F9 – Week 3, Monday

Performing Rituals: Introduction

HPAH5076/6076

Funerary Beliefs in Ancient Egypt

Dr. Katharina Zinn

Reading

- Taylor. BoD. 82-91.
- Ikram. Death. 183-201.

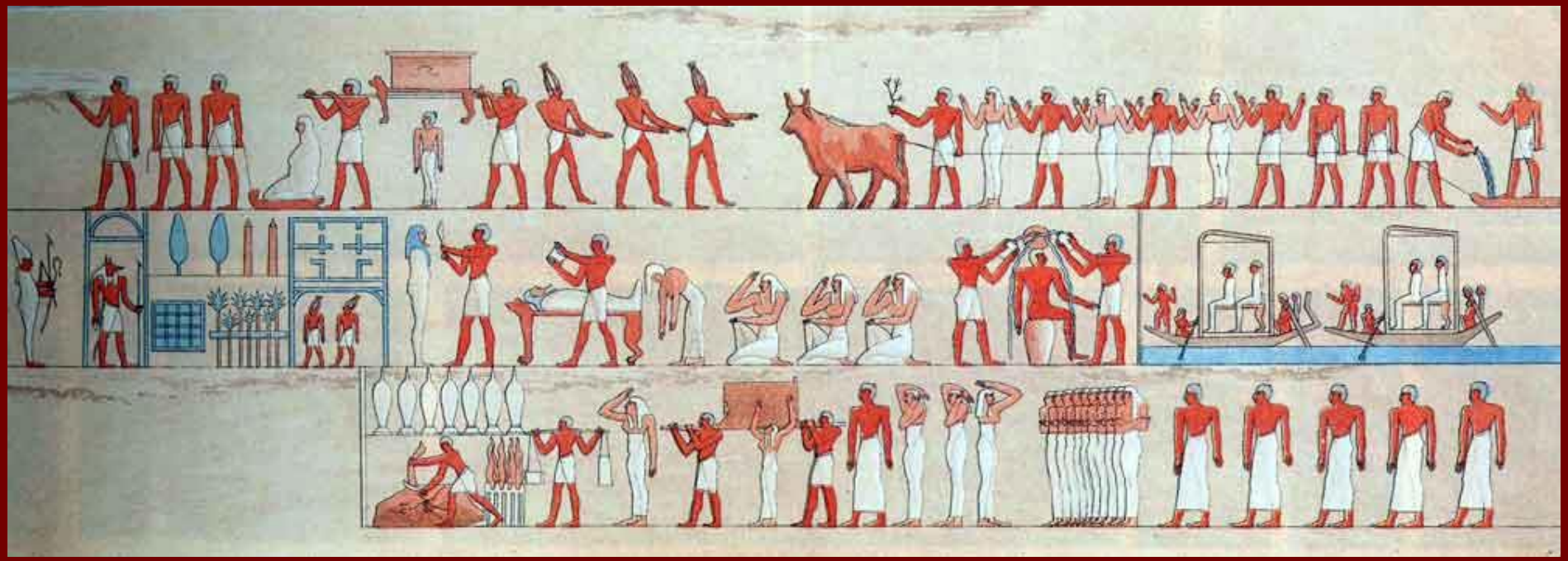
Additional Reading

- Roth, Ann-Marie. 1992. The PSS- Kf and the “Opening of the Mouth” Ceremony. In: Journal of Egyptian Archaeology 78 (1992), pp. 113-147.
- Roth, Ann-Marie. 1993. Fingers, stars and the 'Opening of the Mouth' : the nature and function of the ntrwy-blades. In: Journal of Egyptian Archaeology 79, 1993, 57-79.

