmen cf. Janssen 1975, 533–8.
[1046] Janssen 1975, 246–8. The reference to a statue worth 195 *deben* in P. Turin 1907–8 was possibly an acquisition for the community chapel (Janssen 1975, 248).
[1047] See also Teeter 2010, 15 who suggests that clay images might have served a different purpose than statuary.
[1048] For example, a clay figurine (now in the Cairo Museum JE 38597) is known of king Amenhotep III; cf. Kozloff and Bryan 1992, 254, fig. 46a; Dorman 2002, 35–6; Waraksa 2003, 93.

it.[1049] Furthermore, "baked clay figurines of gods are rare."[1050] Clay may have had a symbolic connection to human life.[1051] As argued below, clay was used "for images to endure (...) as well as images to be destroyed."[1052] Both statuettes and figurines carried considerable value.

3.2.1.1 Statuettes

Being the valuable objects they were, statuettes would have presumably been removed from the village during its abandonment. A considerable number of statuettes remained in the village,[1053] however, e.g., images of snakes (possibly Meretseger or Renenutet),[1054] a few representations of deified kings in the shape of a human or sphinx,[1055] two crocodile statuettes,[1056] the gods Opet,[1057] Ptah,[1058] and Hathor,[1059] a goose (perhaps Amun),[1060] the wings of a wooden bird,[1061] and two Bes-images.[1062] Lacking a context of use, and in many cases, inscriptions, determining who worshipped these images in which contexts proves extraordinarily. Perhaps unfinished or broken, they might have been left behind as *de facto refuse*. The discovery of the majority of the statuettes in areas of debris supports such a hypothesis.

While few divine images clearly relate to domestic cultic emplacements, many of these objects were domestic cult images. The divine names attested in the village (e.g., lintels and offering tables) correspond to the deities identified by iconography.

[1049] E.g. P.F. Dorman, *Faces in Clay. Technique Imagery, and Allusion in a Corpus of Ceramic Sculpture from Ancient Egypt*, *MÄS* 52, Mainz 2002, 104 and 114–30; Ritner 1993, 137–8. The idea that man was made of clay is, for example, also expressed in the Teaching of Amenemope; cf. e.g. Lichtheim 1997, 40.

[1050] Teeter 2010, 20, but see Teeter 2010, 106–9 and pls 47–9.

[1051] Similarly, Waraksa (2009, 93–4) declares that clay should be understood "as a medium imbued with the essence of life."

[1052] Waraksa 2009, 93–4; and compare the observation by Maarten Raven that "paradoxically, fire does not harm it [i.e. the clay], but preserves it forever," cf. M.J. Raven, 'Magic and Symbolic Aspects of Certain Materials in Ancient Egypt', *VA* 4 (1988), 240.

[1053] See **Cat. 10.3-7**, **Cat. 10.13**, **Cat. 10.16**, **Cat. 10.20-2**, **Cat. 10.24**, **Cat. 10.26-31**, **Cat. 10.33**, **Cat. 10.37**, **Cat. 10.39-40**, **Cat. 10.42-43**, **Cat. 10.48**, **Cat. 10.50**, **Cat. 10.52-53**, **Cat. 10.57**, **Cat. 10.59**, and **Cat. 10.60**. In some cases only the base has been preserved: **Cat. 4.9**, **Cat. 4.11-13**, **Cat. 4.18-19**, **Cat. 4.30**, **Cat. 4.34**, **Cat. 4.39**, **Cat. 4.43**, **Cat. 4.45**, **Cat. 4.51-52**, **Cat. 4.55**, **Cat. 4.61**. If no traces of the statuette and no holes in which it was embedded are preserved, it is difficult to tell whether these objects were bases of stelae, statuettes, and cult emplacements. Since the present location of many of these objects is unknown and the original objects cannot be checked Bruyère's assessment must be followed.

[1054] **Cat. 10.6**, **Cat. 10.21-22**, **Cat. 10.37** and **Cat. 10.61**. It is highly unfortunate that the beautiful examples found by Möller have no known context of use.

[1055] **Cat. 10.5**, **Cat. 10.7**, possibly **Cat. 10.13** and **Cat. 10.52**.

[1056] **Cat. 10.27** and **Cat. 10.59**.

[1057] **Cat. 10.20**.

[1058] **Cat. 10.26**.

[1059] The base shown in Bruyère 1939, 89 (fig. 28); possibly **Cat. 10.10**.

[1060] **Cat. 10.8**, **Cat. 10.29**, and **Cat. 10.34**.

[1061] **Cat. 10.33**.

[1062] **Cat. 10.11**, **Cat. 10.15**, and **Cat. 10.40**.

Apart from divine images, several statuettes seem to represent human individuals rather than gods.[1063] Problems arise for this interpretation, however, as both gods and kings appeared with anthropomorphic bodies. The clothing of figure **Cat. 10.13**, for instance, likely identifies the statuette as a representation of a king. With few exceptions, the objects showing human body parts are either poorly described or fragmentarily preserved, exacerbating the identification of statuettes as divine or human images. Posture alone determines interpretation. Gods were depicted in a reverent stance, standing or sitting, and although representations depict also humans standing or sitting, gods were never portrayed kneeling (cf. **Cat. 10.50**), naked, nor squatting with cats on their knees.[1064] In these three cases, the iconography securely classifies the image as a representation of a human.

The find of human images in the domestic sphere is somewhat unexpected. Such statuettes usually come from temples or tombs, where they participated in the religious activities and served as intermediaries between individuals and gods.[1065] As one exception from Deir el-Medina, stelophorous statuettes were typical of tombs.[1066] Moreover, statuettes of human individuals at Amarna generally emerged from workshop areas,[1067] a situation potentially paralleled at Deir el-Medina, where several sculptors (*ṯzy.w-mḏ3.t*) were employed.[1068] Unfortunately, no clear evidence suggests the existence of a domestic workshop at Deir el-Medina. Perhaps many objects' finds spots in debris areas indicates such activities took place not in houses, but community areas.[1069]

To summarize, Deir el-Medina may have seen the cultic use of divine images, but not those of human individuals. These finds probably evince sculpture rather than religious practice, with those individuals venerated in the village appearing in the form of anthropoid busts rather than limestone or wooden statuettes.

[1063] **Cat. 10.3**, **Cat. 10.13**, **Cat. 10.16**, **Cat. 10.23**, **Cat. 10.24**, **Cat. 10.28**, **Cat. 10.30**, **Cat. 10.54**, **Cat. 10.56**, **Cat. 10.59**, **Cat. 10.71**, **Cat. 10.72** and **Cat. 10.74**.

[1064] Compare the objects found in the village areas descibed in Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0151_002; Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0151_004; Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0151_007 and Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0151_008.

[1065] The most common type being the block statue: R. Schulz, 'Block Statue', in: W. Wendrich (ed.), *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, Los Angeles 2011, 6, cf. https://escholarship.org/uc/item/3f23c0q9; accessed on 2 January 2013. See also Verbovsek 2004, 25.

[1066] Compare the example found in the *déblaiement du village;* cf. Bruyère 1934, 88. Fragment "*de stèle d'adossement de statuette*," it is unclear what a stela leaning against a statue is meant, possibly a stelophorous statue. See further H.M. Stewart, 'Stelophorous Statuettes in the British Museum', *JEA* 53 (1967), 36. The texts on these statuettes typically had solar connotations. Like block statues, stelophorous statuettes were thus not strictly part of a "ritual for the deceased tomb owner, but (...) associated with (...) deities particularly venerated in the cemetery," Schulz 2011, 6. No block statue was found in the village.

[1067] Cf. Stevens 2006, 128–30.

[1068] E.g. Davies 1999, 176–89.

[1069] On this area as a place for community activities see e.g. Eyre 1987, 170. Drawing on Kemp's findings at Amarna, Eyre has, however, noted that small scale domestic workshops may not leave traces in the archaeological record "distinguishable from those (...) normally found," cf. Eyre 1987, 192 quoting B.J. Kemp, 'The character of the south suburb at Tell-el Amarna', *Mitteilungen der Deutschen Orient-gesellschaft* 113, Berlin 1981, 81–97.

3.2.1.2 Figurines

Relatively common at Deir el-Medina, figurines will undergo analysis in three distinct groups: female figurines, animal figurines and the *jeux de la nature*.

Female Figurines

The largest group found at Deir el-Medina are the female figurines. Introduced by Elizabeth Waraksa, this term seeks to avoid any immediate association of these figurines with fertility cults.[1070] In her study on the context and function of female figurines from the precinct of the temple of Mut in Karnak, Waraksa presents a concise typology for six kinds of figurines.[1071] Except for Type 3, all her categories match the record from Deir el-Medina.[1072] Her typology focuses on shape and iconography, giving less attention to minor iconographical details,[1073] which makes it more easily accessible than previous typologies.[1074] Waraksa's model thus provides insights into the use and production of figurines and helps contextualize those figurines recorded without a specific find spot:

- **Type 1** shows hand-modeled female figurines whose main characteristic comprises a disk-shaped headdress "with perforations for the insertion of string and bead hair."[1075] Only a single example has come from the Mut precinct,[1076] a finding paralleled at Deir el-Medina.[1077]
- **Type 2** is the most common type of female figurine[1078] in stereotypical positions. Some lying on beds, at times accompanied by a child or toilet equipment,[1079] and many of them appear standardized, which might betray production by molding.[1080]
- **Type 3** figurines "are molded in half-molds (...) as their flat backs attest,"[1081] but no examples occur at Deir el-Medina.[1082]

[1070] Waraksa 2009, 15.
[1071] Waraksa 2009, 22–38.
[1072] Pinch has also offered a typology of her own (1996, 198–209). Considering the high degree of overlap between the types found in the Mut precinct and those found at Deir el-Medina it makes more sense to follow Waraksa's typology.
[1073] Such as the distinction between females on beds nursing (Teeter 2010, type C) versus not nursing (Teeter 2010, type D).
[1074] Pinch 1993, 198–209 and Teeter 2010, 27–53.
[1075] Waraksa 2009, 24; Pinch 1993, 202. An example with such hair is shown in I. Gamer-Wallert, 'Drei Votivfiguren vom Gebel el-Zeit am Roten Meer', in: I. Gamer-Wallert and W. Helck (eds), *Gegengabe. Festschrift für Emma Brunner-Traut*, Tübingen 1992, 93, pls 3 a–c.
[1076] Waraksa 2009, 22.
[1077] E.g. Louvre E. 16509 A; cf. Bruyère 1939, pl. XLV; upper picture, first figurine in the second row from the left.
[1078] E.g. Louvre E. 16515; cf. Bruyère 1939, 142, fig. 59,1.
[1079] Waraksa 2009, 25–8. An example of such a figurine, that is a fragment of a bed, was found in the fifth room of house N.O. XX; cf. Bonnet and Valbelle 1975, 445 and see **Cat. 10.14**.
[1080] Waraksa 2009, 76–9.
[1081] Waraksa 2009, 30.
[1082] For the discussion of type 3 cf. Waraksa 2009, 30–3.

- **Type 4** are hand-made figurines characterized by their "pinched heads."[1083] Different from those discussed by Waraksa which show no incised patterns,[1084] some examples from Deir el-Medina have incised belly buttons and pubic triangles.[1085]
- **Type 5** is a flattened and less elaborate half-molded female figurine with an incised pubic triangle and round belly button. The line running down from the pubic triangle, which indicates the border between the two legs, further characterizes these figurines.[1086] In contrast to those found at Deir el-Medina, the figurines discussed by Waraksa have no arms.[1087]
- Waraksa has described the hand-modeled **Type 6** as "lower bodies of females,"[1088] where the upper part of the object is an incised pubic triangle and the lower part "feet" (i.e., where the clay bends towards the viewer).[1089] Curiously, no upper body parts have arisen.[1090] Such figurines find parallel at Deir el-Medina,[1091] but there the lower part of the female body does not even appear, reduced merely to the female genitals.[1092] In fact, rather than lower bodies of females, the whole object seems to portray the pubic triangle. The line Waraksa interprets as leg divider (as in **Type 4**) probably represent the outer labia in these instances. The pubic triangle type is not particularly surprising. The "celebration of the phallus" was "one of the centric iconic foci of [ancient] Egyptian religion" at any time,[1093] which—in the Egyptian dualistic worldview—required a female equivalent. Indeed, even the creation of the world was conceived as an interaction between male and female qualities.[1094]

In addition to these types of figurines, Deir el-Medina has yielded yet another category, which will expand Waraska's sequence to seven.

[1083] Waraksa 2009, 33. E.g. Louvre E. 16507; cf. Bruyère 1939, pl. XLV; upper picture, first figurine in the first row from the right. For the discussion of type 4 cf. Waraksa 2009, 33–5.
[1084] Waraksa 2009, 33.
[1085] E.g. Louvre E. 16506 C; cf. Bruyère 1939, pl. XLV; upper picture, first row, third figure from the right.
[1086] Waraksa 2009, 36–7. E.g. Louvre E. 16509 C; cf. Bruyère 1939, pl. XLV, upper picture third row, first figurine on the left.
[1087] Waraksa 2009, 36.
[1088] Waraksa 2009, 37. For the discussion of type 6; cf. Waraksa 2009, 37–8.
[1089] Waraksa 2009, 37 and fig. 7.
[1090] Waraksa 2009, 37.
[1091] Similar objects also known from Medinet Habu (OIM 14598; cf. Teeter 2010, 72 and pl. 27c) and Deir el-Bahari (BM 47766, cf. Pinch 1993, pl. 52B).
[1092] E.g. Louvre E. 16504 A–H; Bruyère 1939, pl. XLV, lower picture, the eight pieces shown in the lower right corner; the closest parallel being Louvre E. 16504 F; shown in the second column, second piece from below.
[1093] T.B. Hare, *ReMembering Osiris. Number, Gender, and the Word in Ancient Egyptian Representational Systems*, Stanford 1999, 145.
[1094] Compare, for example, F. Servajean, 'Duality', in J. Dieleman and W. Wendrich (eds), *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, Los Angeles 2008, 3; cf. https://escholarship.org/uc/item/95b9b2db, accessed on 11 January 2013. Note that Cooney 2008a, 6 states that "the female has no active role in the mechanism of rebirth."

- **Type 7** is a hand-modeled longish figurine without head and extremities (**Cat. 10.56**). The base is flat, which might have enabled it to stand without tipping over.

Not only Type 6, with its explicit body parts visible, but also all other figurine types carry clear sexual connotations. Earlier scholars therefore suggested the figurines served as concubines in the afterlife[1095]—an interpretation "now largely been abandoned," since the figurines were found in tombs of men, women, and even children along with temples and houses.[1096] Drawing on Bruyère, Pinch asserted that some female figurines were kept in the houses as fertility charms to "ensure (...) the continuity of the family."[1097] She further opined some figurines might have been "offered to the male and female ancestors."[1098] One female figurine in particular might bolster this proposal (**Cat. 10.56**) as it probably came from the same house (N.O. XXVII), that yielded an anthropoid bust.[1099] Even more, a female figurine (**Cat. 10.14**) in house N.E. XVI/N.E. XIX, also relates to ancestor cults performed in the house.[1100]

As verification of Type 7 as a figurine typical for domestic contexts, this shape has not arisen from temple contexts,[1101] though it was present at Amarna, where it mainly "originated from residential areas."[1102] As Anna Stevens has shown, these figurines also derived from domestic contexts in Kahun,[1103] Gurob,[1104] and Buhen.[1105] Concerning the a potential relationship between ancestors and fertility, such figures have also materialized at burial sites.[1106] The flat base of the objects seems to suggest they were meant to stand somewhere, perhaps in a cultic emplacement.[1107] Several parallels of this type now in the Louvre Museum,[1108] unfortunately do not have a clearly designated find spot.

[1095] Compare, for example, W. Helck, 'Beischläferin', *LÄ* I (1972), 684–6.
[1096] Cf. Pinch 1993, 214; Waraksa 2009, 13–14 and with reference to the burial contexts e.g. J.D. Bourriau, *Umm el Ga'ab. Pottery from the Nile Valley before the Arab Conquest*, Cambridge 1981, 120; cf. Dorman 2002, 26–7.
[1097] Pinch 1993, 219 quoting Bruyère 1939, 137–9 and 142–3.
[1098] Pinch 1993, 219.
[1099] Unidentified; cf. Bruyère 1939, 300 and Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0156_014. Perhaps the bust is identical with DM 4064 (h. 10 cm; Keith 2011, 192–3). The find record is unfortunately unclear see remarks **Cat. 10.56**. Note that several papyrus fragments were found in the third room of N.O. XXVII; **Cat. 12.10**.
[1100] The ancestor cult of a Paheripedjet (i/ii/iii) (**Cat. 5.4**) as has been argued above (p. 96).
[1101] This type has not been mentioned by Waraksa 2009; Teeter 2010, or Pinch 1993. A single exception from the entrance area of the temple of Buhen dating to the Middle Kingdom proves the rule; cf. W.B. Emery, H.S. Smith and A. Millard, *The Fortress of Buhen. The Archaeological Report*, London 1979, 149, pl. 54, cf. Stevens 2006, 90.
[1102] Stevens 2006, 89; for the parallel of so-called "female plaques," cf. Stevens 2006, 89–92.
[1103] E.g. grouped among "mud toys made by children"; cf. W.M.F. Petrie, *Objects of Daily Use*, London 1927, 61, 445–6, 447, 457–60, 462 and pl. LIII.
[1104] Cf. Brunton and Engelbach 1927, 18 and pl. XLVII, 7; identified as "mud dolls"; dating to the reigns of Thutmosis III to Ramesses II.
[1105] Emery, Smith and Millard 1979, 148–9, pls 53–4, mostly found in the domestic space; and see Stevens 2006, 90 with references.
[1106] In Edfu, Diospolis Parva, Tell el-Da'ba and Abydos, cf. Stevens 2006, 90 with references.
[1107] See also remarks **Cat. 10.56**. The same interpretation might apply to the remaining two parallels. It seems plausible that their provenance is the village area, but their actual find spot has unfortunately not been recorded. Admittedly, the only other figurines of clear shape found in the house context follows Waraksa 2009, type 2 (see below): **Cat. 10.14**. The shapes of **Cat. 10.31**, **Cat. 10.41**, **Cat. 10.45**, and **Cat. 10.49** are unfortunately unclear.
[1108] Louvre E. 16503 A-H, cf. Bruyère 1939, pl. XLV.
[1109] Kleinke 2007, 75.
[1110] Kleinke 2007, 75 and see also Baines 1991, 144 and C. Adams, 'Shades of Meaning: The Significance of Manifestations of the Dead as Evidenced in Texts from the Old Kingdom to the Coptic Period', in: M. Cannata (ed.), *Current Research in Egyptology 2006, Proceedings of the Seventh Annual Symposium which took place at the University of Oxford April 2006*, Oxford 2007, 1–2.
[1111] Kleinke 2007, 75.
[1112] Pinch 1993, 219 and see Harrington 2013, 59 and 63 for the ancestor's responsibility of the well-being of the family.
[1113] Published by P. Grandet, *Catalogue des Ostraca Hiératiques Non-Littéraires de Deîr el-Médîneh IX. Nos. 831–1000, Documents de Fouilles de L'IFAO* 41, 2003, 124–6 and 398–9.
[1114] Janssen 1982, 255.
[1115] Grandet 2003, 125.
[1116] Janssen 1982, 255.
[1117] Janssen 1982, 255.
[1118] Janssen 1975, 239–42; Janssen 1982, 255 and recently Cooney 2007, 25–8, suggesting the object was an "open cartonnage mummy board" (Cooney 2007, 28).
[1119] Grandet 2003, 125, note R°3.
[1120] Janssen 1975, 239–42 and Cooney 2007, 26–8 with references.
[1121] On this shared symbolism see also Dasen 1993, 77 and A.M. Roth and C.H. Roehrig, 'Magical Bricks and the Bricks of Birth', *JEA* 88 (2002), 129 with references.

As for function, they probably served in religious activity aimed at guaranteeing a family's continuity (see also p. 70). "Future ancestors" assured the continuation of ancestor cults.[1109] Nira Kleinke has aptly described this causal chain as a "*Generationenprinzip, bei dem die ursprünglichen Kultausübenden zu Ahnen werden und die Kinder ihren Platz im Kultgeschehen einnehmen.*"[1110] The consequence of any disruption would discontinue the ancestor cults,[1111] which thus gave ancestors a vital interest "to ensure that children continued to be born into the family."[1112] A text preserved on O. DeM 952 illustrates this concern quite nicely, listing the gifts provided to a grandfather after his daughter had given birth to a son.[1113] An immediate association with ancestor cults may seem somewhat morbid considering the grandfather was probably alive.[1114] Furthermore, the text mentions a feast celebrated among the living: "the heavy drinking" (*pȝ sw{r}j ʿȝ*).[1115] Unclear is whether these objects were, in fact, "ceremonial gifts."[1116] Janssen regards the main object given to the grandfather as a "funerary gift"[1117] based on his translation of *ytj.t* as "funerary bed,"[1118] yet the occurrence of such term in this context appears somewhat odd. For his part, Pierre Grandet sought to explain it as a word for "bed" whose "*charactère funéraire (...) résultant sans doute que d'un emploi particulier.*"[1119] However, the proposal for this object as a "normal" bed used in everyday life would not correspond to the term's other attestations, where it stands juxtaposed to funerary equipment.[1120] Such a translation would thus categorize the text as the sole exception to a lexeme's known meaning, a dubious conclusion indeed. As an alternative suggestion, the reception of a funerary object in celebration of a granddaughter's birth could evince a close symbolism between birth and rebirth.[1121] The text would then support association of fertility cults and care for the dead. Generally, gifts to the grandfather rather than the granddaughter underlines the concern all generations had for preservation of the family line. In this setting, a joint cult of both female figurines and ancestors makes perfect sense.

To sum up, female figurines found in domestic contexts pertained to religious practices concerned with the circle of life[1122] and family continuity.[1123] The female figurines evince clear sexual connotations, represented with either explicit body parts, or even figurines that consisted of solely the pubic triangle, thus applying the principle of *pars pro toto*. In the domestic context, both forms carried the same meaning, symbols of not only fertility and birth,[1124] but also of rebirth.[1125] As one aspect of a standard dualism,[1126] served as counterparts to the phallus as symbols of fertility and resurrection.[1127] Far fewer phallic objects have risen from the village in the framework of ancestral offerings, though.[1128] Although Bruyère mentioned phalli in the N.E. area,[1129] he excluded them from further discussion. An exception, discussed above (p. 94), came from the community chapel of the goddess Hathor,[1130] not a domestic context. This failure to elaborate may derive from a certain degree of prudery on the part of early excavators, who "tended to suppress or ignore phallic objects, or to assign them automatically to a very late period, when they could be explained as examples of foreign influence."[1131]

The preceding interpretation applies to female figurines found in houses. In addition to their function in domestic ancestor and fertility cults, these figurines likely found usage and significance at other times and in other contexts. Discovery of stable patterns in the household assemblages of Deir el-Medina remains a difficult task, and alternative interpretations do not necessarily invalidate the conclusions above. On the contrary, they confirm the hypothesis that the village's families undertook a range of various religious appropriations. Nevertheless, these figurines (**Cat. 10.14** and **Cat. 10.31-2**) may stand as the only objects unambiguously associated with religious

[1122] Compare also J. Bodel and S.M. Olyan, 'Introduction', in: J. Bodel and S.M. Olyan (eds), *Household and Family Religion in Antiquity*, Oxford 2008, 1.

