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# The Ritual of “Encircling the Tomb” in the Funerary Monument of Djehuty (TT 11)

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**Summary:** In the Theban tomb of Djehuty (TT 11) we have the representation of a ritual apparently focused on surrounding the funerary monument. The objective of this paper is the reconstruction of the scene, and the text that accompanies it, thanks to the parallel of the TT 20 (Montuherkhepeshef). This allows us to link this ritual to the Pap. Ramesseum E and other antecedents of the Old and Middle Kingdom. An interpretation within the historical, religious and cultural context of the age of Hatshepsut-Thutmose III, and a possible relationship with the Middle Egypt background of the owners of the TT 11 and TT 20 is also proposed.

**Keywords:** Burial Ritual – Djehuty – Hatshepsut – pap. Ramesseum – Tomb

The Theban tomb of Djehuty (TT 11), Overseer of the Treasury during the time of Hatshepsut-Thutmose III, located at Dra Abu el-Naga, is unique in many aspects, especially with regards to the range of texts and the iconographic repertoire found within<sup>1</sup>. A particularly remarkable aspect of the tomb is the decoration of the inner chapel, the most important cult place of the tomb, featuring walls that depict a sequence of uncommon rituals (Figure 1). The only parallels can be found at the tombs of Montuherkhepeshef (TT 20) and Amenemope (TT 29). The former is a contemporary of Djehuty, also buried at Dra Abu el-Naga, very near to TT 11<sup>2</sup>. The tomb of Amenemope is located at Sheik Abd el-Qurnah and is clearly from a later date (the time of Amenhotep II). Its decoration is in a style that is quite different from that of TT 11 and TT 20, and preserves only a portion of the rituals discussed here.<sup>3</sup> A comparison of these funerary monuments allows us to determine what damage and destruction it has suffered, as well as to

<sup>1</sup> For an analysis of the originality and unique elements displayed in the tomb of Djehuty, see: Galán 2014, 247–272; id. 2015, 183–196; id. 2015a, 207–220; Serrano 2014, 273–295; id. 2015, 1237–1245; Diego Espinel 2014, 297–336.

<sup>2</sup> Maspero 1883, 435–468; Davies 1913, 1–19 and pls. II–XVII; PM I (1), 34–35.

<sup>3</sup> PM I (1), 45–46; Bavay 2007, 7–20.

complete the scenes and refine our comprehension of the texts, hence providing a method by which to understand the unusual rituals better<sup>4</sup>.

## “Encircling the Tomb” at TT 11 (and TT 20)

The eastern wall of the inner chapel of the tomb of Djehuty (n<sup>o</sup> 22 on the Figure 1) is relatively well-preserved (Figure 2). It is divided into three sections or horizontal registers of religious content. The upper band is completely filled by a ritual sequence focusing on the *tekenu*, a recurring figure with an ambiguous meaning in the funeral representations, which has been the subject of recent studies and publications<sup>5</sup>. The lower section is especially striking due to its explicit depiction of one of the rare scenes of human sacrifice to be found in Egyptian art.

Nevertheless, it is the second section (the middle register) that will be the focus of this discussion. The left half is made up of a scene displaying the sacrifice of cows, a common feature of Egyptian funerals. It is worth noting that in the inner chapel of the tomb of Djehuty (and at the parallels of TT 20 and TT 29), this is a recurring and dominant topic, emphasized above all others. Additionally, in the scene discussed here the sacrifice includes the decapitation of the animal, depicted with remarkable expressiveness and brutality, something without any known parallels<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> It is important to note that in the usual reference works relating to Egyptian funerals and burial rites very little mention is made of these tombs: cf. Altenmüller 1980, 745–765 (Altenmüller clearly highlights in p. 747 the difference and specificity of the rituals represented in TT 20 and TT 29: “Eine abseits stehende Fassung stellen die Darstellungen des Mentuherkhepeshef und Amenemope in Theben vor”); Settgast, 1963; Assmann 2005, 328–329; Theis 2011. Only recently are partial studies on these rituals beginning to appear: Serrano 2011, 150–162, pls. V–VIII; id. 2017, 587–593; Larcher, 2015, 191–214.

<sup>5</sup> For a review of the different interpretations that have traditionally been applied to the *tekenu*, as well as for the contributions of the comparison of the reliefs of the tombs of Djehuty and Montuherkhepeshef, see Serrano 2011, *passim*. To the references of this work should be added: Willems 1996, 110–112, and Theis 2011, 78–79, 135–139.

<sup>6</sup> In fact, two scenes of animal sacrifice are represented in the register, which could be related to the rite that appears on the right, and which we study in the present work (see below).

The right half of this section is quite well-preserved at the tomb of Djehuty. The parallel scene has suffered considerable damage at TT 20 (Figure 3) and it is not present at TT 29. The combination of what has been preserved in the two aforementioned tombs allows for an almost complete reconstruction: two rows of three figures, which in the tomb of Djehuty we know to be *smrw*, carry out a ritual depicted symmetrically, framing a central element (Figure 4). This element is almost totally lost at the tomb of Montuherkhepeshef but is completely preserved at TT 11. It appears to be a structure supported by a platform or podium, with a staggered top. It is colored in blue and decorated with a series of lines that accentuate its vertical progression. As is customary, the scene is accompanied by a short horizontal text found above, which has suffered some damage at the tomb of Djehuty and is almost completely lost at the copy in TT 20<sup>7</sup>.

At first glance, it seems to be depicting the activity of encircling or walking around the central object. It is important not to forget that in Egyptian art, the techniques of wall decoration, paintings as well as reliefs, essentially work within two dimensions. Therefore, the composition of a scene of this type presented a challenge for the artist, a challenge that one tried to solve in a variety of ways. One option is the combination of the frontal view with the lateral view in order to give the impression of a circle or ring, as also occurs in the celebrated scene of music and dance at the tomb of Nebamun. Sometimes the perspective is forced for the depiction of the figures, objects, or animals on the perimeter of a building or a structure; a good example of this can be found at the funeral pond shown at the tomb of Rekhmire. In the fishing scenes, the removal of the net from the river is shown by two rows of men who are facing each other, while in reality they should form two parallel lines, perpendicular to the riverbank<sup>8</sup>. It is important to stress that our scene is unique, that its origin could possibly be traced, as we will demonstrate, to an attempt to translate an activity described in a papyrus to the wall decoration of the tomb, with the added challenge of combining images and text.

