

The Trappings of Kingship Remarks about Archaism, Rituals and Cultural Polyglossia in Saite Egypt

Part I. Theoretical considerations and notes on some royal reliefs*

1. INTRODUCTION

Already in the 19th and early 20th centuries many renowned Egyptologists such as Brugsch, Maspero, Erman and Breasted remarked the pronounced archaising features observable on several Late Period monuments, especially those dating from the 26th Dynasty.¹ From this era of pioneering research onwards archaism has admittedly played a prominent role in Egyptological perceptions of the Late Period.² The existence of a specific "retro-culture" during the 8th-6th centuries BC was very soon regarded an established fact which, due to its obviousness, did not require further explanation, Consequently the sizeable number of Egyptological publications devoted to this subject so far have primarily focused on the description and classification of specific monuments and on questions of when this cultural formation had begun or which external/internal factors had fostered its development. Few have been the attempts to deal with issues that are conveniently circumscribed by the term "archaism" on a more general, reflective and theoretical level.³ Thus it

3 To name only the most important contributions to the study of archaism in the Late Period:

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¹ BRUGSCH 1877, 739; *idem* 1891, 487; MASPERO 1887, 224 f.; BREASTED 1905, 570-573; ERMAN 1923, 52 f.

² Cf. Capart, 1920, 485; Curtius 1923, 204-206; Erman 1934, 321; Gauthier 1932, 232-235; Bothmer 1960, XXXII-XXXIX.

still remains a *desideratum* to define the exact nature of the "archaism", or rather "archaisms", encountered in the Late Period but also in earlier phases of Egyptian history. Such a study would have to be based on a very wide range of source material because the haphazardness of conservation necessitates a comparative framework also encompassing the minor arts. Even so it will remain difficult to assess the complex relationships between innovations, traditions and archaisms (which may in fact possess their very own line of traditions, see below), and to fathom the latter's depth of penetration into the contemporary cultural sphere as a whole.

This article is meant to explore some of the possibilities at hand to the Egyptologist for approaching such a task. While I try to raise in the following some methodological issues of archaism that have, in my opinion, not received enough attention so far, no claim is made of presenting new source material or arriving at completely new conclusions. Rather, it is my aim to approach some of the material already known by asking new kinds of questions and forging new relations between different types of evidence.

Part I of the article in the present volume comprises introductory remarks on methodology and terminology as well as a number of case studies devoted to Saite royal reliefs. In part II, which will be published elsewhere, information stemming from a wider group of sources (e.g. titles and biographical passages in private inscriptions) will be employed to gain more insight into the ritual dimension of Saite kingship and help to illustrate the use of different cultural temporalities during the 26th Dynasty.

2. Types of archaism – attempts at definitions

At the beginning of any study on archaism stands the problem of terminology. This is not merely a side issue since the very definition of terms, either explicit

BAINES – RIGGS 2001; CAPART 1938; DER MANUELIAN 1983a; *idem* 1983b; *idem* 1985; ERMAN 1914; JANSEN-WINKELN 1998; RUSSMANN 1983; *eadem* 1997; SCHENKEL 1977. Works dealing with archaism in more general terms: BRUNNER 1970; *idem* 1975; DER MANUELIAN 1994, esp. 1-59, 66 f., 387-402; JOSEPHSON 2001; KAHL 1999, esp. 28-52, 283-356; MORKOT 2003; NAGY 1973; NEUREITER 1994. See also the catalogue of the recent exhibition "Faraonska Renesansa/Pharaonic Renaissance" (Ljubljana, 2008) which was almost entirely devoted to this subject: TIRADRITTI 2008. The individual contributions to the catalogue are, however, of unequal quality and do not devote much space to theoretical issues.

or implicit, and the manner in which they are used have direct repercussions on the outcome of the research. The problems are aggravated by the existence of a huge repertoire of related expressions such as "archaism", "archaic", "archaising", "archaistic", "antiquarian", "sub-archaic", "retarding", "classicist", "classic", "neo-Memphite", "revival", "survival", "renaissance", etc. In addition, the use of these terms is often very inconsistent. This may in some cases even lead to the result that different scholars employ the very same term with sometimes completely different meanings. For Josephson, for example, "archaism" signifies the conscious re-adoption of a style current during a previous era in sculpture, painting, architecture, literature or any other field of cultural expression.⁴ He concedes, however, that in a wider perspective the term also encompasses the survival or simple presence of any cultural feature associated with the past, irrespective of the question whether it was consciously perceived as such. The broadness of this definition asks for a context-specific qualitative limitation of the term in order to make research on specific questions feasible. Aldred, on the other hand, calls the conscious readoption of cultural modes of the past "antiguarian" or "antiguarianism".⁵ The label "archaism" is in his terminology reserved for the going back (e.g. during the 11th Dynasty) to the "archaic" style of the Predynastic and Early Dynastic Periods, which are characterised by rather austere pre- or early canonical forms.⁶ Fischer agrees with Aldred's view of 11th Dynasty art as being oriented towards early Egyptian history, but characterises this artistic trait simply as "archaic"⁷ and does not distinguish – at least not on a terminological level – between primary and secondary occurrences of this style.8

In order to make the use of terminology in this article more transparent I offer in the following three basic definitions.

- Archaism: In accordance with the short but seminal article by Brunner
- 4 JOSEPHSON 2001, 109.
- 5 ALDRED 1980, 228.
- 6 Idem 1970, 30. Cf. DAVIS 1989, esp. 116-126.

8 The terms "primary" and "secondary" are used here expressing simple chronological relation, irrespective of the question whether there was a deliberate going back to the past. One might even doubt that the artistic styles of these two periods resemble each other to a significant degree.

⁷ FISCHER 1959, 252. As far as the latter part of the 11th Dynasty is concerned, Fischer sees indeed signs of an "archaism". Cf. FISCHER 1996, 116.

in the LÄ archaism is here understood as a conscious going back to cultural modes of the past that are not linked to the time of re-appropriation through a chain of traditional transmission. Archaism thus circumvents tradition,⁹ the major distinction between the two being the gap of time that separates the individual attestations of a stylistic or typological trait (fig. 1a–c). This chronological gap sets archaism also apart from simple conservatism with which it has otherwise in common the aspect of choice. One could characterise conservatism as a cultural decision process on a synchronic level, whereas the choices of archaism are situated on a diachronic level. Archaism is in need of difference. The crucial aspect of this definition lies with the fact that choice implies deliberateness and, as a consequence, one or more contemporary alternatives from which the choice is to be distinguished. There have to be different choices available – at least in principle – for an archaism to come into effect and be recognisable as such.

• **Transmission:** Transmission is the diachronic reproduction of cultural information (sets of "**culturemes**"¹⁰) by human beings, i.e. agents or bearers of such culturemes. The actual modes and methods of transmission may vary from one case to the next. The same is true for the starting point of these transmissions and the circumstances of social interaction that accompany them. On the sociological level one can basically distinguish between future-bound transmission and past-bound transmission. The former is characterised by a continuous passing on of traditional cultural knowledge from one person (generation) to the next, e.g. by instructing/ teaching. While the capacity and will of the recipient to receive and store this information forms a prerequisite for the succeeding of this type of transmission it is still the transmitter's motivation and ability which govern the process as a whole. Past-bound transmission, on the other hand, does not require the interaction of two or more individuals because the cultural information is usually sought without direct social mediation in remnants

9 BRUNNER 1975, col. 386.

¹⁰ The term "cultureme" designates a single distinct unit/item within a cultural repertoire, be it on the level of language, the visual arts, material culture or any other emanation of a given cultural system. See Even-Zohar 1997, 22

Possibilities of transmitting cultural information over time



a) chain of tradition (future-bound transmission)



b) archaism bridging gap of transmission (past-bound)



c) "virtual archaism" = chain of tradition unrecognisable due to lack of preservation



d) combination ("tradition of archaism", "invention of tradition" etc.)

Figures 1a-c Archaism and related phenomena

of the past such as ancient monuments, pattern books or textual corpora on papyri, priestly or administrative records and other artefacts of bygone ages. In reality no type of transmission can occur in an undiluted form on its own. Even the most influential teacher/instructor will recur from time to time to educational material or examples not created by himself, neither will he be able to completely prevent influence on his disciples stemming from their own experience with cultural features created at different times in the past. Accordingly, even a person eager to stick to modes of ancient cultural expression cannot create work of his own without unconsciously resorting to traditional features that were very much "alive" during his or her own time.

The diagrams in fig. 1 should thus be regarded only as simplified models applying only to the prototypical manifestations of the paradigm. They do also not take into account a practice that played an important role throughout Egyptian history, namely the "elaboration on the cultureme". By this expression I understand the **adaptation** of a given cultureme, which can be either transmitted through tradition or re-appropriated after a gap of transmission. The different forms of adaptation are perhaps best considered with the theoretical concepts of the text critical studies in mind. Basically three different attitudes towards working with older texts can be discerned. They are normally subsumed under the headings "reproductive tradition", "productive tradition" and "open transmission".11 While the first denotes a faithful word-by-word copying of manuscripts, the second term refers to a transmission in which texts are subjected to adaptations determined by the requirements of contemporary reality. "Open transmission" takes place when texts are constantly re-phrased, and the newly created texts conform to their prototypes only in terms of the content. Additionally, one has to account for the creation of a new text or textual version by means of resorting to different manuscripts, thus producing a "contaminated" text or a kind of pastiche.¹² To what extent these possibilities of textual transmission had their counterpart in other modes of cultural expression such as the

¹¹ Cf. KAHL 1999, 37-38 w. references.