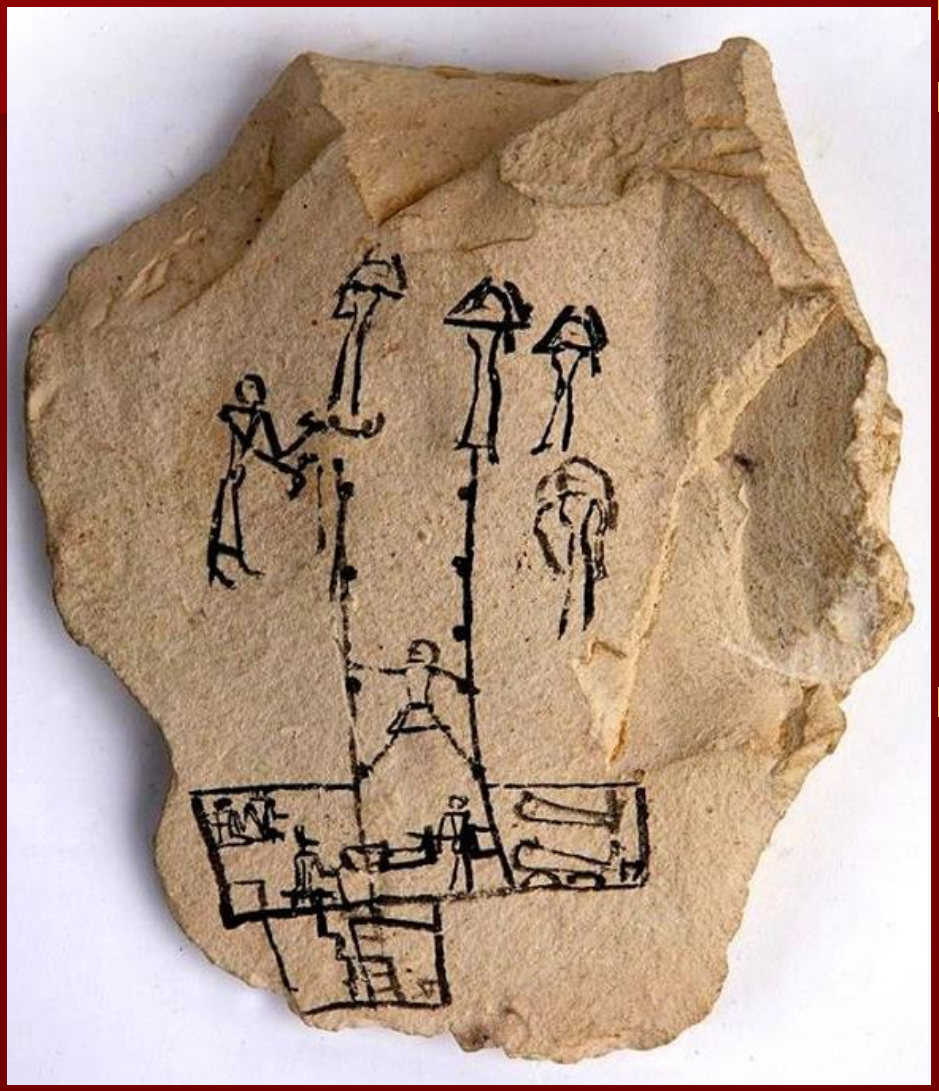
Opening of the Mouth,

Tomb of Tutankhamun

El-Kab
Reneni



Ostracon with funerary scene (final phase of burial) and tomb plan, NK, Manchester 5886



- western Thebes
- unique ink sketch – scene of a funeral
  - tomb shaft typical for Deir el-Medina
  - group of female mourners
  - Man descending in shaft
  - burial party carry a coffin burial chamber – one with jackal head
- informal medium: likely sketch of what happened (schematic) The implication is that one of the party is wearing a jackal-headed mask (priest as Anubis?)

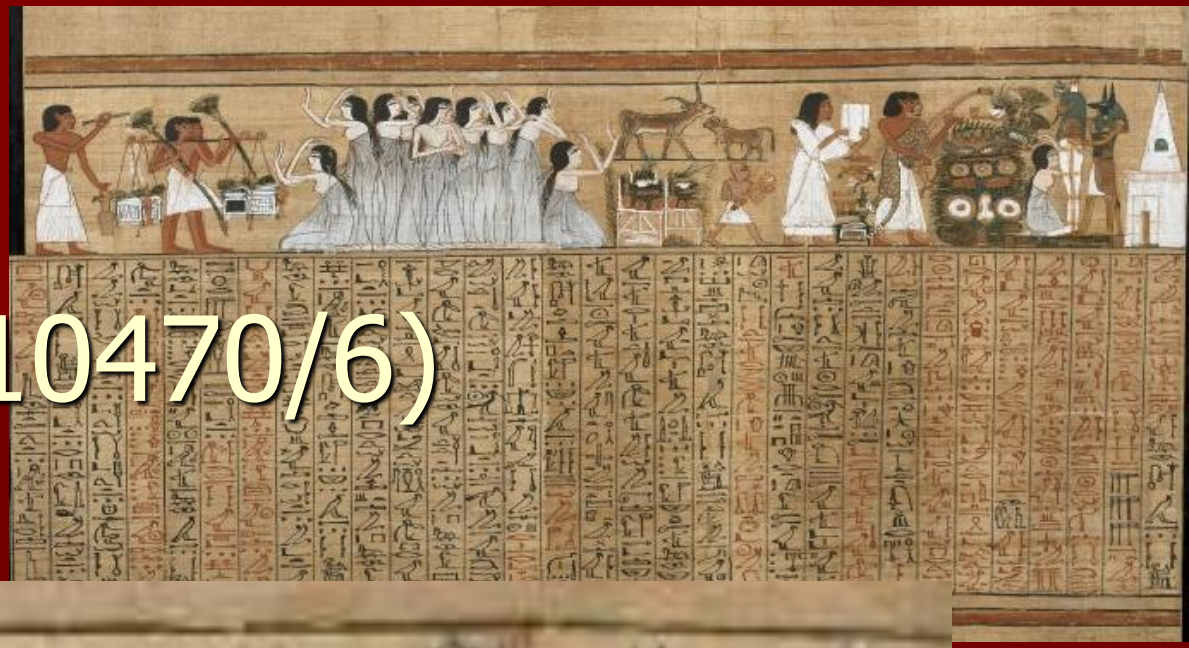
PELIZAEUS-MUSEUM HILDESHEIM 1585

(fired clay mask, painted, Late Period – 26th-30th dynasty)