[1123] Lesko 2008, 204.

[1124] Compare Pinch's argument that the figurines were "primarily concerned with the successful production of children." In other words the figurines "were associated with sex as well as with pregnancy and birth;" cf. Pinch 1993, 220. This may as well apply to the pictorial ostraca showing birth scenes; e.g. Berlin ÄMP 21453 found in N.E. XII; cf. Brunner-Traut 1956, 69–70, no. 66 and pl. XXV; Berlin ÄMP 21451 (found in N.E. XIV); cf. Brunner-Traut 1956, 69, no. 65 and pl. XXV; and Berlin ÄMP 21461 (found in N.E. XVI/XVIII); cf. Brunner-Traut 1956, 70–1, no. 69 and pl. XXVI.

[1125] Pinch put forward a similar argument suggesting that the female figurines were present in tombs of the deceased "to ensure the fertility of the deceased in the afterlife and/or to assist with their rebirth," cf. Pinch 1993, 219. The idea of birth as rebirth can also illustrated by the daily cycle of the swallowing of the sun by the goddess Nut followed by its birth (cf. e.g. A. Piankoff, 'The sky-goddess Nut and the night journey of the sun', *JEA* 20 (1934), 57–61 and see also D. Montserrat and L. Meskell, 'Mortuary Archaeology and Religious Landscape at Graeco-Roman Deir el-Medina', *JEA* 83 (1997), 184, referring to "a funerary religion where the cyclical process of death and rebirth was considered analogous to the movements of the sun"). Interestingly, Mark Smith has noted that perhaps also funerary rituals might be better understood as an ongoing cycle; cf. Compare also M. Smith, *Papyrus Harkness (MMA 31.9.7)*, Oxford 2005, 38.

[1126] Servajean 2008.

[1127] Hare 1999, 245.

[1128] Pubic triangles also go unmentioned among the house's finds. Some examples do appear in Bruyère 1939, pl. XLV, however, which may suggest they were found in the area of the village or at least in areas of village refuse.

[1129] Bruyère 1939, 262.

[1130] Bruyère 1952, 15–6 on the chapel see also Bomann 1991, 48.

[1131] Pinch 1993, 235.

practice pertaining to family continuance. The reality of this function finds reflection in Type 7 figurines (p. 140). The majority of female figurines at Deir el-Medina, however, came not from houses but areas of secondary refuse,[1132] a situation paralleled at other sites as well.[1133] Though probably used at some point in the village, these objects were apparently discarded at one time or another. Remarkably, most female figurines were broken,[1134] as is the case of **Cat. 10.14** from house N.E. XVI/N.E. XIX.

Waraksa has convincingly argued that the figurines were intentionally broken.[1135] The strongest evidence comes from the location of the break lines at their "strongest structural point"—namely, the torso[1136]—which makes "accidental damage"[1137] unlikely. Drawing on the figurine's red color symbolism, Waraksa associates the breaking of female figurines to the ritual of the breaking of the red pots (see also above, p. 47), and thus places the figurines within the context of execration rituals,[1138] to ward off evil forces. This interpretation fits the archaeological record at Deir el-Medina as well. Indeed, the majority of female figurines was either painted red or made of red clay; even further, no figurine was discovered unbroken.[1139] Polychrome and white examples[1140] do occur, however, and such coloration presents difficulty for situation in execration ritual.[1141] Moreover, Waraksa's argument does not apply to Types 6 and 7, complete objects most likely from domestic ancestor cults.

[1132] Such as *Grabungsstelle* D/area around the houses N.E. VIII–N.E. XIX: **Cat. 10.31** and **Cat. 10.32**, in *Grabungsstelle* Dx: **Cat. 10.41** and **Cat. 10.45**, behind the last ten N.E. houses and the first three S.E. houses **Cat. 10.49**, in *Kom Sud* (compare the ones found on 15, 18, and 20 January 1930; Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0151_008 and Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0151_010); and in unspecified areas Louvre E. 14385 BIS; and Louvre E. 16514-5; Louvre E. 16504 A-H; Louvre E. 16505 A-I, Louvre E. 16506-8; Louvre E. 16509 A-D, Louvre E. 16512 A-Y; Louvre E. 16513 A-Y; cf. Bruyère 139, fig. 58 and pls XLIV-XLV. The latter could in fact be identical with the former unidentified figurines.

[1133] Waraksa 2009, 18, e.g. in the workman's village of Amarna: B.J. Kemp, 'How religious were the ancient Egyptians', *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 5/1 (1995), 30–1 and Stevens 2006, 314. See also Waraksa 2009, 73–4.

[1134] Pinch 1993, 214 and 341, cf. Waraksa 2009, 19.

[1135] Waraksa 2009, 19. Her argument does not apply to Type 6, which represents no lower body parts of women but only the pubic triangle. Additionally, the general condition of the find context and the "level of secondary disturbance at the site" must be taken into account, cf. Kemp and Stevens 2010b, 217, arguing against the idea of ritual destruction of the figurines found in Grid 12 at Amarna.

[1136] Waraksa 2009, 19.

[1137] Pinch 1993, 341.

[1138] Waraksa 2009, 119. Recalling the ideas of the duality expressed above, Waraksa certainly has a point that confining the performance of execration rituals betrays a certain amount of "gender bias" that does not correspond to Egyptian realities.

[1139] E.g. the broken object Louvre E. 16515, Bruyère 1939, 142, fig. 59,1.

[1140] Polychrome painting: e.g. Louvre E. 14385 BIS; cf. Bruyère 1939, 13, fig. 4; Louvre E. 16512 L cf. Bruyère 1939, pl. XLIV; upper picture, second row second one from the left. Painted in white e.g. Louvre E. 16512 C; cf. Bruyère 1939, pl. XLIV, upper picture, second row, third one from the left. Painted in red and black: e.g. Louvre E. 16513 D; cf. Bruyère 1939, 139, fig. 58 and one made of blue faience (**Cat. 10.41**).

[1141] The female figurines in the present study could only be studied from black-and-white photographs and general descriptions in the museum catalogues. It is therefore difficult to relate their coloring to the detailed finding of Waraksa 2009, 102–13.

Medical instructions collected by Waraksa elucidate why some female figurines were broken.[1142] In one spell against stomach ache, a female figurine of clay assumes the suffering of the sick person who since recovered.[1143] The female figurine is explicitly identified as the goddess Isis. The term used for figurine (*rpy.t*) can refer to a range of images depicting female goddesses and made of various materials.[1144] Nevertheless, for those images formed from clay, Waraksa's identification with the female figurines remains quite plausible. These figurines embodied a generic form for female goddesses whose specific shape could be molded as needed.[1145] During ritual destruction, then, the disease in the figurine was destroyed, not the goddess herself.[1146] In addition, a variety medical instructions require the use of female figurines.[1147] The identification of female figurines as goddesses does not undermine the proposed symbolism of clay and human life (p. 135) since these representations putatively restored human health.[1148]

Discovered among the possessions of a religious specialist,[1149] two intact figurines from a tomb near the subsequently-built Ramesseum further suggest practitioners ritually destroyed the figurines after their use,[1150] i.e. the intact figurines possibly saved for future practice. A third figurine emerged broken. Waraksa's interpretation thus obtains, as it explains why all female figurines at Deir el-Medina were broken and discarded after use.[1151]

Apart from the figurines' function, their manufacture and distribution[1152] also proves significant since these two factors differ considerably from the other artifactual groups discussed in this study. For example, *jeux de la nature* are more or less accidental finds, hence unlikely objects of mass production. The female figurines of Deir el-Medina, especially Waraksa's Type 2, appear rather standardized. Contrary to Pinch's earlier

[1142] Waraksa 2009, 131–65 and especially P. Leiden I, 348, rt. 12,2–12,4 cf. Waraksa 2009, 148–154 translated by J.F. Borghouts, *The Magical Texts of Papyrus Leiden I 348*, *OMRO* 51, Leiden 1971, 25, spell 20.

[1143] The text runs as follows: *ḏd md.w ḫr rpy.t n(y).t sjn.t jr mn=f nb m ḫ.t hȝb g(ȝ)bw ḫr=f m tȝ rpy.t ȝs.t r snb=f*, i.e. "Words spoken over a female figure of clay. As to any of his suffering in the belly, the affliction shall go down from him into the female figurine of Isis until he recovers," cf. Waraksa 2009, 150–1 and her interpretation in Waraksa 2009, 153.

[1144] Cf. *TLA*, lemma no. 94110 "*rpw.t*" for "figure of a woman; statue of a woman"; see also *Wb* II, 414.12–13; *LGG* IV, 662 and cf. Janssen 1975, 246–8 with reference to Deir el-Medina. The idea that the material could vary is, for example, supported by P. BM EA 9997, VI, 16 where a *rpy.t* made of fire wood (*jr m ḫ.t n sḏ.t*) is attested; cf. Chr. Leitz, *Magical and Medical Papyri of the New Kingdom*, *Hieratic Papyri in the British Museum* 7, London 1999, 18 and pl. 6. Compare also O. Berlin P 14222 on which the term *rpy.t* possibly refers to a funerary statuette, cf. Cooney 2007, 36.

[1145] This aspect has also been elaborated by Waraksa (2009, 148 and 169).

[1146] Waraksa 2009, 148.

[1147] Waraksa 2009, 153.

[1148] Compare Waraksa's (2009, 123) interpretation of medicine as having the main aim of restoring fertility.

[1149] Borghouts 1999, 157. Finds published by J.E. Quibell, *The Ramesseum and the Tomb of Ptah-hetep*, *Egyptian Research Account 1896*, London 1898, 3, pl. III, 12.

[1150] Waraksa 2009, 153.

[1151] Waraksa 2009, 82. Already Pinch noted that most female figurines were broken, but since she interprets them as votive objects, Pinch disputes that many of them might have been ritually broken; cf. Pinch 1993, 214 and 341, cf. Waraksa 2009, 19.

[1152] A full analysis can be found in Waraksa, 43–89.

proposal that the figurines were made by individual craftsmen "who knew the standard forms" and were "able to reproduce them,"[1153] Waraksa contends the figurines were manufactured by through "centralized workshop production," like that of temple workshops.[1154] The craftsmen living at Deir el-Medina would have possessed the skills necessary to "implement the figurine standards (...) set by the (...) regulating"[1155] institution, which would allow room for Pinch's theory at Deir el-Medina.[1156] Bruyère mentions molds for female figurines, among others,[1157] but they have not been recorded in detail; some disappeared in WWII (**Cat. 9.16**). Female figurines may thus have undergone manufacture in other places—and perhaps occasionally—the village.

As previously argued, religious practice at Deir el-Medina did not differ from other sites fundamentally (pp. 20–2). The actual means of religious practice may have constituted the greatest distinction, with state institutions—embodied primarily by the temples—supplying the village's inhabitants.[1158] Regarding Waraksa's theory of female figurine production and potential distribution at temple workshops, Deir el-Medina almost certainly proved no exception. The purchase of figurines in temples would also explain the absence of texts mentioning said representations. If produced locally on a larger scale, transaction records for figurines similar to those of statuettes would presumably materialize, but none refers to figurines. Rather, deliveries consisted of vessels and everyday pottery.[1159] No reference is, however, made to figurines. Rather the deliveries consisted of vessels and everyday pottery.[1160] Individuals may have purchased female figurines in the workshops of state temples most often, as the temple precincts of Mut[1161] and Medinet Habu[1162] have yielded the same types of figurines, more or less.

In conclusion, different types of female figurines ostensibly shared the same meaning, generic images embodying fertility and health in the broadest sense.[1163] On the principle of duality, such power operated in two ways: offering images to the goddess

[1153] Pinch 1993, 330. This is true for Deir el-Medina and Amarna, but Waraksa (2009, 82) has questioned whether the conclusion is applicable to sites situated more distant from the residence.

[1154] Waraksa 2009, 81–2.

[1155] Waraksa 2009, 82.

[1156] Waraksa 2009, 82.

[1157] Bruyère 1939, 214.

[1158] B.J.J. Haring, *Divine Households. Administrative and Economic Aspects of the New Kingdom Royal Memorial Temples in Western Thebes*, *EU* 12, Leiden 1997, 257–73.

[1159] Janssen 1975, 485–8; Dorman 2002, 93–4.

[1160] E.g. O. Ashmolean Museum HO 80; cf. W. Helck, *Die datierten und datierbaren Ostraka*, *Papyri und Graffiti von Deir el-Medineh (Bearbeitet von A. Schlott)*, *ÄA* 63, Wiesbaden 2002, 243.

[1161] Waraksa 2009, 22–38.

[1162] Teeter 2010, 16–17 and figs 4–5 show mainly women on beds (type 2), which are regularly found at Deir el-Medina e.g. **Cat. 10.14** and **Cat. 10.59**, but also types 3, 5 and 6 are found at Medinet Habu (cf. Teeter 2010, 27–72).

[1163] This idea was also presented by Waraksa's interpretation of the "iconography of the nude female in a broader fashion"—namely as the "embodiment of a healthy person" and hence appropriate symbols "in a health-related ritual;" cf. Waraksa 2009, 168; and see also S. Quirke, 'Figures of clay: toys or ritual objects?', in: S. Quirke (ed.), *Lahun Studies*, Reigate 1998, 149. Quirke contends an interpretation of figurines generally as being used "in support of the (...) preoccupation with health as self-defense," which is in line with the present hypothesis. A discussion of whether the Ancient Egyptian culture "in its formal self-expression virtually omitted children except as miniature adults (workers) and as future adults (heirs)" (Quirke 1998, 149), however, is beyond the scope of the present study.

Hathor and ancestors engendered fertility, health, and family well-being, with these beneficiaries aiding in the maintenance of the life circle; when used to extract disease or poison from the sicks' bodies, the figurines could themselves provide fertility and health. Yet again, questions surround who performed this latter activity. In a temple context, priests stand as likely candidates, but at Deir el-Medina, a broader use seems possible.[1164] Complete objects (i.e., Type 6; the pubic triangles[1165] and longish figurines (i.e., type 7[1166]) underwent use in the domestic context, where they were also produced.[1167]

Animal Figurines

In ancient Egypt, gods could appear in the manifestation of those animals with which they were associated.[1168] Iconography undergoes analysis when recognizable, that is, when two- and three dimensional representations bear texts identifying the gods in question.[1169] Animals cults, in contrast, generally receive study for later periods in Egypt, as those with "real animals," i.e., living temple animals and animal mummies—increased significantly.[1170] As for clay figurines, however, these studies usually exclude them since they rarely bear inscriptions. Different from the rather standardized molding of female figurines,[1171] animal figurines at Deir el-Medina were hand-shaped and show a variety of forms. The main problem for understanding these animal figurines comes from their find location in areas of refuse, since some of these objects may have been toys,[1172] thereby obscuring the artifactual category's more general religious significance.[1173] Other figurines, however, might have served a general apotropaic function or represented "specific [gods or] goddesses."[1174] Most shapes represent the common iconography of a goose (Amun)[1175] or cow (Hathor),[1176] with only a few exceptions presenting real

[1164] Waraksa 2009, 174.
[1165] Louvre E. 16504 A–H; Bruyère 1939, pl. XLV, lower picture, the eight pieces shown in the lower right corner.
[1166] **Cat. 10.56** and probably also Louvre E. 16503 A-H.
[1167] The same applies to the two dimensional figurines now in the Louvre Museum E. 16511 A–G.
[1168] For example, the crocodile as Sobek as shown above, cf. Bruyère 1939, 276 (fig. 149), and 277; Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0155_010 and Keimer 1940, 12–15 and fig. 11.
[1169] Notably K. Myśliwiec, *Studien zum Gott Atum I: Die heiligen Tiere des Atum*, *HÄB* 5, Hildesheim 1978.
[1170] Compare, for example, Fitzenreiter's defintion of what is commonly understood as *the* manifestation of Egyptian animal cults—namely temple animals and animal necropoles; cf. M. Fitzenreiter, 'Einleitung', in: M. Fitzenreiter (ed.), *Tierkulte im pharaonischen Ägypten und im Kulturvergleich. Internetbeiträge zur Ägyptologie und Sudanarchäologie* IV, Berlin 2003, 16. For a list of both cemeteries and types of animal mummies cf. D. Kessler, *Die heiligen Tiere und der König* I: *Beiträge zu Organization, Kult und Theologie der spätzeitlichen Tierfriedhöfe*, *ÄAT* 16, Wiesbaden 1989, 17–43.
[1171] Waraksa 2009, 76–9.
[1172] Compare, for example, the discussion by Quirke 1998, 149–50, also emphasizing the ambiguity of the interpretations.
[1173] Teeter 2010, 110.
[1174] As suggested for some clay cobras from Amarna by Szpakowska 2003b, 119. See also above p. 77.
[1175] **Cat. 10.29**, **Cat. 10.34**, and **Cat. 10.44**.
[1176] **Cat. 10.10** and see also Bruyère 1933, 7. The small Hathor head was also found "*devant 1193 au Kom du Sud*"; cf. Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0151_002.

difficulty for explanation in a religious context, like the representation of a hyena.[1177] The majority of these figurines discussed elsewhere, the flawed record often prevents meaningful discussion. Therefore, only the most relevant groups will undergo investigation here: horses, baboons, and Bes-images. Admittedly, a Bes-image is not exactly an animal figurine, yet description of monkeys as "*têtes grotesques*",[1178] raises question as to whether some artifacts excavators identified as monkeys may not, in fact, be Bes-images (see below).

Horses

A somewhat odd phenomenon is the occurrence of several horses.[1179] The fact that one horse has a rider[1180] suggests the figurine was a toy. The interpretation of all figurines as toys is difficult in view of the number of parallels, however. From Medinet Habu, for instance, several examples of horses with riders date to the Ptolemaic Period.[1181] Since horse symbolism is not easily explained within the context of the ancient Egyptian pantheon, Teeter opined an association with the goddess Astarte and god Harpocrates.[1182] Finding images of Harpocrates at Deir el-Medina is less plausible, for this god is only attested from the 21st dynasty onwards (compare **Cat. 9.10**) when the village was apparently already abandoned (pp. 24–5).

The question then centers on what happened after the village was abandoned. Little evidence suggests Deir el-Medina served as a storeroom after its abandonment.[1183] Alternatively, Dominic Montserrat and Lynn Meskell maintain the "[d]escendants of the Ramesside villagers continued to live in the area."[1184] Given the importance of family continuity their hypothesis that these descendants may "well have returned episodically to visit family chapels and observe the mortuary cult (...) even when domestic occupation

[1177] Berlin ÄMP 21178; cf. Berlin inventory; no find spot: „*Aus den Grabungen der königlichen Museen auf der Westseite Thebens im Frühjahr 1913*". This find is highly interesting, because as far as I am aware this is the only known hyena figurine. I would like to thank Daniela Witthuhn for kindly confirming that the iconography identifies the present object as a hyena.
[1178] **Cat. 10.25**, **Cat. 10.43,** and **Cat. 10.47**. A "sitting monkey" was also found in *Kom Sud* (cf. Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0151_004). The question is whether the description as sitting monkey is correct. The shape recalls that of sitting women in boats (e.g. Louvre E. 13859 and compare the stelae nos 258–68 published by Teeter 2010, 188–93 and pls 120–6). The parallel found in the Louvre already arrived in the Louvre in 1929 and can hence not have been unearthened in the 1934–35 excavation. Unfortunately no find spot has been recorded. The identification of the iconography can be illustrated by the following examples. A close parallel (Louvre E. 13859) has been identified as "Phallic figurine. Roman period (?)" by Teeter (2010, 17 fig. 5c). This interpretation is clear from the very similar shape of objects such as OIM 15507 (cf. Teeter 2010, 104). Yet, another similar object has been interpreted as monkey by Kemp and Stevens (2010b, 231–3, inv. 35063). Lacking the head it is difficult to decide whether the object was a human figure or a monkey. It is unfortunate that the original object found by Bruyère cannot be checked.
[1179] **Cat. 10.19** and **Cat. 10.63** and see Dorn 2011, 108–10, who does not consider a religious significance. For further unspecified horse figurines found in *Kom Sud*; cf. Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0151_006.
[1180] Found in *Kom Sud*; cf. Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0151_006.
[1181] Teeter 2010, 112 fig. 13.
[1182] Teeter 2010, 111.
[1183] Compare, for example, Weiss 2009a, 194.
[1184] Montserrat and Meskell 1997 181.

had ceased"[1185] is conclusive. Furthermore, the tombs of Deir el-Medina were usurped from the Third Intermediate Period onwards, and even new tombs were built in the Saite Period.[1186] Beside, the community chapel for the goddess Hathor was extended to the shape visible today only during the Ptolemaic Period.[1187] Deir el-Medina thus saw considerable activity during the Graeco-Roman period[1188]—an important development since not only horses with riders but also many other horse figurines from Medinet Habu date from the Late to the Graeco-Roman Period.[1189] Teeter's dating may thus apply to the examples of Möller and Bruyère for two reasons: first, "some of the post-Pharaonic material may have been overlooked or misclassified" by early excavators, who were primarily interested in the remains from the New Kingdom;[1190] second, all horse figurines were found in debris areas, not houses, and hence might have been surface finds rather than found within the New Kingdom context.

Parallel evidence alone does not date a group of artifacts to a different period. However, conclusive evidence establishes a date for the horse figurines in the New Kingdom. First, many pictorial ostraca from Deir-el Medina as well as the Valley of the Kings depict the horse motif.[1191] Second, some horse figurines may date back to the New Kingdom. Two came from the third forecourt of the tomb of Padihorresnet (TT 196).[1192] Whereas the tomb itself dates to the Saite Period, the debris from the forecourt almost certainly came from TT 192 (Cheruef).[1193] Others emerged from Karnak in a context dated to the New Kingdom or later.[1194] Consequently, workmen may have used the horse figurines at Deir el-Medina.