Regarding the central object that is being circled by the six *smrw*, it could be a representation of the superstructure of the tomb or the funerary monument itself. Due to

its appearance and shape, it is easily related to a series of hieroglyphic signs that are commonly and frequently used as semantic determinatives that designate the tomb and related funerary concepts, such as  (O41),  (O194),  (O234), and  (O24A), among others<sup>9</sup>. Especially suggestive is the possibility that this image is the result of a combination of the two first signs. The word *iꜣr* (or *iꜣ*), which is normally written with the semantic determinative , is a verb that expresses the action of ascending, as well as its derivative the causative *sꜣꜣ*. It also frequently appears with the determinatives of the trapezoidal mastaba mentioned above. If one examines the most ancient corpus of funerary literature, the Pyramid Texts, we can find some relevant information: *iꜣ* and *sꜣꜣ* are used recurrently for the action of ascending (to heaven) by the deceased ruler during the process of resurrection, and the determinatives that accompany them often display interior details of vertical strokes and lines that echo the decoration of the type known as “palace façade.” They also frequently include a podium, the form of a staggered pyramid, or other details that are the result of the combination of signs that we have mentioned above (Figure 5). Especially noteworthy is a passage where we can find a play on words with the verb *iꜣ* = “ascend” and the noun *iꜣ* = “tomb,” clearly used in this case to designate the funerary monument or tomb itself, and accompanied by two determinatives of the type mentioned above ( -O24A- in the pyramid of Teti, and  -O234- in Merenre). The complete text is as follows: *ꜣ sꜣꜣ.tꜣ n.s m rn.s n iꜣ* (“You have been elevated to her (Nut) in her identity of the tomb’s superstructure (*iꜣ*)”)<sup>10</sup>. In summary, our proposal is that the central element, the ritual object found at TT 11 (and that originally was too in the TT 20), corresponds to a way of depicting the funerary monument or tomb itself, perhaps by following archaic models or with inspiration from documents that were originally older or not completely understood. Ultimately, the scene that we can reconstruct with the reliefs in the tomb of Djehuty, compared and completed thanks to what we have in the tomb of Montuherkhepeshef, reflects a ritual in which a group of officiants, the *smrw*, carry out a (ritual) encircling of the tomb.

As previously mentioned, above the scene there is a short text that could very well be a title or an epigraph, or in any case a phrase that refers to the activity and the figures

<sup>7</sup> As usual in the decoration of Egyptian tombs, the majority of the ritual sequences in the inner chapel of the tomb of Djehuty and TT 20 include short texts, somewhat difficult to read and understand, but without a doubt related with the activity depicted.

<sup>8</sup> For the scene in the tomb of Nebamun, see Parkinson 2008, 71–92. For the pool, or pond, of Rekhmire (TT 100), see Davies 1943, pl. 79 and Theis 2011, 81–84, 139–144 y pl. 54. For the iconographic peculiarities of the fishing scenes, see Vandier 1969, 561 ff.

<sup>9</sup> For a study of this group of words and the hieroglyphs displayed, see: Cervelló 2006, 1–20; id. 2007, 297–305; Regen 2007, 171–200.

<sup>10</sup> PT Sp. 364, & 616 f (for the translation, see Allen 2005, 80). Sethe, referring to this specific passage, specifies that *iꜣ* is “eine alte Bezeichnung des Mastabagraves (“das Aufsteigende” wegen der geböschten Wände)”, and insists on the variety of determiners that can accompany this word (Sethe 1936–1962, vol. III, 145).

depicted below. This text has been damaged and therefore causes some difficulties regarding reading and translation. In the tomb of Djehuty, at the beginning of the text we recognize -despite the damage-  with relative clarity. The problem is that, at the tomb of Montuherkhepeshef, Davies seems only have been able to identify one sign with certainty, the V15 () , with all of the rest having been lost. However even in this case, and although he seems sure of what he is copying, Davies draws it in a way that seems to be incorrect or anomalous (Figure 3)<sup>11</sup>. Having arrived at this point, we would like to put forth the possibility that there has been a confusion, on the part of the scribe or the sculptor (or both) between the signs V15 () and F46 () combined with D54 () . Both are written in a similar way in literary hieratic of the Middle Kingdom<sup>12</sup>, linked with the sign D54<sup>13</sup>. A confusion like the one we are proposing could have taken place during the process of copying the decoration of the tomb wall, that conventionally combines scenes and images with text, from an original document that was used as a model. This sort of document could possibly be written in hieratic or cursive hieroglyphs on papyrus, ostraka, or another similar surface. Additionally, in the specific case of the verb (*phr*), anomalous writings and confusions similar to the one we have proposed are relatively frequent. Hence, above all starting in the Middle Kingdom, it is not strange to find  , with a substitution of  for , both signs equivalent and, also, clearly interchangeable in hieratic<sup>14</sup>.

To support this assertion, it is important to mention that in the unusual ritual sequences preserved at TT 11 and TT 20, and only partially at TT 29, we can find other cases of texts with an uncertain or doubtful reading, or with anomalous writings. These are errors in reading and tran-

<sup>11</sup> Davies 1913, pl. VIII. It is important to mention that Davies does not use the dotted line or the broken line that he normally employs to highlight unsure readings or those that have been reconstructed based on Maspero's first copy, partially inexact or erroneous (Maspero 1883, *passim*). One of the ends of the strap or rope that represents sign V15 finishes in the usual loop, while the other does not. It seems clear that this was not an error by Davies, considering that he reproduces the same sign correctly in other places in the decoration of TT 20, even in the same wall that we are studying (see Davies 1913, pls. VI, VIII, X). If it was indeed shaped originally in that way, then it is an anomalous hieroglyph.

<sup>12</sup> Möller 1909, n<sup>o</sup> 526–529.

<sup>13</sup> In the case of F46 () it can be read as *dbn*, as well as *phr*, with the basic meaning of “going around,” “circling,” and in both readings appears with D54 acting as a determinative (cf. Wb. I 544–547; V, 437).

<sup>14</sup> For the similarity of both signs in hieratic and the possibility that they may be confused, see Möller 1909, vol. I n<sup>o</sup> 91 and n<sup>o</sup> 526, and Ritner 1997, 60 n. 275 (with examples of this confusion going back to hieratic texts from the Middle Kingdom). See too Wb. I, 544.

scription, which could definitely be the results of doubt or hesitation on the part of the scribe or the sculptor. For example, in a scene that depicts the sacrifice and dismembering of a cow, one of the main officiants is apparently throwing the mutilated pieces of the animal into a pit. In the tombs of Djehuty and Montuherkhepeshef the title of this individual has been lost; however, at TT 29, where it is preserved, it is written with the sign , a variant of N4 (Figure 6)<sup>15</sup>. For other depictions of this set of rituals, we know that the priest who was normally in charge of placing the offerings in the pits is the *imy-hnt*, whose title is frequently written in an abbreviated manner with the sign  (W17) or its different variants<sup>16</sup>. It seems clear that there has been a confusion between W17 and N4, something that may once again be due to the fact that both display a notable similarity regarding their writing in hieratic<sup>17</sup>. Faced with this reiteration of writing errors, it may be pointed out that during the excavation and subsequent restoration of the inner chapel of the tomb of Djehuty (TT 11), we have found evidence that the walls were extensively reworked and re-carved. It is clear that part of the original decoration, images and texts, were corrected or simply erased, replaced by others, possibly different ones. We really do not know if this was due to a change in the original plan and design of the decoration, or even in order to correct errors that may have been too serious or repetitive<sup>18</sup>.

<sup>15</sup> For the scene preserved in the TT 29, see Davies 1913, pl. XLIII (it is the figure that appears on the left end of the top register). We would like to express our gratitude to Dimitri Laboury, of the Mission Archéologique Belge dans the Nécropole Thébaine (MANT), who works in the excavation, restoration and study of the TT 29, for his kindness in providing us with current photographs of this scene, which have served to confirm the accuracy of Davies' drawing.