¹² Ibidem, 41; Rössler-Köhler 1991, 286-287.

visual arts will be of concern below.¹³ **Innovation** should be regarded as a sub-category of adaptation rather than as a completely different category.

Archaic: One may call "archaic" those iconographic, stylistic, linguistic or other features that are indebted to cultural forms current during early Egyptian history, i.e. the Pre- and Early Dynastic Periods as well as the Old Kingdom. The expression does not state whether the cultural item is a deliberate resuscitation of already extinct, anachronistic culturemes or whether it still belongs to an ongoing chain of transmission. The decisive criterion for applying the term is the perceived difference of a feature from a linearly conceived line of development. Thus a sheath-dress with shoulder straps depicted on the wall of a Late Period tomb appears to us archaic because at that time there already existed more "modern" alternatives such as elaborate pleated dresses.¹⁴ In contrast, the icon "smiting the enemies" should not be called "archaic" from an art historical perspective, although it was conceived during the earliest stages of Egyptian culture. This is because during its history spanning over 3000 years it was never completely replaced by an alternative scheme, irrespective of the fact that during the Ramesside period in particular it underwent a process of substantial iconographic modification and innovation. Yet, these adaptations merely widened the repertoire and did not lead to a completely new pictorial vocabulary that would have superseded the traditional scheme.¹⁵ A different picture emerges when considering the icon's relation to the realities of contemporary rule throughout the ages. Perceived from this angle it would be difficult not to

15 See HALL 1986, esp. 28-42.

¹³ A certain group of lintels from Late Period funerary monuments, for which Bénédite coined the term "art néo-memphite" (BENÉDITE 1921/22, 1), could be cited as an example of such pastiche work in the visual arts. Bénédite's neologism was evidently influenced by the concept of Neo-Attic art in Classical Archaeology (see Fuchs 1959; STROCKA 1967; CAIN – DRÄGER 1994). Though many age-honoured motifs are employed in the decoration of "néo-memphite" monuments, the way in which they are combined and arranged as well as certain details such as furniture fittings are without earlier parallels. Cf. CAPART 1938, 13-15; WOLF 1957, 637-642.

¹⁴ Cf. Russmann 1997, 28-29 w. fig. 5. It is of no concern here that the development of a feature such as a dress might not have followed a straight line, e.g. from simple sheath dress to elaborate pleated dress, since the term "archaic" does not pretend to convey a deeper insight into the complex relationship between different cultural temporalities. It is merely a semantic tool that facilitates describing the phenomenological properties of an item, the impression it conveys to our modern eyes.

wonder at the great contrast between the Roman Emperor as a real human being on the one hand and the "hieroglyphic" Roman Pharaoh depicted on Egyptian temple walls on the other. While the former would usually wear a toga or Roman armour when heading his legions in a remote part of the Empire, the latter is represented in the anachronistic guise of an ancient Egyptian monarch with complete royal attire, smiting prototypical enemies of the Egyptian state whose real-life models had already perished millennia ago.¹⁶ In this particular sense the icon has indeed become "archaic".

This last observation highlights the fact that the phenomena of upholding tradition and of archaism may only pertain to a very limited sphere of contemporary culture as a whole and must not be generalised. It is therefore essential to clarify which levels of the cultural transmission are referred to in each case, since transmission of iconography may not necessarily coincide with transmission of rituals, ceremonies, royal attire, etc. (see p. 25ff.).

2.1. Problems related to common concepts of archaism

At least four problems arise with the common definition of archaism. The first is a pragmatic one. A discontinuity in the attestation of a particular cultural feature, for example a specific iconographic pose or statue type, may lead one to regard the later attestations as evidence of a conscious going back to an old tradition that had been interrupted at a certain point in the past. This discontinuity, however, is in many cases only a virtual one that stems from the unequal distribution of the available source material, which is in turn a result of the distorting haphazardness of preservation (fig. 1b). More than once Egyptologists – in the simple ignorance of particular monuments – postulated the existence of an archaism bridging more than thousand years in regard to a certain feature while the actually preserved attestations of this feature would rather speak for a continuous line of tradition.¹⁷ Vice versa, equally large

¹⁶ Cf. Hölbl 1994, 69-73; 277; idem 1996, 98-109, esp. 99.

¹⁷ The asymmetrical squatting statue may offer a pertinent example. Since this type is well attested during the 5th and 6th Dynasties its occurrence with a representation of the TIP vizir Hori (JE 37512, early 9th century BC according to TIRADRITTI 1999, 25, n. 10, late 8th century BC according to ALDRED 1981, 134, fig. 112; early 22nd Dynasty according to BRANDL 2008, 67, Dok. O-4.1) lead F. Tiradritti to postulate an archaism going back to Old Kingdom models (TIRADRITT

is the danger of assuming a tradition where there existed in reality several independent re-adoptions of old motifs or other cultural elements (fig. 1d). No matter how much has been preserved of ancient Egyptian material culture, to modern researchers these remnants will always remain a puzzle whose missing parts outnumber the preserved ones by far. As a consequence it is hardly ever possible to unequivocally demonstrate the existence of a continuous chain of transmission between two attestations of a feature which are separated by decades, centuries or even millennia.

The second problem concerns the possibility of different modes of transmission for a single cultureme or a set thereof. Thus the same features might be transmitted through different modes at different times, sometimes perhaps even simultaneously. While a particular patron might encourage the artists assigned by him to derive their models from ancient papyri, the employees/subordinates working for another contemporary or slightly later dignitary might prefer to take measure at the actual monument of the latter's colleague or at least receive inspiration from the design sketches devised for it. Such practices can lead to the phenomenon of primary and secondary archaism where the latter would depend on the former instead of drawing on a presumed "original" model. The art at the beginning of the New Kingdom has often been described as an emulation of artwork created during the 11th and early 12th Dynasties,18 which themselves depended heavily on the Old Kingdom tradition of the Memphite residence.¹⁹ In this sense early 18th Dynasty art could be considered a secondary archaism. Primary archaism, in turn, would be a feature of artistic productions of the later 11th Dynasty, provided that Mentuhotep Nebhepetre and his successors did not encounter a residential culture and tradition in the north that was still very much alive then and in no need of resuscitation.²⁰ Another case of secondary archaism often referred

18 Cf., e.g., GRIMM - SCHOSKE 1999, 75-76. See also MORKOT 2003, 96.

19 Cf. FISCHER 1959; Di. ARNOLD 2002, 121-122.

20 In this case Nebhepetre would only have elevated the principles of Memphite culture to their former pre-eminent position throughout the country. A true archaism would then have occurred

^{1999, 25,} n. 10; *idem* 2000, 21, n. 20). However, more than a dozen asymmetrical squatting statues are known from the intervening Middle and New Kingdoms, rendering the possibility of an Old Kingdom-inspired archaism in the case of Hori's statue rather unlikely (cf., e.g. MMA 20.3.4 and Baltimore, Walters Art Museum [formerly Gallery] 22.20: VANDIER 1958, 167; 234; Album, pl. 55, 2; 57, 2; HAYES 1959, 214, fig. 131; LOUVREA 123: DELANGE 1987, 59; Cairo CG 42116: RUSSMANN 1990, 86, cat. 38).

to is the art of the 30th Dynasty. According to Bothmer the artists of the last "indigenous" Egyptian dynasty attempted to revitalize the stylistic repertoire of the "archaizing" 26th Dynasty, in particular the latter's earlier phase. The result was a style which Bothmer called "archaistic".²¹ If one accepts that the basic models of Old and Middle Kingdom art became an ancient Egyptian classical canon, setting the standards for artistic practice to come, one could regard both Saite and Nectanebide art as only slightly differing varieties of the more general phenomenon of **classicism**.

It should be further taken into account that archaism (by no means only artistic currents referring to the Old and Middle Kingdoms) was an option throughout pharaonic history. One could call this constant falling back on culturemes of the past the "virtual tradition of archaism" in ancient Egypt. It is a phenomenon which makes it particularly difficult to uphold the established dichotomy of continuous traditional transmission on the one hand and the postulated discontinuity evidenced by archaism on the other. The problem may be illustrated by the example of post-Middle Kingdom false-door stelae. Even though the majority of funerary stelae of the New Kingdom conform to a layout easily distinguishable from monuments of the former Empires, during Dynasties 18-20 now and again a certain type of niche stela occurs which corresponds to the common type of private stela current during the third and early second millennia BC (see Pl. 17a, stela of Puyemre CG 34047, early 18th Dynasty).²² When this type of stela – after having apparently fallen into oblivion during the late 2nd millennium – makes its occasional reappearance in the Late Period (see for example the stela of Harbes dating to the early 26th Dynasty, PI. 17b)²³ one cannot claim that in these instances a conscious going

only under the Ahmoside kings in the 18th Dynasty.