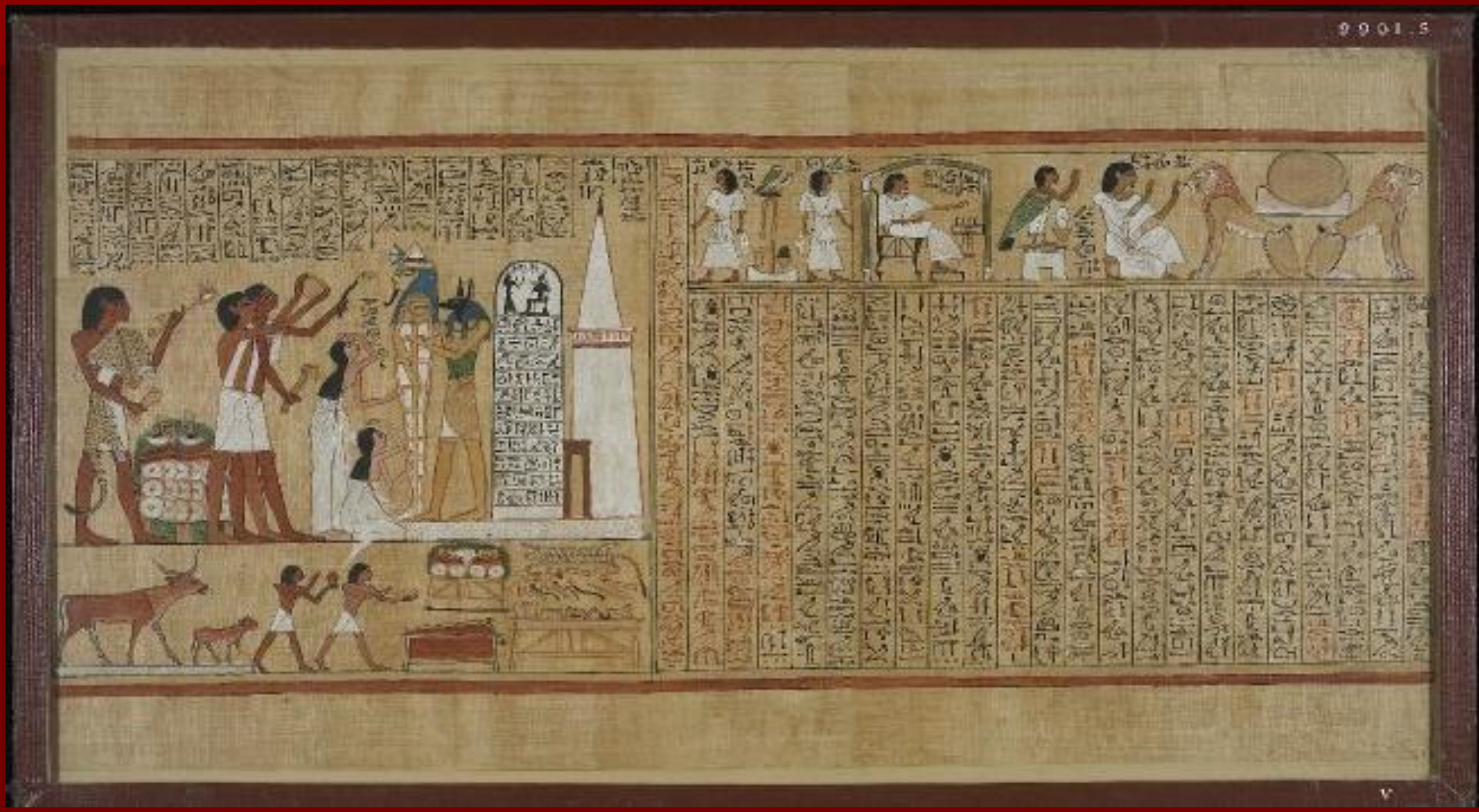
Mask in the form of the jackal head Anubis, ancient Egyptian god of embalming and the dead

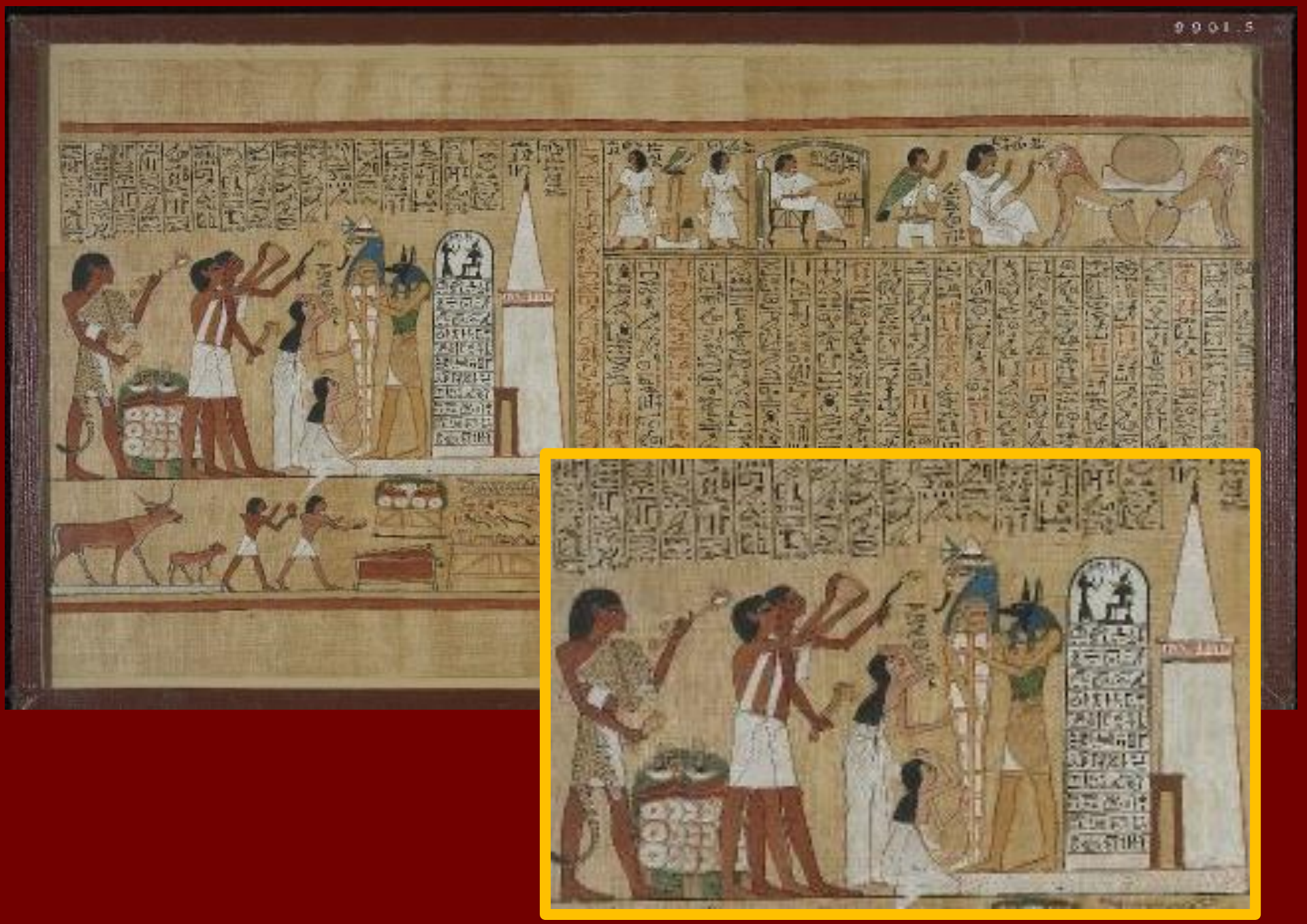
- made of cartonnage, layers of linen and papyrus, stiffened with plaster and then painted
- one of only three surviving masks made for the living
- only one allowing the wearer to speak
- worn by a priest during funeral rituals (Opening of the Mouth ceremony)
- Came from North Yorkshire farmhouse of Benjamin or 'Benny' Kent near Harrogate, later left to The Royal Pump Room Museum, in Harrogate

