

Death and Salvation in Ancient Egypt

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Translated from the German by

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Abridged and updated by the author



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{CHAPTER FOUR}

Death as Dissociation

The Person of the Deceased and Its Constituent Elements

The concept of the person played an important role in the three preceding chapters. Concerns about managing death and restoring life were not just concentrated on the body and the soul but also on the person of the deceased, which included other, in particular social, aspects such as rank, status, and honor. As I use it here, the concept of the person is a modern one, and there is nothing in the ancient Egyptian language that corresponds to it. I mean by it a collection of individual aspects of a human being for which ancient Egyptian expressions do in fact exist. These Egyptian concepts occur often in mortuary texts. The spells of the mortuary liturgies and texts prove to be the locus of an “anthropological discourse” about the aspects or constituent elements of the person. In death, it seems, the person of the deceased emerged in its various aspects or constituent elements, which now took on a life of their own. I call this process of emergence *dissociation*. Unlike the images of death as dismemberment and isolation, the process of dissociation was not catastrophic and destructive but rather, in a certain sense, desired and necessary. What was crucial was that when they emerged and went off in different directions, these aspects of the person entered into a new relationship with, and remained connected to, one another.

These elements of the person, which are ubiquitous in the mortuary texts, include especially the concepts of *ba* and the *ka*, which have to do

with what is covered by our own concept of “soul,” as well as words for body, corpse, and mummy (*d.t*, *h³.t*, *s^h*). They also include the concept *akh*, which I here render “transfigured ancestral spirit,” as well as the concepts “heart,” “shadow,” and “name.” The principal goal was to maintain the unity of the person, even under conditions of dissociation, with the connection of the *ba* and the corpse playing an especially important role in this regard.

On anthropoid stone sarcophagi of the Late Period, there is a spell that appears with almost canonical regularity on the upper surface, the breast of the mummy, where the *ba* was supposed to land when it came to unite with the corpse. All the important elements of the person make their appearance in this spell:

O you who drag away *bas* and cut off shadows,
O you gods, lords of the living heads (or, heads of the living),
may you bring the *ba* of Osiris-Khentamentiu to him,
may you join his *d.t*-body to him, that his heart may be glad!

May his *ba* come to his *d.t*-body and to his heart,
may his *ba* swoop down on his *d.t*-body and his heart.

Bring it to him, O gods,
in the *benben*-house of Heliopolis,
at the side of Shu, Geb, and Atum.
May his *jb*-heart belong to him like Re,
may his *h³.tj*-heart belong to him like Khepri.

Purity for your *ka*, for your *d.t*-body,
for your *ba*, for your corpse,
for your shadow, and for your illustrious mummy,
O Osiris-Khentamentiu!¹

Here, the concern is with the uniting of the *ba* and the corpse, and further, with the reintegration of the person, which is composed of no fewer than eight different elements, components, or aspects. First (verses 3–4), we see the constellation of the *ba* and the *d.t*-body, which appears here instead of the more usual juxtaposition or combination of *ba* and *h³.t*-corpse. Then, in verses 5–6, the heart appears, turning the duo into a trio. In verses 10–11, the concept “heart” is divided into the *jb*-heart and the *h³.tj*-heart. Turning away from the heart, the concluding verses 12–15 enumerate, after the fashion of a litany, six aspects/components of the person: *ka*, *d.t*-body, *ba*, *h³.t*-corpse, shadow, and mummy.

In the tomb of the grain assessor Amenemhet from Dynasty 18 (Theban Tomb 82), no fewer than fourteen constituents of the person are adduced (two of which are lost in a lacuna).² On the south wall of the chapel, “stela” and “tomb” appear, along with five personifications of destiny (*š³jj*

“destiny,” *ḥw* “lifetime,” *Mshn.t* “birthplace,” *Rnn.t* “development,” and *Hnmw*, the personal creator god),³ while on the north wall, we find *ḥ* “offering stone” (in parallelism with *ḥ* “stela”) and, after a lacuna that might well have contained “*ba*” and “heart,” *ḥ* “dead spirit,” *ḥ*.*t* “corpse,” *šw.t* “shadow,” and *hpr.w = f nb.w* “all his forms of manifestation.”⁴ This scene, however, is a unique instance, unparalleled in any other tomb. More widespread and representative is a scene that appears in three Theban tombs of the Ramesside Period,⁵ in the early Hellenistic tomb of Petosiris,⁶ and on coffins of the Late and Ptolemaic Periods.⁷ Here, the four Sons of Horus bring the deceased his heart,⁸ his *ba*,⁹ his *ka*,¹⁰ and his body or mummy. In the ritual texts of the Osiris chapels at Dendara, the king says to Osiris:

I bring you the capitals of the nomes: they are your body,
they are your *ka*, which is with you.
I bring you your name, your *ba*, your shadow,
your form (*qj*), and your image: the capitals of the nomes.¹¹

These texts and scenes afford us only an introductory glimpse at the concerns of this theme, which plays so great a role in the mortuary literature.

In our own understanding of the human being, the decisive distinction is between body and soul, or between mind and body. The Egyptians drew a wider and apparently even more decisive distinction. They distinguished between the physical sphere and the social sphere of the person. To the physical sphere belonged, naturally, the concepts of body, limbs, and corpse, as well as *ba* and “shadow.” To the social sphere belonged the concepts of *ka*, name, and even “mummy,” for the word for “mummy,” which also meant “aristocrat,” “dignitary,” “worthy,” was first and foremost a designation of status. The mummy was the body as bearer of an identifying sign, in particular, a sign of rulership, which had an effect on the social sphere and created respect for the dead in the netherworld. The heart was the “interface” between the personal sphere and the social sphere, and its work consisted in the integration of these two spheres into the entirety of a person.

physical sphere (physical self)		person social sphere (social self)	
body	soul	body	
soul			
<i>ḥ.w, ḥ.wt, ḥ.t, ḥ.t</i>	<i>ba</i> , shadow	<i>sḥ</i> (“mummy-dignitary”)	<i>ka</i> , name

It might seem surprising that the *ba* is ascribed to the physical sphere. Was *ba* not a soul-like concept? To be sure: the conventional translation of the Egyptian term *ba* as “soul” (German “Seele,” French “âme”) was

not created out of thin air. It is based on the figure of a bird (a heron with a feathered breast) used to indicate the word in the writing system, and which serves in art (in the form of a falcon with a human head) to represent this aspect of the person. It is also based on the concept of freedom of movement connected with the *ba*. In the form of a *ba*, the deceased passed through the realm of death, and from there, into the hall of the Judgment of the Dead, into the house of Osiris, into the Field of Reeds and the Field of Offerings, and into the sun barque. As a *ba*, he also enjoyed the ability to assume various forms (including that of a “living *ba*”) in which he could return to the world of the living. From an ethnological perspective, the *ba* belongs to the category of a “free soul” that could separate itself from the body.