How these figurines were used remains a difficult question, however. The typical iconography associating horses and the goddess Astarte shows her armed and riding on a horse.[1195] At Deir el-Medina, however, only the heads of most horse figurines have been preserved, though the head could have been the object proper. Lacking typical iconographical details, the figurines do not relate easily to Astarte. The horse was known in Egypt since the beginning of the New Kingdom, and chariots with horses are a

[1185] Montserrat and Meskell 1997, 181.
[1186] Montserrat and Meskell 1997, 181.
[1187] Montserrat and Meskell 1997, 182.
[1188] E.g. T.G. Wilfong, 'Western Thebes in the Seventh and Eighth Centuries: A Bibliographic Survey of Jême and Its Surroundings', *BASP* 26/1–2 (1989), 89–145.
[1189] Teeter 2010, 112–23.
[1190] Montserrat and Meskell 1997, 182.
[1191] J. Vandier d'Abbadie, *Catalogue des ostraca figurés de Deir el-Médineh (Nos. 2256 à 2722). Documents de fouilles de l'Institute français du Caire* II, fasc. 2, Cairo 1937, pls 19–23; J. Vandier d'Abbadie, *Catalogue des ostraca figurés de Deir el-Médineh (Nos. 2734 à 3053). Documents de fouilles de l'Institute français du Caire* II, fasc. 4, Cairo 1946, pls 104–7 and Teeter 2010, 111.
[1192] E. Graefe, *Das Grab des Padihorresnet, Obervermögensverwalter der Gottesgemahlin des Amun (Thebanisches Grab Nr. 196)*, *MonAeg* 9, Turnhout 2003, 12 and 167; 330 cat. 324 and 325, pl. 84.
[1193] Graefe 2003, 70 and 167.
[1194] J. Jacquet, *Karnak Nord IX. Le trésor de Thoutmosis Ier. Fouille à l'est du monument*, Cairo 2001, 63 and 65.
[1195] J. Leclant, 'Astarté à cheval d'après les représentations égyptiennes', *Syria* 37/1–2 (1960) 19–20 and more recently I. Cornelius, *The Many Faces of the Syro-Palestinian Goddesses Anat, Astarte, Qedseshet, and Ahera c. 1500–1000 BCE*, *OBO* 204, Freiburg 2004, 42–4 showed that the iconography can also apply to the goddess Anat.

common motif at Deir el-Medina.[1196] Marie-Agnès Matelly has recently offered a new interpretation for this imagery. She remarks that the New Kingdom was characterized by northward expansion, with horses and chariots playing a key role in such campaigns' success.[1197] Egyptian accounts of military campaigns confirm this proposal, mentioning chariotry in prominent positions.[1198] Even more, she interprets the motif of the king as charioteer as a symbol of maintaining the universe's order.[1199] It would be tempting to apply this interpretation to the horse figurines from Deir el-Medina, with horses complementing the female figurines. Whereas the latter were concerned with health, the horses could have had a broader concern for the continuation of the cosmos. This idea is, of course, speculative, especially since the one guaranteeing order is not the horse but the king, who is absent in this case along with his chariot.

As for the iconography of horse figurines, Matelly's solution provides the same problems as interpreting the figurines as images of Astarte. Unfortunately, none of the horse figurines has come from a clear find context, and no medical instructions mention horses. Nevertheless, their find spots in tombs and temples elsewhere suggest an interpretation as cult images rather than toys. The horse's symbolism cannot be solved without further information. Though clearly implemented in the New Kingdom, their context persists in obscurity.

Baboons

In religious contexts, baboons usually appear as manifestations of the god Thoth.[1200] Several hymns to Thoth have come from Deir el-Medina,[1201] and texts portray Thoth as the lord of a house.[1202] Monkey figurines from Deir el-Medina[1203] as representations of Thoth is therefore conclusive. As one relevant example, the double-faced figurine found by Möller (**Cat. 10.43**) shows a monkey on one side and a human on the other. The god Thoth can be represented in the shape of a human, but he is always depicted with the head of an ibis thereafter.[1204] Whether this figurine renders Thoth is inconclusive.

All such figurines found in areas of secondary refuse, interpretation of this artifactual group proves challenging. Furthermore, no example has been drawn or

[1196] Compare, for example, Berlin ÄMP 21771; cf. Brunner-Traut 1956, 102, no. 102, pl. XXXVI.
[1197] M.A. Matelly, 'Un ostracon de cavalier', *BIFAO* 97 (1997), 197.
[1198] E.g. Seti I's second Beth-Shan Stela on which "His Majesty l.h.p. commanded a number of men from his [army and his] numerous [chari]otry" (i.e. "*wḏ-jn ḥm=f ꜥw.s. rḫ.t rmṯ m pȝy=f [mšꜥ tȝy=f ḫ]trj ꜥšȝw.t*"; cf. B.G. Davies, *Egyptian Historical Inscriptions of the Nineteenth Dynasty*, *Documenta Mundi, Aegyptiaca* 2, Jonsered 1997, 38–9.
[1199] Matelly 1997, 197.
[1200] E.g. K. Hein, 'Der Pavian im Boot', *GM* 210 (2006), 5–6 and C. Greenlaw, *The Representation of Monkeys in the Art and Thought of Mediterranean Cultures. A New Perspective on Ancient Primates*, Oxford 2011, 27–34.
[1201] Studied in detail by C.J. Bleeker, 'Thoth in den altägyptischen Hymnen', in: J. Bergman (ed.), *Ex Orbe Religionum. Studia Geo Widengren XXIV mense apr. MCMLXXII quo die lustra tredecim feliciter explevit oblata ab collegis, discipulis, amicis, collegae magistro amico congratulantibus* I, Leiden 1972, 3–15.
[1202] E.g. P. Anastasi II, 4,12, cf. C.J. Bleeker, *Hathor and Thoth. Two Key Figures of the Ancient Egyptian Religion*, Leiden 1973, 108–9 and Luiselli 2011a, 49.
[1203] **Cat. 10.11**, **Cat. 10.25**, **Cat. 10.43**, and **Cat. 10.47**.
[1204] Bleeker 1973, 109.

photographed, the ones by Möller were lost in WWII. It is therefore difficult to tell whether the figurines had any religious significance. If so, it would be plausible to argue for a general apotropaic function. As the god of writing and wisdom,[1205] Thoth may well have received veneration at Deir el-Medina. It is, however, significant that little evidence for this worship derives from houses, the only exception being the offering stand of house S.O. V (**Cat. 8.2**). Two other objects were found in areas of secondary refuse, a stela dedicated to the god Thoth (**Cat. 11.47**) and the fragment of a cultic emplacement's lintel with unspecified find spot.[1206] These finds suggest Thoth veneration was a rather marginal phenomenon in the village. Perhaps the god was mostly associated with local and translocal appropriation and only occasionally worshipped by individuals, perhaps village scribes.

Bes-Image

James Romano introduced the term "Bes-image" since the iconography usually associated with the Bes-image applies to a variety of similar gods as well.[1207] The literature on the Bes-image is virtually unmanageable, and this study can touch upon only the most relevant issues. Passionately debated, one question centers on the Bes-image's origin,[1208] though most scholars argue for an Egyptian origin.[1209] For the present context, the question of origin has minimal significance the Bes-image was already well-integrated into the Egyptian pantheon by the New Kingdom period.

As for iconography, the Bes-image is represented as a dwarf, sometimes naked, sporting a skirt, and/or wearing a lion skin on his shoulders.[1210] A feather crown sits upon

[1205] For a comprehensive analysis of the god Thoth, cf. A.M. Stadler, *Weiser und Wesir, Studien zu Vorkommen, Rolle und Wesen des Gottes Thot im ägyptischen Totenbuch*, Tübingen 2009.

[1206] Cf. Bruyère 1939, pl. XVI, 19 and Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0155_019.

[1207] J.F. Romano, 'Notes on the Historiography and History of the Bes-image in Ancient Egypt', *BACE* 9 (1998), 89, mentions "at least ten (other) gods" such as "Aha, Amam, Bes-image, Hayet, Ihty, Mefdjet, Menwe, Segeb, Soped and Tetenu."

[1208] E.g. Nubia/Sudan: H. Junker, *Der Auszug der Hathor-Tefnut aus Nubien*, Berlin 1911, 86 and see also summary by V. Dasen, *Dwarfs in Ancient Egypt and Greece*, Oxford 1993, 63 (stating that Bes "emerged from the world of native Egyptian demons living (...) in the southern desert"). For comprehensive summaries see also Dasen 2003, 60–4, on the Semitic origin and the appearance of theophoric names cf. M.I.T. Rueda, 'Der Gott Bes in der ägyptischen Onomastik', *GM* 193 (2003), 65–9. An etymological approach has been tried by Takàcs following Meeks' interpretation of the word *bs* in PT 1186 (G. Takàcs, 'The Origin of the Name Bes (bs)', in: H. Györy (ed.), *Le lotus qui sort de terre, Mélanges Offerts à Edith Varga, Bulletin du Musée Hongrois des Beaux-Arts, Supplément*, Budapest 2001, 458 based on D. Meeks, 'Le nom du dieu Bès et ses implications mythologiques', in U. Luft (ed.), *The Intellectual Heritage of Egypt, Studies presented to László Kákosy by Friends and Colleagues on the Occasion of his 60th Birthday*, Budapest 1992, 423–47). Takàcs argues the primary meaning of the name of Bes might be "small child" since the word "Bes" could have "originated in Afroasiatic *b-s 'child'." As Takàcs is well-aware, deriving a meaning of a word in the New Kingdom from Old Kingdom Pyramid Texts is highly problematic, for language and meaning are subject to change throughout the centuries. More convincing in this respect is of Malaise. In his view "*bs*," "to protect," cf. *Wb* I, 475 is the root of the name Bes (cf. M. Malaise, 'Bes et les croyances solaires', in S. Israelit-Groll (ed.), *Studies in Egyptology Presented to Miriam Lichtheim*, vol. II, Jerusalem 1990, 692).

[1209] Romano 1998, 89.

[1210] A comprehensive summary is provided by Dasen 1993, 57–60.

his head at times. The Bes-image is often depicted dancing and playing the flute.[1211] Based on his appearance as a dwarf, several scholars have investigated the disease putatively plaguing the Bes-image (achondroplastic dwarfism).[1212] More interesting is the Bes-image's protective nature,[1213] prominent in numerous texts.[1214] P. Mag. Harris 501,[1215] for instance, refers to a dwarf as protector of Osiris on the burial day.[1216] The same role of a protector of Osiris is known for a dwarf in "the middle of the sky,"[1217] (i.e., "in the sun"[1218]). Moreover, P. Leiden I 348 attests a dwarf amulet that protects a woman in labor,[1219] the medical instruction to be recited "four times over a dwarf of clay placed on the bow of a woman who is giving birth while suffering."[1220] This practice resembles that involving female figurines (see pp. 138–46), where similar imagery conveys notions of birth and rebirth. Accordingly, the protection of Osiris in the netherworld corresponds to the woman birthing a child. The Bes-image could also cure disease appearing as an

[1211] For a recent typology see e.g. V. Wilson, 'The Iconography of Bes with Particular Reference to the Cypriot Evidence', *Levant – Journal of the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem* 7 (1975), 78–80, the most comprehensive summary is still the one provided by F. Ballod, *Prolegomena zur Geschichte der zwerghaften Götter in Ägypten*, Moskau 1913.

[1212] For a summary of interpretations concerning medical matters; cf. A. Ber, 'Was de god Bes een hypothyreoïde dwerg?', *Organorama* 10/4 (1973), 26–30. Romano has recently advanced the proposal that the Bes-image suffered from achondroplastic dwarfism (Romano 1998, 98). Romano assumes that the difficulties associated with surviving such a disease in infancy might have influenced the appearance of the Bes-image as a dwarf and his role as protector of childhood (Romano 1998, 98). This proposition is rather far-fetched. More convincingly, however, Romano suggests it was the elements of a lion which make the Bes-image a "vigorous and efficacious guardian whose physical form was consonant with his role as protector of mothers and babies" (Romano 1998, 98). He further opines that the increasing infant mortality at the beginning of the New Kingdom might account for the increased popularity of the Bes-image from that time onwards (Romano 1998, 98). Irrespective of whether or not an increase in mortality rates took place, it is conclusive that many women and children died during childbirth, or shortly thereafter, and thus looked for additional protection. Compare, for example, R.M. and J.J. Janssen, *Growing up in Ancient Egypt*, London 1990, 9.

[1213] E.g. O. El-Aguizy, '*Dwarfs* and Pygmies in Ancient Egypt', *ASAE* 71 (1987), 56.

[1214] Except from the reference to P. DeM I, the texts are found in the *TLA*, lemma no. 84270; "*nmw*," "dwarf," cf. *Wb* II, 267.4–5. The basic assumption is that the dwarf shares meaning and iconography with the Bes-image.

[1215] Cf. P. BM EA 10042, rt. 8,9–9,5; cf. H.O. Lange, *Der Magische Papyrus Harris*, Copenhagen 1927, 72–3 and more recently Leitz 1999, 45. The text is quoted as describing the "symptoms" of dwarfism by El-Aguizy 1987, 53.

[1216] Notably, Schäfer could not imagine that a "misshapen one" ("*Verwachsener*") might have acted as the protector of Osiris cf. H. Schäfer, 'Zauberpapyrus Harris VIII, 9–IX, 14 und Plutarchs Erzählung vom Tode Osiris', *ZÄS* 41 (1904), 81–3.

[1217] *nmj pwy ḥr-jb p.t*, cf. P. DeM I, vs. 4,5, cf. Černý 1978, pl. 12 and 12a, cf. El-Aguizy 1987, 56. The solar aspect is also clear from the appearance of the Bes-image in the Litany of Re, cf. Piankoff 1964, 91 and 151, no. 25 quoted by Dasen 2003, 65 who also notes that the Bes-image is occasionally "associated with solar emblems." This symbolism, however, does not come from houses at Deir el-Medina.

[1218] J. Černý, *Ancient Egyptian Religion*, London 1952, 71–2. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to discuss the appearance of Ptah as a dwarf. However, El-Aguizy averred that the dwarf-shaped Ptah may have been a manifestation of the sun god in the morning and during daytime, with Bes being the sun god's manifestation during the night: El-Aguizy 1987, 59. No evidence associates Ptah's manifestation as a dwarf with the Bes-image at Deir el-Medina.

[1219] Borghouts 1971, 29, spell 30 and 154–5, note 370.

[1220] Ibid.

amulet of the goddess Neith against diseases in a magical text,[1221] and against snake poison in a medical prescription.[1222]

In addition to texts, decorations on house altars at Deir el-Medina also testify to the importance of the Bes-image (in the houses N.E.X, N.E. XII, N.E. XIII, S.E. IX, and S.O. VI[1223]), portraying it as protective element.[1224] Decorations on jars[1225] and furniture[1226] demonstrate the same connotations. Although Möller referred to a fragmentary wall painting showing the feet and wings of a goddess,[1227] such description could also refer to the Bes-image. Unfortunately, it was no longer visible when Bruyère arrived at Deir el-Medina, and Möller only recorded its location on the superstructure's wall,[1228] but without indicating the room. Thus, the evidence shows that the main function of the Bes-image was to protect the household members' health.[1229] The Bes-images seems to complement the female figurines discussed above; in fact, the images were discarded together on a few occasions.[1230] Found in areas of secondary refuse, both the known Bes-images[1231] and female figurines provide no direct information regarding the objects' potential relationship. Discovered molds clearly demonstrated the production of Bes-image amulets in the village (e.g. **Cat. 9.4**, see also below; chapter 3.2.3). The great size of some might suggest they were used to create cult images rather than amulets (e.g. **Cat. 9.12**). The first was found in house N.E. IX. While this house may have contained a cult emplacement, this conclusion remains uncertain.[1232] Other finds from this house include an anthropoid bust[1233] and a stela dedicated to Osiris (**Cat. 11.8**), which intimates the performance of an ancestor cult in the house. It is unclear in how far this cult was related to the Bes-image (**Cat. 9.12**) , however. The stela shows To (i) and his brother, Paneferemdjed (i), in adoration before the god Osiris, but no further finds indicate whether the two might have lived in house N.E. IX.[1234]

Möller found a Bes-image (**Cat. 10.11**) in a rather ambiguous find spot:[1235] His *Grabungsstelle* D9 corresponds to houses N.E. XVI and N.E. XVIII.[1236] This figurine shows the Bes-image playing the double flute. Although a pictorial ostracon showing a

[1221] P. Turin 1993, rt. 4,14. cf. Borghouts 1971,154–5, note 370.
[1222] P. BM EA 9997, IV, 10; cf. Leitz 1999, 11 and pl. IV.
[1223] Weiss 2009a, 197.
[1224] For a summary of other interpretations see Weiss 2009a, 196–7.
[1225] E.g. on a jar from the *Roemer und Pelizaeus Museum* Hildesheim: cf. E. Brovarski, S.K. Doll and R.E. Freed, *Egypt's Golden Age: The Art of Living in the New Kingdom 1558-1085 B.C.*, Boston 1982, 94–5, cat. no. 75.
[1226] The Bes-image apperas, for example, on the footboard of a royal bedstead of the king Tutankhamun; cf. G. Killen, *Ancient Egyptian Furniture* I, Warminster 1984, 32 and pl. 40.
[1227] Anthes 1943, 56.
[1228] Anthes 1943, 56. For a possibly parallel wall painting of Bes; cf. B.J. Kemp. 'Wall Paintings from the Workmen's Village at El-'Amarna', *JEA* 65 (1979), 47–8.
[1229] Cf. e.g. H. Altenmüller, 'Bes', *LÄ* I (1975), 720–4; for a short summary see also Kleinke 2007, 54.
[1230] E.g. **Cat. 10.49**.
[1231] **Cat. 10.40-1** (*Grabungsstelle* Dx).
[1232] See remarks **Cat. 4.5**.
[1233] Berlin ÄMP 20994; cf. Anthes 1943, 58 and pl. 16c; Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0156_037 and Keith 2011, 71–2 and 199–201.
[1234] Bruyère 1939, 253.
[1235] I.e. *Grabungstelle* D9, which refers to the area of the houses N.E. XVI/N.E. XVIII; cf. Anthes 1943, 55.
[1236] Anthes 1943, 55, see also discussion of *Grabungsstelle* D10.

woman sitting on a bed decorated with Bes-imagery[1237]—also found by Möller—might be related to this particular Bes-image, the variety of other pictorial ostraca found in the house disrupt any definitive religious significance,[1238] as these finds could also be an artist's drafts or little drawings.[1239] Some other finds carry a clearer religious significance, but it remains unclear who used these images and for which activities,[1240] thus vitiating interpretation of the Bes-image's actual function.

To sum up, many parallels can be drawn between the Bes-image and female figurines: First both artifactual groups were often found in a fragmentary state and in areas of secondary refuse. Second, they were often made of clay, an imagery ostensibly witnessing to these objects. Third, both groups were painted red at times. Fourth, the female figurines and Bes-image share symbolism of birth and rebirth. Interpretation of the Bes-image therefore parallels that of the female figurines. The Bes-image should thus be understood as a protector of the family's health and well-being. As such, it protected not only women and children—though fertility remained an important aspect of Egyptian life—but also the family's well-being more generally. Unlike female figurines, however, the Bes-image was not a common grave gift. Nevertheless, textual attestation of the Bes-image as protector of Osiris in the netherworld suggests it embodied protection of all aspects of family life, including the hereafter, much like the female figurines did.

Jeux de la Nature

As for the *jeux de la nature*, the term refers to stones decorated to enhance their resemblance with images associated with their natural shape. Keimer has studied the variety of shapes,[1241] but only three examples have a known provenance from the houses of Deir el-Medina: a female figurine,[1242] a crocodile,[1243] and a bird or duck.[1244] These images may

[1237] Berlin ÄMP 21461; cf. Brunner-Traut 1956, 70–1, no. 69 and pl. XXVI and H. Schäfer, 'Ägyptische Zeichnungen auf Scherben', *Jahrbuch der Königlich Preussischen Kunstsammlungen* 37, Berlin 1916, no. 6 and fig. 11.
[1238] Other finds include an ostraca showing a locust (Berlin ÄMP 21452; cf. Brunner-Traut 1956, 118, no. 137 and pl. XLI), the branches of a date palm (Berlin ÄMP 21462; cf. Brunner-Traut 1956, 119–20, no. 141 and pl. XLIII), an erotic motif (Berlin ÄMP 21478; cf. Brunner-Traut 1956, 60–1, no. 53 and pl. XX), monkeys climbing a dum palm (Berlin ÄMP 21486; cf. Brunner-Traut 1956, 111–2, no. 122 and pl. XXXIX), the head of a falcon (**Cat. 11.19**), a relief study of a king (**Cat. 11.22**) and an ostracon inscribed with an unidentified text (**Cat. 11.20**). Also worth mentioning is the fragment of a bowl depicting an antelope motif (**Cat. 12.2**). The question of pictorial ostraca's religious significance will undergo discussion in chapter 3.2.2.2.
[1239] On the self representation on ostraca by the workmen from Deir el-Medina compare, recently Dorn 2011, 77.
[1240] These finds consist of, for example, an amulet mold for a *wḏȝ.t*-ring (**Cat. 9.7**), a *jeu de la nature* in the shape of a duck (**Cat. 10.8**), a fragmentary figurine made of clay (human head) (**Cat. 10.9**), the fragments of a cow figurine (**Cat. 10.10**), and the head of a limestone statuette (**Cat. 10.12**), and a basin (**Cat. 6.3**) found by Bruyère in house N.E. XVIII.
[1241] Keimer 1940.
[1242] **Cat. 10.51**.
[1243] Cf. Bruyère 1939, 276 (fig. 149), and 277; Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0155_010 and Keimer 1940, 12–15 and fig. 11.
[1244] **Cat. 10.8**.

well have served as talismans or votive offerings,[1245] the crocodile perhaps associated with Sobek, the bird or duck representing Amun (the goose being one of his forms), and the female figurine consistent with those already discussed. Made of stone these images were quite robust and generally not discarded.

3.2.1.3 The Interpretation of the Three-dimensional Images

The context of most cult images is difficult to reconstruct, because almost none of them was inscribed or found *in situ*. The majority of three-dimensional images have the shape of animals, a situation paralleled in votive contexts analyzed by Pinch.[1246] Nonetheless, the statuettes might have been removed from their original contexts. Such statuettes were likely worshipped in cult emplacements, small and large alike, and on house altars. Since none of the cult images bears any inscription, the agents involved in their use is hard to detect. The images were found in various houses, hence not only religious specialists were able to use them. The imagery of the family's life cycle associated by many images seems to support interpretation as domestic cult images.