<sup>16</sup> Davies 1913, pl. VIII and X. The purpose of *imy-hnt* as the person in charge of depositing the mutilated pieces of the victims and other offerings into the pits is also confirmed by the reliefs of TT11, which depict these same ritual sequences.

<sup>17</sup> Möller 1909, vol. I n<sup>o</sup> 302 and n<sup>o</sup> 504 (especially clear in the Golenishchev and Ebers pap.). In the ritual scene of the “race with oars” in the tomb of Rekhmire (TT 100) we can possibly find another example of the same confusion (Davies 1943, pl. 79; Theis 2011, 84 and pl. 30).

<sup>18</sup> It is well known that in the course of decorating a tomb it was a frequent practice to correct or modify the original designs as work progressed and decoration was completed. There are often remains of the drawings, figures or scenes initially chosen, on which modifications are applied with greater or lesser freedom. But in the case of the inner chapel of the TT 11 it seems that it was a modification or a change that could be described as drastic or almost total. Thus, for example, the large offering-list that completely occupies the western wall (n<sup>o</sup> 25 on the plan, Figure 1) began to be carved into the opposite side, the eastern wall, being finally replaced by the scenes and ritual sequences that we are just analyzing in this paper.

Returning to the text being discussed here, following  in the TT 11 we can see , *h3* (M16), a sign that in TT 20 apparently-following Davies- was completely lost<sup>19</sup>. However, in the original publication by Maspero, one can see that the French copyists were still able to see the remains of some traces which were not able to be identified nor understood. Thanks to what is preserved in the tomb of Djehuty, it is easy to recognize that these sign traces may actually correspond to M16 (*h3*)<sup>20</sup>.

Then, always after the copy of TT 11, the text ends clearly with two *ayin* (). Here a variant of the word *i<sup>c</sup>*  (“tomb”) can be recognized, referred to above when discussing the interpretation of the element around which the *smrw* seem to be placed. Although it is an ancient term that appears as early as the Pyramid Texts, its use lasts throughout all Egyptian history, with different variants. It is worth noting that is necessary to wait until the New Kingdom to find the form *cc*, <sup>21</sup>, as well as *cc<sup>i</sup>*, <sup>22</sup>. In the Late Period we can find the variants *3<sup>cc</sup>*,  and other similars<sup>23</sup>. Furthermore, the reference that we are referring to is not the only occurrence of this word in the images and texts of Djehuty, Montuherkhepeshef, and TT 29, in this meaning of “tomb” or “funerary monument”. In fact, we find it once again, in the form of *i<sup>cc</sup>* () in the ritual sequence, already mentioned (Figure 6 y n. 15), that ends by tossing the mutilated pieces of the sacrificed cow into the bottom of a pit.<sup>24</sup> It seems that the use of this word and its variants is essentially restricted to a funerary and religious context, something that can be well understood. It also possibly involves the intention to provide the text with a style of some archaic

<sup>19</sup> Davies 1913, pl. VIII.

<sup>20</sup> Maspero proposed (erroneously) . He tried to link this damaged area with rituals related to the *tekenu*, an officiant that can be seen on the upper register and whose sledge also appears on the same wall, in the context of the sacrifice of the Nubians (Maspero 1883, 552–556). In this point it's worth saying that we do not find the idiomatic use of *it h3* (cf. Wb. I, 149–150). This is an additional argument in support of the correction that we have proposed for the only sign () preserved in the copy of TT 20.

<sup>21</sup> Wb. I, 40, 3 (tomb of Thay, from the 19th Dynasty).

<sup>22</sup> Kitchen 1975, 113, 9 (stele of Seti I in Abydos).

<sup>23</sup> Sethe 1936–1962, vol. III, 145 (making reference, among other documents, to the Famine (Sehel) Stele).

<sup>24</sup> The complete phrase is:    , *irt ssm hfi i<sup>cc</sup>* (“carry out the ritual in front of the tomb”). This text, which has been very damaged in TT 20, is preserved at TT 29 (cf. Davies, *Five Theban Tombs*, 18–19 and pl. XLIII) as well as TT 11 (here partially lost). Thanks to this, an interesting ritual can be reconstructed here (with precedents in the Old and Middle Kingdoms), focusing on the amputation of the four feet of the cattle, which ended up being thrown into the pit along with the entrails and organs. Cf. De Meyer and Serrano, forthcoming, and below n. 66.

form. A good example of this can be found in the Famine (or Sehel) Stele. Although it dates from the Late Period, it tries to evoke and recreate an episode that is supposed to have happened in the Old Kingdom, during the kingdom of Djoser. This document utilizes *cc*, , as an old word to refer to the royal tomb, something that should be related to the purposeful evocation of ancient times<sup>25</sup>.

In conclusion, the form in which this word appears written in the copies at TT 11 and TT 29 (and that with confidence must also have been at TT 20), refers to the tomb or the funerary monument. Its inclusion in the text above the scene of the six *smrw* and the way in which it has been written (without a determinative) should be understood in relation to the image of the structure in the form of a staircase that appears below, the object of the ritual encircling sequence. What we effectively have here, following a usual and wide-reaching practice in Egyptian art, is the integration of text and image that complement each other. In this way, the space that is dedicated to the written word interacts with the space that is occupied by the image, and together create a single message that should easily be understood by the reader. Our proposal ultimately attempts to reconstruct at TT 11 (and also in the corresponding scene at TT 20) *phr/dbn h3 cc* (  ) which fits perfectly with the ritual activity and the corresponding iconographic depiction found below.

## The Parallel: Pap. Ramesseum E

The religious practice of circling or walking around an object (a building, a statue, or even a person) is somewhat commonplace in Egyptian magical and religious practices. Nevertheless, we can find a parallel that is especially similar to and illustrative of what we have just proposed in the important set of the Ramesseum Papyri, found in a tomb dating from the 13<sup>th</sup> Dynasty<sup>26</sup>. Specifically, we have to focus our attention on the Pap. Ramesseum E, one of the most poorly preserved, greatly fragmented and deteriorated. This has made its reconstruction and study difficult,

<sup>25</sup> Always worthy of note in this important text has been the recurring use of archaic terms as an additional resource to evoke, in the eyes of the reader, an event that took place in the distant past. Among these terms *cc*, “tomb,” is expressly cited. Cf. Sethe 1964, vol. II, 81 and n. 2; Barguet 1943, 40–41. Furthermore, in the Famine (or Sehel) Stele, this word refers to the royal tomb, in this case the Step Pyramid of Djoser in Sakkarah, which combined with the determinative makes its use here particularly appropriate and expressive.

