

The ‘Book of Going Forth by Day’ in the funerary chamber of Djehuty (TT 11): past, present, and future

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Abstract

This contribution looks at the epigraphic work currently being undertaken in the burial chamber of the tomb-chapel of Djehuty (TT 11, temp. Hatshepsut–Thutmose III). The chamber was fully decorated with spells from the ‘Book of Going Forth by Day’, turning it into an exceptional source for our knowledge of this corpus of funerary literature. This paper will centre on the history and transformations of this space, the results of the reconstruction of the original decoration, and the analysis of scribal practices and habits. Finally, future venues of research based on the materials collected during the epigraphic investigation are suggested.

Keywords

TT 11; ‘Book of Going Forth by Day’; scribes; writing habits

The decoration of the burial chamber of TT 11 in context¹

Djehuty was a high official who served under the joint reign of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III, although he probably did not outlive the former. He followed a civil and religious career that possibly started in Hermopolis and ended in Thebes, as overseer of the treasury and overseer of works for royal monuments – positions that would have granted him access to qualified workers and skilful scribes. He built his tomb around 1470 BC (labelled TT 11) in Dra Abu el-Naga, opposite Karnak and within the royal cemetery of the 17th Dynasty. A Spanish mission began working in the area of TT 11 in 2002, under the direction of José M. Galán, and has hitherto completed 15 seasons of fieldwork.

The monument of Djehuty has the usual T-shape. It is characterised by a rich decorative program which portrays its owner as a knowledgeable man, who displays his creativity and his access to ancient and new materials by means of cryptographic texts (Diego Espinel 2014), autobiographical inscriptions, hymns (Galán 2015), complex and elusive rituals (José M. Delgado, this publication), and a developed version of the ‘Opening of the Mouth’ (Serrano Delgado 2014). From the innermost chapel a vertical shaft, that was dug in 2008, led into an antechamber, a second shaft, and finally into the burial chamber (excavated in 2010; Figure 1).² The latter was completely decorated on its walls and ceiling with spells and vignettes from the ‘Book of Going forth by Day’,³

written retrogradely in lined columns of cursive hieroglyphs distributed in different registers. This chamber is currently the object of a complete epigraphic examination (see ‘Present’ section) which presents new research questions (see ‘Future’ section).

The burial chamber of Djehuty has turned out to be an exceptional source for the study of the ‘Book of Going Forth by Day’ (abbreviated BD) for a number of reasons. First, the version in TT 11 is situated at an early stage of the so-called Theban Recension and has a precise archaeological context and dating. Together with the examples of Senenmut (TT 353: Dorman 1991), Useramun (TT 61: Dziobek 1994), Nakhtmin (TT 87: Guksch 1995; Lüscher 2013), Amenemhat (TT 82: Davies and Gardiner 1915), Sennefer (TT 96B: Saleh 1984: 29, 84), and Amenemheb (TT 85: Heye 2008: 265–7, Abb. 7), it is one of the few burial chambers built during the reigns of Hatshepsut–Thutmose III (and into the reign of Amenhotep II)⁴ decorated with funerary spells and vignettes. Second, compared with the contemporary parallels quoted, its decoration is remarkable for its richness (Galán 2014: Tb. 11.2). Epigraphic work has resulted thus far in the identification of 41 chapters, turning this example into the largest collection of formulae attested in the mortuary monument of a Theban high official of the early 18th Dynasty (Figure 2). A larger number of texts were integrated in the original decoration, but the re-carving of two of the four walls prevents us from knowing the extension and content of the complete decorative program. Third, TT 11 has yielded some of the earliest versions for certain compositions, such as the spells for knowing the souls of the holy cities (BD 107–9, 111–6: Lüscher 2012) and the net spell BD 153A.⁵ Finally, another exceptional feature of the decoration of Djehuty’s burial chamber is that in the selection and layout of spells, it follows the sequence often attested on shrouds and papyri of the early 18th Dynasty, many of which belonged to members of the royal family (Galán 2014: Table 11.1). The owner of TT 11 aligns with a different textual tradition than his Theban colleagues, harking back to models used in the royal entourage. However, the well-known interplay between tradition and innovation led to the use of old patterns in a creative way. Thus,

¹ This contribution is part of Research Project HAR2014-52323-P, funded by the Spanish National Program for Scientific Research, Technology, and Innovation.