3.2.2. Two-dimensional Cult Images[1247]

3.2.2.1 Stelae

Erected plates usually made of stone or wood, decorated, and/or inscribed, stelae frequently served as focal points for religious cults (compare p. 54).[1248] Consequently, stelae—and mainly the prayers and hymns preserved on them—are traditionally considered the essential expression of personal piety.[1249] Prayers and hymns were, in fact, two categories barely distinguishable in the Egyptian sources.[1250] According to Assmann the stelae should be understood as "the act of devotion in its entire meaning set out in writing."[1251] He further elaborates that it was essential for the ancient Egyptians to

[1245] Compare also S. Aufrère, *L'Univers Minéral dans la Pensée Égyptienne* I, *BdE* 150/2, Cairo 1991, 564.
[1246] Pinch 1993, 349.
[1247] Cf. Table 12.
[1248] The term comes from Greek στηλη for "erected stone plate or vertical pillar," cf. H. Menge, *Menge-Güthling. Enzyklopädisches Wörterbuch der griechischen und deutschen Sprache* I (14th edition), Berlin 1957, 637. For similar Egyptological definitions; see K. Martin, 'Stele', *LÄ* VI (1986), 1 and R. Hölzl, 'Stelae', in: D.B. Redford, *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt* III, Oxford 2001, 319. This definition concerns individual religious contexts. Kings, for instance, also erected boundary stelae whose interpretation and possible religious implications the present study does not investigate.
[1249] Cf. Luiselli 2011a, 5 with references. Although authors usually distinguish between votive and commemorative stelae, cf. Hölzl 2003, 323 and between prayer and votive stelae; cf. Luiselli 2011a, 132–7. For a critical perspective on the interpretation of the stela texts without their context, cf. D. Kessler, 'Die Interpretation der ägyptischen Kultstele in Deir el Medine', in D. Kessler, R. Schulz, M. Ullmann, A. Verbovsek and S. Wimmer (eds), *Texte – Theben – Tonfragmente. Festschrift für Günter Burkard*, *ÄAT* 76, Wiesbaden 2009, 254–70.
[1250] Cf. Luiselli 2011a, 30 and C. Knigge Salis, 'Hymnen und Gebete (Ägypten)', in: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft (ed.), *wibilex.de. Das wissenschaftliche Bibellexikon im Internet*; Stuttgart 2010; cf. http://www.bibelwissenschaft.de/nc/wibilex/das-bibellexikon; accessed on 30 July 2013.
[1251] J. Assmann, *Ägyptische Hymnen und Gebete*, Zürich 1975, 7.

illustrate this act on the stelae in both script and decoration.[1252] Interestingly, Luiselli has demonstrated that the words "praise/to praise" were distinguished in their determination, thus indicating either an emphasis on the speech act[1253] (classified by the determinative of the man with the hand to his mouth  ; cf. Gardiner A4) or a more general respect (classified by the man with his hands raised in adoration  ; cf. Gardiner A30).[1254] Remarkably, since the variety of determinatives was reduced when these texts were written on stelae, she interprets her finding as a means for the "*sofortige[n] Wiedererkennung des abgebildeten Vorgangs: der Anbetung einer Gottheit.*"[1255] Given the preceding interpretation, however, this distinction in determination may have reflected the written speech act. Put differently, the written speech act on stelae replaced the original speech act.[1256] By means of written speech act, the stelae not only illustrate the "act of devotion," but also guarantee its sustaining performance.[1257] At the same time written speech acts do not generally exclude individual agency, as when, for instance, the stela was set up and later visited,[1258] so the formalized hymns reflect individual appropriations within the framework of public cults.[1259] The virtual lack of artifacts attesting elaborate formulae in the domestic space at Deir el-Medina converges with Kessler's association of stelae with cult.[1260] The replacement of speech acts by written speech acts would explain at the houses of Deir el-Medina have yielded no written speech acts, elaborate written formulae hence indicating the absence of speech acts performed on a daily basis. Where the speech act could be performed regularly, no elaborate written speech act was necessary.[1261]

[1252] J. Assmann 1975, 7.
[1253] A speech act is the performance of action by means of speech. A comprehensive summary for approaches to speech acts appears in H. Bredekamp, *Theorie des Bildakts*, *Frankfurter Adorno-Vorlesungen 2007*, Berlin 2010, 49–51.
[1254] Cf. Luiselli 2011a, 30. Examples for the different Egyptian terms are *jꜣ.w*, cf. *Wb* I, 28.1–5; *ḥsw.t*, *ḥsj*, cf. *Wb* III, 154.2–155.25 and 164 or *ḥkn.w*, cf. *Wb* III, 179.6–19 as well as praise/hymn *dwꜣ.w*, cf. *Wb* V, 428.14–429.6. In general the importance of determinatives was also implied by J. Assmann 1975, 8–10.
[1255] Cf. Luiselli 2011a, 30. A full analysis of this aspect including the study of the other written sources on papyri is provided by M.M. Luiselli, 'Das Bild des Betens. Versuch einer bildtheoretischen Analyse der altägyptischen Anbetungsgestik', *Imago Aegypti* 2 (2007), 87–96, contrary to J. Assmann 1975, 10, who argued that literary texts were never "*in dieser Weise "illustriert," weil hier kein Situationskontext determinierend zum Text hinzutritt, sondern die Texte semantisch autonom sind und für sich selber stehen.*"
[1256] For example, Harrington 2013, 83 notes the difficulty of tracing oral acts archaeologically. The idea that the written word can replace the speech act has in fact also been proposed by J. Assmann, *Ägyptische Geheimnisse*, München 2004, 103, who did not, however, envisage the consequences of this reality—consequences this study seeks to explore in full.
[1257] Cf. Luiselli 2007b, 95 and M.M. Luiselli, 'Inszinierung von Individualität. Zur Selbst-Thematisierung in der altägyptischen Portraitkunst des Mittleren Reichs', *Imago Aegypti* 3 (2011), 75 and J. Assmann 1975, 11. Compare also Kessler 2009, 257–8 who argued a stela was functional within its cultic context without being read aloud.
[1258] Kessler contends that the formulae reflect the oral practice of the *wʿb*-priest performing the cult act. This is important, although I would not agree with Kessler that the oral practice or speech act was confined to the acting priests; cf. Kessler 2009, 256.
[1259] Luiselli 2011a, 33.
[1260] Cf. Luiselli 2011a, 33.
[1261] Note, however, that some votive objects also contain no elaborate formulae; e.g., those found at the temple of Ptah in Memphis cf. A.R. Schulman, 'Ex-votos of the Poor', *JARCE* 6 (1967), 153–6. The common explanation such textual absence suggests votive gifts were provided by poorer people who could not

Textual evidence supports this hypothesis. At Deir el-Medina, only four texts could potentially illuminate the function of stelae (*wḏ.w*),[1262] and the scarcity of data itself suggests stelae were objects displayed in public.[1263] O. Berlin P. 14256, for instance, mentions two stelae for the temple of Hathor and another for the temple of Amun-lord-of-the-thrones-of-the-Two-Lands.[1264] Yet another piece of evidence comes from a sequence in the story of Wenamun:[1265]

> "And if it comes to pass that in another day an envoy comes from the land of Egypt, who knows writing and he reads out your name on the stela, you will receive the water of the west like the gods who are there."[1266]

Beyond description of the stela in a location accessible to future envoys, the narrative confirms that written texts caused the performance of offerings. These findings provide additional support for Kessler's placement of stelae in public cultic contexts.[1267] Even further, some stelae commemorate historical events,[1268] thereby making them documents important to "the life and career of the individual."[1269] A stela by Ramose (i), for example, evinces that a scribe could initiate a cult for a statue of the living king Ramesses II and build a community chapel for it.[1270] The offerings for the statue were provided by the Ramesseum and funded by an endowment of the scribe Ramose (i),[1271] an influential and wealthy inhabitant of the village. The act of such an endowment was both "personal and prestigious,"[1272] and certainly something to display in public.

Elaborate stelae inscribed with hymnal texts are virtually absent from the houses, however,[1273] as are so-called ear stelae: only one fragmentary example has arisen.[1274]

read. Based on my own hypothesis, one could argue the votive gifts show no formulae since the speech act was performed at the moment the gift was offered to the god. As singular gifts for a particular wish, they were perhaps not meant to represent the benefactor for a longer time span in the respective temple or enable him or her to participate in the cult there. Compare also Verbovsek's definition of a votive offering which is usually combined with a vow; cf. Verbovsek 2004, 13.

[1262] *Wb* I, 398.15–399.4; The references listed by Cooney are O. Berlin P. 14256; O. DeM 129; O. DeM 246 and O. Michaelides 13; cf. Cooney 2007, 37 and see R.J. Demarée, 'Remove your stela', in: R.J. Demarée and J.J. Janssen (eds), *Gleanings from Deir el Medina. EU* 1, Leiden 1981, 101–8.

[1263] On the find context of the stelae as found mainly in non-domestic areas see also Menéndez 2009, 28.

[1264] Published by Deir el-Medine online, cf. http://dem-online.gwi.uni-muenchen.de, accessed on 5 January 2013; cf. Cooney 2007, 37 reading "diadems" instead of "thrones."

[1265] Reference taken from *TLA*, lemma no. 51990.

[1266] *mtw ḫpr jr m-sꜣ ky hꜣw mtw wˁ jwpw.ty jy m pꜣ tꜣ n km(.t) jw =f rḫ sš.w mtw=f ˁš rn=k ḫr pꜣ wḏ.y jw=k ḥr šsp mw jmn.t mj-ḳd n{ꜣ} nṯr.w nty dy*, cf. A.H. Gardiner, *Late Egyptian Stories* I, *BAe* 1, Bruxelles 1932, 73, 2–5; translation by M. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature. A Book of Readings* 2: *The New Kingdom*, Berkeley 2006, 228.

[1267] Kessler 1999, 178.

[1268] E.g. A.R. Schulman, *Ceremonial Execution and Public Rewards. Some Historical Scenes on New Kingdom Private Stelae. OBO* 75. Göttingen 1988, 3–5; Pinch 1993, 95; and see the recent discussion by Exell 2009, 69–82.

[1269] Schulman 1988, 193.

[1270] Cairo JE 72000, cf. Haring 1997, 147–9; Exell 2009, 73–4.

[1271] Compare discussion by Haring 1997, 148 and note 4.

[1272] Exell 2009, 73.

[1273] The only exceptions are **Cat. 11.39** (perhaps not a stela fragment (?) street south of S.E. IX), Louvre E 16374 (found in S.O. VI); cf. Bruyère 1939, 334 and 335 (fig. 206); and a stela from *déblaiement du village* = area around the first N.O. houses; cf. Bruyère 1934, 86. Texts were not generally absent from daily religious practice, as shown by a dedicatory list of kings (O. Cairo CG 25646) written by the scribe Qenhirkhopshef (i) and found in the Valley of the Kings between KV 7 (tomb of Ramesses II) and KV 9 (tomb of Ramesses VI); cf. C.N. Reeves, *The Valley of the Kings: the Decline of a Royal Necropolis*, London 1990, 325. This text has parallels in recent finds from the Valley of the Kings. Here, Dorn could also show that the absence of formulae indicates that a stela was found in a hut: cf. Dorn 2011, 91 and 133.

[1274] **Cat. 11.33**.

Stelae for ancestors, by contrast, usually consist of a representation and only short texts.[1275] In the few cases a text is, in fact, present, the inscription is usually limited to the name and *ꜣḫ-jḳr-n-Rˁ*-title of the respective ancestor. A single exception mentions those benefactors offering to the beneficiary.[1276] According to the record from Deir el-Medina's houses, written formulae tend to come from areas not associated with individual daily religious practice. Moreover, the religious expressions attested on these stelae were not meant as an individual devotion towards the gods only.[1277]

Interestingly, Keith describes the anthropoid busts as "primarily wedge- or stele-shaped."[1278] She then counters theories that trace development from stelephorous statues to the shape of the busts,[1279] noting the distinct absence of texts and representations on the latter.[1280] In addition, she maintains the presence of ears on both wigged and bold busts does not indicate the busts could "hear prayers or pleas or requests for judgment."[1281] Keith's argument is inconclusive, though. First of all, the busts represent anthropoid figures that themselves have ears[1282] regardless of their ability to hear. Second, the absence of texts (or written speech acts) in the domestic context does not contradict, but support personal vows, given the general absence of elaborate formulae in the houses at Deir el-Medina and the implications discussed in the present study. Stelae do not require texts, and the bust is itself an image, even without additional decoration.[1283]

[1275] Cf. Demarée 1983, 3 and 178–81 and see e.g. **Cat. 11.27**, **Cat. 11.35**; Louvre E. 16369; cf. Bruyère 1939, 164, 310 and pl. XXIII/Demarée 1983, 29–30 and pl. III and Louvre E 16368; cf. Bruyère 1939, 318 and fig. 187/Demarée 1983, 110–1 and pl. XI. It is remarkable that no representation of ancestors is known from pictorial ostraca, but see Berlin ÄMP 21455. Possibly the word "ancestor" (i.e. "*ꜣḫ*," *Wb* I, 15.17–16.10; but see also remarks) written in elaborated hieroglyphs. The shape of the arm on the left indicates that probably a Bes-image can be reconstructed there. Underneath, the drawinga palimpsest is visible. The remains of a snake underneath the Bes-image and the head of the ibis seems to have been changed into that of a *sꜣ*-bird (Gardiner G38).

[1276] Louvre E. 16344; cf. Bruyère 1939, 317 (fig. 186) and 318; Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0156_020; Demarée 1983, 106–9 and pl. XI.

[1277] Compare also criticism by Luiselli 2011a, 8.

[1278] Keith 2011, 3.

[1279] Friedman 1985, 97.

[1280] Keith 2011, 42–3.

[1281] Keith 2011, 45. In the following, however, Keith "suggest[s] that they [i.e. the ears] may have rendered some busts capable of hearing petitions and prayers, especially in an environment that produced many ear stelae and votive ear sculptures. They may reinforce the identity of some of the busts as deities, ready in the house *lararia* or the chapels to listen," cf. Keith 2011, 88.

[1282] Compare also Keith's discussion of wigs, which states they "generally revealed the ears," cf. Keith 2011, 49 with references.

[1283] See Friedman 1985, 97.

3.2.2.2 Ostraca

In Egyptology, the term ostraca refers not only to potsherds but also to limestone flakes inscribed or painted.[1284] Pictorial ostraca were often understood as exercises or sketches made by artists or scribes in their leisure time.[1285] Although scholars once understood administrative ostraca as drafts,[1286] Ben Haring has since shown that the administrative ostraca were, in fact, true documents: "bookkeeping at Deir el-Medina was mainly ostracon-keeping."[1287] Pictorial ostraca, too, had more extensive functions, some functioning as two-dimensional cult images.[1288]

A relatively large group of such ostraca portrays the god Amun as a ram[1289] or bark.[1290] As previously argued, the god Amun held great significance in and around the

[1284] Cf. E. Brunner-Traut, *Die altägyptischen Scherbenbilder (Bildostraka) der deutschen Museen und Sammlungen*, Wiesbaden 1956, IX.

[1285] E.g. W.C. Hayes, *Ostraka and Name Stones from the Tomb of Sen-Mût (No. 71) at Thebes* (reprint 1973), New York 1942, 3. For example, **Cat. 11.17** shows a scene ostensibly copied from a tomb; see also above pp. 39 and 76 and **Cat. 11.29** and **Cat. 11.39** may show the draft for the decoration of a coffin. For the interpretation of representations of gods as sketches and trial pieces, see e.g. Sadek 1988, 123 and further C.A. Keller, 'Royal Painters: Deir el-Medina in Dynasty XIX', in: E. Bleiberg and R. Freed (eds), *Fragments of a Shattered Visage. The Proceedings of the International Symposion on Ramesses the Great. Monographs of the Institute of Art and Archaeology* I, Memphis 1991, 50–86. Keller notes that the interpretation of the pictorial ostraca is conclusive for certain ostraca only; e.g. MM 14116 (cf. Keller 1991, 51 and pls 1–2 and see B.E.J. Peterson, *Zeichnungen aus einer Totenstadt. Bildostraka aus Theben-West, ihre Fundplätze, Themata und Zweckbereiche mitsamt einem Katalog der Gayer-Anderson-Sammlung in Stockholm*, Stockholm 1973, 105, cat. 138 and pl. 73), whereas others seems to be finished objects possibly to be interpreted as ex-voto (e.g. O. Cairo TR 23/22/1, cf. Keller 1973, 52 and pl. 4). Similarly Peterson 1973, 12–24.

[1286] Some ostraca clearly were drafts, but this interpretation does not apply to all ostraca, cf. e.g. K. Donker van Heel and B.J.J. Haring, *Writing in a Workmen's Village. Scribal Practice in Ramesside Deir el-Medina*, *EU* 16, Leiden 2003, 76.

[1287] For the sake of completeness it should be noted that this assessment applies to the situation at Deir el-Medina before the middle of the 20th dynasty. Afterwards the use of papyri increased, perhaps because the legal document became more accepted as evidence; cf. Haring 2003, 265.

[1288] Compare Sweeney 2009, 538 who mentions a category of votive ostraca and compare Keller 1991, 50–86. See also Brunner-Traut 1956, 17; Keller 1973; Peterson 1973, 12–24 and Stevens 2006, 153. This interpretation may also apply to O. Cairo JE 72504; cf. Demarée 1983, 86–7 and pl. IX. In order to demonstrate this function Dorn has recently introduced the term "*Stelenostraka*," cf. Dorn 2011, 185. It shall become clear in the following that the function of public stelae fundamentally differed from that of pictorial ostraca. Therefore Dorn's term will not be applied to the present thesis. On the potential replacement of objects by representations see also F. Albert, 'Amulets and Funerary Manuscripts', in: M. Müller-Roth and M. Höveler-Müller (eds), *Grenzen des Totenbuchs. Ägyptische Papyri zwischen Grab und Ritual*, Rahden 2012, 83. Note also that at Liverpool University, Joanne Backhouse is currently working on a PhD analysing the pictorial ostraca in detail; cf. J. Backhouse, 'Figured Ostraca from Deir el-Medina', in: H. Abd El Gawad *et al.* (eds), *Current Research in Egyptology 2011. Proceedings of the Twelfth Annual Symposium Durham University 2011*, Oxford 2012, 25–39.

[1289] Berlin ÄMP 21463; cf. Brunner-Traut 1956, 20, no. 4 and pl. V.

[1290] Berlin ÄMP 21446; cf. Brunner-Traut 1956, 32–5, no. 17, pl. IX; Berlin ÄMP 21471; cf. Brunner-Traut 1956, 35–6, no. 19, pl. IX; Berlin ÄMP 21456; cf. Brunner-Traut 1956, 37–8, no. 22 and pl. IX. In fact the only exception of a representations of a bark not related to the god Amun are a stela showing the goddess Hathor (Bruyère 1937, 17, no. 7 and fig. 6) In his publication Bruyère simply notes "*barque solaire*" (Bruyère 1934, 86). The appearance of the goddess Hathor with a solar bark is rather unusual, but is, for example, known from the coffin texts (cf. S. Allam, *Beiträge zum Hathorkult (bis zum Ende des Mittleren Reichs)*, Göttingen 1959, 115– 6, with references). The decoration of the bark and the text clearly indicate

region of Thebes. His appearance as bark may have derived from practical matters, namely, the ability for villagers see him during large-scale festivals. Other ostraca potentially classifiable as cult images depict Renenutet or Meretseger,[1291] Thoth,[1292] Sobek,[1293] Re-Horakhty,[1294] the king,[1295] and the deified Amenhotep-son-of-Hapu.[1296] Apart from these examples and numerous drawings of the king (see also below chapter 3.2.2.3), however, pictorial ostraca functioned as cult images rather in isolated instances.

In addition to cult images, cult images, some pictorial ostraca might have served as offerings. As with stelae, pictorial ostraca at times illustrate an act of offering, a woman offering to Hathor,[1297] for example. These ostraca functional by combining a representation of the ostraca with a speech act, so representation of beneficiaries or written speech acts was unnecessary. This can be illustrated by the representation of a priest offering flowers on an offering table.[1298] Similar to ancient Egyptian texts, iconography not only conveys ideal truth,[1299] but also *creates* this truth.[1300] Such an act was therefore

that Bruyère's identification of the goddess were correct. As to the find spot, in the publication the findspot is indicated as *déblaiement du village*, i.e. the area around the first N.O. houses. In the notebook the fragment appears among the objects found outside the southern village "*jusqu'au thalweg les dernières maisons du sud.*" Apparently, Bruyère excavated the whole area east of the village without recording the exact location. In an earlier publication the object appears among fragments found in the "*quartier est du village*" (cf. Bruyère 1937, 16). Bruyère 1934, 86. Bruyère 1937, 17, no. 7 and fig. 6.

[1291] Berlin ÄMP 21480 (found in N.E. XI); cf. Brunner-Traut 1956, 86, no. 88, pl. XXXII.

[1292] Berlin ÄMP 21438 (found in N.E. VIII–XIX); cf. Brunner-Traut 1956, 82–3 no. 83 and pl. XXXI; and possibly Berlin ÄMP 21468; Brunner-Traut 1956, 54, no. 42 and pl. XVII.

[1293] O. DeM 2650 (found in N.O. XVIII); cf. Vandier d'Abbadie 1937, 134 and pl. LXXXVI.

[1294] The god Re-Horakhty on a bark in a shrine (Berlin ÄMP 21488; Brunner-Traut 1956, 40, no. 25 and pl. X) Brunner-Traut suggests that the ostracon represents a sketch of a pectoral (1956, 40). Pectorals are rectangular amuletic plates that were worn on necklaces (cf. E. Feucht, *Die königlichen Pektorale. Motive, Sinngehalt und Zweck*, Bamberg 1967, 7). Whereas the rising sun is a common pectoral motif it is usually Khepri and not Re-Horakhty who is depicted (cf. Feucht 1967, pls XII–XVI and E. Feucht, *Pektorale Nichtköniglicher Personen*, *ÄA* 22, Wiesbaden 1971, 4). The rectangular shape has been interpreted as the symbol of a small naos (cf. M. Jost, 'Ikonographie und Bedeutung einer hybriden Pektoralgruppe', in: T. Hofmann and A. Sturm (eds), *Menschen-Bilder. Kunst und Kultur im Alten Ägypten*, Norderstedt 2003, 45; quoting Feucht 1967, 8. See also H. Schäfer 1916, 33 for an interpretation as "*Brustschilder in Kapellenform*"). Assuming that a pectoral symbolizes a naos the drawing on the present ostracon might as well itself be interpreted as a naos. The detour via the pectoral is hence unnecessary. This interpretation would also solve the problem that the gods shown are rather unusual for a pectoral. Most probably the ostracon shows the drawing of the sun god Re-Horakhty accompanied by the god Thoth in a solar bark that is situated in a small shrine.

[1295] Drawings of kings on ostraca: **Cat. 11.14**, **Cat. 11.16**, **Cat. 11.22**, **Cat. 11.25**, **Cat. 11.32**. For so-called relief studies of the king see also below chapter 3.2.2.3.

[1296] **Cat. 11.17**.

[1297] Louvre E 14297; cf. Vandier d'Abbadie 1937, 83–4 and pl. LIX.

[1298] Berlin ÄMP 21457, cf. Brunner-Traut 1956, 56, no. 45 and pl. XIX. Flowers are a typical offering for temples and/or the deceased (cf. J. Dittmar, *Blumen und Blumensträuße als Opfergabe im alten Ägypten*, *MÄS* 43, München 1986, 146). The present ostracon seems to represent a cheaper or less perishable variant of such an offering. Perhaps the act of offering is implied by means of pictorial act, cf. p. 160. It remains, however, unclear whether or not a part of the ostracon showing a god or ancestor to the right of the offering table might have been lost (for similar considerations of whether or not the present ostracon is complete; cf. Brunner- Traut 1956, 56).

[1299] E.g. S. Ikram, *Choice Cuts: Meat Production in Ancient Egypt*, Leuven 1995, 1–3.

[1300] See, for example, Teeter 2011, 5.

illocutionary, performed through representation as a "pictorial act."[1301] This pictorial act not only dispenses with the written speech act but also eliminates the need for mention of the benefactor, who would have been present during the offering. In this way, depiction of a fattened ox would have had the same symbolic significance as an actual piece of meat,[1302] a proposition generally accepted by Egyptologists with reference to offering tables.[1303] A similar symbolic significance for some pictorial ostraca found in the village thus falls in line with this standard interpretation. As a third function, pictorial ostraca thus acted as model offerings. Those blackened by smoke demonstrate this particular capacity (see p. 95).[1304] Regarding ostraca with bull drawings,[1305] bovine meat was expensive and hence not available to everybody.[1306] Though not necessarily rare at Deir el-Medina, beef came to the villagers only as special reward or on special occasions,[1307] the latter generally consisting of local or trans-local feasts.[1308] The gods may have valued beef highly, but the village inhabitants probably did not provide them with it on any regular basis. Instead, pictorial ostraca with representations of meat substituted the meat offering itself.[1309] As Dorn observes, some pictorial ostraca show bovine heads similar to those depicted on offering tables.[1310] Besides these bull drawings, drawings of flowers,[1311] palm branches[1312] and a group of two-dimensional female figurines[1313] may

[1301] Cf. S. Kjørup, 'Pictorial Speech Acts', *Erkenntnis* 12 (1978), 55–71. In the present context Søren Kjørup's term "pictorial *speech* act" (my emphasis) has been modified into pictorial act, because in the ancient Egyptian context the finished representation is performative also without an additional speech act. Both acts can exist individually or complement each other (see also Bredekamp 2010, 51–6). Contrary to Kjørup the act of recognition of the representation (i.e. "*Bilderkennung*") is taken for granted and the pictorial act is performative by itself and not only by its creation (compare the critical perspective by S. Seja, *Handlungstheorien des Bildes*, Jena 2007, 14 and 81–94) and see Luiselli 2007b, 89.