<sup>26</sup> For the original finding, see Quibell 1896. For the set of papyri, see Gardiner 1955 and Lorand 2011, where one can consult the extensive related bibliography. Cf. also the references of n. 27.

giving rise to a variety of different translations and interpretations. It was first published by Gardiner, who called it “a unique funerary liturgy.” Later, Helck proposed a new organization and translation of the text. Finally, Díaz Hernández has provided a current and thorough study of the papyrus, which he defines as “ein Ritualbuch für Bestattungen”<sup>27</sup>. For this last scholar, the Pap. Ramesseum E contains a text designed to be used by the main officiant, typically a lector-priest (*hry-h3bt*), who organized and directed the funeral. The ritual was perhaps originally designated for the king or members of the royal family and included rites for the last phase of the burial, which were carried out upon arrival at the tomb. Among these ritual sequences, permeated with a dramatic and performative vocation, we can differentiate three types or categories: 1) Farewell rites, designed to promote a blessed transit to the beyond for the deceased. 2) Rites designed to guarantee the supply of all types of goods in the afterlife. 3) Rites with an apotropaic purpose, to purify and protect the tomb and its contents, designed to prevent the possible threat of potential malign magic.<sup>28</sup> The rite of “encircling the tomb” can be situated in the last category, and it is repeated up to four times<sup>29</sup>. The most well-preserved fragment referring to this can be found in col. 74:  (*dbn h3 i<sup>c</sup> sp 4*). Due to the recurrence of this expression and its position in the text, marking the phases or principal steps that make up the ritual sequence, it seems undeniable that it is of special importance and centrality. As we can easily see, it is the same formula, almost word for word, that we have found in the scene copied in the tombs of Djehuty and Montuherkhepeshef<sup>30</sup>. This opens the possibility that

in TT 11 and TT 20, and in the Pap. Ramesseum E, we are actually facing the same rite, or at least one that is very similar. This last one basically consists of encircling the tomb or the funerary monument by some of the priests or ritualists.

We must now consider the possibility of finding other links or connections between the Ramesseum ritual text, which dates from the 13<sup>th</sup> Dynasty, and the TT 11 and TT 20, which can be placed chronologically in the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty, making them almost two or three centuries later. It is a question of finding parallels or elements in common between, on the one hand, the “unique funerary liturgy” (as it is referred to by Gardiner) or the “Ritualbuch für Bestattungen” (in the words of Díaz Hernández), contained within the Pap. Ramesseum E, and on the other hand the unique set of ritual sequences in the chapel of Djehuty and TT 20 (which also should have been in the later tomb of Amenemope, TT 29). The discovery, restoration, and enhancement of the value of the reliefs of the Djehuty inner chapel on the part by the Spanish Mission at the Necropolis of Thebes, as well as the recent studies regarding the Ramesseum papyrus, now allow for a deeper analysis of these possible parallels. We will focus on the three that initially seem more suggestive and illustrative:

1) The panel of the TT 11-TT 20, where “encircling the tomb” is included, is composed, as has been mentioned, of three sections that display different scenes (Figs. 2 and 3). It is possible to suppose that they are related to each other in some fashion. The upper register, as mentioned above, is made up of a ritual sequence focusing on the *tekenu*, an officiant or ritualist characterized by the appearance in funerals transported on a sledge and covered by an animal skin, the *msk3*-skin. He wears it in the funeral procession as well as in the specific rites that he performs, which possibly include a ritual sleep perhaps designed to experience certain dream visions related to the journey to the afterlife (cf. above n. 5). Significantly, in the lower section on the same wall, under the ritual of “encircling the tomb,” some figures carry a sledge upon their shoulders, which seems to be the same one that they have used to transport the *tekenu*, which is finally tossed into one of the pits.

If we focus once again on the Pap. Ramesseum E, in cols. 64–74 a rite is described that was possibly an appendix or complement to the great sacrifice that makes up the “Royal Offering.” Unfortunately, this part of the papyrus is in an advanced state of deterioration. However, different priests and officiants are mentioned. Among them is one whose name or title has been lost, but who is defined by wearing a skin or by covering himself with it (col. 73), which inevitably reminds us of the *tekenu*. To further accentuate the possible parallel, the mention of this offi-

<sup>27</sup> Gardiner 1955a, 9–17; Helck 1981, 151–166; Díaz Hernández 2014, *passim*.

<sup>28</sup> Díaz Hernández 2014, 58.

<sup>29</sup> Pap. Ramesseum E cols. 14 (“Second time encircling the mastaba”), 26 (“Third time”), 74 (“Fourth time”). The first occurrence of “encircling the mastaba” should have been in the beginning of the papyrus, currently lost. The number 4 is a frequently-occurring element in religious texts; it expresses, among other things, totality, fullness, the will to completely span a space or object. Repeating a ritual action up to four times is considered to help guarantee its full effectiveness (Díaz Hernández 2014, 35).

<sup>30</sup> In the Pap. Ramesseum E the reading of  is undoubtedly *dbn*, something that caught the attention of Gardiner, who expected the more common reading of *phr* (Gardiner 1955a, 10 n. 2). In any case, as told before, the sign F46 () can be read indistinctly as *dbn* or *phr*. On the other hand, both verbs, in their meaning of “going in circles around,” “going around,” or “circling” are equivalent and used interchangeably in religious and funerary texts. For some examples, see PT Sp. 366 & 629b, Sp. 274 & 406a, b, c; CT VI, 18 g–h (Sp. 573), etc. A particularly eloquent passage is CT VII 38 c (Sp. 837), where an allusion is made to “going around (*dbn*) the hills of Horus; circling (*phr*) the hills of Seth”.



ventional manner: the cow is lying on the floor with its legs immobilized and bound with rope, a typical position for the victim. The sacrificer, who this time is the *wt-Inpw*, leans over it to slit its throat. The accompanying vertical text, which separates it from the other sacrifice scene above mentioned, can be read in this way: *dšr šc mntt (sic) sp 4* “(a cow) red, sever the leg, four times”<sup>35</sup>.

The essential role that sacrifice plays, especially the sacrifice of cows, is of course widely known in funerary rituals. However, the abundance of scenes depicting bovine sacrifice in the unique ritual sequences at the tombs of Djehuty, Montuherkhepeshef, and what remains in that of Amenemope TT 29, is striking<sup>36</sup>. This could involve many victims. In addition, they appear related to the aforementioned pits, into which the remains or mutilated parts are thrown. Once again, this reiterated relation is uncommon and without further close parallels, at least with regard to the detail of the depictions and their clear central importance.

In the Pap. Ramesseum E we can find, as was to be expected, the inclusion of the cow as a victim of sacrifice,

<sup>35</sup> The red colour of the bull can be an additional reference that links it to Seth. The correct reading of the word should be *mnt* (cf. Wb. II, 68, 8–15). Then it is possible that the second *t* is erroneous, the result of the confusion with some uncommon determinative related to the leg of the cow (F 22, 23, 24 o 114). This again opens the possibility of being before a problem regarding the reading and transcription of a text originally written in hieratic. The formula “sever the leg, four times” is also worthy of discussion: as told before, it is possible that we are before a multiple sacrifice; but following this text apparently it involves a single victim (a red bull), understood to have each of its four legs severed. If this were the case, it would clearly make it similar to the rite mentioned above, which culminates with the placement of the four feet of the bovid in a pit, also depicted in the ritual sequences of TT 11, 20, and 29 and (see n. 15 and 66). For the role of *wt*, or the *wt-Inpw* in funeral, see: Morales 2002, 123–146, and Theis 2011, 177–178 n. 33. This officiant is always associated with Anubis, with the treatment of the body, mummification, and specifically the bandages that the mummy is wrapped in. However, in this scene he acts as a sacrificer, the person who takes the life of the victim. It is worth pointing out that in a passage of the Pyramid Texts (Sp. 355 & 573) the *wt-Inpw* is identified with Horus, expressly described as the son “who protects their father Osiris” and fights in their name. The quintessential opponent in this fight is Seth, who, as we have mentioned previously, is identified with the cow sacrificed in the funeral (cf. n. 34).