² Details of the excavation process and archaeological materials found, documenting the use of the antechamber in the 18th Dynasty and its re-use in the 19th and 21st Dynasties, have been published by Galán 2012: 418–22; 2014: 252–5.

³ Decoration schemes are presented in Galán 2014: fig. 11.7. Not all the compositions integrated in the decoration of the burial chamber are spells from this corpus. The centre of the ceiling is occupied by an image of the goddess Nut with arms opened in the gesture of embracing and surrounded by so-called ‘Nut spells’ (Galán 2013). The parents of Djehuty, depicted on the north wall, to the east side of the entrance, are represented next to wish formulae which express the longing to receive offerings from the god’s altars, the separation of the *ba* from the corpse, and the freedom of movement (parallels in Assmann and Bommas 2002: 138–41, 183–5, 376). The Nut-spells and the wish formulae are the only texts written in a non-retrograde manner.

⁴ Amongst these, TT 11 is the earliest or second earliest funerary monument built.

⁵ Totenbuchprojekt (<http://totenbuch.awk.nrw.de/spruch/153a>, last accessed 01/05/2016).

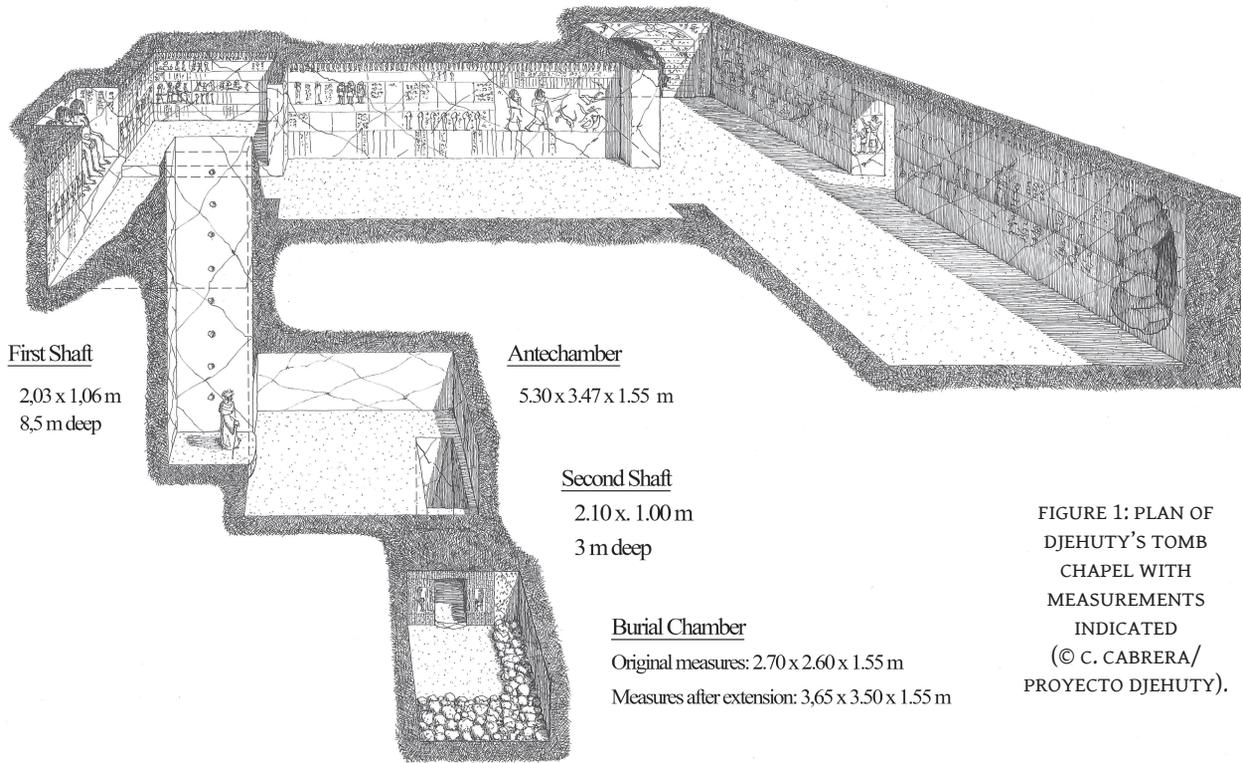


FIGURE 1: PLAN OF DJEHUTY'S TOMB CHAPEL WITH MEASUREMENTS INDICATED (© C. CABRERA/ PROYECTO DJEHUTY).