[1302] On this idea in general cf. e.g. Baines 2007, 214 and Eyre 2002, 37-9.

[1303] For example, Hölzl divides the decorative elements of offering tables into *real-functional* and *magical-functional* elements thereby stressing that the "magical" elements were considered equally "real-functional" by the ancient Egyptians as a drain would be a functional element in our modern understanding, cf. Hölzl 2002, 65–6; see also p. 119.

[1304] E.g. Berlin ÄMP 21441, cf. Brunner-Traut 1956, 105, no. 106 and pl. XXXVII.

[1305] E.g. Berlin ÄMP 21441; Berlin ÄMP 21440; cf. Brunner-Traut 1956, 105-7, nos. 106-7 and 114 and pls XXXVII-I and IFAO 2121 (with a canide underneath); cf. Vandier d'Abbadie 1936, pl. XVI, document 2121.

[1306] Cf. Ikram 1995, 8 and 200 showing that bovine husbandry was expensive, their meat thus a luxury item and indicative of the benefactor's status.

[1307] Janssen 1975, 491–2 lists the delivery of six and ten oxen on O. Cairo CG 25504 and of eleven oxen on O. DeM 46. For example, king Merenptah rewarded the crew with various goods among which were ten oxen in his 8th regnal year, cf. O. CG Cairo 25504 and Janssen 1975, 489–90.

[1308] E.g. O. Ashmolean Museum HO 362 which records the ritual slaughtering of an ox in preparation of the Opet-festival (i.e. a trans-local festival belonging to the state cult), where the meat would have been offered to the gods or O. Turin N. 57033 which records the slaughtering of an ox for a local festival of Ptah, cf. Jauhiainen 2009, 297. Note, however, that O. Ashmolean Museum HO 5 seems to refer to an ox given to the goddess Meretseger as individual gift, cf. Wente 1990, 140.

[1309] Remarkably, that only the side of the ostracon showing the bull,—not the accompanying person—is blackened by smoke. Thus, the bull alone was fired.

[1310] Dorn 2011, 106. Dorn follows the usual interpretation of this imagery as "*Übungsmotiv*" or "*Gelegenheitsbild*," cf. Dorn 2011, 106–7. Interestingly, one of Dorn's examples also shows traces of firing and smoke, cf. Dorn 2011, 302; Cat. 267 and pls 242–3.

[1311] Berlin ÄMP 21474 (found in area N.E. VIII–XIX); cf. Brunner-Traut 1956, 121, no. 145 and pl. IV.

[1312] Berlin ÄMP 21462 (found N.E. XVI/XVIII); cf. Brunner-Traut 1956, 119–20, no. 141 and pl. XLIII and Berlin ÄMP 21460 (found in N.E. VIII–XIX); cf. Brunner-Traut 1956, 119, no. 139 and pl. XLII..

also fit this interpretation. Lotus flowers, for instance, were a particularly common offering related to ancestor cults, as stelae clearly indicate,[1314] and model offerings on ostraca would be "more durable in the desert heat as real flowers would be."[1315] Pinch has compellingly revealed that in "state-run shrines," where "the deities were probably thought to be more powerful" than in the domestic context, "[t]he emphasis was on the symbolic rather than the intrinsic value of the votive offerings."[1316] While little evidence identifies household gods and ancestors as less powerful, her finding could serve as additional support for drawings of offerings replacing "actual" offerings.

3.2.2.3 Relief Studies

Among the two-dimensional representations found at Deir el-Medina, a relatively large group depicts the king or his head. Since a number of objects evince that Egyptians practiced draftings of, *inter alia*, architectural projects,[1317] some scholars interpret these representations as relief studies.[1318] However, there are several reasons why this interpretation is somewhat unsatisfactory for the alleged relief studies showing the king. First of all, some relief studies have indeed emerged, and they differ from the proposed ones, clearly identifiable as master copies. An ostracon found at Deir el-Bahari shows traces of preparatory lines underneath the drawing of two human faces and two owls,[1319] for instance. Only one of the alleged studies from Deir el-Medina[1320] was left unfinished, and no grid lines have been preserved. Second, the motif is uniform, whereas a variety of shapes would be expected—i.e., not only the king—were the objects trial pieces for stelae. In fact, as far as I know, no relief studies of other motifs have come from the houses of Deir el-Medina.[1321]

Labib Habachi has identified the veneration of kings as a minor cult during the New Kingdom, mainly attested for Amenhotep I and Ahmes-Nefertari but possibly Amenhotep III and Ramesses II.[1322] The record from Deir el-Medina's houses confirms this trend.[1323] Other kings were venerated at the village, however, for a number of festivals

[1313] **Cat. 11.54–9**.

[1314] Demarée 1983, 174.

[1315] Sadek 1988, 78. Sadek comments on the model offerings discussed below (chapter 3.3.2), but his argument also supports the present hypothesis.

[1316] Pinch 1993, 355.

[1317] E.g. O. BM 41228 from Deir el-Bahari which depicts a temple or shrine; cf. Peck 1979, 194, and see also C.C. van Siclen, 'Ostracon BM 41228: A sketch plan of a shrine reconsidered', *GM* 90 (1986), 71–7 and cf. also O. CG 25184, which shows a map of the tomb of Ramesses IX, cf. Peck 1979, 196–7 and see also C. Rossi, 'The Plan of a Royal Tomb on O. Cairo 25184', *GM* 184 (2001), 45–53.

[1318] E.g. Brunner-Traut 1956, 2 and compare Dorn 2011, 79–81. The canon of Egyptian art has been studied in detail by E. Iversen, *Canon and Proportion in Egyptian Art*, Warminster 1975.

[1319] O. Brooklyn Museum 58.28.2; cf. W.H. Peck, *Ägyptische Zeichnungen aus drei Jahrtausenden (Translation by J. Rehork)*, Bergisch Gladbach 1979, 27. Another example also found at Deir el-Bahari (O. MMA 23.3.4) shows the *ꜥnḫ*-sign, the *ḏd*-pillar, and the *wꜣs*-scepter drawn on a grid; cf. Peck 1979, 35.

[1320] Berlin ÄMP 21449; cf. Brunner-Traut 1956, 47–8, no. 31, 47 and pl. XIII.

[1321] Occasionally the outline is indicated. For example, on JE 46732 the outline of three drawings of animals is carved; cf. Peck 1979, 169.

[1322] Compare L. Habachi, *Features of the Deification of Ramesses II*, *ADAIK* 5, Glückstadt 1969, 48–51.

[1323] The attestations for the cult of Amenhotep I are **Cat. 11.9** and a few architectural fragments with unclear find spots: Bruyère 1939, pl. XV, 5, Turin Cat. N. 50240; cf. Tosi and Roccati 1972, 200 and 350;

commemorate the accession of Seti I, Ramesses II, and Ramesses III.[1324] Not considered in Habachi's study, Amenhotep IV had the most important cult of any king from the New Kingdom. Numerous parallels of so-called relief studies were found at Amarna.[1325] The question is whether these alleged relief studies were so-called trial pieces or whether they might have had a religious significance.[1326] As Stevens contends "[the] majority of trial pieces and ostraca depicting the image of the royal family were found in the Central City, mainly from the vicinity of the Great Aten Temple, Great Palace and Royal Estate."[1327] Questions concerning access to these areas then come to the fore. House N.49.18 has yielded one relevant example,[1328] which shows the king's head in relief, resembling those found at Deir el-Medina.[1329] The find spot of the piece from Amarna is somewhat odd, "wedged into the small space between the east wall of the courtyard of house N.49.18 and the slighter west wall of N.49.34."[1330] Similarly, other parallels materialized from "the trenches where the walls [had] been."[1331] These find spots could suggest the objects comprised a foundation ritual, though this hypothesis remains tentative.[1332]

At Deir el-Medina, no such find spot is known. The houses generally yield additional, potentially related, objects alongside the alleged relief studies. For instance, house N.E. XII contained several objects pertaining to the cult of the king. Beyond the unfinished alleged trial piece of the king's body,[1333] a second one (**Cat. 11.12**) along with fragments of a sphinx portraying Ramesses II (**Cat. 10.5**) came from the house. This accumulation might intimate a cult of the royal ancestors in house N.E. XII.[1334] Two other alleged relief studies came from house N.E. XIII (**Cat. 11.14** and Berlin ÄMP 21479[1335]) together with a scarab of possibly Amenhotep III (**Cat. 9.6**). Similarly, house N.E. XVI/XVIII produced two alleged relief studies (**Cat. 11.16** and **Cat. 11.18**), yet

Ahmose-Sapair appears on **Cat. 5.10**; the cult of Ramesses IV is attested on: **Cat. 5.11**, Ramesses II on **Cat. 10.5**. Amenhotep III or prince Nebmaatre, son of Ramesses IX on a scarab (**Cat. 9.6**). See also **Cat. 11.31** for the veneration of royal ancestors.

[1324] Jauhiainen 2009, 178–86 and see also the evidence for the veneration of Ramesses VI quoted above (p. 114 and Hovestreydt 1997, 121).

[1325] E.g. JE 64597; cf. Peck 1979, 100 and see Dorn 2011, 129.

[1326] Somewhat biased Peck notes that "*die eigenwillige Darstellungsweise, die Echnaton bevorzugte*" required "*von den Künstlern seiner Zeit ständige Übung*"; cf. Peck 1979, 100. Compare Dorn 2011, 83 for a possible identification of the king wearing the blue crown or the ibes as representations of Amenhotep I.

[1327] Stevens 2006, 156.

[1328] T.E. Peet and C.L. Woolley, *The City of Akhenaten I: Excavations of 1921 and 1922*, London 1923, 14 and pl. XII, 6. Not studied by Stevens and Kemp 2010.

[1329] It should be noted, however, that it was found together with a piece that is difficult to explain as something other than a trial piece; cf. Peet and Woolley 1923, 14 and pl. XII, 8.

[1330] Peet and Woolley 1923, 14.

[1331] J.D.S. Pendlebury, 'Preliminary Report of the Excavations at Tell el-'Amarnah, 1932–1933', *JEA* 19 (1933), 116 and pl. XV, 1–3 and J.D.S. Pendlebury, *The City of Akhenaton* III: *The Central City and the Official Quarters. The Excavations at Tell el-Amarna During the Seasons 1926–1927 and 1931–1936*, London 1951, 19 and pl. LIX, 2–3. Among the latter is a representation of the king, which also depicts an individual in adoration on the reverse. This sequence might support the interpretation of at least some of the alleged trial pieces as cult images, apparently assumed also by Stevens 2006, 156.

[1332] A comprehensive study of the contexts of the other parallels of Amarna is beyond the scope of the present study.

[1333] Berlin ÄMP 21449; cf. Brunner-Traut 1956, 47–8, no. 31, 47 and pl. XIII.

[1334] The fragment of a pictorial ostracon showing the head of a woman possibly in a birth scene (**Cat. 11.20**), cannot be related to a shared cult within this group.

[1335] Cf. Brunner-Traut 1956, 62, no. 57 and pl. XXI.

none of these objects bear any clear relation to a cultic emplacement. The three known frames of cultic emplacements dedicated to Amenhotep I have no clearly-defined find spot,[1336] circumstances that also apply to the lintel of a cult emplacement belonging to either a king or queen Meriamun.[1337] With one exception, the reliefs bear no inscriptions.[1338] These accumulated finds of objects related to the cult of the king cannot prove a religious significance for the alleged relief studies. A draftsman could have also lived in the house, leaving more than one draft.

3.2.2.4 The Interpretation of the Two-dimensional Representations

With few exceptions, introductory formulae and elaborate texts were not part of the domestic context's *decorum*. Such texts replaced religious offerings and speech acts, which suggests elaborate stelae belonged to public contexts. While Luiselli rightly sees personal religious expression as an important aspect of the stelae that might have influenced the benefactor's choices of decoration, texts, and beneficiary (i.e., a specific god or deified king),[1339] the evidence identifies the stelae's primary function as expression of status and prestige through exhibition of an individual's cultic participation[1340]—a display important in public but less so in private, which partly explains the virtual absence of stelae in homes. The main reason for such absence, however, is the accessibility of cult images. In less accessible areas, written speech acts replaced speech acts, thereby accounting for the few standard formulae found on cult objects in domestic contexts. Put differently, where speech acts were evoked as part of daily cults, written speech acts were absent (see also above p. 66–68). Illustrating the rules of the *decorum*, texts and representations had a practical function, namely, guaranteeing the persistence of cults in the physical absence of both benefactors and beneficiaries. That is to say, benefactors and beneficiaries were present and participated in the cults embodied by either texts and representations or written speech acts and pictorial acts. Religious activities performed in the domestic contexts were probably similar to those depicted on the stelae. Accordingly, the inhabitants of Deir el-Medina likely raised their arms in adoration, stand or kneeled before cult images and offering tables, sang hymns, recited prayers, performed libations—and occasionally burned fat, meat or incense—, and presented offerings to their gods and ancestors.

[1336] Cf. Bruyère 1939, pl. XV, 5, Turin Cat. N. 50240; cf. Tosi and Roccati 1972, 200 and 350.

[1337] Unpublished; cf. Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0155_020. This fragment was apparently part of a naos dedicated to a king. A variety of kings and queens bear a titulatory containing the epithet "beloved of Amun," because Amun was the most important god at the time. Examples are: Sethos I (*Mry-n-Imn*; cf. J. von Beckerath, *Handbuch der ägyptischen Königsnamen (2nd rev. ed.)*, *MÄS* 49, Mainz 1999, 151); Tawosret (*Mry.t-Imn*; cf. Beckerath 1999, 163) or Ramesses III (*Stp-n-Rᶜ-Mry-Imn*, Beckerath 1999, 165). It is therefore unclear which king or queen is attested here. No further information is available in the publication or notebooks.

[1338] And in fact the inscription of **Cat. 11.32** is unknown. Besides it is not exactly the same artifact group because it shows a drawing not a carving.

[1339] E.g. Luiselli 2011a, 8 and 41.

[1340] Exell 2009, 137–8.

3.2.3. Amulets and Amulet Molds

As noted throughout this study, most portable valuable objects were probably taken away when the village was abandoned (see chapter 1.3. above).[1341] Amulets and amulet molds furnish one good example of an artifactual group that was potentially common at Deir el-Medina but left little trace in textual and archaeological records alike (table 9). These artifactual groups fall between the categories of two- and three-dimensional cult images.

The administrative texts of Deir el-Medina make limited reference to transactions of amulets,[1342] and the few allusions that do occur offer little information about the actual use of the objects.[1343] As one exception, a letter from the scribe Butehamun (i) to the scribe Tjaroy while the former was away in the south (P. BM EA 10411),[1344] indicates that amulets were carried along on journeys to ensure traveler's well-being.[1345] This situation finds parallel in another letter Butehamun (i) wrote to his father, Thutmose (ii),[1346] which suggests such usage was common practice. In most cases, however, amulets appear as part of transactions,[1347] and their actual use remains unclear. For example, O. Cairo CG 25678[1348] mentions a list of supplies that includes several kinds of amulets.[1349] Probably written by the scribe Qenhirkhopshef (i), the text lists objects given

[1341] For a variety of shapes found elsewhere at Deir el-Medina compare, for example, B. Bruyère, *Rapport sur les Fouilles de Deir el-Médineh (annés 1948 à 1951)*, *FIFAO* 16, Cairo 1953, 53–4, fig. 11.

[1342] Janssen 1975, 308 and 310–11.

[1343] Except for the term *sꜣ.w n ms.w*, which was some kind of birth-charm, whose shape and use is unknown; cf. Janssen 1975, 310–11.

[1344] Published by J.J. Janssen, *Hieratic Papyri in the British Museum VI. Late Ramesside Letters and Communications*, London 1991, 11–5 and pls 3 and 4.

[1345] P. BM EA 10411, 4: *jr tꜣ m(w)d.w n tꜣ ḥḏ.t jw dj=j n=k m ḫnt.y* ("as for the matter of the White-one, I gave (it) to you when you were going south"); cf. Janssen 1991, 12 and pls 3 and 4. Janssen correctly identifies the word as "hippopotamus amulet" (Janssen 1991, 12–14). Whereas the spelling of the word might have had some iconic value (as argued by O. Goldwasser, *From Icon to Metaphor. Studies in the Semiotics of the Hieroglyphs. OBO* 142, Göttingen 1995, 112), it is certainly not the drawing of an amulet. The word written here is in fact *tꜣ ḥḏ.t*, the White-one, a particular form of a hippopotamus goddess (cf. *Wb* III, 212.2–3). This goddess is rarely attested in the Egyptian sources, but it was certainly her protective power that applied in the present case. A summary of references and their interpretation has been provided by W. Kaiser, 'Zwei weitere *ḥb.ḥḏ.t*-Belege', in: P. Der Manuelian, *Studies in Honor of William Kelly Simpson* II, Boston 1996, 451–9 and see his fig. 2 for an early reference for the spelling of *ḥḏ.t* preserved on the present papyrus. The former refers to a festival and the *ḥb* is not written on the present papyrus. The reference to *ḥḏ.t* is listed in the *TLA*, lemma referring to an amulet rather than to the festival. The reference to *ḥḏ.t* is listed in the *TLA*, lemma no. 112520.

[1346] P. Geneva D 404 referring to an amulet of the red crown, cf. E.F. Wente, *Late Ramesside Letters*, *SAOC* 33, Chicago 1967, 33 and 37 note i.

[1347] E.g. O. Berlin P. 12652 attests an amulet (*sḫr*); cf. Janssen 1975, 308 and see also http://dem-online.gwi.uni-muenchen.de. Another example is O. Ashmolean Museum HO 133; cf. *KRI* VII, 182–3, where the words *smn* and *sḫr* (both possibly meaning amulet or jewelry) as well *sꜣw n msw* ("birth-charm") are attested as part of a payment. Both use and agency remain unclear. Was the person using them as payment the same person who made them?

[1348] Cf. *KRI* IV, 168–9; recently published by J.J. Janssen, 'Three mysterious ostraca', in: M. Collier and S. Snape (eds), *Ramesside Studies in Honour of K.A. Kitchen*, Bolton 2011, 237–82.

[1349] E.g. 40 *wḏꜣ.t*-eyes, 150 beads (*rnṯ*) of several kinds, and ten seals (*ḫtm*) are listed.

to a lady Khaysheb, otherwise unknown at Deir el-Medina.[1350] Although the meaning of the list is difficult to assess,[1351] it seems clear that it was not a simple transaction. One interpretation considers it a list of valuables kept in some "village "store.""[1352] According to another, the list describes a house's inventory.[1353] Regardless of the text's original function, it nonetheless evinces the value assigned to amulets. O. BM 65936 does mention an *wḏꜣ.t*-amulet among the objects a man brought into marriage (perhaps as bride price),[1354] which might support interpretation of the abovementioned list as a house inventory.

Not only small and portable, but also highly valued, amulets virtually absent in the archaeological record of the village,[1355] which has produced only a few scarabs[1356] and amulets.[1357] The scarcity of amulets found in the village reflects abandonment processes rather than an absence in everyday daily religious life. Molds have appeared in a variety of shapes, which reveals the production and presence of amulets at the village (table 9).[1358]

The majority of studies on amulets focuses on formal criteria, e.g., material and shape, and employs classification to illuminate the symbolism of the various types.[1359] Other studies draw on tomb contexts where amulets were found *in situ* to reconstruct customary wear among the living.[1360] Although Deir el-Medina does not allow for such considerations, similar practices of dress remain likely. Whereas scarabs had a broader

[1350] A similar ostracon (O. Cairo CG 25677) is a list of supplies to a lady Khaysheb. Both ostraca (O. Cairo CG 25677 and O. Cairo CG 25678) are written by the same hand, that of scribe Qenhirkhopshef (i), cf. Donker van Heel and Haring 2003, 41–2. Therefore it seems plausible that the list applies to the same lady Khaysheb; cf. http://www.leidenuniv.nl/nino/dmd/dmd.html; accessed on 30 July 2013.

[1351] Compare also J.J. Janssen, 'Three mysterious ostraca', in: M. Collier and S. Snape (eds), *Ramesside Studies in Honour of K.A. Kitchen*, Bolton 2011, 241.

[1352] Cf. Toivari-Viitala 2001, 40.

[1353] J.J. Janssen, 'A Marital Title from the New Kingdom', in E. Teeter and J.A. Larson (eds), *Gold of Praise. Studies on Ancient Egypt in Honour of Edward F. Wente*, *SAOC* 58, Chicago 1999, 187.

[1354] S. Allam, *Hieratische Ostraka und Papyri aus der Ramessidenzeit*, Tübingen 1973, 222–3.

[1355] The majority of the amulets and amulet molds apparently came from the *Grand Puits*, a dump almost certainly created when the area around the private chapels was cleared to build the Hathor temple. The finds from the pit probably do not relate to the domestic context, thus excluded from the catalogue (table 9). The dump contained valuables to some degree. On the find situation, see Bruyère 1953, 53–54 and fig. 11; on the *Grand Puits* cf. e.g. Toivari-Viitala 2011, 6; cf. http://www.escholarship.org/uc/item/6kt9m29r; accessed on 24 June 2013. A nice example is also the unique scorpion amulet Bruyère found in January 1930 in the *décombres* behind the houses of the S.E. area cf. Bruyère 1939, pl. XLII and Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0151_005 and MS_2004_0151_006.

[1356] **Cat. 9.1**; **Cat. 9.6**; **Cat. 9.8**; **Cat. 9.11**; and **Cat. 9.20**.

[1357] **Cat. 9.3-4**; **Cat. 9.10**; **Cat. 9.12-13**; **Cat. 9.17-19**; and **Cat. 9.25-26**.

[1358] As already noted by Bruyère 1939, pl. XXV. See also the amulet molds found in the Valley of the Kings published by cf. Dorn 2011, cat. 858, cat. 863, cat. 864, and cat. 866.

[1359] Notably C. Müller-Winkler, *Die ägyptischen Objekt-Amulette. Mit Publikation der Sammlung des Biblischen Instituts der Universität Freiburg Schweiz ehemals Sammlung Fouad S. Matouk. OBO Series Archeologia* 5, Göttingen 1987; and C. Hermann, *Ägyptische Amulette aus Palästine/Israel. Mit einem Ausblick auf ihre Rezeption durch das Alte Testament. OBO 138*, Göttingen 1994.