23 VERNUS 1978, 95, doc. 101, pl. XIII. The indication of the leaves of the door and the bolts is paralleled on some niche stelae of the Old Kingdom. See, e.g. KANAWATI *et al.* 1984, 17-18, pls. 5-6. For further Late Period examples of niche stelae cf. BOTHMER 1960, 28, no. 24 w. references. An isolated occurrence of an archaic offering scene, but without niche, can also be found on a wooden

²¹ BOTHMER 1960, XXXVII; 97, no. 77. While it would be hard to deny that artists of the 30th Dynasty were indebted to their Saite predecessors in many ways, it is now also acknowledged that 30th Dynasty art shows a remarkable degree of stylistic innovation thus paving the way to the art under the Ptolemies. See Josephson 1997.

²² LACAU 1909, 80-82, pl. XXVIII. For other niche stelae dating to the New Kingdom cf.: from the tombs of Senenmut TT 71 and TT 353: DORMAN 1991, 54-55, pl. 16a; pp. 135-138, frontispiece, pls. 70-71, of the vizir Ptahmose, Leyden, AM 1: BOESER 1913, 8, no. 28, pl. XVIII.

back to the New Kingdom forerunners takes place, nor is there any justification for reconstructing a line of tradition leading directly from the New Kingdom niche stelae to the Late Period examples that would have bridged the gap. The difference to the example of the asymmetrical squatting statue type (see n. 17) is that in the case of the funerary stelae the argument of quantity comes into play. Even today the Old and Middle Kingdom niche stelae are ubiquitous in collections of ancient Egyptian artefacts worldwide. Examples from the New Kingdom and the Late Period are much less frequent and altogether missing (so far as it is known) from Dynasties 21-23. The significance of this distribution is confirmed by the great number of other types of funerary stelae preserved from the period 1500-500 BC. In other cases, however, it is not difficult to imagine that archaism did indeed become the breeder of a new line of tradition, thus causing even more trouble for the researcher who is trying to keep the two terms neatly separated. The art of the earlier 12th Dynasty may be seen as such a newly formed, slowly evolving line of tradition whose foundations were laid by the archaising movement of the previous period. Of course it is highly problematic to decide at which point an artistic movement stops referring to a distant past and starts transmitting cultural information in the sense of a true tradition. It might often appear arbitrary to differentiate between the phenomenon of secondary archaism and a tradition originating in an archaism since the crucial criterion lies with the ancient artists' attitudes towards their models, which is all but impossible to gauge today.

Considerations of archaism should also not lose sight of the fact that there is a pragmatic side to the phenomenon too. After a period of prolonged economic hardships and political crisis, which also saw a transformation of the ideological anchoring of society, it might not have been possible initially to meet the elite's renewed demand for artefacts through which they could engage in the "monumental discourse"²⁴. A previous lack of demand will almost

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Theban funerary stela dating from the late Third Intermediate Period (London, British Museum EA 65354: BIERBRIER 1987, 16-17, pls. 20-21).

²⁴ Following ASMANN 1992, 169-170, "monumental discourse" designates here the totality of representations in different kinds of media that express the overarching ideological and ethical principles of the ancient Egyptian state and its elites. Paradigmatic embodiment of this function are inscribed monuments of durable stone, but other media such as sacred texts or traditional models/ templates on papyrus should be considered part of this "monumental discourse" as well.

inevitably have resulted in a decreased willingness to procure the substantial resources necessary for providing continuous education of apprentices, in turn a prerequisite for upholding tradition and transmitting cultural knowledge. With the lack of contemporary alternatives suited for emulation and a shortage of adequately trained highly qualified personnel it does not come as a great surprise that craftsmen, priests of the House of Life and their patrons turned their attention to models of a more distant past. Sophisticated archaism may thus become a very "modern" and innovative feature that might also distinguish the patron from people who still contented themselves with the unpretentious creations of a thinned-out tradition. As the concept of cultural temporality introduced into Egyptology by Whitney Davis implies, one single cultural feature can be archaising and traditional or even modern at the same time, depending on one's point of view and the applied frame of reference.²⁵

Having touched upon the topics of "sophistication" and "distinction" one is almost automatically led to the third problem connected with the concept of archaism, namely the issue of deliberateness. If archaism constitutes a deliberate choice to employ a certain time-honoured cultural mode instead of one or more equally available contemporary ones its success depends upon recognition by its potential audience. It is clear, however, that a deliberate choice might not always be easy to identify when being separated from the studied culture by thousands of kilometres and several millennia. How far are we willing to extend the range of what still passes for "deliberate emulation"? The many examples of statuary created or modified during the Baroque age and successive centuries which were then regarded as genuinely Egyptian while being now either benignly categorized as Egyptianizing creations or entirely dismissed as crude forgeries should serve as a warning against all too ready judgments on matters of intentionality.²⁶ It is a fact that the criteria according to which the ancient Egyptians picked a particular model very often elude us today. These criteria may in fact be guite different from common Egyptological

²⁵ Davis' most important contribution to a theoretical approach towards Egyptian archaism is Davis 2003, *passim*, esp. 33-36, but see also Davis 1992. It remains an open question, however, whether the modes of cultural temporality applied to ancient Egyptian art should be identical to the common trias of Western culture, namely the "archaic", the "classical" and the "modern".
26 Some good examples of ancient Egyptian statuary that was subjected to heavy restorations à

l'égyptienne in the 17th to 19th centuries AD are found in Curto 1985, 25-36.

preconceptions of what, to the Egyptians, constituted a prototype worthy of emulation. Not in every case the model of a (in Davis' sense²⁷) "classical" cultural item is to be sought in the masterpieces of the Old and Middle Kingdoms, which would be perhaps considered the most obvious choices by present-day Egyptologists. One has to account for the possibility that ancient Egyptians held different views about the importance of particular periods or individual rulers of their past than nowadays prevail. The circumstances of transmission, for example the partial translocation of manuscripts stored in a particular temple library which subsequently enjoyed wide circulation,²⁸ may provide another possible explanation for the use of certain models. It may indeed be for one of the reasons mentioned above that the Saite kings chose to adopt throne name patterns associating them with rather ephemeral rulers of the Second Intermediate Period.²⁹

The fourth problem has already been hinted at above. It revolves around the fact that the creation of, as well as the response to, any form of archaism depends upon conscious human actions at one or several social levels (see fig. 2). The nature of archaeological evidence often makes one forget that no direct relation leads from a certain artefact X to an artefact Y. Every typological sequence, every stylistic development is the result of human engagement. Artefact-intrinsic laws of development do not exist. In the case of future-bound transmission human agents are present at both ends of the "path of transfer" while past-bound transmission requires human agency only on the right (chronologically later) side.³⁰ What is gained by taking the agency-dimension of archaism into account is a better understanding of the decision making process lying behind the creation of an artefact. It is not the total of preserved cultural artefacts predating artefact X that form the pool of culturemes from which the creators of X could draw on, but those artefacts that were accessible to their "horizon of experience". Decisions in favour or against certain archaising features could have been taken at the level of the

29 Idem 2002, 38; BLÖBAUM 2006, 146; 151.

^{27 &}quot;Classical" in the sense of an established normative tradition; see DAVIS 2003, 33.

²⁸ Cf. Kahl's reconstruction of the dissemination of texts originally housed in a temple library in or near Assiut. KAHL 1999, 282-348.

³⁰ That artefacts too have the potential of exacting agency is of no concern to the argument here, but cf. GELL 1998, *passim*, esp. 16-27.

Level of agency	author / manufacturer	patron/commissioning institution	beneficiary	addressee	actor (may be identical with any of the other categories)
Corresponding example	craftsmen / workshop	official, court, temple	official, temple, gods	social elite, posterity, gods	king, officiant, gods
Mode of influence on artefact	direct influence		indirect influence		undefined

Figure 2. Impact of different forms of agency on an artefact

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patron, but they could also have had their origin at the level of the overseer of the executing craftsmen or the craftsmen themselves. Any of these decisions may also have been triggered by a factual or anticipated response of an audience or addressee.³¹ When describing features of an Egyptian work of art it is important, however, to note that additional, mostly virtual, agents may be present which have no direct bearing on the decision making process. For example, a donation stela might show in its lunette a king offering before divinities without being a royal commission. King and gods are actors on a pictorial and perhaps also on a magical and legal level, but no social agents capable of directly influencing the layout of the stela.³² While such a distinction is comparatively easy to make in cases of "royal vs. private", it is often very difficult when several human actors are involved.³³ The same applies to potential beneficiaries of an artefact, i.e. people, dead or alive, divinities or institutions that benefit from the creation/erection of a monument, the cult associated with it and its inherent magical potential in a certain way.³⁴

3. Approaching the significance and depth of Saite archaism

As important as the issues raised in the preceding paragraphs might seem, the identification of an archaism within the preserved repertoire of ancient Egyptian culture constitutes but the first step in the hermeneutic enterprise. The next logical step consists of making sense of the archaism in its chronological context and evaluating the significance of the cultureme in question at the time of its re-appropriation. It goes without saying that this step provides an even harder challenge.