Early 18th Dyn. sequence-1 (Munro 1994: 15; Lapp 2004: 46-49)

124-83-84-85-82-77-86- 99B-119-7-102-38A-27-14-39-65-116-91-64-

South wall > East wall >
DJEHUTY [...]-78-86V-81AV-88V-87V-99B V-119-7V-102V-38A-14-(22-)
TT 11 [149/1st mound]-149 V + 150 V (2nd-7th mounds) (lower register >)

North wall > ceiling >
 (-14)-22-23-24-25-26-28-27-43-30A-31-33-34-35 (door) -74-45-93-91-41-42-114-112-113-108-109-125A, B, C-126V-153A-64

(> lower register) 149 V + 150 V (7th-10th mounds)[-...]

17-18-22-23-24-25-26-28-27-43-30A-31-33-34-35-74-45-93-91-41-42-14-68

Early 18th Dyn. sequence-2 (Munro 1995: 11; Lapp 1997: 36-37)

FIGURE 2: COMPARISON OF THE SEQUENCE OF CHAPTERS AND VIGNETTES IN THE BURIAL CHAMBER OF TT 11 AND ON EARLY 18TH DYNASTY MANUSCRIPTS (SHROUDS AND PAPYRI) (AFTER GALÁN 2014, TABLE 11.1, MODIFIED BY THE AUTHOR).

Djehuty took advantage of the three-dimensional nature of the medium he opted for, to produce an individual version of the contents' distribution. Against two-dimensional manuscripts, the architectural space allowed for a more meaningful and cosmological arrangement: while the image of the sky-goddess Nut presided over the ceiling⁶ and would have embraced the coffin of Djehuty (had it been placed in this chamber), the lower parts of the walls were covered with a description of the underworld topography in an hitherto unique combination of

BD 149+150,⁷ and the access to the chamber was secured with spells for repelling inimical forces.

Past: from execution to (re)discovery

The funerary chamber underwent several phases of transformation in antiquity, including its construction, decoration, alteration, and decay, leading into its initial documentation

⁶ This image was used since the beginning of the 18th Dynasty to decorate the lids of royal sarcophagi and of white and black private coffins, and has been analysed by Galán (2013). A close parallel in style and surface type (ceiling of burial chamber) can be found in TT 85 (temp. Thutmose III-Amenhotep II: Heye 2008: 266, Abb. 7).

⁷ Such a combination of vignettes of both chapters is only attested (but is not identical) in the papyrus of Nakht (temp. end of the 18th Dynasty-beginning of the 19th Dynasty, pLondon BM EA 10471): http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details/collection_image_gallery.aspx?assetId=393484001&objectId=113282&partId=1 (last accessed 01/015/2016).

FIGURE 3: IMPRECISE DRAWING OF LINES DELIMITING COLUMNS, WITH BRUSH-STROKES INVADING THE AREA SEPARATING TWO REGISTERS (© PROYECTO DJEHUTY).



FIGURE 4: TWO DIFFERENT PROCEDURES FOR ESTABLISHING THE WIDTH OF THE COLUMNS (DOTS IN THE LEFT IMAGE AND SMALL STROKES IN THE RIGHT ONE, HIGHLIGHTED BY MEANS OF WHITE CIRCLES AND SQUARES IN THE PHOTOGRAPHS) (© J. LATOVA/PROYECTO DJEHUTY).

in February 1899 and its re-discovery in January 2009 by the Spanish team.

The space destined to be the final dwelling of Djehuty, although probably never used as such, was originally squared and smaller (Figure 1) and was inscribed towards the end of his career. Proof for this observation comes from the expansion of some of the owner's titles: while in the accessible parts of the monument he is entitled overseer of the treasury (*jmy-r pr-hd*), the promotion to the higher category of senior overseer of the king's treasury (*jmy-r pr-hd wr n nsw*) is only attested on the walls of the funerary chamber (Galán 2014: 268 and Table 11.3). As for the construction and decoration stages, many details point in the direction of a work executed in haste: the lower section of the walls was not smoothed, the floor was not finished, and the layout following a columnar format was not carefully carried out, especially on the ceiling where the width of the columns often varies. Lines dividing registers and separating columns were also not neatly drawn (Figure 3), while the funerary texts show many mistakes and some of the vignettes are conspicuous for a lack of inner details.