<sup>36</sup> For victims and sacrifices in the funeral see: Settgast 1963, *passim*; Theis 2011, *passim*. Although it does not fall within the scope of this work, it is important to mention that in the lower section of the panel being studied at TT 11 and TT 20, there is a scene displaying the “sacrifice of the Nubians,” one of the few explicit depictions (as told) of human sacrifice in Egyptian art. This is a question that deserves its own study, although it is possibly also related with the idea of the sacrifice of the enemy, in order to protect the deceased and the tomb (Diego Espinel 2014, 297–336).

as occurs in col. 6, as part of the “Offering-of-the-God”<sup>37</sup>. In col. 40, a similar reference appears, but this time the animal that is going to be sacrificed is designated with an expression that allows for two readings: *šsr ʿḫti šmʿw*, a “bull of Upper Egypt”, or *šsr ʿḫti nsw*, a “royal bull”. What is interesting here is that this bull only appears on few occasions in the sources regarding funerary rituals: one significant example is another one of the Ramesseum documents, the so-called “Dramatic Papyrus” (Pap. Ramesseum B), as well as, once again, in the rituals of TT 11 and TT 20<sup>38</sup>. However, what is most striking is the reference to 40 bulls designated for sacrifice in col. 49. As it becomes clear by the colour red used by the text here, this column marks the beginning of a new or specific phase of the ritual, a phase that revolved around the death and dismemberment of all these animals, culminating in the removal of the foreleg (*ḥpš*) and the heart, the most select pieces of the offering. Among the priests and participants involved in this ritual mention is also made of the “many bearers of the foreleg-*ḥpš*” (cols. 50–1). Such a high number of victims, something not really very common, has been connected to the possibility that the ritual included in Pap. Ramesseum E may have been originally designated for a person of higher rank, the king himself or a member of the royal family<sup>39</sup>. In any case, we are faced with another unique element that once again could connect the ritual sequences depicted on the papyrus with those found at TT 11, 20, and 29<sup>40</sup>.

<sup>37</sup> For the significance of this offering, and a discussion regarding the elements from which it is composed, including the bull, see Díaz Hernández 2014, 32–33.

<sup>38</sup> Regarding this type of sacrificial victim, about which there are still considerable doubts, see: Sethe 1964, 109–111; Otto 1960, Vol. I 73–74 (in the Opening of the Mouth); Settgast 1963, 105–107; Theis 2011, 95–96 (as part of “die Riten um die Landepflöcke”); Díaz Hernández 2014, 40–41. For its inclusion in the rituals of TT 20, see Davies 1913, pl. X (the parallel scene preserved in TT 11 is yet unpublished).

<sup>39</sup> Díaz Hernández 2014, 45 (“Aus der grösseren Zahl von Opfernern kann man schliessen dass das ganze Ritual für eine bedeutende Persönlichkeit, z. B., ein Mitglied der königlichen Familie gedacht war”). This is a difficult proposition for a noble or a courtesan, regardless of the importance of their position, although it must not be forgotten that in fact, a large part of funeral rituals carried out at the tombs of normal individuals were based on and took their inspiration from royal funerals. It must be insisted that the number 40 is a multiple of four, the magically-potent number that represents totality, included in the “ritual of encircling the tomb” described in the Pap. Ramesseum E.

<sup>40</sup> It must be recalled that the restoration and study of the inner chapel of Djehuty is still under-way. It is very possible that when this work has finalized, and the parallels with TT 20, and TT 29 have been fully analysed, we can include other elements in this list of similarities. To give another example, several priests and ritual partici-

In conclusion, the comparison and study of the images and text preserved at the tombs of Djehuty and Montuherkhepeshef, both belonging to the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty (Hatshepsut-Tutmosis III) allows for the reconstruction of a rite whose main feature was walking around the tomb or the funerary monument. This action was accompanied by the recitation of spells, hymns, or invocations (expressed by the verb *nʿs*), and most likely also included the sacrifice of several bovine victims. This ritual sequence displays notable similarities with the Pap. Ramesseum E (13<sup>th</sup> Dynasty), to the degree that it is worthwhile to ask the question whether this text or a similar one could have served as a model or source of inspiration for the iconographic design of the aforementioned tombs. Another possibility that should not be ruled out is that both ritual sequences are following a common model or source. This hypothetical source would be older, and the Ramesseum document would have been derived from it, as well as the three Theban tombs, beginning with Djehuty (TT 11), possibly the oldest of the three and which could have served as a model or inspiration for the almost-contemporary tomb decoration of Montuherkhepeshef (TT 20) and finally for Amenemope (TT 29), clearly much later<sup>41</sup>. If this is the case, we would be faced with a repositioning of traditional religious elements towards marked archaic tendencies, a topic that will now be discussed.

## Background and Historical Context for a Unique Rite

The activity of walking around (encircling) an object, a building, an animal or a person is, as mentioned above,

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pants are depicted in these tombs such as the *it nʿr* or the previously discussed *dmḏt*. These figures are not common in the funerary representations of the New Kingdom, but have clear precedents in previous periods, in documents of the Middle and Old Kingdoms.

**41** For the dating and chronological context of the tomb of Djehuty within the time of Hatshepsut, see Galán 2014, 247, where it is established that Djehuty presumably did not outlive Hatshepsut and that his tomb “was considered finished at some point during the last years of her rule”. For the dating of TT 20 to the kingdom of Thutmose III, without further specificity, see Bryan 2006, 74, 100. Montuherkhepeshef does not make mention of any sovereign in his tomb (Galán, 2014, 248 n. 5); this does not rule out the possibility that he had experienced the rule of Hatshepsut, perhaps opting not to mention any ruler considering the damage that the *damnatio* had caused to the neighbouring tomb of Djehuty, practically a contemporary, and whose uncommon iconographic programme he would imitate. For the dating of Amenemope to the kingdom of Amenhotep II, see Bayav 2007, *passim*.

common to magical-religious practices and dates back to the origins of Egyptian religion. In fact, it involves something universally widespread and present in almost any ancient culture. It can have different and multiple purposes. Basically, the definition of a magical perimeter guarantees the protection and purification of what has been circled, keeping it safe from enemies or supernatural (and human) powers that may be a potential threat<sup>42</sup>. Some Egyptian sources included this magical activity, explaining that it must be repeated up to four times to be completely effective<sup>43</sup>. Furthermore, they insist on the fact that the activity be accompanied by the recitation of the corresponding spell or magical formula<sup>44</sup>. The word that is normally chosen in the texts for this is *phr*, although *dbn* is also used. These are both terms that, as we have seen, are equivalent and can be alternated in the same text with the same meaning<sup>45</sup>. It is interesting that the expression *phr hʿ* has a somewhat archaic connotation, and that starting in the New Kingdom it was fundamentally used for traditional religious texts<sup>46</sup>.