It would seem, then, that in Egyptian thought, *ba* and body were opposites. Yet, when we look at the texts, we see that they form a pair and are most often cited together. In the Dialogue of a Man with His Soul (Papyrus Berlin 3024), there is even a reference to the “corpse” of the *ba*. The verses in question lay stress on the corporeality of the *ba*, and on its close connection with the shadow:

I shall make a cooling over your corpse,
so that you may make another *ba*, one that is weary, envious.
I shall make a cooling, though not too cold,
so that you may make another *ba*, one that is hot, envious.
I shall drink water at the well and set up a protection for the shadow,
so that you may make another *ba*, one that is hungry, envious.¹²

Ba and body constituted a unity that was broken up in death and had to be restored by mortuary rituals under conditions of separation.

I. *The Ba*

a) *The Ba* in the Sky, the Corpse in the Netherworld

The goal of the funerary rites was to bring about the separation of *ba* and corpse, so that they could once again be placed into a relationship with one another. The last act of the burial procession, before the actual interment, was the making of an offering to the mummy under the open sky. Thus, in an oft-used offering spell, we find the *ka*, the mummy, the *ba*, and the corpse all mentioned:

One shall cut off a foreleg for your *ka*,
and a heart for your mummy.
May your *ba* ascend,
may your *corpse* descend.¹³

Before the coffin containing the mummy was deposited in the sarcophagus chamber, and thus in the netherworld, the *ba* was supposed to ascend to the sky during this rite carried out in the sunlight. Dozens of text passages can be cited in support of this point:

Your *ba* to the sky,
your corpse to the netherworld!¹⁴

Such formulas are ubiquitous in the mortuary texts of the New Kingdom and later periods,¹⁵ where they lay stress on the positive aspect of the dissociation. The separation of *ba* and corpse was one of the goals of the transfiguration rituals, and it was part of the transformation of the deceased into a transfigured ancestral spirit. Other wishes on behalf of the deceased added the statue, in whose form the deceased was present on earth. For the most part, the reference was not to the tomb statue, but to one or more statues that meritorious officials were allowed to set up in a temple by special favor of the king, so as to be able to enjoy, on earth, the blessings of divine presence:

Your *ba* endures in the sky,
your corpse in the netherworld,
your statues in the temples.¹⁶

Temple statues first appeared in the Middle Kingdom (ca. 2000–1700 B.C.E.). At first, they were a rare privilege, granted by the king to his highest dignitaries. In the New Kingdom, the custom of setting up temple statues became more widespread, to the point where, in the first millennium, they surpassed the monumental tomb as a medium of continuance, for a time even taking its place. In the form of their statue, those accorded this privilege remained close to their god, breathing incense, listening to the chanting of hymns, and taking part in the festivals. Such images most commonly took the form of a “block statue,” a cuboidal representation of a man, wrapped in his mantle, squatting on the ground with upraised knees. In the New Kingdom (beginning ca. 1500 B.C.E.), there appeared variations on this theme, depicting the deceased in connection with a divine emblem (naos, divine statue or symbol, etc.), thus iconographically laying stress on his relationship to the deity in question. When this custom was in its heyday, we can see to what an extent Egyptian temples served the quest to overcome human mortality. In any case, this was true for the king; when he erected a temple, it was for a deity, to be sure, but it was also his “personal monument,” as the dedication inscriptions stress, and much the same became true for the growing number of those who were allowed to take up residence, in the form of a temple statue, in this ter-

restrial enclave of divine immortality. In the later stages of Egyptian history, the image of the block statue served as a hieroglyph in the writing of the word “praised one.”

During the embalming ritual, “those in the land” went to the sky and the netherworld, where they busied themselves with the preparation of the body:

Your *ba* is in the sky,
your corpse is in the netherworld.
Those in the land make your body magnificent,
you receive ointment in the Place of Uncion.¹⁷

Through the medium of his representations as statue, on stelae, and so forth, the offering cult turned the double form of the deceased as *ba* and corpse into a triple one, in which he was present in the sky, on earth, and in the netherworld. This is how we are to understand the text passage that served as our departure point. The sacrificial offering of the heart and foreleg of a bull was a part of the tomb cult, where it was performed before the mummy, as it stood propped up in the forecourt of the tomb during the Opening of the Mouth ritual. The offering was thus intended for the *ka* and the mummy, the forms in which the deceased was present in the tomb and received cult attention. As tomb owner, he remained a member of the community that included his posterity, and the cult in the tomb had to do with his social sphere on earth. The tomb was the special place of the *ka*, a topic to which we shall return.

The *ba* and the *ḥꜥ.t* (corpse), however, belonged to the otherworldly spheres of the sky and the netherworld, where they shared in the cosmic existence of the sun god. As early as the Coffin Texts, there are text passages that compare the relationship between the deceased and his *ba* and corpse to the course of the sun:

May you control your *ba*,
and your flesh and your corpse in Heliopolis.¹⁸

On the model of a deceased human being, the sun was conceived of as a *ba* that traversed the sky by day and at night visited his corpse, which was resting in the netherworld of Heliopolis. It is thus that we are to understand this wish that the deceased, like the sun god, might cross the sky and come to rest in Heliopolis as a corpse.¹⁹

The New Kingdom solar hymns and Books of the Netherworld constantly affirm that the *ba* of the sun god is in the sky and his corpse in the netherworld, precisely as stated of human beings in the mortuary spells. Thus, in a solar hymn from the tomb of Apuia, which was constructed at Saqqara in the immediate wake of the Amarna Period, we read,

Ba to the sky,
corpse to the netherworld.²⁰

Such wishes are typical in the Books of the Netherworld, for example:

The sky for your *ba*, that it may rest there,
the earth for your corpse, O Lord of Provisioning!²¹

Clearly, then, the point of the dissociation of the *ba* and the *h³.t*, and of their assignment to the sky and the netherworld, was to enable the deceased to have a share in the sun god's form of existence. In the daytime, this god traversed the sky, visible to all in the form of his *ba*, the sun disk, and in the evening, he sank into the netherworld, where, invisibly, mysteriously, and beyond any human perception, he united with his corpse. From this union, the *ba* absorbed the power to renew itself, after which it once again ascended to the sky to begin another day. The *ba* and the *h³.t* were partners in this cycle of regeneration; they worked together in a process that would otherwise have been inconceivable. The body needed its *ba*, and the *ba* needed its body. Together, the two were an indissoluble pair.