[1360] E.g. U. Dubiel, *Amulette, Siegel und Perlen. Studien zu Typologie und Tragesitte im Alten und Mittleren Reich. OBO* 229, Göttingen 2008. For a comprehensive summary of amulet usage from Pharaonic to Late Antique Egypt; cf. A. Grimm and I. Grimm Stadelmann, 'Zauberhaftes Alt-Ägypten. Schwarze und weiße Magie an den Ufern des Nils', in: A. Grimm und S. Schoske (eds), *Isisblut & Steinbockhorn. Amulett und Talisman in Altägypten und im Alpenraum*, Munich 2010, 35–75.

meaning, sometimes used as seals,[1361] amulets were mainly worn to enhance the bearer's protection and/or well-being.[1362] In addition, specialists used amulets to increase the power of certain spells.[1363]

Usually, amulets were made of faience cast in mud brick molds,[1364] a method that consisted of the following procedures:[1365] first, the positive would be pressed into a mud brick ball, which would then be burned and used as a model; this model would then be filled with a (colored) quartzite paste and burned again. Recitation of spells might have accompanied such manufacture, though written sources do not attest to this dimension of amulet production.

Amulet molds generally consisted of mud brick and clay.[1366] With few exceptions,[1367] however, Bruyère and Möller found molds made of limestone, a situation paralleled in the huts in the Valley of the Kings.[1368] The somewhat blurred photographs reveal no traces of firing. Limestone molds were probably used to cast molten metal into amulets, and perhaps other objects as well, but such molds were usually used to cast bronze weapons and tools[1369] rather than amulets.[1370] Nevertheless, metal casting was a practice explored for small objects at Deir el-Medina, as clearly indicated by the limestone molds for jewelry like seal rings,[1371] earrings,[1372] *wḏȝ.t*-rings,[1373] and finger rings.[1374] Additional materials, such as faience, may have found use for scarabs and other amulets.[1375] Oddly, no faience waste was found at Deir el-Medina which contrasts other production areas, like those in Amarna, for example.[1376] A piece of turquoise belonging to

[1361] K.M. Cooney, 'Scarab', in: W. Wendrich (ed.), *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, Los Angeles, 2008, 6; cf. https://escholarship.org/uc/item/13v7v5gd.pdf; accessed on 4 January 2013.
[1362] This definition is confirmed by the meaning of the Egyptian words usually translated with "amulet" *mk.t, nh.t sȝ* and *wḏȝ*, cf. C.A.R. Andrews, *Amulets of Ancient Egypt*, London 1994, 6.
[1363] An example is P. BM 9997, VI, I and 16, where an amulet is used in a spell against a specific type of snakebite, cf. Leitz 1999, 16 and 18 and pl. 6
[1364] According to Nicholson this technology was mainly used when a larger number of similar objects was needed, cf. P.T. Nicholson, 'Faience Technology', in: W. Wendrich (ed.), *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, Los Angeles 2009, 3–4; cf. https://escholarship.edu/uc/item/9cs9x41z.pdf; accessed on 4 January 2013.
[1365] Hermann 1994, 26–8.
[1366] One of the few parallels for New Kingdom limestone amulet molds is from Amarna and now in the Petrie Museum (UC 189).
[1367] **Cat. 9.26** and see also the impressions **Cat. 9.14**; **Cat. 9.15**; **Cat. 9.20** and **Cat. 9.22**.
[1368] Dorn 2011, 165.
[1369] Cf. A. Lucas, *Ancient Egyptian Materials and Industries* (4th edition revised by J.R. Harris), London 1989, 213. An example is UC 38387 from the New Kingdom (unfortunately the provenance is unknown).
[1370] For the technology, cf. J. Ogden, 'Metals', in: P.T. Nicholson and I. Shaw (eds), *Ancient Egyptian Materials and Technology*, Cambridge 2000, 157. A melting or casting technology is perhaps also indicated in the literary text called the Contendings of Horus and Seth, where Isis is said to cast (*wḏḥ*, *Wb* I, 393.11–13) a harpoon, cf. P. Chester Beatty I, rt. 8, 12–13. This practice was apparently more common in the Ptolemaic Period as has been shown by M. Etienne, *Heka. Magie et envoûtement dans l'Égypte ancienne*, Paris 2000, 17, Cat. 118.
[1371] **Cat. 9.2** and **Cat. 9.26** and see also Louvre E. 16295-Louvre E. 16297.
[1372] Louvre E. 16300 (?)–**305** and Louvre E. 16316; Louvre inventory.
[1373] **Cat 9.7** and Louvre E. 16306.
[1374] Louvre E. 16296–99.
[1375] **Cat 9.1**, **Cat 9.6**, **Cat 9.20**, **Cat 9.26**, and Louvre E. 16312 (fish amulet mold); cf. *Inventaire spéciaux* III, 79, no. 42.
[1376] Kemp and Stevens 2010a, 481.

"scribe Pentaweret" came from house S.E. V (see also above, p. 41)[1377] and constitutes the only attestation of raw material use. Apparently, Bruyère did not record the rather dowdy refuse.

Not all molds found at Deir el-Medina were amulet molds, however. The great size of some (varying between 11 and more than 20 cm),[1378] may suggest they were used for casting images rather than amulets, a technique already proposed by Herbert Garland and Charles Olden Bannister, who believed that for "the poor, who could not afford a sculptor, repetition castings from stone molds were probably made."[1379] The common practice for making bronze figurines was cored casting.[1380] At Deir el-Medina, though, statuettes usually consisted of wood or limestone (see table 11).[1381] The absence of large bronze figurines at Deir el-Medina converges with the general scarcity of full-cast bronze figurines for the New Kingdom period.[1382] Accordingly, the majority may have been reused at some point in antiquity, the bronze melted for other purposes.[1383]
A different explanation may account for other alleged molds. First of all, these molds lack any traces inside, a remarkable circumstance.[1384] Second, many of them seem rather shallow[1385] and would hence produce rather fragile amulets or images. Regardless of the material cast into the alleged mould, whether faience, metal, or clay, the legs of a potential bird mold[1386] would be rather thin compared to the body, liable to break off from the finished cast. Admittedly, some molds might have been left unfinished,[1387] but this situation seems exceptional. In general, most of these alleged molds were made of smooth and handy stones, the shape of the cavity more or less centered. Though rather large for amulets, they can still be considered "pocket-size." Perhaps at least some of them are proper objects, not merely tools in the production process, so they would have borne their own symbolic value. They may have been divine images or pocket charms, the clearest example of this artifactual group being a limestone piece now in the Louvre museum that shows four cavities for amulets: a *wȝs*-scepter, possibly a somewhat odd *ḏd*-pillar, and two *sȝ*-amulets.[1388] This stone is inscribed with four protective amulets in a row that are far too shallow to be amulet molds. Moreover, texts reveal that amulets were not only worn but also buried. Spell BD 151, for instance, reports that burying amulets in

[1377] Bruyère 1939, 270–1.
[1378] **Cat. 9.4**, **Cat. 9.12** and Louvre E. 16313 (small Bes/Thoeris amulet mold).
[1379] Cf. H. Garland and C.O. Bannister, *Ancient Egyptian Metallurgy*, London 1927, 57–8.
[1380] For a detailed description of the production method cf. Garland and Barnister 1927, 37–8.
[1381] Large faience plaques are known from the Third Intermediate Period, (e.g. Brooklyn Museum Accession Number: 58.171 is measuring 15,1 cm x 6,4 cm x 2,4 cm). No such object is attested at Deir el-Medina, however.
[1382] For this statement with and references cf. Ogden 2000, 158.
[1383] The accessible older statues might have been reused for the manufacture of statues in the Late Period and perhaps even in the Graeco-Roman Period, when bronze casting became commonplace, as illustrated by the numerous examples of bronze statuettes in almost every modern Egyptian museum collection.
[1384] As visible in photographs, Dorn observes that almost all examples from the Valley of the Kings show a "*Trennschicht*," which prevented metal from sticking to the mold; cf. Dorn 2011, 165.
[1385] Louvre E. 16307 (mold for a ring with an *wḏȝ.t*-eye instead of a seal plate; cf. Bruyère 1939, pl. XXV) and Louvre E. 16308 (mold for a scarab; cf. Bruyère 1939, pl. XXV).
[1386] Cf. Bruyère 1939, pl. XXV.
[1387] Mold for a scorpion amulet and possibly an earring, the third longish element is unclear; cf. Bruyère 1939, pl. XXV.
[1388] Louvre E. 16309; cf. *Inventaire spéciaux* III, 79, no. 39. The object is marked with the number "Ks–27 I 38," i.e. possibly found in *Kom Sud* on 27 January 1938.

all four compass directions of the tomb helped to protect the deceased.[1389] The burial of amulets in the netherworld (*dwꜣ.t*) does not exclude the possibility of burial at home. The netherworld probably began underneath floor level, a conceptualization resonant with the Nile having its source in the netherworld.[1390] Spell BD 151 should be recited on a *ḏd*-amulet made of faience, whose engravings (*sʿw.t*) are inlayed with electrum, which is covered in royal linen and sprinkeled (*ḥꜣj*) with unguent, the whole amulet then fixed on a brick made of fresh clay.[1391] Royal linen and electrum were certainly not available to everybody; as with ox representations substituting "actual" meat, cheaper alternatives may have been used as amulets. Fresh clay (*sjn wꜣḏ*) may have also been less accessible, for this type of clay had a special quality beyond the Nile alluvium.[1392] Especially if these amulets were meant for burial rather than wear, a limestone block would make good sense. Amulets engraved in limestone might have had a similar apotropaic value as their equivalents made of other materials.

Remarkably, no parallels appear at other sites, such as Amarna, Gurob, or Kahun. Earlier excavators probably paid little attention to this artifactual category. Nevertheless, the unique find situation at Deir el-Medina presents problems for a more comprehensive explanation. The majority of amulets and amulet molds or images have no known find spot, and no particular accumulation indicates the existence of a workshop. Some general spatial patterns do emerge, however: Möller found several examples in the N.E. area,[1393] while Bruyère's few specified finds may have their center in the south of the village.[1394] Though rather vague, these find spots they might evince a few specialized craftsmen responsible for producing the amulets. Called an amulet-man by Gardiner, the *sꜣw* may be one likely candidate.[1395] Deir el-Medina itself does not attest this title, but Wolfhart Westendorf has contested the clear distinction between magician and physician.[1396] Therefore, healing specialists at Deir el-Medina—e.g., the wise woman (*tꜣ rḫ.t*), the scorpion charmer (*ḫrp Srḳ.t*), and the doctor (*swnw*)—might have been in charge of amulet production. In addition to the potential charm container already reviewed (p. 132), Bruyère found other written charms upon smaller papyrus fragments from the houses. Apart from papyrus charms, some textiles also possessed amuletic character.

[1389] Compare, for example, B. Lüscher, *Untersuchungen zum Totenbuch Spruch 151, Studien zum Altägyptischen Totenbuch* 2, Wiesbaden 1998, 258–72.

[1390] E.g. J.F. Pécoil, 'Les sources mythiques du Nil', *BSEG* 17 (1993), 103–4 and fig. 3.

[1391] *ḏd mdw ḫr ḏd n ṯḥn.t sʿ.t=f m dʿm ḫbs.w m ss-nswt rḏi(.w) ḥꜣj mrḥ.t ḫr =f smn.w ḫr ḏb.t n.t sjn wꜣḏ*, cf. P. BM EA 10477; published by Lapp 1997, pl. 78, pls 13–4; see *TLA*, lemma no. 176620.

[1392] *Wb* IV, 37.11–38.2 and see Aufrère 1991, 682

[1393] **Cat. 9.1–23.**

[1394] **Cat. 9.24–6.**

[1395] Cf. A.H. Gardiner, 'Professional Magicians in Ancient Egypt', *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology* 39 (1917), 33. The title has been translated with conjurer ("*Zauberer*") by Westendorf: e.g. W. Westendorf, *Handbuch der altägyptischen Medizin* I, Leiden 1999, 474.

[1396] E.g. Westendorf 1999, 524.

3.3. Other cult objects[1397]

3.3.1. Masks

Masks constitute yet another significant artifactual group from the houses at Deir el-Medina.[1398] Before discussion of the objects themselves, a brief summary of research is essential, since contemporary reference to masks usually bears connotations of masquerade and disguise,[1399] a vocabulary that describes appearance rather than meaning.[1400] Masks not only conceal but also create.[1401] They blur reality insofar as one can act in the manifestation of the other, a man as a god, for example.[1402] As a result, a person wearing a mask becomes whatever the mask represents.[1403]

Arelene Wolinski averred that animal-headed gods—common for two- and three-dimensional representations from ancient Egypt—actually show priests wearing masks.[1404] Her hypothesis employs evidence from a relief in the temple of Dendara (dating to Roman times) which depicts a priest his head in the head of a jackal[1405] and a mask presently in the *Roemer und Pelizaeus Museum* in Hildesheim (Germany) (dating to the Late Period),[1406] the mask—fully complete—representing the god Anubis and borne on the shoulders of whoever wore it.[1407] Challenging this hypothesis, Christine Seeber[1408] refers to the mask's fragile material (terracotta), its considerable weight (8 kg), and the narrow space permitted for shoulders.[1409] Nevertheless, Wolinski's theory confirms the at least occasional use of such masks in temples during the Graeco-Roman period, an

[1397] The present chapter is confined to those objects for which an interpretation as cult image seemed non-controversial. For other possible cult images not neccesarily all related to domestic cults; cf. table 12.

[1398] **Cat. 12.14** and two unclear mud brick examples found in S.E. IX, first room; cf. Bruyère 1939, 276 and fig. 148.

[1399] For example, the first definition of "mask" listed in the Merriam Webster dictionary is "a cover or partial cover for the face used for disguise," cf. http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/mask accessed on 30 July 2013.

[1400] Cf. T. Schabert, 'Einführung: Über die Notwendigkeit und den Nutzen einer Sprache der Maske', in: T. Schabert (ed.), *Die Sprache der Masken. Eranus Neue Folge Bd.* 9, Würzburg 2002, 11.

[1401] Cf. Schabert 2002, 11.

[1402] Cf. Schabert 2002, 11; Ch. Seeber, 'Maske', *LÄ* III (1980), 1196–7.

[1403] Cf. Schabert 2002, 14. Schabert's argument applies to the Aztec masks, but as shall be shown in the following, masks in ancient Egypt had a similar function.

[1404] A. Wolinski, 'Ancient Egyptian Ceremonial Masks', *DE* 6 (1986), 50 and D. Sweeney, 'Egyptian masks in motion', *GM* 135 (1993), 102. See also Stevens 2006, 201. Slightly different with reference to the mask of Bes and the mask of Anubis, DuQuesne (2001, 18) contended this interpretation only applies to "rites associated with birth and with death."

[1405] Cf. Seeber 1980, 1197; Wolinski 1986, 48–9; Sweeney 1993, 103; DuQuesne 2001, 16 and 30, fig. 18.

[1406] Hildesheim Cat. 1585 cf. Wolinski 1986, 48; Sweeney 1993, 102; DuQuesne 2001, 15 and 29, fig. 16 and Stevens 2006, 201. The mask from Hildesheim is, for example, published in A. Eggebrecht, *Pelizaeus-Museum Hildesheim. Die ägyptische Sammlung, Zaberns Bildbände zur Archäologie* 12, Mainz 1993, 87. See also Cairo JE 55620 quoted by DuQuesne (2001, 15 and 28, fig. 15) as another possible parallel from the Late Period.

[1407] Wolinski 1986, 48 reports that she tried it on and it "fit easily over my head, and balanced well on my shoulders with the weight of the terracotta distributing itself across my shoulders and back." See also Sweeney 1993, 102. Apparently inspired by Wolinski, DuQuesne (2001, 18–19 and 31, fig. 19) initiated the manufacture for his own, lighter mask of Anubis.

[1408] Seeber 1980, 1198; DuQuesne 2001, 16. The latter suggested the Hildesheim mask may be a "model or mold" for a lighter version of the mask that could be carried more easily "or more probably an object used in divination".

[1409] Seeber 1980, 1198; DuQuesne 2001, 16.

observation some Greek authors also report.[1410] Apart from these finds, archaeological inquiry has uncovered scarce evidence of masks for earlier periods.[1411] Many Egyptologists have consequently concluded that "Egyptian priests did not wear masks," instead attributing masks to "Roman invention."[1412] Such a conclusion has emerged since these two masks constitute the only two more or less.[1413] To understand the function of the three potential masks from Deir el-Medina, it is important to discuss a few other known but contested masks.[1414]

Ancient Egyptian attests no term for "mask,"[1415] but an absence in language does not necessarily indicate an absence in thought.[1416] The nonexistence of such a term, however, creates difficult for locating examples of masks in written sources.[1417] Magic spells generally associate the (voice of the) conjurer with certain Egyptian gods, and masks may have furthered such an identification. For example, a spell against scorpion stings links the conjurer's voice to that of the sun god Re, who cried after the goddess Isis poisoned him to reveal his hidden name.[1418] In other spells, the conjurer identifies himself with a god.[1419] Literal reading of the texts, however, suggests divine manifestation usually came through the conjurer's voice rather than actual appearance.[1420]

As for material sources,[1421] another possible two-dimensional representation of a mask dates to the Old Kingdom. A relief block, it seems to portray a young man with the head of a lion walking in the middle of a row of men.[1422] This "headdress" ("*coiffure*"[1423])

[1410] E.g. Wolinski 1986, 51 quoting R.E. Witt, *Isis in the Graeco-Roman World*, London 1971, 199–201 and DuQuesne 2001, 11 quoting the writer Apuleius.
[1411] As an aside, no crowns have been preserved from ancient Egypt either, a fact generally ignored by Egyptologists regarding the question of Egyptian kings wearing crowns. Explaining the absence of masks, Wolinski (1986, 51) opines that masks may have been restricted to high-priests or passed on from one generation to the next.
[1412] J. Assmann, 'Du siehst mit dem Kopf eines Gottes. Gesicht und Maske im altägyptischen Kult', in: T. Schabert (ed.), *Die Sprache der Masken. Eranus Neue Folge Bd.* 9, Würzburg 2002, 150.
[1413] But see Seeber 1980, 1198; DuQuesne 2001, 16.
[1414] Compare also the brief discussion on masks of Bes by the present author: Weiss 2009a, 201–2.
[1415] Cf. *TLA* and Seeber 1980, 1197; but see Y. Volokhine, 'Dieux, masques et hommes: à propos de la formation de l'iconographie de Bès', *BSEG* 18 (1994), 93 and notes 65–6, who suggests a broader understanding of the terms "head" or "face." See also Cooney 2007, 28–30 and T. DuQuesne 2001, 6–8 and 14.
[1416] Similarly DuQuesne 2001, 14.
[1417] Seeber (1980, 1198–9) mentions a text that might allude to a mask curing headaches, cf. Borghouts 1971, 16 and 41–3 and see also DuQuesne 2001, 17.
[1418] Cf. P. Leiden I, 349, II, 6; published by A. de Buck and B.H. Stricker, *Teksten tegen schorpioenen naar Pap. I 349*, *OMRO* 21 (1940), 58 and 61.
[1419] E.g. P. Leiden I, 349, III, 2: 'I am Nefertem', cf. De Buck and Stricker 1940, 59 and 61.
[1420] J. Assmann 2002b, 158.
[1421] A fragment from the temple of Sahure may also be a mask of Bes (cf. DuQuesne 2001, 9 quoting L. Borchardt, *Das Grabdenkmal des Königs Sahure* II, *Ausgrabungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft in Abusir 1902–1908* 7, Leipzig 1913, 38–9 and pl. 22). However, this representation has no context, its meaning highly unclear. For example, Borchardt (1913, 39) sees an "old man" in the scene. This study will thus not consider this item a mask of Bes.
[1422] BM 994, cf. W.S. Smith, *A History of Egyptian Sculpture and Painting in the Old Kingdom* (2nd edition), Oxford 1949, 211, fig. 83.
[1423] Volokhine 1994, 82.

has received interpretation as a mask of the god Bes.[1424] Despite my own earlier explanation, this illustration may not depict a man wearing a mask after all.[1425] The only evidence for identifying the "headdress" as a mask comes from "*la présence de ce personnage au sein d'une scène rituelle.*"[1426] The text written above the scene reads *ḫb.t jn* followed by the *hapax legomenon šdḥt*. As argued elsewhere, William Stevenson Smith's interpretation "dance of the *šdḥt* youth"[1427] is not convincing.[1428] Moreover, little evidence could classify the scene as one of "adolescent initiatory rites,"[1429] a theory mainly based on the ostensible youth of the depicted men. The scene could show any kind of procession or festival, however.[1430] A parallel scene from the New Kingdom provides the best source for elucidating this particular relief. [1431] There, a similar figure appears among "dancers and musicians performing jubilee ceremonies before the Enthroned Amenhotep III" during his Sed festival.[1432] Although Volokhine cites the parallel as evidence for a masked figure,[1433] his argument relies on the position of Hathor at the beginning of the procession, whom he views as closely related to the Bes-image in the New Kingdom. No data favors a masked figure over the Bes-image. A more simple interpretation—i.e., both figures being a (lion) god or perhaps the Bes-image—seems more compelling.[1434]

Apart from these two-dimensional references, several three-dimensional (and hence tangible) objects usually interpreted as masks have been found. It seems beyond the scope of the present thesis to study all known masks in detail. Therefore, only a few examples will be discussed. The first example dates to the Middle Kingdom and was found at Kahun.[1435] The mask is made of cartonage and painted black with "grotesque arches over and under the eyes, spots on the cheeks band across the head and red lips."[1436] This iconography could support an interpretation of the god Bes,[1437] but such a conclusion is indeed uncertain.[1438] William Flinders Petrie discussed the mask within the context of

[1424] Volokhine 1994, 82–3; Romano 1998, 94–5 and DuQuesne 2001, 9.
[1425] Contra Weiss 2009a, 202.
[1426] Volokhine 1994, 82.
[1427] W.S. Smith 1946, 210.
[1428] Weiss 2009a, 201–2.
[1429] Cf. DuQuesne 2001, 9, quoting J. Capart, 'Note sur un fragment de bas-relief au British Museum', *BIFAO* 30 (1939/31), 73–5. Furthermore, DuQuesne suggests that wearing Bes masks was an element of "ritual dances to safeguard babies in gestation, or for other prophylactic healing processes," cf. DuQuesne 2001, 9 quoting B.S. Stricker, 'Bes de danser', *OMRO* 37 (1956), 35–48.
[1430] Cf. W.S. Smith 1949, 210, who in fact, suggests an interpretation as a seasonal festival.
[1431] Volokhine 1994, 83.
[1432] The Epigraphic Survey, *The Tomb of Kheruef, Oriental Institute Publications* 102, Chicago 1980, 46–7 and pl. 40, cf. Volokhine 1994, 83.
[1433] Volokhine 1994, 83.
[1434] Against the interpretation of the figure in the relief BM 994 see also Seeber 1980, 1197 and 1199.
[1435] T. DuQuesne, 'Concealing and revealing: the problem of ritual masking in Ancient Egypt', *DE* 51 (2001), 8 and 22, fig. 1, quoting W.M.F. Petrie, *Kahun, Gurob, and Hawara,* London 1890, 30 and pl. VIII and see also Seeber 1980, 1197–9 and R. David, 1990, 37–8.
[1436] Petrie 1890, 30 and pl. VIII, 27.
[1437] Petrie 1890, 30; D. David 1991, 38; Dasen 1993, 80; Pinch 1993, 358; Volokhine 1994, 84; DuQuesne 2001, 8 and Stevens 2006, 201.
[1438] Compare criticism by Seeber 1980, 1197 and 1199, 10.