If we carry out research into the most ancient sources of Egyptian funerary religion, we can find abundant references to ritual circling<sup>47</sup>. Perhaps the most significant precedent can be found in the Abusir Papyri, coming from the funerary temple of Neferirkare, from the 5<sup>th</sup> Dynasty. Here a round of inspection looking for possible damage at the mortuary temple of the dead king is mentioned. What is interesting is that this round was carried out while following the sacred itinerary of a periodic ritual of circling the funerary monument or royal pyramid, which should be completed with all the relevant religious requirements. It is described in words in a way that is very similar

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**42** Ritner 1997, 57–67 (“Encircling”); Theis 2014, 433–590 (“Magie und Schutz des Grabes”) and 631–633 (“Der magical Kreis”).

**43** Thus, in the initial phases of the ritual of the Opening of the Mouth, for the protection and purification of the mummy or the image of the deceased, the officiant goes around four times with the different purifying materials or elements, such as natron and incense. See Otto 1960, vol. II, 37–55 (Scenes 2–7).

**44** Theis 2014, 631–632. In the ritual of the Opening of the Mouth, the action of circling the mummy must necessarily be accompanied with the recital of the corresponding formulas (cf. n. 43).

**45** Ritner 1997, 57–57 and above, references and examples in n. 30.

**46** WB. I, 545 (s. v. *phr*: “alt mit *hʿ*, später mit direktem Objekt”).

**47** See for example: PT Sp. 659 (& 1866 a-b), Sp. 690 (& 2099 a), Sp. 612 (& 1735c), Sp. 668 (& 1959 a). Especially interesting is Sp. 600, which contains an invocation designed to protect the deceased ruler and their funerary monument. Although the verb *dbn/phr* does not appear, that magical protection of the tomb (*mr*, “pyramid”) is activated by the god Atum, who embraces it with his arms. If we look at the Coffin Texts, in Sp. 234 there is an indication referring to the action of walking around the offerings four times in order to purify them for their reception by the deceased. Cf. too the examples cited in n. 30.



ruler is concerned about the situation of decline of the sanctuaries, especially about the continuity of the offerings, festivals and liturgical practices. Apparently, it was the queen herself who oversaw decisions regarding the cultic rules and instructing the priests, establishing their obligations and periods of service<sup>58</sup>. It is worth pointing out that this task of reconstructing temples and renewal of worship is not limited to the Speos Artemidos, but also affects other important religious centers of Middle Egypt, such as Cusae or Hermopolis Magna. It is also interesting that the ruler expressly declares that it is the god Thoth himself, the most dominant god in the area, who has illuminated her path and guided her through all this intense pious activity (see below n. 64).

## Rituals and Biographies: the Identity of the Owners of TT 11 and TT 20

We are now going to consider with some detail the identity of the owners of the two main tombs we have discussed: Djehuty (TT 11) and Montuherkhepeshef (TT 20). It is espe-

58 “... the rites of its arrangement having been made firm, which (rites) he (the Sun) made in the past (8) for the first (gods)... The temple of the mistress of Qusae, which had <completely> (16) fallen into dissolution – the earth having swallowed its noble sanctuary, children dancing on its roof<s>... I hallowed it, built it anew, fashioning its Leading Serpent of gold ... Great Pakhet, who roams the wadis, resident in the eastern desert, [was] s[ee]king] (20) the rainstorm’s paths, since there was no relevant libation-service that fetched water (for her). I have made her enclosure as [what this goddess] intende[d] (21) for her Ennead, the doorleaves of acacia inlaid with bronze, in [or]der that [they] might be [in it, her register of festival-offerings] (22) (in effect) with respect to (its) timing, the lay-priests learning of its time. Hur and Hermopolis were im[poverish]ed of provisions. (23) I have hallowed the sacred precincts of their towns, established as a frequented place. Those who were in [...] the storehouse (24) are (now) requisitioner(s) from it. Since great Thoth, who came from the Sun, has been reveal[ing] (this) to] me, I [have consecrated to] him an altar in (25) silver and gold and chests of cloth, every vessel set in its (proper) place. For the one authorised to see, the leader of (26) Atum’s two Enneads, did not know how to do it, there being no knowledge in his house; the god’s-fathers were empty-headed, [and there was no son who] learned from <his> father. (27) My incarnation’s vision gives clarity of vision to those who shoulder the god ... I have [magnifi]ed (29) the incarnation of this god with a double festival of Nehebka and the festival of Thoth, which I set for him anew (30) when they were (only) in the mouth and not on his calendar since the time when the conduct of the festival was single. I have multiplied the god’s offering for him more (31) than what was before ...”. Translation by Allen 2002, pp. 3–4.

cially interesting to determine whether there is some type of link or relationship that helps to explain why they are the only ones to choose, almost at the same time, these unique ritual sequences to decorate their funerary monuments. Both tombs are neighbours, in close proximity to each other, in the same area of Dra Abu el-Naga, and furthermore are practically contemporaries<sup>59</sup>. From an internal study of the documents corresponding to both monuments nothing can be initially found that indicates that they had any sort of family link or institutional relations<sup>60</sup>.

However, if we look at the public career of both figures and the government posts they occupied, the links that brought them together in Middle Egypt begin to become apparent. This allows us to support the hypothesis that they were both native to this area and always maintained close relations there<sup>61</sup>. Montuherkhepeshef, in addition to the position of fan-bearer (*t<sup>3</sup>y-hw*), was the governor of nome X of Upper Egypt (the nome of the Cobra, or Qau el-Kebir/Antaeopolis); additionally he was overseer of the priests of Nebuy, the patron god of this province<sup>62</sup>. For Djehuty, we possess more information regarding his biography and his origin in Middle Egypt, specifically the Hermopolitan area: in addition to the positions he occu-

59 TT 29, belonging to Amenemope, as stated earlier, is later and so less relevant for this part of our study. The reasons why this peculiar series of rituals is included in this tomb, are not immediately clear. Amenemope was vizir by the first half of the reign of Amenhotep II, which means that between his tomb and that of Djehuty there should be a period of approximately thirty or forty years. Furthermore, although the sequence of rituals has been greatly destroyed at TT 29, what is still preserved allows for confirmation that its decoration was carried out in a different style and technique. However, we can also establish a link, albeit indirect, with areas to the north of Thebes: the brother of his father, Nu, (father of his cousin Sennefer-TT 96), was a priest of Horus in Qus, halfway between Thebes and the area of Hermopolis (Shirley 2013, 587 n. 193).