During the embalming process, the *ba* hovered over the corpse, ascending to the sky only at its end, at the time of the Opening of the Mouth and the offering in front of the entrance to the tomb. This is what we see, for instance, in a scene in the tomb of the vizier Paser. In a liturgy from the Coffin Texts that refers to the embalming ritual, the *ba* and the corpse are both said to be still on earth, and it is made clear how both these aspects are a part of the physical sphere of the deceased:

May Geb open your sightless eyes,
may he straighten your bended knees.
May your *jb*-heart be given you by your mother,
and your *h³.tj*-heart, which belongs to your *d.t*-body,
your *ba*, which is on earth,
your corpse, which is on the ground.
Bread for your body,
water for your throat,
sweet breath of life for your nostrils.²²

These verses refer to the process of embalmment, when the corpse was not yet buried and the *ba* had not yet ascended to the sky, as depicted in the tomb of Paser.

In the Coffin Texts, there are portions of a liturgy whose aim was to enable the *ba* to separate itself from the corpse and to exit the nether-

world unhindered. Spells 94–96 and 488–500 are part of this liturgy. Spell 94 is entitled “Causing the *Ba* to Depart from the Corpse,”²³ a sentiment that runs counter to the fear, frequently expressed in later texts, that the *ba* might distance itself from the corpse. In this spell, the *ba* is still in close contact with the body. Osiris has created it out of the discharges of his flesh and the semen of his phallus; it is the “*ba* in its blood.” From his bodily fluids, Osiris creates a *ba* that is to emerge into the light of day and take sexual pleasure in the world above. This was a role the deceased wished to play. In spell 96, the deceased calls himself “that great *ba* of Osiris, on whose behalf the gods have ordained that he copulate by means of (etc.).” The corresponding divine commandment reads, “Come out and copulate by means of your *ba*.”²⁴ This concept shows clearly that the *ba* belonged to the physical sphere. The sequence of spells 488–500 belong to a liturgy dealing with the *ba*’s freedom of movement. The *ba* was to descend, unhindered, all the way to Osiris in the depths of the netherworld, and to ascend all the way to Re in the celestial heights. It was to approach both these gods, which was the most pressing need of every deceased person: the sun god as dispenser of truth/justice/order, for whose functioning on earth man himself was responsible, and Osiris as healer of his affliction.

The *ba* left the corpse through the head. On many coffins, the end that sheltered the head is inscribed with a hymn to the goddess Isis (Coffin Texts spell 229), who stood by the head of the deceased in the embalming ritual. In this hymn, we read, for example, “May you form my *ba*!” In the latter part of the text, the deceased affirms aspects of his well-being that are connected with his head and entail the unbroken connection between the *ba* and the corpse:

My neck will not be severed, my name will not be ignored
among the transfigured ancestral spirits,
I shall not be caught in the fish net,
the word of power will not be snatched from my mouth,
my *jb*-heart and my *h3.tj*-heart will not be cut out.
My face is not sad, my heart is not forgetful,
my *ba* will spend the night watching over my corpse;
my face will not be sad, my heart will not be forgetful,
I shall not be ignorant of the path to the realm of the dead.
I am one with a spirit-powerful mouth and unscathed magic,
one who has outfitted himself with the needs of his heart.²⁵

This passage makes it clear that the *ba* was closely related to the body and to concerns regarding corporal integrity and vitality.

b) The Uniting of *Ba* and Corpse

After the *ba* was separated from the body, it acquired its own freedom of movement and could roam about in the celestial and netherworldly spaces of the afterlife. It was then necessary for it to remember its connection with the corpse, so that the personal unity of the deceased would remain preserved, even under conditions of separation. In a funerary liturgy from the Coffin Texts, it is said to the deceased,

The heart of your *ba*, may it remember your corpse,
that it may gladden the egg that brought you forth.²⁶

The vague allusion to the “egg” plays on the mystery of regeneration in the coffin, which will be treated in chapter 7. The placing of the body in the coffin was explained as a return to the uterus.²⁷ The comparison of the mummy with the egg “that brought you forth,” and thus with the symbol and epitome of origin, points in this direction. The *ba* “gladdens” the mummy when it returns to it.

Especially important here is the *ba*’s “remembering” the corpse, whereby the continuity of the person is maintained. There is a similar statement in another funerary liturgy:

Your heart comes to you, it is not far from you,
your *ba* remembers you and unites with you.²⁸

Here, we again encounter the theme of life-giving connectivity (see chapter 2), which worked against death as isolation and was above all a matter of the heart:

Truly, so long as your *ba* exists, your heart will exist with you!
May Anubis think of you in Busiris,
may your *ba* rejoice in Abydos,
may your corpse, which is in the necropolis (of Abydos), be glad.²⁹

Every bit as important as the separation of the *ba* from the corpse, without which the desired freedom of movement could not be gained, was the unhindered return of the *ba* to the body.³⁰ It is often stated that this communication between the *ba* and the corpse is not to be hindered, with the result that the *ba* would be locked in or out:

May my *ba* not be guarded (= locked in) on my corpse,
may I not be hindered from drinking water from the flood.³¹

The concept of the *ba* spending the night upon the corpse now became one of the central leitmotifs of mortuary belief. Chapter 89 of the Book of the Dead is devoted to this theme, and its accompanying vignettes depict the *ba* hovering over the corpse. The text states:

May it (i.e., my *ba*) gaze upon my corpse,
may it alight upon my mummy,
may it never be destroyed or perish.

In the cult of Osiris at Dendara, the union of the *ba* and the corpse was celebrated during the festival of Khoiak, when a “grain mummy” was prepared and set out in the sunlight in the court of the rooftop temple. There is a reference to this practice in a text that makes use of an oft-attested mortuary offering spell:³²

Rejoice, you gods and goddesses:
the *ba* of Osiris has come,
and it rests on his corpse.³³

2. *The Deceased and His Ka*

A great deal, much of it contradictory, has been written about the *ka*.³⁴ Scarcely any other Egyptian concept has received so many or such different explanations. The reason is that this concept played a central role not only in the conception of man but also in that of the king and of the gods, and that over time, it underwent changes in all three cases. Given these circumstances, it is not to be expected that we can arrive at an accurate definition of the *ka* concept that would satisfy all its occurrences in the texts. For every attempt at a definition, contrary examples can easily be adduced. We shall therefore confine ourselves here to the meaning of the *ka* concept in the framework of conceptions of death, singling out some central points that can shed light, above all, on the different meanings of the *ba* and the *ka*. In this connection, I hold the following differences to be essential:

1. “Freedom of movement,” an essential element of the *ba* concept, played no role with regard to the *ka*.
2. The *ka* had nothing to do with the corpse; it was not part of the “physical sphere” of the individual.