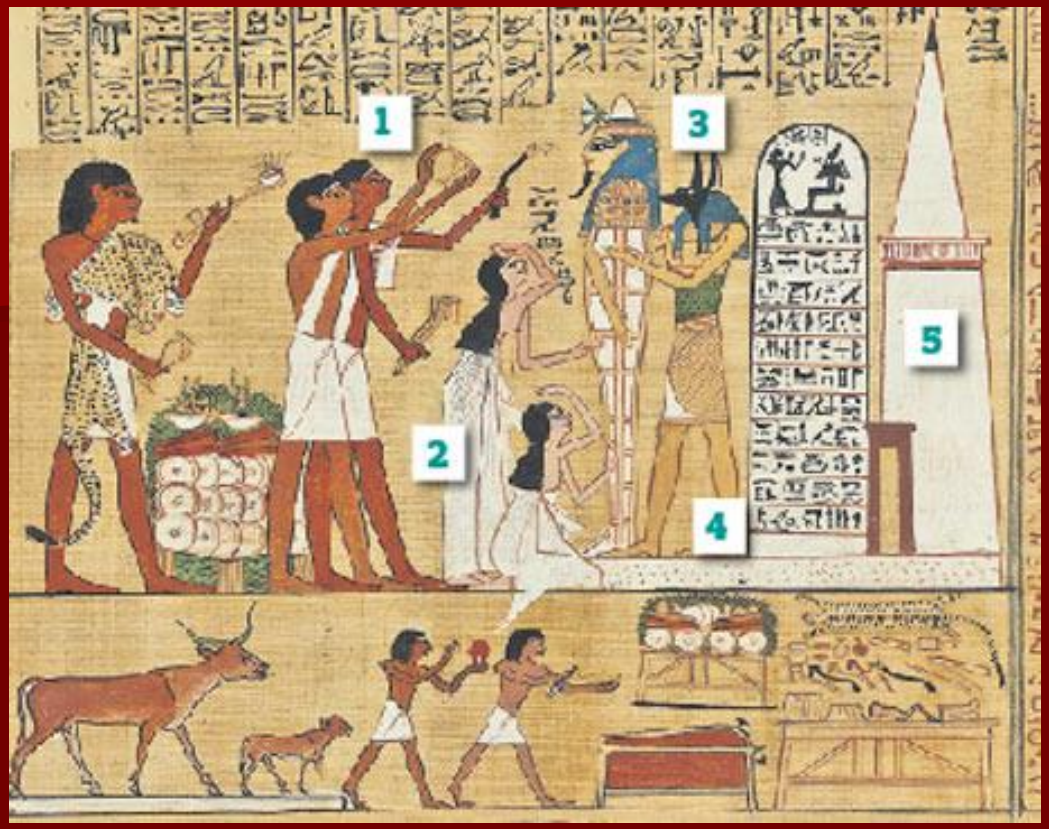
Ani (BM EA 10470/6)



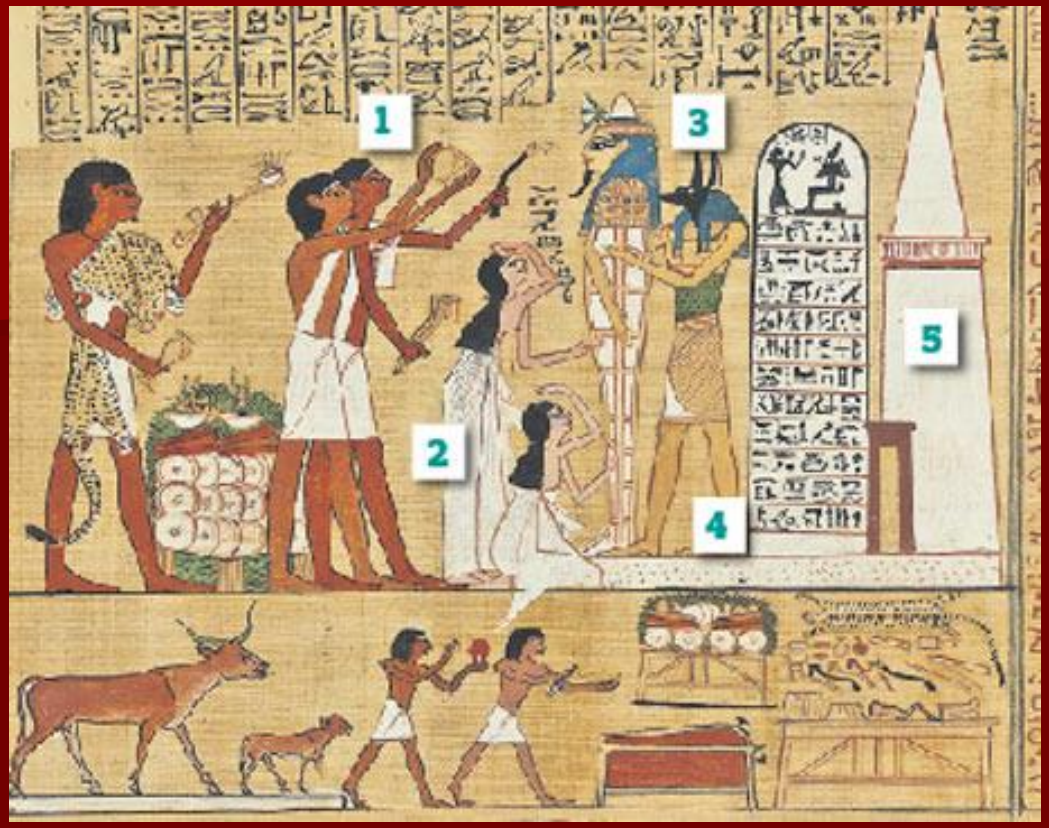
Pap. Hunefer (BM EA 9901/5)