Attention to small details can illuminate aspects of the working process. For example, two different procedures to create columns of the same width were used (by marking the width of 3cm with small lines or rounded dots: Figure 4), which point to various hands executing this task. The overall design of the room seems to have been carefully planned at an early stage. The number of columns each spell should occupy was calculated, and scribal marks were left in the upper

horizontal register, above the columnar surface, to indicate the starting point of a text. At the same time, the space for vignettes was established. However meticulous this planning was, some problems of distribution affecting both texts and images had to be corrected along the way.

At some point difficult to specify, once the original decoration had been executed, the south and east walls of the chamber were hacked up and pushed back by almost a metre (Figure 1). One of the walls was smoothed and coated with a layer of plaster, probably to receive new decoration that was never added, whereas the other was left rough. What new decorative scheme was planned for this extension, or who was responsible for it, are issues that remain uncertain. There is a clue to thinking that this stage of alteration took place soon after the first phase of decoration: a pottery sherd with remains of yellow pigment (the colour used for the background of the inscriptions surrounding Nut on the ceiling) was found during the excavation, indicating that the working tools of the first phase were still in the chamber. The stonemasons in charge of re-carving the walls must have also received orders to execute their work with attention and precision, since the decoration of the contiguous sides suffered no damage.

A second unexpected turning-point in the life of the funerary chamber happened soon after this alteration. This could be due to a shortage of economic resources, to the death of Djehuty, or to problems of mechanical stability derived from the widening of the space, which probably led to the appearance of cracks on the ceiling. Be that as it may, the room was abandoned by

the workmen, seemingly in a rush; inscribed fragments of the hacked walls and a vessel with remains of plaster were left on the floor. A lack of funerary objects and human remains indicate that Djehuty was not buried in this chamber, so the room never fulfilled its intended function. The decay phase is marked by the collapse of parts of the ceiling and of the two decorated walls. This stage began years or centuries after the abandonment, or immediately afterwards, perhaps as a direct consequence of the extension of the chamber.

When the Spanish team accessed the burial chamber for the first time in 2009, the position in which the blocks were found suggests that the room had already been inspected. The largest fragments, by-products of re-carving activities, had been piled in a corner. Several inscribed blocks found on the floor and leaning against the wall had their decorated surfaces facing upwards (Galán 2014: fig. 11.8), as if ready for copying. Through publications and archival material in the Griffith Institute (Oxford), we know that the Marquis of Northampton sponsored a season of excavation at the site in the months of January and February 1899, during which Wilhelm Spiegelberg and Percy Newberry documented the tomb (Northampton, Spiegelberg, and Newberry 1908; Galán 2009). Although the final report included no reference to the funerary substructure, a newspaper fragment dated to the summer of 1898 found in the antechamber and Newberry's diary provide a hint to their archaeological and epigraphic activities down the shaft (Galán 2012: 415–17; 2014: 254). The latter probably transcribed the texts of the funerary chamber, but hitherto no trace of his copy or notes have been found in the institutions where he worked, or to which he bequeathed his legacy.⁸

After the team sponsored by Northampton left the site, no other researcher seems to have explored the underground structures of TT 11, and knowledge of the antechamber and funerary shaft was lost until the first decade of the 20th century. The shafts, burial chamber and antechamber, as well as the chapel, were filled with debris and archaeological material from other tombs of the area, which entered TT 11 through several holes in the ceiling, probably in the first decade of 1900. The situation deteriorated due to a further collapse, which was the unexpected outcome of the clearing activities undertaken in this part of the Theban necropolis by Charles Gordon Jelf on behalf of the Antiquities Service (Galán 2012: 414–5, 417). In 2009, the Spanish mission recuperated this space for modern research and recovered more than 800 fragments originating from the hacked walls and collapsed surfaces.

Present: reconstruction of original decoration and tracing scribes

In 2013 I joined the Spanish mission with the aims of recording, studying, and publishing the inscriptions of the funerary chamber, of reconstructing the original decoration, and of analysing scribal practices. The texts of the standing surfaces have been transcribed in CSIC (Madrid) from pictures using the VisualGlyph program. The resulting copies were collated in Luxor against the original and with the aid of parallels.

⁸ My thanks to Francisco Bosch-Puche (Griffith Institute), Kate Spence (University of Cambridge), and Carl Graves (Egypt Exploration Society) for discussing with me the Newberry material kept in these institutions.