Ka and *ba* are often mentioned together but seldom in a way that highlights the different roles of these two aspects of the person. One example

is the formula with which the sage Djedi greets Prince Hardjedef in the “tales of wonder” from Papyrus Westcar:

May your *ka* prevail over your enemy,
and may your *ba* know the path, in the world beyond,
to the portal of the place that conceals the weary!³⁵

It was the *ba* that could move freely between this realm and the next and, thanks to its knowledge, led the deceased out of the realm of death to Osiris and Elysium. The *ka*, however, was the vehicle of the vindication that restored the individual’s status as a social person, which had been destroyed by death. In other words, the *ba* belonged to the physical sphere of the deceased, restoring his movement and his ability to take on form, while the *ka* belonged to his social sphere and restored his status, honor, and dignity.

From the point of view of comparative religion, the *ba* obviously fell into the category of a “free soul,” for freedom of movement was its prime characteristic. Nevertheless, it was closer to the body than was the *ka*. Mobility is a physical ability. The *ka*, for its part, did not form a pair with the body but with the “self” of a person. It was soul, protective spirit, and doppelgänger, all rolled into one. It was said that the deceased “went to his *ka*.” This was also a matter of uniting, just as when the *ba* alighted on the corpse. But when the deceased united with his *ba*, it was not body and soul that were united, it was the deceased himself and his alter ego.

Here, I should like to cite some texts that describe this union. The oldest one, a classic that continued to be cited down into the latest periods of Egyptian history, is spell 25 of the Pyramid Texts, a censuring spell. In it, the rising scent of the incense is “sacramentally explained” (on this concept, see chapter 15) as a departure or ascent of the deceased king to his *ka*:

A departer departs with his *ka*,
Horus departs with his *ka*.
Seth departs with his *ka*.
Thoth departs with his *ka*.
Dewen-anwy departs with his *ka*.
Osiris departs with his *ka*.
Khenty-en-irty departs with his *ka*.
You yourself depart with your *ka*.

O N., the arms of your *ka* are in front of you,
O N., the arms of your *ka* are behind you,
O N., one foot of your *ka* is in front of you,
O N., one foot of your *ka* is behind you.

Osiris N., I have given you the Eye of Horus,
that your face may be complete by means of it.
To be spoken four times: May the aroma of the Eye of Horus waft its way
to you.

In Pyramid Texts spell 447, we find the same concept of the deceased “going with his *ka*” in the context of a text that describes the uniting of the deceased with the sky and mother goddess Nut, as embodied in the coffin. This is thus a “sacramental explanation” of the laying of the body in the coffin. The deceased enters the coffin as sky and must therefore “depart” from the earth. As in spell 25, this departure occurs in the company of his *ka*:

A departer departs with his *ka*,
Osiris departs with his *ka*,
Seth departs with his *ka*,
Khenty-en-irty departs with his *ka*,
You yourself have departed with your *ka*.

O Osiris N., a comer comes, that you may not suffer need,
your mother comes, that you may not suffer need,
Nut (comes), that you may not suffer need,
the Great Protectress (comes), that you may not suffer need.
The protectress of the fearful (comes), that you may not suffer need,
to protect you, to prevent that you suffer need,
to give you your head,
to gather your bones for you,
to unite your limbs for you,
to give you your heart in your body,
that you may be at the head of those who are before you
and give commands to those who are behind you,
that you may secure your house behind you
and keep your children from mourning.
Your purity is the purity of the gods who have gone to their *kas*,
your purity is the purity of the gods who have gone so as not to suffer (?).³⁶

From this text, we learn two things: first, that “departing in the company of the *ka*” is a specifically divine action that has something to do with purity, and second, that this motif was not necessarily connected with the rite of censing but could also occur in spells mentioning Nut that presumably refer to the ritual placing of the body in the coffin. To be in the company of the *ka* was the end, the high point, and the epitome of personal reintegration as expressed on the physical level by the motif of uniting the limbs.

In the Coffin Texts, this spell has only a single, rather badly preserved variant, in which it is stated that the deceased goes, not “with” but “to”

his *ka*.³⁷ This is a reference to a blessed existence in death, corresponding to the biblical expression “gathered to his people.” In the Hebrew Bible, this expression refers to a real situation: interment in a family tomb. These family tombs were extensive caverns in the hillside. With each new interment, the last to have been buried was shoved aside and the disarticulated body, of which only the bones remained, was tossed onto a huge heap of bones at the back of the cave.³⁸ In ancient Egypt, the formula “going to one’s *ka*” also referred to the individual’s joining his forebears. This meaning is made clear in tomb inscriptions of the Old Kingdom:

Ferrying the forebears in very beautiful peace,
setting out for the hills of the necropolis;
grasping the hand by the fathers, namely his *kas*,
each (of them) a provisioned one;
bringing an offering to him above the shaft
in his house of eternity.³⁹

In these inscriptions, going to one’s *ka* is also closely connected with burial. “Going to the *ka*” meant being buried in one’s tomb as a “provisioned one.” There are numerous examples of this formulation, especially from the Old Kingdom.⁴⁰ The following text, however, which also mentions the *ba*, is from the Dynasty 18 tomb of Khaemhet (Theban Tomb 57):⁴¹

May the sacred place be opened to you,
may you die as one who goes to his *ka*.
May you receive your offering in the Great House,
may your *ba* rest in the House of the Phoenix.
May you carry out a purification in the Lake of *Maat*.
May Anubis himself wrap you with bandages.

Here, the *ba* is connected with Heliopolis. There stood the House of the Phoenix, and also the Great House, in which the deceased, surely in the form of his *ba*, is to receive offerings. In this text, the *ka* makes its appearance as a sort of doppelgänger of the deceased, and to go to it is the epitome of the kind of death one hoped for. An inscription from the temple of Sethos I at Kanais is especially informative regarding the sense of this usage. It contains a blessing on any official who will respect the king’s edict and keep it in force under future kings: “His end will be peaceful, (the end) of one who goes to his *ka*.”⁴² By way of contrast, on the statue of the high steward Amenophis from Memphis, there is a curse on the potential wrongdoer: “His *ka* shall be far from him.”⁴³ Just as the separation of *ka* and self was the epitome of a dreadful, cursed death, so the togetherness of *ka* and self was the epitome of a goodly, blessed death.

Because the *ka* and the self were created simultaneously, they had a symbiotic relationship in this life, one that fell apart at death and had to be restored, albeit in a different form, by ritual.