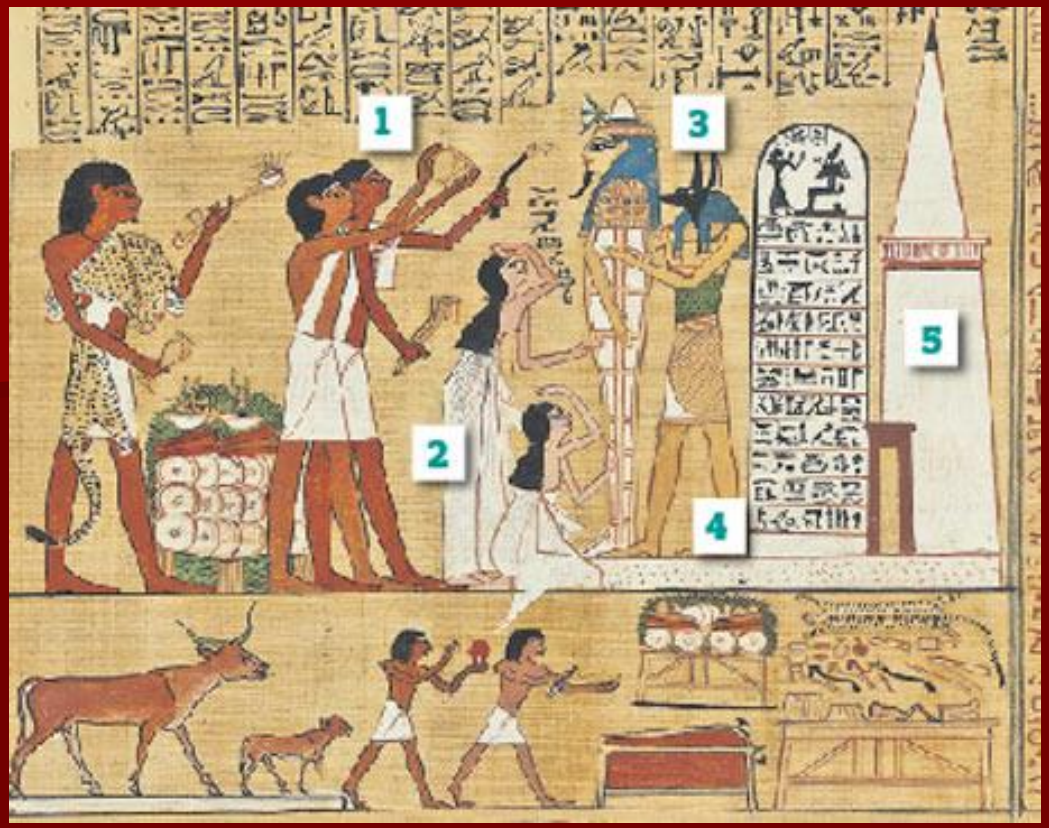




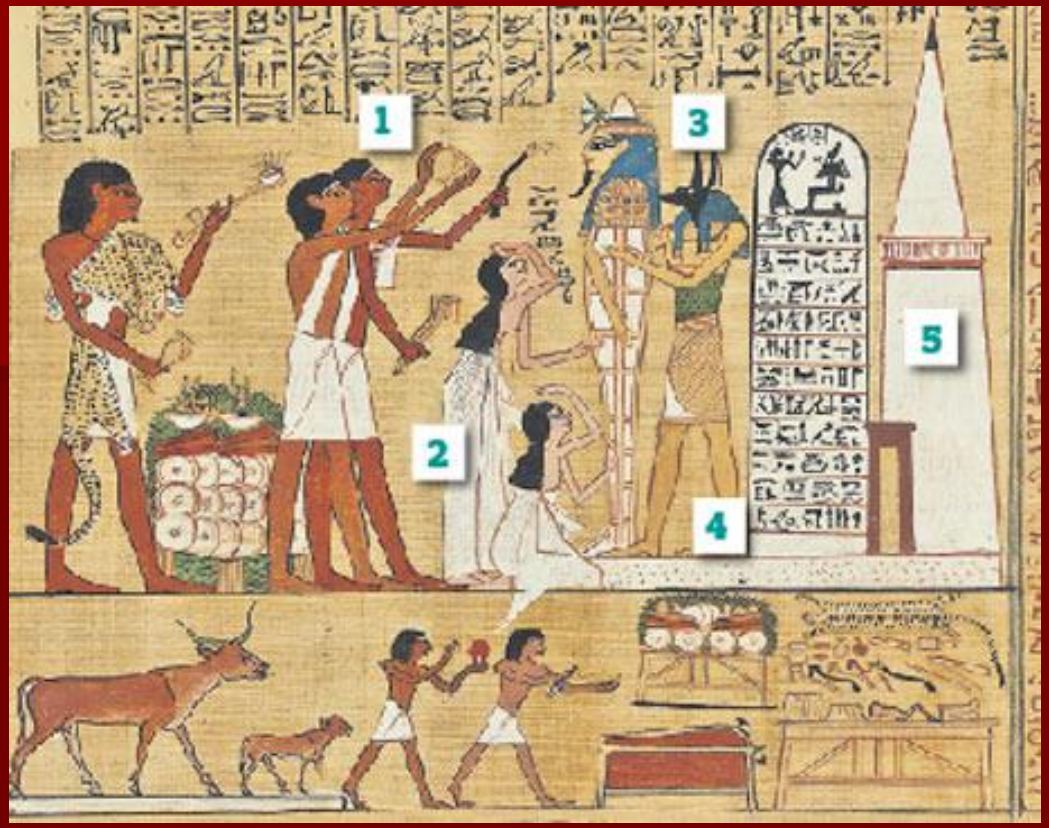
- **1** "Opening of the Mouth" = prominent part of the Book of the Dead.
- To perform it on a mummy, a priest would touch the face mask with a series of implements, symbolically unstopping the mouths, eyes, ears and nostrils so the corpse regains its faculties.