Examples from European culture of the present or the recent past serve as a reminder that archaism is no phenomenon confined to ancient or "cold societies"³⁵. Even today interpretation of archaism often requires substantial

32 MEEKS 1979, 626-629

35 The term "cold societies" (as opposed to modern "hot societies") was originally coined by Lévi-

³¹ Cf. Kjølby 2007.

³³ The "family monuments" of the Middle Kingdom and early New Kingdom are a good example. Cf. FITZENREITER 2005, esp. 74-77.

³⁴ This is for example the case when a statue depicting the deceased person X has been dedicated by X's son Y, and both X and Y are memorialised on the statue in almost equal measure through inscriptions and/or pictorial representations. Cf., e.g., CG 1212 dedicated by Ankhefensekhmet on behalf of his father Horsiese: MARIETTE 1892, pl. 27g.

cultural knowledge with no guarantee of obtaining unambiguous results. In our daily environment we are engulfed by artefacts, images and stylistic schemes that bear witness to a great cultural heterogeneity and evidence a wide spectre of different cultural temporalities operative in contemporary society. Being familiarised with our cultural conventions from childhood on we are used to decode ideologically charged images that forge a link with bygone ages through the use of style and iconography. At least we have learned not to take them at face value. A person with average education passing by the Austrian Parliament on the Viennese Ringstraße may not be able to fully acknowledge and understand the sophisticated imagery alluding to myths and allegories of classical antiquity which Theophil Hansen so deftly incorporated into his architectural chef d'œuvre. But he or she will most probably not assume that Emperor Franz Joseph I indeed appeared wrapped in an ancient Greek himation when decreeing the constitution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in front of representatives of the Crown lands, as being shown on the building's main pediment (PI. 18).³⁶

With much less cultural background information at our disposal the way towards decoding ancient Egyptian archaisms is naturally fraught with many pitfalls.

The problems are poignantly exemplified by looking at the gateway reliefs recovered from the so-called Palace of Apries at Memphis which depict an anonymous ruler of the later 26th Dynasty engaged in several religious ceremonies (PI. 19). These undoubtedly archaising royal images raise a number of intriguing questions as to the self-conception of the depicted monarch. One might ponder whether a pharaoh reigning during the 6th century BC did indeed occasionally clad himself in archaic ceremonial garments and participated in ritual performances that had originally been conceived millennia

Strauss to characterise traditional non-Western cultures which take immense efforts to keep social and cultural change to a minimum (CHARBONNIER 1969, 37-48). For its application in Egyptology see Assmann 1996, 28-31.

³⁶ The statuary of the pediment, a work by the Neo-baroque sculptor Edmund Hellmer, aroused some criticism among pundits when it was presented to the public in 1888. It was felt that the realistically rendered portrait of the emperor with his whiskers formed a veritable "Stilbruch" in respect to the classically idealised rest of the sculpture. REHUCEK 1995, 49-51.

ago while figuring at the same time as the leader of a major power in the Eastern Mediterranean world who would even commission divine images for Greek sanctuaries. What was the true nature of Egyptian kingship at that time, not only in relation to conventionalised ideology but also in terms of daily life at court and official conduct?³⁷ How ritualised was it? Had pharaonic identity become nothing but a stage role that was propped upon the man on the throne in order to meet the demands of preformed religious texts and imagery? Did the ruler remain detached from most aspects of traditional Egyptian culture despite his paying homage to decorum?³⁸

It has been argued that the Egyptians of the 25th and 26th Dynasty eclectically adopted old traditions on a rather superficial level, similar to a fancy, agehonoured coat wrapped around a sober, bureaucratic body of state.³⁹ The significance of such generalised judgments, however, remains in doubt, and there is no alternative to carefully pondering the possibilities of total, partial or inexistent correspondence between the cultural repertoire evidenced by the monumental discourse and the realities of daily culture. Are there any ways to estimate the degree of ritualisation and the level of sacredness characteristic of the Saite monarchy? The spectrum of possible manifestation is admittedly large, ranging from the quasi-divine role postulated for the Early Dynastic ruler⁴⁰ to the merely "virtual" or "hieroglyphic" pharaoh of Roman times.⁴¹ While Hölbl attests a continuous decline in divinity of the reigning pharaoh during

40 Cf. BAINES 1995, 122-123; 128.

³⁷ An impression of the extent of political interaction between the Saite kings and the Eastern Mediterranean offer Kienitz 1953, 11-47, Francis – Vickers 1984; König 1989; Wallinga 1991, 179-197.

³⁸ This question appears all the more justified in the light of the assumed Libyan ancestry of the Saite kings. Cf. JANSEN-WINKELN 2000, 16-18.

³⁹ Cf. Brunner's statement in his *Lexikon* article: "Das wirkliche Leben der SpZt dürfte vom A. [= Archaismus] kaum tangiert worden sein, er bleibt beschränkt auf die religiöse und zeremonielle Sphäre und bestimmt auch dort das Leben nur zum Teil." (BRUNNER 1975, col. 393). Already Gardiner pointed out the unreliability of archaising sources when it comes to reconstructing historical events of the first millennium B.C. (GARDINER 1961, 57). He referred specifically to the scenes of "Smitting the Libyans" in Taharqa's temple at Kawa in which the members of a Libyan chieftain's family do not only resemble exactly their counterparts in the Old Kingdom versions of the scene, but are even provided with identical captions. See most recently, RITNER 2008, 305-306 w. references. One need not enter the Late Period, however, to find the historicity of military accounts being put into question. On the possibility that a number of battle scenes at Medinet Habu are actually copies of reliefs from the funerary temple of Merenptah, see LESKO 1980; VANDERSLEYEN 1998; cf. also NIMS 1976.

⁴¹ See above, n. 16.

the first millennium BC,⁴² Quirke advocates certain caution, asking why a Late Period king should not have enjoyed the same divine status in the eyes of his subjects than a pharaoh of the 4th Dynasty.⁴³

3.1. The gateway reliefs from the "Palace of Apries" at Memphis

The true ritual dimension of Saite kingship and its potential congruence or incongruence with the representation of such rituals is a largely unexplored field of research. However, the presence of apparently anachronistic motifs in the Saite visual and textual repertoires raises the question to what extent these old culturemes corresponded to contemporary rituals that were actually performed by the king and/or his entourage. One of the possible approaches to this problem consists of examining once again the aforementioned gateway reliefs from the Memphite "Palace of Apries" (Pl. 19).⁴⁴ It is the archaic, rather obscure character of the royal rituals depicted there in combination with a clear iconographic dependence upon relatively old or at least "old-fashioned" models which make these reliefs an ideal testing ground for the consideration of the issue.

As Kaiser has convincingly argued in his influential contribution to the "Palace of Apries" reliefs, there can be hardly any doubt that the individual scenes of the Late Period monument are mostly indebted to prototypes dating from the first half of the 3^{rd} millennium BC.⁴⁵ Certain features such as the repeated occurrence of the archaic rp.wt palanquins (or shrines) as well as the three rows of stars filling the *p.t* register demarcations may even point to models from the earlier Old Kingdom, perhaps the 3^{rd} or 4^{th} Dynasty.⁴⁶ In fact, the "Palace of Apries" as a whole has been interpreted as a deliberate homage

⁴² HÖLBL 1991.

⁴³ QUIRKE 1999, 63. One can state at least that the legitimacy as well as the ethical and political performance of the last "indigenous" Egyptian rulers were subjected to criticism in the Demotic Chronicle. Cf. JOHNSON 1983, 66-72.

⁴⁴ The use of quotation marks is to indicate that neither the king who had originally commissioned the reliefs nor the precise function of the building for which they had apparently been made have been established beyond doubt.

⁴⁵ KAISER 1987, esp. 134-143.

⁴⁶ For the rpw.t palanquins, see KAISER 1983; *idem* 1987, 137. I am indebted to Andrzej Ćwiek for drawing my attention to the fact that the only known parallel for the pattern of three rows of stars within the p.t register demarcations is found on a relief fragment from the Intermediary Temple of Snofru's Bent Pyramid complex. Cf. Ćwek 2003, 43.

to (or even an emulation of) the Saggara pyramid complex of king Dioser about 3.5 km to the west.⁴⁷ This assumption is primarily based on the observation that the latter, in addition to being located almost immediately to the west of the Late Period palatial building and thus linked with it through a direct line-ofsight,⁴⁸ comprises a number of underground relief panels (PI. 20) which provide at least in parts potential prototypes for the gateway reliefs.⁴⁹ That these reliefs were demonstrably traced and copied long after their creation is often put forward in support of this theory,⁵⁰ although the actual date of the copying, or rather, of the production of templates derived from direct copying,⁵¹ is likely to have preceded the Saite Dynasty by several decades at the minimum.⁵² In the light of our current knowledge it would therefore be rather frivolous to give an account of the exact relationship between the "Palace of Apries" and the Dioser complex. Two things appear certain, however: Neither can the Dioser reliefs be considered the primary source of inspiration for the decoration layout of the gateway as a whole, nor is it possible at present to identify any other monument - may it date to the Old Kingdom or to a later period - as the allimportant prototype. Furthermore, one should not rule out the possibility of a rather free handling and eclectic combination of differing models by the Saite artisans which could have resulted in the presence of incongruent iconographic schemes even within a single scene. With these options in mind let us consider in the following one of the relief panels in slightly more detail.