The text of Khaemhet refers to the relationship between the deceased and the sun god, in the sun barque as well as in the temples of Heliopolis. In another, unfortunately badly destroyed inscription in his tomb, Khaemhet speaks again of union with his *ka*: "You will unite with your *ka* of your earthly existence."⁴⁴ The additional phrase "of your earthly existence" usually refers to the heart.⁴⁵ What is meant is a consciousness, or recollection, of existence on earth that the deceased is to maintain, thus assuring his personal continuity.⁴⁶

Book of the Dead spell 105, entitled "Spell for Satisfying the *Ka* of a Man in the Realm of the Dead," connects the *ka* with existence on earth and also with the Judgment of the Dead and its moral assessment of the guilt or innocence of the deceased. The vignette depicts a man offering an incense vessel and a libation vase before his *ka*, which is represented as the hieroglyph for *ka* resting on a standard:

Greetings to you, my *ka*, my lifetime!
 Lo, I have come to you,
 having appeared and being strong,
ba-mighty, and powerful.
 I have brought you natron and incense,
 that I may purify you therewith and purify your sweat therewith.
 Every evil statement I have made,
 every evil deed I have done,
 (they) will not be reckoned against me;
 for I am that amulet
 that is around the throat of Re
 and is given to the horizon dwellers.
 When they thrive, I also thrive,
 and my *ka* thrives like theirs,
 and my *ka* is fed like theirs.

The *ka* of the deceased is equated with lifetime, just like "the heart of my existence on earth," thus assuring an equation of the heart with the *ka*. This aspect of the *ka* seems to underlie the meaning of the verb *kꜣj* "to think, intend, plan."⁴⁷ The meaning "spirit, consciousness, will" can be connected with the concept that the *ka* was created together with the individual and accompanied it as a protective spirit or doppelgänger (Latin *genius*). It is this aspect of the *ka* that is evidently invoked with the mention of the "*ka* of your existence on earth."

In Book of the Dead chapter 105, the *ka* is soothed from the worry that it might reject the "I" who is addressing it and dissociate itself from him

on the grounds of potential moral burdens, just like the heart, which the deceased implores not to abandon him and testify against him (see below, section 3). In this chapter, concern about the possibility that the *ka* might distance itself from the “I,” not as a witness for the prosecution, like the heart when it is placed on the scale, but as a lifetime companion who might end his association with one who has been found guilty. He assures the *ka* that it will not come to a verdict of guilty. Like the heart, the *ka* thus belongs to the moral, and thus the social, aspect of the person. Notwithstanding the association of the root *k³* with the word “bull,” the *ka* does not designate physical strength but rather the moral personality, the “normative” doppelgänger, a sort of superego connected with social categories of honor, dignity, and status, just as the heart is connected with the categories of virtue and righteousness.

The meaning “bull” seems to be connected with the original, central concept that the *ka* was handed down from father to son, specifically in the form of the embrace that the hieroglyph seems to depict, for it is not a matter of upraised but rather of horizontally outstretched arms.⁴⁸ We have mentioned this embrace in Chapter 2. This aspect of the *ka* can be called a paternal, dynastic principle, one that reproduced itself through the genealogical line; this principle includes the concept that the god Horus manifested himself in the *ka* of the king.⁴⁹

The wish for union involves both the *ba* and the *ka*. In both cases, death means dissociation. The *ba* separates itself from the body and ascends to the sky, while the *ka* returns to the social sphere from which it came, to the ancestors who have already died. What had been a unity during life could no longer sustain itself as such, that is, as constituents of the person joined together symbiotically in a single body. Thus, as the Egyptians conceived it, the parts of the body, which had come apart at death, had to be brought into a new connection with one another.⁵⁰ As we can see, this, too, is a matter of integration and connectivity. Life is integration, community, and interaction, while death is decay, dissolution, and isolation. Just as decline and isolation could befall an individual even during life, the Egyptians held it as possible that there could be integration and association after death. In order to overcome the state of death and attain the blessed status of a transfigured ancestral spirit, it was necessary to facilitate the continued interaction of the various aspects or components of the person, though now under the altered circumstances wrought by physical death. These aspects or constituent elements were no longer united in the body, but separated. This fact created the possibility of new forms of cosmic existence that were not at the disposal of the individual during his lifetime. But to make this happen, these various aspects had to be placed into a relationship with one another so that they could remain connected to the “I” as an organizing personal center. It was necessary

not only to maintain these elements as such and thus preserve the corpse from decay and the *ba* from destruction but also to construct a network of relationships that created specific connections between the “I” and the *ka*, the “I” and the heart, the *ba* and the corpse, and the *ba* and the shadow.⁵¹ The *ba*, the *ka*, the corpse, the heart, and the shadow, all separated by death, had now to be reunited.

3. *The Heart*

Surprisingly, this need for reunion was also true for the heart. Deities were implored to help the deceased recover his heart. The goddess who regularly appears in this connection is the mother and sky goddess Nut:

I give you back the heart of your mother,
I set it in its place in your body,
you being fresh and rejuvenated.⁵²

This motif is closely connected with the mummification process. Anubis, the god of embalming, played a special role in the concept of the reinsertion of the heart into the body. A number of vignettes to chapter 26 of the Book of the Dead depict him giving the deceased his heart; in Theban Tomb 359, he even places it in his mouth, which reminds us of the episode in the Tale of Two Brothers in which the older brother, whose name is Anubis, causes his younger brother Bata to drink his heart. On the Anubis shrine of Tutankhamun, the god says,

I bring you your heart
and give it to you in its place in your body.⁵³

In the mummification ritual, the heart was the only internal organ that was not removed.

But even when the deceased recovered his heart, there was still the danger of a further—and this time, a final—disassociation. This was the situation at the Judgment of the Dead, when the deceased was obliged to answer for his conduct during life before a divine tribunal. What the mouth averred, the heart had to confirm, or it would be exposed as lip service, that is, as a lie. All depended on the heart’s not deviating from the mouth, and thus from the speaking “I.” The deceased thus implored his own heart:

O my *jb*-heart of my mother,
O my *jb*-heart of my mother,
O my *h³.tj*-heart of my earthly existence:

Arise not against me as witness
before the “lords of demand”!
Say not against me,
“He actually did it” according to what I have done—
let no complaint against me arise
before the Great God, the Lord of the West.⁵⁴

O my *jb*-heart of my mother,
O my *jb*-heart of my mother,
O my *h3.tj*-heart of my changing forms:
Arise not against me as witness,
oppose me not in the court,
turn not against me before the master of the balance!

You are my *ka*, which is in my body,
my Khnum (= creator), who makes my limbs hale.
May you go forth to the good
that is prepared for us there!⁵⁵

Do not make my name stink for the officials
who reduce men to “sums.”⁵⁶

Thus, with regard to the heart, death is also pictured as dissociation, and salvation from the latter is represented as reintegration. The deceased speaks to his heart, as he does to his *ba*, promoting the notion of solidarity. He “comes” to his heart and unites with it, as with his *ka*. And, what is more, he has his heart restored to him by deities such as Nut and Anubis, as is never said of the *ba* or the *ka*, though it is said of organs and body parts.