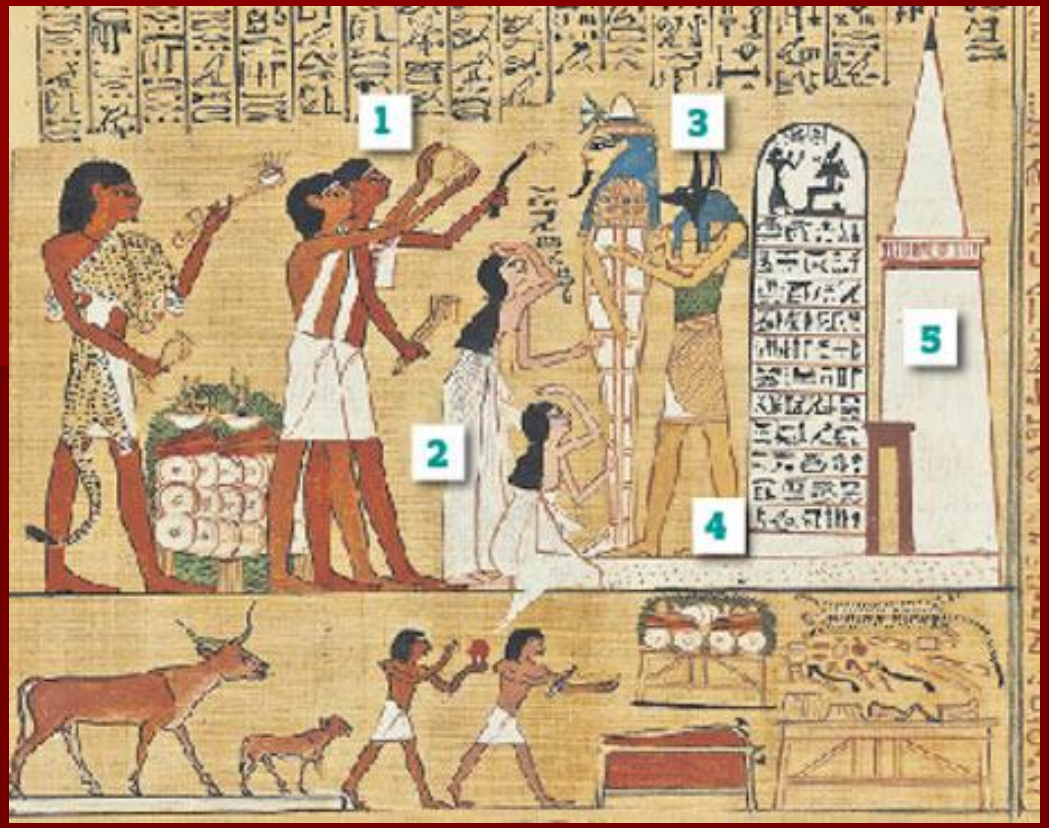
- **2** Two women mourning for the dead Hunefer. The standing one is named as his wife, Nasha.



- **3** The mummy of Hunefer, adorned with a mask. It is held up by a jackal-headed figure representing the god Anubis, protector and embalmer of the dead. This may represent the god himself or a priest wearing a mask to impersonate him.