amusements, interpreting it as a "mummer's mask"[1439] rather than as a ritual object. Therefore, his association of the object with the Bes-image is based on its role in dancing and music. Irrespective of function, it is crucial that the mask was worn. Two observations indicate such wear: first, one of the nostrils was enlarged to enhance the view;[1440] second, the mask was damaged and repainted, which might serve as a sign of use.[1441]

Some authors have suggested a religious specialist inhabited the house that yielded the mask.[1442] They based their interpretation on two objects found together with other objects potentially used in some kind of cultic activity, namely, the fragment of a female statuette and two ivory clappers.[1443] However, the group was found "buried in the hole in the floor" in an adjacent room,[1444] which could suggest the objects were deliberately buried in deposit, perhaps to protect the house from otherworldly dangers (compare pp. 46–8). The alleged mask, however, was *de facto refuse*, left in the house during abandonment processes, and thus not closely related to the statuette and the "clappers." Though found in the same house, the objects bore no necessary relationship. Regarding the statuette, it represents a female figure wearing the mask of a lion[1445] or a mask of the Bes-image.[1446] A parallel statuette emerged from a tomb in "what would later be the territory of the Ramesseum,"[1447] found together with magical papyri and other small religious objects in a wooden box decorated with the representation of a jackal.[1448] This distribution suggests the box and hence the tomb belonged to a religious specialist of some kind.[1449] Importantly, James Edward Quibell's interpretation of the statuette as a "dancer" and "girl [who] wears a mask"[1450] relies on Petrie's analysis of the Kahun parallel mentioned above, but no evidence counters explanation of either statuette (i.e., from Kahun and in the Ramesseum) as female with the head of a lion. This would be the common interpretation of this iconography in ancient Egypt. In fact, the goddess Sakhmet was frequently represented with the body of a human female and the head of a lion.[1451]

[1439] Petrie 1890, 30. A "mummer" can be defined as "a performer in a pantomime; *broadly*: actor" or the "one who goes merrymaking in disguise during festivals," cf. http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/mummer; accessed on 30 July 2013.
[1440] Petrie 1890, 30.
[1441] Petrie 1890, 30; DuQuesne 2001, 9.
[1442] A.R. David 1990, 37–8; DuQuesne 2001, 8 and Dasen 1993, 70.
[1443] Petrie 1890, 30 and pls VIII, 13, 13A and 14; R. David 1991, 37; DuQuesne 2001, 8.
[1444] A.R. David 1990, 37.
[1445] Petrie 1890, 30.
[1446] Petrie 1890, 30; A.R. David 1991, 37–8.
[1447] Borghouts 1999, 157. A.R. David 1990, 38–9, quoting Quibell 1898, 3, pl. III, 12.
[1448] All finds except for the papyri are shown in Quibell 1898, pl. III; Waraksa 2009, 120–1.
[1449] E.g. A.R. David 1990, 38; Pinch 1993, 223; Waraksa 2009, 120 and recently A.R. David, 'Ancient Egyptian Medicine', in: D. Aston, B. Bader, C. Gallorini, P. Nicholson and S. Buckingham (eds), *Under the Potter's Tree. Studies on Ancient Egypt Presented to Janine Bourriau on the Occasion of her 70th Birthday*, *OLA* 204, Leuven 2011, 267.
[1450] Quibell 1898, 3; or "Bes dancer," cf. Waraksa 2009, 120.
[1451] For typical iconography of the goddess as a female with the head of a lion, see e.g. S.-E. Hoenes, *Untersuchungen zum Wesen und Kult der Göttin Sachmet*, Bonn 1976, 13. There is thus no reason to view "*une certaine ambivalence sexuelle*" triggered by the head of a male lion on the body of a female as suggested by Volokhine 1994, 84. Her role as an aprotropaic goddess (cf. Hoenes 1976, 54–5) accounts for her carrying snakes, a function undoubtedly dated to the Middle Kingdom and onwards, cf. *TLA*, lemma no. 142250 "*Sḫm.t*" (Sachmet); *Wb* IV, 250.7. Leitz (*LGG* VI, 556) refers to the Coffin Texts as the earliest reference of the standing goddess Sakhmet quoting B. Altenmüller, *Synkretismus in den Sargtexten*, *GOF* IV/7, Wiesbaden 1975 195–7, who also notes the relationship of the goddess to the uraeus snake and the snake goddess Wadjet. Interpretation of the goddess Beset, the female Bes), in this instance depends on the Kahun example coming from a house. For a parallel figure made of ivory (described as "girl"); cf. Petrie 1927, 43, 24 and pl. XXXVIII, 24.

Both statuettes may hence be interpreted as images of the goddess Sakhmet, not humans wearing masks.[1452] Concerning the mask from Kahun, it was clearly worn, but the unusual iconography obscures any potential religious function.

As another promising candidate, a pottery face found in house T36.36 at Amarna may show a Bes-image.[1453] Henry Frankfort and John Pendlebury judge the find "one of the legs of a tripod" assuming that it was a custom product meeting the Greek taste,[1454] but Stevens notes the difficulty in this interpretation since no "sign of wear" is visible on the lower side of the object that "must have formed a point of contact with a surface."[1455] Instead, she identifies the object as a mask but fully acknowledges the tentatively of such a proposal.[1456] While the "overall dimensions" would indeed fit the back side of the alleged mask, the object itself does not match a human face.[1457] However, masks were not necessarily worn on the face, at times held in front of the face with the hands. The shape of a statue from Ramesses IX's tomb might support this postulation. Generally understood as a demon holding his beard,[1458] the image could depict a demon concealing his face with a mask, a speculative but possible interpretation.[1459] The "lack of eye holes" does not refute explanation as a mask either,[1460] for the eye holes in the abovementioned Anubis mask permitted only a limited view.[1461] The wearer of the alleged mask might have been "accompanied by a helper."[1462] In the domestic context, the wearer would have been familiar with the spatial conditions in his or her house. More difficult to explain "is a broken projection near the top of the reverse."[1463] If not a mask,[1464] the object could have been part of a vessel,[1465] though even this explanation has problems accounting for the projection.

[1452] Similarly, DuQuesne interprets the figurines as Beset statuettes but nevertheless states "[t]he enactment of rituals by persons wearing Bes-masks is strongly suggested" by the evidence also discussed in the present study, cf. DuQuesne 2001, 8–9.
[1453] Stevens 2006, 199 and published with a different interpretation by H. Frankfort and J.D.S. Pendlebury, *The City of Akhenaten* II. *The North Suburb and the Desert Altars. The Excavations at Tell el Amarna During the Seasons 1926–1932*, London 1933, 45 and pl. XL.1.
[1454] Frankfort and Pendlebury 1933, 45. Even more, Frankfort and Pendlebury believe that the house was inhabited by a "Greek merchant."
[1455] Stevens 2006, 199.
[1456] Stevens 2006, 199.
[1457] Stevens 2006, 199 and 200 fig. II.10.3.
[1458] Cf. BM EA 61283; cf. Quirke 1992, 156–7 and see M.J. Raven, *Egyptische Magie. Op zoek naar het toverboek van Thot*, Leiden 2010, 146.
[1459] Apparently shared by Meskell 2004, 162 (fig. 6.3), without further comment.
[1460] As pointed out by Stevens 2006, 199.
[1461] Cf. Wolinski 1986, 48; Sweeney 1993, 102.
[1462] Sweeney 1993, 103.
[1463] Stevens 2006, 199.
[1464] Stevens 2006, 199 categorizes the object as "stand?" and suggests the object from Amarna might have drawn "inspiration from" the other objects usually interpreted as masks, cf. Stevens 2006, 201.
[1465] Such as Berlin ÄMP 22620; cf. Dorman 2002, pl. IIIA and Emery, Smith and Millard 1979, 154 no. 1298, pl. 56.

In summary, the only definite human mask worn is the one found in Kahun, but its use context—cultic or otherwise—remains unknown. Second, the interpretation of most two- and three-dimensional representations as evidence for ritual masking is subject to debate. Some may have simply depicted gods or demons. Nevertheless, evidence does suggests masking for two- or three-dimensional representations prior to the Roman period.

Concerning Deir el-Medina itself, the first two examples have been found in house S.E. IX.[1466] Bruyère's publication reconstructs only one of them,[1467] probably showing the pieces in a better state of preservation. Life size,[1468] the masks were made of mud brick ("*limon*"[1469]) and painted white. The painting along with the form show the Bes-image's human face wearing a crown of feathers, his tongue stretched out between his teeth. Since the object's sides do not survive, it is unclear whether the masks might have had hangers or wholes for wear upon a human head. If worn by a human, the mask would presumably have a reverse molded to fit a human face.[1470] Only the front view has been provided by Bruyère, and the present location of the masks is unknown, which leaves the question ultimately unanswerable. As in the case of the Anubis mask , the material of this mask seems to contradict proposals for human wear—the material being mud-brick a rather friable material.[1471] Probably for this reason did Bruyère consider the masks decorative elements of a large house altar since fallen into decay.[1472] Fragile decorative elements in such good condition would, however, probably not have survived the collapse of a massive built structure. Moreover, ancient Egypt has provided no parallel for molded mud-brick decoration,[1473] apart from the so-called Bes chambers dating to Ptolemaic times.[1474] These objects were probably independent, not constituent of a larger whole. While they could be cult images, parallels lack for this interpretation as well.

Two rather unusual cult objects may further suggest a religious specialist lived in the house. Furthermore, whoever occupied the house may have engaged in the creation of cultic objects. Bruyère mentions numerous statuettes[1475] and amulet molds (**Cat. 9.25** and **Cat. 9.26**), for example, which might evince the existence of a workshop.[1476] Other notable finds include two *jeux de la nature* (one in the shape of a naked woman without

[1466] Bruyère 1939, 276 and fig. 148.
[1467] Petrie 1914, fig. 148.
[1468] Bruyère 1939, 58.
[1469] Bruyère 1939, 276 and fig. 148.
[1470] Compare the comment by Stevens 2009, 199.
[1471] At first I thought the mud mask of Bes could parallel the well-known corn Osiris made of soil and seed. The greens sprouting from it represented vegetation and fertility (For the corn Osiris cf. e.g. J. Assmann 2000, 27). Theoretically the god Bes was associated with fertility cults and hence might have had similar cults. However, there are several reasons to abandon the idea that the mud mask might be some kind of a 'corn Bes'. First, the fact that the mask was painted contradicts this interpretation, because the painting would no longer be visible once the greens have grown. Second, a corn Osiris was usually placed in a wooden container, which is not the case here. Third, no parallels of a "corn Bes" are yet known.
[1472] Petrie 1914, 276.
[1473] For example, Emery does not mention the existence of such a decoration; cf. Emery 2011.
[1474] J.E. Quibell, *Excavations at Saqqara* (1905–1906), Cairo 1907, V, pl. III.
[1475] Bruyère 1939, 278.
[1476] Admittedly there is no forceful argument against the idea that a workshop could have been operated by any craftsman who was not necessarily a religious specialist.

head **Cat. 10.51** and another one in the shape of a crocodile,[1477] a magical text,[1478] several offering tables (**Cat. 5.6-9**), and a pictorial ostracon showing a woman offering to Hathor,[1479] perhaps a two-dimensional cult image, several fragments of small cult emplacements one of which dedicated to the god Sobek (**Cat. 4.20**); as well as one of the very few roofs (**Cat. 4.21**). The number and variety of religious objects found in house S.E. IX is remarkable, prompting questions concerning the inhabitant's potential religiosity or specialization, who may have used the two rather odd cult objects of the Bes-image.

The third alleged mask from Deir el-Medina emerged from house S.O. III (**Cat. 12.14**) and might further associate such objects with houses with an accumulation of finds related to religious activities or potential religious specialization. Representing the face of Hathor with cow ears and sculptured on wood, the item contains four bolts. While the bolts themselves suggest the object was affixed, their location indicates that whatever surface the object might have been attached to, it was probably not a human face, at least primarily. One of the bolts is situated right in the middle the of the goddess's forehead and hence perhaps that of the wearer. The house also contained remarkable objects, an offering grill (**Cat. 7.2**) and an offering support (**Cat. 8.1**). As previously demonstrated, these objects were not commonly used, which may provide evidence of a certain specialization (see also above; p. 129). Additional finds include a regular offering table (**Cat. 5.18**), an anthropoid bust[1480] and two stelae (**Cat. 11.48-9**). Although these objects have parallel in many other houses, their presence elsewhere does not undermine the possibility of a religious specialist living in the house at some point. He or she might have performed regular religious actions for the sake of his/her family beyond those pertinent to professional services.

As already argued, the family of Nebdjefa (i) could have inhabited the house at some time (pp. 97–8). Nebdjefa (i) as well as his son or grandson bear the obscure title *ˁn ˁ*.[1481] Whereas Davies assumes a military rank ("chief of the manoeuvre"),[1482] Černý[1483] and Al-Ayedi[1484] translate the title "leader of the choir," thereby proposing a religious title. Such a religious title would square with interpretation of a religious specialist living in the house. Černý has since qualified the "translation" as a "mere guess" since "it seems to designate him [in his study on the workman Aamak] as the leader of a group of singers who accompanied statues of gods carried in processions during festivals."[1485] Explanation of *ˁn ˁ* as a religious title probably derives from Adolf Erman's and Hermann Grapow's interpretation of different title from the 22nd dynasty, attested in P. Greenfield.[1486] No

[1477] Bruyère 1939, 276 (fig. 149), and 277; Bruyère, *Notebook*, MS_2004_0155_010 and Keimer 1940, 12–15 and fig. 11.
[1478] **Cat. 11.39**.
[1479] Louvre E 14297 cf. Vandier d'Abbadie 1937, 83–4 and pl. LIX.
[1480] Unidentified; Bruyère 1939, 309 and Keith 2011, 11.
[1481] Davies 1999, 87, for Harnefer (i) or (ii) compare Turin Cat. 50206, cf. Černý 1927, 198 and Tosi and Roccato 1972, 179 and 338.
[1482] Davies 1999, 87.
[1483] Černý 1973, 46
[1484] Al–Ayedi 2006, 200–1.
[1485] Černý 1958, Bankes Stela No. 5.
[1486] *Wb* I, 159, 16 lists *ˁ.w* as female singers from a choir quoting P. Greenfield tab. 2, 4; 19, 12 and 21; 11, cf. *Belegstellen* I, 29.

evidence compels translation of "the arm" (Gardiner A36) written with the determinative stroke as "choir" in the context of the title ˹ *n* ˺. In fact, ˹ is a rather abstract term with a number of references.[1487] Dominique Valbelle may have chosen to leave the title untranslated for this reason, though she does favor a religious function nonetheless.[1488] Lesko also seems to share Valbelle's reservations, for he omits the title from his dictionary altogether.[1489] As for the title's few attestations at Deir el-Medina,[1490] they provide no further assistance for determining its meaning. The description of a procession for Re-Horakhty in the hymn on stela Bankes no. 5, for instance, does not verify that the title had a religious connotation. Clearly, ˹ *n* ˺ was not a common title, and its meaning remains unclear.[1491]

In conclusion, little evidence supports ritual masking in ancient Egypt. Assmann's hypothesis that ritual masking did not occur prior to the Roman period[1492] is probably too strict, however. The alleged masks may have been a specific type of cult image held in front of people's faces.[1493] As for Deir el-Medina the household assemblages of houses S.E. IX and S.O. III may evince that a that a religious specialist lived in either house—a specialist who used this type of cultic image, supposing the object was not, in fact, attached to something else, such as a statuette.

3.3.2. Model Offerings[1494]

Wooden flower bouquets from Deir el-Medina constitute yet another kind of model offering. House S.O. IV (**Cat. 12.15**) confirms that such offerings were in use at Deir el-Medina. In addition, wooden imitations of flower bouquets were found in house S.O. IV (**Cat. 12.15**) by Bruyère and in house N.E. XVII/XIX (**Cat. 12.4**) by Möller. In the Valley of the Kings, a two-dimensional parallel of such a flower offering has recently materialized.[1495] Bruyère found a few more model bouquets, but their context is

[1487] Such as "hand," "arm," "condition," "state of affairs," "piece," "pair," "item," "region" and "province" cf. Lesko and Switalski 1982, 65–6.
[1488] Valbelle 1985, 329.
[1489] Considering the scarcity of attestations Erman and Grapow had probably not yet known it.
[1490] O. Ashmolean Museum HO 42, O. Prague H 10, Stela Bankes no. 5, pyramidion BM 479, and TT 356 (the tomb of Amenemwia), TT 329 (cf. Bruyère 1927, 82 and fig. 57) and a relief fragment now in the Turin museum (Turin Cat. 50206; cf. Tosi and Roccati 1972, 179 and 338.
[1491] Though somewhat rare, the title is attested from the late 18th dynasty (O. Ashmolean Museum HO 42) to the times of Ramesses II (O. Prague H 10) covering a considerable time span.
[1492] J. Assmann 2002b, 150.
[1493] This interpreation is broader than that advanced by DuQuesne (2001, 16) who interprets the Hildesheim mask as an "object used in divination."
[1494] Graefe's term "*Sinnbilder ohne Alltagsfunktion*" (i.e. symbols not functional in everyday use) should not be used; cf. E. Graefe, 'Die Deutung der sogenannten "Opfergaben" der Ritualszenen Ägyptischer Tempel als "Schriftzeichen"', in: J. *Quaegebeur* (ed.), *Ritual and Sacrifice in the Ancient Near East: Proceedings of the International Conference Organized by the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven from the 17th to the 20th of April 1991*, *OLA* 55, Leuven 1993, 145. The term "model offerings" conveys the sense of certain objects imitating others. A functional distinction between "*Realhandlung*" ("real act") and "*Sinnbild*" ("metaphor") is misleading, for both are equally functional in religious contexts.
[1495] Dorn 2011, 317 and pl. 291.

unclear.[1496] Like the pictorial ostraca these wooden bouquets were non-perishable offerings (see above; p. 159),[1497] their relative scarcity in the archaeological record, due to relocation during the site's abandonment and/or the inhabitants' preference for cheaper model offerings, namely, pictorial ostraca.

[1496] Bruyère 1939, 211, fig. 211 and 323–24, fig. 193.
[1497] Sadek 1988, 78.

Chapter 4: Synthesis

Claude Levi-Strauss showed that we tend to see progress in those cultures that resemble our own and stagnation in those that differ.[1498] As Baines argued, "Egyptologists often wish to propound "their" civilization's unique role in the history of human ideas and social forms, in the process sometimes finding precedents for their personal faith."[1499] For Egyptian religion, this tendency becomes tangible in the focus on personal piety and Assmann's bipolar model describing the "revolution" superseding "man in the collective" in favor of "man in front of god."[1500] Stevens[1501], Luiselli,[1502] many others demonstrated that the Ramesside Period was not the proclaimed "Age of Personal Piety"; instead, evidence attests to individual religious practices even earlier. Perhaps the increased data for so-called personal piety in the New Kingdom simply results from the state of preservation at Deir el-Medina without reflecting any radical turning point.

Whereas previous studies on personal piety at Deir el-Medina have mainly focused on written sources, the present study aimed at exploring personal religious practice in the everyday life Deir el-Medina's inhabitants in the domestic space. This perspective once again demonstrated that the traditional focus on religious expression in terms of inwardness derived from a biased European Protestant perspective that does not necessarily converge with ancient Egyptian conceptualizations. In order to grasp this individual action, it was crucial to broaden the scope of analysis and include the archaeological remains from these localities. In addition, a model for analyzing the variation of individual action within the frame of traditions and *decorum* was developed. Consisting of four degrees of group participation on the individual, family, local, and translocal levels, this model allows for varying appropriations within these categories.

The record from the houses of Deir el-Medina reveals little evidence for individual expression of personal piety towards gods, a phenomenon perhaps expected based on earlier studies that focused on hymnal texts. Without excluding the possible experience of pious feelings towards deities as an important motivation for any religious activity, the majority of religious actions sought the individual's well-being within a broader familial context. Egyptology may have long asserted that the individual should undergo analysis as part of the greater social whole,[1503] but the field has not applied such a perspective of social embeddedness to religious practice. Assmann's dominance of Egyptological discourse—particularly his conceptions of personal piety—have contributed to such restriction. Moreover, his studies concerning the importance of individual loyalty to specific deities has received more adherence than it probably deserves.[1504] The present study has shown that personal religious practice within the home centered on the family, including

[1498] C. Lévi-Strauss, *Race et histoire. Suivi de l'œuvre de Claude Lévi-Strauss par Jean Pouillon*, Paris 1961, 41–2.
[1499] Baines 2011, 42.
[1500] J. Assmann 1990, 280–1.
[1501] Stevens 2006.
[1502] Luiselli 2011a.
[1503] E.g. J. Assmann 1996, 92–4; J.J. Janssen, 'Die Struktur der pharaonischen Wirtschaft', *GM* 48 (1981), 63.
[1504] E.g. J. Assmann 1996, 92.

the deceased. With few exceptions, the cult of the dead has undergone analysis almost exclusively within that mortuary cult associated with tombs.[1505] However, the deceased remained part of "the spectrum of existence"[1506] and participated in the family religion within the daily cults, as did the unborn through fertility cults. Put differently, the full consequence of accepting rebirth or (re-)juvenation as the core of Egyptian religion (see also below)[1507] in a consistent system makes plausible that these conceptions were also appropriated on family level. It is thus difficult to draw a clear distinction between providers and beneficiaries of offerings, because the unborn child, the living family as well as the ancestors could be viewed as beneficiaries of fertility cults ensuring the ongoing cycle of life. Only the new offspring could ensure the continuation of family and the ancestor cults respectively. The benefactor did thus not literally provide offerings to him-/herself, but while offering to either gods or ancestors, the *do ut des* principle still reveals the offering person as (one of the) ultimate beneficiaries of the offering process. Irrespective of potential (self-)interests of the offering individual that may have included personal prayers, religious practices in the domestic context generally seem to have focused on family matters and the "dynamics of life and death."[1508]

The heuristic tool offered by Rainer Flasche and Maria Michela Luiselli[1509] can serve to help scrutinize the various aspects of religious practice. In contrast to their models, which offer lists of questions for analysis of prayers (e.g., who prays and what is prayed), the present application to religious activities performed in the houses at Deir el-Medina does differ from their proposals in some regards. For the present study a differentiation in categories while following my own research questions was more appropriate. In addition, their catalogue of questions has been condensed into five categories instead of eight.[1510] For example, their question of "when it is prayed?" aims at a differentiation between cultic, ritualized, and spontaneous prayers,[1511] yet such a distinction does not arise from the context under discussion here. Therefore the category of "timing" thus fit the summary of religious activities at Deir el-Medina much better. For the same reason, Flasche's and Luiselli's categories of why, wherefore, and whereto, fall under the category of "aim" in this study.