The Egyptians considered a dissociation between self and heart while still alive to be a life-threatening symptom. This was especially true of physical circumstances. One love song, for instance, describes lovesickness as an absence of the heart.⁵⁷ In another text, a man complains of longing for his home town.⁵⁸ In the healing spells on the Metternich Stela, Isis wails over her child Horus, who has been bitten by a scorpion.⁵⁹ The motif of the absent heart also makes its appearance in the Story of Sinuhe, which describes the state of extreme fear that overcame Sinuhe in the presence of Pharaoh:

I was like a man in the grip of darkness.
My *ba* was gone, my limbs trembled,
my heart was no longer in my body
that I might be able to distinguish death from life.⁶⁰

For the Egyptians, lovesickness, homesickness, worry, and fear were physical conditions that seemed like the grip of death, for to them, death was

the ultimate dissociation of the heart and the self. To them, to be a person meant to be able to exercise self-control. But this control was lost when the heart, the *ba*, or some other aspect of the person was dissociated from the self. Such a dissociation resulted in powerlessness, unconsciousness, or sleep, all of which were compared to the state of death. The deceased was promised the ability to regain self-control. In this connection, the concept of *d.t*, which we have rendered above as “cult body,” was invoked:

A great one is awakened, a great one wakes,
Osiris has raised himself onto his side;
he who hates sleep and loves not weariness,
the god gains power, the god gains control of his *d.t*-body.⁶¹
Horus has set him upright,
the one in Nedit, he has lifted himself.

Just as it is said to the deceased that he is to gather his limbs in the framework of the image of death as dismemberment, so here he is bidden to become conscious, and above all, to wake up:

The sleeper awakes,
Osiris-Khentamentiu awakes here with his *ka*,
he who sleeps on his left side, the sleeper!⁶²

Such sentiments, along with spells for the provisioning of the deceased and the presentation of offerings, go back to an early date, to the third millennium B.C.E., when the deceased was pictured as sleeping in his tomb.⁶³ Later, the deceased was pictured as being in the next world, and he was summoned to receive his offerings (see chapter 14). In the New Kingdom, we encounter the image of death as sleep especially in the Books of the Netherworld, where the sun, during his nightly journey, awakens his mummy, which is slumbering in the netherworld, from the sleep of death. It awakens in the sunlight, which for a short while restores its consciousness, life, speech, and personality. When the sunlight passes, it sinks back into sleep.

The image of death as sleep is a familiar one in Western tradition. *Hypnos* and *Thanatos*, Sleep and Death, were twin brothers in Greek mythology. But while this image represents a blessed ultimate condition in the Western mythology of death, in Egypt, it was an image—like those of dismemberment, isolation, and dissociation—of a helplessness that had to be reversed through ritual. The deceased slept, but he was not to remain asleep; he was to awaken, just as he was to be gathered together, out of his dismemberment, into a single body, and to be integrated, out of his isolation, into a community. Sleep was not a goal, but a starting point.

4. *Image and Body*

a) Image and Death, Statue and Mummy

The primary experience of death included the idea that in death, the body became not only a corpse but also an “image” of the deceased.⁶⁴ The original image of the deceased was his own corpse.

Death itself always already appears as an image, for even the corpse has already become an image that merely resembles the body of the living person. . . . It is no longer a body, but only an image of a body. . . .

The true meaning of an image lies in the fact that it represents something that is absent and thus can only exist in the image. It makes something appear that is not in the image, but can only appear in the image. Under these circumstances, the image of a deceased person is not an anomaly, but the original meaning of what an image is. Dead, a person is always already absent, death is an unbearable absence that is quickly filled with an image so as to make it bearable.

This is now an artificial image, summoned to counter the other image, the corpse. Making an image, one becomes active so as no longer to remain passively delivered to the experience of death and its terror.⁶⁵

There was thus a concern to preserve the appearance of the corpse as image of the deceased, for instance, by covering it with a coat of plaster so as permanently to preserve the features. Such techniques were employed at a very early date at Jericho and in other neolithic cemeteries of the Fertile Crescent, and they are also attested from Old Kingdom Egypt as a preliminary step in the direction of mummification and tomb statues. The beginnings of mummification, with its “masking” of the face and sometimes the entire body with a thin layer of plaster, show how the masking of the body stemmed from the need to preserve the external forms, to change into the unchangeable. The early stages of mummification did not yet aim at the chemical preservation of the corpse but rather, and above all, at the preservation of the external form by means of padding and wrapping, makeup, and paint. The corpse thus became an image of the deceased, one that was as lifelike as possible, and it was dressed in the clothing of the living. From this common origin sprang mummy wrappings and anthropoid coffins, on the one hand, and on the other, tomb statues.⁶⁶ The characteristic form of the mummy, in which the deceased was made to resemble the god Osiris, became the goal of mummification only in the First Intermediate Period, and it was at that time that tomb statues and mummification went their separate ways. Tomb statues, which depicted the deceased in the form and the clothing of the living, left the hidden spaces of the tomb and were increasingly set

up in the accessible cult rooms, until, with the end of the Old Kingdom, the *serdab* disappeared altogether. The corpse, however, which remained in the hidden spaces, assumed the form of the god Osiris.

In the matter of “treating” the dead, art played as great a role as language. One principle reigned supreme: a depiction was not a depiction of a body, it was itself a body. This was true not only for statues of the dead in their tombs but also for those of gods in their temples. In the course of the daily cult, they were anointed and clothed, and they benefited from all the actions that were normally carried out on behalf of a genuine body. The Egyptian language had a term that erased the distinction between representation and body: the word *d.t*, which we usually translate as “body,” actually referred to both.

Words for “corpse” (mummy, body) and “representation” (statue, picture, form, etc.) were determined by one and the same hieroglyph in the Egyptian writing system. Standing upright, this sign indicated a “depiction,” and recumbent, it meant “corpse” (Figure 2). This hieroglyph is a clear indication of the



Figure 2. Hieroglyph used as determinative in words for (a) depiction and (b) corpse.

relationship, even the equivalence, of the two concepts in Egyptian thought. Lift a body up on its own two legs, and it is a representation, lay a statue down on its back, and it is a corpse. Central, in this connection, is the symbolism of horizontality and verticality in Egyptian mortuary texts and rituals. To be upright was synonymous with life and renewal.