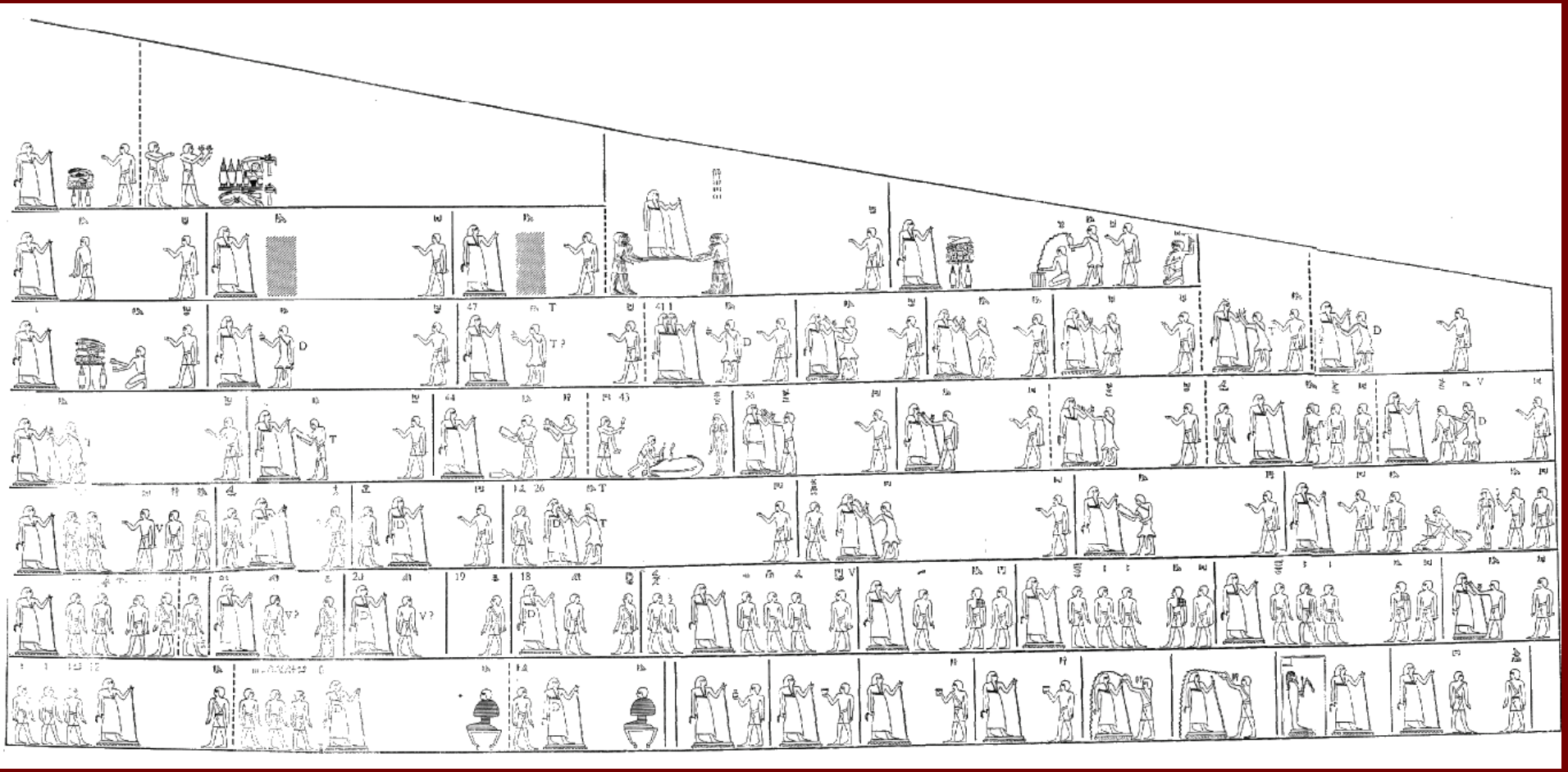


- **4** An inscribed tablet, which would have been set up outside Hunefer's tomb. At the top, a scene shows Hunefer worshipping Osiris.

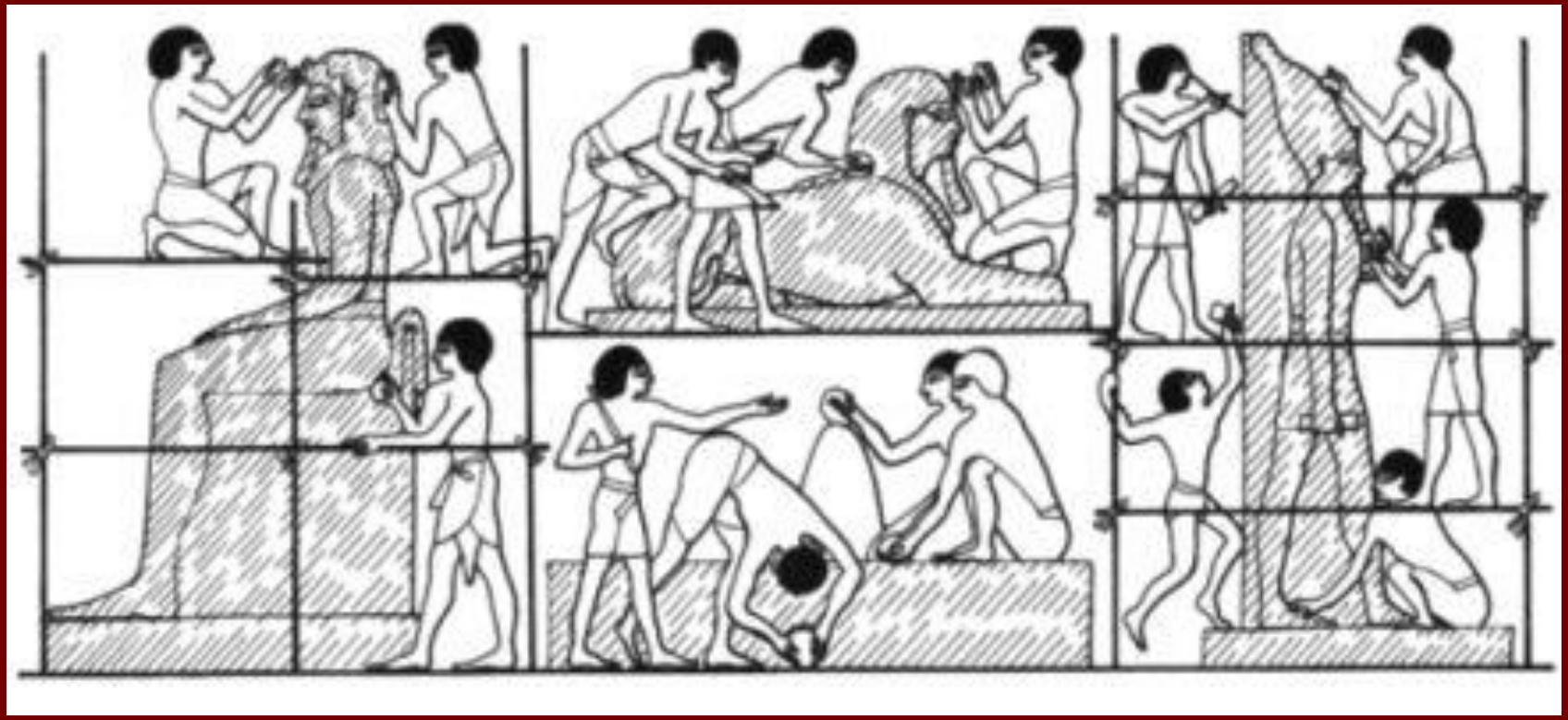


- **5** A stylised depiction of Hunefer's tomb.

“Opening of the Mouth”-Ritual Tomb of Rekhmire (TT100)



Workshop of sculptures



Sources

- written and pictorial sources range from Old Kingdom to Roman Period
- E. Otto published a synoptic edition and commentary
- & sources with the longest series of scenes and/or written passages (see next slide):
  - New Kingdom (1-3)
  - Twenty-first Dynasty (4)
  - Twenty-fifth to Twenty-sixth Dynasties (5,6)
  - early Roman Period (7)

Sources

1. tomb-chapel of vizier Rekhmira at Thebes (TT100) → longest sequence
2. tomb of king Sety I at Thebes (Valley of the Kings)
3. tomb of queen Tausret (Valley of the Kings)
4. coffin of a man named Butehamun, secretary of the king's draughtsmen, from Thebes (now in Turin: no depictions)
5. tomb-chapel of the high priestess of Amun Amenirdis at Thebes (Medinet Habu)
6. tomb of a man named Padiamenipet, chief lector priest, at Thebes (TT33)
7. funerary papyrus of a woman named Sais, from Memphite necropolis (now in Louvre: no depictions)

extended ritual of some seventy-five episodes

1. Episodes 1-9: preliminary rites
2. Episodes 10-22: animation of the statue
3. Episodes 23-42: meat offerings aligned with Upper Egypt
4. Episodes 43-46: meat offerings aligned with Lower Egypt
5. Episodes 47-71: funerary meal
6. Episodes 72-75: closing rites

Rekhmire

- Title: introduces the setting and purpose of the ritual: a statue is to be placed in the 'House of Gold' on a bed of sand, with the face oriented to the south
- Episodes 2-7: purification of area

Offering of incense and water

Bronze censer UC 30663, from the temples for the cult of sacred animals and birds at Saqqara.