The work with the fragments recovered from the excavation, varying in size from a few millimetres to several columns of inscription, is still ongoing. It centres on finding joins and identifying the compositions originally written on them. Most of the blocks belong to the ceiling and, thanks to their rejoining, approximately 70% of the partially missing last three registers in this area is being brought back to its original state. Fitting pieces together has resulted in the identification of the rarely attested chapter 153A, with the further incentive that the version in TT 11 displays many individual traits when compared to those of Nu (pLondon BM EA 10477) and Yuya (pCairo CG 51189). Although the reconstruction is still underway, it is remarkable that hardly any fragments can be ascribed to the hacked up walls.⁹ Perhaps during the process of the re-carving of the written surfaces, part of the debris was deposited outside the tomb. Alternatively, as the blocks fell on the ground, the stonemason could have stepped on them and reduced their size, making our current task of identification and relocation more difficult.

The epigraphic work in this chamber allows us to come closer to different material aspects of scribal tasks and practices, and to the technical process of planning and copying the text and of drawing the vignettes. All working stages can be traced, from the preparation of the surface to the correction of mistakes in the texts. For this purpose, high resolution pictures are combined with a detailed observation of the surfaces on the spot. 'Experimental epigraphy' is also being developed with our sights set on trying to comprehend and reproduce the working conditions of ancient Egyptian scribes in the funerary chamber.¹⁰ Being at the crossroads between the world of the scripture – concerning the contents of the compositions copied and the agents involved – and the domain of artists – concerning the technique of painting architectural surfaces – the analysis of the funerary chamber of TT 11 can draw both on studies in palaeography and in written culture (Parkinson 2009; contributions collected in Verhoeven 2015) and on more art-oriented approaches (Laboury and Tavier 2010).

The texts were written with black and red ink, using a rush-pen. This tool allowed the scribe to combine strokes of different forms (straight or rounded) and widths (varying between 1.5 and 4mm) in one sign. Traces of the fibres forming the nib are also especially visible as the ink fades or dries (Figure 5). When faced with long passages alternating black and red colours, the scribes of the burial chamber chose to write the elements corresponding to each *en bloc* and separately, perhaps to avoid the constant changing of brushes or to ensure that the prepared ink would not dry. With a careful observation, one can trace the movements of scribes' rushes, and analyse their hesitations and solutions (Figure 6).

In order to distinguish between individual scribal hands, attention is being focused on three main characteristics: 1) broad aspects (i.e. the general layout); 2) specific or internal aspects of the signs (including shape – morphology – and ductus – number, sequence, and direction of the strokes – of the most common signs, but bearing in mind that a high

⁹ Save for six large blocks belonging to BD 78, a spell which must have covered a large extension of the missing south wall. At least the first mound of BD 149 was also inscribed in the lower register of this wall.

¹⁰ We are indebted to Hugues Tavier (restorer of the Belgian *Mission Archéologique dans la Nécropole Thébaine*) for helping us in the course of this experiment.



FIGURE 5: DETAILED PICTURES OF TEXTS ALLOW TRACING THE MOVEMENTS OF THE RUSH-PENS, THEIR REFILLING WITH NEW INK, AND THE FADING OF THE LETTER (© M. Á. NAVARRO/PROYECTO DJEHUTY).



FIGURE 7: MANY CORRECTIONS IMPLIED WASHING AWAY THE BLACK PAINT, WHICH LEAVES SOME GREY TRACES OF THE FORMER SIGN (THE ERASED SIGN A1 IS HIGHLIGHTED WITH A WHITE ARROW) (© J. LATOVA/PROYECTO DJEHUTY).



FIGURE 6: HESITATION IN THE SPELLING OF THE WORD *rmt*: THE DETERMINATIVES A1 AND B1, INITIALLY CORRECTLY PLACED BUT NOT FINISHED, WHERE SECONDARILY CORRECTED; THIS LATTER CHANGE ENTAILED THE ERRONEOUS INVERSION OF THEIR POSITIONS (© M. Á. NAVARRO/PROYECTO DJEHUTY).