Throughout the history of Egyptian tomb statues, the analogy between statue and corpse is clear. In Old Kingdom tombs, the statue was not set up in the accessible cult chambers but rather in a special, walled off room that Egyptologists call a “*serdab*,” an Arabic word meaning “cellar.”⁶⁷ In the wall between the *serdab* and the cult chamber, there was often a peephole that enabled the statue to participate in the rituals and inhale the aroma of the incense without itself being seen. In this period, the statue was thus part of the “hidden functioning” of the tomb (see chapter 8), just like the corpse in its coffin. It was only at the very end of the Old Kingdom that the statue began to leave the “personal sphere” of the *serdab* and to be set up in the cult chamber, where it was visible.⁶⁸

b) Reserve Head and Mummy Mask

In tombs of Dynasty 4, life-size heads of limestone were deposited in the sarcophagus chamber; the sculptors endeavored to make them true

portraits of the deceased. These “reserve heads” were not deposited with the statue in the *serdab*, yet they fulfilled its function in a different manner. Like mummification, they sprang from the impulse to preserve the corporeal form. Scholars have assumed they were created from plaster masks that were made either before or after death.

The mummy mask reminds us of the “reserve head” of Dynasty 4. The Egyptian term for this important element in the mummification process is *tp n sšt*³ or *tp št*³, “head of mystery (= corpse)” or “mysterious head.” The following stanzas from the mortuary liturgy refer to this mummy mask:

He sees, the one who sees with the head of a god.
He sees: N. (Osiris-Khentamentiu) with the head of a god.
He gives instructions to the gods.
He gives them to them as the foremost among them,
as the greatest one of the council.
The *mks*-scepter is in his hand.
His *nḥb.t*-mace is in his hand.
He gives instructions to the gods,
and they do what he says, trusting in them,
and satisfied with what you say to them.⁶⁹

The mummy mask was thus no “mask” in the sense of dissimulation, of hiding a true identity; rather, it was the “head of a god,” a head that enabled the deceased to see and act as a god. What the expression “you see with the head of a god” is supposed to mean is revealed in chapter 151 of the Book of the Dead, which deals with the mummification of the deceased. It is a spell for the mummy mask, entitled “spell for the mysterious head” or “the head of mystery”:⁷⁰

Anubis speaks, the embalmer, lord of the divine hall,
when he has placed his hands on the coffin of N.
and equipped him with what (he) needs:
Hail, O beautiful of face, lord of vision,
whom Ptah-Sokar has gathered together and whom Anubis has upraised,
to whom Shu gave support (that is, impetus),
O beautiful of face among the gods!

Your right eye is the night barque,
your left eye is the day barque,
your eyebrows are the Ennead.
The crown of your head is Anubis,
the back of your head is Horus,
your lock of hair Ptah-Sokar.

You (the mask)⁷¹ are in front of N., he sees by means of you.
 (You) lead him to the goodly ways,
 you repel Seth's band for him
 and cast his enemies under his feet for him
 in front of the Ennead in the great House of the Noble in Heliopolis.
 You take the goodly way to the presence of Horus, the lord of the nobles.

From the Middle Kingdom on, this spell was written on the inner surface of mummy masks; it is even on the famous golden mask of Tutankhamun.⁷² Its focus is in fact on sight. The mask is called "lord of vision," and it is stated, "he sees by means of you." The apotropaic aspect of the mask is also stressed: it repels enemies for him. The expression "with the head of a god" becomes understandable when we note that all the details of the mask—eyes, eyebrows, crown and back of the head, "finger" (understand: nose), and hair—are divinized. "With the head of a god" is thus tantamount to saying, "with a thoroughly godly head." The designation of the mask as "head," and not "face," is entirely justified. It refers to a helmet-style mask that did not just cover the face but enclosed the entire head and was worn on the shoulders.

There are many mummy masks, and also faces on anthropoid sarcophagi, that are in no way second-rate sculpture in their quality, and sometimes even in their portrait-like nature. The mummy was treated like a statue, and the statue was treated like a mummy; both served the deceased as bodies, that is, as instruments of his continued life, which was conceivable only in the medium of corporeality. The statue and the mummy are both to be understood as representations of the deceased, representations that served to keep the deceased present while at the same time also presupposing his absence.⁷³

For this reason, the Opening of the Mouth ritual was carried out on both the statue and the mummy of the deceased. Though it doubtless originated in the preparation of statues, for mummification and its accompanying rituals developed at a later date, by the time that our written and pictorial evidence for it were created, the ritual had long since been applied to mummies as well. In any case, unlike Mesopotamia, where there was a like-named ritual, the Opening of the Mouth ritual originated in the mortuary cult. It was a matter of a representation of the deceased father, which was to be prepared and endowed with life under the supervision of the son. The preparation of a statue was unequivocally connected to the management of death, and the statue cult had its origin in the mortuary cult.

Like corpses, statues could be buried. In the mortuary temple of Mentuhotpe II, the king who reunited Egypt at the end of the First Interme-

diate Period, there is a grave known as *Bab el-Hosan*, “(Tomb-)Entrance of the Horseman,” which Howard Carter sank into while riding his horse one morning, thus discovering it. It is a passageway nearly 500 feet deep. In what would normally be the sarcophagus chamber, the archaeologists found a seated statue of the king, wrapped in linen bandages and lying on its side.⁷⁴ In the cults of Osiris and Sokar, artificial “corpses” were annually prepared and buried. At Karnak, in recent years, archaeologists excavated a cemetery in which artificial corpses of the god Osiris were buried by the hundreds. The figurines were made out of a certain cohesive mixture of sand that was then covered with plaster and decorated. The Osiris mysteries, along with the Khoiak mysteries that were inseparably connected with them from the New Kingdom on, were nothing other than the embalming and burial rituals of the mortuary cult, transposed onto the divine level. These mysteries centered on a statue, not a corpse, but this distinction played no role and was ritually rescinded. In this connection, priests in certain temples prepared “grain mummies” that also had the intermediate status of both representation and corpse. To a great extent, and all the more so in the later stages of Egyptian history, the divine cult was a mortuary cult, not because the Egyptians believed their gods were dead (and that their dead were gods), but because there was no distinction between corpse and statue. Rites carried out to transfigure the corpse and endow it with life could thus epitomize all the ritual activity aimed at life-endowing renewal that was deemed appropriate for gods and their images. The burial ritual was thus the epitome of the ritual activity that, in these later periods, centered on the “synthetic” corpses of Osiris and Sokar, and on the bodies of the sacred animals of certain other gods.