60 The names of the mother (Dediu) and the father (Abuty) of Djehuty were preserved despite the damage caused by the damnatio to the decoration of the tomb. Other relatives are also depicted, sisters and perhaps brothers, and the lack of any mention of a possible wife or children of the tomb owner is somewhat striking. Interestingly, Djehuty shares these features with some of the courtiers who served under Hatshepsut (see Galán 2014, 251–252 and 268–270). Regarding Montuherkhepeshef, we only know the name of his mother, Taysenet, with whom he is twice depicted (Davies 1913, p. 12, pl. IV and VIII). On a badly deteriorated wall fragment another male is depicted, possibly his father or, less likely, a brother (id., p. 7 and pl. XI).

61 During the rule of Hatshepsut-Thutmosis III, there are many political groups or influential figures and courtiers coming from different parts of Egypt, who maintained strong internal links and who possibly supported each other. See: Ratie 1979, 243–290; Bryan 2006, 74 and 100; Shirley 2014, 173–245.

62 Davies 1913, pls. IV and VIII; PM, I (1), 34; Montet 1961, vol. I, 115–123; Bryan 2006, 74.

pied at the court and in the service of the central administration, Djehuty was the governor of Her-Wer, overseer of the priests of Khemenu (Hermopolis Magna), high priest of Thoth (“Chief of the Five in the House of Thoth”), and overseer of the priests of Hathor, lady of Cusae, relevant positions that clearly associate him with the Fourteenth, Fifteenth, and Sixteenth nomes of Upper Egypt<sup>63</sup>. It is important to mention that the majority of these provincial positions are related to the priesthood, and clearly link Djehuty with responsibilities related to the maintenance of temples and the cultic activity, something that could also be said of Montuherkhepeshef, the high priest of Nebuy. It is highly possible that Djehuty was largely responsible for or was behind the restoration of the temples of Hermopolis or Cusae, referred to in the large inscription of Hatshepsut in the Speos Artemidos mentioned above<sup>64</sup>. We must not forget that this restoration activity included the revival of festivals, the ancient religious calendar and the cultic activities in general, all elements that had apparently fallen into disuse (following the text of Speos Artemidos) during the Second Intermediate Period.

It is worth noting, finally, that a more detailed and thorough study of the tomb of Djehuty will probably provide new and additional evidence of the archaic trends to which we have referred previously<sup>65</sup>. It would also possibly support the close relationship between the rituals preserved in the decoration of this tomb and the geographic, historical, and cultural context of Middle Egypt. To be precise, some of the scenes included in the reliefs of the inner chapel of the TT 11 (and copied at TT 20 and later at TT 29), depict ritual sequences whose archaeological and material evidence have recently been found in the Hermo-

politan region, dating to a period that spans the end of the Old Kingdom to the Middle Kingdom<sup>66</sup>.

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<sup>63</sup> For a complete and updated study of the biography of Djehuty and the positions he held, with a reference to and a review of previous studies, see: Galán 2014, 247–252.

<sup>64</sup> Allen 2002, 15; Galán 2014, 250–251; the hypothesis of this last scholar is specially suggestive: behind the god Thoth, who advises and moves Hatshepsut to carry out this work on the sanctuaries of Middle Egypt, there is actually a hidden metaphorical reference to Djehuty himself, whose name is written in a way that is indistinguishable from that of the god (id., p. 251 n. 20).

<sup>65</sup> So, for example, in the inner chapel of TT 11, in front of the reliefs where the rite of “encircling the tomb” can be found, Djehuty is depicted in a sitting position, appearing to attend and supervise these rituals, wearing a bonnet or cap common to depictions of the deceased in Middle Kingdom tombs (for example, Beni Hassan or El-Bersha), but atypical to the 18th Dynasty (report from J. M. Galán). As stated earlier, a variety of elements have been found in contemporary monuments that are examples of this voluntary return to archaic tendencies, including in the way the words are written and texts are organized, just as found in the decoration corresponding to the tomb of Djehuty, TT 20 and TT 29 (Macy Roth 2015, 537–552).

<sup>66</sup> Specifically, we are referring again to the rite of cutting the four hooves of the cow, which forms part of the iconographic sequence depicted at TT 11, TT 20 (badly destroyed here) and TT 29 (almost completely preserved). Recent archaeological excavations have confirmed the material existence of a similar ritual activity, especially at sites such as Dayr el-Bersha, very near to Hermopolis Magna, the homeland of Djehuty. See De Meyer, Van Neer, Peeters, and Willens 2005–2006, 45–71; De Meyer and Serrano forthcoming (cf. above n. 15, 24 and Figure 6).

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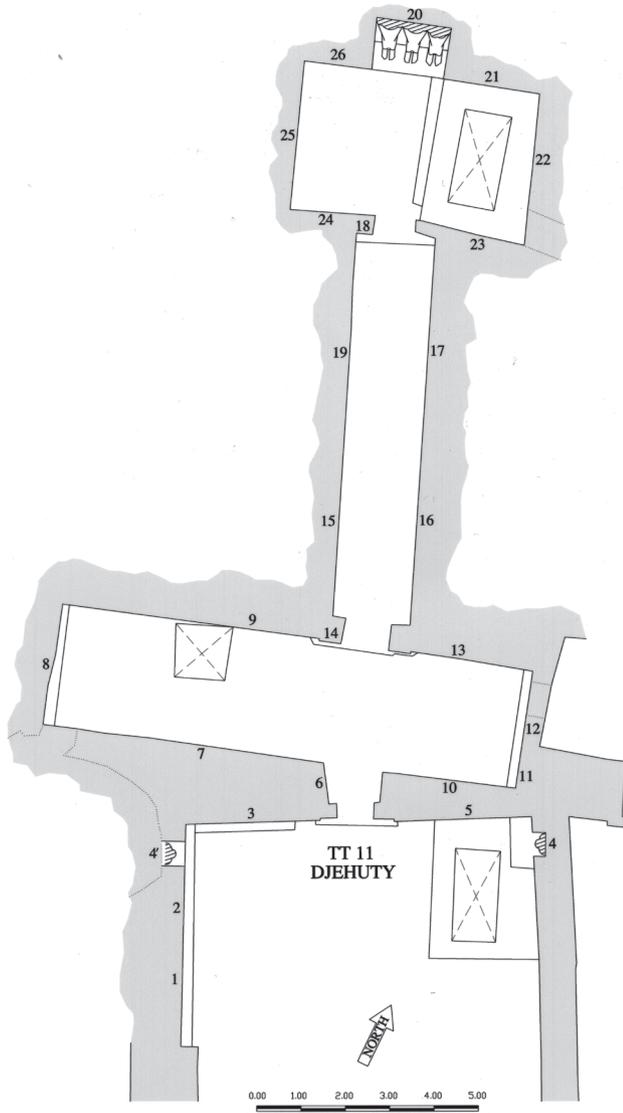


Figure 1: Ground plan of the TT 11-Djehuty (©Proyecto Djehuty).