Gardiner Nr.	Visual Glyph	West wall, right side	West wall, left side
A1		 W173 W170	 W122
A2		 W178	 W110
D2		 W177	 W126
D4		 W170	 W111
G17		 W178	 W111
I9		 W178	 W17 W114
Q3		 W165	 W111

FIGURE 8: PALAEOGRAPHIC TABLE COMPARING THE SIGNS' MORPHOLOGY OF TWO SCRIBES ON THE WEST WALL. THE LOCATION OF THE SIGNS IS RECORDED INDICATING THE WALL (W FOR WEST WALL), REGISTER (I FOR FIRST REGISTER), AND NUMBER OF COLUMNS (STARTING FROM THE LEFT SIDE) (© PROYECTO DJEHUTY).

degree of personal variation can be expected in these two traits within a single hand); 3) various phenomena related to the practice of writing (from orthography, including specific use of determinatives or seemingly unconscious appearance of hieratic signs, to the refilling of the writing tool with ink (so-called dippings), or types of mistakes – omissions, additions, substitutions between similar signs, words, etc. – and corrections). Contrary to papyri, it is interesting to note that the type of writing surface in the burial chamber, with signs copied on top of a greyish layer of gypsum, renders the recognition of emendations made by rubbing or washing away the ink easier (Figure 7). The next step after establishing a whole array of criteria related to the practice of writing is to prepare palaeographical tables (Figure 8) and to map or plot these criteria on the surface of the burial chamber. Thus, we can determine how many scribes were involved, how they worked, and their individual idiosyncrasies.

Mistakes, a controversial point in Textual Criticism, are evaluated in an attempt to seek explanations, taking into account both textual and material aspects. For example, formulaic passages or statements with a similar structure and slight variations in content (such as in the *Gliedervergottung* section of BD 42) are more likely to reduce the copyists' concentration and result in the intrusion of errors. On the other hand, the spatial location of the surface where a text is transcribed can also have a negative effect on scribes, since corners or the ceiling entail more uncomfortable body positions.

The current evaluation of writing habits and hands of scribes in TT 11 proves that a single explanation might not account for all circumstances surrounding scribal practices. Instead, one should take into account a variety of factors: the nature of the text copied (religious compositions were generally more carefully executed than private or administrative documents), space constraints, body positions (especially anomalous when inscribing corners or ceilings), available time and pace of work, laziness, the degree of concentration or weariness at the end of a copying session, the quality of the writing surface and tools, and the general working conditions (especially the type of lighting).

Future: perspectives of research

The study of the funerary chamber will continue along the lines described in the previous section with the following aims:

- a. Completing a critical edition of the spells and vignettes. The compositions written in TT 11 will be systematically compared with earlier, contemporary, and slightly later versions copied on different media (mainly shrouds, papyri, and tomb walls). The idea behind conducting this critical analysis is to move closer to the stock of texts available in archives or libraries. Moreover, finding exact parallels will allow us to explore individual attitudes of scribes towards their master copies. An example is the *dublette* (i.e. exact copy) of the deification of the body limbs in BD 42 found in a papyrus in Hannover. The latter has been ascribed by Irmtraut Munro (1995) to the reign of Amenhotep II and a comparison of the *Gliedervergottung* in both versions will be the object of a forthcoming publication.¹¹

- b. Devising a methodology on how to distinguish between different scribal hands. Determining how many scribes contributed to the decoration of this room in TT 11 is hindered by the fact that two walls are missing and that some of the remaining surfaces are worn away by natural agents (salt and water). However, the burial chamber is an ideal case study to suggest methodological procedures of how to analyse peculiarities in writing style, in order to identify individual handwritings and scribal idiosyncrasies.
- c. Embedding the study of the material aspects surrounding the decoration of the burial chamber in the context of scribal education. For example, some mistakes affecting the orientation of signs within words (Figure 6) or the appearance of hieratic signs in a cursive-hieroglyph composition can be understood if the general training and practices of scribes (based on texts written in non-retrograde lines, and using hieratic: Goelet 2009) are taken into account.
- d. Comparison of the work executed by scribes and artists, in order to determine whether the vignettes accompanying certain spells were executed by the scribes themselves, or by experts in 'illumination'.

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¹¹ *Vorlage* was used to create this section in pLouvre N. 3074 (*Imn*) and pHannover KM1970.37 (*Jmn-hip*). However, the latter comes much closer to TT 11, unknown to Munro when she published her research. The article, entitled 'Products of the same master copy: deification of body limbs in Book of the Dead chapter 42 in TT 11 and pHanover KM 1970.37', will be published in ZĀS.

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