Because of the equivalence of image and body, sacred animals also counted as images or bodies of gods. The gods were powers whose identity or life force could occupy a host of physical receptacles, both statues and, in certain cases, animals. This power to be incarnated in representations and in theriomorphic “transformations” was also ascribed to the dead in their status of transfigured ancestral spirits. For the dead, the statue was the medium of physical self-multiplication. There were thus often multiple statues, especially in the *serdabs* of the Old Kingdom.⁷⁵ In this period, there were even double and triple group statues that depicted the deceased in the company of himself.⁷⁶ During life, the individual’s presence in his body stood in the way of such self-multiplication; in death, his absence dissolved this barrier, and the single body, which itself had become a statue through the mummification process, could now be multiplied into a host of statues that served as bodies.

c) *Shabty* and Golem

In this connection, we must also consider the well-known figurines called “*shabty*” or “*ushabty*.”⁷⁷ Made of clay, faïence, wood, or hard stone, they were deposited in tombs in large quantities. Along with beautiful, carefully modeled and inscribed figurines, there are also grotesque examples that are scarcely more than lumps of clay rolled out between the palms of the hands. They were placed in a small wooden chest. Intact finds show that the ideal number of these figurines was 401: 365, one for each day of the year, and 36 “overseers,” one for each ten-day period. The year in question was a period of possible obligatory labor in the afterlife. For each day of this year, it was supposed to be possible for the tomb owner to send a substitute in the form of a *shabty*-figure. *Shabtys* are thus not to be understood as a means of avoiding obligatory labor, but rather, as a means of enabling the deceased to participate in this labor. In Egyptian beliefs about the magic of representations, the distinction between “(mere) representation” and “(true) self” was entirely dissolved. If it had been desired to avoid such duty, there would have been appropriate spells: “O you overseers of the afterlife, who call those obliged to serve to their work, you shall have no power over me, for I am a worthy in the household of Osiris, free of any obligation to serve!” I know of no such spells.⁷⁸ The deceased created substitutes for the sake of taking his place, and thus to participate, not for the sake of avoidance.

A spell was written on the bodies of these figures to activate them. The spell became chapter 6 of the Book of the Dead,⁷⁹ and it also appears in the mortuary liturgy of Pa-aa,⁸⁰ which means it was recited in the mortuary cult:

O this *shabty*, if the scribe Pa-aa is conscripted
for any work that is carried out in the realm of the dead,
as a man who is obliged to do his work,
to till (the fields) and to water the banks,
to carry sand from the east to the west,
you will say, “I shall do it, here I am!”⁸¹

On a Late Period wooden chest used for storing *shabty* figures, there is the following text:⁸²

Spoken by Thoth, lord of hieroglyphs,
scribe of Truth of the lord of eternity.
He says: O *ushabty*-figure (*rpjj*),
and you great officials of the realm of the dead,
when one calls, when one commands N.
to transport sand from west to east,

to transport sand from east to west,
 you will say, "Yes, I shall do it,"
 in sunlight and moonlight,
 at the beginning and the end of the year,
 in summer, in winter, on the 365 days of the year,
 to secure (him) in his activity (*r rwd m jrr=f*),
 like the great gods who lie in (their) coffins in the crypt
 in the sacred district of the divine region.

That such *shabty*-figures could serve other forms of sharing and participation emerges from an archaeological find, a burial "in effigy" that the overseer of domains Qenamun, who had shared a wet nurse with King Amenophis II and also been his companion at arms, had arranged for himself by special favor of the king in the most sacred part of Abydos, so as to be buried in the immediate vicinity of the tomb of Osiris and the entrance to the netherworld.⁸³ The *shabty* thus represented the deceased not only for the purpose of compulsory labor but also could serve as a bearer of his extended identity in other connections, such as here, in the proximity of Osiris.⁸⁴

From here, it is but a small step to the medieval Jewish concept of the golem, the artificial clay man who could be brought to life by means of letters written on his forehead and the recitation of secret spells, and whom its creator could send in his place on various missions.⁸⁵ An Egyptian story from the New Kingdom, fragmentarily preserved on a papyrus of the Late Period, tells of just such a case. It is prophesied to a king that he has only a short time left to live. But there is the possibility that another can go to the netherworld in his stead. Only one person, General Merire, an extremely wise, virtuous, and learned man, is capable of doing this. He receives a promise from the king to care for his widow and his son, and he goes in his place to the realm of the dead. There, he immediately learns that the king has most thoughtlessly broken all his promises. The king has made his wife the Great Royal Wife, given his house to a rival, and had his son killed. As a deceased person, Merire is not in a position to return to the world above to look after his family. But he forms a man of dirt, whom he is able to send in his place, with appropriate instructions, to the world above.⁸⁶

The "organic" unity in which the various constituent elements were integrated with one another during life could not be restored by the mortuary rituals, nor was this attempted. In the condition of death, they entered into entirely new forms of connection that opened up, for the deceased as a transfigured ancestral spirit, new forms of continued life in the sky, the earth, and the netherworld. This new connectivity, which held his person as such together, thus took on cosmic dimensions. His body,

which earlier had all the elements united inside it, now became only one element out of several. Along with the *ba*, the *ka*, and the heart, with which we have concerned ourselves in this chapter, these included the shadow and the name. The shadow belonged with the *ba*, but it did not follow it to the sky. The name lived on in the world above, in the memory of posterity; it had a certain affinity to the *ka*. What the Egyptian aimed for was a life in and with all these aspects of his person, which he now no longer “embodied” but rather combined. With the construction of a tomb with its statues and symbols, with the carrying out of rituals, and with the depositing of “mortuary literature” (see chapter 10), he endeavored to construct a network of connections that was supposed to facilitate a post-mortem relationship between the individual elements of his personality.

Moreover, the tomb served as a medium of social integration. Each tomb was part of a network of significant relationships with other tombs, with a temple, and with the city of the living. Its location was determined, for the most part, by social, not topographical or astronomical, factors. In every necropolis, there were principal tombs, dominating structures for correspondingly dominating personalities, around which smaller tombs were grouped. In cemeteries of rock-cut tombs, the highest-ranking tombs were often above, near the top of the hillside, while clients and dependants located their tombs below it. At el-Bersha, one tomb inscription stresses that the owner had constructed his tomb “at the feet of his lord.” There were also many group tombs that sheltered the wife, the father, or other close relatives in their upper stratum, and in the middle stratum, larger groups of relatives and dependants. At Deir el-Gabrawi, the Dynasty 6 nomarch Djau stressed in his tomb inscription that he had prepared his tomb together with his father, not because he lacked the means to make a tomb of his own, but because it suited him to be together with his father in the next life: “I have made my burial in a single tomb together with this (senior) Djau, so as to be together with him in a common place. This happened, not because means were lacking to make two tombs; I did this because I wanted to see this Djau daily and to be together with him in a single place.”⁸⁷ In this respect, the tomb was the “house of the *ka*”: first and foremost, it was at the service of the social self of the deceased, preventing his isolation by integrating him into both the sphere of those who owned tombs and the sphere of those yet to be born.⁸⁸