49 For a comprehensive study of the relief panels at the Djoser pyramid complex, see FRIEDMAN 1995.

50 WILDUNG 1969, 78 w. references. While not going as far as to postulate a direct copy-relationship between the "Palace of Apries" and Djoser's Step Pyramid complex Gestermann does not fail to stress more than once the tremendous ideological significance of the Djoser complex for the Saite monarchy. Cf. GESTERMANN 2005, 364 and *eadem* 2006, 203 with a slightly revised account of Saite royal interest in the Saqqara necropolis.

51 For the possible procedures involved in ancient Egyptian copying of reliefs, see DER MANUELIAN 1983a, 230-233; *idem* 1985, 108-112.

52 Direct copying of elements from the decoration of Djoser's subterranean complex is already evidenced by an Apis stela very likely dating from the 24th Dynasty. Cf. JURMAN 2009, 131 f., nos. 114-116 w. references. Already in 1925 Petrie stated that "what is usually called the Saite revival was really Ethiopian [i.e. Kushite]." PETRIE 1925, 1. For marked archaising tendencies predating the 25th Dynasty, see also FAZZINI 1997; PAYRAUDEAU 2007.

⁴⁷ BADAWY 1966, 29-31.

⁴⁸ Even today the brick platform of the "Palace of Apries" is the place most suited in the environs of Memphis to offer a convenient panoramic view of the pyramids of Saqqara and nearby Dahshur and Abusir. On the potential ideological importance of lines-of-sight between the pyramids and the city of Memphis, see JEFREYS 1998; *idem* 2006, 15.

The panel which according to Kaiser formed the middle register of the gateway's right door jamb is known to depict the festival of the "White/ Shining⁵³ Hippopotamus" (*hb Hd.t*, Pl. 21). A large figure of the king preceded by two standards occupies the central part of the relief. He is shown wearing the Red Crown and a peculiar dress consisting of a ceremonial apron with girdle pendant as well as a long scarf-like piece of cloth draped over his left shoulder.⁵⁴ With both of his hands he is gripping a long staff terminating in a knob which is placed horizontally before his body. This object has been described as the stylised rendering of a harpoon, but given the lack of any indication of a hook or blade and the scene's non-violent context this interpretation should be dismissed.⁵⁵ Behind the king originally three priestly/courtly attendants were positioned above each other on individual sub-registers. An additional number of priests and courtiers were depicted facing the king on four subregisters to the right. In the left corner of the lowest sub-register on the right one recognises two men facing each other, each one having an arm raised as if to indicate engagement in a kind of ritual dance. Above their heads are placed two toponymic inscriptions whose correct reading and significance has yet to be definitively established.⁵⁶ Apart from captions associated with the attendants and the hieroglyph Gardiner M26, which could be part of an infinitive construction referring to the royal action,57 the scene's only other

53 On the question of how to translate the Egyptian word *hd.t* adequately in this context, see PAWLICKI 1990, 25-28.

54 The very fine vertical striation indicated by Petrie in his drawing of the scene (PETRIE 1909, pl. 7) is no longer visible on the original relief surface. Säve-Söderbergh, in the light of an Edfu text in which the harpooning god Horus is said to be clad in "trappings of giraffe's hair", suggested that this detail is meant to represent giraffe's hair, even though there is nothing to substantiate this assumption. Cf. SÄvE-SödEREGH 1953, 49.

55 In fact, the object looks very similar to the *mks* sceptre/baton depicted on the frises d'objets of Middle Kingdom coffins. Cf. especially JéquieR 1921, 174, no. 451. Harpoons, on the other hand, are normally represented very differently on Egyptian temple reliefs of historic times. Cf. KURTH 2005. On the three-dimensional representation of a Late Period ruler holding a harpoon, see the contribution of EL-DAMATY 2008.

56 On the possible reading and localisation of the toponyms, as well as the variants within their transmission, see Säve-Söderbergh 1953, 52-55; Kees 1958; Altenmüller 1994, 33-34; Behrmann 1996, 114-117; Kaiser 1996, 458.

57 Though the orientation of the sign M26 is reversed in relation to the designation of the festival in the column immediately below, it could nevertheless belong to the latter, forming with it the title of the scene as an infinitive governing a direct object. As Fischer demonstrated, the partial reversal of the orientation of hieroglyphs within ritual captions is no infrequent phenomenon (Fischer 1977, 97–108). In the case of the Memphite relief the orientation of the presumed verb would correspond non-generic textual element is the name of the festival from which the current designation of the scene derives: *hb Hd.t*, with *Hd.t*, "the White/Shining One", being the name or epithet of the hippopotamus goddess. In the Late Period relief as well as in attestations dating from the Old Kingdom the hippopotamus is represented as standing within a kind of primitive construction made of reed (a sanctuary?) and does not exceed the space of an elaborate determinative. In contrast, the two known New Kingdom examples of *hb Hd.t* imagery show the riverine animal as an independent and much larger pictorial element which is facing the king.⁵⁸ In these two instances the iconography of the hippopotamus differs as well. It is shown standing on what seems to be a simple kind of sleigh instead of the reed mat or platform of the earlier examples. The existence of this differing line of pictorial tradition, which is so far only attested in temple reliefs of Hatshepsut and Thutmosis III at Deir el-Bahari and the Akhmenu at Karnak,59 has been taken as an indication that the festival underwent a substantial change in meaning over the centuries. According to Kaiser, the scene's original emphasis on paying homage to a benevolent divinity during her festival might, over time, have given way to interpretations more related to

58 The seven known attestations of the scene are: **1**) relief fragment from the pyramid temple of king Khufu, only part of royal figure wearing indicative garment and two attendants preserved (4th Dynasty): LAUER 1949, 113-114, pl. I; HASSAN 1960, pl. VI; **2**) fragmentary relief from the sun temple of Nuiserre at Abu Ghurob, only hippopotamus and part of captions preserved (5th Dynasty): KEISS 1928, 30-31, pl. 10, no. 206; **3**) fragmentary relief found re-used in Bab el-Futuh, Cairo, only hippopotamus and part of captions preserved (5th Dynasty): KEISS 1928, 30-31, pl. 10, no. 206; **3**) fragmentary relief found re-used in Bab el-Futuh, Cairo, only hippopotamus and part of captions preserved (perhaps Old Kingdom): DROWER 1935, 350, w. pl.; ANONYMOUS [CAPART] 1936, 468-471 w. fig.; KAISER 1988, 125-126, pl. 60a; **4**) fragmentary relief in the Brooklyn Museum, only hippopotamus and part of captions preserved (perhaps Old Kingdom): KAISER 1996, 452-454; **5**) carved scene on the Lower Terrace of queen Hatshepsut's temple in Deir el-Bahari, partly effaced, analogous to no. 6 (18th Dynasty): PAWLICKI 1990; **6**) carved scene in room XLI B of the Akhmenu of Thutmosis III at Karnak, analogous to no. 5 (18th Dynasty): KEIMER 1943; **7**) carved scene forming part of a gateway found in the "Palace of Apries" at Memphis (most likely second half of 26th Dynasty): PETRIE 1909, 7, pl. 7; KAISER 1987, 131; 153, fig. 10; see also DE Wit 1958.

59 Although it is theoretically possible that chronologically younger attestations of a motif are in fact culturally older, the Theban reliefs represent most likely a genuinely younger line of pictorial tradition. The way in which the hippopotamus is almost depicted like an enlarged hieroglyph points to the secondary nature of this iconography and most likely constitutes what in terms of textual criticism would be called a directional or index deviation ("Leitdeviation", see, e.g. KAHL 1999, 32).

to that of the king who is performing the action. However, it has to be admitted that the reading and meaning of the verb remain elusive. Unless one faces an elliptic construction which omits a preposition the verb should be transitive. This leaves little choice when taking into account that the object is the name of a festival. No Egyptian verb is known to me with the meaning "to celebrate" or similar and is written with either M26 or M23 (the latter sign seems to be present on the partly preserved Karnak example).

hunting rituals. On the other hand the effacing of the scene at Deir el-Bahari during the Amarna Period could also indicate that the supernatural character of the represented hippopotamus and the connection to a divine festival was still strongly felt. Irrespective of this hypothetical change of meaning the "Palace of Apries" relief panel undoubtedly harks back to a very early layout of the scene⁶⁰ and is therefore also likely to retain its presumed original significance, at least as far as it could be determined in the 6th century BC.⁶¹ However, this observation still leaves one in the dark about the scene's potential relation to cult practices and real ritual actions performed during the Late Period. Kaiser assumes that "die eigentliche Kulthandlung wohl bereits in der 4./5. Dynastie nur noch dargestellt, aber kaum mehr realiter durchgeführt worden ist". Indeed, the incongruent assemblage of seemingly unrelated ritual scenes on the Memphite palace gateway seems to speak in favour of this view. On the other hand Kaiser himself has collected additional attestations of the Hd.t hippopotamus dating from the Middle Kingdom to the Ptolemaic Period which testify to the deity's significance outside the realm of palatial decoration. The existence of an independently venerated hippopotamus goddess named Hd.t would, in turn, corroborate the hypothesis that the Memphite ritual scene does reflect to a certain degree the reality of contemporary cultic practice. Illuminating in this regard is a carved, secondarily hollowed-out block of quartzite in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo (JE 2579462) dating from the reign of

⁶⁰ Among the "archaic" features of the "Apries relief" belong the superimposed sub-registers of attendants behind the king which are paralleled in the oldest known attestations of the scene, the relief fragment from Khufu's pyramid complex, but are missing in the Theban examples of the New Kingdom. While the actual "cultural age" of the composition quite likely predates its first attestation, the origins of the ritual itself may go back even further in time. However, attempts by KEES (1958) and ALTENMULLER (1994) to offer a Pre- or Early Dynastic political context determining the ritual's original significance are to be taken with caution. Even more than 100 years after Sethe' reconstruction of Predynastic political and cultural history by resorting primarily to the Pyramid Texts (SETHE 1905) one has to confess that the seeming allusions to real places and political events found in many Egyptian ritualistic texts are still much too elusive as to be used in this respect.