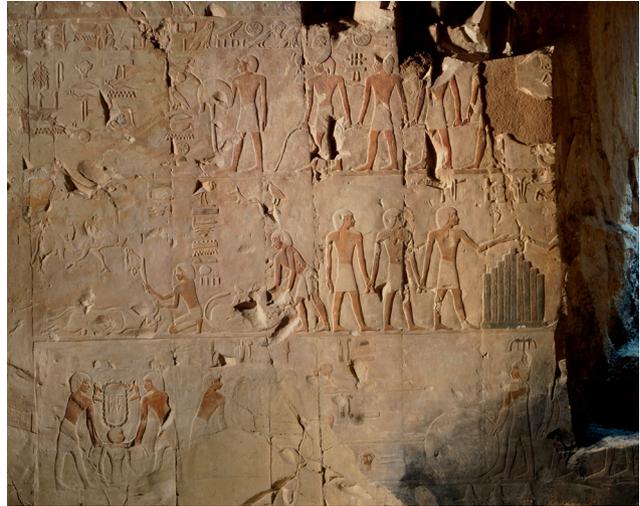


Figure 2: Eastern wall of the inner chapel of the tomb of Djehuty (©Proyecto Djehuty).

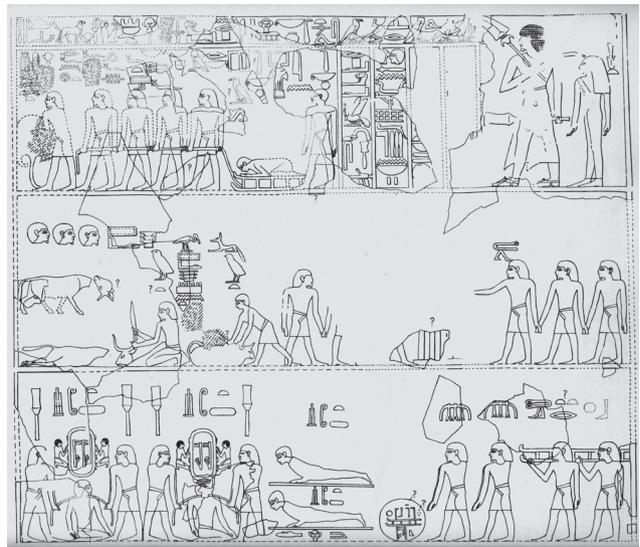


Figure 3: Tomb of Montuherkhepeshef – TT 20 (Davies 1913, pl. VIII).

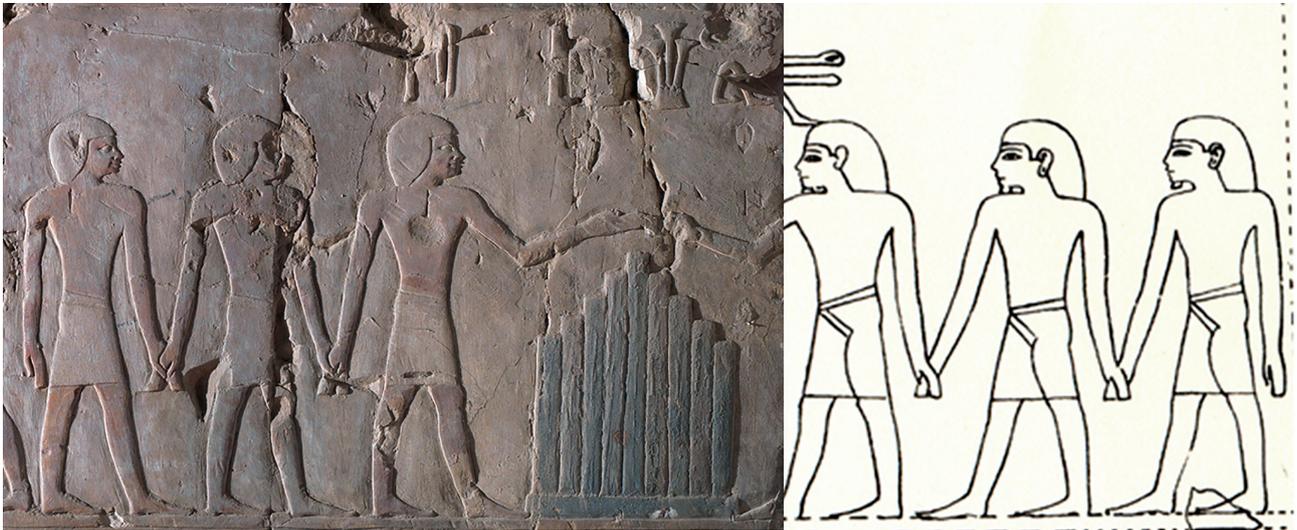


Figure 4: Ritual of “Encircling the Tomb” (from what has been preserved in the TT 11 and TT 20).

160b <sup>W</sup>		452b <sup>W</sup>	
616f <sup>T</sup>		456d <sup>W</sup>	
1455b <sup>P</sup>		456e <sup>W</sup>	
616f <sup>M</sup>		462c <sup>W</sup>	
1171b <sup>P</sup>		613a <sup>T</sup>	
1173b <sup>N</sup>		641a <sup>T</sup>	
		645c <sup>T</sup>	

Figure 5: Determinatives for tombs and related funerary concepts (adapted from Cervelló 2006, 14).

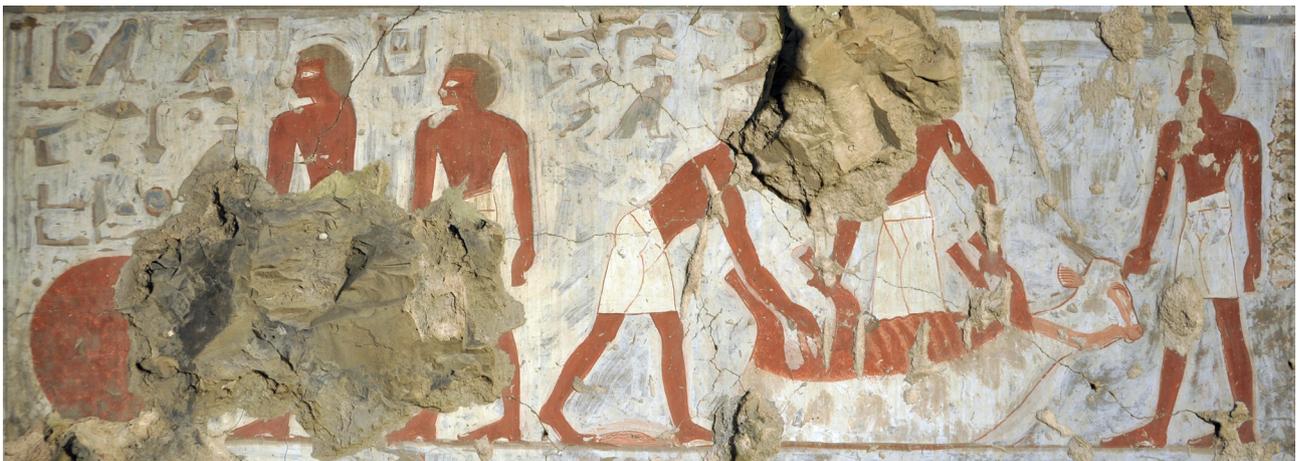


Figure 6: Tomb of Amenemope – TT 29 ((© MANT / D. Laboury).