[1505] E.g. J. Assmann 1996, 89.
[1506] L.M. Meskell and R.A. Joyce, *Embodied Lives. Figuring Ancient Maya and Egyptian Experience*, London 2003, 136.
[1507] Recently, Assmann has noted the "*verblüffende Parallele zwischen Götter- and Totenkult*," which becomes apparent in the "*Urszene*" of the cyclical regeneration; cf. J. Assmann, 'Vorwort', in: N. Tacke, *Das Opferritual des ägyptischen Neuen Reiches* I, *OLA* 222, Leuven 2013, XII–XIII.
[1508] F. Stolz, 'Paradiese und Gegenwelten', *ZfR* 1 (1993), 19. Stolz' notion of "*Gegenwelt*" as a more neutral term for the world of the deceased shall not be applied here, as it still implies the binary opposition I seek to avoid. Similarly Ahn 1997, 51.
[1509] Luiselli 2011a, 29–30; borrowed from R. Flasche, 'Gebet', in: H. Cancik, B. Gladigow and M. Laubscher (eds), *Handbuch religionswissenschaftlicher Grundbegriffe* II, Stuttgart 1990, 456–68.
[1510] Flasche 1990, 462–3 and Luiselli 2011a, 29–30 asking "what?," "how?," "when?," "where?," "why?," "wherefore?," and "whereto?" it is prayed?
[1511] Flasche 1990, 462 and Luiselli 2011a, 29.

4.1. Actors

The benefactors were family members, the beneficiaries the deceased or the gods. From stelae texts, Luiselli found considerable evidence for individual prayers to gods.[1512] Her finding, however, finds no parallel in the household assemblages, where stelae inscribed with complex texts and written speech acts are virtually absent. Some people might have evoked individual speech acts or prayers, which are untraceable in the archaeological record. The artifacts discovered in the houses reflect a strong family tradition and great emphasis on family continuity.[1513] Even on stelae, family members are often present in pictorial acts. Thus, family members may have engaged in religious practice together. Yet questions still surround whether all members included in any given religious action must have been physically present or whether symbolic presence sufficed.

As Meskell concludes, in family continuity and, with it, the smooth transition between fertility cults and ancestor cults, "death itself was expressed as journeying (...) [and] remained one state of being along the spectrum of existence."[1514] However, the deceased were venerated in the home not only as followers of Re (*ȝḫ-jḳr-n-Rʿ*), but also as followers of Osiris (*Wsjr*), a form usually understood as confined to the mortuary sphere. Such titles underscore the relationship with particular gods, was built in lifetime and continued after death.[1515] Ancestors thus played no "temporarily limited role among the living,"[1516] but proceeded to carry significance in the family tradition for several generations. Since the archaeological record does not suggest servants participated in family cults, determining whether family religion concerned all members of the household proves quite difficult.

Workmen having been employed at "The Tomb" by day, some scholars contend that women and children performed religious activities.[1517] Though possible, this conclusion remains difficult to confirm with any certainty, as men were at home on weekends.[1518] Certainly, they were not excluded from religious practice, for they appear in inscriptions, which thus included them in the same way the family was embedded in written speech acts on stelae within the public context. In a few cases, the household

[1512] Luiselli 2011a, 29.
[1513] This situation is paralleled by the findings of Van der Toorn 1996, 11, for Deir el-Medina this interpretation was also noted by Müller 2008, 373, here in a narrower sense with reference to mother-child-scenes and wall-paintings of the dancing god Bes "celebrating the succesful family continuity;" see also Müller 2008, 375.
[1514] Meskell and Joyce 2003, 136.
[1515] Luiselli 2011a, 49. The wooden plate BM 5646 is inscribed with a hymn attesting the daily cult of the dead for the god Thoth (see also Luiselli 2011a, 343–5). Since the text starts with a written speech act (*dwȝ Ḏḥwty m ḥr.t ḥrw nt rʿ nb*, "Prayer to Thoth as daily requirements every day") I doubt whether the plate was used in life. Remarkably, the deceased hoped to ensure the ongoing cult even after his death. On "the relationship between gods and people (...) that would *continue forever*," see also B.S. Lesko 2010, 311.
[1516] Bochi 2010, 76.
[1517] E.g. Friedman 1985, 96, quoting M. Bierbrier, *The Tomb-Builders of the Pharaohs*, London 1982, 52–3 and Pinch 1993, 343.
[1518] On the workdays and weekends cf. e.g. W. Helck, Feiertage und Arbeitstage in der Ramessidenzeit', *JESHO* 7 (1964), 136–66 and S.P. Vleeming, 'The days on which the *ḫnbt* used to gather', in: R.J. Demarée and J.J. Janssen (eds), *Gleanings from Deir el-Medîna*, *EU* 1, Leiden 1982, 183–92.

assemblages seem to reflect religious specialism, but the evidence could not link these activities to specific actors. Although religious instructions generally mention no specific actors, perhaps anyone with the required knowledge could have performed religious activities at Deir el-Medina.

Initially, the cults of the gods seems to have been less important in the houses than one might have expected from previous research focusing on hymnal texts. Virtually absent from houses, written evidence for the cults of the gods were likely local appropriations. Worship of certain gods often depended on the profession of the owner as a kind of individual appropriation although here a distinction between individual and family concerns is difficult given the vocations were often bequeathed within the family. Priorities for certain gods as related to individual/family profession is attested in the houses. At the same time, however, written evidence of the cult of these gods was rare. Most animal figurines were left uninscribed, which complicates identification of figurines as deities or toys. Baboon figurines, for instance, are likely figurines of the god Thoth.

The existence of family gods corresponds to certain aspects of Babylonian culture, where the "devotion to the family god (...) had the effect of legitimizing the social station of the family, since health, wealth and a good reputation were celebrated as his gift."[1519] By contrast, however, the inhabitants of Deir el-Medina could address various gods, not only a single patron deity. Despite the "*Gottesbeherzigung*" formula attested in hymns, individuals did not depend on one god,[1520] but employed different gods with different capabilities[1521] at different times.

Nevertheless, the primary significance of some deities lay in local and translocal appropriations, not the home. Little evidence indicates the household worship of Karnak or Re-Horakhty, for instance. The greater importance of local or individual festivals beyond official state festivals parallels this find and accounts for the absence from work during such celebrations.[1522] Furthermore, the appearance of foreign gods like Reshep betrays translocal appropriation as well, though Reshep was well-integrated into the Egyptian pantheon by the New Kingdom, hence disqualifying him as a strictly foreign deity. In fact, apart from Shed, no foreign god has emerged from household assemblages at all. This absence might indicate that foreigners played a minor role within the workmen community. Alternatively, a few well-assimilated foreigners might have performed common Egyptian religious activities in the houses.

The gods that do appear more frequently in the houses include the Bes-image, Thoeris, Renenutet, and Meretseger. Consequently, these deities seem to relate to the domestic sphere. While results from the present study demonstrate that Meretseger was less significant in the houses at Deir el-Medina than Renenutet, uninscribed (cult) images make it difficult to decide whether a snake goddess should be identified as either

[1519] Van der Toorn 1996, 11.
[1520] See also Luiselli 2011a, 233.
[1521] B. Gladigow 'Struktur der Öffentlichkeit und Bekenntnis in polytheistischen Religionen', in: H.G. Kippenberg and G.G. Stroumsa (eds), *Secrecy and Concealment. Studies in the History of Mediterranean and Near Eastern Religions*, Leiden 1995, 20–1.
[1522] Spalinger 1998, 256, quoting J.J. Janssen, 'Absence from Work by the Necropolis Workmen of Thebes', *SAK* 8 (1980), 127–52. Although one could argue that there was no need for the recording of absent workmen when everybody had a day off.

Renenutet or Meretseger. As for the Bes-image and the image of Thoeris, it seems that also these gods played a role in the houses more minor than previously believed. Apparently, both served principally as amulets and/or part of the apotropaic decoration, occurring less frequently as cult images or on stelae.

4.2. Action

Like Egyptian gods,[1523] ancestors depended on sustenance from the offerings of humans, the most basic benefactions being incense, libations, and other goods. The use of offering tables was not confined to tombs. As for approaching ancestors and deities, written speech acts, speech acts, and pictorial acts all enabled human contact with them.[1524] A new insight gained in the present thesis is the fact that the form of action depended on the respective appropriation. Generally, deities and ancestors were approached by means of written speech act, speech act and pictorial act. While the speech act could involve prayers, it may have also taken the form of hymns.[1525] Speech acts may prove difficult to find in the archaeological record, yet titles like "chantress"[1526] of a god indicate that hymns were sung in temples. Moreover, the religious practice performed in temples was paralleled in houses as well. Some speech acts may thus have been sung.[1527] Whereas the written speech act replaced the speech act in areas inaccessible to daily cults, speech acts could, in turn, be reconstructed in parallel contexts where written speech acts were absent. As with speech and written speech acts, pictorial acts may have permitted access to beneficiaries as well. Pictorial acts supported written speech acts and/or speech acts, but they could also appear alone. [1528] For example, representation of an offering person could invoke the act of offering; even further, pictorial acts could create the offerings themselves by functioning as model offerings. This technique arose for more unavailable or perishable offerings, such as bovine meat and flowers, respectively. The scarce attestation of meat offerings on offering grills substantiates this hypothesis.

4.3. Timing

As for the spontaneous or ritualized performance of religious activities, [1529] no evidence has arisen for any particular calendar in use within the home, though public offerings were performed regularly during public village festivals and trans-local festivals might have influenced the daily religious practices. Thus, religious practices from the non-domestic sphere may have been paralleled on a smaller scale at home. Certain offerings may have been performed with all members of the household at home, but absent family members could as well have been included in the speech acts.

[1523] Hermsen 2005, 168.
[1524] Cf. Hubert and Mauss 1964, 100 and others.
[1525] E.g. O. 25752, cf. Wente 1990, 140.
[1526] "*šmʿy.t*"; cf. *Wb* IV, 479.8–480.4.
[1527] See also Luiselli 2011a, 49–50.
[1528] Compare also Pinch who showed that votive offerings complemented the speech act; cf. Pinch 1993, 355. She further contends that religious action could combine a number of otherwise separate acts.
[1529] Luiselli 2011a, 29.

4.4. Location

Personal religious practices were not confined to more or less open communal spaces.[1530] Clearly the numerous small and large emplacements found in the houses bore some relationship to varying religious activities. Indeed, the performance of religious activities within the domestic space did not converge with broader conceptions of purity in ancient Egypt[1531]—or the spaces in question were purified with incense or libations beforehand and/or as part of the respective actions. Mainly located in the first and second rooms of the houses or their kitchens, the cultic emplacements demonstrate no clear orientation, though niches may tend to have had an eastward orientation. The diverse allocation of space converges with the various appropriations of the cult emplacements, which problematizes a single interpretation of their locations.

4.5. Aim

Elaboration of this study's conclusions in any detail requires a turn to Levi-Strauss and his distinction, first made in 1962, between "hot" and "cold" cultures.[1532] Assmann deployed this theory—in slight modification—and classified ancient Egypt as a cold culture, a stable society conscious of its tradition and eager to maintain the status quo[1533] (as opposed to fast-moving "hot cultures" that worship all kinds of innovation). Thus, continuity serves as the primary characteristic of cold cultures.[1534] As with his theological model, Assmann's cultural theory is bipartite. He contrasts monumental culture with quotidian culture,[1535] with the former meant for eternity and hence characterized by elements made to last (such as stone constructions and hieroglyphic writing)[1536] and the latter aimed at practical values and characterized by cursive script (hieratic) and mud brick architecture.[1537]

Stone constructions full of written and representational acts, temples were certainly built for eternity.[1538] The importance of eternity becomes especially clear in the so-called houses of million years, where the king was worshipped as a royal ancestor.[1539] Unstable and surrounded by a chaos that demanded continuous battle for maintenance of the world

[1530] See also Harrington's conclusions of mortuary cults appearing in various areas including e.g. houses, tombs, chapels, and temples; cf. Harrington 2013, 150.
[1531] E.g. O. Gal, 'Uncleanliness and sin, cleanliness and purity', in: I. Shirun-Grumach (ed.), *Jerusalem Studies in Egyptology*, *ÄAT* 40. Wiesbaden 1998, 243–5.
[1532] C. Lévi-Strauss, *La pensée sauvage*, Paris 1962, 309–10.
[1533] J. Assmann, *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis: Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen*, München 1992, 68–70. It should be noted that Assmann views certain Egyptian rituals in a kind of a middle ground position between the typically "hot" and "cold" cultures, cf. J. Assmann 2000, 26.
[1534] J. Assmann 1992, 70.
[1535] E.g. J. Assmann 1991b, 16–31.
[1536] J. Assmann 1991b, 20–7.
[1537] J. Assmann 1991b, 24.
[1538] E.g. J. Assmann 1991b, 19–27.
[1539] E.g. S. Schröder, *Millionenjahrhaus: Zur Konzeption des Raumes der Ewigkeit im konstellativen Königtum in Sprache, Architektur und Theologie*, Wiesbaden 2010, 217–29.

order, the ancient Egyptian cosmos placed great emphasis on stability and eternity.[1540] According to a fundamental principle of the Egyptian worldview, the cosmos was continuously re-enacted,[1541] as demonstrated by the daily rebirth of the sun.[1542] Likewise, the beginning of a new year or the coronation of a new king were equated with the recurrence of creation.[1543] The preservation of order therefore relied on the king's offerings in the temple.[1544] Although most people could not directly participate in those temple cults—except during festivals[1545]—they participated indirectly as part of humanity more generally.[1546] Crucially, however, the gods constituted the same circle of life and death the Egyptians did. The sun god, for instance, "moves perpetually in a cycle of life and death, just as the sun passes from the day of being into the night of annihilation."[1547] The present study has demonstrated the corresponding conception within families. Whereas the king guaranteed the order of the cosmos by offering to gods in the temple,[1548] the family performed similar activities for their own well-being at home.[1549] In other words, it was the responsibility of the king to keep the eternal cycle of the sun going, and it was the responsibility of the individual and family to maintain the circle of life. Fertility and ancestor cults are two sides of the same coin, however,[1550] insofar as they both ensure the continuation of the family. Once again, Meskell's description encapsulates the conception quite nicely: "Ultimately, the place of death in Egypt is an ambivalent one, permeated by fears of the realm of non-existence and yet full of the promise of rejuvenation. Both stem from the same domain. One cannot have rebirth without death."[1551] According to the principal conclusion of the present study, birth and rebirth were essential for not only the afterlife but also the ongoing life. Therefore, the cults of the gods and those of ancestors were not alternatives but complements.[1552]

Assmann's conception of a "cold culture" eager to maintain the status quo is thus too narrow for the vivid, ongoing creation and recreation of cosmos and family tradition

[1540] E.g. J. Leclant, 'Espace et Temps, Ordre et Chaos dans l'Égypte pharaonique', *Revue de synthèse* 90 *Troisième série* 55–56 (1969), 217–39 and Baines 1991, 125.
[1541] Cf. e.g. J. Assmann 2000, 170–1 and E. Hornung, *Geist der Pharaonenzeit*, Zürich 1989, 46.
[1542] Hornung 1989, 47.
[1543] Hornung 1989, 47–9.
[1544] E.g. H.H. Schmid, *Gerechtigkeit als Weltordnung. Hintergrund und Geschichte des alttestamentlichen Gerechtigkeitsbegriffs. Beiträge zur Historischen Theologie* 40, Tübingen 1968, 47–9; Hornung 1989, 123; Baines 1991, 126 and Grimm and Grimm Stadelmann 2010, 38.
[1545] E.g. Baines 1991, 148–9.
[1546] E.g. Baines 1991, 126–7.
[1547] Piankoff 1964, 49.
[1548] Assmann 1990, 207 and see recently, Cauville 2012, 5.
[1549] Likewise, Kessler has argued that both Egyptian religious texts and cults were "*zyklisch*" and "*auf Erneuerung und Bestätigung ausgerichtet*," cf. Kessler 2009, 270. K. and A. Schlüter have offered a similar proposal, viewing representations of festivals in tombs as an attempt on the part of tomb owners to participate in the "cyclical rejuvenation of the cosmic scenery," cf. K. and A. Schlüter 2009, 368. See also Teeter 2011, 41. However, the latter authors have not yet realized the importance of this finding for individual religious practice.
[1550] Compare also Roth and Roehrig 2002, 138–9 for a similar interpretation of the use of bricks in human birth, the opening of the mouth rituals, and temples.
[1551] Meskell and Joyce 2003, 136.
[1552] The quote refers to the Bes-image and Thoeris only, but the present statement applies to the worship of gods in the houses more generally as well; cf. Harrington 2009, 229. See also Frankfort's conception of a "multiplicity of approaches," Frankfort, 1948, 4.

alike. Consequently, the religious conceptions of "high" and "low" cultures reveal no fundamental distinctions between them. Any notion of a "sharp distinction (...) between the spheres of memory and practice application"[1553] should be abandoned, for household archaeology substantiates no such distinction; on the contrary, alongside parallel religious conceptions, the very means of "practice" and "memory" overlapped. For example, not only hieroglyphic texts, but also hieratic texts could have a mnemonic significance (e.g. **Cat. 11.31**). Instead of constructing a tension between two spheres or cultures, the essence of religious practice in ancient Egypt was the continuation of the ongoing life cycle along with its memory. While different appropriations were undoubtedly possible, domestic religious practice shared a common imagery and language for protecting family health and tradition—expressions that contributed to the larger maintenance of the cosmos. This cosmic continuation is the essence of Maat.[1554] In a broader sense domestic religious activities therefore sought to preserve Maat,[1555] which thus saw no decline in the New Kingdom.[1556]

[1553] J. Assmann 1991b, 27 mentions a "*scharfe Trennung (...) zwischen Sphären des Gedächtnisses und des Gebrauchs.*"
[1554] See also Assmann 1990, 160-95.
[1555] This statement understands Maat in terms of the "cosmological power" and conceptual framework for the ongoing order of the cosmos; cf. Junge 2003, 88–9
[1556] See also Lichtheim 1992, 98-101.

Bibliographic Abbreviations

ÄA	Ägyptologische Abhandlungen
ÄAT	Ägypten und Altes Testament
ADAIK	Abhandlungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Kairo
ÄF	Ägyptologische Forschungen
ASAE	Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte
ASE	Archaeological Survey of Egypt
BACE	Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology
BAe	Bibliotheca Aegyptiaca
BAR IS	British Archaeological Reports, International Series
BASP	Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists
BdE	Bibliothèque d'Étude
BES	Bulletin of the Egyptological Seminar
BIE	Bulletin de l'Institut d'Égypte
BIFAO	Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale
BiOr	Bibliotheca Orientalis
BSEG	Bulletin de la Société d'Égyptologie de Genève
CdE	Chronique d'Égypte
CHANE	Culture & History of the Ancient Near East
DE	Discussions in Egyptology
DZA	Digitalisiertes Zettelarchiv, card index of the *Wb*, digitalized and integrated in the *TLA* (see abbreviations below and http://aaew.bbaw.de/dateien/dza/einfuehrung.html)
EU	Egyptologische Uitgaven
FIFAO	Fouilles de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale
GM	Göttinger Miszellen. Beiträge zur ägyptologischen Diskussion.
GOF	Göttinger Orientforschungen
HÄB	Hildesheimer Ägyptologische Beiträge
HÄS	Hamburger Ägyptologische Studien
ITIS	Integrated Taxonomic Information System; online database of "authoritative taxonomic information on plants, animals, fungi, and microbes of North America and the world" cf. http://www.itis.gov/
JANER	Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions
JARCE	Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt
JEA	Journal of Egyptian Archaeology
JESHO	Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient
JNES	Journal of Near Eastern Studies
KÄT	Kleine Ägyptische Texte
KRI	K.A. Kitchen, *Ramesside Inscriptions, Historical and Biographical* I-VIII, Oxford 1969-90.
LÄ	W. Helck, E. Otto and W. Westendorf (eds), *Lexikon der Ägyptologie* I-VII, Wiesbaden 1975-92.
LEM	A.R. Caminos, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies*, London 1954

LGG	Chr. Leitz (ed.), *Lexikon der ägyptischen Götter und Götterbezeichnungen* I-VIII, *OLA* 110-116, 129, Leuven 2002-2003.
MÄS	Münchner Ägyptologische Studien
MDAIK	Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo
MIFAO	Mémoires publiés par les membres de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale
MIO	Mitteilungen des Instituts für Orientforschung
MonAeg	Monumenta Aegyptiaca
OBO	Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis
OLA	Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta
OLZ	Orientalistische Literaturzeitung
OMRO	Oudheidkundige Mededelingen uit het Rijksmuseum van Oudheden te Leiden
PMMA	Publications of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Egyptian Expedition
RdE	Revue d'Égyptologie
RMNW	Rocznik Muzeum Narodowego w Warszawie (= Annual of the National Museum Warsaw)
SAGA	Studien zur Archäologie und Geschichte Altägyptens
SAK	Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur
SAOC	Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilisation
TLA	Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae, online dictionary and full-text database developed and compiled by the project "*Altägyptisches Wörterbuch*" established at the *Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften*; http://aaew.bbaw.de/tla/
VA	Varia Aegyptiaca
Wb	A. Erman and H. Grapow, *Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache* I-VII and Belegstellen I-V, Berlin 1926-63.
WWII	World War II
ZÄS	Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache
ZfR	Zeitschrift für Religionswissenschaft

General Abbreviations

ÄMP	Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung zu Berlin
Ash	Ashmolean Museum, Oxford
ʿnḫ, wḏȝ, snb	see l.h.p.
BD	Book of the Dead
BM	British Museum, London
CG	Catalogue Général, Egyptian Museum Cairo
CT	Coffin Text
DeM	Deir el-Medina
EA	Egyptian Antiquities
EES	Egypt Exploration Society, London
EMC	Egyptian Museum Cairo

Gardiner	Gardiner's sign list, cf. A.H. Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar. Being an Introduction to the Study of Hieroglyphs* (3rd revised edition) London 1973, 442-543.
IFAO	Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, Cairo
JE	Journal d'Entrée, Egyptian Museum Cairo
KS	*Kom Sud*, southern pit
l.h.p.	life, prosperity and health, typical element of ancient Egyptian offering formulae and often added after the name of the king; compare, for example, J.G. Griffiths, 'Some Egyptian conceptual triads', in: U. Luft, (ed.), *The Intellectual Heritage of Egypt. Studies Presented to László Kákosy by Friends and Colleagues on the Occasion of his 60th Birthday*, Budapest 1982, 224–6. Ben Haring has shown that the formula was also used by individuals in letters, cf. B.J.J. Haring, '"In life, prosperity, health". Introductory Formulae in Letters from the Theban Necropolis', in D. Kessler, R. Schulz, M. Ullmann, A. Verbovsek and S. Wimmer (eds), *Texte – Theben – Tonfragmente. Festschrift für Günter Burkard, ÄAT* 76, Wiesbaden 2009, 180–91.
KV	Kings' Valley
MM	Medelhavsmuseet, The Museum of Mediterranean and Near Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm
MMA	Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
OIM	Oriental Institute Museum, Chicago
PT	Pyramid Text
rt.	recto
SR	Special Register, Egyptian Museum Cairo
ST	"*Sud du temple*", i.e. South of the temple
TR	Temporary Register, Egyptian Museum Cairo
TT	Theban Tomb
UC	University College, London
UCLA	University of California, Los Angeles
vs.	verso

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