⁶¹ This assumption is also backed by the small size of the Memphite Late Period hippopotamus. It would correspond well to the presumable rendering of such a hieroglyphic sign within a hypothetical mention of the *hb Hd.t* in Early Dynastic times. The opposite end on the conceived line of gradual development is occupied by the "inflated" images of the New Kingdom that show little resemblance to the hieroglyphic sign from which they have evidently been derived. Cf. KAISER 1996, 458.

⁶² I owe my gratitude to Ms. Elina Nuutinen of the Registration and Collection Management Department of the Egyptian Museum in Cairo for providing me with the inventory number of this object.

Psammetich II. On the block's two longitudinal sides are preserved altogether five images of the king offering to various deities (Pls. 19-20). According to the captions one of the latter (Pl. 21) represents the hippopotamus deity Hd.t nb.t wrr.t ("The White/Shining One, mistress of the White Crown"). Interestingly, the animal is depicted standing on a primitive construction of reed reminiscent of the examples known from the older iconographic tradition of the hb Hd.t scene, thus confirming that the image was not exclusively employed by the artisans working on the Memphite palace decoration. Taking into account that JE 25794 was with great probability originally part of a wall of a sanctuary or a naos the hippopotamus deity would have been embedded in an elaborate composition consisting of rows of divinities which all received offerings by the king while not necessarily being specifically venerated in the temple. If so, the true significance of the motif is at issue. Was *Hd.t* only resuscitated as an archaic icon in order to procure the legitimacy of old age and tradition to the temple? The archaic appearance of the block is undoubtedly enhanced by the inclusion of two obscure, otherwise unattested deities63 whose designations (I.dd.t, Hrw-jb-pr.w-dbh-hr.w [?],64 see Pl. 22) apparently follow Old Egyptian grammatical and orthographic conventions. However, taken as a whole the scenes give a rather incongruent impression, at least to modern eyes. On the one hand the naos fragment shows an extensive use of old or seemingly old culturemes, on the other hand these are contrasted by having been fitted into a culturally younger form of presentation, devised to serve the needs of contemporary religious practice and ideology as it is found for example in the sanctuary of the temple of Hibis at el-Kharga and many naoi of the

63 At least according to LGG I-VII.

64 The correct reading and meaning of the latter name eludes me. Perhaps the first element has to be understood as a nominalised nisba ending in */wl* instead of */jl* (for the occasional ending */wl*, see EDEL 1955, 147, § 343, but Edel does not mention an alternative form for the nisba of the compound preposition *kr j-jb* [cf. *ibidem*, 151, § 348]. I am grateful to Roman Gundacker for his helpful suggestions and comments.) which would give "The one who resides in the houses of necessities and provisions". However, it is not certain whether the sign above the mouth in the first column really stands for *At* least the lack of a determinative does not speak against the reading *pr* since the exclusive use of mono-consonantal signs with certain words can be observed quite frequently on religious monuments of the 26th Dynasty. Cf. JANSEN-WINKELN 1998, 168-172; SCHWEITZER 2003. see pls. 22-23.

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1st millennium BC.⁶⁵ Thus, JE 25794 is a good example of the common Saite principle of cultural di- or polyglossia. Nevertheless it remains unclear whether the Late Period representations of Hd.t are emanations of a traditional cult of the hippopotamus deity or bear witness of an archaism on a cultic level. In the former case the imagery would simply have been updated by making it appear culturally older, in accordance with the general cultural currents of the time. In the latter case the Saite striving for time-honoured religious culturemes may have brought about the re-introduction of an old deity into the iconographic repertoire or even the sphere of cultic practice. What complicates the issue is the possibility that the harking back to old culturemes may have occurred in addition to or in spite of an already existing traditional cult of the hippopotamus addess Hd.t.⁶⁶ Going along with these questions is the problem of what has to be understood by archaism on a religious or cultic level. If revitalisation of an old cult means little more than incorporating a certain deity into a litany or collection of prayers, or adding a culturally old image pattern of a god to a row of divinities, then it is a procedure easy to carry out and with limited impact on the religious/cultic practice.

3.3. Royal ceremonies⁶⁷ and Late Period depictions

Cultural di- or polyglossia is also apparent on other royal monuments

⁶⁵ Cf. DAVES 1953, pl. 2-4; N. SPENCER 2006, 19-30. For the hippopotamus deity depicted on a pedestal within a row of gods on the Bubastide naos of Nakhthorheb, see *ibidem*, 12, pls. 16, 23. Unfortunately as with all the figures on the naos walls the hippopotamus is not identified by an inscription.

⁶⁶ Although it is impossible to trace potential cultic activities around the White Hippopotamus during the Middle and New Kingdoms we have at least evidence of its relevance within funerary literature. A passage in CT spell 466 which was later incorporated into the vignette of BD 110 mentions the "Lake of the White/Shining One" whose most prominent feature was apparently its ritual purity (cf. CT V, 354; FAULKNER 1977, 93; *idem* 1985, 110-111 w. fig.). In a similar context Hd.t, "the heavy one of the lake", also appears in the late Book of the Fayum, this time designated

as mistress of Atfin (BEINLICH 1991, 154-155, pl. 13). Excerpts containing a depiction of the Hd.t even found their way onto a Late Period sarcophagus from Hawara (PETRE 1889, 9, pl. 2). This proves that Hd.t had at least regional significance as a benevolent deity in the Fayum and the adjoining Nile Valley at the time these writings were composed. See also KAISER 1988, 132.

^{67 &}quot;Ceremony" is here employed as an umbrella term encompassing both the religiously significant ritual act and any complex sequence of formalised behaviour as for example in connection with a royal audience. Without doubt a differentiation between these two categories would have seemed arbitrary to the Ancient Egyptians but for practical reasons it is retained in the following.

of the 26th Dynasty, not at least on those prominent examples related to the coronation, the heb-sed or other unspecified ceremonies involving a staged appearance of the king in a $h^c j.t$ $n \pm wt.^{68}$ Unlike most of the reliefs from the Memphite gateway these monuments seem not to draw their inspiration from a single source or a number of sources from a fairly limited period of time, but show a mixture of cultural temporalities which indicate the use of various patterns and prototypes from different periods.

A fragmentary block of quartzite which was found in Rosetta but must originally have come from Sais shows king Amasis turned towards the right, adorned with the White Crown, wearing the so-called "heb-sed gown" and holding crook and flail (PI. 24).69 He is preceded by a lunmutef priest, of whom but the caption remains, and by two jackal standards of different sizes facing each other. Behind the king the common group of protective emblems is present (e.g. the bisected sky signs). Even though the sketchy drawing by Habachi does not convey a great amount of detail it is at least possible to make some general remarks about the relief's position within the pictorial tradition. For the reconstruction of the destroyed lower half of the relief Habachi turned to a scene in the Akhmenu⁷⁰ in which Thutmosis III is represented in a comparable fashion (PI. 25).71 Because of the differences in the royal attire, however, a direct model-copy relationship between these two reliefs or a dependence on similar patterns is out of the question. Comparisons of the Saite relief with pre-New Kingdom material do not lead to conclusive results either. While the depiction and specific positioning of crook and flail on the Rosetta relief are reminiscent of certain scenic elements from the sun

⁶⁸ Besides being related to the specific events of accession and coronation, the designation hj: *n/swt* could be employed to refer generally to formal royal appearances in connection with festivals, audiences and inaugurations. Cf. REDFORD 1967, 4-13. See also WILKINSON 1999, 210-212; JIMÉNEZ SERRANO 2002, 40-41.

⁶⁹ HABACHI 1943, 384-385, fig. 105.

⁷⁰ Karnak, Temple of Amun, Akhmenu, corridor V. Cf. PM II², 113; LD III, pl. 36b.