Hes vase (Amarna Period)

Rekhmire

- Episodes 8-10: priestly officials conduct the fundamental part of the ritual: creation of statue / reviving of mummy in a chamber named by an Egyptian word 'is‘
- Episodes 12-18 involve the sculpting of the unfinished block into a finished statue (would be creation of mummy); in epsiodes 19-22 the key participants change clothing and the setting moves from the is-chamber to an outer (open air?) space

Royal Head, Ptolemaic Period
München, Staatliche Sammlung Ägyptischer Kunst

Rekhmire (not all present in the Rekhmira version)

- Episodes 23-25 cover the sacrifice of a bull and offering of select parts to the statue; Episodes 26-27 present core rites of 'Opening the Mouth' by touching the statue with special instruments; Episodes 28-30 repeat the procedures of Episodes 16-18, followed by the introduction of the 'son' for 'Opening the Mouth' in Episodes 31-32, 'Opening the Mouth' with the small finger in Episode 33, and the presentation of instruments including the peseshkaf-blade in Episodes 34-41

The ritual implements from the Opening of the Mouth as amulets for the afterlife

- Sets of stone versions of the ritual tools were made as parts of burial equipment for officials, priests and their families in the late Old Kingdom, at the cemeteries of Memphis. In the New Kingdom, and more often in the Late Period, models of the tools are found in the large sets of amulets placed on the wrapped mummified body, at cemeteries throughout Egypt.

double finger (Late Period amulet): dark stones and glass

serpent blade (Episode 27 - werhekau = 'Great of Power')

serpent blade (Episode 27 - werhekau = 'Great of Power‘)

The ritual implements from the Opening of the Mouth as amulets for the afterlife

- 1. the forked blade, named in the Opening of the Mouth ritual as peseshkaf, a word of uncertain original meaning, perhaps reinterpreted in later periods as 'splitter of his ka-spirit' - favoured materials include obsidian and other black to green stones, glass and metal; the form seems to derive from the forked flint blades found as early as the Badarian Period

forked blade (peseshkaf)

forked flint blades (Badarian Period)

Meat offering (UC 14479)

Rekhmire

- Episodes 42-47 repeat the bull-sacrifice theme of Episodes 23-25 (of these Episode 42 is absent from the Rekhmira version), followed by a robing and anointing ritual of which the Rekhmira version includes only Episode 50

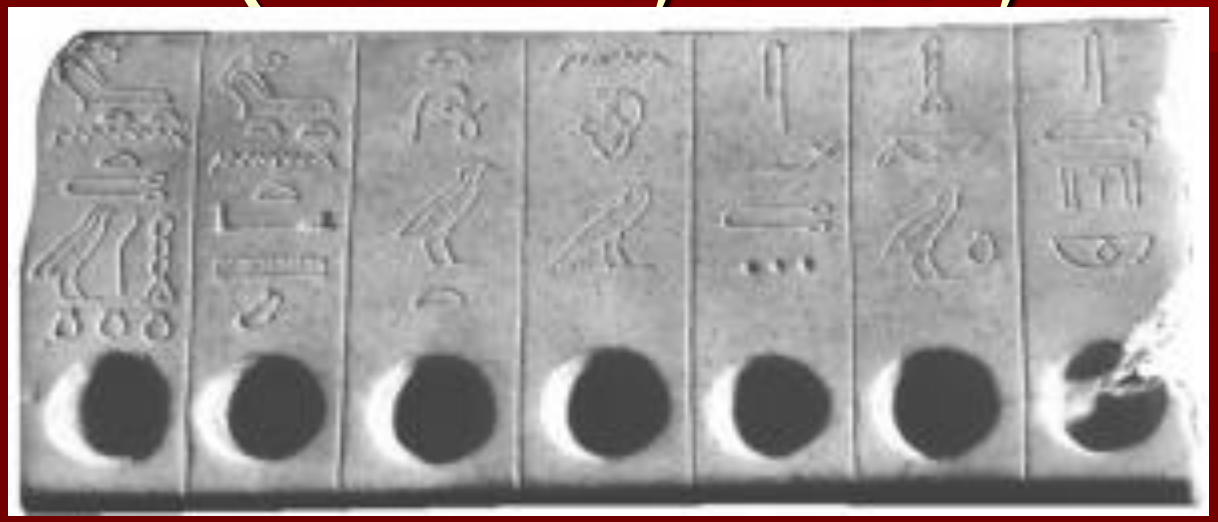
Rekhmire

- Libations to all deities and the purification of an offering (in the Rekhmira version only Episodes 59 and 65 part), followed by the concluding phase in which the image is set up in its final position, and the person conducting the ritual moves backwards out of the sacred space, brushing away any footprints (Episodes 70-75).

Ointment of Amun

Theban burials (early 22nd dyn.): customary to secure mummy wrappings with leather braces, inscribed with king's name (Osorkon, found in Ramesseum)

Seven Sacred Oil palette
(From Giza, G4733E, shaft of G4733)



- divided into seven sections by thinly incised lines, each section with a carved repository for oil in the bottom register.
- From right to left, the oils are labeled: seti-heb, hekanu, sefeti, ni-chenem, tewat, ash, and tiehenu