⁷¹ As Hornung and Staehelin point out, however, we cannot be sure about the original length of the royal garment depicted. HORNUNG – STAEHELIN 2006, 74. A somewhat comparable combination of king in "heb-sed gown" and lunmutef priest can also be found on a mutilated relief at Deir el-Bahari showing coronation ceremonies of queen Hatshepsut (cf. NAVILLE 1898, pl. 59-60; *Urk.* IV/4, 252-253; KARKOWSKI 2001, 90-93). There, however, Hatshepsut is depicted facing the lunmutef priest as well as the god Amun.

temple of Niuserre and even earlier monuments,⁷² other features such as the king's beard and the presence of the lunmutef priest have no known parallels in 5th Dynasty contexts.⁷³ A block found at *el-Nalıhârîya* which shows Amasis receiving blessings from Geb and being acclaimed by the jackal-headed Souls of Nekhen might belong to the same or a similar monument from Sais.⁷⁴ One may therefore assume that this group of ritual scenes belongs *in grosso modo* to a younger iconographic tradition (i.e. post-mid-5th Dynasty) in which human attendants have partly been replaced by divine ones.⁷⁵

The foundations whereupon this argument rests, however, are not as firm as one would wish. This is demonstrated by two fragmentary relief blocks found re-used in the pyramid of Amenemhat I at Lisht which show a figure of Wepwaut (MMA 09.180.2) and a Meret figure engaged in a royal running ritual (MMA 22.1.1) respectively.⁷⁶ If Goedicke's attribution of these blocks to the reign of Khufu is correct their date would contradict the basic distinction between younger and earlier iconographic traditions in relation to

73 For lunmutef, see RUMMEL 2003, vol. I, 67-75. Whether the presence or absence of certain iconographic features has chronological significance is of course always subject to methodological doubt. One should be reminded that prior to the discovery of the underground relief panels of king Djoser Kees claimed that the characteristic assemblage of protective emblems behind the king did not appear before the Middle Kingdom (KEEs 1912, 119-121). Such an appraisal would have had major repercussions for the analysis of the Saite gateway reliefs from Memphis and the cultural temporalities they exhibit.

74 Cf. HABACHI 1943, 398 f., pl. 27b.

⁷² Cf., e.g., BISSING – KEES 1923, pl. 13. The way of holding royal staves and sceptres roughly parallel to each other rather than at an angle or in the oblique "Osirian" fashion can also be found on a limestone relief said to have been found reused in a ^{3rd} Dynasty tomb context and thereby apparently belonging to an even earlier period (BM EA 67153: EMERY 1958, 84, pl. 97; A.J. SPENCER 1980, 16, no. 16). It seems to have been the most common mode of representing regalia during the Old Kingdom and the Middle Kingdom (cf. JEQUIER 1938, pl. 25; DI. ARNOLD 2002, pl. 163a), even though occasionally a slight angle between the sceptres is discernible (cf. the overview in KAISER 1971, folded pl. 5). In the New Kingdom it is rather rare (one of the few New Kingdom examples is a coronation relief of queen Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahari: NAVILLE 1898, pl. 64, right). Interestingly, in the 18th Dynasty temple of Semna, the statue of Senwosret III is represented in the newer fashion (cf. CAMINOS 1998, pl. 50; 57-58).

⁷⁵ For the phenomenon that from the end of the Old Kingdom onwards divinities increasingly take over the roles of human participants in the depictions of hebsed rituals, see KAISER 1987, 139; GUGLIELMI 1991, 28; BISSING – KEES 1922, 93; KEES 1928, 11. To a certain extent this development seems to coincide with the "mythologisation" of transmitted ritual actions by equating them with prototypical events of the divine world. Such an explanatory transposition or commentary is to be noticed, for example, in many spells of the Pyramid Texts and also determines the basic textual layout of the Dramatic Ramesseum Papyrus (DRP). For this practice of transposing, see SETHE 1928, 95-96; ASSMANN 1977, 15-28; QUACK 2006, 78-79 (in connection with the DRP). To GOEDICKE 1971, 29-30, no. 10; p. 35-38, no. 16.

royal festivals. On stylistic grounds, Dorothea Arnold even went as far as to assign the relief with the Meret figure to the reign of Snofru.⁷⁷ Guglielmi, on the other hand, argued in her study of Meret that the very presence of this goddess as well as a number of iconographic elements would point to the 5th Dynasty as a *terminus ante quem non* for MMA 22.1.1, with the Middle Kingdom being a viable option.⁷⁸

Be this as it may, the presumably "modern" approach towards the representation of regalia ceremonies on Saite reliefs is at least partly contrasted by a more or less contemporary naos which was set up in Athribis, perhaps to commemorate Amasis' jubilee festival (PI. 26b).79 While not being a ritual scene strictu sensu the pictorial band adorning the lower front of the naos clearly alludes to ceremonies connected with royal regalia by depicting the snake-stones of the Upper and Lower Egyptian shrines (*jtr.t* $m^{c}w$ and *jtr.t* mhw),⁸⁰ flanked by the animal-headed Souls of Pe and Nekhen as well as the baboon deities Hd-wr and Jsdn and four 3kr-lions. The two bulging stones, each adorned with a rearing snake, seem to figure not only as independent pictorial elements identified through the *jtr.tj*-captions above them, but also as oversized determinatives of these same captions.⁸¹ Even though there is no doubt that prior to the Late Period the snake stone signs are predominantly found as determinatives within inscriptions of the Old Kingdom, it would not do justice to the available evidence to label the scene on the Athribis Naos a simple revival of scenic elements dating from the 3rd millennium BC. It should be emphasised that no monument securely dated to the Old Kingdom is known so far which would depict the snake stones or twin-shrines in a similar context. A fragmentary relief at the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek which was found at Mit

77 Do. Arnold 1999, 196-198.

78 GUGLIELMI 1991, 30.

79 For the numerous allusions to the festival on the naos, see HABACHI 1982, 224-234, esp. 232.

80 As part of the *jrt.tj* or alternative designations thereof the *pr-wr* and *pr-nw* shrines are connected with royal coronation and clothing rituals. Cf. Di. ARNOLD 1982, col. 934-935.

81 This conclusion is suggested by the lack of other determinatives (classifiers) within the scene

and extends also to the rest of the represented deities. As already remarked by Kees, the [] signs can metonymically stand in for the twin-shrines themselves. KEES 1922, 121. The substitution of determinatives in an inscription with an accompanying "ideographic" representation is typical of the Old Kingdom (cf. FISCHER 1973, 7; I am grateful to Prof. Orly Goldwasser for drawing my attention to this article) and may be taken here as another archaising feature of the relief.

Rahina and similarly combines the Souls of Pe with the two snake stones belongs more likely to the New Kingdom or to a later period than to the Middle/ Old Kingdoms as Petrie originally suggested.⁸² In any event, it is interesting to note that the shape of the signs on the Athribis Naos with their incurved sides and the convex top is neither particularly reminiscent of the examples within the Pyramid Texts, nor of the larger representations in temple reliefs before the Graeco-Roman Period.⁸³ Rather, they seem to resemble a representation from the 3rd Dynasty section of the Royal Annals on the Palermo Stone (See Pl. 26a).⁸⁴ Of course, this perceived similarity need not signify an intentional emulation of archaic models on behalf of the Saite artisans, given the small size and imperfect execution of the respective signs on the Palermo Stone and the usual rendering in form of simple rectangles elsewhere within the Annals. But even without taking the *itr.ti* motif into account the frontal relief of the Athribis Naos provides examples of ambiguity in terms of its cultural temporality. Thus, the name of the baboon deity elsewhere attested as *Jsdn* occurs on the relief in a pseudo-archaic writing as $\langle Jw-s-t-n \rangle$ (with the bi-consonantal sign E9) for $\langle j \rangle$ and $\langle t \rangle$ for $\langle d \rangle$), which is all the more surprising as the deity is not attested prior to the 26th Dynasty.85 The presence of Jsdn's counterpart Hd-wr may be taken as another hint at archaistic tendencies, since no representation

⁸² Copenhagen, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Æ.I.N. 1511. Cf. KEES 1922, esp. 121-122; PETRIE 1915, 32, pl. 55, 11. Whereas Petrie considered a date "not later than the 12th Dynasty", Kees ascribed the relief to the 19th Dynasty. In their catalogues for the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, however, Mogensen, Koefoed-Petersen and Jørgensen favour a Late Period dating (McGENSEN 1930, 101, no. A 733, pl. 108; KoeFoeD-PETERSEN 1956, 42-43, no. 51, pl. 51 51; JøRGENSEN 2009, 100), which has been adopted in *PM* III²/2, 851. As an iconographically, and stylistically related scene on the inner southern wall of the Great Hypostyle at Karnak demonstrates (cf. NELSON 1981, pl. 62) a 19th Dynasty date is, however, not completely out of the question.

⁸³ The closest parallel known to me is found in the temple of Dendera: CHASSINAT 1952, 50 f., figs. 1-2.

⁸⁵ Cf. *LGG* I, 558b-560b. Perhaps we are dealing here with a conscious attempt at creating a tradition *post festum*, on similar lines to the "invented traditions" known from European history (for the latter, see the various studies in HOBSBAWM – RANGER 1983).

of this baboon god is known so far dating between the 3^{rd} Dynasty and the Late Period.⁸⁶ In fact, one of the first post-Djoser representations of this god could originally be found on a register of the "Palace of Apries" gateway, judging by the preserved caption $\frac{2}{2}$ [].⁸⁷

4. Transmitting pictures, texts and rituals⁸⁸

Before examining more closely the relation of Saite royal reliefs with real ritual performances it is essential to become aware of the different media involved in the transmission of rituals. In Egyptological practice usually no distinction is made between a ritual and its pictorial representation and it is therefore often left in the dark whether a claimed archaism pertains to one or the other, or even to both categories. Taking into consideration that over time the tradition of actually performed rituals could have followed an altogether different path than the one determining the shape of its monumental representations it is clear that a more complex approach is required.

Using the heb-sed as an example, pl. 27 offers a tentative model of the possibilities in which the different media categories related to a ritual could have developed and interacted over time.

At a basic level of distinction a ritual can manifest itself in at least four

87 KAISER 1987, 139; 150, fig. 7.

88 The following remarks are not meant to provide an in-depth discussion of ancient Egyptian rituals and their manifestation in the extant sources. An overview of recent interdisciplinary research on rituals (ancient as well as modern) with extensive bibliographies can be found in Bell 1997; HARTH – MICHAELS 2003; DÜCKER – ROEDER 2005; MYLONOPOULOS – ROEDER 2006.

⁸⁶ Disregarding the numerous uninscribed baboon figurines found at religious sites of the Preand Early Dynastic periods as well as the Old Kingdom (see WINTER 2006, 447-449; DREVER 1986, 68-72; VAN HAARLEM 2003, 536; SHERKOVA 2002) the oldest, and at the same time the only known, representation of this (ancestral) baboon deity prior to the Late Period is found on a relief panel in the underground structure of the Djoser pyramid complex. There, however, the baboon figure

is identified indirectly through the designation h h d wr.w ($\frac{2}{2}$ [1]], "White Shrine of the Great Ones"?), and could thus represent a divine collective instead of the single deity H d - wr (cf. WINTER 2006, 451; FRIEDMAN 1995, 22-24 w. fig. 14; WILKINSON 1999, 285-286). For a similar attestation of the sitting baboon H d - wr on Saite monuments, see Roeder 1914, 35, § 173, pl. 9 (Cairo, CG 70008, naos from Baqliya, time of Apries) and SATZINGER 1994, 47, fig. 30b (Vienna KHM ÄS 213, screen wall of Necho II, usurped by Psammetich II). Contemporary: DUNHAM 1955, 90, fig. 62 (Boston MFA 23.729, sarcophagus of Aspelta).

different categories. The most obvious one is of course the actual performance with all its designated participants, ritual requisites and specially furnished places. This category is evidenced for example by jar inscriptions or royal decrees referring to the special occasion.⁸⁹ Additionally, one has to assume that at an early, if not original, stage in a ritual's history prescriptive and/or operative texts (derived from the former)⁹⁰ were created by priests or other specialists that would have provided the religious context of the rituals and also guided the actual enactment in the sense of a more or less stringent "screenplay" or "script", incorporating the ritual texts spoken/chanted by the participants. This level is most probably represented by the Dramatic Ramesseum Papyrus, irrespective of the question whether the rituals referred to in it are in any way connected to the heb-sed.91 The prescriptive/operative texts were most probably kept in temple libraries and/or archival offices in the palace and could have been copied, altered or elaborated on according to the principles of textual adaptation laid out above (p. 78.). They would probably have also been a primary source for the preparations of an actual heb-sed celebration. The famous reliefs in the tomb of Kheruef (TT 192) that refer to the first and second heb-seds of Amenhotep III contain a text in which the king himself is said to carry out the rites of his festival according to ancient writings (sh3.w $j \le w.t$).⁹² Though one might be willing at first hand to dismiss this statement as a literary topos, one has to bear in mind that the presumable 30 year-rule made the actual performance of a heb-sed a relatively rare occasion which would inevitably have required specialists to consult old texts, even if focus would have rested on the immediately preceding festival. It is very likely that these texts were at the very core of the transmission of information about specific rituals and inspired or even determined the shape of actual performances as well as the third category of media, hypothetic pattern books that would have been employed for designing and multiplying iconographic schemes in connection with the festival. Of course, a special political/ideological agenda

- 89 For the former, see e.g. HAYES 1951. For the latter, GALÁN 2000.
- 90 For the distinction between prescriptive and operative ritual texts and additional
- differentiations of ritual text categories, see Dücker ROEDER 2004, 9-10.
- 91 For arguments against a connection with the hebsed, see QUACK 2006, 79-89. 92 ES 1980, 43, pl. 28.

or simply the loss or damage of certain manuscripts could have triggered the use/re-appropriation of old ritual manuals or their reformulation. This would naturally also have had major repercussions for the media that depended on the input from these texts. On the other hand it is possible that the transmission also took the opposite path, namely from pictorial representations or pattern/ sketch books to ritual "scripts", possibly with the inclusion of textual elements from manuscripts of related rituals. It has to be stressed at this point that the actual celebration of a heb-sed is no precondition for the transmission in any of the other three media categories. Therefore it is easily imaginable that ritual manuals were newly composed or handed down from one generation to the next without ever having a performative counterpart. In ancient Egypt many conventionalised motifs are religiously "self-sufficient", i.e. they transcend the status of signifiers and fulfil a magical function without ever referring to a signified in the real world. It is therefore nothing but consequent that in their influential book on the heb-sed Hornung and Staehelin defined specific criteria indicating that a festival had truly been celebrated (e.g. pot inscriptions evidencing food provisions destined for the occasion).93 When these kinds of evidence are absent there will always remain doubts about the veracity of textual sources.

To the fourth category finally belong the actual representations of festivals or allusions to them in form of conventionalised "heb-sed icons". It is the category best represented in terms of quantity and consequently determines to a large part Egyptological concepts of the heb-sed. Especially in regard to the Late Period, but perhaps also pertinent to much earlier periods, the moot question is whether the transmission of rituals on the pictorial level (categories 3 and 4) became at some point in time detached from the transmission of ritual scripts and actual performances. While bearing in mind that a complete congruence between the two types of media may not even have been achieved or aimed at in earliest pharaonic times, such a hypothetical major bifurcation of the line of transmission would likely have changed the ancient Egyptians' attitude towards their repertoire of rituals and its pictorial representations. As Pl. 27 makes clear, independent lines of transmission can theoretically meet again at a later point in time. It is also not difficult to see that

93 HORNUNG - STAEHELIN 1974, 51-54; iidem, 2006, 33-37.

a great number of permutations are possible in relation to the way the different media categories could have influenced each other. In principle archaisms can come into play at almost any of these levels. There are also distinctions to be made within the individual media categories themselves. Seen from a purely art historical perspective the differentiation between style (e.g. "Amama style"), iconographical scene layout (e.g. "king running with oar and bird") and iconographical detail ("oar turned towards the chest") is also of importance. While pattern books or actually extant reliefs are sometimes emulated quite closely in terms of the major iconographical scheme, the stylistic rendering of details is often much more sensitive to contemporary currents than to the respective prototypes. The heb-sed reliefs of Osorkon II on the gate of the great temple at Bubastis bear witness to such a "conditional" emulation when compared to the heb-sed iconography of Amenhotep III (as testified by the reliefs in Soleb).⁹⁴

The Saite royal reliefs presented in chapter 3 evidently display a mixture of cultural temporalities and one may feel inclined for this reason to regard them as completely detached from any really performed rituals or royal ceremonies. Even though sources proving the actual performance of festivals such as indicative pot inscriptions are lacking for the Late Period one can still try to catch a glimpse beyond the "pictorial layer" of the monumental discourse. It is the circumstantial evidence deduced from papyri and private inscriptions of royal officials which helps to counterbalance to a certain degree the biased information conveyed by the royal monuments. This topic will be dealt with in the forthcoming second part of this contribution.

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⁹¹ See UPHILL 1965. While the similarities of the two sources even extend to the wording of a royal decree incorporated into the scenes (cf. GALÁN 2000, 255), the artists of Osorkon II were either not willing or capable of emulating the style of Amenhotep III's reliefs or retain the figures' proportions. Even though the drawings convey only little information about the actual stylistic rendering, cf. NAVILLE 1892, pl. 2 with SCHIFF GIORGINI et al. 1998, pl. 99.

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THE TRAPPINGS OF KINGSHIP







Plate 14. Pediment of the Austrian Parliament, Vienna (photo taken by author)

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Plate 16. Relief panels in the underground structures of the Step Pyramid complex (after FRIEDMAN 1995, 3, 2a–b).



Plate 17. "Palace of Apries", relief panel with mention of $hb{-}h\underline{d}.t$ (after Kaiser 1987, 153, fig. 10)

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Plate 18. JE 25794, side A (drawing by author based on KAISER 1988, pl. 61a)





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Plate 21 Thutmosis III in "heb-sed gown", Akhmenu (after LD III, pl. 36b)



Plate 22a Detail of the Palermo Stone, V, 9 (photo taken by author)

Plate 22b Front of naos of Amasis from Athribis (after HABACHI 1982, 226, fig. 6)





Transmitting rituals in different types of media